

# WEST MAUI TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

## Advocating For You!

email: [wmta@maui.net](mailto:wmta@maui.net) home page: [www.westmaui.org](http://www.westmaui.org)  
mailing address: PO Box 10338, Lahaina, HI 96761 phone: 808-661-7990 fax: 808-661-7992

*A'ohe Hana Nui Ke Alu 'ia (No task is too large when we work together)*

## THE VOICE

Newsletter of the West Maui Taxpayers Association – March 2019

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** – Joseph D. Pluta



Aloha WMTA MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!

We are starting off 2019 with enthusiasm while we review the opportunities in the challenges ahead. Please take the time to read the important information regarding our Annual Meeting and other Reports in this Newsletter.

State and County elections resulted in significant changes to leadership of Maui County in the Mayor's Administration and the County Council. Only two of 9 council members were incumbent carry overs with 7 new council members. It seems now that most of the committees in our local government have been established and department reorganizations underway finally.

West Maui has so many pertinent issues to address pressing upon us and prioritizing what should come first is challenging. The Updating of the West Maui Community Plan is a major undertaking which I will be a part of as a selected member of the Community Plan Advisory Committee approved by the County Council. This will take an extraordinary amount of time to complete over the remainder of this year before finalization, submission to the Department of Planning and final approval by the County Council.

We know that our community concerns for Health and Safety have been accelerated by the current "on-hold" status of the West Maui Hospital and Medical Center. When we did the "impossible," by assisting the developer in the obtaining of the required "Certificate of Need," and when we saw the infrastructure ground breaking and preliminary acreage foundational improvements, we were looking forward to an opening date, not an "on-hold," report. The Maui News article of January 19<sup>th</sup> can be viewed on our [westmaui.org](http://westmaui.org) web site. We regret that we no longer have any official role whatsoever with the developer or this development. This project is solely under the control of the developer. As we have been relegated to the sidelines, we can only pray for the successful financing for construction of this urgently needed facility! There is Power in Prayer!

With the limited financial resources at our disposal currently, it's clear that the WMTA will need to focus on some major fundraising towards obtaining a full time Executive Director to enable us to make some significant impacts moving forward. We are having a Whale Watch on March 31<sup>st</sup> – Join Us! Your volunteer board members and I recognize that there are many organizations engaging in fundraising besides us and we need to convince you that we should be a priority on your list of beneficiaries for your charitable giving. Our prior solicitations for added donations to WMTA and WMIF for funding an Executive Director position were not successful. Help us to better serve you and our community. Our goal is \$65 K for this position. Please Send us an Extra donation via our West Maui Improvement Foundation Inc. for a 100% tax deductible gift. Memo the donation; "WMTA E.D. fund."

Malama Pono ame Mahalo,



Joseph D. Pluta – President/ Treasurer

## **MARCH 31, 2019 WHALE WATCH SCHEDULED**



The February 17<sup>th</sup> Whale Watch was such a success (see next page of photo's) – a great time to get social with family and friends of WMIF and WMTA, that we are doing it again! Reserve your seats as seats are again limited.

### **March 31, 2018 – Lahaina Harbor on the Trilogy IV Check In by 4:30 pm (Cruise 4:45 pm – 6:45 pm)**

Tickets for Donation of : Adult (18+) \$50 / Youth (age 13-17) \$35 / Child (3-12) \$20

INCLUDED WITH YOUR TICKET: Filtered Water and an assortment of non-alcoholic beverages; light pupus.

Visit <http://www.westmaui.org/whalewatch.html> for more details and info or to sign up. Or call 808-661-7990.

*Photo by Brianne Harris*

## **WMTA ANNUAL MEETING 2019**

On, Thursday, January 17, 2019 WMTA held its Annual Meeting at the Lahaina Civic Center. You can watch it here: <http://www.westmaui.org/home/wmta-annual-meeting-presentations>

From the feedback we received from attendees at the meeting and afterwards, the information presented was appreciated and provided a better understanding of some critical issues of community interests. There is not any other way where you can receive such “on point” updates on these West Maui issues so efficiently. Share the ability to see these reports on our web site at westmaui.org with your friends who may be interested in West Maui issues. And, please suggest membership and active participation with WMTA as a prudent step in the right direction for a better West Maui. Mahalo.

Mahalo to our Speakers:

- State Representative Angus McKelvey;
- Senator Roz Baker;
- Mayor Mike Victorino
- Council Member Tamara Paltin
- Pamela Eaton, Planning Program Administrator, Long Range Division, **Department of Planning, County of Maui**, speaking about the West Maui Community Plan update process
- Colin Yamamoto, Retired Chief of Ocean Safety, Maui County, updating us on the rescue tube project to mitigate the number of drownings in ocean in West Maui
- Tom Yamachika, President, Tax Foundation of Hawaii

## **WEST MAUI HAZARDS EMERGENCY PLANNING UPDATE – Joseph D. Pluta**

Unfortunately, we did not fill our critical positions at the meeting on February 21st. We are concerned about how effective our volunteers can be without recognition by Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HEMA) & Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). We seem to be having a push-back from MEMA wanting us to do more community resource work , etc.

We do not want an exercise in failure and that's what we see we will have without a buy in from MEMA and recognition by them as a resource to their incident Response Team network.

We have requested MEMA to fill out an incident report command structure that they currently use for a West Maui Disaster at this time.

We have not seen any After Action Report after the recent Lahaina Fires devastating over 20 homes and impacting hundreds of local residents. We want to see that as well.

I will be seeking help from the Maui Mayor's office and County Council to recognize us as a resource to them and their Incident Disaster Team for West Maui Emergencies.

We will let you know how things work out.

**FIRST WHALE WATCH – WMTA/WMIF PARTNERSHP FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS, SECOND ONE ON MARCH 31**

Thank you to all those who participated in our Whale Watch on the Trilogy IV (their newest boat!) in support of the West Maui Community by joining us on the February 17th Whale Watch. After reschedules a few times due to bad weather, third time is a charm! It was a spectacular cruise!

**ANOTHER WHALE WATCH FUNDRIASIER IS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 31, 2019.**

**See previous page for more info!**



Photo by Brigitte Kucher



Photo by Brienne Harris



Photo by Brigitte Kucher



Photo by Joseph Pluta

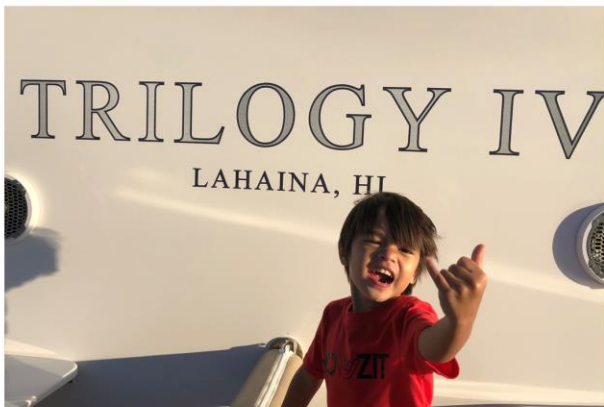


Photo by Aldrina Meier

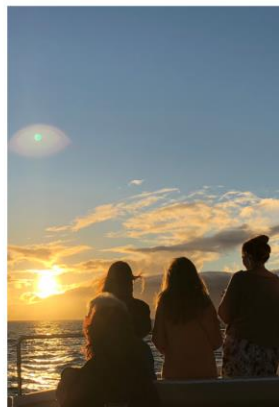


Photo by Aldrina Meier



Photo by Brienne Harris

**More Pictures and videos on line at [www.WestMaui.org](http://www.WestMaui.org)**

**MEMBERSHIP UPDATE – Joseph D. Pluta**

Please be reminded that All property owners in West Maui have been receiving benefits and dividends from the success of the WMTA for the past 40 years. Many who were paying the maximum allowable rates for fire insurance have received back thousands of dollars in reduced premiums since we built and paid for the Napili Fire and Ambulance Station. Some have literally had their lives saved as a result of our remarkable feat which had never been done before anywhere in the State of Hawaii.

We stand on our record of achievements which are unparalleled anywhere by any organization in the entire State of Hawaii. The more you know about what we have done for West Maui, the more you can be convinced that there is not any better return on investment protecting your investment than a membership in the WMTA. If you have friends and they own property on Maui and are not members of WMTA, please ask them to join with us. They will be glad they did.

**POST TAT LICENSE NUMBER IN ADVERTISEMENTS**

We have been advised from the Department of Taxation that all owners, operators, and plan managers of transient accommodations are required to conspicuously provide their Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) license number in all advertisements for that transient accommodation, whether in print or online per Section 237D-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes. See this article by the Department of Taxation in the Real Estate Commission Bulletin, February 2019.

*The Department of Taxation would like to remind all owners, operators, and plan managers of transient accommodations such as hotel rooms, timeshares and other rooms let on a transient basis that they are required to conspicuously provide their Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) license number in all advertisements for that transient accommodation, in print or online, either directly in the ad itself or by electronic link. Failure to provide the number in this manner for an ad for a transient accommodation means that transient accommodation and its operator are in violation of Section 237D-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes.*

*Any operator of a transient accommodation who fails to provide their TAT license number in this manner will be issued a written warning by the Department of Taxation for a first offense. However, if the failure to provide the number is not corrected by amending the ad or taking it down, the operator of the transient accommodation will be fined \$500 per day per transient accommodation in violation. For second violations, the fine increases to \$1,000 per day per transient accommodation in violation. For third and subsequent violations, the fine can be \$5,000 or higher per day per transient accommodation in violation.*

*The Department strongly encourages all operators of transient accommodations, as well as real estate and rental managers who may be conducting the day-to-day letting of units on behalf of the operator, to make sure that TAT license numbers or electronic links to those numbers are conspicuously provided in all ads for transient accommodations. The fines for violations can quickly escalate in severity for you or your clients if you are not compliant. The Department has staff checking publications and websites on a daily basis and issuing warnings and fines to violators. Please avoid incurring these heavy fines by ensuring all advertisements you post conspicuously provide the transient accommodation's TAT license number or an electronic link to it.*

*For more information, please see Section 237D-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes and Sections 18-237D-4-01 through 18-237D-4-35, Hawaii Administrative Rules. To report a violation please call the Special Enforcement Section at (808) 587-1456 or email us at [Special.Enforcement.Tax.Section@hawaii.gov](mailto:Special.Enforcement.Tax.Section@hawaii.gov).*

**West Maui Taxpayers Association**  
**MEMBERSHIP FORM - IRS EIN 99-0160368 - NON PROFIT 501C (4)**  
 You can also pay online at [www.westmaui.org/joinnow.html](http://www.westmaui.org/joinnow.html)

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to have your name kept private in publications and acknowledgements.  
 Check here to have your e-mail address added to our "WMTA E-Alerts" List

<p>\$ _____ <b>MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am a member and renewing my dues</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I <b>am not</b> a member but would like to join</p>	<p><b>Membership Levels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Community Supporter \$25/year</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Community Leader \$50.00/year</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Families \$100/year</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Businesses \$100/year</li> <li><input type="radio"/> AOA – email <a href="mailto:wmta@maui.net">wmta@maui.net</a></li> </ul>
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**\$ \_\_\_\_\_ ADDITIONAL DONATION** Year End Special Donation for Executive Director (E.D)  
 100% Charitable donation when payable to WMIF. WMIF is a 501 (c)(3) Public Charity Organization EIN 99-0275775. . Please check with your tax adviser.

*Memberships effective for one year upon receipt of membership dues payment.*  
**Mail Checks, payable to "West Maui Taxpayers Association", to:**  
 West Maui Taxpayers Association PO Box 158 • Lahaina, HI 96761

NWS2018-12

**THE VOICE**  
 Newsletter of the  
 West Maui Taxpayers Association  
**March 2019**

***"Bringing the West Maui  
 Community Together,  
 Advocating for You"***  
 A 501-C-4 Community Organization

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Look for us on  
  
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