

Maui banker makes Maui Food Bank a priority

By JOSEPH W. BEAN

Overheard at the old Kihei boat ramp: One fisherman complains that he's expected to bring food to work for Maui Food Bank. His friend thinks it's a good idea. He says, "That's church work. Churches have food for people who need it." He mentions Hale Kau-Kau at Saint Theresa's, the Salvation Army, Calvary Chapel and a food pantry at Christ the King. He's right. Those places help feed the hungry, but they and another 95-plus agencies in Maui County get some or all of their food from Maui Food Bank. That's why it's called a food bank, and not just a pantry.

Maui County does need and tremendously benefits from having the Maui Food Bank. Any time you can contribute to a food drive, do it.

"The food bank, last year, distributed 1.6 millions pounds of food to the people of Maui. We really need and appreciate the people and the many businesses and organizations that do fundraisers and donate," said Paul Felix. "We really appreciate the County and other funders for their support, helping the Food Bank be as efficient as possible, serving



the over-10,000 people a month it now assists."

If you're thinking this Paul Felix must be the executive director of Maui Food Bank because no one else would know things like that, you're not that far off. "I have been on the Food Bank board for six years," he said, "and currently hold the Past Board Chair position. My commitment to the Food Bank has been assisting the board in fiscal and financial guidance. Under Executive Director Richard Yust's leadership, and working with the other outstanding board members as a team, we have managed to secure a facility that is now paid for, and this fall a complete \$1.2 million renovation will also be completed — all paid for by grants and other resources."



Paul Felix of American Savings Bank, an affiliate member of the Realtors Association of Maui, left, and Maui Food Bank Executive Director Richard Yust are all smiles when there's food coming in.

If it seems like Felix talks in numbers, that is completely understandable. "I have been with American Savings Bank since 1995, and held branch manager positions at Sack N Save, Wailuku, Lahaina, and Kahului until about 5 years ago when I became a Business Relationship Manager. My position allows me to consult with businesses on various options and programs the bank has to offer. I assist in business loans, residential loans, cash management services, and checking services. I am currently a vice president in my position, and I have over 500

business customers assigned to me that I enjoy helping."

But he's not all numbers, of course. He came to Maui in 1983, and things worked out well for him here. "I have been married to my wife, Janeth, for 17 years. I have a 16 year old daughter, Kristine, who is the State of Hawaii high school pole-vault record holder, and a son, Kyle, 11, who also enjoys track, basketball, and soccer. So, needless to say I spend a lot of time with them."

Working men know how important it is to keep things on a good footing, financial-

ly. They do the best they can, but it doesn't always work out as well for everyone as it has for Felix. Family men know how important it is to put food on the table and keep a roof overhead. Again, Felix knows how fortunate his family is, and he is glad to have a chance to help Maui families who may be struggling for a while. "The Food Bank serves a basic need that no one in Maui should have to go without — food — so I support this organization. They have a large impact to Maui's health and well being." A person has to be

willing to help with that, no?

Felix encourages everyone to chip in for the Maui Food Bank. Donate food or start a food drive of your own. Volunteer because they always needs volunteers. Give money because it costs money to keep a building, staff and drivers; to have water and electricity and phones.

Do something, anything. This is not too much to ask, is it? Don't say you're too busy. Felix has found time to commit to the Food Bank for six years, and he has a demanding job at American Savings Bank, a wonderful family and a history of community service with MEO Business Development Corporation, Kahului Rotary, Maui Young Business Roundtable and the Iao Theater.

What does he do with his free time? "What free time?" he asked. "Just joking! I enjoy running, golfing, and spending time with my family."

Correction

Dave Richardson had the original idea of a free golf event to support Maui Food Bank. He worked in partnership with Tom Tezak to create the event. An incorrect name was reported in the Nov. 13 Kahiau column.