

Malasada sale raises \$5,000 for Maui Waena

By TOM BLACKBURN-RODRIGUEZ

It was no feat of alchemy that changed 600 pounds of flour, 135 dozen eggs and 250 pounds of sugar into 700 malasadas and then into a \$5,000 donation to support the Renaissance Incentive Program at Maui Waena Intermediate School. No magic, unless you count the work of Joe Novit, (R) (PB), Maui Style Realty, and his classmates in the Kamehameha High School class of 1964 (KS '64) who took up the challenge of finding a way to replace Maui Waena school funds that had dwindled in the face of cut-backs and budget shortfalls.

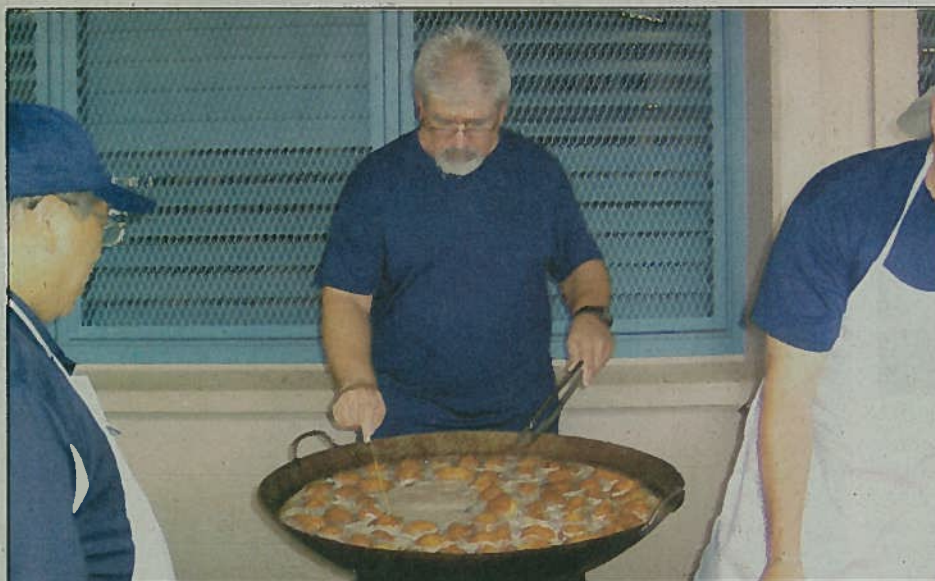
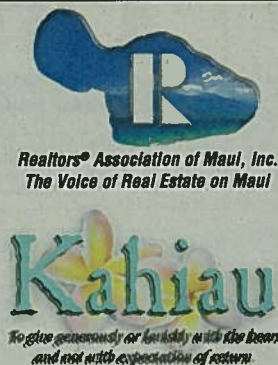
Novit, who is also the REALTOR'S® Association of Maui's "Maui Wishing Well...for Maui Students" coordinator for Maui Waena and Pomaikai schools, got involved in the Wishing Well program in 2007 because he believed in education for our keiki and wants to help them achieve all they can.

According to Novit, the Renaissance Incentive Program "recruits students who contract to do better in school, they meet with counterparts in other intermediate schools to have discussions and to develop plans for improving themselves and the learning experi-

ence. Weekly rewards are made to those who strive to succeed. The funds raised will help defray costs for transportation, incentives, etc."

Sarah Sorenson, GRI, Whale's Tail Realty, started the "Wishing Well for Maui Students" program in 2007. "I liked what she was doing," said Novit, and joined soon after. Since then, the RAM program has raised more than a million dollars in money, goods and services for Maui County schools and students.

At Maui Waena, the Wishing Well Program has provided books, school supplies, and a new refrigerator for the teacher's lounge, white boards, storage containers, donations to the lunch fund, and with the malasadas sale, \$5,000 to the students in the Renaissance Incentive Program.



Dennis Kim (left), Joe Novit (R) (PB) Maui Style Realty, and Charles Rapozo, all members of Kamehameha Class of 1964, helped with many other volunteers to raise \$5,000 to support the Renaissance Incentive Program at Maui Waena Intermediate School by making 7,000 malasadas as a fundraising project.

The May 8th malasada fundraising sale was part of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Maui Waena Intermediate. Playing a key role in making it all happen were members of the Kamehameha Class of 1964, who opened their hearts to the youth of Maui. Along with Novit, they worked for months to coordinate recipes, mixers, certified kitchens, printing tickets, selling tickets and gathering all the

ingredients.

"The key is always the people," said Novit, "the students of Maui Waena spent the month of April selling tickets. A 'Big Mahalo' for their effort; The Kupuna of KS '64 from Oahu and Maui worked hard to make it happen for the Maui Waena keiki. We're not as young as we used to be. But we still try to get the job done, and do," he added.

Sponsors included "The

Traditions @ Maui Lani", DR Horton "America's Builder", "VIP Food Service" and numerous private donors.

Novit believes that with budget cuts and the redirection of school funds, it's more important now than ever for private companies and individuals to help where they can. "I looked at our effort as an opportunity to show the administration of the school that fund raisers are a viable means of

supplementing the budgets," Novit said.

"I'm involved in the Wishing Well effort because both my schools, Maui Waena and Pomaikai, are in my neighborhood, and as a Realtor, I can reach out to the developers in the neighborhood for assistance. If I were not the coordinator for these schools, I would hope someone else would step up and do something positive for these keiki. If not the burden would go back to the school's budget for equipment, books, chairs, etc, or to the parents for all the student's school supplies," Novit said.

Novit is the 17th generation in his family to live on Maui. He returned from the mainland, to Honolulu in 1994, then to Maui in 1998. "The celebration was important to the students, a graduation for the outgoing class, a uniting of the student body and building of pride in their school. As I recall, those are the feelings I had half a century ago."

Novit can be reached at (808) 357-5432 for information on donations of time, money, goods and supplies. Donors may also give to the school of their choice through the Realtors Association Community Foundation, "Wishing Well...for Maui Students," it's good for the heart and it's tax deductible.