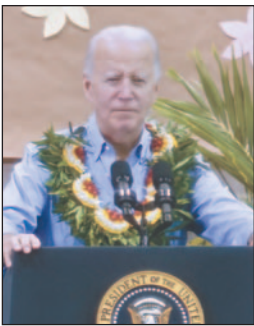




Help for Lahaina
 Binhi at Ani Launches Tulong for Lahaina® to give directly to the victims of the fire.
 See below



President Biden speaks
 The president visits the affected areas of Lahaina's recent fire.
 See below



Nana Lydia does Las Vegas
 Is it time to visit the 9th Isle?
 See p6



FilAm Voice

Magkaisa Tayong Lahat | “Let Us All Unite”

September 2023 • Vol 7 No9 | **FILIPINO AMERICAN VOICE • UPLIFTING OUR COMMUNITY | FREE**

inside



Angel's dinner with Michael's family continues.
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Guevarra is crowned Miss Maui Filipina 2023–24.
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Consul General honored at Knights of Rizal event.
 p15

Tulong For Lahaina® Fund Launched

Alfredo G. Evangelista | ASSISTANT EDITOR

“**T**ulong means help in the Tagalog and Ilokano languages,” said Melen Agcolicol, president of Binhi at Ani in announcing the Tulong for Lahaina® Fund. “And Binhi at Ani wanted to create a fund to help our *kababayans*, our fellow Filipinos, which comprise at least forty percent of Lahaina town.”

There are many sad stories to tell:

An elderly woman barely escaped by taking refuge on the sea wall; her husband unfortunately perished.

An elderly man, who built a small nest egg, lost everything and almost lost his life

TULONG®
For Lahaina

COORDINATED BY **BINHI AT ANI**

when he initially refused to evacuate.

A woman who lost her husband a month before the fire

planned to return to the Philippines after selling her home. She escaped the fire but the home is now gone.

A veteran hopes to find and recover the paw print and ashes of his dog who died a couple of years prior to the fire. His dog helped him survive his PTSD.

A family pooled their assets and started a business just after the pandemic. Their new business was destroyed as well as the homes of several family members.

“These stories of our Filipino community members broke our hearts,” explains Agcolicol. As the only Filipino community center on Maui, Binhi at Ani’s Board of Directors and its legions of volunteers initially prepared food

see TULONG next page

FREE



Rogelio Navarro standing in front of remains of his store.
 PHOTO COURTESY NAVARRO 'OHANA

Filipino Businesses Destroyed by the Lahaina Fire

Alfredo G. Evangelista | ASSISTANT EDITOR

Standing amidst the ruins of their family business, R.V.N. Deli Kitchen And Catering, Rogelio Navarro glumly said, “All my equipment is gone. It’s hard to find a place and to borrow money.”

The business had stood at 840 Waine’e Street #C-2 (across the street from Foodland, Nagasako and other businesses). “R.V.N. stands for Rogelio, Vangie and Navarro,” explains Vangie Navarro, Rogelio’s wife. “We’ve been in business for about twenty-two years, with seventeen years at that location.”

Just a few stores away in the same complex had been Ilocandia Filipino Store

owned and operated by Angel and Evelyn Cabanilla. Ilocandia Filipino Store opened in 2005, with Evelyn taking over from her brother Edward Abut who had operated B&B Store at the same location for a couple of years. Evelyn and her husband used to live in Las Vegas and returned home to run the business.

The Navarros and Cabanillas hope they can resume their businesses. “I spoke to the daughter of the owner (Donna Walden) and they are hoping to be able to rebuild in one to two years,” Evelyn Cabanilla commented expectantly. “A lot of people do not have jobs,” worried Vangie

see DESTROYED p.4



Lt Governor Sylvia Luke speaks with Binhi at Ani president Melen Agcolicol
PHOTO: ALFREDO G. EVANGELISTA



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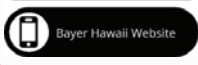
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Tulong ...

from p. 1

for those in shelters, first responders, and those who were housing affected family members. “When the national agencies arrived, Binhi at Ani surveyed what the needs would be and how best to address them,” she said.

“We noticed many organizations, including some Filipino organizations, rushed to fund raise, many of them had no plan—they did not disclose where the funds would go and how the funds would get to those affected the most,” Agcolicol observed.

“So Binhi at Ani developed a plan where funds (\$750) would be awarded to those who 1) as a homeowner, lost their principal place of residence; or 2) as a business owner, lost their business in a brick-and-mortar setting; or 3) lost an immediate family member,” stated Agcolicol.

An application was developed and translated into Ilokano, Tagalog and Visayan, with a deadline of September

30, with the initial distributions tentatively set for October 15. A review committee—independent from the Binhi at Ani Board of Directors—will review each application. If there is a denial, there is a review process.

According to Binhi at Ani, an applicant can qualify for only one category. The number of awards will be based on the amount of donations received. If more qualified applicants apply than there are funds available, it will be based on a first come, first served basis. Depending on funds received, applications received after the due date may be considered.

“We’ve already received over three hundred applications,” said Agcolicol. “So, we need to raise funds.”

One hundred percent tax deductible donations can be made in a number of ways. Checks payable to Binhi at Ani can be mailed to 780 Onehe’e Avenue, Kahului, Hawai’i 96732. Another way to donate is through Paypal via Binhi at Ani’s website: <https://binhiatani.org/donate/>. A QR code (See above) was

see TULONG p.10

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TULONG[®] For Lahaina

COORDINATED BY BINHI AT ANI

Please donate to Tulong for Lahaina[®] Fund

At least forty percent of Lahaina's residents are of Filipino ancestry and our *kababayan* needs our *tulong*—our help. A process was created to grant \$750 to those who 1) as a homeowner, lost their principal place of residence; 2) as a business owner, lost their business in a brick and mortar setting; or 3) lost an immediate family member.

Donations are needed as there are over three hundred applicants.

To donate, send your 100 percent tax deductible check payable to Binhi at Ani at 780 Onehe'e Avenue, Kahului, HI 96732 or donate via credit card through www.binhiatani.org. Or donate through the QR code below. Any questions, contact Alfredo Evangelista at (808) 294-5510.



“We support the Tulong for Lahaina[®] Fund”



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From the Editor's Desk

Vince Bagoyo, Jr.
EDITOR • FIL-AM VOICE

*If we hold on together
We know our dreams will never die.
Where clouds roll by ...*



"If We Hold On Together," a song from the soundtrack of the 1988 film "Land Before Time" is the message of hope we share with Lāhainā fire survivors.
PHOTO: LAWRENCE PASCUA

If We Hold On Together

From the soundtrack of the 1988 film *Land Before Time*, comes a song composed by Diana Ross, sung by many recording stars, including Maui's own Keali'i Reichel. In the lyrics of the chorus and bridge, shown below, is the message of hope, support and encouragement we share with all the survivors of the Lāhainā wildfires, the families suffering unimaginable losses, for whom we create a circle of loving care, joining hands and hearts, with special bonding to and for our fellow Filipinos.

*If we hold on together
We know our dreams will never die.
Where clouds roll by ...
When we are out there in the dark,
We'll dream about the sun.
In the dark we'll feel the light
Warms our hearts, everyone.*

The State of Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Devel-

opment and Tourism recently reported over 5,000 Filipinos or forty percent of the population live in the former plantation town of Lāhainā. It is not a surprise many of our *kababayans* are impacted by this devastating wildfire. Considering this unimaginable suffering and as we grieve the loss of loved ones, we come together as a Filipino community to support, encourage, to bring comfort, hope and prayers for each other. I am so encouraged to see and witness the kindness of our people.

While there are no words that could ever express the depths of sorrow nor the highest, noble wishes to be of help, there is a continuous flood of concern, worry and actions to express love and care coming from around the world. Whether the messages received are from the millions of visitors to Maui worldwide or from family, friends, associates closer to

see FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK p. 6



The Cabanilla's display their first issue of the Fil-Am Voice
FIL-AM VOICE FILE PHOTO

Destroyed ...

from p. 1

Navarro.

As sole proprietors, both the Navarro's and the Cabanilla's do not qualify for unemployment insurance. "It's our sole source of income," explained Evelyn Cabanilla. Ilocandia Filipino Store was both a fast food and a grocery store. Angel Cabanilla cooked the fast food. "We're famous for our *chicharon*, *dinakdakan*, *dinuguan*, *igado*, *pancit*, *pinakbet*, and squid *adobo*," Evelyn Cabanilla proudly touts. "Our vegetables are from Rogelio Ganay who has a farm by the coffee farm while our fresh fish is from Danny in Kahului. Our frozen food such as bangus is from the Philippines through several Honolulu distributors."

Rogelio Navarro's food faire is an international one—breakfasts of omelets, french toast and entrées of shrimp tempura, bbq chicken as well as Filipino favorites of *adobo*, pork and peas, *pancit*, *pinapaitan*, *pinakbet*, *sinigang bangus* and fried chicken. "We also have catering every weekend," states Rogelio Navarro. "I've been looking for a catering place. It's been hard. I went to Maui Mall but they were going to charge over \$10,000 a month. I'm

worried because there's not enough money."

Both the Navarro's and the Cabanilla's are also dealing with insurance issues. The Cabanilla's are reviewing their policy to see if they have replacement income insurance while the Navarro's are worried if they had adequate and appropriate insurance coverage. Plus the Navarro's are concerned about their home's damaged roof. The Cabanilla's live in Kahana—away from the danger zone.

Evelyn and Angel's story on Tuesday, August 8 is one of a close call. That morning, Angel went to work at his normal time of 3 a.m. to begin to cook. At about 5 a.m., the power shut down. Evelyn was still at home and because the garage door could not open, she could not leave. "I called my husband to pick me up and he did," recalls Evelyn Cabanilla. "We went to the store which had no electricity. We stayed for two to three hours but my husband was feeling dizzy because there was no air conditioning

and he was in the heat, cooking. He wasn't getting better so we went home and I had to drive his truck. Before we went home, we placed the food on the counter to cool, with the intent to return. I took a nap and with my husband still not feeling well, I left our home at about

"I've been looking for a catering place. It's been hard. I went to Maui Mall but they were going to charge over \$10,000 a month."

— ROGELIO NAVARRO



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Angel and Evelyn Cabanilla, proud owners of the Ilocandia store.
PHOTO COURTESY CABANILLA 'OHANA



The wildfire damaged all of the assets of RVN's business.
PHOTO: NAVARRO 'OHANA



Rogelio and Vangie Navarro of RVN stand proudly inside their business before the fire.
PHOTO: NAVARRO 'OAHANA

3:30 p.m. It took me almost two hours to get to the Civic Center. I saw the smoke but the police were not stopping cars going to Lahaina. At about 5 p.m., I saw the cars from Lahaina and Kā'anapali and I decided to turn around and go home.”

When Evelyn returned home, Angel was feeling better. “But we were worried at that time what was going to happen to the food—especially the *chicharron*,” says Evelyn Cabanilla. “We did not know anything. We could not call anyone because there was no cell phone service, no tv, no internet. Only until late Wednesday or early Thursday morning did we find out what happened.”

Many other Filipino owned businesses in the area also suffered damage such as EC Food & General Mer-

chandise, Kusina and Maui Asian Distribution. Misay Mart at 1068 Limahana Place in Lahaina opened last year selling groceries and fast food such as *adobo*, pork and peas, *balatong*, *pancit*, *Bicol express*, *igado*, *dinar-daraan*, *bindunngo*, *arroz caldo*, *pinakbet*, *calderata*, *pan de sal*, *halo halo*, amongst others. According to social media posts by one of the co-owners, the business was destroyed as well as their personal homes. In fact, most of the family members were in the Philippines attending a family funeral when the fire broke out. “We lost everything, including eight homes and four businesses,” said co-owner Chamille Misay Serrano.

Even franchises owned or operated by Filipinos such as McDonald's and

“We did not know anything. We could not call anyone because there was no cell phone service, no tv, no internet.”

— EVELYN CABANILLA

see DESTROYED p.8

Maui, WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

Our hearts and support are with our beloved community and everyone affected by the Maui fires.

If you or a loved one, needs medical support during this time, please do not delay care. Maui Health is committed to providing safe, quality, and compassionate care to all who need it. Whatever you are going through, we are here for you.

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My 94-year-old mother Lydia has been looking forward to celebrating my sister Velma's 60th birthday in Las Vegas. My sister and I generally support and encourage her to spend down our inheritance as much as possible. At her senior club officer induction earlier this year, she advised the members to indulge themselves at times and stop worrying so much about their children.

They had me book the flights for five of them (Mom, Vel, Vel's buddy Nel, cousin Elly and *Manang* Tessie) months ago. Cousin Frellie also decided to join them. Vel insisted on the Hawaiian Airlines direct flight from Kahului (OGG) to Harry Reid International (LAS) because Mom had a bad pre-pandemic experience with hours long delays from Daniel K. Inouye International (HNL) on one of those junket charters. At her age, Mom doesn't like sitting around and waiting.

Mom didn't move to Hawai'i until 1960 but has now lived on Maui for 63 years. She's not a settler. This is home for her and for the extended family clan that descended from her father who arrived in 1927 and my 1946 *Sakada* father. Dad started at Pioneer Mill but a Labasan kinsman working at Pā'ia Mill one weekend just picked him up from Lahaina and "moved" him to Pā'ia instead. He worked for nearly four decades for HC&S. Others in the family stayed and remain part of that community today.

At some point, Mom tested positive for COVID-19 this summer. A compulsive walker and full of energy, the diagnosis clearly annoyed and frustrated her. After completing her Paxlovid™ therapy (she didn't like the taste and then noted losing taste), she very carefully avoided crowds—skipping most summer graduation and other family gatherings and even her senior club activities, wearing a mask when she did venture out in public, and maintaining social distance so she could take this trip. Nothing was gonna stop her from hitting the penny and nickel



Visiting Coloma-Pagdilao women with 'Sin City Wahine' kin.

DINENGDENG & PINAKBET

What happens in Vegas ... appears in your son's column

Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran | All photos courtesy Gil Keith-Agaran

slots (Do the casinos still have those?). She intended to buy a new stove with her big winnings.

Like many local families, traveling to Sin City is more than feeding one armed bandits (Do the machines still have arms?), eating lots of buffet food and taking in shows. Mom visited with relatives who have re-located to Sin City from Maui—some Coloma's and Pagdilao's—and Vel

got to see one of her high school BFFs. Some moved for jobs and cheaper housing. Others went for school and stayed. Another had been visiting for several weeks and contemplating moving to Nevada rather than return to her hometown of Lahaina.

One kinsman, Freddy-Boy (from one of our part-Hawaiian branches), had promised to take mom to a B-I-N-G-O parlor (the pandemic and then even months after had largely eliminated her almost-weekly routine of playing quarter per card rounds

with her senior club *kumares* and other friends). Mom didn't win and decisively panned the electronic bingo boards (she preferred her well-worn set of cards with the little red sliding covers to mark called numbers)—*switek* she muttered to Vel when another patron (sitting in the smoking section) kept winning at the Bingo parlor.

Freddy even indulged Mom by buying some PowerBall tickets. Her random numbers didn't score unfortunately. Mom also didn't put in my WhoDey Sports Book wager on the Battle of Ohio.

Freddy, also wielded his Iron *Imu* (*silyase* IYKYK) to prepare a feast: *pancit bihon*, *dinardaraan*, pork and peas with pimentos, butter garlic shrimp and his interpretation of *sini-gang bangus*. Freddy's menu would not have been daily fare in the provinces. His namesake grandfather (Federico) was one of those plantation camp cooks, and later in Dream City and other new subdivisions, who prepared Ilocano fiesta foods for parties that now make up the basic menus in Filipino eateries.

While my sugar irrigator dad was working, he liked having some kind of meat at dinner—usually a *lauya* or other stew, or some steak broiled in the oven. My mom rarely cooked chicken because she's convinced she's allergic to poultry. Since his passing in the 1990s, mom's home cooking usually involved some fish soup and a *dinengdeng* of whatever she collected from her garden of Filipino veg-

see D&P p. 9



Maui travelers arrive at Harry Reid.

From the Editor's Desk | Cont'd from p. 4

home, each of us are touched in some way. I am so encouraged and blessed to see the kindness of our residents extending support to those impacted by this tragedy. This is what makes us unique and special and a model for the world to emulate. The Aloha spirit on Maui is alive!

As a Filipino community, we must be united and demonstrate the spirit of giving and *bayanihan* of our very best TODAY, so we can walk together as one people into a higher tomorrow. In the spirit of 'ohana, let us join hands as a team, all the while knowing it will be difficult, sometimes unbearable and an exceedingly long trek, and yet, still possible, "If we

hold on together."

Let me share a Bible verse found in Psalm 55:22, *Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you; He will never permit the righteous to be moved.* This power verse touches on how we do not have to go it alone when times are tough. Instead, turn to the Lord who will sustain and help us get through it during challenging times. May God Bless us all as we navigate the future ahead with resilience and strength.

Vince Bagoyo
VINCE BAGOYO, JR. | EDITOR

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Lance D. Collins is a widely respected Maui-based public interest attorney and appellate advocate and holds a Ph.D from the University of Hawai'i. Lance has been selected for inclusion in Super Lawyers–Rising Stars Editions 2013, 2014, and 2015. He received the Onipa'a Lifetime Achievement award from the Sierra Club of Hawai'i in 2016 and the Gintong Pamana Award in 2022 from the Maui Filipino Chamber of Commerce.

Naapektuhan ba kayo ng Maui Fires?

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PHOTO ABOVE: Chicharon at Ilocandia Store
PHOTO COURTESY CABANILLA 'OHANA



PHOTO ABOVE RIGHT: Inside Misay Mart.
PHOTO COURTESY MISAY MART 'OHANA

PHOTO RIGHT: Like many others, the Navarro family has set up a Go-Fund-Me account.
IMAGE COURTESY R.V.N. 'OHANA

IMAGE BELOW: Ilocandia Filipino Store ad for Seed & Harvest Dinner 2023 souvenir book.
IMAGE COURTESY LAWRENCE PASCUA

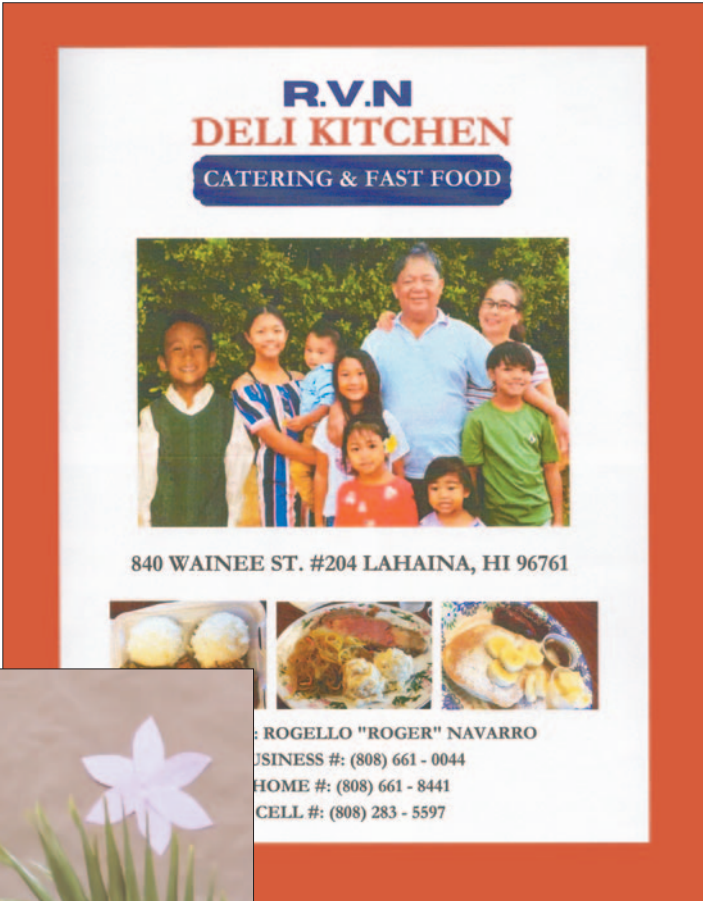


PHOTO ABOVE: R.V.N. Deli Kitchen ad for souvenir book
PHOTO COURTESY R.V.N. 'OHANA

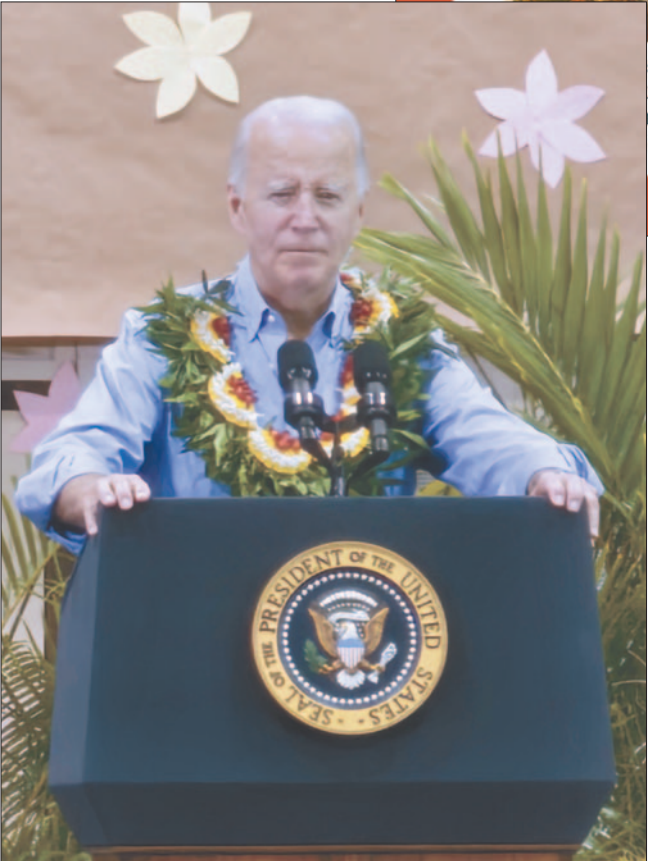
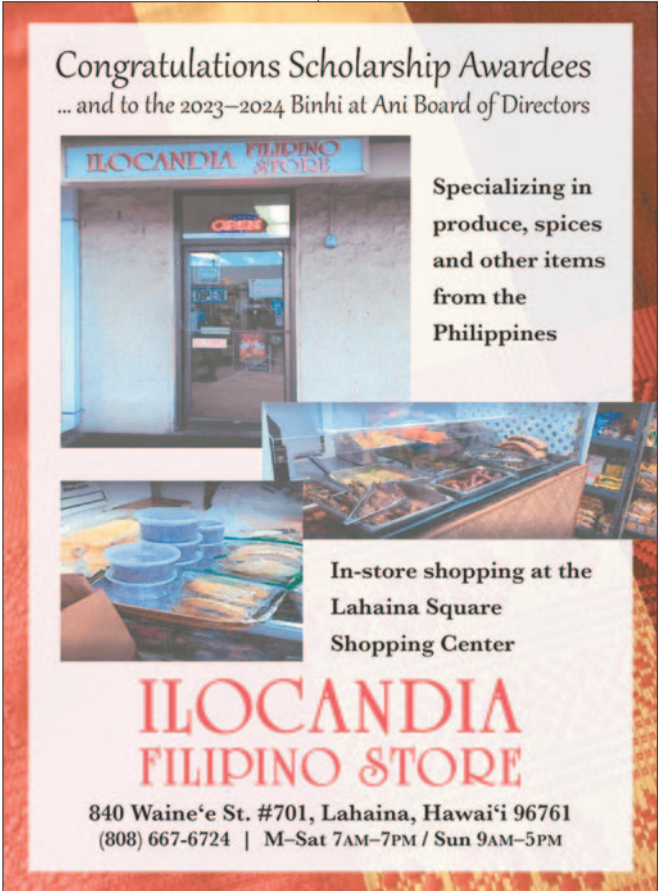


PHOTO LEFT: President Joe Biden speaks at the Lahaina Civic Center following the tragic destruction of much of Lahaina due to the wildfire.
PHOTO: ALFREDO EVANGELISTA

Destroyed ...

from p. 5

L&L were ruined. Duck Kine—which opened in late 2022—and is owned and operated by Chef Alvin Savella (The “Kitchen Assassin”) appeared to be safe. Located at 1312 Front Street, Duck Kine is in the closed zone as no one is currently allowed into that area.

Filipino restaurants not in the fire zone have also been impacted by the lack of tourism: Joey’s Kitchen

Whaler’s Village, Macadangdang, Joey’s Kitchen Nāpili, Fond (in Nāpili, owned and operated by Chef Jojo Vasquez who lost his home to the fires), amongst others. And businesses outside of West Maui are also feeling the effects. While the government continues to grapple with the disaster, non-profits and the business community are offering their *tulong*—help.

“The Chamber of Commerce Hawai’i is devastated by the impact the wildfires have had on the lives and livelihoods of our residents and local businesses,” says Sherry Menor-McNa-

mara, President and CEO. “As the Voice of Business, we will elevate our advocacy to ensure the heart and soul of our small businesses are restored. We have seen how many recovered and rebuilt after the pandemic and are encouraged the same grit and resilience will shine.”

Alfredo G. Evangelista is a graduate of Maui High School (1976), the University of Southern California (1980), and the University of Califor-

nia at Los Angeles School of Law (1983). He is a sole practitioner at Law Offices of Alfredo Evangelista, A Limited Liability Law Company, concentrating in estate planning, business start-up and consultation, nonprofit corporations, and litigation. He has been practicing law for 39 years (since 1983) and returned home in 2010 to be with his family and to marry his high school sweetheart, the former Basilia Tumacder Idica.





PHOTO LEFT: Freddy-Boy Waikiki's 16-year-old son Norman with mom.



PHOTO ABOVE: Freddy-Boy Waikiki introducing mom to the lottery.



PHOTO LEFT: Mom trying to figure out electronic B-I-N-G-O cards.

D&P ...

from p. 6

etables—a little tarong, some paria, long beans or shelled, lasuna, and flavored with kamatis and patis. She'll add little dried shrimp at times and perhaps some slices of

chicharon. But she rarely cooks a heavy meat diet which suits the others in her household who prefer a daily serving of fish more than pork or beef. Vel won almost enough to cover her plane ticket on a penny slots jackpot. Nel cashed in a couple of hits.

Cousin Frellie got hooked on slot machines. Short trip but they had a good time and getting off the plane at OGG on Saturday morning, they wanted to eat ... at Tante's Island Cuisine. Vel used some of her winnings to treat the table. Vel had a local plate while

three of them went with fried bangus with suka dipping sauce. Vel quipped I may need to buy mom a new stove for her birthday. ✨ Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran practices law in Wailuku with Takitani Agaran Jorgensen & Wildman, LLLP.



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Elena's Filipino food business rallied to help in raising funds for the victims of the Lahaina fires. These funds will be donated through Tulong for Lahaina®.

PHOTO COURTESY ELENA'S RESTAURANT



Tulong ...

from p. 2



Cecilia Villafurete presents two of the first checks for the Tulong for Lahaina® Fund

PHOTO COURTESY ALFREDO EVANGELISTA

also developed to assist the computer savvy donors.

Many individuals and organizations have begun to assist. Two of the first organizations to donate were the Filipino Business Womens Association and the Filipino Womens Civic Club Foundation. “When the Lahaina fires happened, we immediately wanted to help,” said Cecilia Villafuerte who is active in both organizations. “There were many organizations asking for donations. It was important to us that 100 percent of our donation will go directly to the victims of Filipino ancestry. We felt Binhi at Ani was the right organization which will implement what they promised.”

Businesses on O’ahu who held fundraisers have begun to donate to the Tulong for Lahaina® Fund. Mellissa Butuyan Cedillo, who owns Elena’s with her brother Richard Butuyan, explained why they decided to donate to the Tulong for Lahaina® Fund. “Maui holds a special place in our hearts. We opened Elena’s Maui in the early 2000s. Although it was a short duration that we served our Maui community, we still feel connected to the locals. When we heard about the many families affected by the fires, it broke our hearts and we felt we needed to help them right away. That week our Food Truck serviced Downtown Honolulu with all sales going directly to

the families. Upon hearing that Binhi at Ani was offering a program giving directly to families, we decided to donate our sales to them—\$4,500 to help six families.”

With over three hundred applicants already received, Binhi at Ani has increased its promotional activities, including complimentary full-page ads in this newspaper, *The Fil-Am Courier* on O’ahu and the *Hawai’i Filipino Chronicle* also on O’ahu. Prominent members of the Filipino community who have lent their names and photos to the cause include former Governor Benjamin Cayetano, Retired Justice Simeon R. Acoba, Jr., Retired State Representative Felipe “Jun” Abinsay, Jr., labor leader Peter Ganaban and business leaders Robin Campaniano, Marivic Dar, Eddie Flores and Sherry Menor-McNamara, amongst others. (See ad on page three.)

“Through the years, members of the Filipino community in the State of Hawaii participated in many humanitarian projects to ease the pain of families who lost their loved ones, their means of livelihood including their housing needs due to various types of unforeseen events,” said Abinsay. He noted the Hawai’i Filipino community came together to support the calamities caused by Mt. Pinatubo, typhoons in the Philippines and Guam, hurricane Katrina and the Japan tsunami. “Cognizant of the inner satisfaction of being personally involved in the fundraising and proper coordination of the distribution of funds raised to help the needy, in any form, I am very much in support to lend a hand on the fundraising effort of Tulong for Lahaina® spearheaded by community volunteers on Maui. Being coordinated by Binhi At Ani Filipino Community Center which has a tax exempt status including the transparency as to how funds are properly received and distributed by qualified recipients, I hope and pray that prospective donors par-

ticularly from our *kababayans* will once again exemplify the spirit of giving to our neighbors who are urgently in need of our *Bayanihan* spirit as we demonstrated in the past time and time again.”

Abinsay is also in the midst of organizing a golf tournament to raise even more funds and has even called his fellow members of the Ilocos Surian Association to donate.

Others, such as Glorey McCaleb of the McCaleb Foundation are utilizing their existing events to fundraise. The McCaleb Foundation will donate a portion of the proceeds of its concert on September 22 to the Tulong for Lahaina® Fund. “Due to my cancer, I have experienced the brink of death and life so I’m giving from my heart because I know how it feels to face death,” says McCaleb. “Although it is nothing compared to what the people of Lahaina have lost, from the distance, this is the only way I can help to assist our *kababayan* financially.”

Emme Tomimbang Burns, a pioneer in Hawai’i’s television industry as a reporter who eventually produced and hosted her own television show called *Emme’s Island Moments*, recalls her moments in Lahaina. “During my early tv years, I would fly to Maui—to interview celebrities like George Benson, Kenny Loggins, Jim Messina and Jim Nabors. I loved the restaurants, shops (vintage and ultra chic) and the simple but electrifying energy of the town. I even saw Elton John at the Blue Max! The Lahaina fires were an

unspeakable tragic moment in our island history. Lost and gone is the local—yet Hollywood celebrity town—that all came to love and enjoy. Everyone loved the Aloha Spirit—it became home to many.”

But beyond her association with Lahaina as a television star, Lahaina has a special place in her heart. “I kept hearing about Mill Camp—and it brought back forgotten memories my Dad shared. Tommy Tomimbang lived there and worked at the Lahaina plantation when he first arrived here in the late ’30s. Now, in his memory and for



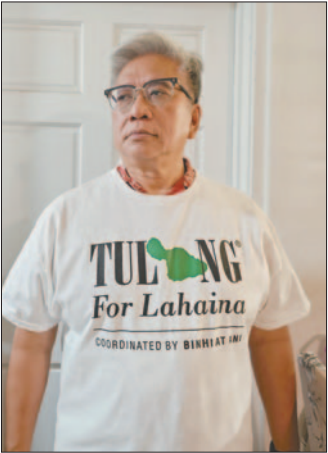
Emme Tomimbang Burns is shown here in this old photo with her grandpa and dad.

PHOTO COURTESY EMME TOMIMBANG BURNS

all the *Island Moments* I experienced in Lahaina, I support the Tulong for Lahaina® Fund. I am here especially for the multi-generational Filipinos who died there and those they left behind. The Filipino community was the early labor workforce of Lahaina town and today the modern-day plantation

workers are the hotel and resort employees—many of whom are displaced. I ask for your support to *tulong* this important and critical endeavor.” ✨

Disclosure: **Alfredo G. Evangelista** is the volunteer Legal Counsel for Binhi at Ani which is coordinating the Tulong for Lahaina® Fund.





Aloha August, welcome September, the first -ber month and you know what it means. It means time will pass by so fast the next thing you know, holidays are coming and the year is gone. For Filipinos, the 1st day of September is the beginning of Christmas season, which makes the Philippines holding the longest running festivity of the Christmas season per Wikipedia. That is why even here in Hawai’i, Christmas songs are played on the radio station on the 1st of September.

Let’s Talk Pinoy!

Dulce Karen Butay

Shout out to all the September babies! We have the most birthdays this month! Do you know why? Because it’s cold in December when they were conceived Happy birthday to Keilah and Deja (1st), Mana (6th, our fur baby), Arissa Kira (7th), Justin

Dumlao (7th), Lalaine Pasion (10th), my cousin Mando Domion (13th), Ferdinand Cajigal (15th), Debbie and Julia (17th), to my mom, Dolly (21st), and Didi Hamai (22nd). Also, a shout out Happy birthday to our Maui Senator Gil Keith-Agaran! Pada-

pada kam nga kumablaaw ti naimbag nga panagkasangay yo amin! (Happy birthday to all!) Happy, Happy birthday to you! (Tagalog) Maligayang bati sa inyong kaarawan! (Ilokano) Naimbag nga panagkasangay mo! (Ibanag) Makapagayaya nga aggaw na nikeyana mu! (Kapampangan) Masayang kebaitan queca! (Ilonggo) Masadya gid nga adlaw sa imo pagkatawo!

Let’s visit our friends Angel and Michael and see what’s going on with them this month, shall we?

MICHAEL’S MOM REPEATS what she said to Angel, “You don’t like the *monggo* beans, *iha*?” (“Iha” is a term of endearment.)

Angel replies shyly and says, “I love *monggo* beans *po*. I’m just not used to having it with *marunggay* leaves.”

Michael’s *inahan* (mother) replies and says, “In Ilocos, we put *marunggay* leaves on most of other vegetables. We don’t like bittermelon because it makes us bitter and look older.”

And they all laugh at what Michael’s *nanay* (mother) says.

Knock, knock knock And they all stop laughing together when they hear a loud knock and puzzledly look at each other.

Then the knocking continues ... And continues ... with urgency this time.

Total silence fills the table.

“*Sino* (Who) could be coming this late?” says Michael’s mom.

Michael is about to stand up but his mom stops him and stands, “It’s ok, I’ll go and open the *pasbul* (door).” She stands up and walks towards the front *pintuan* (door).

Michael’s mom stops in front of the *ridaw* (door) and takes a deep breath and says, “*Sinni* (who) is it?”

“Mila, can you please open the *ganhaan* (door)?” Michael’s dad says softly.

“Robert?! *Ano* (What) in the world ... *Hani* (What) are you doing outside? You were just at the table eating and the next thing you knew, you are in the front *puwerta* (door)?” Michael’s mom says scolding him.

She rushes to unlock the *lukub* (door) for her husband and lets him in.

“I was watering the plants outside and left the keys to the storage and

the tools by the fence. I just remembered it when we were eating so I rushed to go out and get it. I left the back *pasbul* (door) open so I can come back but for some reason, it closed and locked. I was not able to come in,” he explains to his wife.

“*Nanoyin* (What) are we going to do?” she cuts him off.

“We’re going back to the table to finish our dinner,” Michael’s dad says.

“No, silly. I’m talking about Angel,” Michael’s mom says sarcastically.

“Oh, that? I don’t know. I leave it to you, you are the expert on all areas especially that one,” Michael’s dad says and rushes to sit at the dining table.

Michael’s mom is left speechless. She doesn’t know what to do so she just follows her husband to the dining table.

Michael, Angel and Michael’s dad are laughing when she gets to the table. She sits quietly and looks at Angel.

She quietly eats while the three are laughing so loud. She would *ngiti*

(smile) once in a while as if she was participating in their conversation.

They are talking about celebrities, about food and places they would like to visit. She is just listening to them and not really paying attention.

She *isem* (smiles) at Angel. Then she looks at Michael, and she *timan* (smiles). Then she turns to her husband and gives him the “eye.”

Do you know what the “eye” means? Does your mom give you the “eye?” Or your grandma maybe?

Find out or ask the elderly what the “eye” means.

Anyways, that’s all I have. Keep an eye out for my column in every issue. I’m Dulce, helping you to master your Filipino Languages. Like always, let’s laugh, let’s *making* (listen), and Let’s Talk Pinoy! *Hanggang sa muli!* (Until next time!) *Ingat!* (Take care!) ✨

Dulce Karen Butay was graduated from Maui High School and received her Associate in Arts degree in Liberal Arts from Maui Community College. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, specializing in Accounting, from the University of Hawai’i – West O’ahu. She is currently the Administrative Officer at the County of Maui, Department of Finance. Butay is the owner of Maui Balsamic Vinegar, a licensed Resident Producer of Life Insurance with World Financial Group and an Independent Consultant of Saladmaster.



She is now part of Saladmaster’s Travel Club and won an all-expenses paid trip to Cancún, Mexico. Butay has traveled to Texas, the Philippines and Thailand as one of the delegates from Island Healthy Solutions, a Saladmaster dealer here on Maui.



BINHI AT ANI

Celebrate your special events at Binhi at Ani Filipino Community Center. The Center can be rented from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. for \$1150 (including the cleaning fee) plus a \$300 security deposit; from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. for \$800 (including the cleaning fee) plus a \$300 security deposit; or from 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. for \$950 (including the cleaning fee) plus a \$300 security deposit. If alcohol will be served and/or provided, there is an additional fee of \$300 and you must hire two licensed bartenders. Self-service coolers and/or BYOB (guests providing their own alcohol) are NOT allowed.

The office is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Telephone (808) 877-7880.



Bayanihan Feeding Program provides a Sunday lunch to Hale Mahaolu Residents in Central Maui (Hale Mahaolu Elua and Hale Mahaolu Akahi) and Maui Adult Day Care. As of August 31, a total of 17,592 meals were delivered. Teams serving during August included Jaycees Maui Chapter International, Maui County Federal Credit Union, Philippine Nurses Association of Maui, Hawai'i and UHMC Kabataklub Club. There is a need for additional teams of volunteers to prepare the free lunches.

Create a Team by contacting Lucy Porte at (808) 276-8026. Tax-deductible donations are accepted via Paypal or a Credit/Debit card or by mailing a check payable to Binhi at Ani, 780 Onehe'e Avenue, Kahu-lui, HI 96732 [Memo: Feeding Pro-








Filipino Resource Fair

Recognizing the need for
family and to build trust, we
have gathered agencies and
organizations to provide support.

Sat. Sept. 23, 2023
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Lahaina Civic Center

CALL FOR AGENCIES:

Can your organization provide a service
and host a table?



Sign-up at:
bit.ly/hawakkamay

If you're with a family affected by the recent fires, register at mauifilipinochamber.com

This event is a collaboration among many Filipino organizations, and is a great opportunity
for federal, state and county agencies to reach this community. Please join us!


Compiled by Assistant Editor Alfredo G. Evangelista.
Send your community briefs to info@filamvoice.com.

gram].

The Bayanihan Feeding Program is supported by grants from Bayer Crop Science Hawai'i and Nareit Hawaii.

Enhance®Fitness for Kūpuna at Binhi at Ani Filipino Community Center classes are continuing. They are held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Enhance®Fitness is a low-cost, ongoing evidence-based group exercise and falls prevention program helping older adults at all levels of fitness to become more active, energized and empowered to sustain independent lives. For more information on Enhance®Fitness, contact Enhance®Fitness Coordinator Ginny Kiick (808) 280-6251 or gkiick@hotmail.com or Wellness Coordinator Claudette Medeiros (808) 463-3166 or claudette.b.medeiros@co.maui.hi.us.

Take Out Tuesday
Binhi at Ani resumed its fundraiser ti-



A Fundraiser for Binhi at Ani



SCHEDULE OF CONSULAR OUTREACH MISSION IN MAUI

MAUI

DATES:

Friday, 22 September, 8 am - 5 pm
Saturday, 23 September, 8 am - 5 pm
Sunday, 24 September, 8 am - 12 nn

VENUE:

Lahaina Civic Center Gymnasium
1840 Honoapiilani Highway
Lahaina, Hawaii 96761



[honolulupcg.dfa.gov.ph](https://honolulu.pcg.dfa.gov.ph) [f /phinhonolulu](https://www.facebook.com/phinhonolulu) [@phinhonolulu](https://www.instagram.com/phinhonolulu) #DFAForgingAhead



Johanne Paige Guevarra was crowned Miss Maui Filipina on Aug. 20.
 PHOTO: LAWRENCE PASCUA

tled "Take Out Tuesday" on Tuesday, Sept. 12.

MAUI FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

On Saturday, September 23 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lahaina Civic Center, the Maui Filipino Chamber of Commerce will host a resource fair called "Hawak Kamay" (Hand-in-hand). The purpose of the resource fair is to provide a safe and comfortable venue to give and receive support for those affected by the fires.

MAUI FILIPINO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Congratulations to Johanne Guevarra, the new Miss Maui Filipina 2023-2024.



She was officially crowned on Aug. 20, 2023 at the Maui Beach Hotel.

PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL-HONOLULU

The staff of the Philippine Consulate General-Honolulu will be on Maui at the Lahaina Civic Center on Friday, Sept. 22 (8 a.m.–5 p.m.), Saturday, Sept. 23 (8 a.m.–5 p.m.) and Sunday, Sept. 24 (8 a.m.–12 p.m.) to assist with Philippine passports, Notarials (Affidavit, Special Power of Attorney), Dual Citizenship and Report of Birth/Report of Marriage.

(Note the rules for appointments and supporting documents in the image below.)

HOW TO AVAIL OF SERVICES (MAUI)

PASSPORT:
 Who can be served:
 1. Applicants with appointments for the postponed 11 to 13 August outreach* (no need to book another appointment)

**Schedule follows the day and time of the original appointment. For instance, if the original appointment was on 8 August, Friday, 8:00 AM, the applicant's new schedule is on 22 September, Friday, 8:00 AM.*

2. Applicants who were affected by the Maui wildfires (walk-in)

NOTARIALS (AFFIDAVIT, SPECIAL POWER OF ATTORNEY):
 Appointments for the Maui outreach may be made through this link - <https://forms.gle/wSX4c5Zbb28JBTrs6>

DUAL CITIZENSHIP:
 Email application form and supporting documents for evaluation to honolulu.pcg@dfa.gov.ph by 08 September 2023. The Consulate will inform the applicant if the application is approved and when to mail the original for processing and inclusion in the oath taking during the outreach.

REPORT OF BIRTH/REPORT OF MARRIAGE (for those who need these as supporting documents for their passport application):
 Email application form and supporting documents for evaluation to honolulu.pcg@dfa.gov.ph by 08 September 2023. The Consulate will inform the applicant if the application is approved and when to mail the original for processing.

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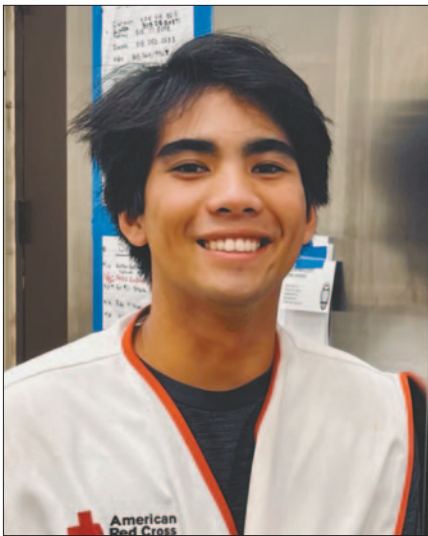
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Mikaila Acosta



Aleyah Falealili-Jenkins



Joe Kainoa Caminos



Dylan Domingo

The month of August was a difficult one for the island of Maui. Named one of the most devastating disasters in history, three wildfires have taken so much from our community. The event is a difficult one to talk about. Lives and homes are forever lost. The historic town of Lāhainā is burned to ashes. While some things can be rebuilt, things will never be the same. Although that fact is true, the memories of these areas near and dear to our hearts will live on forever.

Lāhainā, to me, can be described as its very own island. It is a drive as short as an hour or as long as three hours away from me. My memories and experiences there are very minimal but they are filled with love, youth, learning and a profound sense of community.

My memories of upcountry are even more scarce. Motion sickness al-

Google®

Is Not Everything ...

Relentless Sun

Jhanesty Vaye Bautista | MAUI HIGH SCHOOL, CLASS OF 2024

ways gets the best of me. But with the mere hours I have spent in the area, its defining feature is it is the brightest green I will ever see on Maui. And even with the fires affecting the area, life and nature will prevail.

Lastly, Kihei. The town where I was raised since birth. There is no doubt I have a lifetime full of fond memories

about the area, so choosing one to reminisce on is quite difficult. Instead, I look forward to the future. My future, as I embark on my Senior year, and the future of Maui.

All areas affected are near and dear to me. It has been very upsetting to see the island I have grown up on and continue to grow up on, face the tragedy it did. Though the whole island was shaken by such events, I want to give a platform to some students to speak about their experiences.

Students of Maui describe the fires as heart-breaking, surreal, humbling, unexpected, scary, while others are just speechless.

Mikaila Acosta, a student from Lāhainā expresses her sorrow as she mourns the loss of her home and the neighborhood she grew up in. “It breaks my heart to know the memories I made in Lāhainā were taken away in seconds. I

am so thankful for all those memories me and my family will remember and cherish forever,” she explains. As Mikaila and her family evacuated the area, she watched as the winds created a firestorm stretching from mountain to sea. “Although we lost our home, I am very grateful that me, my family and my dogs were able to escape the fire safely. It is still very overwhelming and all we can do is stay strong and take things day by day.” Although overwhelmed, Mikaila reminisces on those tender moments shared with her family: “My favorite memory of Lāhainā was walking down Front Street Lāhainā with my family, seeing all the different shopping stores whether it was clothing, Aloha souvenirs or simply eating dinner at a restaurant as well as watching the beautiful sunset on the edge of Front

Street.” Although those buildings that once existed on Front Street are gone, the beautiful sunset will become a sunrise the next morning, reminding us we will get through these challenging times one day at a time.

Aleyah Falealili-Jenkins is a student who attended Lāhaināluna as a boarder. She explains the fire paused her time at the school, interrupting her third-year attending. Now having to transfer schools, she sheds light on memories she hopes to return to in the fall. “My favorite memory of Lāhaināluna was definitely everything related to the boarding department. Lining the ‘L’ every year, two times, hosting David Malo Day for our Lāhainā community and hanging out on Front Street when we had town privileges.” She expresses how important it is to be kind during these times. “You never know what we witnessed and experienced during this scary time, so be careful with your words. Just love one another and show Aloha.”

Joe Kainoa Caminos has many friends in Lāhainā and Kula alike displaced by the fires. During these times, he offers his hand and shows Aloha to those in need. “The first few days of the fires, we had to house one of our friends and their family before they were able to return to their home in Kula. We went to the shelter the first night to see if help was needed and we ran into them setting up their cots in the corner. After that we

offered for them to stay at our place and they did.” Although residing in Kula, Kainoa has his fair share of memories in Lāhainā. He paints a picture of his favorite memory in the area—him, his friends, some ice-cream and the beautiful ocean. Lāhainā continues to live on during these times through simple heart-warming memories.

Dylan Domingo resides in North Kihei, and lives awfully close to where the Pulehu fires were. “The fires were massive and close to my neighborhood, to the point where I could see and even smell the fire right up the street. Rushing to pack our necessities and whatnots, we quickly evacuated and waited overnight at the Planet Fitness parking lot.” Thankfully, he was able to return home the next morning, see **RELENTLESS** next page

“ *The Bayanihan Spirit ... is something to be constantly practiced in the years to come as our island comes together to rebuild homes and memories.* ”

– JHANESTY VAYE BAUTISTA

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Relentless ...

from p. 14

and with most of his family living in Lāhainā, he felt at ease when they came down to Kihei until they were able to return safely. His favorite memory of Lāhainā was one full of youth, as he reminisces about his adventures through Front Street, parkour on the rocks in the outlet, etc. He especially loved “the nights spent in Bubba Gump and entering their Wi-Fi password, ‘1Forest1.’” He is also an avid sunset watcher, as the sunsets in Lāhainā are like no other you will experience elsewhere.


If you can provide supplies, relief or donations to those affected, please do. If you cannot, your kindness is important and very needed during times like this. Aleyah says, “Don’t be pilau to those who’ve lost everything.” Understanding is important during these times. “In an age of incredible communication, miscommunication is bound to become an issue. As the dust settles, people begin to point fingers and throw in these right and these wrongs. I think it is important to tune out the social media that emphasizes blame and to try to understand each other. Understand our pain and understand our shortcomings. That will make us more connected and overall, I think that it will build a stronger community,” Kainoa explains.

Filipinos have something called the Bayanihan Spirit. This is the communal desire to show acts of kindness to those in need. It is something to be constantly practiced in the years to come as our island comes together to rebuild homes and memories. Lāhainā translates to “relentless sun” and I think it is a perfect way to envision that, through these dark times, Maui will shine relentlessly throughout it all. ✨

Google® Is Not Everything is a monthly column authored by high school students. The title of the column emphasizes education is more than just googling a topic. Google® is a registered trademark. This month’s guest columnist is **Jhanessty Vaye Bautista**, a Senior at Maui High School. She is President of Maui High’s Key Club, Vice-President of Maui High’s Filipino Cultural Club, Executive Secretary of Maui High’s Student Government, a member of Blue Thunder, Maui High’s Robotics club, and a member of the National Honor Society. Jhanessty is in the ACOM Pathway at Maui High, focusing on graphic design and entrepreneurship. In her free time, she reads


books of any and all genres, sketches out designs for her new graphics project, sings karaoke alone or with a group of her close family and friends and loves anything with the popular videogame’s Minecraft Bee. She is the daughter of Vanessa and Jhon Boy Bautista.





CONSUL GENERAL'S CORNER

EMIL T. FERNANDEZ




KNIGHTS OF RIZAL'S WESTERN USA REGION

For this issue, I wish to share with The Fil-Am Voice's readers the following remarks I delivered last September 3 during the 9th Regional Assembly for Western USA of the Knights of Rizal held at the Hyatt Regency in Waikiki. Again, our hearts go out to the families and friends affected by the devastating wildfires. “Magandangabi po sa inyong lahat. It is an honor to join you tonight as you convene this 9th conference for the Western USA Region. I am truly humbled for this recognition. Marami pong salamat. I have always admired what the Knights of Rizal does and felt that your activities are truly noble objectives—propagat-

ing the teachings and values of our national hero. I can only aspire to live up to his ideals and do what's expected of being a member of your esteemed association. Before we begin, may I ask for one minute of silence for our fellow Filipinos on Maui who were affected by the wildfires last August 8. The past four weeks have been quite trying, given what transpired in Lahaina. It really caught us all off-guard. Like many, I started hearing of the wildfires in the news. And as part of the Consulate's contingency measures, I started calling our contacts in the Filipino community on the island to get a first-hand account of what see CONSUL GENERAL'S CORNER p.18





MISSION


Growing a stronger and healthier Filipino community in Hawai'i through collaborative partnerships.

VISION


A unified and engaged community grounded in Filipino values.

VALUES

Bayanihan - Working together for a common goal.
Lakas - The power of strength in togetherness. Kapwa - A shared sense of humanity.



STAY WELL STAY COVERED



Watch for Your Pink Envelope


Starting in April 2023 and continuing through next year, QUEST (Medicaid) members in Hawai'i will be receiving a pink letter inside a pink envelope from the Department of Human Services. This pink letter will provide members with instructions on eligibility renewals. If you have family who are QUEST members, please be on the lookout for their pink letter and help them stay well and stay covered.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance Benefits Application

Deadline: Sept. 25, 2023

For unemployment assistance, individuals may call (833) 901-2272, (808) 762-5751, (833) 901-2275, or (808) 762-5752.

Or scan this code for more information from DLIR:



STAY UP TO DATE WITH COVID-19 VACCINES


COVID-19 vaccines help your body develop protection from the virus that causes COVID-19. Although vaccinated people sometimes get infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccines significantly lowers the risk of getting very sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19.

Reference: <https://www.cdc.gov>


Scan these QR codes for

Translated Resources for Maui Wildfires


Source: Hawai'i State Office of Language Access



Cebuano



Ilokano





Tagalog














808-369-5380

FILCOMCARES.ORG

FILCOMCARES@FILCOM.ORG



FilComCARES is funded by the Hawai'i Public Health Institute and administered by The Filipino Community Center.



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Ti Biag ken Pammati

“Life and Faith”

The following is a reprint of a Homily I gave at St. Anthony of Padua Church on October 14, 2014 during a Healing Mass. My Prayer is for you to reflect on it!

James 5:13-16
Matthew 8:14-17
Peace be with you!

Welcome to St. Anthony Church and welcome to our Healing Mass. This is the 6th year of this celebration. How many of you are here for the first time? second time? fifth time? God Bless you. May you experience the healing power of Lord and Savior Jesus Christ tonight!

Have you experienced any changes from the last time we gathered? Did it help you make a difference with your health, spiritually, mentally?

I know you came to heal whatever illness you have. Whether it's physical or spiritual, we will try to help you, with the help of God, and assistance of our brother Priests, Deacons, we hope and pray, we can help make a difference in your lives.

Basically, healing comes from prayer, a lot of prayer. God gives us life and it's our prayer every day when we get up in the morning. Second, we need to be reconciled with God first. Then with ourselves and then with those who we hurt. This is the key to healing.

When we experience this peace, God will always help us.

We know God graciously gave us His Son Jesus—to live among us and to be like us, to experience what we go through in life here on earth and to live human life—so we can become believers of Christ.

He did nothing wrong but was killed without fault for our sins. With God in Him, we too become Christ like. It is a challenge for us humans, especially with illnesses.

Remember this, don't let the world evangelize and entice us to its values, priorities and goals. All of them will pass away. Always read God's word. Here is truth. This is who we are. Don't allow the evil one to lie to us, condemn us, rob us of our inheritance, entice us to sin to medicate our suffering. God is here to help us in our need, our weakness, to forgive any sin, to draw us back to himself.

You have experienced Christ's suffering. Illnesses we have, illnesses in our families, unexpected death, loss of homes, financial difficulties, divorces, drug problems, drinking problems, abuses and a whole lot of things we must deal with here on earth.

Christ took it all on Himself. Remember this, there is no suffering we bear that He has not borne for us so we may be confident He is with us in our pain. However awful, it is temporary.

He broke the bonds that keep us in bondage; he broke the power of death. The power of his suffering makes it possible for us to rise from death and live with Him in glory. He won this eternal inheritance for us. Our task is to remain faithful to



Healing Mass with Fr Michael at St Joseph Church

Healing During this Time of Hardship

Pray, hope and don't worry says St. Padre Pio.

Deacon Patrick Constantino



Bishop Larry Silva Blessing the Oil of the Sick for Healing during the Blessing of the new Oils during Easter.

Him!

A young man shared his story on a radio program. He said I was going through physical and emotional suf-

fering and wanted to draw closer to the Lord but needed help. I have Muscular Dystrophy and am in a wheelchair. I am twenty-five years

old. I was raised Catholic ever since baptism but for some time I was indifferent and lukewarm. In the year 2000, the Great Jubilee of the Incarnation of the Lord, I received many graces of conversion.

That same year my family and I were blessed to be able to go on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. I let Jesus through Mary and was reconciled to the Father. Prior to my conversion or reconversion to the faith, more specifically, prior to Lourdes, I had much difficulty dealing with my suffering.

I let it affect me emotionally, socially and spiritually. The Lord changed all of that: in Lourdes He poured even more grace into my soul. The blessed Mother took me by the hand and led me straight into the eucharistic sacred heart of Jesus where I found meaning and purpose. During a mass in Lourdes the priest spoke about suffering in his homily.

I was moved when I learned that suffering had great value when united to the sufferings of Jesus on the cross, that my suffering will be redemptive. It was for my good that God allowed me to suffer—for my sanctification. I began to see suffering can bring us closer to Jesus. He wanted me nailed to the cross with Him.

I was in a wheelchair precisely because God loved me! That a good, merciful and loving God who makes weakness powerful! I prayed for a physical healing and I received the grace to accept my suffering and see it as a real blessing.

see HEALING p.20

Where to Stay on Maui Other Than the Westside?

Liza A Pierce of “A Maui Blog” | PHOTOS COURTESY THE ALOHA 360

Maui is Open, Westside is Closed. Governor Josh Green recently announced beginning October 8, all travel restrictions will end and West Maui (including Nāpili, Kā'anapali, Honokōwai and Kapalua) will be open to visitors again with the exception of Lahaina.

Respectful travel to Maui is welcome and encouraged, now more than ever. Hawaiian Airlines and Alaskan Airlines are giving discounts on airfare to encourage visitors to Maui. We need the visitors to come back now.

While we are waiting for the Westside (except Lahaina) to open, let us explore the other towns on Maui where visitors can stay.

South Maui

South Maui is the sunshine region. The towns of Mā'alaea, Kihei, Wailea and Mākena make up South Maui. Wailea is the major resort area. Although it may be the hottest and driest part of the island, the south is also the most popular coastline on Maui for sun lovers.

Wailea is home to major luxury hotels such as the Grand Wailea, Four Seasons, Andaz, Fairmont Kea Lani and Wailea Beach Marriott. All these hotels are top notch in the industry. You can't go wrong with any of them. There are also many luxury condos and villas to choose from such as Wailea Beach Villas and Wailea Elua, both oceanfront.

Kihei is less expensive than Wailea and has a wide selection of budget condo rentals. Kihei condos are still walking distance from the beach and many are oceanfront. It is more like a traditional town and has great beaches and restaurants. The most popular condominium complexes in Kihei include Kama'ole Sands, Mana Kai, Maui Kama'ole, Kihei Surfside, Royal Mauian, Koa Lagoon and Luana Kai Resort.

Mākena, the farthest town south, is the least crowded and least developed part of South Maui. There are a few luxury condos available for rent. Check out Mākena Surf condos on VRBO and Airbnb. Mākena is where the pristine Mākena Beach divides into Big Beach and Little Beach.

Mā'alaea is an oceanfront village close to the West Maui border. It is windy here, where the trade winds funnel between the West Maui Mountains and Haleakalā, last touching land at Mā'alaea. The area is known for affordable oceanfront

condos. Boat tours leave from the Mā'alaea Marin.

Central Maui

Central Maui towns include Kahului, Waikapū, and Wailuku. The airport (OGG) where you will land is in Kahului.

Kahului is the commercial town of Maui. This is where you will find Costco, Walmart, and Target. It is also where Queen Ka'ahumanu Center is located. Aside from the commercial centers, there are also many local residential neighborhoods in this town. This was known as the “Dream City” to thousands of former sugar-cane workers.

Wailuku is a charming and historic town where most of the State and County offices are located. Local shops and restaurant line Main Street. The Old Wailuku Inn at Ulupono is a popular (and historic) place to stay. There is also the new vacation rental called The Blue Door on Church Street. Īao Valley, a famous landmark, is reached via Wailuku.

Waikapū is the location of Maui Tropical Plantation and Kumu Farms. The King Kamehameha Golf Club is another famous landmark here. Waikapū is a residential area – there are no hotels or inns to stay at although there might be some random rooms for rent on Airbnb.

Upcountry Maui

Upcountry towns Pukalani, Hāli'imaile, Makawao and Kula are away from the beach up on Haleakalā mountains and offer cooler temperatures and green fields. Upcountry is the part of Maui on the valley side of Haleakalā.

Makawao is a small *paniolo* (Hawaiian cowboy) town. My mother-in-law loved visiting this small town. You can stroll through some of the best gift shops and small galleries highlighting Maui's talented local artists.

Pukalani, Hāli'imaile, and Kula – I lumped these towns together. They are mostly residential but for those who desire a cooler climate and do not care if they are far from the beach, these towns are great. There are many exciting activities to take part in here especially in Kula where the 'Ulupalakua Winery, Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm and Haleakalā National Park are located. You will be able to find a few Bed and Breakfast places via Airbnb and VRBO. For

see KWENTO-KWENTUHAN p.21



Beaches in the Wailea resort area offer white sand and scenic views.



Beaches in Kihei have a more challenging in topography but have unbeatable sunset vistas.



Furthest south can be found more private beaches in and past Mākena.



Consul General Emil Fernandez is seen being conferred as Knight Commander of Rizal (3rd degree) by the Supreme Council and the Council of Elders of the Knights of Rizal. Leading the conferment rites is Sir Gerardo Calderon, Knight Grand Cross of Rizal Supreme Commander. The event was held during the Knights of Rizal-Western USA Regional Conference gala at the Hyatt Regency Waikiki on Sept. 3, 2023.

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was transpiring and see how our *kababayans* were faring. They included representatives of the Maui Filipino Chamber of Commerce, The Fil-Am Voice, Binhi at Ani Filipino Community Center, and Maui County Mayor's Office. Expectedly they were still in shock and very emotional. And, because it was quite early, no details could be provided yet.

Step two was to try and do our part in urging our countrymen in affected areas to take necessary precautions and heed the advice of local authorities. For whatever its worth, advisories were posted on our website and social media accounts, including information on where to seek help and assistance, and ways to find those unaccounted for.

The fire just spread so rapidly due to the prevailing winds and because of the dry conditions, the tragic outcome is that, to date, there have been 115 fatalities and over 380 people still missing. Sadly, many of those who perished were the elderly, probably because they had a harder time physically evacuating or they were reluctant to leave homes that they worked hard to save for and build.

And because of the significant Filipino population in Hawai'i, including Maui, and particularly Lahaina, it was inevitable that there would be many affected from our community. According to Census figures, some forty percent of respondents in Lahaina identified themselves to be of Filipino descent. Most were immigrants and legal permanent residents.

A few days after the blaze, when the Hawai'i state government gave the all clear for travelers to enter Maui, I led a team of four people from the Consulate to render consular and assistance-to-nationals services. In a day and a half, we attended to close to 70 people, principally residents of the burn area. Most had lost their homes and belongings, including their Philippine passports, which were important means of identification. Equally important was to lend an ear and just listen to their accounts, following their horrific ordeal. I could see in their faces the trauma they experienced, with some whose hands were still trembling as they accomplished certain forms. I could only console them and do our small part.

During that trip, I was also able to see several Maui County officials and members of the Filipino community. Among them was a group of Filipino teachers, who had just arrived on Maui under the Exchange Visitor Program. Imagine just being here a few weeks and you are confronted with this disaster of historic proportions. Two of these teachers were staying in Lahaina, renting a place there when, on that fateful day, their landlady told them that they had to evacuate. So they hurriedly gathered their most important belongings, but also had the



presence of mind to check on their elderly neighbor, who they had just met. After knocking on his door, the person was apparently unaware of the magnitude of the fire. Subsequently, the teachers were able to lead him to safety. What an amazing story! Newcomers in the country, already saving a person's life!

So amidst the tragedy, you will find stories of courage, bravery and inspiration. Most evident was the so-called Aloha or 'Ohana spirit, the equivalent of which is our Bayanihan spirit. I saw this in the shelters, in the aid facilities, and among the volunteers, including Filipinos who spearheaded fundraising activities, distributed relief goods and even opened their homes to people who were displaced. Dr. Rizal would have been proud of this.

This September 21, I will be returning to Maui with a larger consular team and we will stay for a longer period so we can attend to everyone who needs our services. We will also invite representatives of other U.S. agencies, so the various questions of those in attendance can be responded to in one venue.

Dealing with such challenges in Hawai'i was one of the last things I expected. But this is what I signed up for as a Foreign Service officer and

as a public servant. And I still believe that working in government is a noble calling and one that is rewarding especially when you see how our work makes an impact, no matter how small, in other people's lives, just as the Knights of Rizal does for its members and beneficiaries of its good work.

Maraming salamat ulit at mabuhay po kayo." ✨

Emil T. Fernandez is the current Consul General of the Philippines stationed in Honolulu. He graduated from the Ateneo de Manila University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Management Economics. Prior to his appointment to Hawai'i, Fernandez served as Deputy Consul General in Frankfurt, Germany. His other foreign assignments included Washington, D.C. (2010–2016), Santiago, Chile (2005–2008) and Caracas, Venezuela (2002–2005). In Manila, Fernandez held several important positions, including Executive Director of the Office of Asian & Pacific Affairs (2016–2018), Director for Southern Europe of the Office of European Affairs (2009–2010), Special Assistant to the Undersecretary for International Economic Relations (2008–2009) and Acting Director of the Office of ASEAN Affairs (1999–2001).



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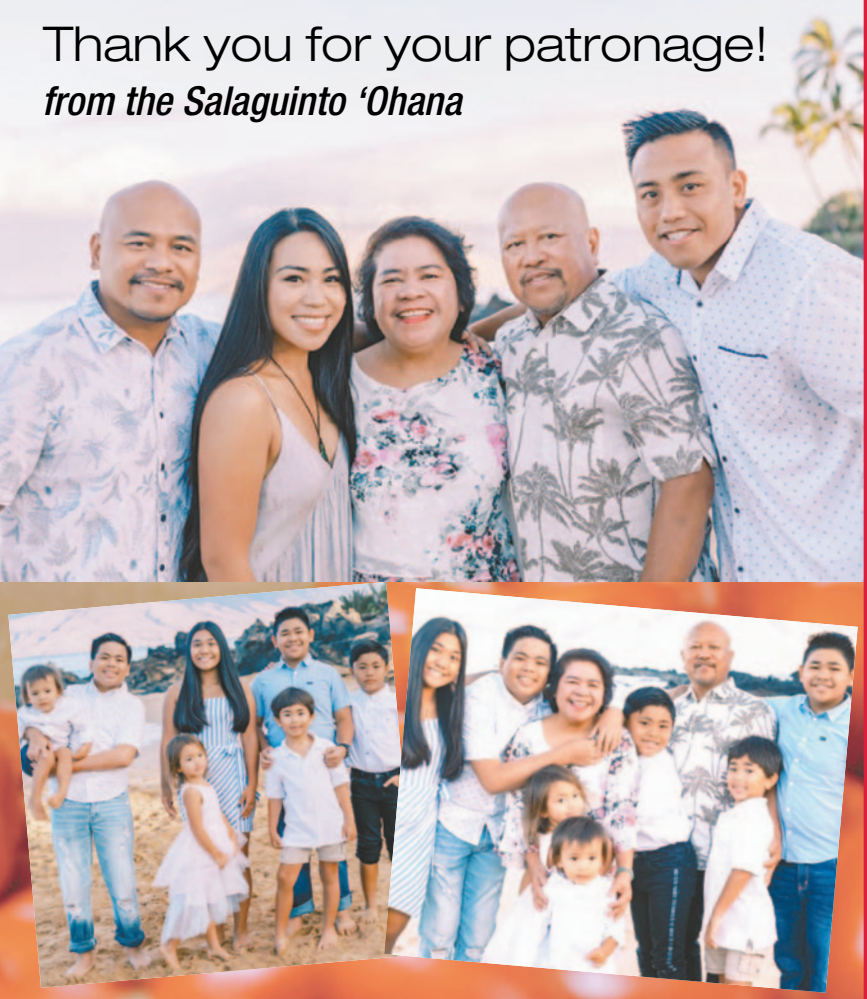
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PHOTO ABOVE: Greatest Healers - Jesus our God, and Mother Mary, our Mother. Son of God and Mother of our God.

PHOTO RIGHT: Healing mass with Fr Michael at St Joseph Church.

“God, will
always have
our back—
and will
always love
you and me!”

— REV. PAT CONSTANTINO



Healing ...

from p. 16

The Lord showed me that spiritual suffering (sin, especially mortal sin) is far worse than suffering of any other kind, and that healing of the soul is greater than physical healing. I realized the suffering I go through is only temporary with eternal benefits if I suffer with Him.

My understanding of what is passing versus what is lasting really grew and the words that Our Lady spoke to St. Bernadette made sense to me: “I do not promise you happiness in this world but in the next.”

Ever since the pilgrimage I have been growing in love of God and neighbor.

The Lord keeps bringing me out of myself through suffering—for love of Him—joyfully! He said,

So there you have it, my brothers and sisters. God loves you just the way you are but he refuses to leave you that way. he wants you to be just like Jesus.

Now there is a statement you can take home with you. Let me say it again: God loves you just the way you are but he refuses to leave you

that way. he wants you to be just like Jesus. there is still hope for us who are ill.

Some of you might remember one of the bestselling songs of the 1970s, *My Sweet Lord* by former Beatle George Harrison. The song was about Harrison’s sincere desire to find God through various kinds of religion:

*My sweet Lord
Oh, my Lord
My sweet Lord
I really wanna be with you
I like to see you, Lord
Oh, it takes so long, my Lord
I really wanna be with you
I’d like to go with you
I wanna show you Lord
That it won’t take long, my Lord*

Shortly before his death in 2001, Harrison was asked about his spiritual journey. The question was apt since it was Harrison who introduced the Beatles to Eastern religion in the 60s and after the group broke up, Harrison wrote *My Sweet Lord*. Until the end of his life, Harrison continued to investigate spiritual matters. He summed up his priorities this way: Everything else in life can wait, but the search for God cannot wait.

We all want that, don’t we? We all want God. We want to know Him more. We want to see Him. And we want to be like Him.

There is an interesting phrase that has entered our common vernacular in recent years. It is the phrase, “I’ll have your back.” If I say to someone, especially someone in a difficult situation, “I’ll have your back,” it means I’ll be there for you, look out for you, help you out if you’re in trouble.

We may be tried and tested often, so our faith might grow stronger and bring us closer to Jesus. These trials in our lives help us to demonstrate our faith and trust in Jesus. Strengthened in faith, we will come to believe we actually can overcome sin and illnesses and share the triumph of Jesus Cross.

Remember this, God will always have our back—and will always love you and me!

May the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, descend upon you and remain with you, always! Amen! ✨

On July 1, 2022, **Patrick Constantino** retired as a Deacon for the Roman Catholic Church in Hawai‘i, after serving thirty-five years and becoming on June 18, 1987, the first Deacon of Filipino ancestry for the Roman Catholic Church in Hawai‘i. For twenty-two years, he served as Administrator at Holy Rosary Church in Pā‘ia, St. Rita Church in Ha‘ikū and St. Gabriel Church in Ke‘ānae. His last assignment before retiring was at St. Joseph Church in Makawao.

Prior to his ordination, Constantino was in government—first appointed in 1966 as Assistant Sergeant of Arms by the Speaker of the House Elmer F. Cravalho. When Cravalho became Maui’s first Mayor, Constantino became his Executive Assistant—the first of Filipino ancestry. Later, Constantino became the first County Treasurer of Filipino ancestry and the first County Grants Administrator and Risk Manager of Filipino ancestry.

Constantino is married to his lovely wife Corazon for sixty-one years.





Marites Sol Chichioco-Perez

Lucy Peros | PHOTOS COURTESY CHICHIOCO-PEREZ ‘OHANA

A few characteristics to describe a good uncle includes someone who brings fun and joy to his nieces’ and nephews’ lives and is caring, loving, protective, encouraging and supportive. In addition, a good uncle is interested in the well-being, growth, and happiness of his nieces and nephews and more importantly, shows up during their tough times. The uncle of this month’s featured Sakada Offspring, Marites Sol Chichioco-Perez is

exactly that. Marites Sol Chichioco-Perez was born on January 2, 1968 in Manila, Philippines. She attended Flores Elementary School in San Manuel Pangasinan. She graduated in sixth grade as a Valedictorian. She moved to Hawai’i in 1981 and attended Pā’ia Elementary School as an eighth grader. In 1986, she graduated from Maui High School. After high school, she studied at International Air Academy in Vancouver, Washington. She graduated as a Flight Attendant and Airlines services. She studied Liberal Arts and graduated from Maui Community College (now University of Hawai’i Maui College). She also attended Hawai’i Pacific University on O’ahu and studied Travel Industry Management. Marites held several jobs. Her first job was at Burger King during school as a part timer after school and week-see SAKADA OFFSPRING next page

Kwento-Kwentuhan | Cont’d from p. 17



The resort area in Wailea is definitely a place with consistently warm weather and captivating beauty.


romantic upcountry cottages with beautiful panoramic views, check out Kula Lodge.

North Shore

Pā’ia is a destination in its own right. Pā’ia is a small town with a big character and personality. So far it has managed to avoid becoming touristy or gentrified, and it is still largely populated by a diverse mix of colorful and eccentric people – lovers of art, surfers, vegans, and others who are drawn to the independent Bohemian vibe. The town is filled with quaint shops, cafes and restaurants. Pā’ia Bay and Baldwin Beach are also close, as is Ho’okipa. The Pā’ia Inn is a popular place to stay but there are other bed and breakfasts in the area as well. Mana Foods is a go-to place, a grocery store for

healthy food in this part of the island. **Ha’ikū** and **Huelo** are mostly residential. Like Pā’ia, these towns also have an eclectic vibe. Sometimes they are known as the Hippie Towns, with inexpensive places to rent via Airbnb and VRBO. You can also stay at the more luxurious Mama’s Fish House Inn near Ho’okipa Beach. **Ke’anae, Hāna, Kīpahulu** – When talking about places to stay on the East Side of Maui, Hāna Maui Resort is at the top of my mind. Yes, you can find various bed and breakfast places to rent if you are on a budget but for honeymooners and for individuals who want to experience convenience and serenity, I recommend spending the extra bucks and staying at Hāna Maui Resort.



I hope this column helps. Feel free to share this with people you know who are on the fence and still trying to decide if they should visit or not. May this help them know there are many other areas they can stay at and have a wonderful time on Maui. Maybe you are that person who is still on the fence. We encourage you to come and visit Maui. Your presence on Maui will very much be appreciated. It will help in our economic recovery. We look forward to seeing you here!  **Liza Pierce** of A Maui Blog is an Interactive Media enthusiast. She started blogging in 2006 and she loves talking story online and spreading aloha around the world. She’s been living on Maui since 1994 and considers Maui her home. A wife, a mother, a friend... and so much

more. She loves Jesus; Maui Sunsets Catcher; Crazy About Rainbow; End Alzheimer’s Advocate. Her life is full and exciting here on the island of Maui. Liza is currently the Digital Media Specialist with Hawai’i Life Real Estate Brokers. She is the author of the book Maui 2021 and Beyond.



ends. Then as a Shift Leader at Jack in the Box when it opened on Maui. Soon after Jack in the Box, she got into banking. She worked as a Teller at Bank of Hawai'i. In between banking positions, Marites also worked with Dr. James Hattaway, DC as a Chiropractic Assistant from 1991 to 2001. These jobs Marites held became stepping stones to her present job today. She is currently employed at American Savings Bank Kahului Branch. She is the Assistant Vice President, Personal Banker from 2001 to present.

Marites was married to the late Zacarias Chichioco, Jr. He was the Director of Maintenance at Mahana Resorts in Lahaina. He attended Don Bosco Trade School in Tarlac, Philippines. He studied in SLU Baguio City, Philippines. Unfortunately, Zacarias passed away on May 19, 2011. Marites and Zacarias were married on November 4, 1995. They have two children, Zacarias Chichioco III, 26 years old. He graduated in Culinary Arts from the University of Hawai'i Maui College. He is currently working at Tiffany's and Tin Roof with Chef Sheldon Simeon. Their daughter, Zo'e Marie Chichioco, 19 years old, attended University of Hawai'i at Mānoa last year and came back home to continue her studies at University of Hawai'i Maui College, majoring in Liberal Arts. Both children attended Christ The King School and St. Anthony then moved to Maui High School where they graduated from.

Marites remarried on November 18, 2022 to her childhood sweetheart,

Ramil Allan Perez. Ramil studied at Far Eastern University (FEU) in the Philippines with a degree of Political Science. He was employed as an NGO (non-government organization) Development worker in the Philippines before joining Marites on Maui last year.

Marites is an active member of Christ The King Catholic Church as a Lector. She was formerly Miss Sampaguita in 1986 and Miss Pangasinan Association of Maui. She also participated in ballroom dancing. She received awards from American Savings Bank for her five-, ten-, fifteen- and twenty years of service.

Marites is a fun-loving person. She loves traveling, shopping, going to musical concerts, art shows, hiking, dancing Zumba, ballroom dancing, working out and yoga. She especially enjoys cooking, eating different ethnic dishes and watching Korean Drama.

Marites has eight siblings and she is the youngest:


Cristeta Sol Yanguas (widow) is the oldest. She was married to the late Amado Yanguas. She is now retired but currently working part time at Walmart Kahului as an Associate. She was an elementary school teacher in the Philippines before coming to Hawai'i. They have three grandsons and seven grandchildren (four girls and three boys).

Next is Alejandro (Alex) Sol. He is retired/disabled from Maui Beach Hotel and Maui Tropical Plantation. He and his wife Cynthia Sol, retired/Disabled from Maui Beach Hotel. They have two daughters and two grand-



Zac, Zo'e and Marites and Ramil Allan are shown here at our family photo taken Nov. 11, 2022 at our wedding ceremony at King Kamehameha Golf Club.

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The 3 Sol brothers: Uncle Pablo Sol (front), Dad Pedro Sol (left back), and Uncle Maximo Sol (right back), all retired from HC&S Co.



Mom's 86th birthday celebration at the Maui Beach Hotel. Our family is shown here Dec. 22, 2017.



Uncle Pablo, Marites and Dad Pedro are shown here when we visited them in the Philippines in 2017.

sons.
Pedro Sol, Jr. (deceased) at 24 years old in the Philippines.
Victorino Sol has two sons and one grandson.
Myrna Sol Ines (deceased), married to Arnulo Ines. They have two children and two grandchildren.
Mario Sol (deceased), worked at H.C.&S. Company. He has four children and two granddaughters.
Marilyn Sol, worked at Hale Makua Kahului as a Transport Aide. She has two daughters and three grandchildren. Olivia Valdez is her significant other.
Marites Sol Chichioco-Perez is the eighth child of the Sol family.

Marites' uncle, Pablo Sol, a 1946 Sakada was instrumental in petitioning the Sol family to come to Hawai'i. He was born on June 7, 1924. He died on August 5, 2019 at the age of ninety-five. He arrived on Maui in 1946, recruited from the Philippines with the thousands of Sakadas to work at the sugar and pineapple plantations in Hawai'i. He and his wife Minnie owned a house in Pā'ia. He was the first one among four siblings to come to Hawai'i at the age of twenty-two. Pablo's first wife Minnie passed away in 1978. He re-married his childhood sweetheart, Carmen.

Uncle Pablo petitioned his younger brothers, Maximo Sol, who arrived on Maui in 1968, followed by Pedro Sol (Marites' Dad), who arrived on Maui in 1978. They all worked and retired from H.C.&S. Co. Lourdes Sol, Marites' mom, together with six children arrived on Maui in 1981, including Marites. Her mom, Lourdes retired from the Department of Education (Kahului Elementary School) as a schoolteacher. Uncle Pablo and Aunt Carmen moved back to Pangasinan, Philippines in 1981. They had a daughter, Kelly Hooper, one granddaughter and two great grandchildren.

Marites had this special tribute to Uncle Pablo Sol:

I remember my Uncle Pablo as a tall, good-looking man with a very amiable demeanor. Known as a very generous person. His relatives and neighbors at the barrio in the Philippines, always seek his assistance and advice, either financial and/or personal problems. When he was still here in Hawai'i, he never missed sending gifts for all of us in the Philippines. For me and my siblings,



Fun family Igorot costume picture taken at the Mines View Park Baguio City 2016. Vic (from left), Alex, Cristeta, Dad, Mom, Tess and Mar. Jr, Myrna and Mario are missing in this photo.

*the arrival of the balikbayan box (gift box) on Christmas Day is awaited with great anticipation. I will never forget that one special December when Uncle Pablo sent me a walking doll as a Christmas present. That walking doll is long gone now but became a part of my childhood's very special memories. It has been four years now since Uncle Pablo passed away. Every 5th of August, we remember his passing and celebrate his life through a family gathering. We talk stories and share with our kids and grandkids about a person whose life's endeavors brought us all together here in Hawai'i, my wonderful Uncle Pablo. The Sol family is forever grateful to our Uncle Pablo for paving the way for all of us to have the opportunity to a greener pasture. We love and miss you Uncle Pablo. You will always be in our hearts. **

Lucy Peros is a retired schoolteacher, having taught at St. Anthony Grade School and Waihe'e Elementary School. Both of her late parents, Elpidio Cachero Cabalo (a 1946 Sakada) and Alejandra Cabudoy Cabalo of Hāli'imaile, worked for Maui Land and Pine Company. Lucy now enjoys retirement and has time to join other seniors in the Enhance Fitness Program under the Department of Aging three times a week. She also attends the line dancing class and other activities at Kaunoa and joins other Waihe'e School retirees when help is needed at the school. Lucy also devotes some of her time to activities at Christ The King Catholic Church. She enjoys writing and reading in her spare time.

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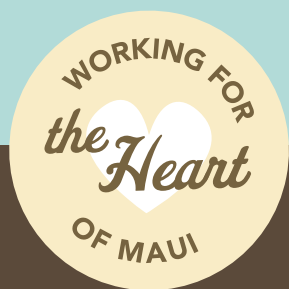


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