

# Dollars for scholars and wine for the donors

By **JOSEPH W. BEAN**

The condo owners' group at the Outrigger Aina Nalu is unlike many condo associations on Maui. While other owners' associations are debating the virtues of repainting parking stalls or whether to give themselves the right to fly a flag on a holiday, these Lahaina folks are determined to make a difference in their community, now and for many, many years to come.

How's that? Well, these days, we hear a lot about STEM education, with the letters standing for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The Aina Nalu Charitable Fund is taking on the foundational element there, the math, by hosting a fundraiser called "Dollars for Scholars" Wine Tasting & Silent Auction for the benefit of the Lahaina Complex After School Enrichment Tutor Project.

The invitation to the event sent out by the Aina Nalu owners says they are "inviting and urging you to take advantage of an opportunity to help sustain financially a tutoring project that dramatically and effectively makes a big difference in the lives of hundreds



of students in West Maui each year." That's right, they are addressing you. You don't have to be an owner in the complex to participate.

What will you be signing up for if you buy a ticket to the event? Well, you'll get to spend the evening, from 6 to 9 p.m., at the Aina Nalu pavilion in Lahaina Town on Friday, May 27. (If you don't know where Aina Nalu is, just recall the "homey" old Maui Islander Hotel on Waieae Street.) You'll be participating in an adults-only (21 and over) wine tasting, and you'll get to bid on items in a silent auction put together by a pretty remarkable collection

of Maui people. There will be live music and pupus, too. But none of that is "the thing itself."

What you really get is the opportunity to participate in providing an essential, almost surely life-changing educational opportunity for West-side kids. "This tutoring project is sorely needed and much appreciated," said Barbara Potts, "it makes a huge difference in so many lives."

That huge difference is provided by Tutor Project, which was launched in February 2002 as a pilot project in reading and social studies at Lahaina Intermediate School. With the effectiveness and success of that pilot effort, the Project expanded to four Lahaina Complex schools: Lahainaluna High School, Lahaina Intermediate, and both Princess Nahi'ena'ena and Kamehameha III elementary schools. The after-school tutoring takes place in classrooms with the cooperation of principals and teachers. The 130 tutors are trained volunteers and, in the tenth year of the program, they tutored 342 students, providing much more than academic assistance. "They help under-



Aina Nalu owners, left to right, Barbara Potts and Cheryl Henderson are seen here with Pat and Richard Endsley, founders, creators and leaders of the Lahaina Complex After School Enrichment Tutor Project.

achieving students to build self-confidence, self-esteem and leadership qualities by increasing literacy and comprehension," Potts said.

What the Tutor Project wants... no, what it needs... is something called the Swun Math "Beyond the Basics" teaching system. It works remarkably. See [www.swun-math.com](http://www.swun-math.com) for the statistics. Naturally, even with volunteer tutors, it takes money to buy

and implement something as big and important as this for kids who may be struggling in their studies. That's where adults like you and me come into it, of course, and why there is a need for this fundraiser.

Barbara Potts, Realtor® and Broker with Aloha Realty Group, is an Aina Nalu owner and a member of the crew producing the "Dollars for Scholars" Wine Tasting &

Silent Auction. In fact, if you want to participate, Potts will help you no matter how you choose to do it. If you're not free on the evening of May 27, Potts will help you choose another way to support the cause. Call her at 344-5008. If you do that right away, you could still donate something to the silent auction, but that means doing it now. The deadline is actually May 15 (but there could be a little wiggle room). Tickets to the event purchased in advance, despite the cause and the great need, are just \$45. If any space remains, tickets will be sold at the door for \$50.

"Our goal," Potts said, "is to raise \$10,000 for the program to help defray the program's costs. Bus transportation, duplication of materials, supplies and snacks are some of the mounting costs each year. Then, of course, there's also the Swun Math system."

If you're too busy to get out, lend a hand by making a check payable to People for Educational Equality, and mail it to Barbara Potts, Aloha Realty Group, 180 Dickenson St. #217 Lahaina, HI 96761.