

ON BOARD

CANVASBACK MISSIONS | FALL 2022



CANVASBACK
MISSIONS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a year 2022 has been. I'm guessing you'd expect a sailing analogy from an old sea captain like me to describe Canvasback's adventures for the year, wouldn't you? Well, I won't disappoint. It certainly has not all been smooth sailing. When we set sail in the beginning of the year, we were hit with powerful gales that forced us to seek anchorage for a while till the storms passed. When the skies cleared, we heaved anchor, trimmed the sails, and began mission work once again—taking greatly needed Super Teams to Micronesia, providing FREE surgeries, and many other needed procedures.

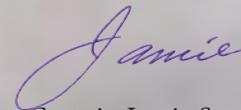
Rest assured that even though over our 40+ years of service, Canvasback has encountered some very rough seas that threatened to take us down, we have always known and understood that there is an unseen Captain who stands at the helm of this ship, continuing to protect and bless us regardless of the storms we encounter.

Because of your support, there are many exciting accomplishments in the pages of this OnBoard. You will read about the work of our Wellness Center operating from the atoll of Majuro. Their hard labor more than took up any

slack in the work while our Super Teams were in port.

Speaking of our Canvasback Super Teams, don't miss the story. The Gastroenterology Super Team, led by Doctors Kam and Yoshinaka, recently returned from Palau where they provided life-saving treatment for many patients. Not only that, but they trained and equipped the local staff to continue providing procedures for years to come—a big plus for the people they serve.

May you have fair winds and following seas.



Captain Jamie Spence

Articles by Jim Ayer and Sterling Spence
Design by Sterling Spence



BACK TO PALAU!



Palau had one of the most effective responses to Covid-19 of any country in the world. Being an island nation, they were able to shut down entry and essentially quarantine the country. While this strategy allowed them to maintain one of the lowest death rates in the world, it also created a difficulty for patients needing off-island medical treatments.

That's why we were so eager to return as soon as the restrictions lifted. Our Gastroenterology Super Team, led by Dr. Nathan Kam and Dr. Rody Yoshinaka, saw patients who were in desperate need of medical intervention, saving lives of many who had untreated cancers. The team performed 68 procedures including 32 endoscopies and 36 colonoscopies. Over the two weeks they provided a value of services, donated equipment, and supplies over \$132,000!

In addition to their direct service, the team brought equipment and trained Palauan Dr. Myra Adelbai-Fraser and the OR staff to set-up a fully functional colonoscopy unit and provide gastroenterology services on-island. They helped create a sustainable medical future on Palau! We couldn't be prouder of our volunteers and the first Super Team back out in the islands since Covid!



COMMUNITY STRENGTH

“I give much of the credit to our own Marshallese culture and to our local customs, where in a sense everyone is part of our family, for such a high level of cooperation, and for the kindness and patience that have been displayed throughout this crisis.”

- Jack Neidenthal, RMI Secretary of Health and Human Services



The Marshall Islands was the first country in the Pacific to shut down its borders at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, they were the only country in the world to be able to maintain zero cases of the virus through the entirety of 2021. This allowed them to offer the vaccine to citizens of all-ages before the virus spread through the community. When Covid did reach Majuro, it hit quickly. The close living conditions and limits of the health infrastructure made it ideal for sickness to circulate. However, the precautions the Marshallese people had taken prevented a catastrophe. Health officials worked tirelessly and many Marshallese living outside of the country even came home to help their community. This resulted in an astonishingly low 0.11% fatality rate.

The Canvasback Wellness Center did its part as well! Though we were forced to close our kitchen, we quickly transitioned to a take-out model and continued providing the community with healthy food to keep them strong and boost their immune systems.



We also continued our work in neighborhoods fighting another epidemic in the RMI: diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension. Working with the RMI Ministry of Health and Human Services, we received a grant from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) to provide medication and create a curriculum to decrease hypertension in the islands by 50% over a six-month period. With help from the New Zealand government, we created remote classes and Zoom opportunities for people to remain healthy on the islands of Jaluit, Wotje, and Ebon.

The Marshall Islands faced a daunting challenge, but their sense of community and creativity showed incredible strength and fortitude. This is why our Wellness Center has always been proud to work in the Marshall Islands. We know the strength of our work comes from the strength of the community.



CANVASBACK IS HAVING AN IMPACT!

Written by Jim Ayer, Canvasback VP of Advancement

Have you ever wished you could meet some of the people your gifts have helped? Well, you can... in a way. On our website you'll find our IMPACT videos. Every episode takes you on a journey to Micronesia to visit in homes and meet individuals like Melly. I had the opportunity to interview her for IMPACT.

Melly visited the Majuro hospital with a swollen belly. There she met Dr. Aina who had some good news, "You're not pregnant." Well, that was good news, but then what was the underlying problem? She needed answers! She went home burdened with doubts and fears wondering, "What is happening to me?" Unfortunately, the hospital offered little help. However, Dr. Aina is a tremendous supporter of Canvasback Missions. She knows the ministry brings, not only highly specialized equipment, but specialists who help train local doctors in the most recent techniques and procedures. So when she found out Canvasback was coming, she contacted Melly and said, "Canvasback Missions is bringing a team of doctors to Majuro who specialize in women's health issues—you need to come and have them examine you!"

Melly met with the Gynecology team and they discovered a massive tumor in her stomach and growing breast cancer. The Canvasback specialists wasted no time operating on both problems.

Melly shared, "I was so happy to learn what the problem was with my stomach. I was also very happy Canvasback discovered my breast cancer. Best of all, I am so happy that both of the operations they performed were a complete success! Because of the Canvasback team, I was recently able to see the birth of my second grandchild. That has been such a wonderful blessing to me and my entire family. Thank you so very much for giving me life so I can enjoy my family longer!"

Your heart will be touched as you are introduced to extremely kind and wonderful people who have stories to share—stories of their lives being restored. And in some cases, you will also meet the families who, as care-givers, had their burdens lifted as well. Please enjoy and remember, it's all made possible by your financial partnership.

Check out more of our IMPACT stories on the Canvasback website at: www.canvasback.org/impact





“I learned so much over the two weeks compared to all my other training combined and, most importantly, gained more confidence in colonoscopy. I had nearly given up after 3 years of training.” - Dr. Mayra Adelbai-Fraser

BUILDING SKILLS FOR THE LONG-HAUL

From its inception, Canvasback’s purpose has been to share our resources and help build programs. In 1987, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) had a plan to build an Outer-Island Dispensary System but didn’t yet have the resources. Our medical ship and volunteers met the need. By 1992, we helped create a system touted as a model for the Pacific.

In the early 2000s, President Amata Kabua asked us to help develop a Diabetes Reversal Program for the RMI. By 2005, we lent our resources and expertise to establish a Wellness Center on Majuro that allowed the Marshall Islands to develop a program that proved lifestyle medicine could be effective in reversing diabetes. Today, Marshallese staff run our community programs on Wotje, Ebon, Jaluit, and Majuro. With our diet, gardening, and exercise programs,



the Marshall Islands are a model of what can be accomplished to fight diabetes.

Our programs aren’t just episodic care, we help local health staff increase their own capacities. For instance, this May, our Colonoscopy team performed GI procedures and trained Dr. Mayra Adelbai-Fraser along with her OR staff to perform endoscopies and colonoscopies. We added our resources to help establish a fully functional colonoscopy unit where local staff can now provide gastroenterology services. Our upcoming dental team will help the local dentists upgrade their skills in crafting state-of-the-art, cost effective dentures and will provide training for procedures such as root canals.

Our teams give the local healthcare professionals hands-on opportunities to learn and perform procedures that they have only been allowed to observe. This builds real capacity and better health future in the Pacific!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The fall begins the major fundraising season for Canvasback and we need your support! You can make a gift online or with the enclosed envelope. We also would love to hear if you've put us in your estate plans or have vehicles or appreciated assets to donate. We'll also be calling you for our annual phonathon!

We have several trips coming up in 2023. Visit www.canvasback.org to join us!

PALAU

Orthopedic - January
Gyno & Pathology - April
Ophthalmology - TBD
Urology - August

MAJURO

Gyno & Pathology - TBD
Ophthalmology - TBD
Orthopedic - TBD
Urology - TBD



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