

THE FAMILY HERALD

Big Island Adventure by Luke Yamamura

In January, my Dad and I went on a trip to the Big Island to spend time hanging out as father and son. The first place we visited was Mauna Kea, and it was a long drive up to the visitor center. At 9,200 feet above sea level, we were standing above the clouds and at that high elevation the temperature was so cold I could see my breath. The view was beautiful as we watched the sunset. The next day we visited Hawaii's active volcano, Kilauea. We had a private tour with geologist, Dr. Donald Swanson at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory. I asked Dr. Swanson what causes volcanoes to explode. He said when the



lava level drops and gets close to the water table, about 2,000 feet below ground, the rock for-

mations which are soaked with water will quickly boil, creating pressure and eventually cause an explosion. I learned a lot and appreciated Dr. Swanson sharing his experiences with volcanoes. Sadly, Kilauea exploded on May 17, 2018 early in the morning spewing out ash 30,000 ft. high in the air. Lava poured out into the bay and nearby communities. More than 700 homes were destroyed, and we prayed that God would help these families that had to evacuate. After months of eruptions, the lava flow has lessened, but geologists continue to monitor Kilauea for any future eruptions. I'm thankful for the memories I had with my dad and will continue to pray for the people on the Big Island.



Niños and Jalapeños by Tiffany Yamamura

This October, I had the privilege of going on my second missions trip to Mexicali, Mexico. Last year's trip was an amazing experience and I thought nothing could top it, until I went



back this year. We formed more unforgettable memories and friendships with new Mexi-team members. It was so nice reuniting with our Mexicali family at the base. God worked in ways I could have never imagined and displayed His miraculous power daily. We didn't have running water the entire week, but it was a blessing

in disguise because it gave me a great appreciation for things I take for granted like warm showers. Although I went there to impact the people in Mexico, I left being impacted by them even more. While working with disadvantaged children and orphans, I witnessed the unconditional love of God. I spent time with kids who had nothing yet were the most joyful people I have ever met. They didn't know me, but they embraced me as soon as I said, "Hola." Even though we spoke different languages, we connected through the universal language of love. I had the honor of meeting a sweet, five-year old girl named Reyna at our Vacation Bible School. Because of her overflowing energy, it was hard to keep up with her, but she filled me with immense joy and now holds a special place in

my heart. I was blessed not only by new formed relationships with these precious children, but also by the opportunity to witness seventeen of them receive salvation. It was a joyous sight to see them walk to the altar and pray because I knew I was gaining seventeen new siblings in Christ. We also worked with kids from the orphanage, I was overwhelmed by the amount of compassion they had for one another. These children did not receive love from their families, yet their capacity for love was like none other. My eyes watered as I witnessed a girl named Vanessa care for another girl who had cerebral palsy. She could've played with the other kids, but she didn't want the other girl to be alone. That was a true image of Christ's love. It was bitter sweet to leave Mexicali, but the people I met will continue to be in my heart. God is definitely moving in Mexicali, and I'm excited to see how He continues to bring the lost into His kingdom.



2018 Highlights

Gracie is in the 3rd grade and learned to crochet. She likes reading about history and says "I love school!"

Josh is a 7th grader and enjoys running, playing basketball, and cooking Mexican food.

Luke, our 9th grader loves everything basketball! He's very disciplined with his health/fitness regimen.

Tiffany is enjoying her senior year and is seeking the Lord's guidance as she decides which college to attend.

Coco has been slowing down a little but still enjoys playing with the kids in the yard.

You Like Buy Lychee? by Joshua Yamamura

I was excited that our whole family was going on another missions trip to Mexicali, Mexico in October. This time, my Dad said I had to figure out a way to raise most of the money to pay for the trip. One morning, I was thinking of ways I could earn money, then it hit me — we have a lychee tree! I can sell lychee. I immediately did research on how much to sell it for and how to pick it so the lychee would not get old. After a few days of planning, I finally put it into action. Both Grandpa and Grandma Y. were by my side helping me as I picked as much lychee as I could from our tree and their tree. It took



many hours to pick and pack the lychee, but I finished it in time for the Momilani Rec center Farmer's Market. We set up our booth and hung up our sign, and guess what? We sold out in 5 minutes! Because it was so awesome, we planned to

pick more lychee and go back the next week. Again, we sold out and it was amazing that God provided



all I needed to go on the mission. Praise God!! Because I raised the money I could get ready for the missions trip. A few of the best memories from the trip was feeding the homeless and praying with them. I also got to support the base we stayed at by helping to build a new fence. Our Mexi-team put on a Vacation Bible school for orphan children in the area. I had fun playing games with the kids and helping them make gospel bracelets. I'm so glad I got to go and thank goodness for the lychee tree.

The Great and Fun Aloha Run by Johanna Grace



I always wanted to be a runner because my dad, brothers and sister impressed me so much! "I can run the Marathon too, Daddy!" but Dad said "Sorry Johanna, you're too young to do the marathon." I told him, "Daddy no one's ever too young to do anything! I really want to run." So, he signed me up for the Great Aloha Run and I was so excited! He even signed mommy up too, so it was like a Family Aloha Run.

We had a special training plan — every other day we had to train at the Aiea track. I was trying so hard to keep up the pace with everyone else but they were too fast. It's a good thing mommy was there because sometimes when I couldn't run anymore I would stay back with mom (she kind of runs like a turtle).

Then it was the Big day! We woke up so early that it was still dark outside. I was kind of scared because there were so many people there. I was thinking in my mind "What if people run over me?" But it was ok because my mom, Aunty Anne and Aunty Divina were with me. One hour later, my feet were so sore that I said to my mom, "I'm gonna die!" But luckily Aunty Divina was there to help hold me up. It's a

good thing she's a nurse because boy did I feel like I wasn't going to make it! I quietly asked Aunty Divina if she could carry me but sadly my mom could hear me. People were cheering us on so I kept going! They even passed out Gatorade to us and Aunty Anne had a lot of snacks! I thought I could never make it. But then I heard something...it was music! Aunty Divina was playing "Eye



Make 'em Laugh

by Gracie
(Josh is taking a break since he's tired from the marathon)

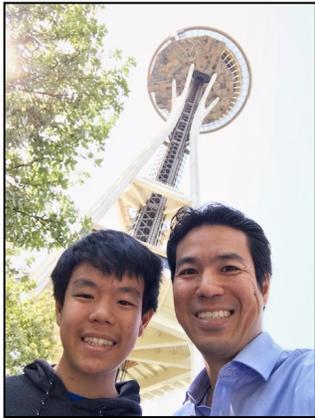


What happened in the marathon race between the lettuce and the tomato?
(answer on p.3)

of the Tiger" and it made me want to dance and go faster. My mom and aunties kept cheering me on to finish the run. Then we saw the Aloha Stadium in the distance and I knew we were almost there. Just a few more steps then I was done! When we got to the finish line I felt so good and had to just yell "YAY!!" Daddy was waiting for me and piggy backed me to the snack station. I learned that running the Aloha run wasn't easy but I'm so glad that I could do it with my family and friends! Like my daddy says, when you do something you have to be committed to it because you can't finish it if you don't do it with your whole heart and mind. Now, I'm ready for the Marathon!

Seattle Sights by Luke Yamamura

In May, my dad took me on a trip to Seattle, Washington. The first thing we did was go to Amazon's headquarters. After looking around the large campus, we visited their grocery store called Amazon Go. We had to download the Amazon app which allowed us to enter and purchase anything without going through a check-out line. The technology was cool! It was interesting to learn about the history of how Amazon started from an online book store to an online mega-store. Our next stop was Seattle's famous Space Needle. It opened in April of 1962 on the first day of the World's Fair. It represents a belief in commerce, technology and progress. My Dad and I rode the elevator up 500 feet to the top where we could see the whole city. It was under renovation, but we still got to walk around the glass walls. When they finish everything, it will be the first and only rotating glass floor structure in the world. My dad's favorite part of the trip was get-



ting to go to the very first Starbucks store down at Pike Place Market. There was a long line, but we were able to get through it to order our hot coffee and caramel Frap. The next place we went to was the MoPOP (Museum of Pop Culture). We visited several areas in the museum. The first was the Universal movie exhibits where I got to see original props from one of my favorite movies - Indiana Jones. They had his jacket, fedora, and a cool medallion staff. The other exciting part of the museum was the Marvel exhibit. It explained the history of Marvel and how Stan Lee started writing Marvel comics for kids. It was exciting because they had the original Iron man suit and Black panther's costume.

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Seattle was one of the most interesting places I've ever been to. Although it was a little rainy, it was a great city to visit and I hope to go back one day with my younger brother Josh.

Hey guys! Did you get the joke? If you give up, turn the paper upside down to see the answer.
 Answer: The lettuce was a "head" and the Tomato was trying to "ketchup!" (HA HA HA good one right!)

A Year of Firsts by Tiffany Yamamura



All throughout high school, I dreamed of being a senior. I couldn't wait to graduate and enter a new season of life; however, I didn't anticipate the amazing journey along the way. My senior year has been the year of firsts as I have experienced my first time driving, first job, and first college classes. My Dad would only allow me to get my license if I ran the marathon, so after I completed it, I couldn't wait to

drive. I received my permit in March and attended drivers ed in July. After much convincing, my dad finally got in the car with me. We drove out of our driveway, and I could already sense him tensing up. While he was most likely screaming inside, he remained calm on the outside. Although there were a few bumps in the road, I can confidently drive now and hope to take the licensing test in January. I also experienced my first job this summer. I got hired at Jamba Juice, along with my two good friends Chloe and Ani. When I was little, working at Jamba Juice was my dream job because I thought

I could drink smoothies all day. Once I started working, I realized it's a lot harder than I expected. But, I am continuing to learn new skills and enjoy the times I can work with friends. This year, I started to attend college for the first time and took classes such as Microbiology and Japanese. While I was anxious about the work load, I had peace that I could do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I have learned a lot from my professors as well as my classmates at Leeward



Community College. Through these first time experiences, I was pushed to stepped out of my comfort zone and trust in God even more. I still have no idea what His plans are for the future; however, I thank the Lord for providing me with golden opportunities and look forward to seeing where He will lead me next.

The Marathon of Life by Joshua Yamamura

In 2017 after my sister, brother, and dad finished the Honolulu marathon, I told my dad that I would not mind running the marathon in 2018. He said that he would sign me up and we would start training in August. I really didn't think much about it because it was so far away. But, before I knew it, the first day of training came and we ran three miles. Running three miles wasn't that bad but when we got to 20 miles, I thought to myself, *I should not have done this!* But I stuck it out and trained for four, long, exhausting months. Every week, I put on my running shoes and ran on the bike path near Pearl Harbor. When we ran, we would often see a homeless family living along the path.



We wanted to bless them and brought them a Thanksgiving meal. It felt good to help those in need. Fast forward to the night before the marathon, Dad and I went to the restaurant Bravos to carb up. The chicken alfredo with garlic rolls was so good that I almost forgot I had a race

the next day. After months of training, finally the day came and I was ready! As thirty thousand people lined up to run 26.2 miles the gun fired along with the fireworks and we were off. With the adrenaline in my body, I felt like sprinting, but I knew I had to conserve energy. At the beginning, the thoughts going through my mind were, *what a beautiful day in Hawaii.* But when we reached mile 20, I wanted to quit! However, I knew I had to keep going, so I distracted myself with thoughts of malasadas. Looking back, I know the main reason I was able to persevere was not because of food but because people were praying for me. Then I saw it - the finish line! I ran as fast as I could. As I crossed the line I knew all that training was totally worth it. That day I learned the value of disciplining my mind. There were many moments when I wanted to give up, but I chose to keep going. Now I know that whenever I face good or bad days I will keep on going as God helps me in the Marathon of Life.



A Mouse's Dance in the Nutcracker by Johanna Grace Yamamura



I've been dancing ballet since I was almost four years old. This year, since I'm eight, I auditioned for the Nutcracker. When I went to the studio I felt kind of nervous but I was really excited! I wasn't so scared when my mom came to support me and I knew she was smiling watching me. Everyday I waited for Josh to get the mail and I checked to see if the letter came. The day was finally here and the letter came in from Ballet Hawaii. The words I read said "Congratulations, Johanna you are a mouse!" I was so excited and couldn't wait to tell Daddy. So after that, every week we had rehearsals and we practiced our mouse dance really hard. It was so much fun to dance

like a mouse with my friends and the best part was that we got to dance with Clara. She was really nice and encouraged us to keep going.

Did you know that Hawaii's Nutcracker is unique because they have a Hawaiian theme in the show. The first part is the traditional Nutcracker dances and the second act has Hawaiian dances with geckos, honu (turtles) and I'iwi birds. I liked the costumes because they were very creative, especially the Chinese dancers and Hibiscus Flowers! It was so cool because we got to dance with professional dancers from New York City Ballet. You have to work really hard to have this show and it takes a lot of effort to make it go smoothly. There was even an orchestra that kind of hides by the bottom of the stage.

They had a big job because they play all the music and have to make sure the timing is perfect!

I was so happy that my Grandpa & Grandma, aunties, uncles, cousins and even my Aunty Deb from Japan came to watch the show. It helped me a lot that they were there because I knew they were cheering me on. I'm so glad that I had the chance to dance as little mouse in the Nutcracker.



On our family wall, we've been measuring and marking the kid's heights. They've been growing in leaps and bounds in so many ways. Luke is now a mighty Freshman in high school. Josh started shaving (although he doesn't have a mustache yet). Gracie wants to be a singing doctor, and Tiffany will be graduating in 246 days and 14 hours. Everyday is another adventure in their growth and we cherish every moment. We are thankful to God for the family and friends who have played a part in helping our kids develop into the young men and women they are becoming. Our continued prayer of blessing over them comes from Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."

We pray that you will also experience God's hope in His plan for you this coming new year. Have a blessed Christmas!

With love,

Owen, San, Tiffany (17), Luke (14), Joshua (11) and Johanna Grace (8)