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# The legend of the ghost dance and Micronesia's August icons

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THE following legend of the ghost dance reminds islanders about the importance of our environmental culture and traditions.

A Yapese man in the village of Akaw, Weloy was inflicted with leprosy. To prevent the spread of the disease, the villagers built a shelter for him high up on a hill outside the village and provided the man with his daily meals.

As his disease got worse, the man started hallucinating and thought he was seeing people passing by for a dance practice.

One night as he was sleeping he "saw" the same people again. He asked if he could join their dance practice. They agreed and so he practiced with them until he learned the dance as well.

When his family came to bring him food he asked them to bring his traditional dancing clothes.

His relatives were alarmed. They thought he was losing his grip on reality. But he insisted and finally one of the family members agreed to bring his thuw, hibiscus, lavalava and dancing leis.

That night when the dancing people came he was dressed in his best traditional clothes. They danced through the night and when the sun came up the next morning the sick man noticed all the dancers had disappeared. He was alone, hanging on a branch in the largest banyan tree on island. He began shouting for help.

People from his village heard him and came running. They were shocked to find the sick man in his dance clothes hanging in the tree. They were even more shocked to see that the sick man's sores were gone and he seemed well again.

As they helped him down from the tree he began telling the villagers about the dancers who visited him at night. Back in the village, he taught the villagers the dance before he forgot it.

Culture and traditions are part of the spiritual nature of Micronesian societies and they work like medicine that heals an individual's soul so he can have wholeness, balance and harmony.

The following individuals help promote the importance of Micronesia's balanced environmental culture and traditional lifestyle.

**Best Photos of the Month**

Environment — Saipan sunset, trees and plants by Antonio Cabrera, Pohnpei environment and lifestyle by Bill Jaynes, Palau land and under water by Richard Brooks, Palau plants and trees by Kambes Kesolei, Flowers and Sunset by Harry R. Fritz,

Environmental variations — April Pich, Joseph Ngcheed, Joy Baules, Jubilee Y. Toribiong, and Susan Pharmin

Culture and lifestyle — Brian Manabat, Kambes Kesolei, Harry R. Fritz and Junhan B. Todino

Sports — Katy Clarke, Baklai Temengil, James Sablan, Kambes Kesolei and Emmanuel T. Erediano

### ***Culture & Lifestyle***

Kiribati Photo Essay by Tony Whincup, Unknown Country by Sarah Richard, Satawal Film Documentary by National Geography filmmaker and anthropologist Elizabeth Kapuuwailani Lindsey, Tobi Fourteen Sketches by Peter W. Black, Clan Histories and Migration in Micronesia by Dr. Manuel Rauchholz, Woleai Island Life by Sailing Helena, Yap & Palau Stone Money Quarry by Johnson Toribiong, Living Legacy by Irene Olkeriil, Indigenous Visionary Medicine Art by Mariela de la Paz, Far Edge of and Micronesia by Francis X. Hezel, SJ

### ***Environment, Health & Nutrition***

Nora Glasby and Palau Fitness group Clint Wachi, Josy Termeteet, Julia Lieb Sage, Elgin Lo Elwais and CJ Morros, writers Daisy Iekar, Elaine Cramer, Ellen Toribiong Marcia, Roxenn RTC, Telael Kinsman, Violet Ngirabiang, Tacia Dawson, Willa Melilit, and Linda Adelbai on healthy fit and nutrition, Richard Brooks and Striking Light Production, Gloria Hunter, Barney Antonio Jr., Belau Recipe, Wilhelmina Brock, Sing Miyozawa, Prekei Mers, Sveta and Glen Hunter, Rodman Teltull, Frank "The Crank" Camacho, Baklai Temengil, Felisha Brel, Marianas Tribe, Legend, Belau Tribe, Das Sasao Design and Sha Merirei Design

### ***Entertainment***

Kimie Ueki, Kelau Remeliik, Vitores & OP, Lisa Glover, Milla Obeketang "Milz" and Tamara Okabe, Ohana Dance Group, Chuukese Vine, Paul Ueki, Merv Melatk, Bernie Ngiralmu, Dee Masang and Lenny Rubak Neal

### ***Youth and Community***

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library Youth Program, Motherread/Fatheread Saipan, Kobleville Youth Learning Center with Shelane Borja, Christine Quitoqua, Sandra Christopher, Vernon Lee Manglona, Evilyn Herмосilla, Gloria Kaipat, and DYS with Vivian Sablan, PEC Youth with Bradley Kumangai and Lola Koshiba, Chuuk Youth, Tbo Mori, Myjolynee Kim and Lucilee S.

### ***Men and Women in Uniform***

Jun Park and Vennesa Alfonso Junior

### ***Culture and Tradition***

Ivy Ngeanges Rdialul, Dan Suda, Richard Santos, Brandon Lee Cruz, Dr. Takuya Nagaoka, Phillip Reklai, Harry Fritz, Kambes Kesolei, Saipan CNMI, Peter Luzano, Benjamin Iskawa, Gibson Kanai, Francis Kib, Lawrence Olkeriil, art by visit Yap.com myths, history, the Legend of Yap Mermaid, art by Dan Suda, "Traditional Island Man," Richard Santos's "Asan Village" and Richard Ngcheed's "Island Fisherman"

### ***Humanitarian and Social Work***

Best Sunshine and UFO

### ***Journalists***

Civil Beat Hawaii, Kiribati News Australia, Pacific Daily News Sports, Raquel Bagnol, Tia Belau with Kambes Kesolei, Kaselehlie Press with Bill Jaynes, MV editor Zaldy Dandan and MV sports reporter James Sablan, Palau 2013, Marilyn Rideb of Hawaii, Chuuk News Update Dan Suda, Belau Photo Group by Harry Fritz, Belau Useful Information with Merv Melatk, Olilai Ikesiil, Palau Fitness by Nora Glasby, Chamorro People on Facebook David Atalig, Chuuk Youth, PEC Youth Bradley Kumangai, MV reporters Bryan Manabat, Junhan Todino, Emmanuel Erediano, Guam Daily Post

