

Henry Kapono visits K-Bay, rehearses with MarForPac Band for upcoming concert

Garrett Cole

Contributing Writer

Christmas came early as Henry Kapono, of the Hawaiian music duo Cecilio and Kapono, came to Marine Corps Base Hawaii to rehearse with the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific Band, Tuesday.

Kapono will be joining the MarForPac Band for the fourth annual Na Mele o Na Keiki Holiday Concert at the Neal S. Blaisdell Concert Hall, Dec. 1.

"This rehearsal is to be one of many in preparation for the concert," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Smith, band director, MarForPac Band, explaining the importance of preparing for the concert.

"This event is particularly a great collaboration between local musicians in Hawaii and the Marine Corps band," Smith said. "To get this kind of collaborative concert ... it's a gift. Just to be in the [concert] hall ... it's huge, it's gorgeous. Every one of the guest celebrities that are performing with us are professional musicians. They're donating their time to come rehearse with us and to perform."

The concert is set to kick off the holiday season and help attendees escape from the hustle and bustle of the commercial barrage. By encouraging the donation of toys for Toys for Tots, the concert also helps strengthen ties with both military and local communities.

Cpl. William Baumann III, piano player, MarForPac Band said, "We not only play military music but holiday music with various entertainers around the island and local musicians. I like how it not only brings the unit together, this brings the public into the military perspective and not only gives them a positive view of what we do but gives back to the community."

During their rehearsal, Kapono and the band members worked hard to perfect and merge their sound for the performance. Kapono has shown his admiration and respect toward the military members ever since he started playing for service members in Vietnam.

"I love it, I've always been a big supporter of the military,"



Garrett Cole | Hawaii Marine

Local musician Henry Kapono rehearses with the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific Band here for an upcoming holiday concert.

Kapono said. "Way back in the day I played in a rock band in Vietnam, so I got to go all over Vietnam and play for the troops. I learned a lot about what they do, and I appreciate everything. I've made a connection to the military, and I've always been supportive of them. With this gig, I try to do something for them every year, and this is a great opportunity for me to participate in something for this organization."

For more about Toys for Tots and the concert, visit the band's website at <http://www.facebook.com/ToysForTotsHawaii>.