



Mele Kalikimaka e Hauoli Makahiki Hou everyone and welcome to Nani Notes. Ron and I wish you and yours a peace filled time of sharing, caring and joyful reflection of all the good things you enjoyed this past year. Some will make new year vows for 2004, others will seek new opportunities in the new year season. This newsletter will continue to be printed once a month in 2004. We may add special features, writers, and as usual answer all questions you pose. I welcome suggestions and comments. Periodically I shall begin to post some of my travel and conference schedule. I thank all of you for your support, you are my success story and I promise to continue this newsletter as long as it provides value for you. Harvest all that you need and let the rest go. Know you are loved and appreciated beyond words! Safe holidays!

Enjoy,
Nani

This December 2003 issue is dedicated to YOU!

Last month I posed this question. Ever think of the art of being free and what it means for you?

We led with the saying, "In becoming FREE, safety is the first burden left." I ching

Here is a thoughtful reader's response:

Hi Nani,

As promised in my first e-mail I had to think for a few days regarding your newsletter question. This is the first newsletter that I have received and it is very good and thought provoking.

Here goes:

Because each of us has a "history" and a platform for decision making I must first say that my platform has been solidly formed from Biblical principles. Knee jerk reactions are important because they define the real person. My first reaction to the art of being free is only this: truth sets me free. It goes much deeper than not lying, always telling the truth because we don't want to get caught, etc. I MUST be honest with myself as to my goals, life directions, reasons for being alive. I MUST evaluate on a daily basis why I act and react. I MUST make choices--it is required of me by God who thoughtfully and frightfully gave me free will.

We only have today. Our journey here is short, and I MUST glorify God with every breath I take. It's the way I honestly approach my life and it frees me to love others, understanding that not everyone has walked in my shoes, not everyone makes their decisions with my platform, and everyone is on a different level of character/moral development. Some reach higher levels than others. I am free to love them, at whatever level they might be, knowing that my presence in their life can nudge them upward. Only love can accomplish our mission on Earth. Deep, abiding love. Sometimes tough love.

Being free encompasses greater responsibility, and deeper thought. It will grant me peace on the day I take my final breath, knowing that I have done everything in my power and understanding to be truthful--really free!

Your friend,
Linda Miller

Way to go Linda, your response is very thoughtful and eloquent. I can tell you are a woman of conviction and caring. I invite others to continue to respond so we can keep this thought provoking question and dialogue going. I will print other responses in next months issue.

Here are my added thoughts: Whenever you make changes, the first obstacle to overcome is letting go. Setting yourself free requires letting go of the safe haven you have come to know and love to reach out in belief and faith "to become." It is indeed the "first burden left" and the beginning of a journey of a thousand miles. Let's try this. First, make a distinction between worrying and caring. This is the art of cause and effect! You care so you worry, worry turns to fear and fear short circuits us. Some may then plead or make promises to God. We do not have to beg or plead with God to attain. We need only to **relax**, become **quiet** and **believe** in **ourselves and the abilities he gave us**. In the quiet, we receive answers. This "knowing" requires only that we believe and trust the process and set ourselves free. Creation, friends, starts first in your mind with thought and imagination. Nani
Feel free to comment to nani@universityoflife.info

[Some Glowing Comments From Nani Note Readers For Iris](#)

Iris's voice and the power of her words are what's needed to bring recognition of the truth of Native suffering, strength and wisdom. All people must know the truth

in order to honor those who have gone before and those who are coming up in new generations to bring change. Iris is a revered elder and also an awesome writer whose perspective comes from living a life with eyes and heart wide open.

Nani, thanks for the plug for the website, but the address, should anyone look for it, is www.racismagainstindians.org Also, I would like to post your story of what happened to you on the website with the contact info for your conferences. Is that okay? I am in the process of developing so many new sections for the site, including a section for speakers. The newsletter is AWESOME!

Christine Rose
Students and Teachers Against Racism
www.racismagainstindians.org

Aloha e, **Iris Allrunner**...I read with a hopeful heart your article...I felt the passion you feel for your people and all people who have been put in positions of despair through no fault of their own. When will we all see each other as brothers and sisters walking together in this land...perhaps now as we take the opportunities to take each others hands and learn with love and caring that what brings us together is more than what tends to take us apart...thank you for your from the heart pro-active stance...

Leilani Aki Kins...American Hawaiian sister
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Also here is something that came to me:

Nani,
I sat down and read **Iris' writing**. I sense that she is an honest woman, believing as I do, that truth will set us free from prejudices. I have no sense of the pain suffered by a minority. However, within me, I have no sense of prejudice except to be very opinionated regarding arrogance, hatred, stupidity (not the kind of lower IQ — the kind where thought is not taken before acting), greed, and dishonesty.

I believe that some people use their history (and history of their race) as an excuse to be angry, deceitful, and disrespectful of others. Iris however, related the pain and stated the solution. Sometimes I want to respond by saying "get over it" but these pains are carried for generations. I agree with her that exposure must come before healing can occur. I did not find her writing to be militant or overstating the challenge — only honest.

Your friend,
Linda
Spokane, Washington

Hello Nani,

First of all I want to thank you for allowing me to write your guest column in last month's newsletter. I enjoyed the entire newsletter very much because I think it was helpful to so many people in so many different ways. I like the way you empower people to change. I like how you tell people to pray twice a day and tell them their prayers will help.

It is a pleasure, in my latter years, to be able to be a part of change. That is change for the better. And I think people are not hearing anything new - much of what we both have said has been said before in another place and in another time. But isn't that what life is all about? Taking what is good and nourishing to make all of us better people! And many will come behind us and repeat what we are saying and goodness will live on. My prayers are with you and yours.

Grandmother Iris

Wolf Point, Montana

I received this story this week and thought it an appropriate Christmas story to print as a tribute to those who serve our country and those who have given their lives to keep Americans free!

A Story For Christmas

TAPS

We in the United States have all heard the haunting song, "Taps." It's the song that gives us that lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son.

The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army. The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

This wish was granted. The haunting melody, we now know as "Taps" ... used at military funerals was born.

The words are ..

Day is done ... Gone the sun ... From the lakes ... From the hills ... From the sky ... All is well ... Safely rest ... God is nigh ...

Fading light ... Dims the sight ... And a star ... Gems the sky ... Gleaming bright ... From afar ... Drawing nigh ... Falls the night ...

Thanks and praise ... For our days ... Neath the sun ... Neath the stars ... Neath the sky ... As we go ... This we know ... God is nigh

REMEMBER THOSE LOST AND HARMED WHILE SERVING THEIR COUNTRY.

Also those presently serving in the Armed Forces.

I do not know who the name of the author.

[A Personal Note from Nani Aki Linder](#)

A vision is but a wish and a thought until action and persistent determination is applied. My friend Burt Durbin calls it, "bulldog

tenacity!"

My prayer for you in 2004 is that you find YOUR special destiny; move towards it with persistence, determination and focused tenacity. Know that all power, all guidance comes from within YOU and you my friends can be what you will to be.

The secret!

Believe! There is power in simple!

REFLECTIVE MOMENT: Character isn't inherited. One builds it daily by the way one thinks and acts, thought by thought, action by action. If one lets fear or hate or anger take possession of the mind, they become self-forged chains.

Helen Gahagan Douglas, 1900-1980

Nani Linder and University Of Life & Hope are scheduled to present several fund raiser conferences in 2004: I invite you to join my vision quest journey by **first** standing tall because you are worthy. **Second** you can support my work for the children by sponsoring or attending one of our seminars conferences retreats. **Our Conferences are results oriented.** It is my policy to put my money where my mouth is by partnering throughout the year with a few non-profit organizations raising money through my workshops/conferences/retreats/keynotes and donate 50% of my personal profit from the conference. Call Nani at 509-467-7714 , email nani@universityoflife.info or visit Nani's website www.universityoflife.info for details and to get on my schedule.

The following are examples of fund raiser conferences for 2004:

RED ALERT: Diversity Conference sponsored by WRC, Glasgow, Montana
 March 25-26 Cottonwood Inn
 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Beth Pohl Director Women's Resource Center
 January 2004 newsletter will contain full information

Leadership is A Family Affair Conference sponsored by Frassatti School Of Leadership, Spokane, Washington
May 2004 Doubletree Inn Downtown Spokane
Watch for details in next months newsletter

Spirit Of Hope Conference sponsored by WRC, Glasgow, Mt.
May 13-14 site to be determined by next newsletter

Family Leadership Camp sponsored by Frassati School Of Leadership, Spokane, Washington
August 6-8

This is a family camp/leadership conference so plan on sharing your vacation with us at one of Washington's popular camp sites. We hope some will come and bring their tipi's. Should be fun

Michael Muglia, president

Diversity Conference sponsored by Frassati School Of Leadership
Spokane Washington
November 2004

Michael Muglia, President FSL

Point to ponder for Christmas sharing:

Men are often forgotten when we buy presents for the church box or the homeless. Why not pick up some warm mittens, hat, socks or underwear and drop them off at the homeless shelter. The feeling you receive of sharing with those who can do nothing for you is priceless.

This Month's guest writer is Leilani Kins from Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Leilani is a certified teacher and child advocate. Leilani is one of the workshop trainers in the University Of Life & Hope Cross Cultural Leadership Conferences. She will play a prominent roll in my "new teaching text" presentation beginning in 2004 called "Look At Me, I'm A Star". She is well qualified to comment and teach on this topic. Leilani and her grade school students did some pilot projects for this work when she taught in the Flaxville School in Flaxville, Montana. Her students are happily featured in the new text book with their "ginger jar" project on page 43. Leilani also enjoys writing poetry.

Commentary Article

By Leilani Aki Kins

HOPE...Healthy Opportunities Played-out Every moment of everyday...is in my mind the embodiment of Nani Linder's newest book...LOOK AT ME, I'M A STAR!

As an instructor and advocate for children for more than 35 years, it is exhilarating to work with materials of this nature: activities that meaningfully and respectfully guide children through real everyday experiences. Students live themselves in atmospheres of safety when they know that their facilitator appreciates the ME inside each of the activity pages.

This work text allow the instructor, whether in home school or traditional school environments, to gain invaluable insights. The observation of **ALL** the ways children choose to play-out each moment keeps one in heads up mode. For the instructor to **SEE OUT OF THE BOX**, he or she must leave all notions and egos parked outside the door! What we, as facilitators, learn from and with these student charges will build, or **NOT**, the bridges we all need to understand diversity's child!

LOOK AT ME, I'M A STAR offers both students and instructors **HOPE...Healthy Opportunities Played-out Every moment of everyday...in a quality world of activities that stimulates the mind, warms the heart, and respects the unique diversities within.**

Capture the vision...see out of the box...know that diversity is a strong suit we all wear! We are all STARS in our own right...student and instructor...child and adult...parent and grandparent...and so it goes!

Ode to Diversity's Child

**Child of Diversity
Who be you?
Is that you with the voracious appetite
Always in motion
Never still,
Searching, energizing!**

**Is that you knocking on my door?
Banging on sensitivity
Peering in spirituality's window!**

Child of Diversity
 Who be you?
 Diligence in motion
 Reality on the go
 Treasured
 Still cherished!

Child of Diversity
 Let me SEE you.

By Leilani Aki Kins

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION: We are leaving this up
 until March 2004**

Little Brown Penny Award: last month we told you about the little brown penny award. [Here are the details.](#) Every month we "catch someone doing something special for others." It could be a person, a group, an organization. It is the going beyond the self award, helping those who can do nothing for you in return and not wanting recognition. If you have read my book *Trial By fire a True Story Of Hope*, page 26 states, " I might even press a penny into your hand as a [reminder that you are important.](#)"

Yes, it is an award of hope the greatest gift I believe one can give. So, every month we recognize someone. At the end of our University of Life and Hope Year we present the award. You can help us by sending us stories of people you know who have brought hope by helping someone or going above and beyond. Just email me, nani@universityoflife.info

November Spirit Of Hope recognition

[Goes to Iris Red Elk Allrunner of Wolf Point Montana. Sioux Mother, grandmother, Adjunct Professor of Native American Studies.](#)
[Congratulations Iris!](#)

[Iris has earned this months recognition because she is in my eyes an "above and beyonder." She has dedicated her life to uplifting the plight of her people with boldness, brilliance, even through advocating on less than](#)

popular positions. None the less she persists. I admire her courage, her steadfast commitment, and for daring to challenging status quo. It is with sincere humility that we honor Iris.

Iris my friend, you exemplify the term, "moving forward, keeping still again and again and again, whatever it takes. I love it! Congratulations!

Iris joins the other candidates, one of whom will be chosen to receive the prestigious and coveted "Little Brown Penny Spirit Of Hope Award". This award will be presented to the chosen recipient in March 2004 at the Diversity Conference in Glasgow, Montana.

Holistic health tip for December 2003

These tips are for education and information and NOT medical advice, think safety first and consult your physician or naturopath.

Everything in moderation is a general rule of thumb except for telling those you love how much you love them. Say it often. During this holiday season, sing and be silly together. Visit old friends, make new ones, invite someone for dinner who might otherwise be home alone. Place a dish of food outside for the homeless pets that roam the earth. Keep your 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. date with an attitude of gratitude and this time share the moment with your loved one. Did you know the best stress buster is laughter and sharing a moment of "living hope".

For the flu season you might want to have these on hand:

Goldenseal is said to be nature's antibiotic. You must watch where you get this herb as it has some nasty side effects. It is my best recollection that none of these should be taken beyond two weeks at a time. The best brand for this herb and **White Willow bark** (nature's aspirin) is Sunrider. The processing they use is superior to others with no side effects. Since these are all medicinal herbs seek a naturopath or physicians advice.

This information is for educational and information only and not medical advice. I caution you to think safety first. I am living and walking proof that one does not need modern medicine to stay healthy. I do not take any medication unless am having an allergic reaction and then it is under the supervision of my physician so I can stay alive. I assure you ANY information that I recommend has been researched, researched and then researched again. Be well!

Hawaiian words of wisdom for December 2003

A'ohe pu'u ke'eki'e ke ho'a o 'ia e pi'i

No cliff is so tall it cannot be climbed.

Reflect: Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

Calvin Coolidge, thirteenth president of the United States

Check next month to see who our recognized December University of Life and Hope honored person is. It might be you. Send me your personal recommendation to nani@universityoflife.info. Age, gender does not matter; it is the sharing, caring spirit of hope that we are looking for. We plan to present this award in March 2004 at the Diversity Conference in Glasgow, Montana. Read more details in January 2004 newsletter issue.

The last word:

Take time to reach out and share a meal this Christmas and as often as you can in December, share with a lonely friend. Plan a visit to a nursing home or pet shelter and share time and food with those less fortunate.

We have so much to be thankful for living on this continent we call America and those who live and read this from around the world. Share the meaning of Ohana (family) by reaching out and telling someone you care.

Hint: See if there are families of soldiers serving overseas living close to you who may need a friend to talk to, meal to share, an errand run.

Ohana means family, we are Americans that is our common ground. Take a chance; reach out to a stranger, you might make a new

lifelong friend.

A reminder: you can purchase gift certificates from Mc Donald's, Wendy's, Burger King etc. and give them to a homeless or a hungry person you see. When you visit your local pet shelter take a bag of food for the hungry neglected or abused pets they shelter everyday. Have you a talent you can share? Nursing homes can always use singers or piano players etc. to volunteer an hour or so to entertain the patients. Christmas caroling is a great way to share and care. It is the simple act of kindness that brings smiles and warms the heart.

Same Challenge: Everyday without fail at 8 a.m. or 8 p.m. stop whatever you are doing and "cop an attitude of gratitude". **Meaning**, say thank you to creator God, universe, Buddha, Allah, whomever you thank for life, freedom, and everything you have. Bless those who do not have anything and if you happen to see a homeless person or pet, get them something to eat and drink. Better yet, offer them shelter. Send a prayer overseas for those who fight for us and the families who wait and those who grieve. Realize our soldiers fight there so as not to fight in your town, your city, your back yard. America and those in free societies cannot risk running from this fight against terrorism. Why? 9/11 told us in stark living "reality color" what terrorists are like. Stealth, sneaky no mercy for woman, children, old, poor. Imagine if everyone in the world paused at 8 o'clock everyday p.m. and a.m., to just say thank you! Wow! Lovely vision isn't it! When the intent is to serve the greater good, all things are possible, even the seemingly impossible. Make sense!

Point of reference: "An ye shall find him wrapped in swaddling clothes"

Malama Pono till we meet again. Nani

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We will be back January 10, 2004

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