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Kaua'i Ocean Discovery

page 2



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Rediscovering Kaua'i Ocean Discovery

By Jean Souza

The Kaua'i Ocean Discovery has reopened to the public. After a two-year closure due to the pandemic, the facility at Kukui Grove Center in Lihu'e is back again sharing the traditions and knowledge of our ocean connections and inspiring stewardship.

The facility has interactive displays, hands-on activities, videos and cultural exhibits that bring awareness and education on humpback whales, Hawaiian monk seals, sea turtles, albatrosses and other creatures residing in and around our oceans.

Located in the center of Kukui Grove — between the Food Court and the ocean-themed Keiki Korner play area — the Kaua'i Ocean Discovery first opened in January 2020. It seemed fitting, given Kaua'i's location related to the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and its proximity to Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

When the facility originally opened back in January 2020, in its first two months this admission-free learning center generated a flurry of activity with a visiting "walk-in" humpback whale exhibit, new photographs and videos not seen on Kaua'i before, displays on ocean critters, keiki activities and guest speakers sharing knowledge of our cultural roots and practices and our natural resources. The third annual Kaua'i OceanFest was held in and around Kaua'i Ocean Discovery during the humpback whale season and Hawaiian language month. The vision, with more than 10 years in the making, had come true.

Then in March 2020, Kaua'i Ocean Discovery closed its doors due to the pandemic, like similar ocean learning centers around the county. But on-site manager Jean Souza kept the vision alive during the pandemic and planned for its return.

"When we couldn't open our doors, we found other ways to connect — through articles in For Kaua'i Newspaper, "Grab-&-Go" Ocean Learning Kits for students and families to do at home together, a giant shark wall in the play area, and daily ocean programming broadcast on Hō'iike Kaua'i Community Television Channel 54. I even studied video production at Hō'iike to find ways to share content with families," Souza said.

As a partnership between NOAA, the State of Hawai'i, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and Kukui Grove Center, NOAA COVID rules applied, said Souza, explaining they had to be patient until the facilities were permitted to reopen.

"With the reopening, we are offering an expanded suite of rotating outdoor outreach activities along the walkway fronting KOD. The activities, which are free and available to all, have focused on the latest voyage of the Hōkūle'a to Tahiti (by making wooden models of the voyaging canoe and learning about wayfinding and the use of the star compass), promoting awareness of current turtle nesting and hatching season (with sea turtle jigsaw puzzles), learning about fish anatomy (by making gyo-taku fish prints) and more," Souza said.

Indoors, there is a larger touch screen with lots of ocean content contributed by the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary. The touch screen is on loan from Hamline University's Center for Global Environmental Education and is a product of their collaborations with many partners on Kaua'i, including Ke Kula Ni'ihau o Kekaha and Kaua'i Museum. New content is in the works.

A greater variety of videos and webinars are playing on the large screen TV within KOD.

"One positive outcome of the pandemic has been the tremendous number of fascinating webinar and web story topics that are accessible to us. We can play all of them within Kaua'i Ocean Discovery. Also, we live stream NOAA undersea explorations," Souza said.

A new panel on ocean careers in NOAA has been erected and another one is on order.

More indoor learning materials will be introduced in the coming months, including STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, math) activities. In addition, more ocean-themed puppets and stuffies will be brought for use by keiki in the popular puppet show corner. Donations have contributed to an impressive collection of quality puppets, many related to the ocean and Hawai'i. Resumption of storytelling activities is also waiting in the wings for an appropriate time.

see Ocean Discovery page 4



Photo courtesy of Kukui Grove Center

Jean Souza, left, of Kaua'i Ocean Discovery and Melissa Warrack of Kukui Grove Center with marine wildlife props.



Jean Souza

Recent World Ocean Day activities focused on turtle jigsaw puzzles to promote awareness during Hawaii's sea turtle nesting and hatching season.



Matt McIntosh/NOAA

The opening ceremony in January 2020 honored traditional Hawaiian protocols.



Jean Souza

NOAA Hollings Scholarship Intern Abigail Seibel, left, chats with a student about her turtle jigsaw puzzle.



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On the cover: Left to right, Kaua'i Ocean Discovery volunteers Myrnalyn Villasita of the Kaua'i Foster Grandparents Program, Alfonso Murillo, and Kawahine Kau of the Kaua'i Foster Grandparents Program staff. Photo by Jean Souza

Ocean Discovery

from page 2



The opening ceremony in January 2020 included hula performed by students from a local Hawaiian charter school.

With the generosity of local photographers, many Kaua'i images have been incorporated into the display panels.

"After many years of conducting outdoor workshops and one-day events around the island, it's been great having a stable home base where the public can easily find us and where we can build upon programs with continuity, innovation and relevancy. We are all about science, service and partnerships," Souza said.

Melissa McFerrin Warrack, Kukui Grove Center Specialty Leasing and Marketing Manager, worked with Jean throughout the process and helped on the re-opening. And there is something quite special about this relationship.

"We discovered that Kaua'i Ocean Discovery is the first learning center within the National Marine Sanctuary System located in a shopping center. That's such an honor to be part of it. This is a great opportunity to show how we can support our community and inspire stewardship and meaningful connections every day, right here where we work, shop, eat and play," McFerrin Warrack said.

Community volunteers are an essential part of Kaua'i Ocean Discovery. A special group of seven Kaua'i residents have been advising on KOD operations and direction. All have served on the advisory council for the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary. Their input was integral to the planning and design of the facility, the first within the sanctuary system to be done completely in-house.

One of the advisors, Maka'ala Ka'aumoana, came from Kaua'i's North Shore for the re-opening.

"Kaua'i Ocean Discovery tells the story of our connections to our communities. The Hawaiian origin myth, the Kumulipo, provides a guide for discovery of these connections, and that is very important," said Ka'aumoana, referencing the display panel on the Kumulipo greeting guests as they enter, along with a map of the extensive Hawaiian archipelago.

"The number and scope of enriching activities would be much reduced without community volunteers," said Souza, who works with volunteers each day. "Their enthusiasm inspires us. It's great to see the kids of all ages light up when they've discovered something new."

Souza said adults who are willing to learn are welcome to apply as KOD greeters, and training is provided.

"We're here to be a resource for the people of Kaua'i — to raise awareness, to be inspired, and to promote responsible actions. We continue to implement measures that ensure a healthy and safe learning space for the public, partners, volunteers, and staff," Souza said.

Funding for Kaua'i Ocean Discovery comes from donations and from the federal budget through the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.

Contact Souza at jean.souza@noaa.gov for more information about volunteering and supporting outreach programs. Visit Kaua'i Ocean Discovery during its summer hours of Wednesday and Friday, from noon to 5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



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Unfolded by the water are the faces of the flowers

—'Olelo No'eau by Mary Kawena Pukui



Alakaina

July Spotlight: Trysen 'TK' Kaneshige, Multimedia Artist

By Char Ravelo

A Path to positive.

At the age of 15, Trysen <TK> Kaneshige was an easy-going teen when he discovered the art of lettering and calligraphy at a workshop, and he instantly knew he was meant to be an artist.

Trysen started drawing in middle school, and the workshop changed his life. With the help of the instructor who became his mentor, Trysen opened up a world of creative

happiness by developing his natural talent. After seeing how liberating it was to express oneself through art, he wanted to help others experience the same freedom of expression.

He thought about helping the students and his friends at school because opportunities for experimenting with art elements were limited. So, in 2013, Trysen took his thoughtful and insightful senior project from a sketch to a larger-than-life creative form that landed on the side of a two-story building. His idea was an art project that helped seniors to navigate the uncertainties of what happens after graduation – college or work? Today, an awe-inspiring-beautiful mural “Believe in Your Dreams” inspires every student on many levels, along parents, teachers and visitors of Kaua'i High School.

Underneath his passion, Trysen was working hard to overcome adversity. The project was mutually beneficial for his personal healing and recovery from a concussion he suffered while playing soccer that year. The brain injury caused headaches which made it very difficult to focus. He became overwhelmed, and it led to depression and suicidal thoughts. During this painfully emotional time, he turned to his art and the belief others had in him to push through.

With pen or paintbrush in hand, Trysen noticed focusing on the details of the design calmed him down. Calligraphy was like meditation that stopped the random thoughts and allowed him to see clearly what was needed to move forward. Guided by advisor Mrs. Aiwohi, and then Principal Mrs. Lindsey, alongside his family, mentors and friends, Trysen came through the darkness and finished his senior project humbled with appreciation for the support.

The Believe in Your Dreams mural and the Spray Away Meth workshop involved many community partners and sponsors to creatively help Kaua'i's

youth to become aware of the dangers of meth use.

This was Trysen's first of many leadership roles in collaborative art projects on Kaua'i, statewide and on the Mainland. The skills he gained by stepping out of his comfort zone to successfully work the back and front end of the projects (advocacy, coordination and logistics) gave him confidence to launch his own graphic design company. Equipped with a college degree in graphic design, a diverse portfolio and a reputation that precedes him, Trysen finds himself busy juggling clients and jobs. He enjoys running the business, meeting with people and helping them with logos, branding and promotional material. Trysen's gift is creatively putting thoughts to paper in a positive way.

“I listen to music, get into the flow state where time doesn't exist, and from there my mind stops random thinking and focuses on what feels right. When it is right, I feel it in my heart, feel happy and calm-minded,” Trysen said of his inspiration.

His mentor taught him that “art is from your heart, not always a skill. It's the passion and motivation of the work that matters most.”

This innovative artist with a passion for the positive is currently working on projects to inspire, encourage others and honor his ancestors. Giving back to his community and those who believe in him, his goals include opportunities to share his knowledge, mentor students and pay it forward.

Trysen's message today to all of us is:

Keep going!

Stay true to yourself and don't lose values as you learn to balance the business, jobs and community interests.

Do what you love, don't lose sight of it, and know you are not alone.

Trysen Kaneshige joined the ranks as a Leadership Kaua'i alumni in the summer of 2021. Before joining the cohort, Trysen had received two proclamations for Mayor Bernard Carvalho Jr. (2016) and Mayor Derek Kawakami (2019) for his inspirational work on Kaua'i. His LK experience helped him to reach his future goals by being able to challenge the process and step out of his comfort zone in order to grow. His biggest take away was knowing that you're not alone and the people you surround yourself help you to grow as a person.

Visit tkaytwodesign.com to see Trysen's portfolio.

Visit www.leadershipkauai.org today to enroll for Leadership Kaua'i Class of 2023.

• Char Ravelo is the Executive Director of Leadership Kaua'i, and can be contacted at info@leadershipkauai.org or (808) 246-8727.

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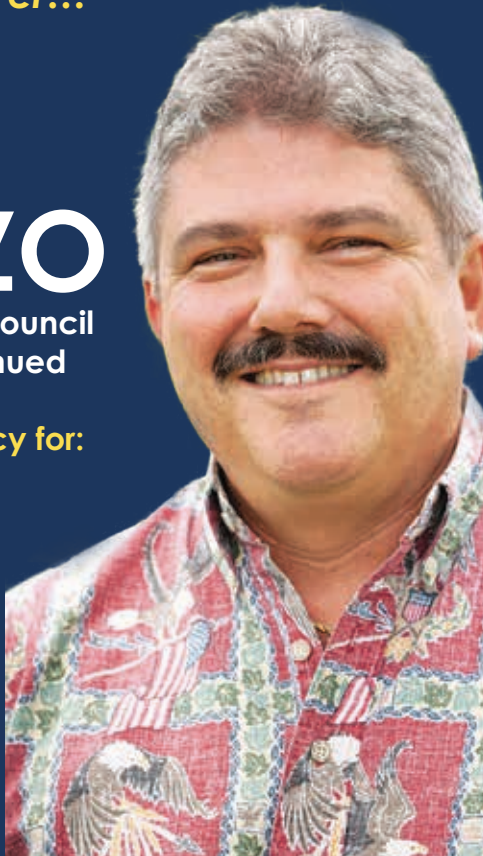
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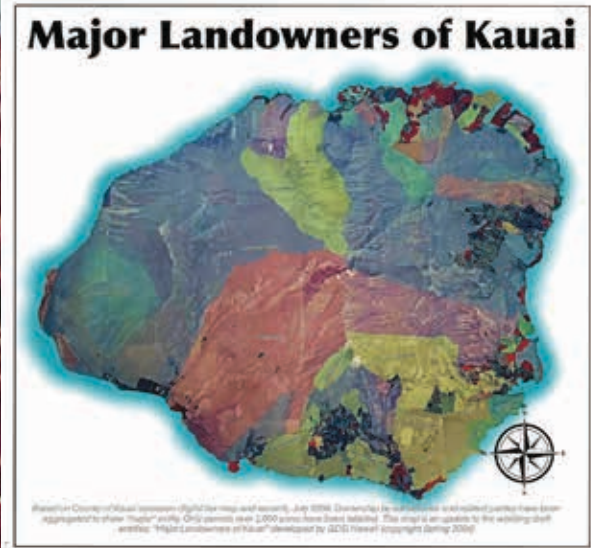
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Summertime, Together Again

By Virginia Beck

Summer Vacation! Beautiful skies are gracing the Islands, spreading the heavenly blue above, and the holidays from school are unleashing our keiki for summer fun, art programs, surfing, and ocean awareness programs and camping. The great outdoors lets them release their wild energy.

Our beaches have been a safety net for Hawaiian families, packing up and spending the day or days camping, swimming, fishing, picnics and gatherings of enormous multigenerational families escaping the heat to awnings and tents by the ocean. Often spontaneous music floats by.

Local houses are small by Mainland standards. Until the last 20 years size this was not a problem because folks always socialized outside. Air conditioning was open windows and doors. Generosity is a cardinal value of the Hawaiian culture, and sharing food is essential.

Which is why everyone brings enough for 20 people! Leftovahs!

In Hawaiian culture, food is given to us by the land, the 'aina, and the ocean, or moana. It isn't ours. It is given from the 'aina to share with others. The name Moana was chosen for the movie to show the power of the ocean. The adventure of a rebellious young girl coming to grips with her destiny, being chosen by the ocean itself to perform a heroic act.

For Hawaiians, the ocean was far more than a massive body of water; it was alive with power and life, the marine life, and the Hawaiian god Kanaloa. It granted such bounty to the humans who respected the power of the waves. It sustained their lives.

Mālamalama

For a life uplift, I simply listen to Auli'i Cravalho singing the reprise version of "Who knows how far I will go." Moana is facing the unknown.

None of us know what lies ahead, and reality reminds me that I have little control over what is before me. Faith is what keeps me going forward. Particularly when I have ran out of faith in my own abilities. Faith is for when we don't have any. We just trust life itself.

The generosity of our local communities, their goodwill and kindness, true aloha, revive my spirits whenever I have been doom scrolling the news, or have been inside too long. My husband knows to drag me out for a walk. Day or night, rainbows or stars show up.

The beauty, our children, and the glorious skies of Kaua'i refill our hearts with renewed love and energy for whatever comes next. There are no experts on the future, despite the claims of the media.

All our great technology and algorithms cannot predict the future 100 percent accurately. It will not save us. What will, are the simple everyday miracles. The tiny ones. Be on the lookout, or you might miss them!

Amazing how many little miracles happen every day. I like to think of them as love notes from God! Someone letting you into traffic. The child who spontaneous rushes to run over to help pick up something dropped. A new orchid blossoming. A seemingly dead 22-year-old Bonsai suddenly reawakens. Someone loves you. Or does a favor you didn't ask for.

Or my husband shows up with roses when he knows it's a tough day. In the end, it is not the technology that will save us. It is each other. Friends. Even strangers who step in to help without waiting to be asked.

This is the true spirit of community, one of Aloha.

• Virginia Beck, NP and Certified Trager® Practitioner, offers Wellness Consultation, Trager Psychophysical Integration and teaches Malama Birth Training classes. She can be reached at 635-5618.



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Status of Ke Ala Hele Makalae, Phase III

By Tommy Noyes

Planning, design, and construction of Ke Ala Hele Makalae, often referred to as East Kaua'i's bike path, is separated into six different phases.

The entire Ke Ala Hele Makalae concept entails using available Federal Highways Administration funds to connect communities along approximately 20 miles of Kaua'i's eastern coastline through an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, integrated walking and bicycling path system, built by the County of Kaua'i's Public Works Department, and managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Here's an update on the Kapa'a portion of the project.

Phase I consists of the paths and several amenities in Lydgate Beach

Community

Park. This Phase was opened for the public's use in 2004. Phase II, blessed in 2008, includes the amenities and the linear four miles of path along the coast from Lihi Boat Ramp in Kapa'a to the stub out near Kuna Bay, with a spur going up to a comfort station and trailhead at Kealia, on the makai side of Kuhio Highway.

On June 13, 2022 Michael Moule, PE, PTOE, Chief of Engineering, Public Works Department, County of Kaua'i provided the following details on Ke Ala Hele Makalae's status.

Construction continues extending Phase III of the path system, a much more complex project than Phases I and II. Phase III will eventually consist of a 2.8-mile-long contiguous path from Lydgate Beach Park to Lihi Boat Ramp. Additionally, work completed in Phase III includes the 2017 construction of the 0.4 mile long Kawaihau Connection and Elevated Boardwalk. Phase III is mostly complete.

The southern portion of Phase III now in service continues Lydgate Beach Park's path, crosses the Wailua River, parallels Kuhio Highway along Wailua Beach Park, follows Papaloa Road to the Coconut Marketplace, and currently stubs out at that commercial parking lot. The present gap starts at the Papaloa Road stub out and runs north approximately 0.6 mile to the recently completed path fronting the Sheraton Kaua'i Coconut Beach Resort.

Two segments of Phase III are yet to be completed. Ka'iwa Construction, Inc. is under contract with the county's Public Works Department for the construction of one of those segments. These segments include:

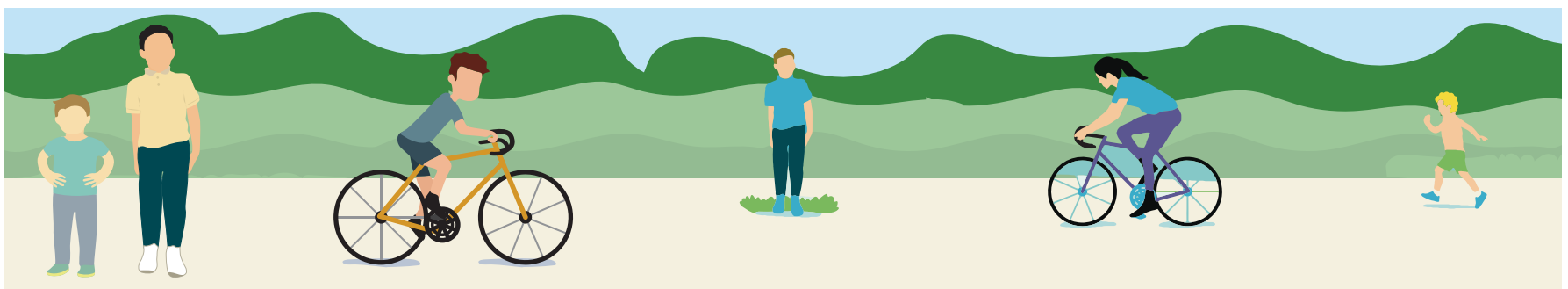
- **Improvement of the existing coastal public access right-of-way from Papaloa Road to the shore between the Kaua'i Shores and the Aston Islander on the Beach Resort properties,**
- **Building the segment makai of the Aston Islander on the Beach and Kaua'i Coast resorts, and**
- **Paving the trailhead parking area in the vicinity of The ISO Resort and Bull Shed Restaurant with pedestrian access to Kuhio Highway.**

Barring unforeseen complications, that construction should be completed within the coming nine months. That will leave an unimproved stretch along the coast approximately one third of a mile long.

A condition of the Coconut Beach Resort developers' permitting requires them to build the 0.3 mile long section of Ke Ala Hele Makalae on the makai side of their resort. No plan to initiate any construction on that site is currently on record with the County, hence no informed completion date for that segment is available. Despite being unimproved, the existing "soft surface" social trail is being used frequently.

Phases IV and V are planned to connect Lydgate Beach Park to Lihue's urban core and the status on those Phases will be addressed in a future article.

• *Tommy Noyes is Kaua'i Path's executive director, a League of American Bicyclists Certified Instructor and active with the Kaua'i Medical Reserve Corps.*





Tommy Noyes

The most recently completed segment of Ke Ala Hele Makalae crosses the Uhelekaawa Canal at Waipouli Beach Resort, leads makai towards the Bull Shed Restaurant, and parallels the shore makai of the Sheraton Kaua'i Coconut Beach Resort.



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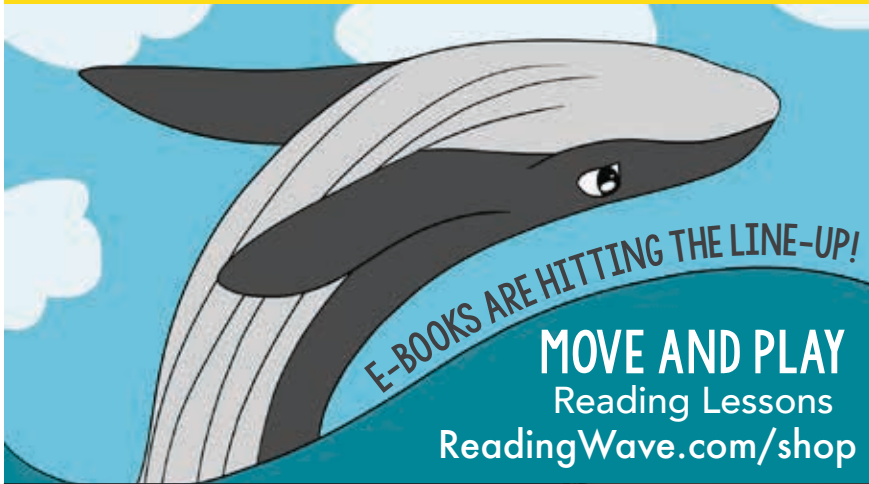
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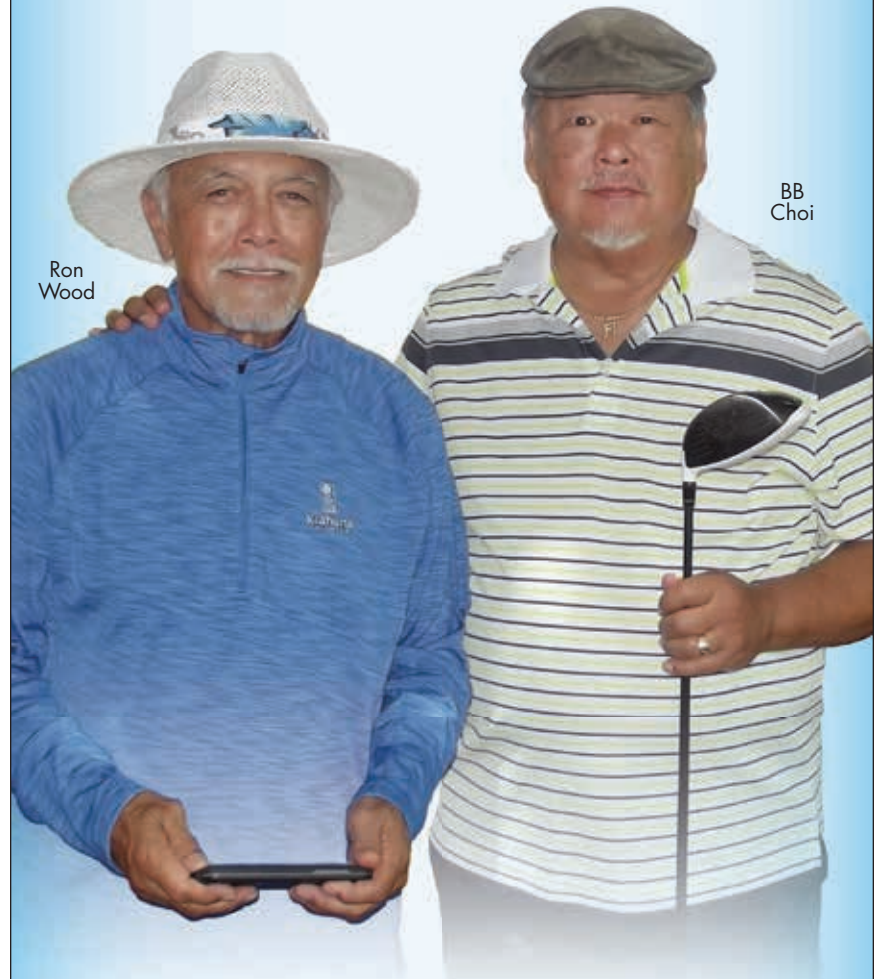
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