



ISLAND MATTERS *Mufi Hannemann*

Webster, Akana Making Impact In NBA

Former 'Iolani hoops star Bobby Webster made a splash when he was appointed general manager of the Toronto Raptors, making him the league's youngest at only 32 years of age!

I have been tracking his ascent in the NBA through his proud dad, Bobby Sr. He first worked for the Orlando Magic before joining the NBA's league office in New York City, where he stayed for seven years. In 2013, he was appointed to the Raptors' front office and took over the top post following the departure of the previous general manager. We're looking forward to seeing him when the Raptors play the Los Angeles Clippers in October at Stan Sheriff Center.

Jarinn Akana, who is enjoying a solid career as a sports agent representing NBA athletes, such as DeMarcus Cousins of the New Orleans Pelicans, says, "Webster has an unbelievable future ahead, and I am very happy for Bobby." Akana, older brother of Brandy Akana, coach of the 2017 boys basketball state champ Kahuku, as I'm sure

you'll remember, was a star baller for the Moloka'i High School Farmers, BYU-Hawai'i and then for the University of Hawai'i Rainbow Warriors. After some college coaching stints, he followed that with coaching tours with the Dallas Mavericks, Denver Nuggets and Milwaukee Bucks. While with the Nuggets, he was part of their scouting and front office operations.

"When he (Webster) joined the Raptors, he quickly impressed the senior brass that they gave him some of the more challenging assignments to complete," continues Akana.

And they often "talk story" about ways to get Hawai'i and Hawai'i-based players more connected with the NBA. That would be great, so let's make it happen — and keep making the 808 proud!

Let's Go Bows — To Kaua'i!

While we are on the subject of sports, 'twas an impressive gathering of seven University of Hawai'i coaches, accompanied by their boss Dave Matlin and his key staff, who made the



UH coaches and staff visited Grand Hyatt Kaua'i for a Kaua'i Chamber quarterly meeting regarding the Rainbow Warrior sports program. Pictured are (front, from left) Eran Ganot, Laura Beeman, Kaua'i County Council chairman Mel Rapozo, athletic director Dave Matlin, Nick Rolovich, (back) Charles Wade, the author, Senate President Ron Kouchi, Jeff Hall and Mike Trapasso.

PHOTO COURTESY JARED HIGASHI

trek to the Garden Island to participate in a jam-packed Kaua'i Chamber quarterly meeting dedicated to the Rainbow Warrior sports program. Never before have so many UH athletic honchos appeared together to break bread and mix and mingle with the general public. Coaches Eran Ganot, Charles Wade, Nick Rolovich, Laura Beeman, Mike Trapasso, Jeff Hall and Deirdre Wisneski were extremely generous with their time, and athletic director Matlin was so touched by

the outpouring of aloha from the people of Kaua'i that we already are in discussions on doing more of these kinds of events on other islands.

The highlight of the night was a \$10,000 contribution from chamber sponsor Family & Friends of Agriculture and Hawai'i Lodging and Tourism Association to UH Foundation to benefit UH sports programs. Let's go, 'Bows!

Prince Lot Hula Festival

The sports of my forma-

tive years were basketball and baseball. Interestingly enough, a skillful hula instructor and friend of the family named Myra Chartrand somehow convinced my mother that enrolling me in a hālau would enhance my cultural understanding and strengthen my athletic skills.

While I'll admit the "grand experiment" of my hula experience was short-lived, it did give me a lasting appreciation of the beauty of Hawaiian music and dance.

This aspect of the culture was embedded in me when I joined state government as DBEDT director and had the wherewithal to promote it when we embarked on tourism-related promotional tours across the mainland and globe, and later when I was mayor of Honolulu.

At that time, I appointed kumu hula Michael Pili Pang to be my director of the Office of Culture and the Arts.

Michael now is one of the leaders of the annual Prince Lot Hula Festival, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, with events slated

for July 15 and 16, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday.

However, there's been a change from past festivals. This year, for the first time, Prince Lot Hula Festival will be held at 'Iolani Palace, where Prince Lot Kapuāiwa maintained his official residence.

Named in memory of Prince Lot, who later reigned as King Kamehameha V, the festival — which is the largest noncompetitive hula event in Hawai'i — was founded in 1978 and attracts up to 17,000 residents and visitors each year.

Aside from performances by top hālau, other highlights include an opening ceremony led by the Royal Order of Kamehameha, followed by the presentation of Moanalua Garden Foundation's Kukui o Lota Award to former U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Akaka, Charles M. Cooke IV and my Kalihi neighbor, kumu hula Vicky Holt Takamine. Takamine is leading the charge to bring the prestigious Festival of Pacific Arts to Hawai'i.

On Sunday, master chanter Cy Bridges, another dear and



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Halau Take Over 'Iolani Palace

respected friend from Lā'ie, will receive MGF's inaugural Namakahelu Oli Award for his contributions to the preservation of this ancient art form.

Kumu hula Leimomi I Maldonado and her brother Milton

be free.

Pauline Worsham, an MGF leader, notes that the festival has garnered outstanding ratings from evaluators retained by Hawai'i Tourism Authority. In 2015, the festival scored a



Kumu hula Michael Pili Pang's Halau Ka No'eau will perform at this year's Prince Lot Hula Festival. Pictured are (from left) Kesha Ruffin, Mia Obciana and Deborah Ing. PHOTO COURTESY ROBYN YIM PANG AND MOANALUA GARDENS FOUNDATION

I will receive MGF's Malia Kau Award for their dedication to the perpetuation of our hula traditions as taught to them by the late Maiki Aiu Lake, known as the mother of the Hawaiian Renaissance.

Other highlights include noon concerts by Royal Hawaiian Band, food vendors, a Hawaiian-themed craft fair and demonstrations of traditional Hawaiian arts.

On Sunday, entrance to the first floor of 'Iolani Palace will

90 percent satisfaction rate and last year was rated 9.1 out of 10 points. Visitors have stated that the event changed their perception of Hawai'i for the better and were more apt to return.

There is no charge to attend the festival, however, a button donation to MGF is requested to support the event. For more information, visit moanalua-gardensfoundation.org.

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²Please see the Consumer Deposit Account Agreement and Disclosure Statement and Bankoh Consumer Electronic Financial Services Agreement and Disclosure Statement and Fee Schedule for Personal Checking and Savings Accounts for terms, conditions, fees, and additional restrictions that may apply.

³Waived bank closing costs include \$125 mortgage documentation fee, \$75 trust review fee, and \$75 condominium review fee. If escrow is required, we will provide a credit of up to \$175 to offset escrow fees related to paying off existing liens. Payments to third parties of certain fees, which generally total between \$0 and \$5,900 may be required at closing, and are not waived as part of this offer.

⁴#1 Home Equity Lender ranking is for total number of home equity loans made and total dollars committed by lenders in the State of Hawaii from June 2015 to June 2016. Information derived from State of Hawaii Bureau of Conveyances property information for 2015 - 2016. Information is deemed reliable but not guaranteed.