



# IMUA POLENISIA

NEWS FROM THE POLYNESIAN CULTURAL CENTER

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## 1994 WORLD FIRE-KNIFE CHAMPION CROWNED

Maui auto mechanic Ifi So'o fought back tears after being crowned the 1994 World Fire-Knife Champion recently at the Cultural Center.

In a highly professional final competition – PCC's So'o Tufaga came in second and Tuione Tovo took third place – So'o narrowly beat out his rivals by 35 points and 135 points respectively.

With \$10,000 in cash prizes provided by the Center, the 1994 world championship was co-sponsored by Polynesian Airlines, Rodeway Inn Hukilau Resort, Hawaiian Airlines, Turtle Bay Hilton Golf and Tennis Resort and KHNL (Fox 13). The six other semi-finalists each received \$500 and other prizes.

A total of 23 professional fire-knife dancers entered the competition from Western Samoa, Guam, Las Vegas, Florida and Hawaii.

So'o, 34, works as a full-time mechanic for Wailea Golf Course by day and performs as a fire-knife dancer by night at the Wailea Intercontinental Hotel.

"It could have been any of us (finalists). So'o and Tuione were great, but it was just my night. I

didn't realize there were so many great (fire-knife) dancers out there," So'o said.

In addition to his cash prize of \$4,000, So'o received a set of three hand-crafted fire-knife dance knives beautifully designed by PCC carver Tumu Purcell. Second-place winner Tufaga received \$2,000 and a set of two knives and third-place winner Tovo received \$1,000 and a single knife.

The world championship event is believed to have set a one-day attendance record of almost 6,500 visitors to the PCC.

The 1993 world champion, PCC's Sielu Avea, did not compete because of a knee injury several months ago that prevented him from training for the event.

"I plan to compete next year. I know the competition will be bigger, tougher and more spectacular. I'm looking forward to what I know will be one of Hawaii's greatest events," Avea said.

*The Comraderie of Champions: The three top fire-knife dancers show their support of each other backstage – Tuione Tovo (left), third-place winner; Ifi So'o, 1994 World Fire-knife Champion; and So'o Tufaga, second-place winner.*



*World champion Ifi So'o has been dancing since the age of ten. He was born in Nofoali'i in Western Samoa. He attended Church College of Western Samoa and BYU-Hawaii for a short time before moving to Maui.*



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Lester W.B. Moore*

#### Editor's Note:

PCC President Les Moore is traveling on the mainland and his column will resume in our next issue of Imua Polenisia.

# DRUMS OF POLYNESIA

## Bits and Pieces...

### Special Visitors

#### Elder and Sister F. Burton

**Howard**, First Quorum of the Seventy... Former well known knife dancers who judged the World Fire-knife Dance Championship included KCCN radio personality **Kimo Kahoano**, **George Dalire**, **O'Brien Eselu**, **George Dayag**, **Falaniko Vitale**, **Billy Duarte**, **Malo Seleni**, **Joseph Ahuna** and **Pepe Ake**... 60 Hospitality Associates (operators of Rodeway Inn Hukilau Resort) managers of **Rodeway Inns** nationwide... **Don George**, Travel Editor, San Francisco Examiner accompanied by **Joyce Matsumoto**, Public Relations Director at the Halekulani Hotel... **Earl Bakken**, retired owner of Medtronic Company which produced the first heart pacemaker... **Andres Jershonbeck**, General Manager of the Tokyo Hilton... **Donna Kim**, Honolulu City Councilwoman from District #7.

#### Four-Star General Visits Center

General **Charles "Chuck" Horner**, the four-star U.S. Commander in Chief of the Space Command, visited the Center recently accompanied by his wife **Mary Jo**, and two members of his staff - Colonel **Bill Van Meter**, former commander at Hickam 15th Air Base Wing, and Major **Ken Bennett**. Horner praised the Center as a "good operation" as evidenced by the quality performances he experienced throughout his PCC tour.



Mrs. Horner, General Chuck Horner and Colonel Bill Van Meter participate in PCC's Fiji Islands bamboo instrument demonstration.



#### Photo Polynesia Reorganized

It was announced this week that **Les Forester** has sold his shares of Photo Polynesia to his partner **Spencer Kamauoha**.

"Our goal for Photo Polynesia is to establish the finest photography programs found anywhere and support the finest cultural center in the world," said Kamauoha. "We are committed to maintaining the same high level of service and will continue to respond to all PCC requests."

Kamauoha has promoted former PCC employee Raymond Mokiao to vice president.

"I plan to pursue other business projects," said Les Forester, "but I will continue to serve Photo Polynesia as a consultant."

#### Happy 50th Anniversary to Christy's

Congratulations to **Barney Christy** (Master carver) and his wife **Marge** (Migrations Museum) who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary earlier this month. They were married in Gisborne, New Zealand.

#### PCC Reservations Logs On New System

On May 18 PCC Reservations logged on a new computerized ticketing system. It will better control seat allocations, better service guests at point of sale, eliminate lines and produce a more

efficient accounting record. The system no longer allows for reserved seating. Tickets are issued with row designations. Guests choose their seat positions within their designated row with the help of theater ushers.

#### Two Represent PCC at ANZAC Day Commemoration

**Colin Shelford**, PCC's New Zealand Islands Manager, and Master Carver **Barney Christy**, represented the Center in the ANZAC Day commemoration at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific last month where they laid a wreath. (ANZAC stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.)

#### Miss Teen Samoa Introduced at Arts Festival

During the Hawaii High School Samoan Arts Festival, **Maila Marasco**, Miss Teen Samoa 1993-94 was introduced. Marasco attends BYU-Hawaii and is a freshman majoring in English. She dances in PCC's night show "Mana".

#### PCC Takes Turtle into Custody

PCC security officer, **Liufau Tuifua**, recently took into custody a turtle weighing approximately 15 pounds. It was found loitering on the service road near the PCC Maintenance Building. After a brief investigation, it was returned to its home - the PCC lagoon.

### SUGGESTION CORNER

by Elder Paul Wilson

The PCC Suggestion Systems is in full swing and employees have already sent in nearly 200 suggestions. The Suggestion Committee is now evaluating each one and will soon begin making awards for the best suggestions submitted.

Winning suggestions are those that prove beneficial to the Center in terms of money saved or revenue gained if it is implemented. Safety-related suggestions are getting a great deal of attention from the committee. Keep them coming!

# IMUA POLENISIA Employee Survey

1. Do you read Imua Polenisia? Yes  No
2. Are you generally happy with the present content of the PCC publication? Yes  No
3. Below are some of the possible types of articles and sections that are now in the newsletter or could be included. Please indicate your preference with a number from 1 through 4, using this code:

- 1. Not interested.** You do not wish to read such an article.
- 2. Occasionally interested.** You are somewhat interested and would read selected articles, but not all.

**3. Quite interested.** You are interested in reading almost all articles like this.

**4. Very interested.** You would enjoy reading articles of this type in every issue of Imua Polenisia.

*You do not have to sign your name unless you want to.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill in and return to Tali Pei, (293-3002), PCC Communications Division, Administration Building.**

MAHALO!

Type of Article	Your Rating (1-4)
President's Message	_____
VIP Visitor information	_____
Customer letters (positive ones)	_____
Suggestions/complaints from customers	_____
Information about special events/calendar	_____
Special Visitor information (Non-VIP)	_____
Training information (Hana Hou)	_____
Safety Tips	_____
Educational programs PCC is involved in (Sterling Scholar, etc.)	_____
Employee biographies	_____
Information about future PCC plans	_____
PCC Employee Suggestion System updates	_____
Outside news media reports about PCC	_____

Type of Article	Your Rating (1-4)
Employee missionary departures/arrivals	_____
Cultural Information	_____
Employee of the month information/Profiles	_____
DMBA Hotline	_____
Editorial	_____
Trade Shows and Promo Team Updates	_____
Special Awards to PCC	_____
Retirement news	_____
List other types of articles you want to read:	
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

# Fire and Art: Blazing New Directions for Samoans

The second Saturday of May 1994 at the Polynesian Cultural Center will burn brightly in the hearts of the Samoan community in Hawaii. In the morning at the Pacific Pavilion, more than 500 students from a dozen Oahu high schools sang, danced and competed in the 4th annual "We Are Samoa" Arts Festival. In the evening, 34-year-old professional knife-dancer from Maui, Ifi So'o, beat out two other finalists from PCC to claim the 1994 world fire-knife dance championship, a \$4,000 check and other prizes.

The student competitors supported by about 2,000 family members, school administrators and teachers screamed and cheered their schoolmates through four competitive categories: Lauga Feiloa'iga or welcoming speech; a solo poem competition with the theme - Loto Nuu or "The Spirit of Samoa"; Sasa, Mauluulu, Tauluga - dances of Samoa; and traditional Samoan activities and games such as si'aga afi (firemaking),

Lalaga Ato (coconut leaf weaving), and O'oaga Popo (coconut husking).

The participating high schools included Aiea, Campbell, Farrington, Kahuku, Kailua, Kaimuki, Kalaheo, Leilehua, McKinley, Pearl city, Waianae and Waipahu. The emcees of the event were popular Samoan entertainer Jerome Grey and PCC's Samoa Islands Manager, Pulefano Galea'i.

"The great pride and happiness evident in the faces of the Samoan students and their parents motivates us every year to make this high school festival bigger and better every year," said PCC President Les Moore.

"The high school Samoan arts festival not only enriches the lives of all those who come to enjoy the cultural activities, but also the lives of every one of our employees validating the purpose of the Center to "preserve and portray the cultures, arts and crafts of Polynesia," Moore added.

## China Travel Vice-Chairman Ma Chi Man: Cultural Tourism Development in China

In a special lecture to PCC and BYU-Hawaii employees, Ma Chi Man, vice-chairman of China Travel (Holdings) H.K. Ltd and China Travel Service (CTS) spoke on the cultural tourism development in China, particularly in the city of Shenzhen.

His company, which employs 35,000, has been on the forefront of developing cultural theme parks, building attractions that reflect Chinese

history, culture and ethnic groups.

Through these "windows" into the different peoples of China, it is hoped international peace and understanding will result and overseas tourism will be promoted, he said.

In 1989 the first cultural theme park, "Splendid China", representing 80 historical villages in miniature, opened in Shenzhen located not far from Hong Kong. It was well-received by both domestic and foreign visitors.

In 1991, an adjacent attraction was added called the "China Folk Cultural Village". It featured 21 ethnic groups set within 24 full-sized replicated villages featuring cultural dwellings and special geographical landscapes. Both attractions together employ approximately 300 people who perform dances and demonstrate Chinese folk arts.

In April of this year, CTS added the new "Windows of the World" attraction. Its purpose is to preserve historical world landmarks including man-made wonders such as the Eiffel Tower in Paris. An important feature will be a Grand Canyon exhibit occupying 45,000 square meters.

Because Shenzhen has become one of China's most successful tourist destinations, other supporting peripheral structures developed by CTS include an art exhibit center, three hotel resorts, a

national park, a shopping center and business center.

Last December CTS opened a 76-acre "Splendid China" theme park in

Orlando, Florida, with 60 miniature replicas of historically-preserved Chinese villages. This cultural center is one of the largest outside of China with others to follow.

Its purpose is to complement the theme parks in Shenzhen and to expose the splendid cultures of China to the rest of the world.

Ma paid special tribute to PCC as the forerunner and inspiration for the China Folk Culture Village theme park. He reiterated the special relationship we share - exchanging ideas, cooperative visits and travel management training.

He also expressed his gratitude for the Center's hospitality and hoped for continued success and prosperity for both China Travel Service and PCC.



*China Travel Vice-Chairman Ma Chi Man and PCC President Les Moore pose during special dinner in front of hand-stitched Hawaiian quilt.*

### VISITOR INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES APPRECIATION DAY

Today the Department of Business Economic Development & Tourism, Hawaii Visitors Bureau, Polynesian Cultural Center, Unity House and Hilo Hattie honor all visitor industry employees in a special free event at the Honolulu Zoo from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Employees from all walks of the visitor industry are invited to bring picnic suppers, experience the new African Savanna Exhibit, enjoy the music of Israel Kamakawiwoole and cheer on participants in the first annual Visitor Industry Karaoke Contest.

PCC will provide island exhibits and the Promo Team will perform.

# THE SPIRIT OF POLYNESIA

## PCC Fosters Happiness

by Janis Lania Koh, reporter  
Hawaii #1 Magazine

For the past few months, I was busy meeting some future investigators who left their phone numbers at the temple while visiting the Polynesian Cultural Center. It was a memorable experience sharing my views and testimonies of the Church with these new friends.

Vacation is a memorable time to many. They open their eyes and hearts to accept and appreciate what they see. To some of us Disneyland is called the happiest place on earth. At least to my experience that is right. PCC may be happy to hear that I think PCC is the happiest place in Hawaii.

I see the young students working hard, happy dancers, happy waiters, happy canoe captains trying hard to welcome their visitors.

Someone has said: "Let us be the ones who protect and enlarge the self-respect of the people we meet. Let us be the ones to see beyond the surface, however rough, into the feelings of those we meet each day."

It takes special empathy, a gracious heart to build the ego of another person. It may be done with a single word, a look, a gesture, but there are very few who have ever understood, let alone mastered, this gentle art. Remember, within the oyster shell uncouth, the purest pearl may hide, and oft you'll find a heart of truth, within a rough outside.

As we grow in discipline, love and life experience, our understanding of the world and our place in it naturally grows apace.

## "Father of Fire-knife Dancing": Olo "Freddie" Letuli

"The opportunity to be part of this year's Fire-knife Dance Competition has been a thrill for me," said 75-year old Senator Olo Freddie Letuli, considered the "Father of Fire-knife Dancing" from American Samoa. "The art of fire-knife dancing has reached a skill level I never dreamed I would see."

Letuli, who is a third-term American Samoa senator and retired judge, was a special guest at PCC's Second Annual World Fire-knife Dance Competition. He pioneered fire-knife dancing as a young entertainer in his twenties.

"After admiring a 13-year old baton twirler dance with lighted batons, I asked one of my fellow performers who was a Hindu fire-eater at a show in San Francisco to help me "light" some towels I tied to the end of my knives. The idea worked. It was not perfect at the beginning, but I kept working to make it better," Letuli added.

With appearances in Hollywood movies and having access to creative people in special effects departments of the studios, Letuli fine-tuned the "fire" to make it safe indoors and

outdoors. "For a while I used dry ice into which I dipped the lighted bulb-ends of the "fire-knife," he said.

Letuli not only pioneered the "flame formula" which most fire-knife dancers use today, but he also introduced "fire-eating" and certain standard acrobatic moves as part of every fire-knife dancer's routine.

"One of the moves I created which I haven't seen any of current fire-knife dancers do is to leap back and forth over a single knife while holding both ends," Letuli said.

Letuli's career includes teaching well-known former fire-knife dancers such as PCC's Pulefano Galea'i, coordinator for the World Fire-knife Dance Competition and manager of the Center's Samoa Islands, Galea'i's brother Tafili, the late Kui Lee, Faleniko Vitale and Malo Seleni.

"When I started out as a fire-knife dancer, I received a lot of encouragement and support from Freddie," said Galea'i. "I particularly learned showmanship and artistry from him."

Very proud he has performed in every state except Alaska, Letuli worked with many

## From Our Mailbox

"It's been two weeks since returning to Molokai and our students have held daily discussions on how much fun and a great time they had on their trip to your establishment.

We'd like to take this time to say mahalo nui loa to everyone on your staff for an outstanding job in making our visit an educational and memorable experience for our 7th grade Ka Hui' Ana Core Program.

Again mahalo and we hope our future plans include events as such, to be able to call upon your hospitality and service once again."

Ka Hui' Ana Core Team  
Molokai High & Intermediate School



PCC President Les Moore, Senator Olo Freddie Letuli and World Fire-knife Dance Coordinator Pulefano Galea'i enjoy a performance together.

of Hawaii's great entertainers not only in Hawaii but also on the Mainland: Hilo Hattie, Harry Owens, Sterling Mossman, Alfred Apaka, Tavana, Johnny Ukulele, and the Mary Kay Trio.

Letuli has performed the fire-knife dance and slap dance in several movies including "Pagan Love Song", "On An Island With You", "Sailor Beware" and "Waikiki Wedding".

"I tip my hat to all the fire-knife dancers in this year's competition. When the champion is crowned, it is because he has the following qualities which make a fire-knife dancer great: he personally loves the art of performing the knife-dance; he enjoys pleasing the crowd and caters to their enjoyment; he seeks to progress with every performance - trying new actions and movements; and he displays the courage and stamina required of this Samoan tradition.

"It is very appropriate the World Fire-knife Championship was held here at the Center. This is indeed the 'World of Polynesia'. I have loved my visit here and thank everyone for everything," said Letuli.



# HANA HOU



TO DO AGAIN, REPEAT, RENEW, REPAIR, MEND, ENCORE

## OVERCOMING BOREDOM AT WORK

by Rubina Forester  
Communications Coordinator

A great many people these days complain their work is boring. The tendency is to blame the job for lack of challenge. What usually makes work uninteresting toil, however, is one's attitude – not the work itself.

No task need be boring, for the simple reason that every job contains within it a hidden challenge. That challenge is this: How can it be done better?

Could anything be more boring than sweeping floors? Murray Spangler, a depart-

ment store janitor in Canton, Ohio, wasn't bored, even though the dust made him wheeze and cough. Many men would have given up and quit. Instead, Spangler set out to find a better way to clean floors.

"Why not eliminate the broom," he wondered, "maybe something that would suck up dust..."

Spangler's questions led to a crude but workable vacuum cleaner, which he induced an old friend in the leather business to finance. The friend's name was H.W. Hoover.

Center employees battle boredom every day. It is manifested in the greeter who leans against a post or wall; a demonstrator gazing into the far distance while weaving; a typist making silly errors; a guide mumbling directions; a photographer mis-setting the camera; a

food preparer cutting his hand accidentally; or a tram driver failing to look at the rear view mirror before moving.

Whatever the job, all employees can challenge themselves to avoid boredom by changing their attitudes. It is a matter of alerting the mind to observe surroundings, seeking opportunities to improve mundane duties and making the mental decision to maintain an active level of excitement and interest with all PCC guests.

It is noticing whether a bush needs watering, making an irritable child happy, giving assistance to a confused guest, changing the script level of a demonstration to suit the needs of a group, or offering a change of menu item to satisfy an unhappy customer. It is consciously and consistently doing a better job.

## DMBA HOTLINE

by Grace Lee

Beginning June 1st, 1994 DMBA's new medical plans – NetworkCare, ManagedCare and the revised Kaiser Plan – will become effective.

PCC employees who are currently enrolled in DMBA's plan B and who did not fill out the required mandatory change forms before the May 13 deadline will automatically be included in the NetworkCare Plan. Employees who are currently on Kaiser will remain under Kaiser's revised plan if forms were not filled out.

However, employees who did not make a change and would like to do so or those who have enrolled in a new plan but want to change, may submit change forms to DMBA between June 1 to August 31. If you have any questions on the above benefit changes, please contact DMBA at 293-3970.

DMBA is pleased to welcome the following physicians to our ManagedCare Plan:

Dr. James Lew, a family practice doctor with subspecialty in obstetrics and gynecology. He is currently at the North Shore Health Center. His office hours are Mondays to Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Specialty Medical Group at the North Shore Health Clinic – Dr. Sidney Pershing, a family practice doctor who also practices emergency medicine at Kahuku Hospital; Dr. Steven Tang and Dr. Kimberley Douglas who both specialize in pediatrics.

The extended office hours for the Specialty Medical Group are: Monday – Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday 7 a.m. to 12 noon, and Sundays 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

If you are enrolled under the ManagedCare plan, you may now select one of the above doctors or any one of our current Plan B physicians as your Primary Care Physician. Please contact DMBA if you have any questions.

\* For all those employees who were signed up with DMBA's Eye Wear Plan, your membership expired on 4-30-94. Please call the DMBA office for the renewal of your membership.

## SAFETY TIPS

### Assisting Guests in Wheelchairs

**STOP!** Are you on the paved pathway? Do you have a safe, firm grip on the wheelchair?

**LOOK!** Is the path steep? If so, go slowly and carefully. Be prepared to stop. Watch out for other guests.

**LISTEN!** Don't use the wheelchair as a toy. Know the access routes for wheelchairs.



## IMUA POLENISIA

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