



Nathan Puaonaona Aiwohi

August 19, 1940 - November 30, 2021

A true giant to so many, Nathan Puaonaona Aiwohi went to his eternal rest on November 30th, 2021, after struggling with complications from Parkinson's disease and other medical issues.

Nathan is survived by his loving wife Laurie Stratford Aiwohi; his children: Darrelle (Mark) Aiwohi Glushenko, Paul Aiwohi, Elise Aiwohi, Chloe Aiwohi, and Adrial Aiwohi; four stepchildren through Laurie: Brad (Erin) Crittenden, Brandon Crittenden, Jeremy Crittenden, and Brooke Searle; his brothers: Ricky Aiwohi, Casey Aiwohi, and Jared Aiwohi; his sisters: Sandra Aiwohi Romias, Valerie Aiwohi Dukelow, and Puanani Aiwohi Lemick; his grandchildren: Tawni, Keala, Kekai, Mele, and Liko; his great grandchildren: Kūlani, Kauakoko, Kalehua, Kalea, and Ollie; and his stepgrandchildren: Lilia, Dakota, Samuel, and Kyson. He was a beloved son, brother, father, Papa, and friend. Two of his brothers, Daryl Aiwohi and Gary Aiwohi, preceded him in death.

Nathan was the second of nine children born to Randolph and Lily (Mathias) Aiwohi in Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii. He was born with a ball in one hand and a whistle in the other. It didn't matter what sport, as Nathan excelled in all of them, and he carried on the love of teaching and coaching to everyone who'd take an interest in any given sport. His daughter Darrelle says she has often been stopped by people that her father had one time coached and told that he

made a lasting impact on their lives. Nathan did everything from racing canoes, track and field, football, golfing, volleyball, softball, weightlifting, basketball, tennis, and pickleball. He held the senior records for high jump in both the Aloha Senior State Games and the Huntsman Senior Games. He remembered playing softball once and being booed by all the women for catching a fly ball hit by Tom Selleck, forcing him out! It was one of his proudest sports moments (even though the women didn't think so).

During one softball tournament, a scout for a highly sought-after team saw Nathan playing and dropped his card in his hand asking him if he'd be interested in playing for their team. Nathan was always being asked to join teams and took little note of it at that moment. Upon putting the card in his pocket, one of his teammates inquired what the man was asking him. Nate responded, "Oh, some guy just wants me to play on his team: Tharaldson's!" His buddy excitedly explained just who the team owner was, and Nathan immediately got in contact with him (Tharaldson's was a semiprofessional senior softball team that toured and played in tournaments all over the country). The owner, hotel construction magnet Gary Tharaldson, flew the team in his private jet and put the players up in his hotels with all expenses paid. Nathan spent many years touring and playing with the team.

While playing sports took up a lot of his time, during the 80s while singing karaoke with a bunch of his friends they discovered they sounded incredible together and so they formed a group called A Touch of Gold which in part continues to perform all over the islands to this day. Nathan's kids and grandkids remember being dragged to many of their practices and laughing along as this group of men attempted to practice their dance moves. The group performed many opening acts to big named singers, did television specials, and sang at special events.

Although much of Nathan's life revolved around sports, he was also an

extremely hard worker. Nathan spent the majority of his formative years on Oahu, and based on counsel from a close mentor, in 1962 he accepted a position with the Hawaiian Electric Company and continued to work there until his retirement in 1995. Nathan's genuine compassion for others was often demonstrated through his work responsibilities. For example, one of his duties was to read meters and shut-off power to those that couldn't pay their bills, but he chose instead time and again to give an extension to allow time for the customer to get caught up. Nathan also worked weekends at the beach for years on Waikiki, teaching surfing lessons and taking tourists out on canoe rides. His kids remember being bribed to rake the sand for a quarter, later to joke with him that it was breaking the child labor laws.

Nathan attributes his skills and work ethic to his beloved grandfather Mathias who taught him how to fix anything from welding to repairing. Whatever projects needed to be done, Nathan wouldn't hesitate to fix, build, or repair. His homes were always immaculately groomed, and he took pride in everything he did. On one of their first dates, Laurie remembered she was renting a house from a friend and while finishing getting ready she noticed Nathan out in the front yard picking weeds out of her friend's lawn. She quickly learned that this was not just an act to impress her but was instead a demonstration of his character. Nathan's dearest friend Charles Tawzer lives across the street from them, and he recalled to Laurie that just three weeks before Nathan passed, Charles noticed him outside struggling to trim up after the gardeners had left a few stray branches out of place. His nature even to the end was such that if he saw a need, he would find a solution and get to it.

During the 1960s, Nathan remembered coming to the mainland for the first time with his basketball team from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He remembered seeing the beautiful St. George Temple and it left a lasting impression on him. Later he was able to work three different shifts in

the St. George Temple and at one point he and his wife Laurie were coordinators over the baptistery.

Unbeknownst to either of them at the time, both Nathan and his future wife Laurie were likely within ear shot at least one week almost every year as she and her family vacationed in Hawaii at the Outrigger Hotel near where Nathan worked on the beach. At that time, she would have been busy building sandcastles, being a few years younger. It took many years, but their paths were definitely meant to cross. After retiring from Hawaiian Electric, Nathan moved to Washington State where he lived until the mid-90s. While playing softball on a team from Washington, they went to St. George for the Huntsman Senior Games and Nathan spent his free time exploring real estate and ended up buying himself a winter home. Later Laurie moved to the area. In 2009, Nathan met Laurie while playing pickleball at Worthen Park in St. George. They were married in 2010 and then sealed in 2012 in the St. George Temple for time and all eternity.

Nathan continued to enter many events in the Huntsman Senior Games for nearly 20 years. He organized a softball team of players to come from Hawaii for which they won many gold metals throughout his years of competing. He was often called upon to be a runner for players on his team, and even beyond the time when his Parkinson's stopped him from playing the game physically, he instead continued to coach the teams and helped them win many metals.

It was very hard for Nathan to give up his beloved game of softball, but he realized the time had come when he struggled more with his progressing Parkinson's. Fortunately, he was able to continue playing pickleball almost until the end. It became a challenge for him to run after the ball and move his feet, but as long as he was able to hit the ball, he never lost his ability to place the ball anywhere on the court that the opposing player wasn't.

Nathan was instrumental in helping to organize and transform the old tennis courts at Worthen Park into pickleball courts for the community. He served on many committees to help expand the love and growth of pickleball in the St. George area. A bench in his honor is found at Court 6 in Little Valley. He was also a natural-born leader and took on organizing many fundraisers and tournaments and was always the first to volunteer his time and talents wherever needed.

Nathan was loved not just by the community where he played and served, but especially by both his immediate and extended family. Nathan's children and grandchildren describe that one of their favorite times with Papa was playing games with him. He would purposely forget to mention all the rules of a game so he would be declared the winner. They have many fond memories of him spending quality time with them. He truly had the ability to make everyone that came in contact with him feel special and loved. Laurie's own children feel he was a wonderful father figure to each one of them and helped them feel loved, comfortable, and accepted by him.

Until the end, Nathan did his very best to be useful. The hardest part of his disease for him was to lose the ability to continue to take care of a need as he saw it. Regardless of this struggle, he continued to stay positive and was never known by even those closest to him to wallow in self-pity. He laughed and joked around and made everyone feel welcomed, special, and very, very loved. Nathan, described in one word, would have to be - service. He lived his life showing true Christlike love to all who crossed his path. He had a strong testimony of not only loving his Savior but living like Him, too. The Lord has welcomed him home. Until we meet again!

Tribute Wall

CG

“ Nate was a very special son in law. He always called my mom. He brought true happiness to my daughter Laurie. Many years of fun. Playing and winning pickleball together, traveling and spending a lot of time with family. Nate was a very wonderful loving and caring person. I loved him, he will be greatly missed. Aloha Nate, Love Mom

Colleen Gates - January 28, 2022 at 08:49 PM

ID

“ John and I were fortunate to be Nate's and Laurie's home ministers. Nate was always upbeat and cheerful, and I can't remember a time when he didn't share something with us. It was always, " try this " or " sample some of this". Nate taught me by his generosity and his positive example. He will be missed by John and myself.

Ingrid Dame - December 27, 2021 at 02:35 PM

JT

“ The first day we met, I realized that Nathan had a special gift to make people feel important, and worthy of his friendship. And that attitude had never diminished with the passing of time. I love you brother. Joel T.

Joel T. - December 09, 2021 at 06:58 AM

VM

“ "Gone and never to be forgotten, forever in my heart", RIP 💔 Verna M Makuakane

Verna Makuakane - December 08, 2021 at 03:12 PM



“ He was the only Father I knew, and he Helped me become the Man I am Today. Dad was very disciplined in everything he did and passed that down to my brothers and I. He was not only a Father to Us ,he was also our sport Trainer / Coach and help us soar in Competition. He raised us Hawaiian style and taught us to love the Hawaiian culture,
and Although He was just my Stepfather I We grew up the Aiwohi way and because that I was Granted to become an Aiwohi legally to carry on his Legacy . I miss you Dad and wish we had more time together later in life.
RIP
Adam (Steve) Aiwohi

Steven Aiwohi - December 08, 2021 at 02:34 PM

BD

“ I only knew Nathan for a short time, I'll never forget our visits. His faith and righteousness made me a better person. May he dwell in peace and glory forever.

Bryan DeMille - December 08, 2021 at 11:55 AM

TL

“ I loved Nathan, he and I loved playing pickleball together!! And when I started teaching and my classes would overflow, Nathan was always happy to step in and help me teach. He was such an inspiration to me!! Trish

Trish Loggry - December 07, 2021 at 09:45 PM

DS

“ 3 files added to the album Family photos



David Smith - December 07, 2021 at 09:28 PM

TL

Loved Nate like family!!! He took in our kids as grandkids when we moved to St. George. He served, loved and always played pickle ball like a champ! He loved his wife and God the most, what a great example he was to me! I'm so grateful I got to be part of his life❤️

Tracy Lindstrom - December 10, 2021 at 03:17 PM

DS

“ Nathan was also an avid tennis player, one of my first students I had the pleasure of teaching around 1999 at Green Valley. He was an insatiable learner and wanted to play tennis to the very best of his ability. I loved having Nate in my clinics and he took part in a large number of my programs over the years. He was a wonderful supporter of all the programs I ran and always had wonderful things to say about everyone that took part. I often think back to those days over 20 years ago and cherish the opportunity I had to be part of his amazing life. Thank you, Laurie, and thank you to his extended family for sharing this wonderful man with our community. I know his influence will have a lasting impression on this city of tennis, softball, and pickleball players. May he rest in active peace and may his family and friends remember with gratitude his presence in our lives.

David W. Smith

David Smith - December 07, 2021 at 09:20 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Video



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - December 07, 2021 at 06:35 PM



“ 26 files added to the album Family photos



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - December 07, 2021 at 06:35 PM