



On the calendar

On June 2

HCDA approved Kamehameha Schools proposed Kaiaulu o Kakaako Master Plan amendments, that will extend the period of the Plan, combine Block F and G, transfer tower from Block F to Block D, and confirm future flexibility in the transfer of towers and density between land blocks, allow for projects to be developed pursuant to HRS chapter 201H, increase the maximum permitted floor area to account for the addition of Koula Street, and allow for flexibility in the number and type of dwellings while adhering to the maximum floor area ratio (3.5) approved under the KKMP.

June 23 at 9 a.m.

A virtual public decision making hearing will be held regarding the draft Heeia Community Development District Plan & Rules.

July 7

The next HCDA Board meetings will be held.
For more information on the public hearings, board meetings or about HCDA visit dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda.

Know someone?

If you want to include an event, know an individual or a business in Kakaako, Kalaeloa or Heeia that we could feature, or just want more Community Connection, let us know by emailing us at: dbedt.hcda.contact@hawaii.gov.

Support local

Eden in love

In every challenge there is opportunity

By Francine Murray

When newlyweds Tanna and Bryson Dang, first went into business in 2005 they bought the Wedding Café in Manoa Marketplace. Two years later they moved the Wedding Café to Ward Warehouse. "Being in Kakaako was a really big deal for us," Tanna explained. "We wanted to be in that area, live there, work there and support the area. That is our love and our connection to this whole Kakaako area."

They gradually moved out of the café business and into retail, opening Eden in Love.

When Ward decided to demolish Ward Warehouse, Eden in Love moved to South Shore Market, and the Dang's moved into a condominium in Kakaako. "We love this area. We can walk to the store. We also have a warehouse on Halekauwila. Everything we do is right in the heart of Kakaako."

The Dang's bike daily, walk their dog, and eat at the restaurants. "We know this Kakaako vibe and everything we want it to be for our customers as well."

Then the COVID 19 pandemic struck, the statewide shutdown shuttered Eden in Love, like all the other businesses that were considered non-essential. It forced the Dang's to make some drastic changes quickly just to survive. "We had to get scrappy as if this were 2005 and we were starting off all over again," said Tanna. They had to figure out how to have everything in their store on a website. This was happening while everything was shut down and they couldn't even access their store.

Prior to COVID, Eden in Love had only about ten online sales a month. They were true shop keepers at heart that used their experience and knowledge to create a welcoming location with beautiful merchandise and they strived to provide an excellent customer experience. "We had

to come up with new ways of servicing our customers," said Tanna. "Especially the customers that were used to coming into



Kakaako and being able to shop."

"It was a big fat challenge. Everything was hard," Tanna explained. "We closed down in March. April was our birthday month," one of the busiest times of year for Eden in Love, second only to Black Friday.

They had the inventory for a grand birthday month sale, but couldn't do a photo shoot and had no models.

One of Tanna's two store managers came up with the idea to divide the merchandise among the three of them, take it home and take selfies with each item for the website. "We felt ridiculous. Olivia and I are size large," said Tanna, "but what was really cool about it is more people started buying those items because we were real, and we weren't afraid to talk about how embarrassed we were that we had to selfie."

"May 15th when we all reopened we thought, okay guarantee, we're back on track and we can have our big black Friday sale," said Tanna. They had leased the old Bed Bath & Beyond space to hold a huge 30-day sale in November 2020, with room enough for social distancing, appointment only VIP treatment and pockets of parties. However, in July the numbers of new COVID cases grew and they realized that they had to cancel their plans.

As a small business one day of black Friday sales can equal three-months of sales in the store. Bryson, who does the finances, said we can't make it without our annual black Friday event.

"How are we going to recreate this experience online?" Tanna asked. The concept was foreign to them.

The focus again turned online. Not only did the website have to become more inviting, but every aspect had to be completely creative – emails, website and social media working together. "We call it a seamless online channel experience," said Tanna. "How were we going to tie it all together? That was our biggest struggle through COVID."

The team's innovation and flexibility coupled with their honesty about what was happening



Eden in Love is in the South Shore Market at 1170 Auahi St. #120. Honolulu.
Visit: edeninlove.com or on Instagram @edeninloveboutique.

Continued on page 2

Eden in love *page 1*

really got people's attention online. When their Black Friday month online sale started on November 6th they made one-thousand sales in the first fifteen minutes. "Suddenly, it wasn't only local customers, but international," said Tanna. "Everything changed." With the fifty percent off sale, people had huge orders, but they offered a flat rate \$7.95 shipping and handling fee.

The actual shipping costs were so high. For example, a customer ordered serving boards, and several other things. The actual shipping across the island was over \$80, so Tanna's father started making deliveries for them.

Filling the online orders was a huge task. They were grateful for friends and family who volunteered to help and they high fived each day they met or exceeded their goals.

"I feel retail is going to shift," said Tanna, "and I don't imagine its ever going back to the way it was before."

"The pandemic made me realize that everything we've been searching for we already have," Tanna explained. "When everything kind of got stripped away, we had what we needed. I've never been closer to my staff, my community, my family. So, everything I felt like I built this up for, I felt like we already have it."

The pandemic was devastating, but it also created opportunities because people had to change the way they were doing things to survive. "We always believe that with every challenge there is opportunity," said Tanna. "But you can choose to see the opportunity or you can choose to see the challenge."

Meet the Team

Everyone, Meet Neal

By Craig Nakamoto

Neal Imada, P.E. really needs no introduction. Neal has been a familiar face at the HCDA for 34 years in the planning and development department, having started with the agency in 1987, as a Project Management Engineer. He came to the agency after being with the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Belt Collins, and Dames and Moore, and getting an undergraduate civil engineering degree and an MBA from the University of Hawaii.

Neal has primarily been involved in Kakaako improvement district projects, and he has seen the evolution of improvement projects in the district. In the early years he felt there was an urgency to build infrastructure to stimulate redevelopment, and now there is more of a planning and regulatory focus.

Most rewarding to Neal has been the sense of accomplishment and pride he has felt seeing Kakaako evolve into to a lively urban community and having a role in that transformation. He notes that the challenge has been balancing the goals of the State in establishing Kakaako as a community development district, economic stimulus, redevelopment, and housing, while being cognizant of the impacts on existing tenants



and businesses. Neal feels that compromise is often required to achieve that balance.

His most significant work accomplishment is being part of an agency that "changed the whole complexion of a blighted, underutilized area to what it is today." If there was a project that Neal wishes could have been done, it is the Queen Street improvements from Ward Avenue to Kamakee Street.

Neal is proud of his family. His wife is a parent community coordinator and teacher at Niu Valley Middle School. His son earned his doctorate in clinical psychology and started his own practice in Seattle. Neal's daughter recently earned her master's degree in marriage and family therapy and is working in Los Angeles.

Neal attributes his strong sense of family and appreciation of life as factors that shaped who he is today.

In his spare time, Neal enjoys thrift store shopping and restoring and repurposing his finds.

What's cooking?

Crab Rangoon *By Francine Murray*

The keiki and I first discovered these crispy bags of gold, in a small local restaurant a decade ago. Since then, whenever we came across something similar we were pleasantly surprised. For us, they bring back good memories of times out with family, and can turn an ordinary meal into a treat. Eventually, I sampled making them on my own until coming up with this very simple recipe that we really enjoy and hope that you will too.

6-8 oz. crab meat or imitation crab
1 package of won ton wrappers
1/4 c. mayonnaise

8 oz. cream cheese
oil for deep frying
1 T. sweet chili sauce



1/4 t. garlic salt

Mix crab, cream cheese and salt. Add 1 spoonful of mixture to the middle of a won ton wrapper. Moisten edge with water, fold in a triangle and seal. Then it can then be deep fried, or for a round shape (as pictured), bring the 3 corners together and twist top, forming a round bottom. Fry until golden brown. Repeat with all the mix and wrappers.

Extra mixture can be frozen.

Mix mayonnaise and chili sauce. Serve with Rangoon as dipping sauce.