



WEATHER



78° F

Sunny

HIGH: 89° F LOW: 76° F

Detailed forecast >>

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Island Life

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Posted on: Tuesday, November 22, 2005

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TV REVIEW

Documentary explores effect of ice on Islands

- It's about local folks telling local stories

By [Wayne Harada](#)

Advertiser Entertainment Writer

Internet predators seeking out unsuspecting minors are nabbed in a stakeout, with cameras rolling.

U.S. marshals zoom in and book federal fugitives who are peddling ice.

Crystal meth addiction has links to the theft of sacred Hawaiian artifacts.

On the brighter side, an 18-year-old violinist, his father in prison on a drug-related conviction, excels as a musician and composer, defying the odds.

These compelling stories, representing the effect of narcotics in the Islands, are explored in "The Levi Report." The investigative program is the first of four collaborative series in prime time, mounted by Matt Levi, a private investigator and former broadcast journalist, and Edgy Lee, prolific Island documentary filmmaker.

Levi's connections with law enforcement are an asset as he gains access to federal and local raids to arrest criminals. "I see a side of Hawai'i far from the headlines," Levi says.

Lee's on-the-edge eye for details brings a few jolts. Levi and Lee present a troubled world, framed with clarity.



Filmmaker Edgy Lee and private investigator Matt Levi teamed up to present an up-close look at the impact of drug abuse in "The Levi Report."

VINCE SHINN | Harrington Photography

"THE LEVI REPORT"

A documentary by Edgy Lee and Matt Levi

9 tonight; rebroadcast at 9 p.m. Saturday

KHON-2



Edgy Lee interviews DeSoto Brown, collections manager of the Bishop Museum archives, for a segment on Hawaiian artifacts removed from ancient burial sites. This segment of "The Levi Report" finds that crystal meth also plays a role.

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No one doubts the value of the Internet, which has changed our lives by bringing the world into our homes and offices. But the medium also brings dangers in the form of virtual predators, who stalk chat rooms. The hazards of online abuse might shock parents; after viewing this program, chatroom participants may want to pull back on their blogs.

VINCE SHINN | Harrington
Photography



Cameraman Chris Rust films Hawaii's U.S. Marshals Task Force for a segment of "The Levi Report." The investigative program shares compelling community stories, with some showing a darker side of life in the Islands. The prime-time show airing tonight looks at how many of the crimes seem to be linked to drug abuse, particularly ice.

FilmWorks Pacific

In the program, Kristin E. Izumi-Niato, deputy attorney general and a key International Task Force figure, says that of 25 million who regularly check the Internet, one in five are exploited — and usually in the victim's home. Robert Jahier, educator and forensic examiner with the task force, says 80 percent of young victims use their computers in bedrooms — generally with endorsement from unsuspecting parents.

"We're seeing an explosion of exploitation," says Brad Russ, an agent with the task force. Intimate details are commonly shared online, and predators — like a 33-year-old boat repairman caught in a sting at a Beretania Street fast-food restaurant — are out there in cyberspace.

A segment on Operation Falcon, a mission to take down federal fugitives, plays like "Dog the Bounty Hunter" in spurts. Officials cruise roads, break in on the runaways and cuff 'em; in a six-day sweep, 133 were arrested here (10,472 nationally).

Alarmingly, all depicted crimes — including burglaries — are drug-related, and ice is a major factor.

When the focus switches to the Big Island, ice still has a chilling presence, in the thefts of Hawaiian artifacts removed from ancient burial sites.

"People going into caves are looking for Hawaiian gold (artifacts)," says Charles Maxwell, kahu and member of Hui Malama I Na Kupuna 'O Hawai'i Nei, the group fighting to keep the artifacts undisturbed.

Audio of looters chatting about their crimes indicates that they smoke ice before entering the caves. The looter says artifacts can fetch \$5,000 to \$20,000, because demand is so high. The loot is sold to other drug dealers.

The fourth segment tells the story of Roosevelt High School graduate Michael Foumai, 18, a violinist with the Hawai'i Youth Symphony.

His father, Seth, is behind bars on a drug conviction; he's never seen or heard his son perform. Michael and his mom, Suzanne, have been faced with family shame, but she, too, works to keep moving forward. "Being Catholic and Chinese, we keep it together, keep the image," she says.

Michael, who has won a national composer's award, says that his father's misfortunes have made an impact. "The toll has made me stronger. I know what bad choices can do."

Reach Wayne Harada at wharada@honoluluadvertiser.com.

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