

WEST



MMidweek
HAWAII ISLAND

Hawai'i Island Midweek | OCTOBER 2, 2019
hawaiiislandmidweek.com | Photo courtesy KAWIKA SINGSON

AN EDITION OF Star Advertiser

ADVENTURE
ZONE

Anyone can step into the Big Island's most remote locales, thanks to videographer Kawika Singson and his show *Everything Hawai'i*.

HAWAII ISLAND MIDWEEK
COVER STORY

ALL ABOUT

HAWAII

BY KRISTINA ANDERSON

See the natural beauty of the Big Island through the eyes of videographer Kawika Singson in episodes of "Everything Hawai'i."

Running 20-mile hikes through Waimanu Valley or up and down Mauna Loa is just another ordinary outing for ultra-adventure personality, athletic prodigy and nature videographer Kawika Singson. That's because every day is a new adventure for the 56-year-old ambassador of aloha whose passion is showcasing the natural beauty of the Big Island via social media and his OC-16 TV show *Everything Hawai'i*.

But it didn't start there.

"I've been doing it all since long before the Internet," says Singson, who grew up in Honoka'a, running the trails of Waipi'o Valley, always toting his trusty Nikon.

Today, armed with only a GoPro camera, Singson goes to great lengths to capture the perfect shot or breathtaking

footage. Although he likes still photography, his preference is video.

"I travel light, so everything has to be compact. No need for tanks or regulators when I dive. Just the GoPro. My 'go-to' is the GoPro," he says with a laugh.

From lava flows, to the mountains, from the sea, the deserts and the valleys, there is no Big Island terrain Sing-

son hasn't traveled, camera in hand. One of his most iconic images showed his tripod with its legs on fire, positioned perhaps a little too closely to some smoking pahoehoe flows. It received almost 50 million views on social media.

Singson would begin his lava shoots by hiking in the early morning. (This was before the 2018 eruption of Leilani Estates, which he did not shoot out of respect to residents who lost their homes.)

"I've been hiking and running lava fields for years. I'm

like a billy goat out there, but it's not something I can do with others since I have my own techniques and it's too risky to expose anyone else to that danger. The gases are extremely unforgiving and deadly, and don't give you any warning so you have to

take precautions. You can be totally engulfed. So I always carry a respirator in my pocket."

But his Big Island adventures didn't stop there. He's hiked, run and repelled from the ridges to the rugged windward valleys, as well as journeyed to the top of 13,678-foot Mauna Loa's summit crater, Moku 'āweoweo Caldera.

"It's pretty challenging to run to the summit and come home the same day," he says, noting that most people stay overnight in the cabin.

In terms of difficulty, the Mauna Loa adventure out-



From the depths of the sea (above, inset) to the edge of the Big Island coast (above), Kawika Singson lives to enjoy all Mother Nature has to offer (left) and share it with others.

(Far left) Singson served in the Army. PHOTOS COURTESY KAWIKA SINGSON

Click or Drag to Zoom

ranks them all.

"It's all uphill and there's the altitude," he says. "But just for fun, I've filmed my 100-yard sprint dashes at the crater. No one else is up there. Yeah, I'm goofy like that and like to have fun. I'm not serious at all."

Born and raised on O'ahu, Singson moved to the Big Island at about age 10. As a young man, he joined the Army and was stationed in Germany for three years. Upon his return to Hawai'i, he decided to make Kona his home and fell in love with it. For quite a few years, he competed in Ironman and other events. But he eventually decided racing was just not for him.

"I stopped doing races and became noncompetitive," he says. "I found what I really loved doing was taking video. I learned the editing process

and how to add music. It's been very rewarding."

Recently teaming with Mason Farish at Farish Media, they produce a show called *Everything Hawai'i: Adventures with Kawika*, now going into its fourth season.

"I give (the footage) to Mason, and they basically leave it as true to Kawika as possible, so the authenticity is preserved."

Airing on OC-16, *Everything Hawai'i* is also available online. They've even been asked to make promo films for Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau.

Singson says it is important to put people in the shots for scale. If he's by himself, which is most of the time, this means he will hike or run, stopping numerous times to set up the camera to film himself as he does, then re-

peat the process to get the full video. It can take a while to complete.

"You have to know the capacity of your camera," he says. "Use that with the creativity of your eye in setting up shots. I'll go to the top of all the mountains and sit and wait hours for the right shot. To get the rainbow in the waterfall at Waipi'o, I will go when the tide is low and there is no surf, and just the right sunlight, at just the right angle, and the rainbow will appear."

His work has garnered

acclaim and a worldwide following. Robert Thomas Fine Arts, a small gallery in Keauhou, has started to carry his pieces.

But Singson says his passion is a hobby and was never about the money.

"I like to give it away. If

someone wants to use my shots, I say 'Fine, go ahead, take it! I hope you make money off it!'

"Aloha is my philosophy. Greet everyone with a smile and you will feel the reciprocal energy in return. Sharing my photos and videos is like

giving you a hug and saying 'I live here and I love Kona.'"

Follow Singson on Facebook or Instagram (@kveeks). For more information on "Everything Hawai'i," visit shows.oc16.tv/show/everything-hawaii.



(Left) Videographer Kawika Singson goes to great extremes to get the perfect shot. CHRISTOPHER HIRATA PHOTO (Above) Find Singson running around the Big Island on his show *Everything Hawai'i*. PHOTO COURTESY KAWIKA SINGSON

BFF
"Beer, Food, & Football"

Come Watch Games
Happy hour prices
throughout the games &
Plenty of free parking
and space available in
restaurant to enjoy

FREE DESSERT
with coupon
Expires 10/31/19
1 coupon per table

FRESH FISH • STEAKS • SALADS • BURGERS

TROPICS
TAP HOUSE & GRILL

OPEN LUNCH AND DINNER
7 DAYS A WEEK 11AM-9PM
SUNDAY BREAKFAST
OPENS WITH FIRST FOOTBALL
GAME OF THE DAY

DAILY HAPPY HOUR: 2PM - 5PM

FOR RESERVATION, CALL US AT (808) 498-4507

78-6831 ALII DRIVE KAILUA-KONA, HI • LOCATED NEXT TO KTA KEAUHOU

VAX
TO SCHOOL

BEGINNING FALL 2020
HAWAII LAW REQUIRES ALL STUDENTS TO GET
VACCINATED AND RECEIVE A PHYSICAL EXAM
BEFORE 7TH GRADE.

**VACCINES YOUR
CHILD NEEDS TO
ATTEND 7TH GRADE**

- TDAP** (TETANUS-DIPHTHERIA-PERTUSSIS)
- HPV** (HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS)
- MCV** (MENINGOCOCCAL CONJUGATE)

MAKE A DATE TO VACCINATE!

Students without the required immunizations risk being excluded from school. Parents, call your child's healthcare provider today to make an appointment.

Get more information, visit VaxToSchoolHawaii.com