



Full of Happiness

Piha me ka Hau'oli

Meals from the Heart, Food for the Soul

HAWAI'I MEALS ON WHEELS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023

Unnoticed No More

For so many kūpuna a knock on the door is powerful. It might not seem like a big deal to many of us. But, to a homebound kupuna, it could signal the arrival of the only person they might see all day or all week long. **A knock on the door may save a life.**

Last year, we received a call from a concerned neighbor. He spoke quickly with worry and desperation. It had been a month since "Uncle George" had running water, he shared. He had been delivering groceries and bottled water whenever he could, but George's health was declining. **His situation had become a crisis.**

Our staff – a meal delivery driver and social worker – arrived the same day with emergency meals and a case of water. It was over the course of many deliveries that week that we got to know George and became better acquainted with his needs.

At 77, George was a retired boat captain and bachelor. Estranged from his siblings, he lived alone in his home, which was heaped with old newspapers, containers full of odds and ends, and broken furniture. The floor was barely visible. **It became clear that George was also struggling with memory loss.**

Every weekday our meal delivery staff and volunteers brought him a hot meal and water. We purchased



a phone for him, so we could keep in touch and in hopes that he could make the calls necessary to restore his water and electricity. **But we soon realized that George needed much more than just meals.** He needed extensive care coordination.

We spent the five months working with supportive agencies, including Medicaid and Adult Protective Services (APS), to help George access the high level of care he needed, such as those available through Adult Foster Care. We sat with him during every phone call, helping him navigate the complex maze of healthcare and social security benefits and discussing his medical needs with his physician.

"Right when we thought it couldn't get worse, we'd learn of something else," his neighbor shared. "Hawai'i Meals on Wheels saved Uncle George's life. I can sleep better at night knowing that he's safe."

Continued inside...

Unnoticed No More

Continued from cover

Now more than ever, we are seeing a growing number requests for kūpuna with multiple, severe chronic health and mental wellness problems and emergency living situations. **The number of kūpuna with emergency needs like George's is far greater than we ever imagined.**

So many have fallen through the gaps. They weren't on anyone's radar. They downplayed their concerns. They didn't know who to turn to for help.

Once they become known to us, no matter how complex their situation, Hawai'i Meals on Wheels will help them age with dignity without fear of hunger.

The kindness of friends like you keep us on the road delivering meals and talking story with kūpuna. **George's experience would have been impossible without the support of people like you!**

A NOTE OF FRIENDSHIP FROM MICHELLE CORDERO-LEE

When I reflect on how seamlessly the Hawai'i Meals on Wheels staff worked together to address seemingly insurmountable challenges to help George, I am filled with pride and gratitude for their hardwork and compassion.

They not only work efficiently to serve hundreds of clients every month, they are skilled in identifying needs and training volunteers to do the same, while working with community partners to provide solutions.

Thanks to your support, this past year, we continued to respond to the surge in meal requests. Only because of your generosity were we able to fully sponsor meals for 250 kūpuna residents when emergency funding for meals to affordable senior communities ended abruptly this summer. In addition, we formed a congregate dining partnership with the YMCA of Honolulu to serve kūpuna members at five of their locations islandwide.



This year, I'm excited to announce that we have expanded for the first time to serve those on the Waianae Coast. In 2023, let's continue to do more for those who truly have no where else to turn.

Michelle Cordero-Lee
CEO

	Pre-pandemic 2019	2022
CLIENTS	759	1,298
MEALS	98,279	156,788
HOT MEAL ROUTES	50	41
FROZEN MEAL ROUTES	0	36
LOW-INCOME SENIOR COMMUNITIES	0	9
CONGREGATE DINING LOCATIONS	0	5



2022 at a glance

1,298

homebound clients

156,788

meals delivered

330

new clients

59%

female clients

80

median age of client

41%

clients at or below poverty line

9

affordable seniors communities

11

kitchen partners

50%

meals that are medically-tailored (customized)

41

daily hot meal routes

36

weekly frozen meal routes

5

congregate dining locations

\$957,926

spent on meals



Q&A with Delivery Driver Mike Lundy Rhythm on the Road

Meet Mike Lundy. He's Hawai'i Meals on Wheels most veteran staff member; he's been with us for more than 21 years. What many on his routes may not know is he also created some of our island's grooviest music!

Scan the QR code to view Mike Lundy's full video interview on our website.



Born and raised in Nu'uano, Mike was composing original music from a young age. In 1979 in Honolulu, he recorded and released a now internationally-acclaimed LP called *The Rhythm Of Life*.



After completing his deliveries, we enjoyed an afternoon chatting with Mike about his music and the past two decades as a meal delivery driver.

What do you find most rewarding about your job?

Caring for our kūpuna, it just feels good inside. I love my job. I've said this for years, it isn't like a job. My most memorable times are deliveries during the holidays when our clients are feeling loneliest. They'll say, "You're bringing us meals and on top of that gifts!?" It really moves me.

What has changed in the past 20 years? *When I started, I was one of only two drivers covering about four routes. Today, we have 6 drivers covering more than 70 routes with the help with 100 volunteers! The need for home-delivered meals has grown exponentially. It's all flown by so fast. I'm now serving some kūpuna who are younger than me!*

Where does music and serving kūpuna intersect?

Delivering meals and performing aren't that much different at all. When you're performing you want to make people happy and take them into a better place. The same with meals. You go to their homes, give them joy and nourishment, and help them get away from their situation for a while.

Mike's inventive rhythms have experienced a resurgence in popularity worldwide. Blending jazzy pop and funk, his music can be heard on our local stations, in Brazilian cafes, and have even been remixed and played in London clubs! But the heightened popularity of his music hasn't gone to his head. He continues to serve kūpuna with humility and compassion – bringing his lively funk and soul on the road to share with kūpuna.

Gigging together since high school, staff drivers Adney Atabay (far left) and Mike perform at last year's Thanksgiving fundraiser.



JOIN THE HUI!

Would you like to join Mike and our meal delivery team as a volunteer? We're looking for individuals, ohanas, friends, co-workers, or church members, who are available Monday, Thursday, or Friday between 9 AM and Noon. **Share your availability with us online at hmow.org/volunteer.**



Congratulations to our volunteers celebrating special anniversaries with HMoW!

35 Years of Service

7th Day Adventist Church
Kailua Rotarians

15 Years of Service

Chloe Heiniemi	Carlotta Pesentheiner
Merilyn Lee	Arlita Spears
Diane Martin	Leighton Tanno
Marlene Matsuda	Charlotte Trotter
Nancy Moyer	Carl Yazawa
Russell Okita	

10 Years of Service

Mary Ann Barngrover	George Moyer
Catherine Chung	Al Prevo
Betty Inada	Karen Prevo
Arthur Kawatachi	Annette Watanabe
Karl Ketterer	Emily Watanabe
Julie Klein	Jayme Watanabe
Terry Ledford	Katie Watanabe
Ethel Masui	James Wolfe
Maile Meyer	Bona Wong

5 Years of Service

Adeline Adachi	Marilyn Lee
David Adachi	Ronald Lee
Patsy Akagi	Terri Luke
Alison Akiu	Stephen Lung
Maria Brennan	Jane Maxwell
Michael Brennan	Mari Mcclenney
Michael Cabusora	Julie Mejia
Jean Campbell	Krista Mui
Carmen Carvalho	Modesty Mullins
Sue Carlson	Evelyn Norris
Adele Ching	Conrad Oishi
Fely Ching	Rachel Pahukoa-malia
Michael Chong	Lisa Perreira
Constance Chung	Suzanne Petritz
Fannie Cline	Timothy Petritz
Susan Cook	Belinda Quach
Toan Doran	Brandy Sakai
Richard Emery	Beverly Sameshima
Layton Fujii	Jackie Sato
Laurie Fung	Ken Sato
Kehaulani Gamboa	Chad Satterfield
Larry Groah II	Rodgene Sylva
Alden Higa	Pamela Takiguchi
Audrey Higa	Bryan Terauchi
Alexander Ho	Lurline Vierra
Sandra Kaneshiro	Tim Von Herrmann
Gaylyn Kauleinamoku	Carolyn Watanabe
Randall Kobayashi	Kelsie Watanabe
Lori Kunimoto	Olivia Weinert
Jack Laufer	April Will
Amy Lee	

Save
THE
Date

Volunteer Appreciation
Celebration Luncheon
Japanese Cultural Center
Saturday, May 20, 2023
Stay tuned for details!





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Save the Dates: Holiday Drive-Thru Fundraisers

**Ohana Meal Pack Drive-Thru
Celebrate Kamehameha Weekend**
Saturday, June 10, 2023

Help kūpuna AND enjoy a plate lunch packed with ono Hawaiian food! Plan ahead and have a plate lunch party with your ohana and friends.

**Turkey Meal Pack Drive-Thru
Thanksgiving Day**
Thursday, November 23, 2023

Skip the cooking! Enjoy a Thanksgiving feast for the entire ohana. Be the first to place your order by email this summer. **Scan the QR code to join our email list.**



Stay up to date on the latest HMoW news by joining our email list!