

# 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 – February 2020

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



Aloha Members and Friends of West Maui!---Happy New Year! Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

Many of you may make “New Years’ Resolutions,” at the start of each year. We hope that you will join with us and resolve to make life saving acute emergency medical care available here in West Maui one of your highest priorities.

Did you know that West Maui is the only location in the entire United States where a community with an average daily census over 50,000 with \$11 Billion Dollars in Property Assessed Valuations is isolated on a roadway frequently closed and over an hour away from 24/7 Acute Emergency Medical Services? Maui County Government relies upon property tax revenues for its highest source of income, and West Maui provides over 50% of total revenues for the County of Maui. West Maui has over 50% of the total transient accommodations in Maui County, so the General Excise Tax and Transient Accommodations Taxes represent the majority of tax revenues from Maui to the State of Hawaii. Words fail to adequately describe how illogical it is to ignore the essential need for acute emergency medical care to protect and preserve these financial resources!

It is clear that the number one priority for the WMTA and the WMIF and all those who love Maui, should and will be establishment of essential life-saving Emergency Acute care accessible within the “golden hour,” here in West Maui.

We started an effort over 20 years ago to obtain access to Acute Care Emergency Medical Services. We obtained a Certificate of Need that we were told would be impossible to obtain. Just when we thought we had achieved success and despite repeated statements that the developer was moving forward with the West Maui Hospital, he changed his course and has abandoned his plans for the Critical Access Hospital. While he changed his mind, the community needs have not changed. We are going to reactivate our West Maui Hospital and Medical Center Foundation Inc. and re-establish a campaign to obtain life-saving acute care emergency medical services here in West Maui. Time is of the essence. Help us to help you and make a commitment now. We know what needs to be done and we know we cannot do it without your financial assistance. Please **Be a West Maui Lifesaver, and** send your tax-deductible donation to the West Maui Improvement Foundation Inc., without delay! We’ve enclosed a donation form and return envelope so you can do it today! Mahalo.

Warmest Regards,



Joseph D. Pluta – President/ Treasurer

## **SUCCESSFUL WMTA ANNUAL MEETING 2020**

We want to thank all of those who joined us for the WMTA at its Annual Meeting held on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at the Lahaina Civic Center – Social Hall (Main Hall).

A short business meeting kicked off and included the Election of Board of Directors. WMTA Board Members are Joseph Pluta, John Seebart, Feresteh Tali, Richard Jarman, Joe Park as pictured below.

Board Members not pictured are Lee Chamberlain, Rick Nava, and Gregg Nelson.

We thank each and every Board Member for their continued volunteerism to keep the leadership strong.

Special thanks to our Elected officials and Presenters from organizations and projects that affect the West Maui community for their participation:



- Potential for 24/7 Emergency Room for West Maui: James “Jim” Diegel, Chief Strategy Officer, Maui Health System
- West Maui Issues: Dr. Keli’i Akina, Ph.D., President & CEO of Grassroots Institute of Hawaii
- Affordable Housing Developments
  - o Pulelehua at Mahinahina: Preston Cheng, Developer, Maui Oceanview LP
- West Maui Community Plan Update: Pam Eaton - Planning Program Administrator
- Front Street Sidewalk, Railing, and Seawall Repair: Kristi Ono, Civil Engineer, Department of Public Works, County of Maui

We also thank all our members and volunteers who believe in our mission, and support it through annual membership or time. Without you, our accomplishments to date would not be possible.

### **Membership Update – Joseph D. Pluta**

We understand that there are lots of worthy organizations seeking your support and that as such you have to decide which one’s you can support financially or otherwise.

We respectfully suggest that if you reside or own property in West Maui, its essential that you support the WMTA and WMIF as your advocate for needed attention to our communities’ needs. No other community organization(s) have accomplished more.

Our web site at [www.westmaui.org](http://www.westmaui.org) provides resource access to vital information and proves evidence of actual accomplishments unparalleled anywhere else on Maui.

This is an election year and all mail in voting is going to be implemented. Our non-resident members who do not vote must rely upon us to advocate for them. That’s one of the major reasons WMTA was created, as the absentee property owners did not have adequate representation in local government.

West Maui Property Owners recently experienced the largest property tax increase in Maui’s history. It seems that this extra income has been parked in budgetary placeholders instead of put into capital improvement projects towards resolving the several “crisis,” situations declared for homelessness, affordable housing, shoreline eroded roadways, emergency preparedness, and wastewater treatment improvements.

Everyone who resides in West Maui or owns property in West Maui should be supporting the WMTA. We have earned the support and our track record proves it. There are many challenges ahead of us and we are ready and eager to address them with your continued outstanding support. We do not receive any funding from the County or State and rely solely on our communities private donations. Please be a part of the solution and support the WMTA with a donation today! Mahalo.

## **Emergency Planning Update – Joseph D. Pluta**

The WMTA has been seeking the engagement of the West Side Community to be a part of our preparedness for Emergencies and disasters. The recent acknowledgement of needed improvements to the Maui Emergency Management Agency as a result of the After Action Report review by Mayor Victorino has encouraged us to continue to involve community members into the action plan. We have scheduled a Community Engagement Meeting for our Community preparedness on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 pm at the West Maui Senior Center Social Hall. We will be contacting those who have previously participated in our planning efforts by phone and email from prior attendance records. If you want to be part of this preparedness effort, please contact us at [wmta@Maui.net](mailto:wmta@Maui.net), or by phone at 808-661-7990.

We are in the process of enhancing Maui Taxpayer Association's West Maui Emergency Plan. We need your help to evaluate the skills and capabilities of the West Maui Ohana. We would like to know the resources that can be utilized; In the event that West Maui becomes impacted or isolated. If you have a skill (Active or Retired PD, Fire, EMT, CEO, Nurse, Craft or just about anything else); we would like to know.

Please fill out the form below if you want to be part of our West Maui Ohana resources. There is no commitment at this time just seeing how we can help.

The subject of our next Emergency Planning Meeting will be “Assessing our Capacities”

### **Topics include:**

- The West Maui Taxpayers Association role in better preparing our community.
- The value of Memorandum of Understandings (MOU's)
- Maui county role in disaster response to West Maui.
- Legal aspects of helping in a crisis. – The Hawaii Good Samaritan law?

Date: April 6, 2020

Time: 5:00pm

Place: West Maui Senior Center, **788 Pauoa St, Lahaina, HI 96761**

### **I am interested.**

Your name	Email and/or Phone
Occupational and Skills you would like to share	

**WHALES JOURNEY TO HAWAII**

WEST MAUI IMPROVEMENT FOUNDATION &  
WEST MAUI TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

**WHALE WATCH FUNDRAISER  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22**



**Ticket Donations**  
\$50 Adults (age 18+)  
\$35 Youth (age 13-17)  
\$20 Child (age 3-12)

**Premium Bar**  
(open bar)  
\$10 extra per  
adult over 21

*E Komo Mai! Welcome aboard your private catamaran. Enjoy the views as Trilogy sail and seek out active groups of the famous humpback whales that journey to Hawai'i every winter, while supporting our non-profit organization.*

- Pupu & Non-alcohol drinks provided
- Check in 4:00 pm to 4:15 pm
- Boat leaves at 4:30 for a 2 hour Whale Watch Cruise
- Space is limited, reserve your tickets today!

For more details & to Reserve your space online at [www.WestMaui.org/WhaleWatch](http://www.WestMaui.org/WhaleWatch) by credit card. Call 808.661.8990 or email [wmifinc@gmail.com](mailto:wmifinc@gmail.com) for check payment.

Support West Maui Taxpayers Association & West Maui Improvement Foundation by joining our private catamaran for a Whale Watch!

Trilogy V sets sail on Saturday, February 22, 2020. Check in is 4-4:15 pm, with the boat leaving at 4:30 pm – so don't be late!

Space is limited, as it is peak season for whale watch, so reserve your tickets today. We expect to sell out quickly. Last year's whale watch we were witness to spectacular views and active groups!

Pupu and non-alcohol drinks are provided. Premium Bar is available for an extra \$10 paid in advance. No outside alcohol allowed.

Visit [www.WestMaui.com/WhaleWatch](http://www.WestMaui.com/WhaleWatch) to view important details and information.

You can also pay for ticket donations via credit card at [www.WestMaui.com/WhaleWatch](http://www.WestMaui.com/WhaleWatch)

If you prefer to pay by check, you can send ticket donations payable to "WMIF" and mail to PO Box 158, Lahaina, HI 96767 with a list of names and ticket types, and note if you are adding optional add-on of Premium Bar (for adults age 21+).

We hope to see you on Saturday, February 22 with your family and friends!

**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: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check here to have your name kept private in publications and acknowledgements.  
 Join the WMTA Email List: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

<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="checkbox"/> Community Supporter \$25/year</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community Leader \$50.00/year</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Families \$100/year</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Businesses \$100/year</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 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

NWS2020-February

**THE VOICE**

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West Maui Taxpayers Association  
**February 2020**

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

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([www.WestMaui.org](http://www.WestMaui.org) has links)