

island scene

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a legacy in dance



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Recipe for gratitude

Living life with gratitude allows us to notice little wins and can help improve health and relationships. Here's a basic recipe you can customize and make your own.

Ingredients

- 1 part observation
- 1 part appreciation
- 1 part self-expression

Directions

Note the good things that happen throughout your day and take the time to appreciate them. Express your gratitude through journaling, thank-you notes, acts of kindness, or anything that resonates with you. Repeat daily as needed.

For more tips on improving your well-being (and real food recipes), visit islandscene.com or scan the QR code.





BRAD GODA

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Local, convenient locations and hours of operation at hmsa.com/contact or scan the QR code below.



We're here with you.



aloha members,



You're going to read about a lot of special people in this issue, each of whom contribute to and enhance the magic of Hawai'i in their own distinct and special way. But how they do it is similar.

When I was coaching, I lived by a principle of "One Team," which is still how I choose to live my life. I demanded that my players play the game in that same way and still believe that was the most important driving force behind our mutual success. Accordingly, I now encourage our team here at HMSA to function in the same way.

Team over self.
Action over talk.
Results over credit.

Embedded in those nine words is the important balance and understanding that community good comes first, but that good only happens with the accompanying personal responsibility of understanding your role and doing that job well.

There is no "I" in "team," but there is one in "win." The ultimate goal is group success that benefits a greater good and a broader community, and that depends on individual commitment to personal excellence in the role that you play.

So, as you read about some of the special people in Hawai'i who are making this a better place to live, keep in mind the underlying philosophy that's driving their impact: No matter what you're doing, do it hard, do it well, and do it on behalf of others.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'M. Mugiishi'.

Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D., F.A.C.S.
President and Chief Executive Officer

island scene

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HMSA COMMUNICATIONS LEADERSHIP

Christine Hirasa
Kathy Chang
Anna Koethe Pavao

PUBLISHER/EDITOR

Lisa Maneki Baxa

ART DIRECTOR

Lawrence Esperanza

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

Caryn Saito

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Kristen Nemoto Jay

FOOD EDITOR

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WRITERS

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Craig DeSilva
David Frickman
Keely Kalama-Lakey
Anna Koethe Pavao
Michelle Liu
Summer Nakaishi
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Lynn Shibuya
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Fannie Niiyama
Garry Ono
Megan Wakayama
Brandon Young

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Alissa Mandich

CIRCULATION

Kay Yasufuku Tam

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Stefanie Park, M.D.
Andrew Perry, M.D.
Jeffrey Tom, M.D.
Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D., F.A.C.S.

NUTRITION ADVISERS

C. Alan Titchenal, Ph.D., C.N.S.
Joannie Dobbs, Ph.D., C.N.S.

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Island Scene, P.O. Box 3850,
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HMSA website at hmsa.com
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COVER: Story on Ballet Hawaii and their annual summer intensive program by Anna Koethe Pavao on page 14. Photo by Romeo Collado.

dear friends,

In the past couple issues, we've been introducing you to some of our *Island Scene* team members. I hope you've enjoyed getting to know them a little. (For more on our writing team, see the About Us section on our website at islandscene.com/about-us.)

This past summer, I celebrated my 40th service anniversary at HMSA. As I type these words, I can barely believe it myself. It seems like I just graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa; I started at HMSA two weeks later.

Island Scene has been one of my favorite projects over the years, but this does not mean that *Island Scene* is my accomplishment alone. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Take a look at all the names listed on page 6. This is the team that puts the magazine together every quarter and I thank them from the bottom of my heart. As I said in the last issue, we're so lucky to have this team. In addition to working on *Island Scene*, we all work together on islandscene.com and a ton of HMSA corporate projects.



And while it would be impossible to list everyone who's helped with *Island Scene* over the past 32 years, please know that we deeply appreciate your talent and contributions.

Of course, *Island Scene* wouldn't be where we are today without our readers. We collected your feedback through surveys and focus groups last year, and you'll see some changes coming soon. As always, please email us your comments and story ideas at feedback@islandscene.com or call (808) 948-6839. We enjoy hearing from you.

Love and best wishes,

Lisa Maneki Baxa
Publisher and Editor

around the 808

big island

Hilo Mermaids: Strong and Ageless

It's a cool Wednesday morning at Kawamoto Swim Stadium and the participants have arrived for their aquatics group, the Hilo Mermaids: Strong and Ageless (HMSA).

The 45-minute class is guided by a lead mermaid. The group began meeting over a year ago as the pandemic subsided. The pool staff created the list of exercises and started the class, which transitioned to a self-led group that meets Wednesday and Friday mornings.

"Our group getting together was a breath of fresh air after COVID," said



Joanna Savage, a Hilo mermaid who rotates leading the class with other volunteers. "It's nice to be a part of this community. It's about the social connection as well as the exercise."

For more information, visit the Kawamoto Swim Stadium page on the

County of Hawai'i Parks and Recreation website. The Hilo Mermaids are listed as a free water exercise under Aquatics, then Kawamoto Swim Stadium's Programming section. Schedules are subject to change. Call the pool at (808) 961-8698 for current information.

kaua'i

Kaua'i demands action

Firearms are the leading cause of death for American children according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These ever-increasing numbers and constant repetition of mass shootings throughout the U.S. over the past 20-plus years was enough for Faith Harding, Kaua'i's Moms Demand Action (MDA) lead, to get involved.

Her experience working with MDA – a national grassroots organization that promotes gun safety awareness – started on Maui in 2018 and fueled her efforts to help the Kaua'i community.

Thanks to the efforts of MDA and collaboration with BeSMART (which promotes secure gun storage awareness), DOE Kaua'i Complex Area Superintendent Daniel Hamada signed a resolution this past summer to provide BeSMART information about secure firearm storage to families at the start of the 2024-25 school year.

"This is common sense and a health-related issue about keeping our keiki safe," says Hamada, "This partnership effort involves Kaua'i's entire community. We must be vigilant in reminding each other to exercise safety practices."

MDA Kaua'i encourages both pro- and anti-gun advocates to agree on preventing unintentional deaths in children and promoting and modeling safe gun storage. "As we've seen with every

generation, people have changed because they realized it's not safe," says Harding. "So, I'm hopeful."

Visit momsdemandaction.org and besmartforkids.org.



maui, moloka'i, and lāna'i

The sweet life of a beekeeper

Christopher Chang was 6 years old when he stumbled upon a wild beehive with a huge honeycomb near his grandparents' farm on Maui. He remembers thinking it would be a good idea to keep bees someday.

Years later, a bee swarm at work reignited Chang's interest. He acquired the woodenware and beekeeping equipment, and Maui bee removal expert Dennis Morihiro gifted him with the bees. Chang hasn't looked back.

Chang and his wife, Robin, operate the apiaries at Kaukini Farm, a family farm started by Chang's grandparents and run by his dad, Lawrence. "These days I just let the bees do their thing," says Christopher Chang. "As long as you've given them the right home and space, and with good weather and blooms available, they get it done without much help."

While the bees are busy making honey, the Changs keep the hives healthy by changing bee pest traps.

Although the bees are independent workers, harvest boxes can get heavy with honey and require a lot of physical work. However, the reward is an abundance of honey, which they let ripen and darken in the hive, resulting in a deeper and stronger flavor.

"What I enjoy about beekeeping is that when you are working with bees, you aren't thinking about other things. You're focused on the bees and what is happening in the hive," says Chang. "It's just you and the bees."

Check out Kaukini Farm on Instagram at [instagram.com/kaukinifarm](https://www.instagram.com/kaukinifarm) or [instagram.com/mauifarmdog](https://www.instagram.com/mauifarmdog). For more information on beekeeping, visit [dadant.com](https://www.dadant.com).



COURTESY CHRISTOPHER CHANG



COURTESY CHRISTOPHER CHANG

Have a great story, place, or event that makes your Neighbor Island community special? Share it with us at feedback@islandscene.com or call (808) 948-6839.



STAR ADVERTISER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, HAWAII STATE ARCHIVE

hometown profile: peering into pearl city's past

words Marvin Buenconsejo

When Debbie Kuhns describes growing up in Pearl City, she's flooded with fond memories. Pearl City has experienced tremendous development over the past several decades. Still, Kuhns recalls the simpler times of her youth.

"It's a great place," says Kuhns, who's served as an HMSA health plan navigator for the past four years. "As kids, we would go out and play all day long. The rules were to just get home before the streetlights came on. We'd roller skate, skateboard, ride bike all over Pearl City."

Overlooking historic Pearl Harbor, Pearl City boasts a population of 48,000 residents. It's grown from a sugar cane-driven community more than a century ago to an area that now features national big-box stores such as Sam's Club, Walmart, and Home Depot. This is in sharp contrast to Kuhn's childhood, when modest-sized stores and restaurants drove the neighborhood economy.

"Back then, we only had Holiday Mart and Foodland. That was it," says Kuhns. "McDonald's was the only fast food there at the time."

Holiday Mart has long since been replaced by Don Quijote. The former Foodland location is now an H Mart. But back in the day, teenagers didn't hang out at those kinds of places. Instead, they headed to the nearby roller rink, a product of the national craze in the '70s.

"I loved going to Skateland. That was the hangout," exclaimed Kuhns. "We had so much fun! It was just a place where everybody would get together. We got to meet people from other schools. It was a really great place to meet new people and have a nice time with good music."



Debbie Kuhns



Top and above: Waimano Home Road at Kamehameha Highway

Skateland closed in the mid-1980s and has since been taken over by M. Dyer Global.

A proud Pearl City High School graduate, Kuhns remembers her rebellious teen years attending class on the campus at the top of the ridge. "I was one of those kids who didn't follow the norm, the one with the pink hair, wearing all the fun clothes," chuckled Kuhns. "Back then, it was the sky high '80s hair with the hairspray!"

Kuhns wrapped up her hometown tour reminiscing about the most famous restaurant west of Waikiki.

"Pearl City Tavern was a fancy restaurant on the Leeward side," Kuhns shared. "The big attraction was the monkey bar, that big bar glass area with all the spider monkeys in it. The



STAR ADVERTISER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, HAWAII STATE ARCHIVE



Kamehameha Highway at Lehua Avenue

drinks they made for the kids would include a little plastic monkey hanging off the side of the glass. We knew it was a special occasion when we went there for dinner.”

The Pearl City Tavern site is now a car dealership. And above, Honolulu’s Skyline rail transportation system now winds its way through the community.

Though a number of Pearl City treasures of old are gone, Kuhns is able to look back at the days of her youth filled with gratitude. “It was a great place to grow up,” she says. “I had a great childhood, and I couldn’t ask for anything more.” ¹⁵

HMSA Center in Pearl City

Take control of your health care by getting answers to questions from someone who knows. HMSA members, if you live on O’ahu’s Leeward side, you’re welcome to visit our HMSA Center in Pearl City to learn about your bill, make payments, check on a claim, explore well-being resources, or start a new plan.



For a video tour of Pearl City, visit islandscene.com/more.





a legacy in dance

words Anna Koethe Pavao

photos Romeo Collado

Tombé, pas de bourrée, glissade, pas de chat, assemblé. This is just one of the “corner” combinations aspiring prima ballerinas use to gracefully warm up for a full day of dance during Ballet Hawaii’s annual summer intensive program.

Each year, Emmy award-winning Ballet Hawaii brings the top dancers and master teachers from Broadway and the best companies of the world so local students can experience professional-level workshops in ballet, jazz, hula, character dance, and contemporary styles.

“It’s really all about providing our students with opportunities they wouldn’t have otherwise without leaving the state,” says Richard Vida, Ballet Hawaii executive director. “The caliber of dancers we’re able to feature is second to none.”

With studios in Honolulu and Waipahu, Ballet Hawaii is home to more than 300 students, ranging from the littlest dancers to the most experienced athletes pursuing professional careers.



Left: Ballet Hawaii student Emma Baynes holds a flawless *développé à la seconde* as she prepares for her performance in the summer intensive program showcase.

Above: Pamela Taylor-Tongg and Richard Vida lead Ballet Hawaii’s artistic offerings to aspiring dancers, including the renowned summer intensive program.



Dancers apply for one of the 90 spots in the program and commit to three weeks of rigorous training. Classes and rehearsals are held daily, with some participants dancing for more than eight hours each day.

"It was tough, but totally worth it," says Emma Baynes, a 17-year-old dancer from Honolulu. "I couldn't believe how much I learned. And to dance alongside principal dancers from some of the country's most renowned companies felt like a once in a lifetime experience."

Baynes earned a spot to study and is currently representing Hawai'i in the world-class Boston Ballet after graduating from Ballet Hawaii's performing ensemble.

The summer intensive is led by artistic director Pamela Taylor-Tongg, who has been with the organization for 38 years, and Vida, an Emmy award-winning artist, who has more than 30 years of experience in television and film and on Broadway. This year, nine celebrated dancers joined the studio's faculty, including:

- Robert Barnett, a living legend known for his role as an original member of George Balanchine's New York City Ballet and his 36-year tenure as Atlanta Ballet's artistic director.
- Megan Fairchild, a principal dancer for the New York City Ballet and author of *The Ballerina Mindset*, which includes advice on taking care of your mental health while striving toward excellence.
- Maiqui Mañosa, a former principal dancer with Atlanta Ballet with experience at Central Ballet of China, Singapore Dance Theater, and other Asian dance companies.
- Lainie Sakakura, award-winning Broadway choreographer and theatremaker who was classically trained at San Francisco Ballet.
- Courtney Schenberger, principal dancer at Carolina Ballet and a Ballet Hawaii graduate.

Rehearsals underway for the 2024 Ballet Hawaii summer intensive program showcase performances. Top: Lainie Sakakura directs students in a Broadway-style number. Middle: Behind the scenes of the summer intensive program showcase performances, which were held at Leeward Community College. Bottom: Emma Baynes (left) and Courtney Schenberger (right) perfect their posture in preparation for their performances.




Students in the 2024 Ballet Hawaii summer intensive program show off their newly developed skills in a thrilling Broadway-style performance of *Groove is in the Heart* by Dee Lite, choreographed by Lainie Sakakura, to close out three weeks of nonstop dancing.

Taking care of the dancers' bodies is a top priority for all involved. "We take the physical and mental health of our dancers very seriously," says Vida. Before starting the program, students complete an orientation by Jennifer King, D.O., a Ballet Hawaii board member and chief of pediatric sports medicine for Hawai'i Pacific Health. Dr. King covers a range of tips to help students keep their bodies and minds healthy so they can fully immerse themselves in the program safely.

The summer culminated in a showcase of diverse performances that ranged from classical ballet styles to Broadway at Leeward Community College. Top guest artists and masters shared the stage with their students, who proudly demonstrated their hard work and dedication.

Schenberger, a former student and now program instructor says, "It's humbling to come back after all these years and inspiring to see young, up-and-coming dancers shine.

Hawai'i truly has an amazing source of home-grown talent right here at Ballet Hawaii's studios." 

Since 1976, Ballet Hawaii has been committed to enriching Hawai'i's cultural environment by teaching, presenting, producing, and promoting dance. To learn more about upcoming classes, performing opportunities, and shows, visit ballethawaii.org or call (808) 521-8600.

For a behind-the-scenes peek into the summer intensive program, scan the QR code for a video.



For physical and mental health tips from Dr. Jennifer King and Megan Fairchild, visit islandscene.com/more.



despite dialysis, they keep cruising

words David Frickman

photo montage Brandon Young

Ron Hall and his wife, Lana Paras, love to travel. Since retiring from their government jobs in their 50s, the Mililani couple has traveled much of the world, often by cruise ship.

When Hall was diagnosed with kidney failure during the pandemic and put on dialysis, he thought their traveling days would be severely curtailed or ended altogether.

He had been diagnosed with kidney disease many years ago. With the help and advice of his primary care provider, Randall Suzuka, M.D., it was suggested that Hall enroll in the Aloha Kidney Care (alohakidney.com) classes by Ramona Wong, M.D. Hall and Paras both enrolled and attended classes together, which provided them with invaluable information. The classes were extremely informative about overall health, kidney disease, dialysis treatment options, and what to expect from kidney dialysis.


"Last year, we found a way to travel using other clinics for dialysis," says Paras. "It involves making arrangements with the clinics at your travel destination or, in the case of a cruise, with clinics at the various ports of call."

The National Kidney Foundation recommends that people on dialysis first talk with their doctors about their travel plans. Once the go-ahead is given, arrangements can be made. Some local clinics can help make those dialysis arrangements, and send your medical records to your destination dialysis clinics. It's very easy and convenient for the patient because it's similar to regular scheduled dialysis treatments at home.

Last October, Hall and Paras went on a seven-day Pacific Coast cruise. "I gave the itinerary to Ron's clinic. They found locations nearest to where the ship or hotel will be and made the arrangements," Paras says. Some cruise lines also arrange ground transportation to and from the dialysis center.

And this March, they went on an 11-day East Coast, Bahamas, and Bermuda cruise. They're heading out on a 15-day Mississippi River cruise in the next few weeks. Paras says, "Dialysis treatments will be provided at city ports throughout the cruise itinerary, but it's really becoming just a routine part of a fulfilling adventurous retirement."

An option for international cruising is Dialysis at Sea (dialysisatsea.com). It has some cruise lines scheduled year-round and provides Fresenius dialysis equipment, a nephrologist, and nurses on board. Cruises and dialysis treatments must be booked directly with Dialysis at Sea. The cost of the dialysis treatments isn't covered by Medicare or Medicaid; however, some health insurance options might provide partial reimbursement for the dialysis treatment expense.

"It's like anything else. You just change and adapt," Paras says. "We just know that there's dialysis for four hours, three days a week, but everything else is the same. We do what we want, and we go where we want." 

If you have questions about planning for dialysis during travel, email Hall at ronhall1808@yahoo.com.

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Oahu

HMSA Center

818 Keeaumoku St., Hau Room

10 a.m.–noon

Tuesday, Oct. 1, Oct. 22, Nov. 5 & Nov. 26

Saturday, Oct. 12, Nov. 16 & Dec. 7

HMSA Center in Pearl City

1132 Kuala St., Suite 400

10 a.m.–noon

Wednesday, Oct. 9, Oct. 30 & Nov. 20

Saturday, Oct. 19 & Nov. 9

Aina Haina Library

5246 Kalanianaʻole Hwy.

10 a.m.–noon

Wednesday, Oct. 16 & Nov. 13

Big City Diner – Kaneohe

46-056 Kamehameha Hwy., D-01

10 a.m.–noon

Friday, Oct. 18 & Nov. 8

Wednesday, Dec. 4

Kaimuki Library

1041 Koko Head Ave.

2–4 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 30

Kaneohe Tax Service

46-005 Kawa St., Suite 101

10 a.m.–noon

Thursday, Oct. 24

Liliha Library

1515 Liliha St.

2–4 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 23

Manoa Library

2716 Woodlawn Dr.

2–4 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 10

McCully-Moiliili Library

2211 S. King St.

4–6 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 30, Japanese

Tuesday, Nov. 12, Japanese

Hawaii Island

HMSA Center in Hilo

303A E. Makaala St.

10 a.m.–noon

Saturday, Oct. 5 & Nov. 2

Tuesday, Oct. 22 & Nov. 19

Premier Benefit Consultants – Hilo

1437 Kilauea Ave., Suite 204

10–11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 16, Oct. 30, Nov. 13,

Nov. 20, Nov. 27 & Dec. 4

Suite Possibilities – Kailua-Kona

75-5915 Walua Rd.

10–11:30 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 17, Oct. 24, Nov. 14,

Nov. 21 & Dec. 5

Mana Christian Church – Waimea

67-1182 Lindsey Rd.

4–5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 15, Oct. 22, Nov. 12,

Nov. 19 & Dec. 3

Maui

HMSA Center in Kahului

70 Hookele St., Suite 1220

10 a.m.–noon

Tuesday, Oct. 8 & Nov. 12

Saturday, Oct. 26 & Nov. 23

Cameron Center – Kahului

95 Mahalani St.

2–4 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 15

Kihei Lutheran Church

220 Moi Pl.

9–11 a.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 5

Kauai

Kauai Chamber of Commerce

4268-I Rice St., Pili Pili Room

10 a.m.–noon

Friday, Oct. 18 & Nov. 15



Online

Oahu Presentations

10 a.m.–noon

Thursday, Oct. 3 & Nov. 7

Monday, Oct. 14, Oct. 28, Nov. 18 & Dec. 2

Neighbor Island Presentations

2–4 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 3 & Nov. 7

Monday, Oct. 14, Oct. 28, Nov. 18 & Dec. 2

teaching
and sharing
his okinawan
roots



words Jodie Chiemi Ching

photos Brad Goda

It's a typical scene at Grant "Masandu" Murata's house in Aiea Koa, Honolulu. There's a group of his students in *uta-sanshin* (singing while playing the Okinawan three-stringed lute) gathered on his lanai for weekly practice. The students sit in a row so they can see the hands of their sensei (teachers), Murata and his wife, Chikako, who sit across from their students. This face-to-face instruction with no musical notes has been the foundation of the teaching style of Afuso Ryu classical Okinawan music for over 400 years.

From pau hana at 6 p.m. until about 8 p.m., you can hear Okinawan classical or *minyo* (folk) music from Murata's house, which is walking distance from his alma mater, Kalani High School. It's not unusual for a neighbor to stop and listen or wave hi to Murata and his group.

At the end of practice, Murata will say, "*Otsukare sama deshita*" to thank them for their hard work. Students reply, "thank you" in Japanese ("*Arigatou gozimasu*") or Okinawan ("*Ippei nifwe deebiru*"). They put their sanshin away in their cars and come back with their potluck dishes.

Out come noodles, musubi, chicken wings, poke, and more. It's time to relax and talk story. And if student/teacher Tom Yamamoto brings his 'ukulele, there's also a little kanikapila.



Grant Murata, and his wife, Chikako, teaching students at their home in 'Āinakoā

Clockwise from top left:
Uta-sanshin masters Grant Murata (left) and Kenton Odo (right) flank their grandmaster, the late Choichi Terukina, at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., April 2019. Grant and Chikako Murata at Hawaii Theatre after his solo performance, November 2018. Grant Murata performing *minyō* (folk music) at College Walk Diner with Nobuko Tanaka, 1984. Grant Murata (right) with Choichi Terukina at Saint Louis School's Mamiya Theatre. Top right photo by @islandbag; other photos courtesy Grant Murata.




"Sensei has always inspired me to constantly improve in my learning and teaching skills," says Yamamoto. "He pushes me to attain higher levels of *uta-sanshin*, whether it's increasing my repertoire of songs or taking the next level of certification. I like to believe that he recognizes my abilities, which I assume is why he lets me teach the beginner classes, even if I don't have the teaching certification, and also allows me to perform alongside him and the other sensei at various performances. I sincerely appreciate his dedication to his students and the knowledge that he has passed down to all of us. Aside from learning songs to perform, we are taught history and experiences related to each song."

Murata is a certified master of *uta-sanshin* but didn't know that he was Okinawan for most of his life. He was adopted and raised by local Japanese parents. Yet, his ancestral DNA guided him on the path to become the first and only *uta-sanshin* master outside of Okinawa to judge the certification exams for the Afuso Ryu Gensei Kai held in Okinawa annually.

Listing his accomplishments would fill pages, but Murata is most fulfilled by the branches of his tree that are flourishing with young students, many who travel to Okinawa to pursue vigorous training and certifications and have students of their own.

His hope for all his students is that they take on their own students and experience teaching young ones or family members, even if it's just one student.

Whether it's on his *lānai* or on the grand stages of the Tokyo Imperial Theatre or Carnegie Hall – performing alongside his mentor and a National Living Treasure of Japan, the late Grandmaster Choichi Terukina – nothing can beat the twinkle in Murata's eyes when he's connecting with people through music, stories, and food.

"My love for *sanshin* grew after my love for *Unchinanchus* (Okinawans), their culture and their sharing heart," says Murata. "It is their willingness to share and how they welcomed me into their community and their hearts that rubbed off on me." 



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1010-1026106





leading with heart and community

Chaminade President Lynn Babington, Ph.D., often walks to campus.

words Michelle Liu

photos Romeo Collado

Three miles separate Chaminade University in Kaimukī from President Lynn Babington's home in Kahala. Instead of driving, Babington walks to work. It's a way for her to unwind, catch up on phone calls, and listen to the news, all while getting in a workout.

"I started walking to campus during the COVID lockdown for exercise," explains Babington. "I realized it wasn't bad! Although at the beginning, people would honk their horns and call out, 'Dr. Babington! President Lynn! Do you need a ride?'"

That's the kind of close-knit community that Babington created among the university's 2,500 students. She leads with kindness, honesty, and support so students feel comfortable with her and know they can go to her for help when they need it.

"Since Chaminade is small, I have the privilege of mentoring students and developing a relationship with them," says Babington. "You don't get lost here. We notice when you're not in class or if you're distracted. We care about our students, which makes it a more enriching environment."

Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Babington was drawn to the aloha spirit of Chaminade and Hawai'i. The university's commitments of moral character, community, and service align with Babington's own principles.

"I've always been focused on helping people live their very best," says Babington, who started her career as a nurse. "When I was taking care of patients, I helped people achieve their highest level of wellness. And it's not that different from my role as college president – I'm providing the environment and resources so that our students achieve their academic goals."



Babington chats with Chaminade students. From left: Kameron Arizumi, Christian Raquepo, and Zoe Morioka.

“That’s what human beings need – feeling like we belong, so we can give back and be genuine in the work we do,”

: Dr. Lynn Babington

Guiding students and supporting their successes has been one of the most rewarding parts of Babington’s job. She knows the transition to college can be difficult for young adults and she wants to help them feel a sense of community.

“That’s what human beings need – feeling like we belong, so we can give back and be genuine in the work we do,” she says. “Education is a great equalizer. We all have the capacity to learn and contribute.”

Babington is leading by example through mentoring and giving back. She found her community by volunteering, enjoying the outdoors, and spending time with her family. Since moving to Hawai’i seven years ago, Babington has witnessed the family-oriented principles of the islands and hopes to extend that feeling of ‘ohana to campus.

“Having that sense of community shapes how you feel about life every day,” she says. 

Stronger, together, this holiday season. Get your flu shot.

Call your doctor or pharmacy to find out where you can get a flu shot, often at no cost.



1010-1026431



HMSA Health Education Workshops

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HMSA Center in Honolulu

Oct. 22, 10-11 a.m.
HMSA Center in Pearl City

Dec. 12, Noon-1 p.m.
Online

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Nov. 2, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
HMSA Center in Kahului

Nov. 23, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
HMSA Center in Hilo

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HMSA Center in Kahului

Nov. 8, 10-11 a.m.
HMSA Center in Pearl City

Nov. 18, 10-11 a.m.
HMSA Center in Honolulu

Nov. 23, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
HMSA Center in Hilo

There's no cost to attend workshops. Workshop dates and times are subject to change.

Visit hmsa.com/HealthEducation or call 1 (855) 329-5461 to register.



1010-1026300

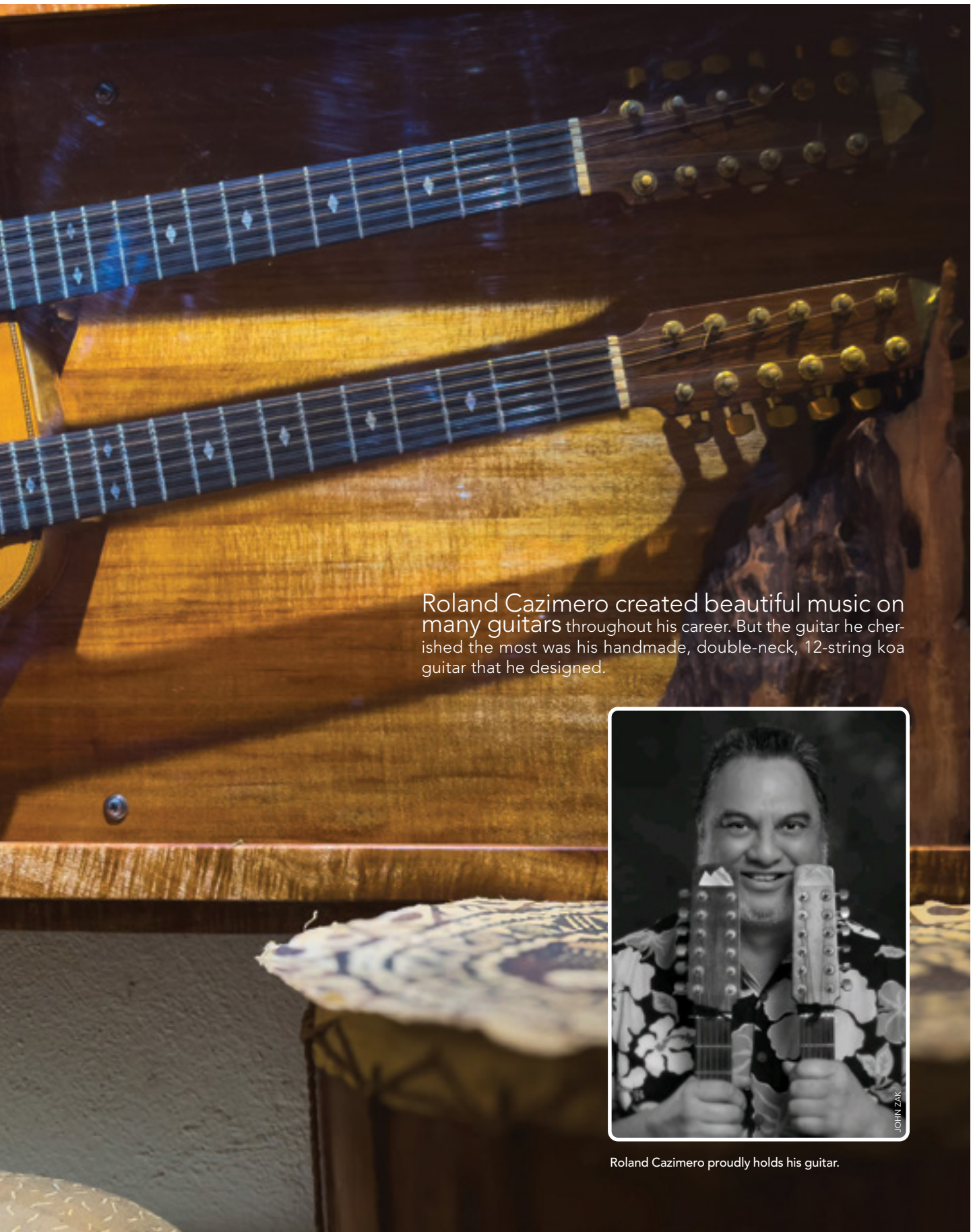


musical homecoming

words Craig DeSilva

Roland Cazimero's double-neck guitar
displayed in the Kāua'i Museum.

COURTESY THE KAUAI MUSEUM



Roland Cazimero created beautiful music on many guitars throughout his career. But the guitar he cherished the most was his handmade, double-neck, 12-string koa guitar that he designed.



JOHN ZAR

Roland Cazimero proudly holds his guitar.



"The guitar was so much a part of him," says his wife, Lauwa'e. "No one else could bring out the same kind of sounds that he made from that guitar. It was the magic that he had."

Since Roland's passing in 2017, Lauwa'e has been looking for ways the guitar could be used to honor her husband's musical legacy. She decided to bring the guitar home to Kaua'i where it was born 34 years ago and donate it to the Kaua'i Museum.

Homecoming

Chucky Boy Chock, the museum's director, says it's fitting that the guitar is back on Kaua'i. He remembers when Roland first traced and cut the guitar design on plywood in Chock's garage on Kaua'i in 1990.



Chucky Boy Chock

"We laughed because it looked weird and uncomfortable – this big, fat guitar," says Chock. "But it was his vision and he brought it to life. Everything about that guitar was Bozo's (Roland's nickname). He wanted it to be Hawaiian."

Roland chose Mickey Sussman, an Anahola luthier (skilled maker of string instruments), to make the guitar. Sussman used koa wood that he harvested from ancient trees in a lowland



Clockwise from top left: Lauwa'e Cazimero holds the guitar of her late husband, Roland. Details of Roland Cazimero's double-neck koa guitar. The Kaua'i Museum now houses Cazimero's guitar. Bottom photo courtesy Kaua'i Museum; other photos by John Zak.

forest near his home. The frets are made from Anahola kiawe trees. Roland made dozens of trips to Kaua'i to oversee the two-year process and would send the guitar back for tweaks until he was satisfied with the sound.

The guitar allowed Roland to have two tunings so he could flow from one song to the next without having to switch guitars. "Playing that guitar is not easy because it's so heavy, but only Bozo could make it sing," says Chock. "If that guitar could speak, a lot of mo'olelo (stories) would come out of it."

Musical legacy

The 50-pound guitar is displayed in a custom-made glass-covered koa box at the museum. The exhibit includes a replica of Roland's signature white cube and pillow that he'd sit on while performing. There are photos of Roland playing the guitar and a description of the musical contributions he and his brother Robert made to the Hawaiian Renaissance, which started during the 1970s.

"Anyone who knows Hawaiian music knows the Brothers Caz. Having the guitar here gives it the opportunity to live and be shared with the community and visitors. It's like having the 'Mona Lisa.' It's the golden nugget to our exhibit of Hawaiian tradition," says Chock.

The guitar is part of the museum's new exhibit of haku mele (composers) and kumu hula (hula teachers) of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau. [is](#)

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**These providers
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March 21, 2024, and
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maintain your fitness with four types of exercise

words Keely Kalama-Lakey

photos Earl Yoshii



Candace Yonashiro Barretta, DPT

For most adults, physical activity came naturally during childhood.

Even if we weren't the fastest or most graceful, we could run, jump, and spin around with ease. If we fell, we usually got right back up.

As we age, some of the physical requirements needed for these movements – strength, flexibility, balance, and endurance – start to decline. Left unaddressed, this decrease becomes a risk to our health and independence. We might not even notice a problem until we suffer an injury or have to limit our favorite activities.

The good news is we can take action to counter the physical effects of aging. Organizations like the National Institute of Aging (NIA) recommend practicing four types of exercise to maintain the physical abilities we need for daily activities. Each type offers different benefits that help keep you strong, energized, and mobile.

Check with your doctor before starting a new exercise program. Even if you're experienced in one type of exercise, you may be a beginner in another. Start slowly, listen to your body, and take breaks as needed.

Endurance (aerobic) exercises increase your heart rate and help you perform daily tasks and activities. "Whether you're shopping or trying to get out of an airport, there's lots of walking," explains physical therapist Candace Yonashiro Barretta, DPT, of StayFit Physical Therapy. "To maintain your ability to do these things, your body needs practice."

Walking is a great endurance exercise for most people. The intensity and frequency can be adjusted to fit your health status and goals, such as maintaining your ability for daily activities, playing with the kids or grandkids, or traveling. Start with walking for 10 minutes and add time as you feel comfortable.



Strength training exercises help keep muscles strong, which is important since muscle mass decreases as we age. We need strong muscles for daily activities like carrying laundry, climbing stairs, and preventing falls. "Through strength training, muscles break down and build themselves back up," says Yonashiro Barretta. "If you do it safely

and in small steps, eventually your body will say, 'Hey, I can do this.'"

While weights and resistance bands are popular for strength training, body weight exercises without any special equipment work well, too.



Strength: Try standing from a seated position. Sit in a chair with feet flat on the floor. Lean slightly forward and stand up by pressing through your heels. Sit back down slowly and repeat eight to 10 times.

Balance exercises strengthen your lower body and train your mind and body to stabilize yourself. Good balance helps prevent falls and supports daily activities like getting in and out of a car or bath.


Yonashiro Barretta says balance exercises challenge the body to make little mistakes, so the body learns how to stay upright. "When you stand on one foot, you might notice your foot wiggles, but that's normal. It's how the ankle tries to maintain balance."



Balance: Stand on one leg with your hand supporting you on a chair or with a family member to support you. Try to hold for 30 seconds, then switch legs.



Flexibility allows us to reach, bend, and twist. Stretching exercises help maintain flexibility so you can bend to tie your shoe or reach for something on a shelf. Yonashiro Barretta says muscles like to be medium length, but when muscles are used, they shorten. Stretching helps lengthen muscles to balance other activities like strength training.

Yonashiro Barretta adds, “For the first month, be cautious. You’re monitoring and conditioning yourself. Even a little is a win. Don’t minimize what you’re doing, it’s beneficial and a building block.” Eventually, aim for 150 minutes of endurance exercise a week and two to three times a week for strength training, flexibility, and balance exercises. 



Flexibility: Try a hamstring stretch. Sit toward the edge of a chair, legs extended forward, heels on the ground, and toes pointed up. Slowly lean forward from the hips, reaching toward your toes. Hold for 15-30 seconds.



To learn more, visit nia.nih.gov or scan the QR code below. For more exercises, go to the NIA’s YouTube channel, @NIHAging.





pet myths debunked

words Courtney Takabayashi

Sometimes they bark. Sometimes they hop. Sometimes they fly.

We're talking about pets.

Though there are health benefits associated with owning a pet, such as increasing exercise or decreasing blood pressure, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you may want to consider if getting a pet is right for you. First, see if you can separate pet ownership facts from fiction.

Myth or reality? Annual checkups are not important if my pet is healthy.

Myth. Preventive care isn't just for humans; it can benefit animals, too! Taking your pets to regular visits with their veterinarian is important to evaluate their overall health and check for risks. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), "Early diagnosis and treatment of problems or diseases can increase the likelihood of successful outcomes." So be sure your pet is up to date with their annual appointments.

True or false? Dog mouths are cleaner than human mouths.

False. The American Kennel Club (AKC) thinks that this myth might have become widely believed because humans can't catch viruses like the flu from a dog whereas they can catch it from a fellow human. This has to do with the different kinds of bacteria found in dog and human mouths. According to the

AKC, "Most of the bacteria in your dog's mouth aren't zoonotic, which means you probably won't get a disease from a doggy kiss." However, beware if your dog eats raw foods as they're more likely to contact salmonella, which can be spread to humans.

Yes or no? A "dog year" is the equivalent to seven human years.

It depends. It's important to consider a dog's size because it makes a difference in their lifespan. The first year of a medium-sized dog's life is equivalent to 15 human years. Their second year equals nine human years. After that, each dog year is equal to five human years. Visit the AKC's website for a chart of dog years to human years according to size at akc.org/expert-advice/health/how-to-calculate-dog-years-to-human-years.

Fact or fiction? Children with pets get sick less than kids without pets.

Fact. According to a study by the New England Journal of Medicine, "Dogs can help strengthen immune systems of children against allergies and asthma within the first three months of life." The study also found that dogs can add good bacteria and microbes inside homes if they play outdoors or with other pets. However, exposure to pets means exposure to their fecal matter, which can contain bacteria and parasites. So, it's important for pet owners to practice good hygiene after contact with animal waste.

For info on the health benefits of having pets, see the "Trending Now" column on page 44.

get your flu shot

words David Percy, D.O.



Dr. David Percy

you may have heard it many times before: Get your flu shot. This important message is repeated often because of the urgency to help protect yourself, your loved ones, and our community's most vulnerable.

The flu is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus that infects the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It's spread when people with the flu cough, sneeze, or talk and its droplets land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. Sometimes droplets are inhaled into the lungs.

People who have the flu often feel some or all of these signs and symptoms:

- Fever.
- Cough.
- Sore throat.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Muscle or body aches.
- Headaches.
- Fatigue.
- Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children).

The exact timing of flu season fluctuates, but viruses typically circulate during the fall and winter, generally November through February.

Here are some quick and important facts to remember regarding flu shots:

- Yearly flu shots are recommended for everyone 6 months and older.

- Flu shots are especially important for those at high risk for complications of the flu, including:
 - Those who are age 65 or older.
 - Young children.
 - People who have chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease, or are immunocompromised.
 - Pregnant persons.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a flu shot can be administered at the same time as the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Flu vaccines administered via injection or nasal spray are recommended yearly. The virus has a high mutation rate, which leads to new variations of the flu every year.
- Flu vaccines are not 100% effective but decrease your risk of developing the flu and serious complications.
- The months of September and October are the best times for most people to get vaccinated.
- Flu vaccines for HMSA members are available without a copayment.

Contact your primary care provider to learn more about the right steps for you when it comes to flu vaccinations. **15**

Dr. David Percy is a board-certified internal medicine physician and an HMSA medical director.

this doctor brings unique medical procedures to hawai'i



Daniel Murariu, M.D.

words David Frickman

photos courtesy of Athena Clinic

It's always a benefit for Hawai'i's health when a doctor returns after training or working elsewhere. That's especially true when that doctor brings unique skill sets back with them.

Daniel Murariu, M.D., is one of the top reconstructive surgeons in the nation. After his residency in general surgery at the University of Hawai'i, Dr. Murariu went to the Mainland to continue his education and eventually became director of microsurgery and lymphatic surgery at Allegheny Health Network in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He returned to Honolulu in 2022 to join Athena Clinic Plastic Surgery.

"I always wanted to come back at some point," he says. "So, when the right opportunity came up, I said, 'Let's do it.'"


Dr. Murariu is one of the few doctors who is considered an expert in DIEP (deep inferior epigastric perforator) flap reconstruction. It's a type of breast reconstruction that uses skin, fat, and blood vessels from the lower belly to rebuild the breast after a mastectomy. It spares the muscle and has fewer risks and complications than other flap surgeries.

"In breast reconstruction, we have implant-based options, but using the patient's own tissue is the gold standard in certain situations," says Dr. Murariu. "We reconnect the belly vessels to the chest wall vessels using a microscope and then reconstruct the breast using the belly fat instead of implants."

Until Dr. Murariu's arrival, "there wasn't anybody on the island offering DIEP on a regular basis," he says. "So patients either go to the Mainland for DIEP, receive no reconstruction, or use the back muscle latissimus and an implant, an option rarely used in most centers."

What makes Dr. Murariu's technique even more unique is his use of robotics. He says he's "part of about half dozen plastic surgeons in the U.S. performing robotic reconstruction surgery for perineal, head and neck, and breast reconstruction." A book he's editing on robotic techniques in plastic surgery is due out by early next year.

His robotics expertise has been a lifesaver for Eddie Okahara. The 80-year-old 'Aiea resident opted for surgery over radiation when his colon cancer reappeared. Krishna Rao, M.D., a colorectal surgeon, used a robotic surgery procedure to remove six inches from Okahara's colon, and Dr. Murariu used the same robot to reconstruct the area using muscle and skin from the abdomen. The procedure was first pioneered using the robot by Dr. Murariu, which helped Okahara's recovery go much smoother.

"It's different because he's working with computers," Okahara says. "He's not right over the person. He's operating in a separate area where he's got joysticks and stuff. But it's just like he's right in there working because of the robotics." 



Dr. Murariu is a leading expert in the use of robotics for reconstructive surgery.



From left: Dr. Murariu with Dr. Carly Wachi, Dr. Dylan Goto, and Dr. Krishna Rao after the first robotic VRAM flap for vaginal and perineal reconstruction at Kuakini Health System.



Read about the state's HELP loan repayment program at the John A. Burns School of Medicine on [islandscene.com/more](https://www.islandscene.com/more).

build a strong relationship with your PCP



words Keely Kalama-Lahey



Dr. Mark Lau

Your primary care provider (PCP) is an important ally in caring for your health. Your PCP is the main provider who will get to know you and your health conditions and other issues that affect your well-being. If you have a strong relationship with your PCP, you can talk openly, ask questions, and get the care you need.

Studies show that effective communication between PCPs and patients helps improve management of chronic conditions, reduce hospitalizations, and ensure preventive care.

Internist and pediatrician Mark Lau, M.D., offers a physician's point of view about the importance of working with your PCP.

Island Scene: Why should patients talk openly with their PCP?

Dr. Lau: Effective communication is important. If a patient doesn't feel comfortable enough to talk about everything, then diagnoses can be missed altogether. If a patient doesn't follow a treatment plan and doesn't tell their PCP, it could affect their care moving forward.

Island Scene: Do providers want patients to ask questions if they don't understand their care plan or have questions about it?

Dr. Lau: Yes, it's important for patients to understand and be comfortable with their care plans to maximize a good outcome. If they don't understand or don't like the plan, they are less likely to follow it. Sometimes a question from a patient can lead to an improved or more appropriate care plan.

Island Scene: Are providers offended or hurt if a patient switches to a different PCP?

Dr. Lau: I don't think a patient should ever worry about hurting a provider's feelings. We tend to have fairly thick skin in our profession. Sometimes our tendencies or personalities just don't fit well for certain patients and their families. If patients are not comfortable, they should find a provider they can be comfortable with.

It's also important to inform your PCP about other care you receive, such as from an urgent care clinic or a specialist. And, if you need care when your PCP's office is closed and it is not a life-threatening situation, you can call the PCP's after-hours line to help you decide if you should visit an urgent care clinic, use HMSA's Online Care®, or wait for an appointment. ¹⁵

Mark Lau, M.D., is a board-certified internist and pediatrician and HMSA medical director.

Amwell is an independent company providing hosting and software services for HMSA's Online Care platform on behalf of HMSA.

love and joy: pets' secret superpowers

words Michelle Liu



GORDON AND JANE CAMPBELL

Max

When my husband and I go to his parents' house, they always make sure their cat, Max, is part of the gathering. My in-laws rescued the orange fluffball a few years ago. It's clear Max brings them a lot of joy.

And according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), pets can help boost mood, decrease stress, and improve overall mental health.

Living in the moment

Alan Wolfson, M.D., a Honolulu psychiatrist, says, "For patients who have anxiety or depression, emotional support animals can act as a medication," he says. "Animals are often present in the moment, which also helps you experience the here and now."

With depression and anxiety, you're often living in the past or worried about the future. Being present decreases those stressful thoughts and can help calm you down.

"Animals can be a helpful way to change our focus toward the love of our lives," adds Jacob Lee, M.D., a psychiatrist who also practices in Honolulu.

Sense of purpose

Taking care of a pet also brings responsibilities, which helps you stay motivated.

"Having an animal can provide you with a deeper sense of purpose in your life," Dr. Wolfson says.

A study by the NIH shows that those of us who feel a sense of purpose make healthier life choices, including prioritizing exercise, which pets can also help with.

"Caring for our pets can encourage us to spend time outside," says Dr. Lee. "When I see people of all ages enjoying the dog park together, it's clear their pets keep them active and healthy."

Beyond the bond

Developing a loving, trusting relationship with a pet requires patience and care. Therefore, Dr. Wolfson warns that simply having a pet may not be effective in helping our overall mental health.

"The process of healing may also require the help of a licensed mental health professional or medication," he says. "Keep in mind it's not a 'one cat fits all' approach."

But a new furry (or scaled or feathered) friend can certainly help!

"My wife and I have a handsome chameleon named 'Ōhi'a, and he makes us happy every day," says Dr. Lee. **15**

For more pet info, see the "For Real?" column on page 38.

five healthy habits to be five times healthier

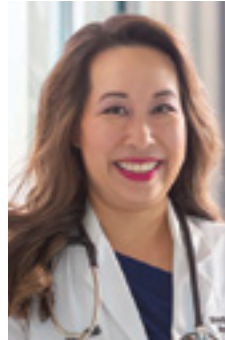
words Summer Nakaishi

art Garry Ono



Maintaining a healthy lifestyle isn't easy.

Stefanie M. Park, M.D., knows firsthand what it's like to juggle work and parenthood, while making time for self-care. HMSA's vice president and chief medical officer grew up playing basketball, volleyball, and soft-ball year-round and had to shift her routines once she entered medical school and parenthood, and again when the COVID-19 pandemic started.



Dr. Park emphasizes that while healthy habits may fluctuate, taking care of our bodies and minds is important during all phases of life. Here are her top five habits for prioritizing a healthy and intentional lifestyle.

1. Prioritize sleep

A good night's rest is one of the most important habits yet easiest to overlook in this digital age.

"National guidelines say adults should have seven to nine hours of sleep, but there are variances," says Dr. Park. "Some people do awesome with six, and some people like me need closer to nine."

For a more effective rest, say no to caffeine late in the day, turn off electronics at night, and make sure your sleeping environment is dark and cool.



2. Schedule your workout like an important appointment

"Exercise is good for longevity, cardiovascular health, and maintaining a healthy weight, but I benefit most from its mental effects," says Dr. Park, who uses a smartphone app for meditation, yoga, stretch, and bootcamp classes.

Keeping exercise as a mainstay in her weekly routine allows her brain time to noodle over a problem like a computer program running in the background, she says. By releasing extra energy or frustration through exercise, she often discovers that a solution works itself out.

Plan your exercise dates as a required appointment – it might even help lighten your workload.



3. Eat mindfully

Time constraints and convenience can be the biggest roadblocks to eating a healthy diet.

Dr. Park says logging calorie counts into a free app like MyFitnessPal can provide insight into mindless eating by measuring the calories you're taking in.

"Food is medicine," she says. "Think about how you feel after eating certain foods."



4. Incorporate meditation

The practice of calming and focusing the mind is a new habit for Dr. Park, who uses a meditation app and podcast.


"Meditation helps me be more present," she says. "Acceptance and gratitude are the topics I meditate on most frequently."



5. Surround yourself with positive people

"Life is colored by those around you," she says. "So, be around positive people instead of negative ones."

Hanging out with friends or workout buddies can improve mood and impact the way you view the world, so it's important to build a community that lifts you up and encourages a healthy mindset.

"Living a healthy lifestyle is not only important for my own health and well-being," she says. "But also serves as a healthy model for my daughter." 



health matters



Antibiotics 101

Every year in the U.S., more than 28% of antibiotics are prescribed unnecessarily. This results in over 35,000 people dying from antibiotic-resistant infections. Lucie Tam, a registered nurse and HMSA clinical coordinator, says antibiotics are important to take when needed but it also should be noted when not to turn to the medication.

“There are good bacteria that help protect your body from invasion of other bacteria,” she says. “If you take antibiotics inappropriately, you’re going to kill your good bacteria along with the bad.”

Consider these appropriate and inappropriate uses of antibiotics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Appropriate

Antibiotics are often prescribed for bacterial infections such as strep throat, whooping cough, and a urinary tract infection, and for life-threatening conditions like sepsis. Antibiotics are often needed for people who are at high risk for developing serious infections, such as patients undergoing surgery or cancer therapy, or those with end-stage kidney disease.

Inappropriate

Antibiotic treatment is not necessary for healthy infants, children, and adults with a common cold, the flu, or COVID-19. Antibiotic overuse can lead to antibiotic resistance, which is when germs and fungi evolve to defeat the drugs and the bad germs continue to grow and new infections may occur.

What can we do?

Tam says we can support our immune system by taking over-the-counter treatments to help with symptoms, staying hydrated, eating a healthy diet, and getting plenty of rest. Before giving over-the-counter treatments to children, please check with their doctor.

Whenever you have questions about whether you need an antibiotic or not, check with your primary care provider or an urgent care clinic.

Tips to curb holiday stress

The fall season may be the start of upcoming holiday festivities but that doesn't mean it should also kickstart your stress levels. Here are some tips from the Mayo Clinic to help you downgrade the pressures in the upcoming months:

- Plan and prep as much as you can ahead of time. This will save you time, money, and stress.
- Don't be afraid to say "no" to some invitations. Choose the invitations that are most important to you.
- Maintain healthy habits. Try to stick to your normal workout routine or suggest something physically active such as taking a hike or playing volleyball at the beach at your next holiday party.
- Share your feelings. The holidays can be difficult. Accept your feelings and be open to sharing them with those close to you.
- Be realistic. You can only do so much shopping, spending, cooking, cleaning, and running around. Forget about perfecting the holidays and enjoy the company around you.



Food safety reminders

As holiday potlucks mean transferring food from your household (or store) to a designated venue, here are some important reminders from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service to help prevent contracting foodborne illnesses.

- When serving food, keep hot food hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays and keep cold food cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice or keep them in the fridge and use small servings trays, replacing them often.
- Use a thermometer to check hot and cold holding temperatures (140 degrees Fahrenheit for hot food and 40 degrees for cold).
- Perishable food should not be left out for more than two hours at room temperature.

for your benefit

Access your HMSA plan info with My Account



HMSA has a simple and convenient way to access information, benefits, and resources that are unique to you. It's called My Account.

With My Account, you can see all your plan information in one place, including plan benefits, tools to keep track of your deductible and out-of-pocket maximum, and more.

Just click My Account Login on the hmsa.com homepage. Once you log in to My Account, you can:

- View recent claims and details about your plan.
- View or request a copy of your HMSA membership card.
- See the status of your annual deductible and out-of-pocket maximum if they apply to your plan.
- Access well-being tools such as a discounted gym membership with Active&Fit Direct™, the ChooseHealthy® program, HMSA365 discounts on health and well-being products and services, and HMSA's Online Care®.

To sign up, click Create an Account and follow the instructions. You'll need:

- An email address.
- The HMSA subscriber number printed on your HMSA membership card.
- And a password that you can remember.

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The ChooseHealthy program is provided by American Specialty Health Group Inc. and ASH Technologies Inc. (dba ASH Technologies of Delaware Inc. in the state of Pennsylvania); all are subsidiaries of American Specialty Health Incorporated (ASH). The ChooseHealthy program is an independent specialty health organization that provides discounts on health, fitness, and wellness products to HMSA members.

Amwell is an independent company providing hosting and software services for HMSA's Online Care platform on behalf of HMSA.



Extra care for your condition

If you're living with a chronic condition, the HMSA Condition Care Program can help you reach and maintain your optimal health. The program works closely with your primary care provider and goes beyond clinical care with health coaching, access to community resources, and more.

Care managers provide support and information on how to access health screenings, tests, and treatments specific to your condition. You'll also learn lifestyle changes such as healthy eating, stress management, and how to increase physical activity.

This program is voluntary and available at no additional cost to HMSA members.

If you need support for a chronic condition and would like more information about the HMSA Condition Care Program, visit the HMSA Health and Well-being Support page at hmsa.com/well-being/health-well-being-support/ or call 1 (855) 329-5461, option 1.

Get prescriptions mailed to your home

Members with Medicare, QUEST, or HMSA Federal Plan 87 have an easy way to avoid frequent trips to the pharmacy to pick up prescription medications.

These HMSA members can get a 90-day supply (100-day supply for Medicare members) of their maintenance medications with mail order. There's no delivery charge and medications are sent to an address of your choice.

Getting prescriptions in the mail is convenient and fast since they're mailed from O'ahu. If you'd like to get your prescriptions through mail order, talk with your doctor.



UH cancer center: saving lives, improving health

words David Frickman



Naoto Ueno, M.D.

Naoto T. Ueno, M.D., Ph.D., is a two-time cancer survivor. He has fought back from sarcoma, a type of cancer that starts in the soft tissues, and myelodysplastic syndrome, which disrupts the making of healthy blood cells. Those experiences fuel his sense of urgency for the research that he and his colleagues at the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center do today.

"I've benefited from clinical trials, so I'm passionate about this," says Dr. Ueno, who has served for nearly two years as director of the UH Cancer Center, which began in the 1970s at The Queen's Medical Center as the Cancer Research Center of Hawai'i.

One of his goals, since arriving in fall 2022 to head the center, has been to significantly reduce the cancer burden in Hawai'i by increasing clinical trials that target the unique characteristics of the state's population.


Clinical trials are studies in which researchers learn whether new methods of prevention, detection, and treatment of cancer, including new drugs and surgeries, are safe and effective, and how they compare with existing methods. Dr. Ueno says one research goal is "trying to understand Hawai'i's unique populations, identify the risk factors that affect them, and make sure that we provide new approaches to prevent and treat cancer.

"Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have a higher mortality of cancer compared with other ethnic groups," he says.

This was confirmed in a first-of-its-kind American Cancer Society report this past May, which found that Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders die from a number of major cancers up to three times more often than white people.

Beyond research, Dr. Ueno says another goal is to make the latest cancer treatments more accessible to people living in Hawai'i. In late 2025, the UH Cancer Center is scheduled to open an early-phase clinical research center, which will bring in more innovative clinical trials for people seeking the most cutting-edge methods to combat the disease. It will be the first time that phase-1 clinical trial treatments will be available in Hawai'i and the Pacific region.

"People now either fly to MD Anderson Cancer Center in Texas or to Stanford University or the University of Washington on the West Coast," he says, "but we're hoping that we could stop that pattern. Further, most people can't even go because it's not affordable. Hopefully, everybody, regardless of financial status, can access innovative treatments right here in Hawai'i at the UH Cancer Center.

"We have a robust clinical trial system," he says. "And we're just starting." 

UH Cancer Center and clinical trials: Call (808) 586-3010, email info@cc.hawaii.edu, or visit uhcancercenter.org.



For more on the UH Cancer Center and its history, visit islandscene.com/more.

animal adventures

words Summer Nakaishi



Animal stories aren't just for kids. These tales offer insights into the human experience and a new way to explore relationships. Check out our recommendations for heartwarming tales of animal companionship.

A Lion Called Christian: The True Story of the Remarkable Bond Between Two Friends and a Lion

By Anthony Bourke and John Rendall

This story seems almost too wild to be true: In 1969, Anthony Bourke and John Rendall purchased a lion cub named Christian from a London department store, and for several months, Christian shared an apartment with the two men, dined with them in restaurants, and became somewhat of a local celebrity. But the lion cub was growing quickly, and the friends knew they had to act fast to keep Christian from spending the rest of his life in a zoo. Bonus: Check out the YouTube video of Christian reuniting with his human friends at [youtube.com/watch?v=Co3N4-6B2pM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Co3N4-6B2pM).

Pax

By Sara Pennypacker

A novel for junior readers, but also entertaining for adults, this story centers on Pax, an orphaned fox raised by a 12-year-old boy named Peter. When Peter's father enlists to fight in a war, Peter is forced to release Pax into the wild and move to his grandfather's house 300 miles away. The chapters alternate between Peter's expedition to find his way back home, and Pax, who has started a fox family of his own but seeks out the only human he's ever trusted after one of his kits falls ill.

Remarkably Bright Creatures

By Shelby Van Pelt

Tova Sullivan is working the night shift at Sowell Bay Aquarium when she stumbles on a giant Pacific octopus named Marcellus who's trying to escape from his tank. The two then form an unlikely friendship. Marcellus pieces together what happened to Tova's son, who'd mysteriously vanished 30 years earlier, and the cranky, yet

highly intelligent octopus must do whatever it takes to share the truth before it's too late. Check out the audiobook for an equally enjoyable listen.

Sam and Dave Dig a Hole

By Mac Barnett, illustrated by Jon Klassen

Sam and Dave are on a quest to uncover "something spectacular." Shovels and snacks in hand, the boys, accompanied by their canine companion, begin digging and digging, missing giant diamonds buried in the dirt. Exhausted, the trio rests, then find themselves falling, eventually landing in a place that looks a lot like home ... but is it? Words and pictures work together to create subtle humor and are fun for readers of all ages to come up with their own conclusions.

CONGRATULATIONS to the 2024 Kaimana Recipients

The HMSA Kaimana Awards & Scholarship Program celebrates 19 years of recognizing Hawaii high schools and high school seniors for excellence in academics, athletics, community service, healthy activities, and sportsmanship.

hmsa.com/kaimana

Kaimana School Award Winners

Big Island Interscholastic Federation

Small School: Parker School
Large School: Kea'au High School

Interscholastic League of Honolulu

Small School: University Laboratory School
Large School: Hawaii Baptist Academy

Kauai Interscholastic Federation

Waimea High School

Maui Interscholastic League

Small School: Maui Preparatory Academy
Large School: Kamehameha Schools Maui

Oahu Interscholastic Association

Small School: Kalāheo High School
Large School: Moanalua High School

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Kaimana Scholarship Winners



MARISSA BOERNER
Kealakehe High School



KAYUGA JADE DE GUZMAN
Waialua High and
Intermediate School



SYDNEY ENDO
Punahou School



RAFAEL FIRME
Campbell High School



KYLEE HAMAMOTO
Punahou School



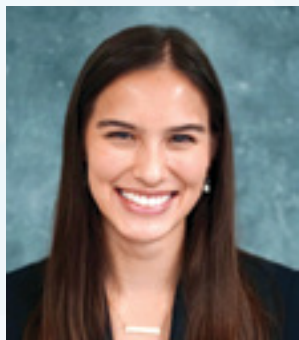
DIYORA KAMILOVA
'Iolani School



TALEN KOERTE
Kaua'i High School



SHYLOH MCCANN
Kapa'a High School



AHRYANNA MCGUIRK
Kalāheo High School



ELLE MIZUE
'Iolani School



CATALINA NAKI-ALFORTE
Nānākuli High and
Intermediate School



EVE NAWAHINE
Kahuku High and
Intermediate School



ANDREW PARESA
Waiākea High School



MADISON STRAND
King Kekaulike High School



JASMYN YOSHIKAWA
Baldwin High School

keiki corner



Animals in Hawai'i

Fill in the crossword with the names of the animals. Some names are in English and some are in Hawaiian!



Fun facts about animals

How many of these facts did you know?

Koalas sleep up to 22 hours a day.



A dog's sense of smell is about 100,000 times stronger than humans.



Elephants are the only animal that can't jump.



Cows have best friends.



A group of parrots is called a "pandemonium."



Male horses have more teeth than female horses.



Axolotls (a kind of salamander) can regenerate body parts.

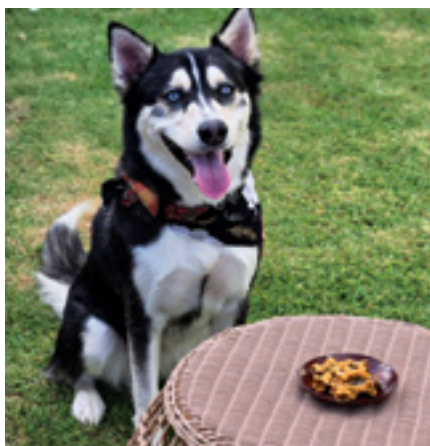


A grizzly bear's bite is powerful enough to crush a bowling ball.



DIY pumpkin spice dog treats

It's pumpkin spice season and why should humans have all the fun? Here's an easy recipe adapted from Simply Darrling (simplydarrling.com/peanut-free-pumpkin-spice-dog-treats) your pup will love.

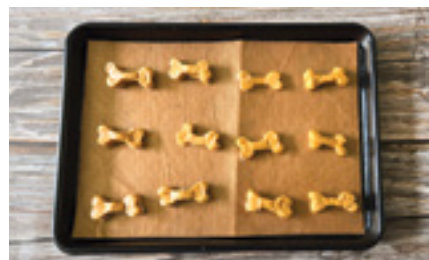


You'll need:

- 1 15-oz. can pumpkin puree
- 1 Tbsp. cinnamon
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 2 eggs
- 4 cups flour, plus more for dusting
- Rolling pin
- Cookie cutters (bone-shaped or dog-themed is optional)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Combine pumpkin puree, cinnamon, honey, and eggs in a bowl. Slowly add flour while mixing. Mix until ingredients are incorporated. Sprinkle a thin layer of flour on the counter or worksurface. Roll out the dough until $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Use cookie cutters to cut shapes. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper or a baking mat. Place treats on the lined cookie sheet. Bake for 30 minutes, let cool, and serve to your furry friend.



Animal crossword: 1. Eel, 2. Monk seal, 3. Pua, 4. Nene, 5. MongOOSE, 6. Gecko, 7. Whale, 8. Jellyfish, 9. Dolphin, 10. Honu, 11. Albatross

quick weeknight dinners

words Michelle Liu

photos Lew Harrington

food stylist Marjie Beaton





After a long day of work, cooking dinner may seem like a hassle. Takeout sounds more inviting, but nothing quite beats a home-cooked meal. Here are three recipes that will save you time and still pack a bunch of flavors.

Chopped Salad

- 1 small head iceberg lettuce
- 1 small head red cabbage
- ½ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved or quartered
- 1 15-oz. can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 4-oz. fresh pearl mozzarella, drained
- 4-oz. provolone cheese, diced
- ¼ cup pepperoncini, sliced

Lemon Vinaigrette Dressing

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- ½ shallot, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Cut iceberg lettuce in half through core, then cut out the core. Slice lettuce lengthwise into ¼-inch strips. Repeat with red cabbage.

To prepare dressing, whisk all ingredients in a small bowl.

In a large bowl, combine lettuce, red cabbage, onion, tomatoes, chickpeas, mozzarella, provolone, and pepperoncini. Drizzle with dressing and toss gently to coat. Makes 6 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving: 380 calories, 24 g fat, 8 g saturated fat, 35 mg cholesterol, 750 mg sodium, 28 g carbohydrate, 8 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 17 g protein

Chicken Noodle Bowl with Peanut Sauce

- 6 oz. rice noodles
- 1 rotisserie chicken, deboned and shredded
- 3 cups napa cabbage, shredded
- ½ Japanese cucumber, thinly sliced
- 1½ cups matchstick carrots
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- 6 Tbsp. peanuts, roasted and salted

Sauce

- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- 2 limes, juiced
- 3 Tbsp. shoyu
- 3 Tbsp. honey
- 2 Tbsp. ginger
- 1½ tsp. sesame oil
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper
- 3 Tbsp. rice vinegar
- ¼ tsp. salt

Cook rice noodles for about five minutes in boiling water. Drain noodles.

Prepare sauce by processing all ingredients in a blender until smooth.

Divide noodles, chicken, cabbage, cucumber, carrots, and bell pepper into six bowls. Top each bowl with sauce and peanuts. Makes 6 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving (based on a 2 pound rotisserie chicken): 460 calories, 19 g fat, 3.5 g saturated fat, 60 mg cholesterol, 950 mg sodium, 49 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 15 g sugar, 29 g protein

Stuffed Peppers

4 large red bell peppers, halved,
seeds and membranes removed
1 Tbsp. olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Filling

2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 yellow onion, diced
½ tsp. salt
1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
4 cloves garlic, minced
1½ tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. ground cumin
1½ cups cooked brown rice
1 15-oz. can pinto beans, rinsed and
drained
½ lime, juiced
4-oz. shredded cheddar or
mozzarella cheese

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Place bell peppers in a 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Drizzle olive oil over peppers and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake for 20 minutes, until peppers are slightly charred.

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat olive oil. Add onion and salt. Cook until onion is tender, about 5 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook another 5 minutes. Add garlic, chili powder, and cumin. Stir and cook until garlic is fragrant, about 30 to 60 seconds.

Remove skillet from heat. Add rice, beans, and lime juice to skillet. Stir to combine.

Stuff each pepper with rice mixture. Top peppers with cheese and bake at 425 degrees F for an additional 10 minutes, until cheese is melted and golden in spots. Makes 4 servings.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving (not including sprinkled salt to roasted peppers): 450 calories, 22 g fat, 7 g saturated fat, 30 mg cholesterol, 650 mg sodium, 50 g carbohydrate, 7 g fiber, 10 g sugar, 16 g protein



going bananas for bananas

There's something special about the banana bread made in Hawai'i, which may have to do with the locally grown bananas. Hawai'i is one of the top producers of bananas in the U.S., with most of them sold in the state.

Here are some fun facts to go bananas for.

Top banana

Of all the varieties in the world (over a thousand!), the most popular grown in Hawai'i is the apple banana, which is sweet and slightly tangy.

Something truly bananas

Bananas are herbaceous plants and are considered berries. The leaves can't be eaten but can be used for steaming and serving food.

Farm fresh

Hawai'i County produced the most bananas in 2022, followed by Honolulu, Kaua'i, and Maui Counties.

On land only

Taking a banana on a boat is believed to bring bad luck.

Golden fruit

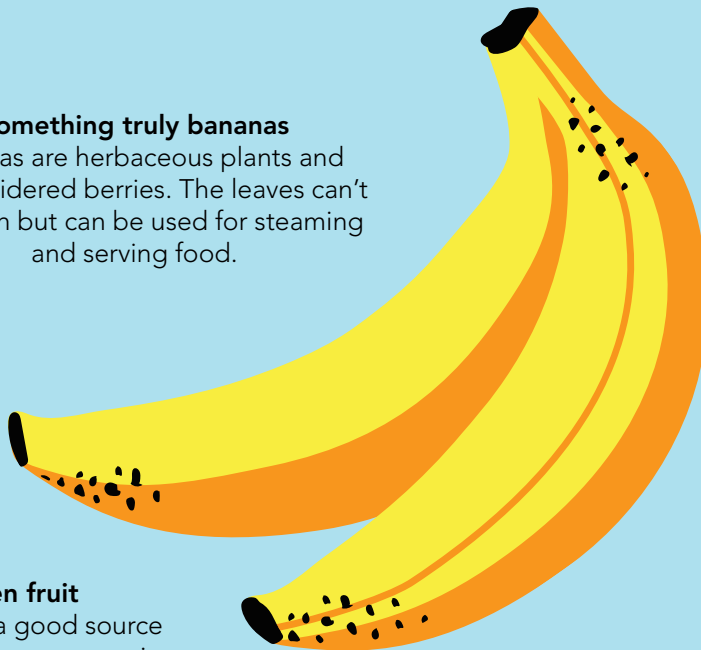
Bananas are a good source of fiber, potassium, magnesium, copper, manganese, and vitamins C, B6, and biotin.

Up or down?

Peeling it from the top down toward the stem is easier – and you'll have the stem to hold onto!

Sweet dessert

Extra-ripe bananas are sweeter and softer, so they're easier to mash for banana bread. Or add them to a smoothie or pancake or waffle batter.



words Michelle Liu

fall into cooking



Fall is a happy, transitional time of the year. Hot, humid days of summer gradually become cooler. We also become filled with anticipation for the holidays.

The shift in season is also a shift in what to cook. We offer three ideas to take you into your comfort zone for those cozy nights with family and friends.

Chili with Pumpkin

This timeless standard gets added appeal from a seasonal ingredient – kabocha pumpkin. Serve this on Halloween night while the kids are out trick or treating and the adults are home passing out candy and watching scary movies on TV. It's better when made a day ahead so that flavors have time to meld. Refrigerate overnight and slowly reheat for dinner.

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 1 lb. ground turkey
- 1 Tbsp. chili powder
- 15-oz. can kidney beans, drained
- 15-oz. can black beans, drained
- 15-oz. can petite diced tomatoes
- 15-oz. can tomato sauce
- 4 cups bite-sized chunks of peeled, seeded kabocha pumpkin

Garnishes (optional)

- Fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- Red onion, finely diced
- Avocado, cubed
- Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat and add garlic and onion. Saute until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the ground turkey and cook until browned and cooked through, breaking up into pieces with a wooden spoon. Sprinkle meat with chili powder and stir.

Stir in kidney beans, black beans, diced tomatoes with juices, and tomato sauce. Cover and bring to a simmer, about 30 minutes. Stir in pumpkin. Cover and cook until tender, an additional 30 minutes.

Serve in a bowl and top with garnishes.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving (based on 8 servings without garnishes): 250 calories, 7 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 40 mg cholesterol, 650 mg sodium, 30 g carbohydrate, 9 g fiber, 6 g sugar, 19 g protein

Roasted Vegetables

Is your vegetable crisper full after a visit to the farmers market? Here's a yummy way to use them up quickly before they turn bad. Use what you have. You can mix or match the vegetables. Meal prep on the weekend and store in a container to last you the week. Use it as a side dish or mix in a salad.

- 6 small red, white, or Yukon Gold potatoes, cleaned and quartered
- 1 medium head cauliflower, chopped
- 1 medium head broccoli, chopped
- 1 lb. rainbow carrots, halved lengthwise
- 1 red or yellow bell pepper, seeded and sliced
- 1 shallot, quartered
- 1 medium onion, thickly sliced
- 1 garlic head, peeled with cloves left whole
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. fresh thyme leaves
- 1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. chopped Italian or flat-leaf parsley

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a large bowl, toss vegetables with oil, salt, pepper, and thyme. Spread evenly on a baking sheet lined with foil or parchment paper. Roast, tossing occasionally as needed to prevent burning. Cook until tender and slightly charred, about 30 to 45 minutes. Toss with vinegar and sprinkle with parsley.

Approximate nutrient analysis per serving (based on 8 servings): 220 calories, 4 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 250 mg sodium, 41 g carbohydrate, 9 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 7 g protein



Charcuterie Board

The holidays are soon approaching. Here's a festive appetizer to get the party started. "Charcuterie" is French for cold cut meats. But you can pile on anything your tastebuds desire.

Here are some ideas to help you get you started

- Assortment of meats: Prosciutto, salami, and chorizo. Cooked Portuguese sausage or lup cheong gives it a local flair.
- Cheeses: One hard, one soft.
- Fruits: Dried figs or dates and fresh strawberries, grapes, or pear slices.
- Vegetables: Sliced carrots, grape tomatoes, and marinated artichokes.
- Nuts: Roasted almonds, walnuts, or macadamias.
- Olives: Black or green, stuffed or not (consider seedless so there are no surprises when biting).
- Cornichons: These little pickles pack a big punch.
- Spreads: Thai basil pesto, taro hummus, or guava jam.
- Crackers, crostini, or sliced whole-grain bread

Arrange ingredients in a large board or platter. Use an assortment of little bowls, spoons, knives, and cutters.



O ka hā'ule nehe o ka lau lā'au, he hāwanawana ia i ka po'e ola.

*The rustling of falling leaves is like a whisper to the living.
(It is the living who appreciate such things.)*

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