

To the loving friends of Julia Neal, readers of *The Ka'ū Calendar*, and the beautiful people of Ka'ū:

We are eternally grateful for your love and support during these difficult times. Your letters of farewell serve as memorials to Julia's legacy and the impact she had on our lives. We will forever keep your thoughts and memories of Julia in our hearts.

Mahalo nui loa,
The Neal Family

THE KA'Ū CALENDAR

Volume 23, Number 2

The Good News of Ka'ū, Hawai'i

Special Edition

More Than Words: A Life of Generosity and Love

For over 20 years, *The Ka'ū Calendar* has faithfully reported on events important to the community of Ka'ū. Julia Neal started the Pāhala-based newspaper in 2002, followed by the on-line Ka'ū News Briefs in 2010.

Julia stayed up late each night preparing daily news briefs without missing a single day. She had one goal, to provide professional and unbiased reporting to a community she loved with every fiber of her being. Although this publication didn't make much, its service to the people of Ka'ū was invaluable in ways that money cannot express.

On January 24, 2025, Julia Neal passed away in her Pāhala cottage. Everyone knew Julia for her compassion, generosity, and unwavering belief in the goodness of others. Julia was the heart and soul of *The Ka'ū Calendar*. Her passing leaves a void that cannot be filled. *The Ka'ū Calendar* will soon cease operations. But before shutting down, this final issue was created with our community and is dedicated to the memory of its founding mother, Julia.

Through her friendships, journalism, businesses, and volunteer work, Julia touched the lives of countless people in Ka'ū and beyond.

Rose

I did not know Julia well but we had the pleasure of spending Christmas dinner with her. While sharing stories of life, family, and Ka'ū over dinner, I got a sense of who she was. She didn't have family close by. We told her that she is always welcome to spend the holidays with us and will always have a place at our table. She had a full and vibrant life filled with unique experiences. Even though she was not from Ka'ū, she genuinely wanted to protect its way of life. She leaves behind a legacy and an empty seat at our table.

Kind Regards, Rose

Charles M. Clausner

I am deeply saddened to hear of Julia's passing. Although I only had the privilege of meeting her a handful of times, I always admired her kindness and warmth to me as a new teacher to Pāhala in 2015. Her dedication to Ka'ū was evident and I love reading *The Ka'ū Calendar* to this day.

I now live on O'ahu but I continued to stay connected with Ka'ū through the Calendar, which I always found to be one of the best. Her ability to keep the community informed and engaged was great, and I relied on her newspaper to stay up-to-date on all things Ka'ū.



Please accept my deepest condolences. My thoughts are with you and all who knew her during this difficult time. With heartfelt sympathy, Charles Clausner

Tui and Donna Masaniai

We are so thankful that we had such a wonderful person that cared about the community. As we remember Julia, we think of wonderful times folding newspapers in her garage, having her help us set up the Pāhala Quilting Fabric store in her building, always being supportive, and inviting us to many community events.

She often called Tui to come to jam with musicians from all over the world who stayed in her cottages. During the closing of volcano buildings, she opened her Pāhala Plantation house for our quilters to gather for our retreat. Julia was always willing to communicate any fundraisers, scholarships, or donations, and we relied on her to let us know how we could help those in our community in need.

Thank you, Julia, for all the love you had for this community. You will be missed.

Minako Yamazaki

Farewell to Julia,

Julia, I am deeply shocked to hear of your sudden passing. You are the person who brought me here to Pāhala, for the first time in 2002 via my Japanese friend. You helped me to sign the document to purchase the assistant manager's house at Sugar Plantation time where my daughter's family lives now and they are trying to maintain the house in good condition. I still like the house with a big yard.

A small group of Japanese friends and their families, a fan of great nature of Big Island stayed at your Big House as guests time to time when you were cheerfully welcoming them and very friendly to them. Some of the tour leaders well remembered your warm hospitality and sent me their deep condolences to you and your family. My memories of you will be endlessly continued.

You, yourself are *The Ka'ū Calendar* and Ka'ū calendar has been the pillar of Ka'ū and Ka'ū calendar represented Ka'ū as a whole.

I will remember you forever with such happy memories, experienced during 2002 to 2010 when we were younger. May your memory be a blessing.

I will miss you.

Julia Neal, cont. pg. 2

Julia Neal, cont. from pg. 1

Shai & The Pāhala Town Lighted Christmas Parade Committee

Our deepest condolences and sympathy to the 'ohana of Julia Neal,

With the passing of a beloved and respected lady the community of Pāhala and the surrounding areas of Ka'ū is saddened by the loss of a loved one. The many memories she had captured for our Christmas parades, from Uncle Eddie's time till now with us these past 2 years, made each moment that she captured to last a lifetime. We will remember all the memories that are close to our hearts and will forever cherish the time we see her around. E ho'omaha me ka maluhia e Julia.

Me Ke Aloha Pumehana

Raylene Moses for Ke Kula Nā 'Ā'ali'i Kū Makani 'O Ka'ū

E ke hoa makamae, Julia Neal,
Ua pau kāu hana nui ma ka honua nei!

E ho'i 'oe me ke Aloha i ka pūlama i ke aumoe

o nā kūpuna. He nui loa kō mākou Mahalo iā 'oe

no kou kāko'o mai i kā mākou Kula, he kahua

no nā pua o ka lāhui o Ka'ū.

I mālamalama kou ala i ke ao kū i ka pō.

E moe 'oe me ka Maluhia [i ka malu a ke Akua].*

Ā hui hou kākou ma ke ao 'ā, 'O mākou iho nō me ke

Aloha mau



Julia Neal was born on October 3, 1949.



she spent these last 30 years working on will have no leader. I'm heartsick I first met her when she moved from Kauai. She introduced herself to us at Kīlauea Lodge, which Albert and I owned and managed. She was a ball of energy and a force to be reckoned with. I thought her goals ambitious but I underestimated her fierce determination and capability. Laurie Carlson from the Honolulu Weekly had just retired her journals ... one about Honolulu doings and one about Ka'ū. And Julia miraculously stepped in. Ka'ū Landing is my go to newspaper every month! Volcano is part of Ka'ū and everything that happens in Ka'ū is very important to many of us. She will be missed in so many ways. Her brilliance, foresight, energy, imagination, determination, caring. We will miss her something fierce.

Tim Wright and Lady Trojans



The Lady Trojans gathered after the BIIF playoffs on Jan. 29th to show their Aloha to Aunt Julia, with some waving Hawaiian shakas and others forming heart gestures.

Debbie Wong Yuen

Just wanted to share my wonderful memories of Julia.

I met Julia many, many years ago when I worked at Pāhala Public & School Library, way before she started publishing *The Ka'ū Calendar* newspaper. She came to the library and worked with a high school student, possibly tutoring the student. They were always very quiet sitting toward the back end of the adult section. I didn't quite know who this woman was, she was always very quiet and respectful.

As years passed, I came to know Julia as the editor for *The Ka'ū Calendar*. Her newspaper was very well written, capturing important events and history about Ka'ū and beyond.

When Julia began the Ka'ū Calendar News Briefs, that opened many doors. The daily articles of important information and news, and the articles and fliers of events happening throughout Ka'ū, became an important part of everyone's lives to know what was happening, instead of waiting for the monthly printed issue of *The Ka'ū Calendar* newspaper. She worked tirelessly putting out current information every night for people to read the next day.

She supported all of Ka'ū well by featuring schools, high school sports, clubs, churches, various community organizations and public events through her articles and photos, many that she took herself by attending the events, then sharing it the next day in the New Briefs.

Julia was like our public representative to keep us all informed locally and nationally. Our community lost a wonderful, caring, community messenger and will be truly missed. A hui hou faithful servant for Ka'ū. May you rest in love and peace knowing you are loved and will be greatly missed.



Alan Moores and Kerry Pitcher

Aloha, We are long time friends of Julia living in Pāhala and below is a Haiku written as a tribute to her legacy:

Reporting the news
Volcano to Ocean View
the peoples paper
- by Alan Moores

Joe Gaynor

This is a poem of mine about Unity.... To earth,,,... to each other ..by Joe Gaynor

Unity
I have the ocean running through my veins,
I have the mountains in my bones,
I have the stars in my eyes,
And hope in my head,
As do we all.

Lorna Larsen Jeyte (Volcano)

Oh goodness. She's gone and that wonderful newspaper and everything



Cindy Orlando

I first met Julia in 2004 when I re-located to Hawai'i Island to serve as the superintendent of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. I had visited the island many times and had no idea I would one day return in that capacity. What I did know was that if I ever lived here, I would live in Ka'ū.

A phone call to Pāhala Plantation Cottages began what would become a twenty year friendship with Julia. I am incredibly fortunate to have known her, been inspired by her, and shared multiple compelling and inspirational moments as we navigated the ups and downs of what it meant to preserve this place in which we lived.

The stories are endless. One stand-out was our trip to Washington, DC for Obama's first inauguration. It was bitter cold, we were crushed in the enormous crowds and the historic Hay Adams Hotel didn't know quite what to do with a houseful of folks from Hawai'i, complete with mele and dance! Even in the bitter cold, Julia wore her muu muu and lauhala hat. Most recently I visited for a day and we spent it cruising Paāhala in her Suzuki plantation truck, the perfect vehicle for her. Her happiness to be there, to share her love and passion of this place she called home - Julia represented the spirit of Ka'ū.

We all know of her kindness, empathy and generosity. Nothing was more important to Julia than her family, her friends, her community and the people in that she loved unconditionally. Her life's impact on all of us will forever be felt. Rest in the aloha and love that defined you and your life dear friend. You are missed.

Bruce and Bonnie (Seattle, WA)

Bonnie and I were saddened to learn of Julia's passing. Although we didn't know her personally, we were aware of her numerous contributions to Pāhala and Ka'ū, in general. We read her Ka'ū Blog daily to learn about news and events and miss not having this resource available. The management of the Pāhala Cottages and the Plantation House are further testament to her skill and determination to make Pāhala a successful community. We extend our sympathies to her family and partner. We will miss Julia's presence and contributions as the weeks and months pass.

Joe Gaynor

Let us listen to the voice of the sparkling sea,

Let the great spirit of Aloha guide us on our life's journey,

For without the wisdom of Aloha, we live in confusion and foolishness,

knowing not right from wrong, Let peace and goodness reign.

Don Eugene O'Reilly

As the owner/operator of Hilo Bay Printing, I had the rich pleasure of working with Julia and her staff for a number of years.

We worked together under monthly deadlines, and the constant pressure of getting things to work with old machinery in a very remote situation in my own very underfunded way. She always kept her cool.

Deeply saddened to hear of her



Julia traveled with her family to many places in the world.



passing, I can only remember her easy laughter and smiles. She is missed by many. A Hui Hou Julia!

Larry and Janet Johnson

When we bought a vacation cottage in Pāhala 20 years ago Julia was one of the first people we met. Little did we realize how fortunate that was for us!

She regularly invited us to gatherings at the Plantation House where we would meet all kinds of fun and interesting local residents and visitors. In addition, we quickly learned that if we needed to find out what local events were coming up or who we should contact about some problem, Julia would know. Julia's cheerful and helpful insights were a wonderful introduction for us to Pāhala and Ka'ū.

Julia was a wonderful gift for us and for all of Pāhala. I remember her telling me once that her mother would say of her, "Other kids outgrow their shoes,; Yours wear out before you outgrow them." We'll all miss that energy.

Ron Whitmore (Hilo)

Julia is one of my favorite people.

I first met her as the gracious host of Pāhala Plantation Cottages. We collaborated to offer retreats for emerging leaders on Hawai'i Island. She offered warm, inviting lodgings, delicious local food, and her ever-present smile and good humor. Participants always raved about their time as Julia's guest.

Later, I got to know Julia the journalist. While I was stewarding the creation and adoption of the Ka'ū Community Development Plan (CDP), Julia was dedicated to keeping the community informed about what the CDP could do, how to participate in shaping the Plan, and diverse perspectives on sometimes difficult decisions. She was inquisitive, fair, and balanced.

In everything she did, Julia was generous – with her time, her hospitality, her prose, and her friendship. Though not originally from Ka'ū, she in many ways exemplified the community's humility, passion, respect, grace, and spirit. May she rest in peace.

Lee McIntosh

In this final issue of the Kau Calendar, I would like to publicly express my gratitude for Julia Neal publishing my photographs and advertising the Naalehu Independence Day Parade in the Kau Calendar and the blog. Both publications were instrumental in keeping abreast with what was occurring in Kau. The best part was that it was free! It was a wonderful service available to our community. All three will be greatly missed.

Madeline Brooks

To Julia:

Ka'ū lost a legend, a flower so rare, A woman whose heart showed us, how much she cared.

Always alert to the news of the day, Surprisingly how she continued that way.

If we needed a place, just out of the way,

Her homes we could go for our family to stay,

Everything notable she was always on top,

Of the news of the area she just would not stop.

She'd attend to meetings and everyone

Julia Neal, cont. pg. 4

Julia Neal, cont. from pg. 3

knew,
That Julia would be there and give us a review.
Just how she kept all those activities in line,
It would always notably be addressed in time.
Her calendars always kept us abreast,
Of everything happening, yes we attest,
To this wonderful Julia who was always a part.
Of the life in this town, she brought state of the art.
Just how will we do without her in our town?
With her lauhala hat she was always around.
Her awareness of just how this town would be affected,
By development, things of interest she would detect it.
How sad we will be as we have come to see,
How valuable a woman she was to you and me.
She brought fine arts and music to this town we hold dear,
She continued it always year after year.
She'd celebrate our weddings, births, events it was true
She would not miss anything happening in Ka'ū.
She always took part in all functions we found,
Just how we will do it when she's not around?
How great was the day Pāhala had found,
This perfect little lady who impacted this town.
So who will remind us of things coming soon?
As *The Ka'ū Calendar* that kept us in tune.
The plantation house will never be quite the same,
As when Julia brought many faces and people of fame.
You'll be remembered and missed in this place,
A strong part of history you kept up with the race.
We love you its practically perfectly clear,
You'll always hold a special place, in Pāhala, my dear.

Written with love...

Madeline Maluhia (Babs) Brooks
Feb 1, 2025

Francis Mitchell

January 20, 2025, the day when Ka'ū news stood down. On the 21st, the 22nd, and the next day - and the next only the edition of July 20, Martin Luther King Day, was to be found online at Ka'ū Calendar News Briefs.

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that," was the MLK quote that Julia chose to headline her last issue.

Twenty-plus years of reading Julia, and the stories she published, kept Ka'ū brightly lit for me, wherever I happened to be.

Barbara Sarbin

I wanted to share a memory of Julia and if it can be included in a publication of stories about her, that's wonderful. If not, that's fine too, I just wanted to make sure I had a chance to remember her formally and share my memories...

I was so grateful to Julia for her Ka'ū Calendar writing and publication,



Photo submitted by Linda Marsh.



Photo submitted by Linda Marsh.

and I can't believe how much I counted on that news, especially on Facebook, and for so many years. It's through the Ka'ū Calendar that I found the Kula 'Amakihi program at Volcano School, which has become such a major part of my life. Any time that I would hear something unusual going on in town, I would always check the Ka'ū Calendar online, just to see if it was true, whether it was a predicted storm or someone looking to take over land for development, I depended on this news outlet. It seems almost child-like to have been that dependent on the Ka'ū Calendar, but I felt I could trust Julia to report the local news.

One time, the Ka'ū Calendar printed something that I didn't agree with, and it actually shocked me to read about someone destroying the land with their business, and another friend posted their concern, and I thought I would comment also. Within the hour, Julia called me on my cell to ask about my concern. She cared so much to not be misunderstood, that she called me. It was very moving to me, because she helped me see what she was saying, and we resolved the issue.

That's how I will remember her, as caring so much about her community to give her energy over to making sure people had the news, but also that they felt included. I remember how she opened up her home during the pandemic for boxing up fresh, local food to deliver door to door to families in Pāhala. My daughter and some of my students and I all participated in loading up boxes of food, and in delivering them.

I will miss having somewhere to send the news, when my students are doing something good for the public. Julia covered some of my educational projects and events for the past 7 years, even though she didn't know me well, she always accepted the information and got it out there. My students were always so proud to see themselves in print.

Thank you Julia for your huge community service, it is going to be missed in a way that can't be described, because it's too great of a loss. I genuinely hope that someone else will step in to keep the Ka'ū Calendar going, but I can't imagine that there's anyone out there with a heart as big as Julia's. But maybe there is?

Ka'ū Libraries Staff

The staff of the Nā'ālehu and Pāhala Public Libraries will miss you so very much, Julia. Your unwavering support for the libraries over the years has been invaluable to us. You helped us to promote our programs and events for the community in *The Ka'ū Calendar*, and we were always so pleased to see you when you attended yourself to cover them for the paper. You even graciously allowed us to hold the Friends of the Ka'ū Libraries annual meetings for free at the Plantation House. You were generous, and kind, and devoted to our community, and you will be dearly missed. With love and aloha,

Ka'ū Libraries Staff

Ka'ū Coffee Growers Cooperative

In Loving Memory of Julia Neal
With profound sadness, we announce the passing of Julia Neal, a cherished resident of Pāhala, who left us on Friday morning. As the esteemed editor

Julia Neal, cont. pg. 5

Julia Neal, cont. from pg. 4

and publisher of our sole local newspaper, Julia was a beacon of dedication and enthusiasm for all things local, especially in the realms of agriculture, coffee farming, and ranching. Her commitment to our community was unparalleled.

Julia's passion extended far beyond her professional role. She was a fervent advocate for the underprivileged, tirelessly working to support and uplift those in need. Her extraordinary efforts and unwavering spirit made a tangible difference in countless lives, and her legacy of compassion and dedication will continue to inspire us.

We, the coffee farmers of Ka'ū, deeply mourn her loss. Julia's influence and support were instrumental in fostering the growth and success of our industry. We extend our heartfelt condolences to her family and friends during this difficult time.

May the God we worship grant her eternal rest and peace. Julia, you will be sorely missed, but your spirit will forever remain in our hearts and in the fields of Ka'ū.

Gabriel and Cheryl Cuevas

Aloha oe Julia, A hui hou

May the Lord shine His light on Julia Neal, may she rest in loving peace and sing with the angels. We pray He gives shelter and compassion to the Neal family, Julia's partner Michael Worthington, and to all of her extended family and friends at this sad time.

Julia was the first friend we made after moving to Ka'ū eight years ago. She seemed to appreciate our sense of adventure hearing that we had moved to Ka'ū not knowing anyone on this island. We were so excited to come home to begin this new chapter of our lives, and seeing the love in her heart for the Ka'ū community warmed our hearts as well.

Julia was one of the most pono minded and community minded people we've met. She very kindly introduced us to her Ka'ū ohana, sharing her dedication to the people of Ka'ū in so many ways. Often times she worked behind the scenes to help encourage or support community events going on or developing. She once told me that *The Ka'ū Calendar* was very important to her to bring news, current events, and accomplishments of the people who made up the Ka'ū community. And yet Julia was so much more than her newspaper. Her passion project wasn't just about reporting "the good news of Ka'ū". One of her main personal goals of the newspaper was to be able to get as many folks in the community mentioned by name and photo in the paper at least once a year. If she ever gave you a photo assignment you know what I mean. She wanted to show how important each person is and to acknowledge their personal accomplishments or successes. She cared so much about everyone she met and certainly had plenty of room in her heart.

Julia was kind and generous to everyone and always there to help out wherever she could. Whether it was providing employment in her hospitality business, supporting our local farmers, housing, *The Ka'ū Calendar* and News Briefs, the Boys & Girls Club and more.

We want to acknowledge and thank everyone who supported and contributed in so many ways to Julia's memorial service. So many people came together donating their time, energy and talent to



William Neal, Julia, ..., Michael Worthington, and Cindy Orlando.



Minako Yamazaki, Julia, and Cindy Orlando



Pastor Marino leads the prayer before Julia enjoys her 74th birthday dinner with friends.



Julia loved music, and some got a rare listen to her singing along.



Julia loved to host her friends and family at the Pāhala Plantation House.



Julia with her friends from France, Marie Gerente and Alain Gerente, and Cindy Orlando.

celebrate Julia Neal's life and contributions to our community. Mahalo Ka'ū for the sharing and compassion during this sad time.

A hui hou dear Julia, A hui hou
We miss you every day

Alain and Marie Gerente

What a wonderful person Julia was. So strong and generous! We can't imagine how devastating it is for all the community. We are always thinking of you, Julia.

(Photo of Julia with Alain and Marie on this page.)

Matt & Vance

Lyrics to - "Julia's Good News in Ka'ū"
Morning light on Mauna Loa's side,
The ocean's singing with the rising tide.
Through Na'alehu and Pāhala town,
Julia walked, always writing it down.
With a notebook in hand and a heart so true,

She brought the best of Ka'ū to you.
No storm too strong, no sky too gray,
Julia found the sunshine every day!
E nā hoa, come hear the sound, (Oh friends, come hear the sound)

Julia's stories are still around!
From Punalu'u to South Point's shore,
Her words will live forevermore.
She told of 'ohana gathering strong,
Of lū'au nights filled with hula and song.

A new calf born, a baby's first smile,
She made us feel like we belonged all the while.

Through dusty roads and fields so wide,
Julia walked with love and pride.
With pen in hand and aloha deep,
She gave Ka'ū a voice to keep.
E nā hoa, come hear the sound,
Julia's spirit is all around!

From Punalu'u to Pāhala town,
Her words still echo up and down.
She sat with aunties under the trees,
Listening close to history's breeze.
She shared the stories, she made them last,

Ka'ū's bright future, tied to its past.
E nā hoa, come hear the sound,
Julia's stories will never drown!
From Miloli'i to Green Sands Bay,
Her love for Ka'ū will never fade.
So raise a cup, let's tell her name,
The heart of Ka'ū will stay the same.
For every wave, for every view,
Julia's love still shines through!

Will miss you my friend!

Tanya Masaniai Ibarra

From the moment I met Julia, she believed in me. She gave me work as a graphic designer, and through that, she gave me confidence, opportunity, and a place in this community. That's just who she was—someone who lifted people up, even when she carried more weight than any one person should have to bear.

Julia was everywhere in our small town. You couldn't go to a community event without seeing her, notebook in hand, camera slung over her shoulder, always documenting, always making sure the stories that mattered were told. She wasn't just a journalist—she was a pillar, a storyteller, and a quiet force that held this place together in ways we will never fully grasp.

As a writer, she had the rare ability to remain neutral, even when the topics were divisive. That gift came with a heavy price. People often confronted her, yelled at her, accused her of taking sides when, in reality, she was only

Julia Neal, cont. from pg. 5

ever devoted to the truth. She seemed tough—unyielding, even—but I know the words spoken in anger hurt her deeply. Still, she kept going, because she believed that our community deserved fairness, honesty, and a voice.

Now that she's gone, the weight of her absence is immeasurable. The stories continue, but they feel different without her. The paper will print its final edition, but Julia's legacy will not end there. It lives on in every person she uplifted, in every truth she fought for, in every life she touched.

We will never fully know the scope of all she did for this town. But what we do know is this—we miss her. Every day.

Rest in peace, Julia. Your story will never be forgotten.

Teri Tico

I am deeply saddened by our loss. Julia was the heart and soul of Pāhala. She was always giving, sharing, and welcoming everyone into her home. She was a good friend, confidant, co-adventurer, intellectual sparring partner, and eternal optimist. I loved her like a sister even when we disagreed. She was one of the first people I met on Kauai in 1976. We had so many adventures I could write a book. But what I loved the most was her generous spirit, always giving, giving, giving even when she couldn't any longer. Sending you love and aloha from Kaua'i, Julia.

Rest in love. Love, Teri

Jack, Brenda, Kameron, Kobe and Khloe Moses

May you be resting in heaven knowing your work here has been appreciated and made a difference in the community you so loved. The long hours and late evenings you spent capturing our keiki's accomplishments and our community's highlights are forever our keepsakes. Mahalo for your generosity you will be missed Julia.

Carl Okuyama and 'Ohana Foods

Julia, You will be missed by the people of Nā'ālehu and people beyond her boardersborders. I still can't believe you're gone. It's been over 25 years working with you and your staff at *The Ka'ū Calendar*. It's like you're still here; I keep expecting to bump into you at the Pāhala Post office driving in with your small putt-putt truck and wearing your big papale. After we took over Mizuno Superette you asked me to bring in the DA BUX local produce discount card, it took over a year to get it approved by the Food Basket and we got the approval two weeks ago, just after you passed on. Now I have to let you know that we got it in this farewell message. You always cared for the people of Ka'ū and I know your spirit lives on and we can still hear your voice. Your legacy is a good one: the humble caring



Elizabeth Fien, Sammie Stanbro, Julia, and Ed Olson.



Julia and her friend from Kaua'i, Teri Tico.



Native Hawaiian actress and writer, Jackie Johnson receives roses from Julia.



Sammie Stanbro and Julia Neal.



Elizabeth Fien, Cindy Orlando, Julia, and friends.

spirit of Ka'ū. Goodbye dear friend, we love and miss you, you were the best.

Ophir Danenberg

Julia was a strong woman who moved through the world with a power that was rooted in her truth. She believed, supported, dedicated, devoted and cared deeply. Her passion shone through to everyone she connected with.

I wish her peace and unconditional love.

Derede I. Johnsen

My condolences to you all. I'm very sad to learn of Julia's passing.

I will always remember her kind, sweet heart, full of aloha, her beautiful smiles and talking with her made my heart happy. The flowers and heart on this card makes me think of her. She such a dear, lovely lady and is missed so very, very much. I will treasure all my happy memories of her. All my love.

Wendy Eberz

"There are some who bring a light so great to the world that even after they have gone, the light remains." - anonymous

Julia, as a pillar of the community, certainly gave great light to Ka'ū. May the spirit of comradery continue.

Connie Koi

I met Julia and Michael when she first moved to Ka'ū I was working with one of her close friends, Patrick Edie, at the time. Once she came to Ka'ū she fell in love with the place and never left. I have always known Julia to be a sweet, generous, humble person.

Throughout the years, she was an advocate and worked closely with the Ka'ū coffee farmers' cooperative. She helped to put them on the map by giving them the much-needed exposure to help launch their success, especially with their annual coffee festival. She did a lot for free, donating her time and talents. My parents are farmers, and I witnessed how they all benefited from her involvement.

Julia was an amazing lady. She kept our entire community of Ka'ū, from Ocean View to Volcano, connected and well-informed. She worked tirelessly to ensure her Ka'ūCalendar went out to every household. It was always well-written, and she featured not only the current events, but she was uplifting by highlighting the accomplishments of our youth whether it be for sports, pageants, art performances, etc. This made them feel great about themselves and made their families feel proud to see their youngsters in the local paper. I for myself, kept many of them as memorabilia for my kids to see later in life. This was special!

Julia has contributed so much to our community. She will be deeply missed by everyone. She was special, she lived and demonstrated the true meaning of "Aloha." I will miss seeing her in our neighborhood. I will miss working with her on special project like the coffee festival or attending one of her events at her Plantation House. We had a lot of fun times, and I will always be grateful and privileged to have known her. Mahalo and God bless you.

Trini Marques

Hey Julia, Been thinking about you and how quickly time has gone by.

Julia Neal, cont. pg. 7

Julia Neal, cont. from pg. 6

I guess we are all here with a purpose and you lived yours to its fullest by sharing your mana'o and doing things you loved. You lifted this community to heights we never knew existed by helping us believe that we indeed count and that our voices have strength by spreading the word throughout our communities and afar and we learned of the happenings outside of home, Ka'u.

It is you newspaper that set off possibilities to do more for ourselves in Ka'u. Many residents loved reading about family and friends and looked forward to more with great anticipation. You never had your own children but you were aunty to Ka'uby encouraging and opening your White House doors to us, something we never had the privilege to do, back in the day. This ground was private, only to the ones with stature. We knew better than to enter the gate and walk up to the house, much less opening the door to walk in. But you, with your kanaka heart always invited me to come talk stories about our past and new ideas for the community.

When I told you about my idea for the first Ka'u Coffee festival, you said, "Go for it!"

I also said I'd do the Miss Ka'u Coffee pageant and she said, "Great!!!" Even though others though I was nuts and that we could never do it, you believed and became a huge part of our success with this celebration and Ka'u coffee by sharing our stories with everyone. We no longer only talked at the kitchen table or down by the shopping center, the word went out!

For the most part, thank you so much for being the wind beneath our wings. Mahalo for your kokua with gathering scholarship donations from various companies and individuals, especially the late Mr. Olson, who generously gave us what we needed. There's so much more I can talk about but it's not the same as seeing your beautiful face under the papale waiting to hear more. My dear Julia, you know the saying, "Time waits for no one," so no more deadlines to meet, and no need rush here and there. I send you off with the wings you earned and please remember, you weren't just the newspaper lady, you were my friend. 😊 aloha

Julie Pasquale & her friends at the Pāhala Senior Center

Julia's support and advocacy for Pāhala and Ka'u could never be overstated. We really miss her and always will.

Ray & Norman Kudo

Although Julia is in our memory, we still can love her in our hearts forever. Julia was one of a kind person with a beautiful heart and spirit.

Mike & Debera Crosson

As an event planner, I got to know her and enjoyed working with her during the many times spent at the Plantation House. I appreciated her sense of community and all the positive effort she put into helping people. What a good person Julia was. She will be missed.

Nālani, Vivian, and Harry Parlin

It's difficult to express just how much Julia will be missed and the enormous impact she had on all of us during her time in Ka'u. Her bright spark and determination lifted us up in ways we



many not have realized at the time.

Kumu Hula Keoni Jenny & Keli'i Aukai

Sending love and gratitude.

Masako K. Sakata, Nā'ālehu Hongwanji

To the family of the late Julia Neal: We are very sorry to see Julia leave us. She did a whole lot for the community of Pāhala, and Nā'ālehu. We shall always remember her for her love to our communities. Mahalo to Julia for the wonderful, *Ka'u Calendar* that she published monthly, which the people will miss greatly.

Otis Salmo

It was wonderful seeing you, even under sad circumstances. I briefly mentioned this to you yesterday but Julia was incredibly proud of everything you've accomplished and the person you've become. At the Pāhala Christmas parade she shared with me how much you two were alike, especially your shared passion for serving your respective communities. She'd sporadically update me on the work you were doing and sharing articles you'd written. Every time she talked about you or your brothers, she would beam with pride. You held a special place in her heart.

I'd often bump into her at the post office, and she'd always ask about the students and offer any help she could. She cared deeply about Ka'u and was determined to protect this area. She was well connected and I've learned so much from her.

I knew Julia since she first moved to Pāhala. I was in high school then, and she'd come to the tennis courts with Michale or Kaori to play with Elijah and me. I spent many evenings at her dinner table, and she really broadened my horizons beyond Ka'u. At that time, I delivered her Japanese magazines and worked in her gift shop when I wasn't in school. Her old Mercedes was the first one I ever drove! After I graduated, she came to my house to say goodbye the day I left for the Navy. She was always so thoughtful. Eleven years later, when I returned to work at the school as a counselor, she immediately invited me over for dinner to catch up!

Julia worked tirelessly on her daily blogs, newspaper, and rentals, often late into the night. I think that's what she meant by your similarities – hard work, dedication, and service to others. It's not about wealth, but about serving the communities we love and care so much about, giving voice to the disadvantaged and underserved, and being generous to those in need.

Julia's passing is such a huge loss to our community and a personal one too. She was a dear friend and an exceptional woman. I'm goin to miss her so much.

Darlyne Vierra

Rest in peace Julia and thank you for supporting our Ka'u Multicultural Society in what we believe is our Ka'u History and knowing what we've been doing over 20 years. Your support and getting us out there in the community and island so they know who we are caring and sharing Our Love for Ka'u! I Am Ka'u! 🇺🇸🙏🏻 you my friend RIL Julia. DPV

Elizabeth Clark

This is sad news for me, and for the

Julia Neal, cont. pg. 10

REMEMBERING JULIA





Julia often was visited by her three nephews, here she is with William and Lee Neal.



Julia celebrated her 74th birthday with friends and family at the old Sasaki Market house.



Her nephew, Michael Neal cruising with Julia.



An iconic figure in Pāhala, Julia was seen in her Suzuki driving all around town. Here she is with her nephew, Michael Neal.



Julia Neal, cont. from pg. 7

Ka'ū community Julia served so faithfully for so many years. She was such an central figure of life there, I can't even imagine Ka'ū events - the Coffee Festival, high school graduations, the Pāhala Christmas parade, and countless concerts at the Pāhala Plantation House without Julia in her hat, always present, always smiling. On my recent visit, I asked friends whether Julia was still in Pāhala, still putting out the paper. The answer was a reassuring yes. I drove through Pāhala by the Plantation House and cottages, the schools and library filled with memories, many of them including Julia in the snapshots in my mind. Her voice and her spirit will be sorely missed.

Oscar Usman

Back in the day I accompanied Brother Zachary to photograph what he wrote for Ka'ū News... it's long gone, then Julia came along and did a fantastic job with the access of the internet to bring us the latest happenings back in Ka'ū for us Mainland transplants. It takes a lot of your time, dedication, and most of all the passion to doing such... Mahalo Julia for doing it... there's a lot of talented people in Ka'ū, I do hope some one will continue what she started...

Deborah Ward

The Ka'ū Calendar has been an awesome contribution to our Hawai'i Island community, and Julia has had enormous courage and generous spirit to not only write it collect the info, and publish, but to purchase and fund the Pāhala home that hosts the music festivals. Her spirit and enthusiasm, good fortune, and preparation are all remarkable and memorable. I will miss my friend Julia!

Tesia Gallinari

Oh No!!! I Love *The Ka'ū Calendar*! I had no idea that One person was responsible for its printing. Julia was obviously very talented and selfless to do all the work! I hope someone with journalistic background can step forward! *The Ka'ū Calendar* has been a very important connection locally... hopefully it can continue. RIP Julia and thank you!

Elizabeth Fien

One of my very best friends. I will miss you more than you could ever know. You spent the last 10 or more of my birthdays celebrating with me - making me feel special, always. Christmas, Thanksgiving, July 4 - our dinners on Friday nights, work parties bringing all walks of life together in a forum of learning, debate, respect and compassion. I have a very long list. Our late-night marathon phone conversations discussing how we could change the world will be missed forever. I love you JN.

Suzanne Dix Kaliko

I was deeply saddened to hear the news of Julia's passing. She has always been such an integral part of life in Ka'ū. *The Ka'ū Calendar* covers all our local events and has kept us informed of what is happening in our community. Her presence will be greatly missed. I send on this painting, a sunset in honor of her life, her contribution to our community. It is my intent that the beauty and intensity of the sunset represents her life's work and how much she meant to us.



Painting by Suzanne Dix Kaliko.

*There is no beginning, no end.
Nature is one continuous cycle.*



Painting by Katie Wortman.

Katie Wortman

"There is no beginning and no end.
Nature is continuous."

Lā'au Letters: Native Plants of Ka'ū

Welcome to *Lā'au Letters: Native Plants of Ka'ū*. Read about Ka'ū's native plants and their mo'olelo (stories), uses, preferred habitats, and opportunities to adopt them for stewardship. This column seeks to encourage making new plant friends and to reunite with others.

Aloha Ka'ū,

I have been contemplating on what to share in this final printed edition of the Ka'ū Calendar. The weight on my heart to put anything into print here is quite the force - but Julia definitely deserves it. I figured I would start with a little background on this column. The idea for Lā'au Letters was born one afternoon in April, 2021, when Julia and I got to talking. There was a lot happening in Ka'ū in regards to land use changes and conservation opportunities at the time, and I was likely ranting about how rapidly Ka'ū's lands were being converted into subdivisions and bulldozed without reason, and she (in very Julia form) blurted out, "You should write an article in the Ka'ū Calendar!" At first I was hesitant, but when we dug deeper into the idea, we agreed that with all of the sight-unseen COVID land purchases happening and subsequent bulldozing of native forest lands, we could go about it in two ways: **1) complain about it, or 2) share information about it. We decided the latter is much more effective, and so was born this plant column.**

To speak to what Julia did for Ka'ū is

easy, and I am sure it is echoed in multitudes within this paper. She supported. She offered her space. She was there, rain or shine, day or night, with her notepad and camera (phone). She pushed interviews. She forced connections. Because Julia held Ka'ū dear to her heart and wanted it to get all the love it deserves. Julia knew everyone, and everyone knew Julia. She kept us accountable. She kept us passionate.

To zoom in and speak to what Julia did in regards to this column is what maybe brings me home even more than the bigger picture. Believe it or not, Joan Yoshioka and I had never met. I knew of her, and knew she was an artist who loved plants. What could go wrong there? Joan and I work so seamless together in the artistic creation that this column became, and we only actually met in person last October at the Run For the Dry Forest!! Because of Julia's nudging to create this column, not only have so many Ka'ū community members been reached, but they have been touched. I cannot express how grateful I am to Julia for providing this media for everyone to connect. I have met so many of you

that comment on your love of this column, and how it changed your direction in one way or another, and that is because of Julia, not Joan and I. Ka'ū High School art students have utilized these columns to create the most beautiful block prints inspired by plants, and that is because of Julia. Because of this space. Because of her push.

Each month, we chose a plant to feature. How we chose is still a bit mysterious to me. Maybe it was because of what it resembled that time of year, maybe it was because of what was in bloom, maybe because Joan or I had a certain relationship with it at that time. We do not know why we chose Kanawao for the month of February, but maybe Kanawao chose its time for a reason. I took a deep dive into what Kanawao represents and how it relates to Julia's transition, and now I understand.

Kana can be translated into rope, but consider thinking beyond the stretches of just something physical you use to connect or haul or tie things down with. It represents a continuum, a generational continuum, something to hold to. It can represent the movement of currents and waves. It is the

electric currents that sharks and whales follow through the ocean. It is a reminder that life continues on. Wao can be thought of as the place where spirits dwell. Wao is usually high up, where no one lives, and deep in the forests. We can look at Kanawao to represent the continuum and movement from the place of the people through the deepest and highest channels to the space of the spirits, to dwell amongst the uninhabited spaces. And to return back to what nurtures you. Now I understand why Kanawao chose this month. Yet another lesson in how these plants are our greatest teachers if we are open to learning.

Julia, we love you, and you will be remembered throughout time. Thank you for pushing me, for keeping me on time, for opening up space to share what we all love with so many. I will miss your early morning texts and your afternoon conversations. I will miss your eager ideas. But most of all, we will miss YOU and everything you have done for Ka'ū. Julia, this final Lā'au Letters is dedicated to you.

Kanawao (*Broussaisia arguta*)

Description: Kanawao is Hawai'i's endemic hydrangea and the only native representative of the Hydrangeaceae family. In fact, it belongs to a monotypic genus, or a genus having only one species. This beautiful and distinctive shrub is unmistakable and an easy one to spot, and when you pay attention, you will see that they are one of the most colorful native species in the forest. The long and narrow leathery leaves have a prominent mid rib that can be white, pink, orange, or even red. The specific epithet *arguta* means sharp or sharp-toothed, aptly named for the deep serration on the leaves. In 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, hydrangea (*H. macrophylla*) are called pōpōhau, which means "snowball," referring to the incredible pom-pom blooms that we associate with other hydrangea on the continent. Amidst the rosette of leaves are Kanawao's flowers, but these are star-shaped rather than the flat, papery petals of the non-native hydrangea. Kanawao blooms year-round in breathtaking shades of lavender, yellow, white, red, and blue (and can even have multiple colors on one individual plant) and give way to juicy red fruits. I should also mention that there are several other Hawaiian names of Kanawao which are worth your time researching those names and their definitions / associations to the plant.

Uses: Kanawao are utilized in many ways, not just by humans but also by many endemic birds and insects. Kanawao fruits are quite delicious (I encourage you to taste one next time you see a juicy bunch!) and are commonly eaten by endemic Hawaiian forest birds. The underside of Kanawao's thick leaves make a great home to the nananana makaki'i (Theridion grallator or happy face



Kanawao (*Broussaisia arguta*)

Art by Joan Yoshioka

spider) and are a preferred habitat for endemic kāhuli or native land snails. Aside from being consumed by forest manu (birds), the fruits and even flowers were also eaten by Kānaka Maoli. According to Mary Kaweni Pukui, Hawaiians would eat Kanawao to increase their chances of conception; the fruiting Kanawao were compared to an increase of chiefs. Different varieties (based on their flower colors) of Kanawao were also reserved and at times prohibited. For example, 'Ula'ula Wahine was reserved for women and children and used to treat some childhood diseases, while Ke'oke'o Kāne was reserved mostly for men.

Habitat: Kanawao are abundant in wet forests and occasionally in mesic forests, though the microclimate in the latter examples tend to be wetter than the mesic forest as a whole. They can

be found across all of the main Hawaiian Islands except Kaho'olawe and Ni'ihau at elevations from about 1,000 to 6,500 feet, although in some instances they grow at higher and lower elevations. In Ka'ū, Kanawao are a common understory species across the Ka'ū Forest Reserve and surrounding wet forests. Kanawao tend to grow most dense within an elevational band between 3,000-4,000 feet, but can definitely be seen higher or lower.

Growing and Purchasing: Again, I have never seen Kanawao grown commercially, and that is unfortunate because big box stores love to sell non-native hydrangeas as ornamental plants. It is worth bringing up this issue to our government representatives and start making the shift from marketing non-native species to incentivizing local nurseries and suppliers to produce and sell commercial quantities of Hawai-

ian endemics instead! Kanawao germinate readily but need a bit of love to survive beyond the seedling stage, especially at lower elevations. They tend to prefer to grow close to their homes, as broken branches will re-root readily on the forest floor but are a little more picky when you move them around. Regardless, Kanawao thrive in wetter environments in Ka'ū, and would not only make a great showcase plant in home landscapes, but will help to increase habitat of other native invertebrates, too. I hope we can all continue to learn from these teachers of ours. Be open, be loved, and keep learning - mahalo for allowing us this space to share.

About the artist: Joan

Yoshioka says she is a conservationist at heart and has dedicated her life to preserving the native plants and animals of Hawai'i through her work with federal, state, and private organizations over the past 30+ years. She describes herself as an outdoor-lovin' optimist, biologist/botanist, and habitual creator of art-stuff. She says the key to our most fundamental and truest part of ourselves is found in nature and she constantly draws on it for inspiration.



Joan Yoshioka

About the author:

Jodie Rosam says she has a deep love for native plants and a passion for exploration, with over 15 years of experience in working in the restoration of Hawai'i's forests. As a mother and an educator, she says the next generation has the power to lead the world to a sustainable future, and is committed to teaching her children (and others) from a place-based perspective.



Jodie Rosam

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United States Senate

February 12, 2025

Dear Friends and Family of the late Julia Neal,

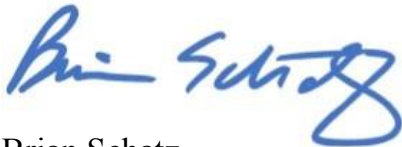
I extend my deepest condolences to you on Julia's passing.

Julia was dedicated and hardworking. She was a respected journalist, working her way up from photographer to editor of The Garden Island before bringing her passion and expertise to Hawai'i Island. As the founder, editor, and publisher of The Ka'ū Calendar, Julia did the important work of keeping her readers informed about local news and events. But she also recognized the publication as an opportunity to build connections, give local residents a voice, and share the special stories of Ka'ū.

Julia loved her community and found ways to use her unique skills to give back. In addition to her work with The Ka'ū Calendar, she helped create a space at the Pāhala Plantation Cottages that both honored the history of the place and also invested in service and learning for residents and visitors. She believed in the people of Pāhala and Ka'ū and was a fierce advocate for anything that would help improve the quality of their lives.

Julia's commitment and care have made a lasting impact, and she will be missed. I join you in celebrating her life and her many accomplishments. May your fond memories help keep her spirit alive.

With sympathy and *aloha*,



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Certificate of Memoriam

Presented to the Family of Julia Neal

The Hawai'i County Council would like to honor Julia Neal for providing invaluable service to the Ka'ū community by publishing a free monthly newsletter that chronicled the events of the far-flung communities of Volcano, Pāhala, Nā'ālehu, Ocean View, and Miloli'i for over 20 years, as well as a daily online vlog for 15 years. Julia tirelessly covered community events in person, especially supporting our youth by covering school athletic games and other youth activities and accomplishments.

Julia Neal's dedication to this mission was extraordinary: she would often stay up until the early morning hours to write up and post on the days happenings in Ka'ū or that were important to Ka'ū around the state, nation, and world. Whereas, Julia Neal supported and recognized the achievements and good works of the Ka'ū community, thereby nurturing community pride and positive achievements for our remote, real communities. Whereas, Julia Neal exemplified kindness, generosity, hospitality, optimism, and civic spirit herself and was always willing to contribute the use of her facilities and talents in supports of the greater good. Whereas, Julia Neal was a passionate advocate for the natural beauty, open spaces of Ka'ū's coastline and mountains, and the native species that lived there. She was also an inspiration and supporter of the work of others to protect the wahi pana of Ka'ū. Whereas, Julia Neal built community by bringing people from all walks of life together at the Pahala Plantation House for planned events such as concerts, meetings, informal get togethers, and spontaneous parties. Whereas, Julia Neal was a passionate lover of music, hula, and all other forms of art and science. She especially loved to support and sponsor musical workshops, classes, and concerts for the young people and kupuna of Ka'ū at the Pahala Plantation House.

Now therefore, on behalf of the County of Hawai'i we would like to recognize the extraordinary life and service of Julia Neal, and express deepest sympathy for their loss to her family and to the Ka'ū community.

Heather L. Kimball, District 1

Jennifer Kagiwada, District 2

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi, Council Vice Chair, District 3

Ashley L. Kierkiewicz, District 4

Matt Kāneali'i-Kleinfelder, District 5

County of Hawai'i Certificate No. 5879

Dated on this 14 day of February, 2025

Michelle M. Galimba, District 6

Rebecca Villegas, District 7

Holeka Goro Inaba, Council Chair, District 8

James E. Hustace, District 9

Jon Henricks, County Clerk



The Hawaii State Legislature

Kā iha'olelo Hoku'āina 'O Hawai'i

hereby presents this certificate to

JULIA NEAL In Memoriam

Senator Hens J.C. Aquino

Representative Della Au Belatti

Senator Stanley Chang

Senator Samantha DeLorte

Senator Donor M. Dela Cruz

Senator Mike Gabbard

Representative Tina Grandinetti

Senator Troy N. Hashimoto

Representative Linda Ichiyama

Representative Gregg Ilagan

Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto

Representative Kirstin Kahaloa

Senator Michelle N. Kidani

Representative Darius K. Kila

Senator Donna Mercado Kim

WHEREAS, it is with a profound sense of loss that the Hawai'i State Legislature mourns the passing of JULIA NEAL, a native of St. Louis, Missouri; born on October 3, 1949, she grew up in Los Angeles before making her way to Hawai'i in the 1970s; and

WHEREAS, as the founder of The Ka'ū Calendar and the online Ka'ū News Briefs, JULIA NEAL printed and distributed this labor of love for over 20 years, bringing important news to a region that previously lacked this critical resource; her unwavering commitment to unbiased reporting, professionalism, and journalistic integrity inspired and benefitted her entire community; and

WHEREAS, with the help of Michael Charles Worthington, JULIA NEAL lovingly restored and stewarded the Pahala Sugar Mill manager's house, engineering its rebirth as Pahala Plantation House, a historic bed & breakfast inn and gathering place where all were welcome; later, the pair restored the old teachers' cottages, turning them into the Pahala Plantation Cottages; and

WHEREAS, JULIA NEAL left a profound and lasting impact through her dedication to preserving Hawai'i's rich culture, historical buildings, and unique traditions; she collected oral histories to preserve community members' stories for the National Endowment for the Humanities and helped several sites become listed in the State and National Registries of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, JULIA NEAL was also a benefactor and member of the Board of Directors of the Boys & Girls Club of the Big Island; generations to come will feel the positive impacts of her relentless drive to faithfully serve her community and uplift those around her; and

WHEREAS, JULIA NEAL is survived by her partner of 30 years, Michael Charles Worthington, her brother, Forest Lee Neal II, and her nephews, Forest Lee Neal III, Michael Martin Neal, and William Clifton Neal; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2025, that this body hereby honors the memory of JULIA NEAL, recognizes her commitment to unbiased reporting, preservation of the history and culture of Hawai'i, and improving the quality of life for her community, and extends its deepest and sincerest condolences to her family and friends upon the passing of their loved one.

The 33rd Legislature:

Representative Jeanie Kapela

Nadine K. Nakamura, Speaker of the House

Brian L. Takeshita, House Chief Clerk

Senator Llu Ma'ano Kanuhū

Ronald D. Kouchi, President of the Senate

Carol Taniguchi, Senate Chief Clerk

Senator Chris Lee

Representative Mike Lee

Representative Nicole E. Lowen

Representative Lauren Matsumoto

Representative Dee Morikawa

Representative Ikaika Olds

Representative Amy A. Perruso

Representative Marina Poppo

Senator Herbert M. (Tim) Richards, III

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura

Representative Gregg Takahama

Representative Adrian K. Tam

Representative David A. Tarnas

Representative Shirley Ann Templo

Senator Glenn Wakai

Michael Neal's Eulogy for Aunt Julia's Celebration of Life

Mahalo everyone for being here to celebrate Julia's life.

I want you all to look at the people around you today. The person on your left. The person on your right. You see friends, you see relatives, you see neighbors, and you may even see a few strangers. Some of you see each other every day, while others have not seen each other in many years, if ever.

But all of us are here because of one person—and that is Julia.

How powerful life can be that it takes just one person, just one human being, to bring together hundreds of us at one place and time.

And that is what Julia loved doing most. Bringing together people from her community and from all walks of life. Especially here, in Pāhala, in Ka'ū.

Those of you who knew Julia well know that she didn't like making herself the center of attention. She loved talking story. She loved helping others. She loved building bridges between people. But she didn't like being in the spotlight. She was as humble as can be.

...But today is Julia's day. Today we shine the spotlight on her. And so we're going to talk all about you, Julia, whether you like it or not!

So, who was Julia? Well, first and foremost, Julia was my auntie. Many times, when I would go with Julia to a town hall or celebrations like this, people would come up to me and ask if Julia was my mom—if I was Julia's son. I used to have long hair like Julia, so I could play the part. I would say, no, Julia is my auntie—I am her nephew. And then they would talk about all the help she had given to the community, whether through *The Ka'ū Calendar* or through personal acts of kindness. Someone once told me Julia was the Mayor of Pāhala because of how active she was in the community. Many of you saw her every day driving all around the village in her famous hat and flower dress.

But it's important to remember



Julia was not originally from Pāhala, or from Ka'ū, or from Hawai'i. Julia's path in life brought her here. A path created early on in life by her curiosity and love of everything different from herself. Different people, different cultures, different perspectives. A path that took Julia to many other places before she would call Pāhala home.

You may not know this about Julia. But when she was a teenager, Julia traveled across the mainland and visited many churches of many denominations to learn about their different beliefs and different ways of worship. Later on, she traveled to India, Pakistan, and other countries to listen to the wisdom of others and learn about other ways of life. Julia was the most thoughtful and tolerant person I knew.

So, it's no surprise that Julia's path in life eventually brought her to Hawai'i. In Hawai'i, Julia felt something particularly special. Something unique in this land, in its people, in its culture, and in its spirit. She felt something that I cannot fully describe. But I sense each of you who are from here or who now live here know what Julia felt. The feeling that this is a sacred place.

And that is what kept Julia in Hawai'i for over 50 years. After first visiting Hawai'i in 1970, Julia stayed, and she called no other place home til the day she passed.

Julia first lived in Kauai, then Kona, and finally Pāhala. She strongly believed in protecting Hawai'i's environment and preserving its culture for future generations. During Hawai'i's

Constitutional Convention, Julia advised the Committee on Environment, Conservation, and Land. More recently, Julia played a major role in helping preserve Ka'ū's coastline—the longest stretch of undeveloped coastline in Hawai'i.

Julia also believed in compassion. Whether it was leaving her backdoor open so the homeless could take a shower in her bathroom, to giving jobs to people struggling with drugs, to giving shelter to those who had nowhere else to turn to in their darkest moments. Julia never gave up on others. Julia thought no one was beyond helping because there is dignity inside of every human being.

Above all, Julia believed in the power of communities to decide for themselves what is right. And it was through her newspaper, *The Ka'ū Calendar*, that Julia informed this community so that we can decide the future we want for our children and grandchildren.

I last saw Julia about a year ago. We spoke about what the future of Pāhala and Ka'ū would look like after she passed. Eventually, all of us will, and we must think about these things.

Julia told me how inspired she was of the young people of Ka'ū who, after leaving Ka'ū for college and for work, have returned—whether as teachers, farmers, or business owners—to contribute their experiences and education to this beautiful community that raised them.

It was Julia's wish that a new generation of leaders would continue to help Ka'ū become a more prosperous place, so young people don't feel like they have to leave, but also a place that remains true to itself—to its land and to its people—so that the sacredness that Julia felt in this land lives on. And as it lives on, so will Julia's spirit here also live on.



JULIA ANN DEAL

October 3, 1949 - January 24, 2025

