

October 29, 2015

Honorable Blaine J Kobayashi
Second Circuit Court
State of Hawaii

RE: Character Reference for Darlene Brothers

My name is Tom Atkins and have been a resident homeowner, and am honored to have been a participant in the volunteer worker program, as a member of of the Kuau Bayview at Paia Subdivision of almost 4 years. At the bottom of this letter, I have include a brief biography as posted on the Kuau Baview Association web site, describing my background and my duties pertaining to my volunteer work in helping to manage the landscaping, irrigation, and storm drainage needs of the Association. For almost four years I have had the honor and privilege of working on our Association projects with Darlene Brothers. The most recent project involved the complete restructuring of the Association's common element irrigation water supply manifold system infrastructure. Other projects have ranged from a botanical classification of the native plant species, along with the invasive species of plants, located in the 71,122 square foot storm water Retention Basin. As an amateur botanist, I found her decades of experience in growing, tending and maintaining her flower gardens, bananas, passion fruit, and papaya trees, and the associated knowledge of the local plant species to be most helpful in establishing the catalog of plants, located in the 1.7 acre "infiltration basin" owned by the Association. The identification and management of the 55 native and non-native plants is fundamental to the 'best practices' maintenance of such a 16 acre-foot storm water infiltration basin. Darlene's understanding of the characteristics of such plants has helped me in my duties to cull out certain deleterious plants, control the growth of less harmful plants, and to encourage the growth of the plants which aid in the dissipation of the storm water.

I consider Darlene to be a 'master gardener', who shows not only an academic knowledge of such 'flora', but exhibits a tenderness and affection for the plants in the garden. Other members of the Kuau Bayview HOA have shown their appreciation of her work as I noted in this statement contained in the Landscape Report, taken from the minutes of the 2013 HOA Annual Meeting:

" The two volunteers, Darlene Brothers and myself, attended a two day training course in the construction and maintenance of "rain gardens," which included comprehensive course work along with application of the principles in a full day of guided instruction, during which the volunteers built a large rain garden from scratch using shovels, pick axes, spades, and wheelbarrows, under the watchful eye of specialists who, in their desire to teach the course, had come from many places on the globe. This lovely garden can be seen at Wahikuli Wayside Park in Lahaina. When you go there, you will observe many of the same features that have been incorporated into the landscaping garden

projects at the entrance to the Kuau Bayview subdivision. Note that both the Wayside Park project and the Kuau Bayview projects have built into them the two characteristics known as "form and function"... the twin goals of achieving beauty and practicality in unison. We hope that our homeowners will appreciate and enjoy the aesthetics of the gardens, and also recognize the practicality in the contours, rocks, and plant life which have been designed to absorb excess storm water by slowing the flow and giving the water places to settle and rest where it can drop its burden of silt on its inevitable course to the sea.

I will allow the before and after pictures to speak for the degree of success of the projects. The volunteers were constantly invigorated in their efforts by the overwhelming show of support from not just passer-by homeowners, but from our neighbors across Hana Hwy, and the joggers, moms & dads with baby carriages, and park users, to name just a few.

I think that all of the observers were impressed by the devotion and enthusiasm of one volunteer in particular, our very own Darlene Brothers, an individual who chose to live in Paia next to the sugar cane fields, tending her gardens well before any of our houses were built. As the song says, "She was country, before country was cool," enjoying the lifestyle of old Paia. I believe that Darlene has always deeply felt herself to be part of this particular and special North Shore piece of land, drawing from it and returning to it an energy of the spirit not often witnessed. In her passion to achieve harmony and order in the arrangement of the earth, the rocks, and the plants, she would often stand back in silence, metaphorically allowing the earth to speak to her. Most observers have expressed the opinion that the communication was successful. I would hope that the example she has set in this stewardship of the land and spirit of donation would be emulated by others... especially the younger generation. There would be no need to explain to ancient Hawaiians the reason for the passion she has shown, and continues to display, in caring for the land...they would understand. She asks only that she be allowed to continue caring for the gardens, and that poisons not be used. She does not ask for praise, but certainly deserves a great deal of it, considering the example she has set. So, I speak for a lot of people in saying, "Thankyou, Darlene."

Other characteristics that I have observed in my three and a half year association with Darlene Brothers is her honesty, frankness and ability to focus on a variety of subjects, where problems need to be solved. A cursory look at the Kuau Bayview at Paia web site will speak volumes as evidence of her talents in presenting information to our homeowners and potential buyers in a concise, accurate and beautifully illustrated manner. I would challenge anyone to find a comparable homeowners association web site.

Darlene has demonstrated extreme competence in the area of financial management and related fraud investigation, as evidenced by the return of over \$14,000. in

association insurance overpayments, spanning a number of years.

Darlene has shown a high degree of common sense in voluntarily resolving issues of young people trespassing into the grounds of the Retention Basin, by carefully confronting the parents of the youngsters, and settling such matters in an effective, yet kind manner. She has a great understanding of, and respect for the local customs of Maui, and incorporates this cultural sensitivity in her problem-solving efforts. I have noted many examples of the love and respect that workers of the land have on numerous occasions show Darlene. It is touching to watch her interaction with the cane field workers, the county and state utility workers, and other's who tend to the needs of the infrastructure of Maui.

This woman of small physical stature but large moral character and abilities, has earned my greatest respect.

Sincerely,



Tom Atkins, DDS, MPH, CDR (Ret)USPHS
Resident homeowner at Kuau Bayview subdivision

TOM ATKINS - RETENTION BASIN COMMITTEE

Tom Atkins moved from South Padre Island, TX, to KB in March 2012. He holds a Master's degree in Community Medicine from the University of Washington. He is a retired Dentist who served as a commissioned officer with the US Public Health Service for many years working primarily with Native American Indians. He is an avid researcher, an amateur botanist, and brings many other science-based skills to the table. In Texas, he was an active participant in many aspects of condominium life for 9 years, attending all annual meetings and filling in for the Property Manager on many occasions. As Chairman of the Repair Committee, he wrote a number of manuals describing technical procedures to be followed in managing the equipment in the mechanical room, the elevator, the stairwell emergency lighting system, and the spa and swimming pool area.

Tom has saved the HOA thousands of dollars as a volunteer, redesigning the irrigation system, and clearing & hauling green waste to the dump. The excellent Retention Basin Maintenance Plan is the result of months of Tom's explorations and research in the basin and surrounding areas. He has taken steps to ensure that all aspects of storm water drainage in KB are maintained properly, including building revetments inside the new rock wall.