

Fantastic 4: Mark DeVirgilio, Celeste Souza, Mokihana Tachera

HUM 300

Kumu Yaz Romero

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Fantastic Four

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Lapu read -

Pu sound. Aloha kākou, ‘O Maka keia. I am a lapu and last worked for Mōi Kahahana more than 200-years ago. I still guard the ‘Āina Loa homestead, and finally, there are new residents here. Let us check on our residents this week. We are lucky to read the diaries of Nālaukapalili the mahiai, Janie the malihini, and Nakoa, the kane ko ohana. Their planting, fishing, playing, and market schedules seem not to change. I hope they are having fun and thriving. I do not want to be alone again. What are their thoughts? Will the market be better this week? Will they be ready for new adventures? Please quietly listen to their words at the end of each day:

Lapu says Monday

Mokihana read:

Pō‘akahi

‘O Nālaukapalili kēia, he kawowo au mai ka ‘ohana ‘o Kuakawaiea. I am Nālaukapalili and I am the offspring of the family Kuakawaiea. I am a 5th generation mahi‘ai and my family has lived and cultivated these lands for many generations. It's because of my upbringing that I have much love for this land, our community, culture and traditions. It is an honor to ‘aumao or carry the kuleana of taking care of it.

I was taught from an early age to pay attention to the ‘āina and the elements. If you listen close enough, it will speak to you. This morning I noticed Makali‘i is high in the sky, and because it is Ho‘oilō season or what some consider winter, our lo‘i is ready to kanu. Last week, I observed the ao po‘ipu and the entire sky was covered with dark clouds. This told me ua loku or heavy rains were coming. I was stoked to have heavy rains because it makes my job of turning the ‘āina over a little easier. My 2 keiki were happy too because they love getting in the land, especially when it's muddy. Me? I love seeing them have fun in the ‘āina but I don't look forward to the mess they track in the hale, so I give that task to my husband. When we prep the land for planting, the whole community gets involved that way when it's time to harvest they get to enjoy the fruits of their labor. We soften the mud by hehi or stomping in it and it is during this time we get to catch up and talk story. This is also the favorite time for my makua since they don't get to work in the lo‘i too often. They are first in line to help hehi. Before you know it, the work is done, that's always the best feeling. The tradition in our ohana is that during the big moon phases or anahulu poepoe we kanu huli in the ground. This will be best and our kalo will be healthy and numerous. Looking forward to the harvest but lots of work still to do before we plant. Today was a good day

‘Celeste read:

Hey guys! Janie here, thanks so much for tuning in. Guys, I am currently sitting in the airport, so you know what that means. I finally get to spill the beans on my super, secret, getaway. You guys have been asking me for months now, Janie! Where are you running to next? Well I can finally tell you that I've been invited by the Aina Loa Community on Oahu to take part in their eco-tourism program. This is a new and experimental Community on Oahu that made it their mission to focus on preserving Native Hawaiian agricultural practices and traditions. Super cool right? Along with preserving their culture, their agricultural and environmental breakthroughs have allowed them to reclaim that portion of land as a type of national preserve. Last year after their milestone fifth year they officially opened their doors one day a week for guided tours and to introduce their farmers market. This community has never opened their doors to foreign visitors, until now. And of course, yah girl got an invite. As an early participant in this eco-tourism program I can't wait to give you guys an exclusive sneak peek. I would stay longer but I think my flight is going to start boarding soon. Gotta Run, I'll check in with you guys, tomorrow, bye.

Mark Read:

'O Nakoa keia. Pilikia nui. Monday gotta be the worst day. The malihini who is supposed to help is probably stuck in the Covid line at the airport. The luna Nālaukapalili wants everyone to help plant because the kalo huli from harvest day will go bad. Then the 'uala tips that were rooted two weeks ago gotta go down. My wife, Malie, knows this. She works at the cafe serving pancakes, and when pau, she likes being a mahi'ai. I work in Encarnacion's car stereo shop for kala. The Filipino ma appreciate me because I love electronics and I figured-out da Chinglish instructions. When I get home, it is dark, but Malie made the pukas for the 'uala. I just get the flashlight, drop

the la'au in, and pa'a the dirt. I love her, making money, and 'uala equals. I look up at the mahina and say aloha to tomorrow. Funny kind how the day starts at night in Hawaii nei.

Lapu says Tuesday

Mokihana read:

Pō'alua

Kau e ka wena o ke ao i ka lani, he wekeweke i ka pō pilipuka. He 'elele o ka poniponi hikina, 'Ae ua ao e. The announcement of dawn has appeared as a glowing streak in the heavens, it is a narrow opening in the darkness heralding the day, it is a messenger from the purple glimmer in the east. Yes, this is a day of beauty of enlightenment.

Today, Kanehoalani or the rising sun, rose beautifully and I welcomed the day with pule, and I mahalo for this day of beauty and enlightenment. I also welcomed the opportunity to teach the malihini who was going to be coming to our 'āina, because akua knew I was a little worried. However, I was glad that we would get some extra hands in our 'āina. Hopefully they are excited, and can connect with our 'āina in a different way. When they came, some of our community members gave them a traditional kanaka 'ōiwi welcome with prayers and lei, strung with gorgeous pillows of a'ali'i and fronds of kupukupu. Keawe, our kahu or head of this wahi or place and I took the malihini on a tour to ho'okama'āina or to acquaint them to our 'āina. It is a good practice, and vital that they understand a sense of place, deepening their connection to the importance of land. We showed them our different sustainable processes that we've established in our community along with our recycling process. We also showed them our

different mala and the plants we grow for food, and other uses. Time for rest for tomorrow is a big day at kai.

Celeste read:

Hey guys! Janie here, thanks for tuning in again. I was gonna update you guys yesterday but my flight came in way later than I thought it would. I'm currently set up in a cozy little corner office that they're letting me borrow. While I'm here I'm just gonna jump on before dinner every night and give you guys quick rundown of my day, just the highlights, the best parts. I'll release all the content in next months edition of On The Run.

This morning though, this morning, oh my god it was beautiful. Does a sunrise over the ocean make coffee taste better? I think it does. After breakfast I met my first group, the cleaning team and while I was shadowing them I got a first rate tour of the whole community. They were so nice, as we gathered landscaping clippings and checked on the local trees, they pointed out and explained the uses that some Native plants have. As we visited each building we took some maintenance notes, checked on solar panels and collected all the trash. While we were sorting through the recyclables, I got to meet the young man who was in charge of the whole process. He won a full scholarship for his recycling proposal plan and now he manages the recycling and keeps track of the environmental waste impact of the Aina Loa Community. Super cool right? Well that's it for tonight you guys, dinner is calling me. I gotta run, bye.

Mark read:

‘O Nakoa kēia. I saw Janie today tagging along with a tour group. She looks smart and takes lots of pictures and is talking to something. Gotta wiki turn her into one wahine hana for help. The wife and I clean the lo‘i and uala fields. Da fields must be getting bigga or we getting slowa. The kids are fed and home at noon because of cultural day. I showed both of them how to fix the nets and floats. Then we made shell hooks with a file for show. I told them that metal hooks are way better, and I tell the kids that the old ways are for remembering. When pau, we roll the ulu maika around the kaha which is all kapakahi. Amazing that the rock can go around a corner if you twist it just right. Nālau can do this too. So ma’a, she like show off. Next, we spear the old banana trees with the spare broom handles. Plenty ‘aka‘aka when we miss. Da best part is when we have the kanikapila. Everyone is so musical, but I just vamp on the ukulele. Malie and Nālau are super good. They must have plenty of practice. My fingers are too sore for fancy playing. I should go to the free clinic, but the kauka gives me lectures on sugar, fat, and salt. I tell her that we now eat healthy stuff that we grow. No can get diabetes chewing on sugar cane. Pau da teeth first. I plan on living foreva.

Lapu says Wednesday:

Mokihana read

Pō‘akolu

E Kanaloanuiākea, Kanaloa Haunawela, Kanaloa ke ala ma‘awe‘ula a ka lā, Kane ke ala ‘ula a ka lā, Kanaloa noho i ka moana nui. Kanaloa of the vast expanse, Kanaloa of the depths of intensity, Kanaloa of the west sky, the setting sun, Kane of the east sky, the rising sun, Kanaloa residing in the great sea.

Today, I started my day off at kai or the ocean with my kane or my husband Kaiuli and my two keiki. I watched a school of nehu try and escape from the pāpio and my stomach growled, "Auwe! " I guess I'm hungry: The ocean was calm and serene and I thought it would be perfect for the malihini to come learn about the different i'a here. After the scuba team came from Ka'ohi'ipu where the 'ōpala gathered in the sea, they brought it up and the malihini assisted us in separating the plastics to recycle. Hopefully this lesson teaches all of us to reduce our waste. I then took some of them down to the ocean, and taught them how to catch pāpio. I used my stash of 'oama, and taught them how to tie a hook and line, and cast the pole. So funny, one tourist got grossed out cause she had to hook the bait. They caught some good size pāpio though, where we later cleaned and lāwalu them for our lunch. I thought it was very appropriate to teach them that we never take more than we need, so that the fish could continue to thrive in their ecosystems. We rely on not only resources from the land, but also the resources from the ocean, and its important to take care of it. Today was a good day, and the malihini seemed to enjoy their time, and learned alot of our fishing customs.

Celeste read:

Hi guys, Janie here, thanks for tuning in. You know guys, I thought the jet lag would still be messing with me but I've had really great sleep the past few nights. I really thought sleeping here was going to be difficult without air conditioning but there's something about being so close to the ocean thats kinda comforting. I can see why my parents always talk about coming back here, but their just too busy with their restaurant. Speaking of restaurant, the chefs here make the best pancakes. I call them chefs because the food has been amazing, but the guys in the kitchen just laugh at the compliment. I thought communal meals would be noisy, but sitting at that long table

with so many other people is nice. I find hearing the laughter, the different conversations and plans for the day to be energizing.

After all the pancakes were gone I joined up with the group I was shadowing for the day, the shoreline team. Even though I've been marveling at it from a distance there's was still something shocking about seeing an empty beach. You know? I'm so used to seeing blankets, umbrellas and people everywhere. For a moment it was almost like, we were the only ones there. We spent most of the morning walking the shoreline documenting the landscape with pictures and notes. Things got really exciting when the team noticed a set of tracks in the sand. I watched as they sectioned off the area of a possible green sea turtle nest. They said that this was the second time they had a mother lay her eggs here and that their research of the closed off beach was contributing to the conservation of the species and the environment. Well that's it for me tonight guys. If I don't run soon I'll miss dinner, goodnight.

Mark read

'O Nakoa kēia. Fun day – ka wa le'ale'a. Today was the best day because Waimanalo Beach is the best. No more tourists and coconut oil in the water. The kids wanted to fish, and I could see the ulua coming near the shore. I bet it was Janie folks out on the reef scaring the fish. Good for me. Too far for the net, but we scored one by sand casting. The kids made all kind squeals when I cut the head and tail. Old kanakas supposed to eat the guts and all. I should gross Janie out with the head and tail, but who knows. The haoles eat fish eggs and baked fish bones. This is gross. Malie went down to talk to Janie folks. She needed the time away from the kids. The kids and I went boogie boarding. Super fun when the beach is not too crowded. My opu was growling, as I

could taste the papaa ulua. I should show the kids how to get paakai from the rocks, but the homeless folks meme all over the place. The thought of being homeless again scares me. I hope living at Aina Loa will last forever. But the rules say that Aina Loa is not permanent. More dumbness, as the kanakas been living in Hawaii nei a thousand years before the haoles when even find the mainland.

Lapu says Thursday

Mokihana read:

Pō‘ahā

Kapu ka Hāloa, Kū maka pe‘a, kanu iā Hāloa, ulu hāhā loa, ‘o ka lau o Hāloa i ke ao lā. Puka!.

Papa mated with Wākea, Hāloa was born. Sacred is the long breath, upright is the stock, Hāloa is planted, the stalk grows and flourishes, and the leaves of Hāloa as well, in the light of day, it emerges.

I hurried down to the lo‘i that had already been prepped, weeded and cleaned. Although there was much going on in the community today, a lot of people joined our kanu day, even the malihini came. I first gave an introduction to mo‘olelo or the story of Papa and Wakea, and from their union came Hāloaanalaukapalili the first kalo plant. I explained to them that us kanaka believe that we stem from Hāloa, and that he is our elder sibling, and that the kalo has sustained our lāhui for many generations. They probably didn't fully get it, but I thought “ah mai hopohopo, listen to our stories, and what you take away from it will be up to you.” Just like my tutu man and makua taught me, I explained the reciprocation process we share with the land and Hāloa, and by taking care of this plant, in turn it takes care of us. The hā or stock is planted and

reused, indicative of generational sustainability. We started by making pu‘u or mounds in the mud, so we could plant our huli in the center of each bundle. Ho, but the malihini went in with their slippers and kept getting stuck in the mud. Auwē, poor thing her, good thing my keiki were there to help pull her out. While we were in the lo‘i, some of the community members had already prepped mea‘ai, so after we pau we got to sit and enjoy lunch.

Celeste read:

Hey guys, thanks for tuning in. Breakfast was another brilliant, sunrise, pancake affair. I didn't have a designated team to shadow today so I found myself drawn to the community center where a few crafty artisans were already starting to set up their tables for the open market on Saturday. There was a ton of cool stuff . Some of my favorite finds were mini water color landscape snapshots, carved drift wood hair sticks, marine life mosaic tiles and this awesome exfoliating soap they make here using the leftover coffee grinds from the kitchen. One corner of the center was dedicated to an art display that the shoreline team put together using some of the trash they've collected this year. A life size translucent man, made from collected soda bottles, stood in the middle of a swirling wave of suspended fishing nets. It was beautiful and frightening, and a little sign said that it was already sold.

On my way out I found a table of women sorting through piles of tumbled sea glass. When they saw gawking at all the glass they had they invited me to sit and help them. When I asked what they did with all the glass they took turns showing off the crafts they enjoyed creating and selling. One woman buffed the more colorful pieces and created jewelry, another woman made a type of stained glass. I ended up buying this really intricate necklace that reminded me of the one my mom lost on their honeymoon. I'll give it to her when I give my dad the hook I carved the

other day, I just know they'll love it. Well, that's it for me tonight you guys, I have to get some extra rest for tomorrow. Bye.

Mark read:

‘O Nakoa kēia. Lucky thing we get Nālau to plan everything. She is one natural luna. Malie takes notes for me, as I am eyeballing the DLNR folks who are managing the land. Janie is talking to everybody. She is always talking, recording, and writing. May be one of my kids should be one journalist, but everything would be in Hawaiian. The journalist should start with Nappy as he got one long lease by occupying Makapu’u for a year. DLNR was nice and noted our farm’s production, but then they go into paperwork about the health permit for the cafe, the state of the septic system, and new construction permits. My family is living in the caretaker’s house as the homeless family program is stuck between IHS and DLNR. I played it cool, but the DLNR folks scare me. One man afraid of paperwork. Lucking thing Nālaukapalili does the farming paperwork and all kind paperwork. Nālaukapalili should be the alii. DLNR act like they are the alii who owned the land. This is the aina of the makaainana. Ali’i ai moku was the old saying. The king that eats the land. Good thing DLNR folks leave early to go grind at Zippy’s. Us guys like snacking on uala chips and drinking mamake tea. Hu ka ono!

Lapu says Friday

Pō‘alima

Mokihana read:

E ala e! Time to get up early in the morning! Friday is harvest day. Hoooo nui ka hana, much work to be done to prep for tomorrow's market. My kane already had the coffee grounds brewed when I got up. That reminds me, I have to dry, roast and ground more coffee beans from our yard. Yes it's a lot of work but so worth it when you can sit with a nice cup of coffee to get your day started. Akua knows I cannot get my day started without coffee! Especially to keep up with these two keiki we headed down to the lo'i to start our harvest. The community came out in numbers today and even the visitors. Only a select few of us are actually in the lo'i, in the patch we when huki, there are two different varieties. The manaulu which is my favorite for making poi and moi which is a good table poi. Once we pull the varieties we make sure that we keep them separate and I use this as a good opportunity to again teach the visitors about the importance of the varieties of kalo as well. A Lot of them had no idea that there were so many different varieties and each one was favored for a particular reason. There was a good amount of kalo this harvest, so I made sure the ohana that came to kōkua got to take home for dinner tonight. Pō malie.

Celeste read:

Hey guys, seeing all the crafters get ready for the craft fair was so much fun yesterday. Today though, today we did some work haha. It started off really early, right after breakfast we headed over to the farming patches with the agriculture team. One of the things I didn't expect to see out there was a mini lab tent. It was really cool. The researchers inside were taking samples from plants they had been treating with their newly formulated organic pest control. Their goal is to step away from the types of pesticides that harm all wildlife and contaminate water supplies.

I found out pretty quickly that I wasn't fast enough to keep up with the harvesting team that day but it was nice to see where all the ingredients from my meals had been coming from. After I lost one of my boots in the mud I was relocated to help another group prepare a new bed for the next planting day. Even though we could have used machines to help there, I'll admit that there was something rewarding in getting your hands dirty. At home I can barely keep my succulents alive, but here, seeing all the greenery and the lushness, swaying in the breeze just made me feel, more alive.

After lunch I volunteered to help wash the extra vegetables and pack them for the open market tomorrow. Sitting down felt really nice. While I was there I got to watch while the kitchen team prepared a pig they had caught that morning. They said it was going to cook all night in an underground oven and tomorrow they'd make lunch plates to sell at the open market. Even though I'm starting to feel it in my lower back today was a lot of fun. I'm going to turn in early again so I can help with the open market setup in the morning. Good night guys.

Mark read:

'O Nakoa kēia. Harvest day is the proudest day for 'Āina Loa. Kalo is 3 bucks a pound, and people pay for the leaves too. Musta have worked for 12 hours. I grabbed some spare uala and tossed it in the microwave. Hu ka ono. The old Hawaiians had to wait for the imu. I just wait for the bell. I am beginning to hate the muddy kalo. We sell most of it, and we buy our poi from Shima's. Nobody has time to cook kalo and pound poi. I wonder how they did it in old Hawaii. Musta been one big family to start the imu, cook the kalo, and pound poi. More worse, the kane had to cook for the wahine and ohana. That's one dumb kapu. My kids learned about the kapu at

Waimanalo Elementary. They said that one kahu and one alii made this up. I need kane liberation- not. I feel important doing the cooking. Not like before when I was begging for food. One mama-san gave my family one bag of McDonald's burgers. Hilahila au. Now I am crying while remembering. Lucky thing everybody is asleep.

Lapu says Saturday

Mokihana read:

Pō'aono

Today was market day, I got the kids up early and we loaded the truck with our manaulu and moi harvest. The market was already packed with the vendors who were setting up, so we joined the them and laid our varieties of kalo out on the table. I'm hoping today is a good market day and we sell out. If this happens then we can contribute some of the money to our homeless fund which supports our houseless community members. The rest of the moneys will go back in to our overhead which will help sustain the farm. Any extra food will be shared with the ohana of the valley. Alot of the community came out to support and was happy with the turn out. Lots of visitors too.. I even saw Nakoā, he was listening in on a conversation i was having with a visitor about throw nets and the traditional style of how our kupuna would fish. Haha I bet he was wondering what a farmer knows about fishing but he forgets that my kane comes from 5 generations of lawai'a so I learned some fishing skills that would surprise him. To me, fishing and farming are all a part of the bigger picture. Keep our community sustainable, malama your ohana and feed the lāhui. Luckily, we did sell out and the monies were put to good use. I even had some time to pick up a few things from other vendors for our mea 'ai. It feels good to see and know that I am doing my part to help our community thrive, it makes all the work worth

Celeste read:

Hey guys, thanks for tuning in. The farmers market today was really amazing. The energy from the crowd that showed up was contagious. So many things to try, so much music and conversation in the air left such a good feeling even after it was over. Everyone was talking about the next time, the next open market, the next recipe to try, the next harvest, the next song to play and the next craft to design. I think that's a part of the battery that energizes the people here. You know, I've only spent a few days here in Aina Loa but I've learned so much. When I was first invited to visit this community I didn't know what to expect. As a travel writer I jumped at the opportunity to try something new, I never expected not wanting to leave. I think they'll let me come back to visit. I want to learn how to cast nets and be there when the next harvest is ready. I want to help them develop their eco-tourism plan and if they're willing, also help them to develop an online presence. The issues this community is actively working on, land ownership, homelessness, preservation of culture and responsible tourism are issues that exist all over the world. If other people can see what's being done here it may help solve problems in their own community.

Well guys I have a lot to do before I leave tomorrow. I hope you've enjoyed the highlights of my stay here in Aina Loa. I'll see you guys next time. Bye.

Mark read:

‘O Nakoa kēia. Farmer's market and trading day is better for the wife. I don't like crowds and sell stuff for too emi. Wife does the selling and buying. I worked on the nets. The coral eats the aha and makes puka nui. I heard Nālau explaining that the Hawaiians did not have throw nets in

the olden days. Must have been tough catching fish with one basket or hook. They musta had nets. What would a farmer know about fishing? Plus, today I have to dig the rocks out of the loi while they play at the market. They don't help me fish. Good. They would jinx me bad. I better start teaching my son about fishing, else he will be a farmer.

Lapu says Sunday

Mokihana read:

Lāpule

Mahalo e nā Akua, e nā 'aumakua e nā kia'i a me nā kupuna. I humbly thank the gods, deified family ancestors , guardians and past ancestors

Mahalo for a great week and your 'ike knowledge. I am humbled and happy that I not only get to perpetuate our culture, but also take on the kuleana or responsibility of helping sustain, and educate our community. The work that is put into our farm is no easy task, however it allows us to thrive and prosper. I cannot explain how important our culture is and our connection to 'āina and kai is and how vital it is to cultivate and learn from these ecosystems and our culture. One needs to experience it to truly know, delve and grasp the importance. Without it, not only do we wither away, and the resources wither away, but also our identity as kānaka goes with it. It is my hopes that more people can learn from our cultural practices, to rethink and reshape our futures. Although this work may not be for everyone, for me it truly allows me to learn from my past, and be innovative for our future generations.

Celeste Read:

Hey guys, thanks for tuning in. So today was my last day in Aina Loa. I was prepared for a sad morning as I said goodbye to my final ocean sunrise and blueberry short stack. I was really surprised when a group of young people approached me to ask about creating a website. One of the main concerns about creating an online presence was the amount of work it takes to record and edit content regularly. With this community already being so busy I'm glad to see that the older kids, the young adults here are going to take on this project for themselves. There are so many different things they can talk about and share with a new audience. As we brainstormed about plant videos that would lead into cooking videos and capturing story telling by the fire and music lessons and history they got really excited. It made me really excited too. I think they have an opportunity to reach a lot of people through the internet. Viewers around the world can experience all the good that happening here. And with more awareness raised on the problems this community faces, there's a larger possibility to find solutions.

You know, instead of feeling sad I felt really good as I left. I can't wait to see what comes next. Well, I'll catch you guys next time. Bye.

Mark Read:

‘O Nakoa kēia. Pau pule with the family. Finally, my rest day, which is really a working rest day. Da wife did good at the market yesterday. She likes making money and showing her skills to our keiki. I have to help old man Okamura change his engine. I like working on cars. I should go to HCC to get certified. Nui ka hana, but we need the money. He pays kala and has plenty of musubi and sashimi to eat. Akā, uahi nui. I smell like smoke when I get home. I am happy that Leilani takes care of our keiki. I am glad we have a place to stay on ‘Āina Loa, but I worry about my family and all the guys on ‘Āina Loa. Week to week living is still way more better than day

to day living on the street. Nālau and Janie can live anywhere they want. For my family, ko kakau aina. I feel the lapu is watching over us here.

Closing with the lapu:

Pu sound. ‘O Maka kēia. I am glad that I am the guardian of ‘Āina Loa. I have gone from being lonely to watching over many people. Nālau keeps things going and growing. A genuine Hawaiian superman. Janie never tires. She tries everything and does everything without a complaint. I wish the local folks were more like that. Nakoa and his family are happy being in a home and not living on the beach. But they are worried about their brothers and sisters who still live there. Please tune in next week as their stories continue. Is Nalu ready for the big rain? Will Janie stay or get lured away to Maui? Will the rest of Nakoa’s extended family be welcomed?