

SPAM Jam closes Kalākaua Avenue

Annual event attracts more than 25,000 attendees and over a dozen chefs

# OAHU • InsideOut

MARCH/APRIL 2015

## Song & Dance

Hula hālau prepare for the  
52nd annual Merrie  
Monarch Festival

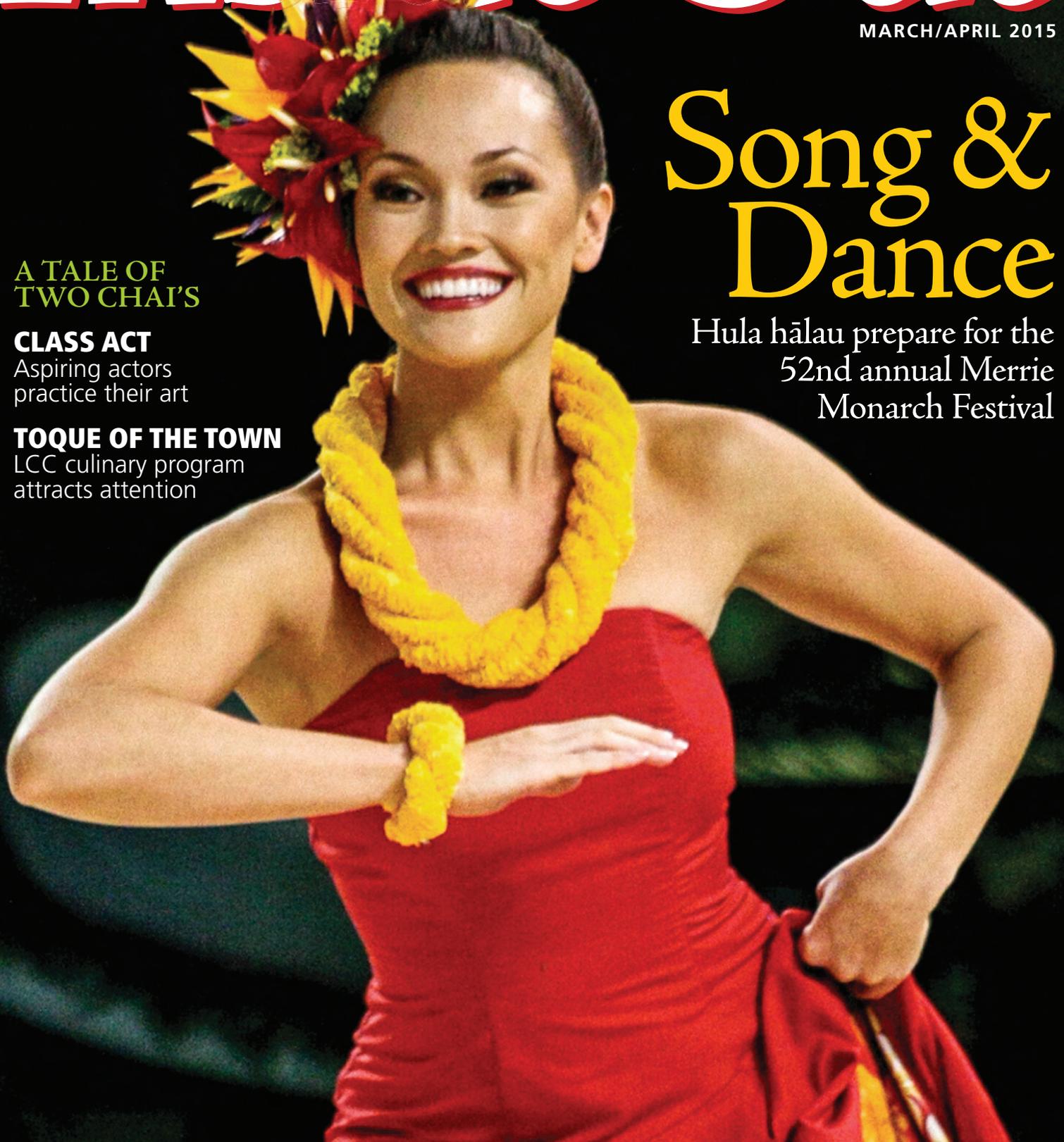
A TALE OF  
TWO CHAI'S

### CLASS ACT

Aspiring actors  
practice their art

### TOQUE OF THE TOWN

LCC culinary program  
attracts attention





## Batter Up!

Two longtime friends step up to the plate to keep Kapolei's Batter's Box Hawaii open to the public.  
By Kristen Nemoto

**HAWAIIAN AIRLINES'** flight attendants Ryan Goshima and Keoni Ruth didn't think they'd ever turn their love of baseball into a business. But when they were approached to take over Kapolei's Batter's Box Hawaii, everything fell perfectly into place.

"We're really lucky," beams Goshima. "We're both definitely baseball guys so it's a win-win for all of us."

Housed in a half circular steel-made Quonset hut, Batter's Box Hawaii is the only indoor mechanically operated batting cage on the island. From couples on first dates to the usual little leaguer, everyone is welcome to swing away at a fast or slow pitch.

"Ryan and I grew up together," says Ruth, a Kamehameha graduate and former minor league player for the San Diego Padres and the Philadelphia Phillies. "I played soccer with his brothers, then [in high school] played baseball against [Ryan]. We ended up both working at Hawaiian Airlines and at the same time we were looking for something to do on the side."

That "something to do," however, has kept Ruth and Goshima on their toes, hustling to open up the cages even after a full 8-hour workday at Hawaiian Airlines. Their investment, they say, is mainly for the community, and their longtime friend and former

co-owner Todd Koishigawa.

"He's the one who built it from the ground up," says Ruth, who was approached by Koishigawa at a baseball clinic to help teach baseball lessons at the former Waipio Batter's Box location. "We're lucky, as Ryan said, because Todd still helps out and comes around."

Born and raised in Kapaa, Kauai, Koishigawa shined both as a baseball player and coach at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, then went on to scout for the Kansas City Royals and now currently the Oakland A's.

Koishigawa humbly attributes the success of Batter's Box Hawaii to his — and Goshima's and Ruth's



**“I think Batter’s Box is just a great place for everybody to come, hang out and have a good time.”**

— knowledge and experience of baseball. He is also quick to point out the “coincidence” of baseball talents that have emerged from the west side throughout the years, including the 2005 Little League World Series champions from Ewa Beach (Koishigawa helped train) and the 2008 champions from Waipio.

“This leeward community has done well,” Koishigawa says proudly. “We’re just happy to be a part of it.”

Regardless if you have baseball experience or not, Koishigawa, Goshima and Ruth assert that it doesn’t matter. Like baseball, it’s all in the fun of the game.

“There’s no age-limit either,” Koishigawa says. “We’ve had young ones hitting off the tee for the first time to 95-year-olds getting in a workout. In general I think Batter’s Box is just a great place for everybody to come, hang out and have a good time.” [www.battersboxhawaii.com](http://www.battersboxhawaii.com)

© JAY PARCO

**There's life after lunch. Nico's at Night.**

**Nico's**  
PIER 38

**Restaurant & Fish Market**  
1129 N. Nimitz Hwy • Honolulu, HI 808-540-1377 [nicospier38.com](http://nicospier38.com) Like us on Facebook

**A TASTEFUL CLASSIC.**

**the veranda**  
BREAKFAST • LUNCH • AFTERNOON TEA

**beachhouse**  
at the moana  
STEAKS • SEA GRILL • SPIRITS

Unparalleled oceanfront dining, any time of day. Indulge in a Waikiki tradition at the veranda or savor the vibrant island-inspired steakhouse of beachhouse at the moana.

Moana Surfrider, A Westin Resort & Spa  
[beachhousewaikiki.com](http://beachhousewaikiki.com) • 808-921-4600