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President's Report - May 2024

Nolan Ahn, PAK President

"ON IT"

Last month I talked about folks who do not respond to our calls for help. The drumbeat I follow prefers that people give me a clear "No" to my request than leaving me hanging with silence or even a "Maybe". No answer leaves me wondering if my message was received, and to ponder why there is no response. Did he/she get the message? Was he/she offended? Is he/she mad with me? Round and round and round. Most of the time, I eventually call the person and ask them straight out. But, if I get their voicemail, then I am back to square one, fretting over why I am not getting a response. Fortunately, there are people out there that are on the opposite side of the spectrum. I call these folk "on it" people.

One of those people is a business owner that I approached with a proposal for putting pickleball on his site. We met, he listened intently, understood what we were asking and quickly decided that pickleball courts were not a good fit on his property. He was also very supportive of the idea and offered to talk to other landowners on our behalf. Done. Check. We were both free to move on. I respect his decision and I respect his decisiveness. It is no fluke that he runs a very successful business and has done so well for himself. In previous articles, I have outlined how many times we have been told no to our requests for a court site. The list keeps growing, obviously, as we still have no site after two and a half years. As our skin gets thicker with each closed possibility, we have had to adopt a mantra of "God never closes a door without opening a window". Let me elaborate on our current window of opportunity.

I called upon an old friend that has a position of influence with one of Kauai's largest employers. Years before, we had worked together on a wild idea to repurpose graduation lei and distribute them the day after to tourists, seniors, and random people around Kauai. The project was called "Lei of Aloha" and we were successful in blessing thousands of people with a still fresh flower lei simply to extend Aloha from the graduating seniors. We recruited and trained the junior class from the high schools to gather, tag, and distribute the donated lei. One of the early volunteers in the project was this woman friend, and she was a dynamo in getting things done. We met, caught up on the years, and then got to our mission statement at PAK to build courts. Like the business owner that turned us down, she listened intently, asked questions about our past rejections and then applied her cumulative knowledge and considerable intellect into suggesting solutions. It turns out she is on the Board of a large non-profit that is also looking for a site, and that a partnering effort to fit our courts into their operation may be possible. She immediately called the CEO of the non-profit and floated the idea of a joint effort, which he received very well. This is our latest, greatest iteration that we are pursuing diligently. Be assured this will be explored and pursued fully. I am not at liberty to mention my friend's name or that of the non-profit yet, but if things move along and we can reveal an alliance, you will certainly recognize her and the organization. I am deeply grateful to her, and was heartened and inspired by her comment when the meeting concluded. She said, "I'm on it". Nuff said.

On another note, PAK is planning for a major pickleball tournament August 2-4, 2024 at the Kauai Community College courts. We are excited to hold it on courts that have been newly re-surfaced, with 6 dedicated pickleball courts, and provisions for an additional 4 courts with temporary striping. (See flyer, attached). Save the Date! Registration will be open soon and we expect in excess of 200 players from Kauai, neighbor islands and around the world as it will be the first local tournament run by Pickleball Brackets. Our dream of owning a striping machine is becoming a reality, and it is on its way here, along with 10 new nets that will be donated after the tournament. Thank you Pat Clabo for your generous donation that helped make the purchases possible.

Until next month,
Nolan

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