

GENERATIONS

HAWAII'S RESOURCE FOR LIFE

MAGAZINE | VOL 16/3 • MAY/JUN 2026

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tributes to Hawai'i.*

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The 18th Annual Generations Magazine Aging in Place Workshop

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A brief preview of some of our presentations:

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■ **BRIDGING AGING & DISABILITY HAWAII' HUI**

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See our upcoming July-August issue for a complete schedule of presentations.

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The Hui Aikāne Senior group enjoyed participating in the Senior Classic Games in Hālawa in March.

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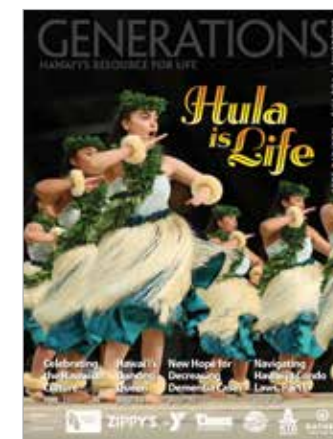
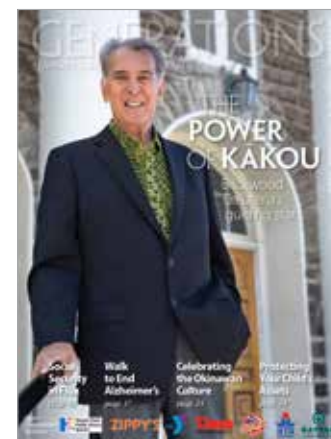
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In May and June, we take time to celebrate our mothers and fathers — those who have guided us with love, patience and unwavering support. I am incredibly fortunate to have the best parents who are caring, supportive and always there for me. I am deeply grateful for everything they do.

This season, I would also like to recognize two very special people in my life — my Auntie Cathy and Uncle Steve, my mom’s sister and brother-in-law — who have been like second parents to me and my siblings. Growing up, the three of us and our three cousins were inseparable. Between the six of us, it often felt like our own version of “The Brady Bunch.” We were like a big family, full of laughs and unforgettable moments. Some of my fondest memories are of sleepovers at their house, waking up to Uncle Steve making breakfast, where the highlight was choosing our favorite Pop-Tart, and knowing Auntie Cathy was always there to talk story and make us feel at home. To this day, they support me and even my daughter Lexie, like she’s their own granddaughter, too. Their love and support have meant more to me than words can express and I am so thankful for them.

Our feature story (pg. 24) this issue highlights Nake‘u Awai, known as the grandfather of Hawaiian fashion. Whether or not you have an interest in fashion, you will be inspired by his journey, his designs, and his deep passion for his work and culture. With his signature vibrant blue hair and creative spirit, he continues to inspire many. I also invite you to explore articles written by our younger contributors, featuring topics such as Memorial Day celebrations (pg. 18), King Kamehameha Day (pg. 20) and even Zumba (pg. 21) — bringing fresh perspectives and energy to this issue.

Lastly, please save the date for our 18th Annual *Generations Magazine* Aging in Place Workshop on Saturday, Aug. 1, from 8am to 2:15 pm at the Ala Moana Hotel. We are excited to welcome more than 40 vendors offering valuable resources and information. The full schedule will be available in our July-August issue. We hope to see you there! ■



Auntie Cathy and Uncle Steve



“The Brady Bunch”



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CYNTHIA ARNOLD
Owner-Publisher & Marketing
Cynthia@Generations808.com
808-258-6618

WILSON ANGEL
Art Director
Wilson@Generations808.com

DEBRA LORDAN
Senior Editor & Writer
Debra@Generations808.com

HALEY BURFORD
Proofreader & Writer

SHERRY GOYA
Community Relations & Subscriptions
sgoyallc@aol.com
808-722-8487

LEIGH DICKS
Content Coordinator & Bookkeeper
Leigh@Generations808.com

MAHLON MOORE
Webmaster & Social Media
Mahlon@Generations808.com




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Who's Behind Generations Magazine?

Generations Magazine relies on Hawai'i's experts—from financial and legal advisors to healthcare professionals and grandparents—to write articles that are important to seniors, their families and their caregivers. The magazine also employs and utilizes writers from across the island chain who are advocates for our kūpuna and passionate about issues that affect our senior community.



HALEY BURFORD, staff writer and proofreader at Generations Magazine, earned her MA in English literature from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She also works as a teacher at the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu, where, both in and out of the classroom, she hopes to share her love of film with other people. She is most passionate about watching, reading and writing reflective stories about a person's inner life—all while adoring her two cats, Basil and Rosemary.



ANNETTE KAM is a retired Registered Nurse with 42 years of experience in healthcare. She also spent 17 years as Founder and President of a nonprofit fibromyalgia support organization. Today, her focus is on helping seniors and their families tackle practical matters that are often overlooked or postponed. She guides them in organizing their affairs so nothing important is left unfinished. Her story has reached audiences through over 150 podcasts, publications and live events. Her book, *Wait — Don't Die Yet!*, has reached readers in 46 states and 19 countries.



REIKO LEWIS is the Founder of Ventus Senior Concierge, a service dedicated to the wellbeing of older adults who wish to age in place. As an aging-in-place specialist with a background in interior design, hospitality and broadcasting, she brings a holistic lifestyle perspective to independent senior living. Her work is shaped by her personal journey living with her 93-year-old mother, which deepened her understanding of the importance of independence, connection, daily peace of mind and wellbeing. Through Ventus, she helps seniors continue living positively in the homes they love.



LAURA RODRIGUEZ serves as Executive Director for the American Cancer Society's Hawai'i and Guam market, leading efforts to expand cancer research funding, patient support and community partnerships. Since joining ACS in 2021, she has helped grow the organization's impact in Hawai'i through initiatives such as the Hope Gala Hawai'i and the launch of the CEOs Against Cancer Hawai'i chapter. During her tenure, the Hawai'i market has achieved record fundraising success and helped establish the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge Hawai'i endowment.



PI'LANI SHIMABUKU, born and raised in Mililani, is voracious consumer of information. She enjoys multitudinous genres of books, magazines and documentaries. On weekdays, she attends classes at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa as an undergraduate student in the English department. On the weekends, she works as a pharmacy technician at Times Pharmacy. She is also writing articles as an intern at Generations Magazine. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in editing, authorship or journalism. She spends her free time with family, friends and her dog.



KATHY WYATT is a Registered Nurse and a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator. She is Founder and President of Hale Hau'oli Hawaii, a nonprofit organization committed to meeting the needs of the elderly and their caregivers through community education programs, resources and referrals and adult day care. She is Past President of the Adult Day Centers of Hawaii. She serves on the board of directors for the National Adult Day Services Association, the Caregiver Foundation, Hawaii Pacific Gerontology Society and Hawai'i Family Caregivers Coalition.

Mahalo to all of our writers and loyal contributing partners, whose dedication to the senior community is greatly appreciated and whose presence continues to enhance this magazine's value.

LJ R. DUEÑAS | DAN HAIRE | KATHLEEN HAYASHI | ROY KODANI | KEALI'I LOPEZ
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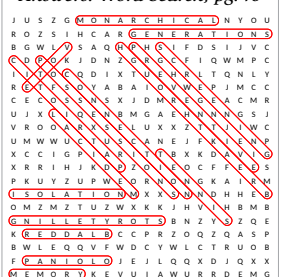
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The Art of Old-School Medicine

by Roy Kodani, GM Columnist

Experience may help develop intuition and that intuition just might prove to be more effective when diagnosing a patient's illness than cold technology. Human insight in this AI-infested world may detect the essence and spirit of a patient that technology alone is incapable of understanding. Dr. Myron E. Shirasu, in his early 90s, has treated four generations of patients relying on more than 50 years of medical experience that has led to profound insights into each of his patients. The human touch of this old-school physician, characterized by active listening, kindness and respect, combines thorough, hands-on physical exams with empathetic, unhurried and personalized care, fostering deep trust. His art-of-medicine approach utilizes the power of touch to diagnose, comfort and connect, rather than relying solely on data and test results.

Dr. Shirasu is a country boy who "pulled himself up by his bootstraps" to become a successful Honolulu physician. He was born in Shimane, Japan, and came to Hawai'i at the age of 3. His father was a Buddhist priest assigned to Hilo Hongwanji. But like many Buddhist priests during WWII, he was incarcerated in a concentration camp, ending up in Tule Lake, California. Dr. Shirasu's mother and his siblings were also held there. When they returned to Hawai'i, his father was assigned as the head priest of Oloo Hongwanji (now Puna Hongwanji) in Hawai'i.

Myron attended Oloo Elementary and Intermediate Schools in Kea'au, then Hilo High School. After graduation, he attended the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Originally, he intended to become a dentist and enrolled at the University of Oregon. To make ends meet, he worked part-time as a hospital orderly in Eugene, where a physician urged him to go to med school. Consequently, Dr. Shirasu had to decide between dental school and medical school. He was accepted at both schools, but the medical school responded first, making his decision for him. He studied at the medical school in Portland for five years.



While there, he faced cruel racial discrimination. Looking back, he believes he made the correct decision.

He returned to Honolulu, and completed his internship and residency at Queen's Hospital. He joined Central Medical Clinic in Honolulu in 1967, where he continues to practice at age 89.

Many of my older patients prefer my old-school treatment. They like it when I take time to explain things in a way they can understand. They don't want to be rushed in and out."

Dr. Shirasu makes the hospital rounds—without charge. Currently, hospital rounds are done by specialists referred to as hospitalists. He says, "My patients look forward to and appreciate my visits. I believe they rest and sleep better after my visits. The old-time bedside manner ensures a quicker recovery. But most of the younger doctors don't make hospital rounds nowadays."

"In the past, medical school concentrated on science courses," he says. "Now, pre-med education has broadened to produce well-rounded professionals, preparing doctors who will treat patients as a whole human being. The physician must be knowledgeable of the social aspects of the patient as well as the physical makeup."

"I have been asked to join other clinics, but Central Medical Clinic has been very accommodating, very professional in their treatment of patients and most importantly, the doctors there have wonderful bedside manners," he says. "I suppose you can teach new doctors bedside manners, but I think they are inborn—from the heart." His inherent, heartfelt approach continues to help patients feel valued, reduces their anxiety and improves overall treatment outcomes.

Dr. Shirasu says, "At my age, I don't *have* to treat patients anymore. Treating patients is not a job. *I enjoy it.* I have no regrets becoming a doctor. All my patients are like family to me. Being a doctor is the best profession there is because you are always helping people." ■

For a More Perfect Union

by Kathleen Hayashi, President and Education Chair, 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans-Club 100

On Memorial Day 2026, on the 250th birthday of America, please reflect and honor all military men and women who died for our freedom and for our country. As we honor America's history and hope for its future, we are reminded that a strong country needs to correct errors and continue to improve "to form a more perfect union" as envisioned in our Constitution.

On Jan. 26, 2026, I was fortunate to see continuous improvement for the USA in action when the US Army Pacific (USARPAC), in partnership with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH), honored seven World War II UH Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets during a posthumous commissioning ceremony at Ke'ehi Lagoon Memorial State Park. This action by the US Army corrected an error of the past and is highly commendable "for a more perfect union."

With the hysteria of war, Americans of Japanese ancestry (AJA) were unjustly discriminated against, accused of sabotage and endured mass incarcerations, which crushed their self-esteem. AJA ROTC cadets attending UH were forced out of the program and deemed "enemy aliens" solely because they looked like the Japanese enemy. Later, when they were allowed to join the US Army, many did. Seven were killed serving their country



in the AJA 100th/442nd unit and never had a chance to re-enter the ROTC program to become officers. The former cadets: Staff Sgt. Grover Nagaji, Sgt. Howard Urabe, Sgt. Robert Murata, Sgt. Jenhatsu Chinen, Sgt. Daniel Betsui, Pfc. Hiroichi Tomita and Pvt. Akio Nishikawa. They were posthumously commissioned to second lieutenant officer status.

The 100th and 442nd were fierce soldiers and loyal Americans and would overcome America's initial betrayal to become one of the most decorated in US military history. In

1948, President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 that desegregated the military—one of the first acts of civil rights in America—due to members of the segregated unit proving their loyalty.

We owe so much to these AJA trailblazers who, despite being betrayed by their country, still put their lives on the line for "a more perfect union."

We are proud of America for acknowledging and correcting prior decisions. Happy 250th and God bless America! ■

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by Jarrett Kitaoka & Randy Ihara, The Ihara Team of Keller Williams Honolulu

JUNE 16
Care That Meets You Where You Are: Understanding Palliative and Hospice Care
by Lesley Milligan, Navian Hawaii

JULY 21
Fall prevention Training
by David Hrobochak, EnPhysio Health

AUGUST 18
Senior Living Options Seminar
by Cynthia Arnold, Generations Magazine Publisher

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Celebrating the Hispanic Culture

by Haley Burford



Since more than 1,500 years ago, Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) have welcomed immigrants from every corner of the globe, cultivating and perpetuating the tapestry of diverse cultures that make up our islands. In this ninth article of our ongoing series, we focus on Hispanic heritage, how a few of the different cultures arrived in the Hawaiian islands, their traditions and celebrations such as the Hawaii Hispanic Heritage Festival and Cinco de Mayo.

Hispanic Arrival in Hawai'i

The first person of Hispanic heritage to arrive in Hawai'i was Spanish adventurer Francisco de Paula Marín near the end of the 18th century. With a vast array of skills at his disposal (interpreting, negotiating and advising the king), he quickly adapted to life in Hawai'i. He is also credited with introducing and planting many of the crops Hawai'i is now known for: pineapple, coffee, mango and more. A few years later, cows were given to King Kamehameha III as a gift, but the king had to request backup from Mexican *vaqueros* (cowboys), who worked with local paniolo and taught them to handle the cattle. Thus began a steadily increasing flow of Hispanic people to the Hawaiian Islands. At the peak of the sugarcane industry, in the wake of two hurricanes in Puerto Rico in 1899, the first group of 54 Puerto Rican men came to work in the sugarcane fields. Only 14 years later, Hispanic immigrants numbered over 9,000. Today, people of Hispanic heritage make up about 10% of Hawai'i's population.

Culture and Holiday Traditions

Hispanic cultures include Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central/South American, Domini-

can and other Latin American/Spanish countries, but the first two are most prevalent in the islands. As a result of Spanish colonization, both cultures speak Spanish and predominantly practice Catholicism, so Christmas is a significant holiday. Noche de San Juan (St. John's Night) is a major Puerto Rican celebration held annually on June 23 to honor Saint John the Baptist, the island's patron saint. There are two well-known and widely practiced cultural celebrations for those of Mexican descent. Cinco de Mayo (May 5), commemorating the 1862 Battle of Puebla, is celebrated with vibrant parades, mariachi music, *baile folklórico* (folkloric dance) and authentic Mexican cuisine. Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead on Nov. 1 and 2), honors deceased loved ones. And, of course, every celebration includes food: pasteles/pastele stew, tacos, horchata, gandule rice and more.

The biggest cultural festival is the Hispanic Heritage Festival hosted by Hispanic Events Hawaii, held on Oct. 10 on O'ahu. The Puerto Rican Heritage Society has also hosted the Puerto Rican Festival for the past two years in July on O'ahu, featuring live music, dancing, pasteles, arroz con gandules and more.

For more information, see the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Hawaii's website (hcchawaii.org) and the Puerto Rican Heritage Society's Facebook page (facebook.com/Boricuas.Hawaii/) as well as *Generations Magazine's* Facebook page (facebook.com/genmag808) and website calendar (generations808.com/calendar) for community events and opportunities. ■

The next article in this series will feature the influences of Tahitian culture in Hawai'i.



Ceviche à la d'Victor

by Victor Roman

Growing up, ceviche was always served at gatherings or parties during hot summer days. It's also perfect for a potluck contribution. Everyone loves it!

The first time I made this recipe on my own, I was in my second year of college, missing home and my mom's ceviche. It was spring break, perfect weather, and I wanted something energizing before going to the beach. I bought the ingredients, called my mom for assistance and made it. It came out perfect! My roommates and I devoured it with chips. What I really like about ceviche? It's really easy to make. It's refreshing and it can be for pūpū or the main dish.

This recipe is the basic ingredients that are distinctively "ceviche." Every Hispanic culture has its own signature version. Make it your own!

Ingredients

- 1 3-lb. bag fresh shrimp/seafood
- 2 cucumbers (or more)
- 1 red onion or
- 2 large shallots (for a sweeter taste)
- 1 bunch cilantro (chopped)
- 8 limes (approx.)
- 4 tomatoes (regular or Roma)
- salt (to taste)

Prep time: 1 hr. (approx.)

Serves: 6–8 small bowls



Directions

Shrimp/seafood preparation: Tear the heads off and shell the shrimp. Devein the shrimp by slicing the back open and scrapping out the vein-like digestive track. Cut the shrimp/seafood into bite-sized pieces and place in a mixing bowl.

Marinate: Squeeze all of the limes and pour the juice into the bowl of shrimp/seafood pieces—enough to just cover them. Let the mixture sit in the refrigerator for 30 to 45 minutes until the shrimp/seafood is opaque and firm.

Vegetable preparation: While the shrimp/seafood-lime mixture is marinating, chop the vegetables.

Bringing it all together: When the shrimp/seafood is ready, mix with the chopped vegetables. Add salt to taste. Add more ingredients to taste. And to personalize it further, add avocado, sweet peppers and mango (as shown above) to your taste. Serve with corn tortas (corn cakes) or chips.

¡Provecho! (Enjoy your meal!) ■

Do you have a favorite recipe and story to share? For consideration, include a photo and mail them to Generations Recipe, PO Box 4213, Honolulu, HI 96812, or email them to Cynthia@generations808.com.

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The Art of Shōganai: Shifting Gears

by Debra Lordan, GM Senior Editor

David Murata, a resident of Kula, Maui, has been a persistent presence on local tennis courts for over three-quarters of a century—well into his 90s. Recently, David has decided to hang up his racket at age 95, an incredible accomplishment and milestone.

To say that the sport increases longevity is an understatement. Tennis is known to extend life expectancy by nearly 10 years... what some call the “bonus years.”

“David has repeatedly said that tennis is what keeps him alive,” say fellow players Tom Liu and Pearl Rockett. But after 77 years of enjoying the sport, David stopped playing when he felt that his balance was declining. “It was a natural transition due to my age and capabilities,” David candidly says.

David started playing tennis around 1948 at Konawaena High School, when a family friend’s father introduced him to the game. Throughout his tennis career, David remained competitive and injury-free, playing on many USTA league teams on Maui. “But my strength decreased as I got older and I had to be careful not to fall on the court,” he says. “I also relied on my partners more since I could not move as well.” So he served as team captain when he was unable to compete at the higher levels.

David not only brought his skills and smiles to the court; the “garden guru” regularly blessed his fellow players with a bounty of beautiful fruits and vegetables that he painstakingly tended on his Kula farm. He has been described as a generous, kind and compassionate gentlemen—both on and off the court.

What kept him coming back decade after decade was that he “liked the game and the people that I played with.” He says he will miss being active and spending time with his tennis friends—Monty Tester, Tom Liu, Pearl Rockett, Don Booth—and many others he has played with over the years.

“He was the captain of several of the teams I played on,” says Monty. “He was a very good, fair



David Murata and long-time tennis partner Monty Tester are two of Maui’s class acts. David’s advice for those just starting tennis is “to practice as much as you can and play with different and better people—if they are willing to play with you.”

captain, keeping us organized on our trips to Kona and O’ahu for USTA sectionals.”

“David’s small frame masked his towering competitiveness, his prowess, his smartness, his total concentration, and his unsolicited cheering after he made a point,” says Pearl.

She says he lives life and played tennis utilizing the Asian culture belief of shōganai: “it is what it is—the situation cannot be altered, worrying about it is pointless and moving forward is the best option.” “He moved on when life showed its nasty ways, he held his head up high and believed in the power of God,” says Pearl. “He never dwelled on the little things.”

“Even in his 90s, David was always fun to play with,” says Don. “He remembered the score better than us 60- and 70-year-olds. He was competitive and loved to report the set scores to his family when his team won. But win or lose, David was always a model of good sportsmanship. He is a wonderful example of a generous and kind man whom we could all learn from.”

Besides the good times with his friends, his most cherished memories include “winning games that I didn’t think we could win.” He says he doesn’t remember much about his opponents... but one can bet they remember him. This polite player with a good-natured giggle wielded a wicked, left-handed slice serve so extreme that



There’s a new kid in town: David Murata has joined a gateball group that plays on Tuesday and Friday mornings in Kula: (L–R, front row) his daughter, Jody Singsank; Doris Ventura; Marsha Williams; (back row) Norma Haicsi (in back of David); Faith and Jim DeBuhr. PC: Arthur Ventura

shamelessly shake his fist at me showing me that he ‘got me!’ It was a wonderful time of togetherness and sharing the tennis courts with David. He is my idol. I will miss playing with him.”

Only time could stop this dynamo. The keys to David’s longevity in sports is to stay healthy and active, but to also be realistic about his limitations as he got older and avoid wasting energy on uncontrollable events. “I am okay not playing anymore due to my limitations,” says David. “Although aging takes away some things you just can’t do anymore, keep active doing the things that you can do.”

He has now shifted his attention to another thinking person’s sport—gateball—several times a week (generations808.com/gateball-revived). Best of luck to his opponents... They will need it! ■

John McEnroe would have been jealous. And like McEnroe, this unassuming senior was indeed a fierce competitor.

“I remember seeing his joy as he whacked that tennis ball and got a winner off of me,” says Pearl. “His serious face broke out into a huge grin—more like a smirk—and then he would

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Hawai'i's Unique Memorial Day Celebrations

by Pi'ilani Shimabuku, GM Intern

Since the beginning of World War II, over 400,000 service members have lost their lives in combat. To honor those who paid the ultimate price to save and protect our nation and values, Memorial Day in Hawai'i is marked by deeply moving, unique traditions blending cultural, spiritual, patriotic elements and military reverence. Hawai'i's Memorial Day is distinctive compared to the rest of the country, with lantern floating ceremonies that draw thousands to honor the departed. And in addition to traditional Memorial Day parades, Hawai'i honors fallen service members by placing thousands of handmade flower lei on their graves.

O'AHU: ★ *The Shinnyo Floating Lantern Festival* at Ala Moana Beach (lanternfloatinghawaii.com) reflects our state's multicultural demographic by blending Buddhist practice and Native Hawaiian tradition. Participants can pay tribute to a loved one who has passed or spread a message of peace and hope by releasing their own lantern at sunset. The ceremony begins at 6:30pm on Memorial Day.

★ *The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific* at Punchbowl, also known as "Pūowaina," was established at the end of World War II to honor veterans who have fought in the Pacific Wars. Mayor Rick Blangiardi will host a special ceremony at 8:30am on Memorial Day (honolulu.gov/dpr/mayors-memorial-day). The ceremony will include the 70-year tradition of adorning each gravestone with a freshly sewn lei. The City and County of Honolulu is asking for donations of tī leaves, plumeria/crown flowers and volunteers to make the 38,000 lei needed for the ceremony.

★ *The Hawai'i State Veterans Cemetery* in Kāne'ohe (lake.com/events/hawaii-governors-memorial-day-ceremony) also holds an annual Memorial Day ceremony to honor over 15,000 fallen service members. The event typically includes the decoration of graves with lei, which is supported by community donations and volunteers to ensure every grave is honored.



★ *The American Gold-Star Families Memorial Day Parade* recognizes the sacrifices of families whose loved ones have died. The parade will begin at Fort DeRussy in Waikīkī (memorialdayparade.com/the-parade).

★ *The Pearl Harbor National Memorial* (pearlharbor.org) will also honor our nation's veterans. Tours are offered on the USS Utah (BB1) and USS Oklahoma (BB37) and a live dive will take place at the USS Arizona followed by a commemorative ceremony.

KAUAI: ★ *The Kauai Veterans Cemetery* in Hanapēpē (lake.com/events/memorial-day-lei-draping-in-kauai) will also hold similar Lei of Aloha ceremonies.

MAUI COUNTY: A traditional, community-led lei placement event is expected to take place at the ★ *Maui Veterans Cemetery* in Makawao, typically starting in the morning around 9am on the Saturday prior, May 23, 2026.

Kaunoa Senior Center volunteers make lei to be placed on graves. Check mauicounty.gov/254/Kaunoa-Senior-Services in May.

HAWAII: ★ *The 22nd Annual Celebration of Life* lantern floating event (tinyurl.com/BigIsland-May24LanternFloating) will be held at Reed's Bay in Hilo, Hawai'i. The free community event also features Bon dancing to honor loved ones with remembrance and reflection.

These events foster a deep sense of community, reflection and gratitude throughout the islands. ■



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What Your Loved Ones Should Know

by Annette Kam, Author, WAIT—Don't Die Yet!



Annette Kam's in-laws enjoy an engaged and loving time with their second great-grandchild, focusing on family, affection and fun.

Six months later, finding care for my mother-in-law brought another surge of decisions layered over grief. Then came their home and 60 years of memories, paperwork and possessions to sort.

Grief did not arrive gently. It competed with deadlines, phone calls and responsibilities. I would solve one problem only to face another. For two years, I lived more than a hundred "I wish I had known" moments that weighed me down from sunup to sundown. Cancel a phone too soon and verification codes disappear. A landline in one name only can stall everything.

My in-laws were not careless. How could they prepare us for what they didn't know? I gained knowledge only because I was forced to. When my mother-in-law passed two years later, I finally understood what needed to be done, which made it easier to handle.

How many families believe they are prepared—until they are standing where I stood?

Have the important, much-needed conversations now. Label the keys. Share the passwords. Clarify the small things down to the detail.

This important preparation is much more than paperwork. It is how we care for the people we love after we are gone.

For more information about *WAIT—Don't Die Yet!*, email buckwun@aol.com, call 808-454-7871 or visit annetekam.com. ■

“When my time comes, everything is here,” he said. Long before his death, my father-in-law sat us down and opened his safe, carefully walking us through the important documents inside. Legal papers were signed. The funeral was prepaid. He had done what responsible people do. He had prepared us.

He had done everything right so we would avoid probate. When he passed, I felt calm, believing the hardest part would be missing him.

I never realized how unprepared I was until I was living it—grieving, exhausted and navigating details I never imagined would fall to me, blindsided by mundane things no one thinks of.

The first sign: a missing checkbook needed to pay bills, followed by a key ring heavy with unlabeled keys. We became landlords overnight without knowing tenants' names or rent amounts. Then there were crucial phone numbers we didn't have, passwords we didn't know and even a request for their marriage certificate.

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Celebrating King Kamehameha Day

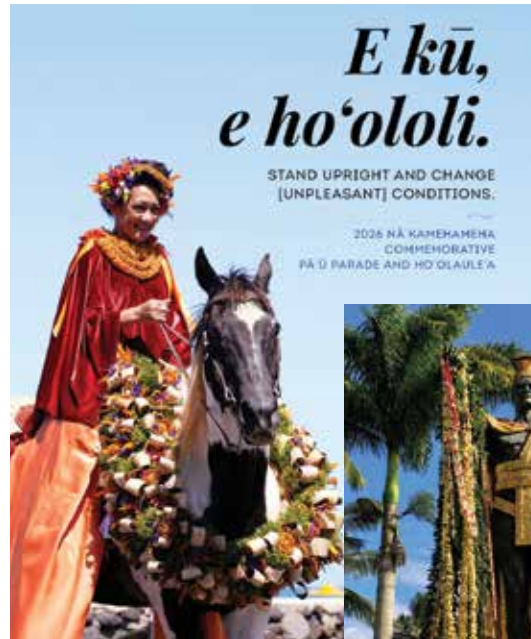
by Pi'ilani Shimabuku, GM Intern

Our islands form the only US state to celebrate their monarchical history. To honor his grandfather, King Kamehameha V inaugurated King Kamehameha I Day on June 11, 1872. The legacy of the sovereign nicknamed “Kamehameha the Great” is that of a powerful warrior and beloved ruler who successfully united the Hawaiian archipelago in 1810, ending a decade-long pattern of inter-island conflict. This year’s festivities on June 11 will mark the 109th King Kamehameha Day. This year’s theme, *E kū, e ho’ololi*, means stand upright and change unpleasant conditions.

Festivities usually include a procession by the Hawaiian Royal Societies, an organization commissioned by Kamehameha V, whose purpose is protecting, preserving and perpetuating the Hawaiian culture. Floral parades feature floats and pā’ū riders on horseback. Pā’ū riders wear long, flowing skirts (*pā’ū*) representing the different islands with specific colors and flowers. Ho’olaule’a, a festival that celebrates Hawai’i’s culture, include local food, Hawaiian music and more.

Traditionally, each year, a statue of Kamehameha I is adorned during the lei-draping ceremony that attracts large crowds of locals and tourist alike. Each island’s Hawai’i Civic Society prepares nearly 100 20- to 30-foot plumeria lei for the ceremony.

Thomas Gould had been commissioned to sculpt the first statue of Kamehameha I. In 1883, upon completion of the 8.5-foot statue, it was sent via ship from Europe to the judiciary building in Honolulu. Although thought to be lost after the boat was shipwrecked near the Falkland Islands, it was recovered later that year. With a replace-



ment statue already unveiled in Honolulu, this statue was relocated to the district of Kohala on the Big Island, where Kamehameha I was born.

The 18-foot King Kamehameha replacement statue stands in front of Ali‘iōlani Hale in Waikīkī, the main stage for the festivities on O‘ahu. As with all statues of His Majesty, the spear clutched in Kamehameha’s right hand symbolizes his ability to protect his people. His left hand is outstretched as a sign of welcome and peace.

In 1997, a 14-foot statue of Kamehameha I was erected in Hilo.

Commissioned by the Princeville Corporation on Kaua‘i and built by Italian sculptor R. Sandrin in 1963, it was originally intended to be erected on island; however, residents pushed back on these plans as Kaua‘i and neighboring Ni‘ihau were the only islands not conquered by force by Kamehameha I during his campaign to unify the islands.

The County of Maui traditionally hosted Nā Kamehameha Commemorative Pā’ū Parade on Front Street and a ho’olaule’a at Banyan Tree Park in Lahaina. The one-time capital of the Kingdom of Hawai’i is still recovering from the devastating 2023 Lahaina wildfires and celebrations have since been relocated to Kahului in Central Maui. The June 20 parade will start at Baldwin High School and end at Queen Ka‘ahumanu Center and will be followed by a ho’olaule’a.

Visit the Hawai’i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts’ website at sfca.hawaii.gov/resources/king-kamehameha-celebration-commission for more information and updates on how you can join these celebrations. ■

Zumba for Your Golden Years

by Dominic Niyo, Editor–The Pinion, BBH Ambassador and HSSC Representative, McKinley High School



Join Dale and his Zumba Gold group every Thursday morning at 10:30am.

recalls. What started as a personal refuge soon became a mission to share movement as joy, connection and wellness. His classes grew from a way to cope with grief into a life-long commitment to community service through movement.

Regular movement is at the heart of Zumba Gold’s impact. For many kūpuna, the class helps ease morning stiffness, improves balance and

Every Thursday morning, Pearlridge Center in O‘ahu hums with the sounds of ABBA and Elvis. On the second-floor stage near the former Sears and Jeans Warehouse, kūpuna and caregivers gather from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., finding their rhythm—some standing, some seated, all moving together. At the center, Dale Delos Reyes leads his Zumba Gold class with a smile and a simple instruction: Just keep moving and have fun.

Unlike traditional Zumba, Zumba Gold is designed specifically for kūpuna and those who may need extra support, offering a safe, enjoyable way to stay active. The choreography is slower and modified, with a focus on balance, range of motion, coordination and joint safety. Dale, a licensed Zumba Gold instructor, keeps routines intentionally simple—no more than three moves at a time. He offers chair-based options for participants with mobility concerns, vertigo or recent surgeries. His classes are free and open to everyone—walkers, wheelchairs and first-timers alike—creating a space where everyone can move confidently and enjoy the music.

For Dale, the dance floor began not as fitness, but as healing. A few years ago, he lost his wife, Yolanda, and found himself searching for a way forward. One day, just steps from his home, he noticed a class pulsing with music and energy. He joined, stood close to the speakers and let the rhythm carry him. “I just let everything go,” he

keep joints moving without strain. The steady rhythms support coordination and gentle cardio, but the real changes show up in everyday moments—standing a little steadier, walking with more confidence and feeling less alone. Dale notices it each session as shoulders drop, breathing settles and cautious movements begin to ease. He says he can see it by the end of class, when most leave with brighter faces and increased energy.

What began as a way to heal has become a practice of showing up—creating a space where people can move at their own pace. “If you only know one move, do that one move,” he tells newcomers. “Just feel the music.” Today, Dale brings that same spirit of care to kūpuna across O‘ahu, offering free classes at Island Family Christian Church from 9:30 to 10:30am on the first three Fridays of each month. He also leads private sessions at senior housing sites, including The Plaza Waikīkī and its sister locations across the island, with schedules varying by facility. ■



Voters 50-Plus Can Make a Difference!

by Keali'i Lopez, AARP Hawai'i State Director



mail to confirm your registration. If you didn't receive a postcard, call your county elections office.

When you turn in your ballot, you also want to make sure that you didn't forget to sign it so that it will be counted.

Sign up for the state's Ballottrax service to get text messages confirming receipt of your ballot at Hawaii.ballottrax.net.

For more information on voting, registering to vote and how you can vote in person, go to the state Office of Elections website at elections.hawaii.gov or call 808-453-VOTE (8683). ■

Every two years, many kūpuna will do something important and elected officials should pay attention to the issues we care about.

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Older voters turn out in record numbers during elections. In the 2024 election, voters 50 and older made up 52% of the electorate nationally. In Hawai'i, the percentage is even higher—nearly 60% of votes cast were from people 50 and older.

You can help us make sure that candidates know which issues you care about. Candidates will likely be knocking on your door or holding forums. Let them know what you think.

We've heard from kūpuna across the state about the importance of Social Security, Medicare support for caregivers, affordable housing for kūpuna and their children and grandchildren, high prescription drug prices and fighting fraud and we're sharing your concerns with the candidates we talk to.

The reason we have power during elections is that we vote and you should make sure that you vote and that your vote is counted.

In Hawai'i, we have an all-mail-in election. If you've moved since 2024, make sure your new address is updated with your county elections office so you'll get the correct ballot mailed to you. If you're registered to vote at your current address, you should get a colored postcard in the

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Celebrating Mothers and Fathers

If you have a story you'd like to share or a topic you'd like to read, contact Sherry Goya.

808-722-8487 | sgoyallc@aol.com

May and June are the months when we can celebrate our mothers and fathers. This year, Mother's Day is on Sunday, May 10th and Father's Day is Sunday, June 21st.



Google writes that Anna Reeves Jarvis is most often credited with founding Mother's Day. After her mother Ann died on May 9, 1905, she set out to create a day that would honor her and moms as a group. She began the movement in West Virginia, which prides itself on hosting the first official Mother's Day celebration three years later at Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill recognizing Jarvis' idea as a national holiday to be celebrated each second Sunday in May.

The nation's first Father's Day, according to Google, was celebrated on June 19, 1910, in the state of Washington. However, it was not until 1972—58 years after President Wilson made Mother's Day official—that the day honoring fathers became a nationwide holiday in the United States on the third Sunday of June.

My youngest sister, Cathy Kawamura, created a beautiful and heartwarming book about our mother and father as a Christmas gift to her siblings. It had photos of our parents as youngsters, dates of very old photos, wedding photos of our parents and all six siblings, as well as many nice extended-family pictures. Hope you have memories as I do of my heritage.



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Cultural Storytelling in Cloth

By Haley Burford, GM Staff Writer
Photography by Ric Noyle

Nake'u Awai, a pioneer of Hawaiian fashion, was a pivotal figure in the Hawaiian Renaissance (mid-1970s onward), merging authentic Hawaiian culture with modern design by creating the first commercially successful Hawaiian prints from native flora, making traditional aloha wear accessible, and influencing a generation of designers to embrace indigenous aesthetics and stories in fashion. He championed local creativity, incorporating elements like ohe kapala, kāhili, and 'ulu into his designs, making garments that fostered deep cultural pride and connection for Native Hawaiian people.

Upon entering his O'ahu shop at 1613 Hough-tailing St. where he's outfitted the people of Hawai'i for decades, Nake'u Awai, age 87, sits at his desk, sporting his classic outfit—an aloha shirt, slacks and signature neckerchief. His hair is dyed blue. It is fading, he says, and he needs to get it redone soon. He is surrounded by varying textures of memorabilia: receipts, books, curated pieces of art, holiday photos from customers and family and, of course, racks and racks of clothing, lovingly designed by his hand and heart. On shelves around the front of the shop are framed photos of people who walked in his fashion shows, of hula dancers whose hālau he outfitted for Merrie Monarch, of memories with friends and fellow designers, of precious moments with family. In this space, Nake'u has intertwined his personal life with his professional life, conveying to anyone who walks in that he has lived a life as intricate and meaningful as his designs.

According to his niece, Marvi Rosehill Ching, Nake'u's mission statement has always been “to be able to serve and present to the world designs that are special to him—which is every single one.” Carrying with him the sentimentality and homesickness he felt while living overseas, Nake'u set about designing clothing by and for Hawai'i's people. He was the first to locally create his prints with native flora and motifs that would later become known as Hawaiian print. He revived and popularized the holokū and mu'umu'u, producing the first to be sold at Carol & Mary, an iconic store that specialized in women's fashion, and Liberty House, making sure his pieces were accessible to all.

He's never felt the need to advertise himself, letting the designs do the talking. On the surface, Nake'u's designs are beautiful and speak to an admiration for the beauty of Hawai'i, but upon closer inspection amidst the memory archive that is his store, it becomes clear that his designs are also his way of memorializing his love for home, in one way, what Marvi calls a “fabric footprint.” From his very first design to his recent last, the legacy of Nake'u Awai is also the legacy of the clothing.

An Artist in Bloom

Nake'u grew up with his three siblings in O'ahu's Punchbowl, the son of a land abstractor and an educator. Already, in his youth, he took interest in the arts. The Golden Wall Theatre supported his love for performance and the YWCA was where he learned hula

and tap dance. He eventually earned a degree in drama from the University of Washington, venturing to New York where he lived for several years, joining a touring company for *Flower Drum Song*. He sang and danced in Europe, Reno and Hollywood in the years that followed.

It would be a while before he was known as “the grandfather of Hawaiian fashion.” Nake‘u learned macramé from a friend, and it was then that he started to gain an awareness of designing clothing, making a business of selling macramé. In Hollywood, Nake‘u’s choreographer mentor, Claude Thompson, expressed faith in his costuming abilities, granting him his first opportunity to outfit a group of performers. Later, on the set of a Don Ho TV special in Lahaina, Nake‘u realized he could make a career out of fashion design.

He finally found his way back home in the early 1970s. At the time he was entering the scene, local fashion was only local in name. Fabrics were imported from Japan, England or the

US, and designs only had to have ambiguous and colorful flowers to be deemed “Hawaiian.” This disconnect between local clothing and local communities found its origin in missionaries bringing outside fabric with them to the islands, pushing kapa (Hawaiian cloth made of beaten mulberry fibers) to the periphery, spreading the influence of Western design elements in Hawai‘i.

Enter Nake‘u Awai. At the start of his design career, he first utilized palaka fabric for its historical relevance in clothing plantation workers and paniolo, unifying the people of Hawai‘i across ethnicity and class. As he kept on, he worked with different cloth blends — cotton, linen and the like. When he wasn’t designing, Nake‘u was selling his work at craft fairs, organizing fashion shows (his first being at Hawaiian Mission Houses in 1974, a place that holds many memories for him), outfitting hālau and more. He went about bringing into a physical reality his love and longing for his home through his designs, turning love into a life’s work.

Bougainvillea

His very first design is still in the shop today, and brings back memories of companionship and collaboration in his earlier years as a designer. “My first print was ‘Bougainvillea,’ Nake‘u says, “which was done by a university friend of mine. After that, the next artist that did prints for me was a guy named Hiko Hanapi,” a Native Hawaiian artist, educator and community activist who advocated for the furthering of Native Hawaiian art. Another artist: “The artist that did most of my prints became a long-time friend of mine, Richard Vyse.” Vyse was a fashion illustrator who did high-fashion sketches for Liberty House and Carol & Mary. “The first thing I got from him was at an art show in some shop in Hawai‘i Kai; I bought a drawing of Princess Ka‘iulani.” Then, he points at something on the wall above him, hanging cozily amongst the oodles of pinned photos and pieces of paper. There, on the wall, was a drawing of the princess. “It’s not that one,” he reveals, “it was a sketch. But, anyway, I bought the Vyse piece, and that’s how I met Richard Vyse.”

Marvi grabs one of the mu‘umu‘u hanging on the wall, a retro green and purple Boat Day garment. Boat Days in Hawai‘i historically refer to the festive, mid-20th century (1920s to 1950s) arrivals of Matson luxury liners at Honolulu Harbor that departed from San Francisco. The Boat Day style was designed with kūpuna in mind — specifically, Nake‘u was thinking of his mother. The sleeves are regal and the off-shoulder yolk with ruffles adds an elegance to the mu‘u. “Most of them have a signature dot pattern. That’s how you can figure out that it’s a Richard Vyse, because he does his with dot, dot, dot, dot.” Today, Vyse is still producing art in Maryland. “He’s around Nake‘u’s age,” Marvi says, “so, when they met, they were very young spring chickens, and they grew together.” Nake‘u adds to that, “He’s a survivor, like I’m a survivor, too.”

As Nake‘u speaks, Marvi excuses herself to grab another dress from somewhere in the orderly jungle of racks of clothing. A couple of minutes pass until she returns, a beautiful white dress in blue flower print in hand. “Bougainvillea: This was his very first print, in the very fabric. Feel the cloth,” she says, bringing it closer for all to see and feel. The dress is cummerbund-style, brought in at the waist to accentuate the figure — truly a



vintage piece. Once she puts the dress up on the wall, Marvi and Nake'u begin a back-and-forth discourse about when and by whom it was worn. "Was it that one? No, they're wearing Papalina. So many photo albums. There's another one, way in the back. I remember that." Designs and clothing are outward-facing items; the meaning behind them usually becomes secondary to the look they create. To Nake'u, though, his designs and clothing gesture to everything within—memories of friends, collaborators and home.

Horseback accentuates fuller figures, affirming Nake'u's promise to make clothes by and for the people of Hawai'i, ensuring that everyone feels beautiful, regardless of shape or size.

Nake'u has always been an admirer of Princess Ka'iulani. Another one of his designs was named in honor of her, The Kaiulani, with its full sleeves and high neck, similar in look to the dresses the princess often wore. "The State Foundation gave me a scholarship to do an event on the life of Ka'iulani, so I did a whole lot of research on her, and as I'm doing the research, I fell in love with her," he says.

Known for her intelligence, free-spirit and beauty, Princess Ka'iulani was the daughter of Princess Miriam Likelike, and the last heir apparent to the throne of the Hawaiian Kingdom as Queen Lili'uokalani's niece. She loved to surf and paint, and made the acquaintance of many, including a poet, Robert Louis Stevenson, whose poem about the princess calls her "the island rose, light of heart and bright of face" ("Ka'iulani," 1889). In Nake'u's program, "I had a wahine who played

Ka'iulani. The artist who did the Bougainvillea print, her brother was an actor at the University of Hawai'i—he played Robert Louis Stevenson, Ka'iulani's buddy, who used to visit her." The last segment of the program was her passing away at the age of 23 from sickness that came on after horseback riding in a rainstorm without a coat. For her entire life, Princess Kai'ulani embodied the will to be free, fighting for herself, her people and the independence of her kingdom until the end. Nake'u still has a strong connection to the princess today. Like Ka'iulani, Nake'u advocated for his art and his home with fearless, steady devotion.

Overcoming the Odds

To get to this point, though, Nake'u has faced many challenges. It isn't easy running a small business that (successfully) strives to be fully locally designed, produced, sold and worn in an industry as competitive and commercial-leaning as fashion. In fashion design, risks are required. Now, he's made a name for himself, but in the beginning of his design career, Nake'u took a back seat to businesses like Carol & Mary and Liberty House in the production world because he was just a small business, and because he prioritized maintaining his creative expression rather than following the trends. To Nake'u and his sister, Marvi's mother, it was always about creativity.

Over the years, people in the business have tried to deceive and betray him, and to them, Marvi says, "Screw all you guys. We came, we conquered and we're still standing strong. That says a lot about his depth and it tested his vulnerability. I am, as his bulldog, to protect him, till forever. Because nobody's gonna do that again." When you hold true and steadfast to what you believe in, nothing's gonna shake you—Nake'u's and his family's story is testament to that.

The rhythm and relationships that have developed over the years matter; there is only one printer doing silk screens in Hawai'i, and Nake'u built and maintained that partnership into the present day. Everything is still produced in Hawai'i with cotton blends. Nake'u has always believed in making local and buying local, a continuously implemented belief that sets him apart from those who have followed. When asked about how he sees fashion changing with the times, Nake'u says, "I'm glad to see people are still interested in mine." From outfitting dancers in Hollywood to singers like the Brothers Cazimero, Nake'u has truly embodied what it means to live and love local.

Taking Care of Business

Nowadays, Nake'u continues in his duty of watching over his shop and serving customers. He doesn't design anymore, nor does he do fittings—Marvi and Gerald Chun take care of that—but he still stays involved from behind the desk. Gerald is in charge of the shop's social media account, and the shop recently opened an online website where customers can order pieces



Ka'iulani on Horseback

Nake'u is no longer working on new designs, but his most recent include ones named "Kona Road" and notably, "Ka'iulani on Horseback," a strong and wide fashion show print. A dress with the print on it sits prettily and boldly on a mannequin, originally released in violet on powder-puff blue fabric. Another way in which the design is unique is that it is a "difficult" print, because the design is so extensive and detailed that in order to properly show the scene of Princess Ka'iulani riding in its full flourish, yards of material must be used. In other words, Ka'iulani on





As the only wahine in the family, Nake'u's niece, Marvi Rosehill Ching, acknowledges her kuleana and vows to keep her uncle safe, healthy and happy. She is also committed to protecting the enduring impacts of his oeuvre, his legacy—the designs that are special to him, which is every single one.

a small, local one—Nake'u and his family maintain that the beauty of the clothing will always stand the test of time (and cameras).

His designs have an “if you know, you know” cultural relevance. Nake'u's never been flashy or felt the need to advertise himself, so those who know a dress is a Nake'u piece are in on a chic fashion “secret.” Many of his dresses are passed down from generation to generation, adding to this “insider” quality. It also helps that the clothes are made well enough to last decades. “Everybody that comes in says, ‘I’m holding onto it because I know it’s gonna last a lifetime,’” adds Marvi. “There’s been kūpuna who have walked in with their mu’u on looking brand new. You take care of it, it will take care of you—and it’ll live longer than you.”

He still hosts his fashion shows. “Coming up, I’ve already thought of a Christmas show,” he says, pride apparent in his voice. “Last year, I did it at the Ko’olau Ballroom, and we’re planning to go back again.” This year’s event is called “Come! Ra-pa-pum-pum,” “because I’m gonna use the ipu,” he adds, demonstrating playing the gourd drum on the surface of his desk. Many of the people who have taken the stage in his fashion shows before still do to this day. “Singers, dancers, some sing *and* dance.” Singer, dancer, whatever—everyone who walks Nake'u's shows must perform. “That’s the story of showbiz.”

The Beauty of Nake'u Awai

At 87, Nake'u is still thriving and going strong— independent, living at home with a companion and “still very on it,” according to Marvi. Having been in business for almost 53 years, Nake'u has always abided by his mission statement to present his designs—all special and all reminiscent of his home—to the world. This sentiment sprouted from the feelings he experienced when he was overseas performing in Europe and the continental US. But, this begs the question, what exactly was it that made him choose to “stay home” for the rest of his life? After going from place to place

in his professional performing career, Nake'u unveils the reason why he came back home and stayed for good: “I saw that my parents were much older. I felt that I should come home and take care of them.” Said plain and simple, Nake'u came home, making a life's work out of passion and loyalty.

“Picture, now, you’re coming home and everything is special,” Marvi says. “People ask, ‘What is your most special design?’ And he says, ‘I don’t know.’ I think to myself, ‘Yeah, you don’t, because everything is genuine and everything is a treasure to you.’” That’s the first thing to remember about Nake'u.

The second is that everyone should be able to wear a Nake'u piece, no matter their size, frame, whatever. To be able to keep the same styles for everyone has always been his thing. For example, the earlier mentioned purple and green boat day mu’u is a piece styled in the '70s and '80s. “It’s resurrected itself,” Marvi says. “It’s kind of retro and old, but it is appealing to a certain few. That’s the beauty of him—he will not change.”

The third thing to remember is that, in doing this work, Nake'u has documented decades of native and indigenous flora that may eventually go extinct due to changes in climate and an increase in invasive species. Like the poem Stevenson wrote for Princess Kai’ulani, when you truly care about a person or a place and can see the beauty in it in any light, art pours from the fingertips and stands the test of time.

Being a fashion designer, like any form of artistic expression, literally requires wearing your heart on your sleeve and putting your all into what you create. The clothing that Nake'u Awai has masterfully produced has been worn by grandparents, parents and children, a cycle that will certainly continue into the future. People wear Nake'u's designs, his love letters to home, to fashion shows, graduation ceremonies, to work, to the beach and so on, donning the man's artwork in the land upon which they are based and crafted. His audience, then, shares the same appreciation for the islands that he feels.

Through memories etched in cloth, he has designed an archive people can put on. What it has always been about, for Nake'u Awai, is the remembrance of home, and the hope to never forget the beauty of Hawai'i. ■



directly to their door. Nake'u remains faithful to his style and his designs, but sometimes they tweak certain styles to see if the younger generation would be interested, like turning what was originally a dress into a blouse and culottes to have more casual, coordinated pieces that can be mixed and matched.

So, it is obvious that Nake'u's brand has evolved in the technological sense, but the traditional, core aspects of the business have remained constant. One example lies in the clothing itself: When posting pictures of a blue garment, “if you don’t have the lighting right,” explains Marvi, “what is really a beautiful chambray blue turns out cream on social media. There’s nothing like true blue.” While being able to adapt to changing times is invaluable to any business—especially

Ask the Doctor: Help for Bladder Issues

by Michelle C. Leach, MD, Kaiser Permanente Moanalua Medical Center

In this ongoing column, Kaiser Permanente doctors will answer commonly asked questions.

As someone who deals with bladder issues all the time, I want to start with one important thing, right away: bladder control problems are nothing to be embarrassed about. Many folks in Hawai'i experience changes in bladder control as they get older, yet too many delay getting care because they feel uncomfortable bringing it up or assume it's just something they must accept.

If bladder leakage is bothering you in any way, that's reason enough to talk to your doctor — especially if it's happening regularly, waking you up at night, causing sudden urges you can't control or making you avoid activities you enjoy.

Seek care if you have pain, burning, blood in your urine or a sudden change in symptoms — all signal issues that need prompt attention.

Many of these issues can be handled by your primary care provider, but sometimes they'll need to refer you to a specialist like me. These conversations are routine for all of us and you're never the only patient asking.

Can I prevent issues with bladder control?

Not every bladder problem can be prevented, but many issues can be improved with a few changes. Gentle pelvic floor exercises, staying physically active and not waiting too long to use the bathroom can make a difference. Constipation is another common factor, as it can put extra pressure on the bladder. It's also important to review your medications with your doctor once a year, as some prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and supplements can worsen bladder symptoms.

One myth I hear often is that drinking less water will improve things. Especially in Hawai'i's warm climate, that idea can backfire. When you're dehydrated, urine becomes more concen-

trated and can irritate the bladder. What helps is steady, balanced hydration throughout the day rather than cutting fluids altogether.

Do coffee, tea or local foods make bladder problems worse?

For some people, certain foods and drinks can irritate the bladder — but this varies from person to person.

Caffeine, including coffee and iced tea, is a common trigger for bladder urgency. Citrus fruits and juices, spicy foods and acidic dishes (adobo, kimchi and tomato-based dishes such as spaghetti and stew) may also affect some people. That doesn't mean you need to give up the foods you like. The key is paying attention. If you notice symptoms tend to appear after you consume certain foods or drinks, small adjustments might help. Try switching to half-caf or decaf, choosing milder seasonings or enjoying smaller portions.

Enjoying local food with loved ones is an integral part of living in Hawai'i. But moderation and awareness often go a long way.

A final word

Bladder control problems are not something you must deal with alone. If symptoms are affecting your comfort, sleep or confidence, talk to your doctor. Together we can find ways to support your health and quality of life. ■



DR. MICHELLE C. LEACH is a urologist at Kaiser Permanente Moanalua Medical Center. She earned her medical degree from Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia and completed a general surgery internship and urology residency at the University of California, San Diego, where she served as chief resident. Dr. Leach is passionate about improving quality of life through minimally invasive and innovative urologic care, helping patients restore health, comfort and confidence.

Kaiser Permanente will cover heart health in the next issue. If you have a medical question for the doctor, email: cynthia@generations808.com.



Alzheimer's 'Mammogram Moment'

by LJ R. Dueñas, Executive Director, Alzheimer's Association

Breakthroughs in early detection, treatments and lifestyle research are changing how we understand and address Alzheimer's disease, offering new opportunities.

One of the most promising advances is the development of blood tests that can detect Alzheimer's disease earlier and more easily than ever before. These new blood tests can identify proteins linked to the disease such as amyloid and tau, potentially allowing doctors to detect the disease much earlier in primary care settings, not only in specialty clinics.

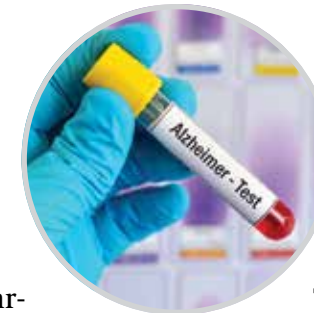
Early detection is critical because new treatments are most effective when the disease is identified in its earliest stages.

Therapies designed to target the underlying biology of Alzheimer's have also come into play. These treatments work by removing or reducing the buildup of amyloid in the brain, one of the hallmarks of the disease.

While these therapies are not cures, studies show they can slow disease progression by roughly 30% in some patients, marking the first time treatments have been able to meaningfully change the course of Alzheimer's.

At the same time, research is demonstrating that prevention and brain health may be more within our control than we first believed. A study led by the Alzheimer's Association is the largest clinical trial in the US examining how lifestyle changes influence brain health. It found that a comprehensive program combining physical exercise, improved nutrition, cognitive stimulation/brain exercises, social engagement and management of cardiovascular health improved thinking and memory in older adults at risk for cognitive decline. Participants who followed a more structured lifestyle program experienced even greater benefits.

For communities in Hawai'i, these advances are particularly important. Our state faces a rapidly aging population and increasing rates of Alzheimer's and dementia. Efforts such as the HANAI Memory Network bill aim to strengthen coordination



among healthcare providers, caregivers and community organizations to ensure people living with or who have concerns with memory loss can access early diagnosis, care and support.

Hawai'i is also poised to contribute to the future of Alzheimer's research.

The University of Hawai'i's John A. Burns School of Medicine continues to expand opportunities for students. We hope the association's UH dementia research bill will accelerate funding capacity through the federal government to enable access to clinical studies/trials, allowing local residents to participate in trials that help advance new diagnostics, treatments and prevention strategies.

Together, these advances in science and care signal a shift from simply reacting to Alzheimer's disease to detecting it earlier, slowing its progression and potentially preventing it altogether.

The takeaways from this: This is our "mammogram moment" for Alzheimer's. Just as early screening transformed outcomes for breast cancer, new diagnostic tools like blood tests could make early detection for Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia the standard of care.

If you have concerns for yourself or a loved one, speak to your doctor or call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at **800-272-3900**. ■

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Get Help Navigating Cancer Screenings

by Laura Rodriguez, Executive Director, American Cancer Society–Hawai‘i and Guam



(L–R) Shareen Turner, Shirley Kauhahao and Dawn Turner: three generations of Native Hawaiian women on Hawai‘i Island with breast cancer.

Support During Treatment

If cancer is diagnosed following a screening, frequent treatment and travel can add challenges. The American Cancer Society’s Hawai‘i Flight Program provides one free flight per year to a patient and their caregiver traveling for active treatment. Call the ACS helpline to arrange flights through Alaska and Hawaiian Air. For patients traveling to O‘ahu for treatment, the Clarence T.C. Ching Hope Lodge Hawai‘i provides a safe, welcoming space for guests to stay free of charge while receiving care.

Taking the First Step Toward Prevention

The American Cancer Society works across Hawai‘i and the Pacific to provide information and support for prevention, screening, treatment and recovery. Learn more about cancer prevention, screening, treatment and support at every stage at cancer.org or call the helpline.

To reach the ACS team in Hawai‘i, contact Executive Director Laura Rodriguez at Laura.Rodriguez@cancer.org.

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Did you know that an estimated 9,420 people in Hawai‘i will hear the words, “You have cancer,” in 2026? And approximately 2,720 residents will not survive their diagnosis, making cancer the second leading cause of death in the State of Hawai‘i.

Cancer screening and detection not only catches cancer early, it can help save lives. While cancer screening can raise questions about access, transportation and more, the American Cancer Society (ACS) has a wealth of resources for people nationwide, including Hawai‘i.

Starting a Conversation About Screening

Listening to your body matters, but screenings detect cancer before symptoms appear and provide the full picture. The Kauhahao family, three generations of Native Hawaiian women diagnosed with breast cancer, urges, “Cancer screening is important because early detection doesn’t just save lives — it protects families, friends and futures of our lāhui.”

Talk with your healthcare provider to review family history and lifestyle factors, determine recommended screenings, how often they should be done and where to schedule them.

Overcoming Barriers to Screening

Cost, transportation or finding a provider can delay screenings, particularly where access to specialists varies by island. For questions about screening, call the American Cancer Society’s 24/7 Cancer Helpline at 1-800-227-2345.

Preventive Care for a Healthy Smile

by Dr. Vinh Tran, Dental Director, Hawaii Dental Service



Taking care of your smile is an important part of maintaining your overall health and quality of life. Regular oral health screenings allow your dentist to examine your mouth for early signs of decay, gum disease, abnormal tooth wear, alignment issues and even oral cancers. Catching these problems early gives you and your dentist time to treat issues before they become serious, saving you from painful and expensive procedures down the road.

As we age, preventive screenings become even more critical. Regular checkups reduce your risk for cavities, gum disease, receding gums, tooth sensitivity and tooth loss. Maintaining good oral health may also help prevent or manage serious conditions like diabetes and heart disease, which are more common among older adults.

Many dental benefits plans cover preventive services with little to no out-of-pocket costs, making regular visits more affordable. Professional cleanings remove plaque and tartar that daily brushing and flossing can miss, while routine exams catch small problems, preventing extensive treatment.

Don’t put off your dental care. Regular exams and cleanings protect your overall health while saving you time, money and discomfort. Schedule your next dentist appointment today to keep your smile healthy for years to come. ■

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Adult Day Care: A Solution for Aging in Place

by Kathy Wyatt, RN, MSN, MBA, LNHA, President, Hale Hau'oli Hawai'i Adult Day Care

Statistics show that most kūpuna want to age in place, in the comfort of their own home. But isolation and inactivity can lead to rapid decline in seniors' well-being. Adult day care offers socialization, physical/mental stimulation and other benefits. It combats loneliness, improves cognitive function, provides exercise and offers an engaging social setting.

For the caregivers, adult day care offers much needed respite from their caregiving responsibilities. Some centers open as early as 6am, giving caregivers the ability to get to work on time. Late pick-up times significantly reduce stress caused by traffic, work meetings or unexpected emergencies. Adult day care also allows caregivers time to tend to their own personal activities and appointments, reduces stress and provides peace of mind



knowing their loved one is in a safe, secure and loving environment.

A normal day at an adult day care facility may include arts and crafts, music, games, exercise, personal care, social interactions with peers and a lot of fun! It also can include a hot lunch and snacks. Clients are assisted with medications, if needed.

As long-term care prices increase, adult day care serves as a cost-effective and engaging solution for caregivers. Fees are significantly less than other options, while providing safety, reducing isolation and preventing caregiver burnout. ■

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Supporting Adult Children Caregivers

by Dan Haire, President and CEO, Navian Hawaii

As we grow older, many of us rely more on our adult children for help — with transportation, medical appointments, household tasks or managing health concerns. While this support is often given with love, it can also place a heavy responsibility on family caregivers.

Adult children who care for aging parents may balance many roles: employee, parent, spouse, caregiver. The emotional and physical demands can be significant.

Kūpuna can acknowledge that caregiving may be stressful by asking, "How are you doing?" which can open the door to honest conversation.

Seniors can also support caregivers by sharing responsibilities, when possible, keeping medical information organized, communicating prefer-



Jennifer Oyer and her mom, Karen Pape

ences clearly and discussing future care wishes before a crisis arises. Small actions, like preparing a list of important phone numbers and medications, can ease the daily burden.

Just as importantly, encourage your adult children to take breaks and accept help from others. Caring for a loved one shouldn't be left to one person.

Caregiving is an expression of aloha across generations. By supporting those who support you, families can stay stronger, healthier and more connected through every stage of life. ■

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Thriving in Place

by Reiko Lewis, Founder, Ventus Senior Concierge Services

Hawai'i's homes hold stories, carrying memories of raising children, holiday celebrations and laughter. For many of our kūpuna, remaining in that home is deeply personal.

Today, more seniors are choosing to age in place, yet many are doing so alone. Children may live far away. Friends may no longer drive. Neighborhoods change. What once felt lively can become too quiet. Independence is precious, but without connection, can turn into isolation.

Having lived with and supported my 93-year-old mother, I have seen how much the small things matter—regular conversation, help navigating schedules and doctor visits, guidance with nutrition for meals she can enjoy or simply knowing someone will check in consistently. These steady rhythms create calm. They restore confidence. They allow seniors to remain in control of their own lives.



Aging should not mean shrinking one's world. As Hawai'i's population continues to age, we must reimagine what community truly means. Supporting seniors who live independently is not only a family responsibility—it is a societal one. When we build thoughtful systems around our kūpuna, we strengthen the fabric of our islands. With intentional connection and steady presence, growing older at home can remain a chapter defined by dignity, purpose and belonging. ■

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When Care Feels Like Friendship

by Tricia Medeiros, Chief Operating Officer, The Plaza Assisted Living

When memory changes, familiar routines can begin to feel confusing or unsettling. A once confident parent may repeat questions, struggle with transitions or feel anxious in new settings. For families, these moments often bring concern and a deep desire to preserve a loved one's dignity and sense of self.

In Hawai'i, an estimated 62,000 unpaid caregivers provide more than 111 million hours of support each year, care valued at nearly \$2.8 billion. These figures reflect both the scope of memory loss and the growing need for compassionate, relationship-centered support.

In response, memory care has evolved beyond task-based routines. One widely respected philosophy is the Best Friends™ Approach, co-created



by dementia care expert David Troxel. This model emphasizes empathy, patience and intentional connection, encouraging caregivers to relate to individuals living with memory loss as they would a trusted friend.

Understanding a person's life story is central to this approach. Knowing personal history, preferences and lifelong habits helps caregivers create familiar routines and meaningful moments. Even as memory changes, the need for connection remains. Relationship-centered care ensures that identity, spirit and dignity stay at the heart of daily life. ■

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These questions are common, and many seniors feel overwhelmed trying to answer them alone. In Hawaii, countless families face these decisions every year. Without a plan, many are forced into rushed choices after a health event, creating stress for everyone involved. Planning ahead brings clarity, protects your equity, and gives your family peace of mind.

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As seen in



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Myths & Realities of a Reverse Mortgage

As with many financial products, reverse mortgage loans can be complicated and there may be a number of misconceptions about how the product works. Do you know the myths vs. the realities?

Myth No. 1: The lender owns the home.

You will retain the title and ownership during the life of the loan, and you can sell your home at any time. The loan will not become due as long as you continue to meet loan obligations such as living in the home, maintaining the home according to the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) requirements, and paying property taxes and homeowners insurance.¹

Myth No. 2: The home must be free and clear of any existing mortgages.

Actually, many borrowers use the reverse mortgage loan to pay off an existing mortgage and eliminate monthly mortgage payments.^{1,2}

Myth No. 3: Once loan proceeds are received, you pay taxes on them.

Reverse mortgage loan proceeds are not considered income or otherwise (though you must continue to pay required property taxes). However, it is recommended that you consult your financial advisor and appropriate government agencies for any effect on taxes or government benefits.

¹ You must still live in the home as your primary residence, continue to pay required property taxes, homeowners insurance, and maintain the home according to Federal Housing Administration requirement. Failure to meet these requirements can trigger a loan default that may result in foreclosure.

² Your HECM loan will accrue interest that together with principal will need to be repaid when the loan becomes due.

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Myth No. 4: The borrower is restricted on how to use the loan proceeds.

Once any existing mortgage or lien has been paid off, the net loan proceeds from your HECM loan can be used for any reason. Many borrowers use it to supplement their retirement income, defer receiving Social Security benefits, pay off debt, pay for medical expenses, remodel their home, or help their adult children. You worked hard for this asset and prudence, along with budgeting, should be the proper approach to enjoying proceeds received from your HECM loan.

Myth No. 5: Only poor people need reverse mortgages.

The perception of the reverse mortgage as an assist for the "poor" borrower is changing - many affluent senior borrowers with multi-million dollar homes and healthy retirement assets are using reverse mortgage loans as part of their financial and estate planning, and are working closely in conjunction with financial professionals and estate attorneys to enhance the overall quality and enjoyment of life.



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Advice for the 'Sandwich Generation'

by Michael W. K. Yee, Financial Advisor and Certified Financial Planner, Ameriprise

If you're between the ages of 35 and 60, you may be feeling a financial pinch from both your growing—or grown—children and your aging parents or in-laws.¹ You may also find yourself juggling your work commitments and the expectations of family members for your time and support. As a member of what's known as the "sandwich generation," you're not alone.

Children today leave home later than in previous generations and less permanently. Today, children tend to live at home longer—or move out and return over time, sometimes with their own children in tow. And parents tend to live longer, often spending 25 years or more in retirement. If you're wondering how to keep yourself financially on track, the following strategies may help.

■ **Pay yourself first.** Instead of paying your bills and other expenses and save what's leftover, automatically route a portion of your paycheck to your 401(k), Roth IRA or other retirement savings account—and encourage your working children to do the same. This ensures you're regularly investing in your future financial security.

■ **Talk openly about finances.** Discuss the basic tenets of sound money management with your children to help them develop good financial habits at an early age. According to an Ameriprise Financial study, 70% of parents involve their children in family financial decisions to help instill values and principles,² allowing them to see where they can contribute. It's equally important to talk with your parents about their plan for meeting their future financial obligations.

■ **Make sure financial and legal documents are up to date.** You, your parents and your children must determine whether you'll need a Durable Power of Attorney, a Healthcare Proxy, a Living Will and a Last Will and Testament. Also, review and update beneficiary designations on investments and insurance policies (they may outweigh what is stated in a will). Keep a list of your financial accounts and passwords—know where your parents and children keep theirs.



■ **Discuss long-term care insurance.** In-home health care costs or a lengthy nursing home stay can be very costly. If you or your parents don't have long-term care insurance, it may be wise to look into it to see if it fits with your family's goals and options.

■ **Explore resources to help offset costs.** If your children are attending college, research the scholarship opportunities or work-study programs that may be available to them. Also, find out whether your parents qualify for any federal, state or local benefits for their care.

■ **Set limits.** If you have the desire and financial resources to support adult family members, it's important to balance your generosity with ensuring you have enough money to last through retirement—and support your family's own financial independence. Be clear with your children and parents about how much financial support you are realistically able to provide.

Managing the responsibility that comes with being a member of the sandwich generation can be difficult. For help understanding how to plan for your future while caring for those who matter most to you, consult a reputable financial advisor. An advisor can help you create a financial strategy that makes sense for your unique situation. ■

MICHAEL W. K. YEE, CFP®, CFS®, CLTC, CRPC®
1585 Kapiolani Blvd., Ste. 1100, Honolulu, HI 96814
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Michael W. K. Yee, CFP®, CFS®, CLTC®, CRPCTM, is a Private Wealth Advisor/Financial Advisor with Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC in Honolulu, Hawaii. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 42 years.

¹Pew Research Center, "More than half of Americans in their 40s are "sandwiched" between an aging parent and their own children". www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/04/08/more-than-half-of-americans-in-their-40s-are-sandwiched-between-an-aging-parent-and-their-own-children

²Ameriprise Financial Parents & Finances Study, 2025.

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Advance Care Planning & Directives

by Stephen B. Yim, Esq., LL.M., & Monica M.M. Yempuku, Esq. – Yim & Yempuku, LLLC

If a parent becomes incapacitated, adult children are frequently called upon to serve as healthcare advocates for their parents. Advance care planning is the ongoing process that includes discussion, reflection upon and preparation for future medical decisions based on personal values.

An advance care directive, a legal document resulting from this process, records those wishes, and are widely promoted as a tool to ease the decision-making burden. This legal document allow individuals to communicate their preferences for future medical care in the event they can no longer express their wishes. Advance directives typically include two key components: end-of-life decisions and a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care (DPAHC). End-of-life



decisions enable individuals to specify which treatments they would accept or refuse near the end of life, while a DPAHC authorizes another person to make medical decisions on their behalf if they become incapacitated.

Advance care planning can promote autonomy, dignity and a sense of control over future medical care, while increasing the likelihood that treatment aligns with personal preferences. However, the presence of an advance directive does not necessarily improve family dynamics after a parent's death or prevent conflict among surviving adult children. ■

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What to Consider Before Buying a Condo

by Terrance M. Revere, Esq., Revere & Associates, LLLC



Hawai'i has a higher percentage of its population living in condominiums than any other state. Reasons include the relative scarcity of land and the time and expense of buying and maintaining single-family homes, making condos attractive, especially for the elderly.

But like any investment, condos come with risks. Here are some things that people may wish to think about before buying into a condo.

■ **Are you ready for common decision making?** Obviously, it's great to have a built-in community, not only for the fellowship that it brings, but also the shared costs. Why pay for the cost to maintain a pool by yourself when you can contribute only a small percentage of that expense and still enjoy a swim?

However, if you have only lived in a single-family home and are used to making your own decisions, keep in mind that with a condo, you are buying into (literally and figuratively) a democracy. Some condo democracies are great, but many are extremely dysfunctional. And sometimes it takes democracies a long time to recognize and correct their errors.

■ **What do the reserves look like?** Hawai'i was the first state to require mandatory savings on the part of condominium boards so that money is set aside to maintain the building and meet future expenses. Unfortunately, while that law exists on paper, it is often not adhered to. When it is ignored, owners can be hit with large special assessments or loan payment obligations. Make sure the reserves are fully funded per the law.

■ **The absence of maintenance fee increases is not a good thing.** One board that was successfully sued bragged about how maintenance fees didn't go up for more than 10 years. Of course, over the course of those 10 years, wages rose, insurance increased and other costs went up. This resulted in things being neglected. At one point, the condominium had more roof leaks than it had condominium units.

■ **Newer is not always better.** We have all seen the gleaming new buildings, but quite often, the shiny new towers have significant construction defects. Some of the developers, contractors, architects and engineers who build them shower politicians with campaign contributions. These may not be disconnected phenomena. Do campaign contributors want something for the money they are shelling out, maybe in the form of laws that are designed to protect them from claims by consumer homeowners? While it's always nice to buy into a brand-new building, prospective purchasers might want to wait a few years to see what defects are discovered by those living there.

■ **Will the building remain accessible for your current and future needs?** Especially as we age, accessibility becomes more paramount. While this is usually less of a problem in newer buildings that are supposed to be built pursuant to modern codes, that certainly is not the case for older buildings. A two- or three-story walk up might not be a problem when you're in your 40s, but it could very well be an issue in your 70s. Additionally, the Fair Housing Act usually only requires that a building allow an accommodation, it is not usually required to pay for it. You as the unit owner can obtain reasonable accommodations, but usually you need to pay for them.

Do your research and work with local professionals to ensure a successful, informed purchase. ■

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Terry Revere is an attorney with Revere & Associates who specializes in representing Hawai'i's homeowners.

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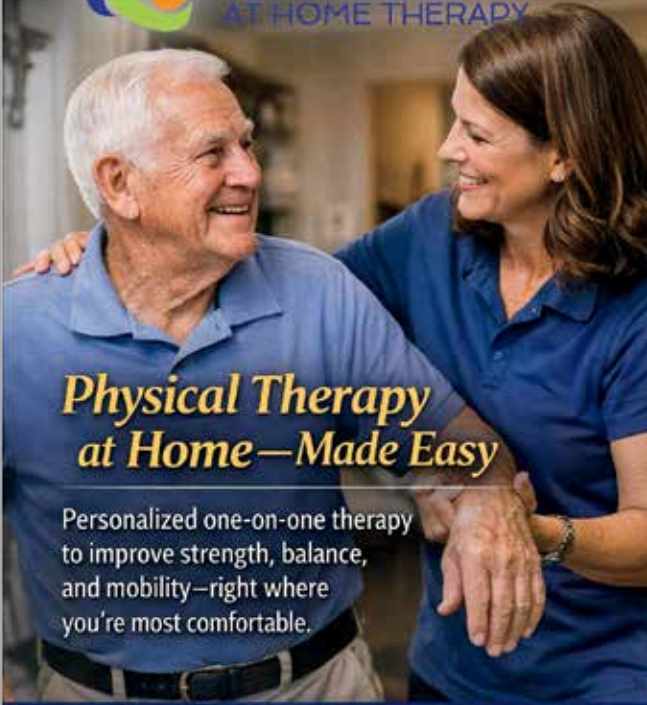
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