

Life in Paradise

For Joe and Debbie Schell, being among the first Residents of Hualalai has given them a chance to see its coveted sense of community grow—even beyond the private oasis of Hualalai.

About ten years ago, Joe and Debbie Schell joined a small group of Hualalai homeowners when they bought their villa. Now, they spend six months of the year in their custom Hualalai home. “Growing up in Kansas I used to dream of going to Hawai’i, just like Gidget in one of my favorite teenage movies, *Gidget Goes Hawaiian*,” Debbie recalls. “And then I would click my red heels together and say, ‘Auntie Em, I want to go to Hawai’i—to heck with back to Kansas.’ And now I keep pinching myself every time I realize how lucky we are to have a beautiful home in such a wonderful place.”

The dream began the first Christmas the resort was open in 1996. “We wanted to go to the Mauna Kea, but were too late to get in. We were moved to the Four Seasons Resort Hualalai...and it’s been a love affair ever since.”

When their three children started families of their own, the Schells realized they needed more space and bought a site for their custom home. Though they relish the wealth of amenities at Hualalai, it’s been the people who bring their growing brood back each year. “The local people are, without a doubt, the most loving, kind, generous and happy people that I’ve met anywhere,” Debbie says.

“We were mostly here for the weather and the golf,” Joe adds, “but as we’ve spent more and more time here, we’ve gotten involved in the community.”

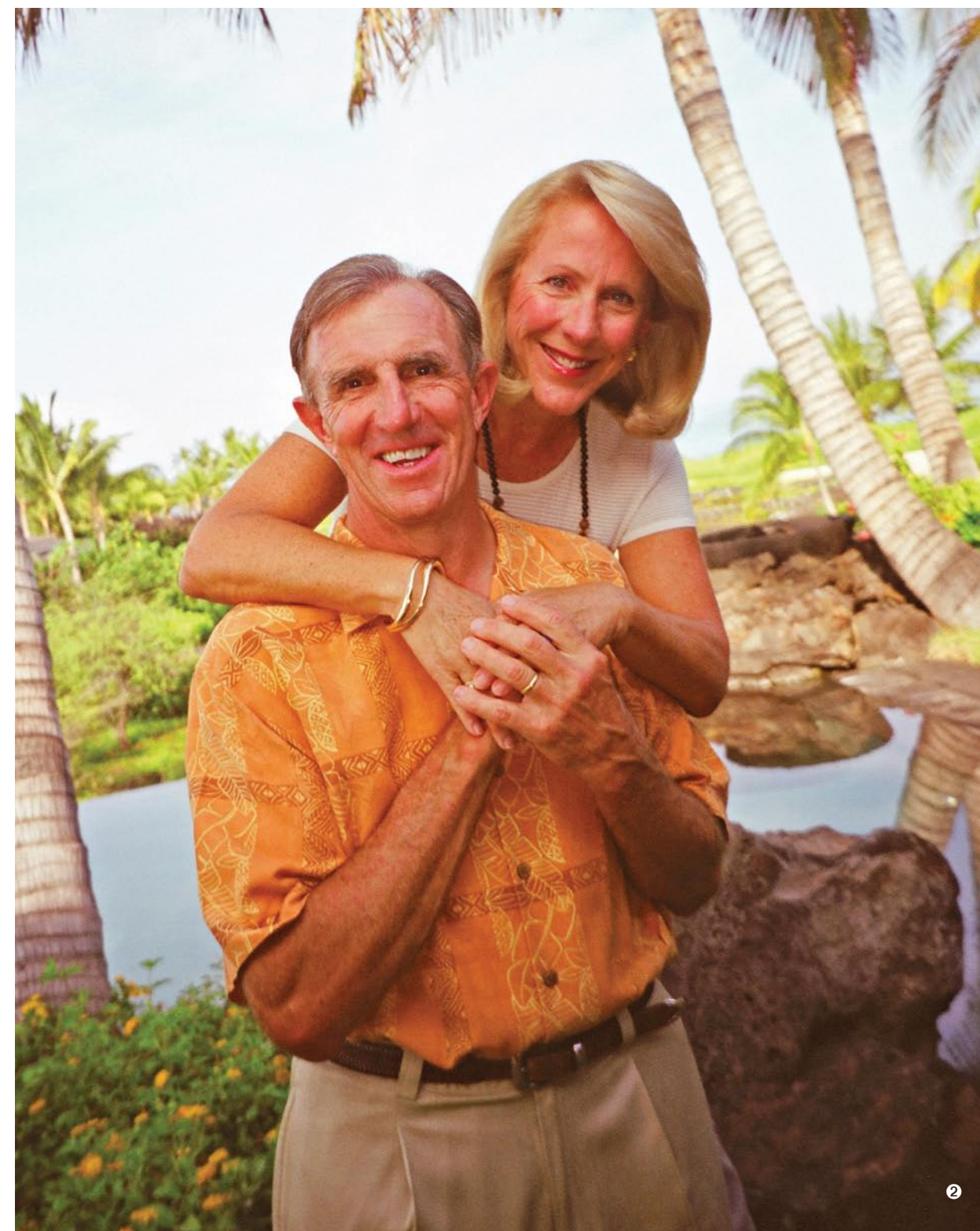
Within the resort, the Hualalai ‘Ohana Foundation—an organization created by Residents to provide financial support for education costs and emergency and extraordinary medical care of resort employees—is a source of pride and accomplishment. As a founder and former board member of the Foundation, Joe has been a part of this program since its inception, when a handful of Residents and resort executives sat down at the Residents’ Beach House to create the program. “Our whole concept was that the Residents get so much from the employees and this is our way of giving back. They give us love; we provide financial support for two things they need...healthcare and education. It’s a two-way street.”

Not surprising, Joe and Debbie’s fondest memories revolve around the people at Hualalai—the resort’s New Year’s celebration and special events hosted by Residents, including the Schells’ own annual gathering, the proceeds of which go to two community hospitals. “The *aloha* that exists on this island is first encountered by the staff at Hualalai, then by the Residents. As you get to know the local community, you find that it permeates the island of Hawai’i.”

The Schells’ home is named ‘*Hale o ke kai hulali*,’ Debbie explains, “It really is the ‘house of the shining sea,’ because in winter when the sun sets right over the ocean in front of our house, the reflection is so strong that I have to wear sunglasses when I make dinner. Oh—the things we have to put up with to live in Paradise!” ■

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Opposite page: ❶ Joe and Debbie share one of their favorite Hualalai pastimes, golf.
❷ The Schells indulge their love affair with the Big Island right here at home.



For the Love of Community

Me ke aloha, kokua aku, kokua mai; pele iho la ka nohana ‘ohana. “With love, help others, be helped; such is a family relationship.” Such is the mission of the Hualalai ‘Ohana Foundation, established a few years ago as a nonprofit vehicle for Residents to contribute to the well-being of the community’s most valuable asset: its employees.

The ‘Ohana Foundation’s tradition of giving is two-fold: to offset the high costs of both education and medical care for Hualalai employees and their immediate families. The Education Committee offers assistance with public school tutoring, private school and higher education scholarships, as well as coursework awards. The Medical Committee provides financial aid during a severe medical crisis and travel expenses for patients who must travel to the mainland. In its first five years of operation, this 501(c)(3) organization granted \$750,000 in educational awards and \$210,000 in medical support—making a difference in the lives of countless Hualalai family members.

Through a love of community, homeowners come together to acknowledge and support the exceptional people who work to make Hualalai “a paradise to the eye and to the heart.” That spirit of sharing is what *‘ohana* (family) is all about. ■