



URBAN concepts

Spring 2021



Entering the new year, starting fresh after a rough and unknown 2020. So many things to look forward to as we enter the Spring season, a time of rebirth, renewal and awakening. Our state is slowly opening up again and many of us already are or will be getting vaccinated, kids will be going back to school, and soon we will all be able to visit and see our loved ones again.

This year, we celebrate a milestone 25 years as a company. Originally founded in 1996, Brett Hill Companies has only grown over the last quarter of a century. There have been many ups and downs over the years, but we are proud to say, we have never strayed from our company philosophy; *with hard work you will always achieve your desired goals; but most importantly, you must enjoy the effort you invest because that is what will truly define your success.*

In this edition we share, a little history behind 404 Piikoi Street, or as we know it now as 88 Piikoi Street, an article on wine pairings, a produce showcase, and a Q&A on frequently asked questions about AC maintenance. We hope you enjoy our first edition of 2021!

Mahalo,
Brett Hill Construction, Inc.

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Produce Showcase

*25 YEARS OF
BRETT HILL COMPANIES*



1935



Lewers & Cooke



1950



Piikoi Street 1952

- The original Hawaii 5-0 production office – "404 Piikoi Street" was also used as Steve McGarrett's original residential address on the show in the 1960's.
- Synergia Studios – A recording studio that at the time produced some popular local albums.
- Records Hawaii – A record store which not only sold vinyl, but posters, t-shirts, incense, pipes, dark glasses and oils – pretty much everything that identified with the drug culture from the 1960's and 70's.
- Stone Free (named after a Jimi Hendrix song of the same name) which sold just about the same merchandise as Records Hawaii except for the vinyl records. In the 1970's the owner began manufacturing and selling waterbeds which was a very popular piece of furniture in the 1970's and 80's. With that success the owner changed the store's name to Stone Free Waterbeds.
- Sure Stereo
- Jelly's Records and Books
- At one time for a couple years Richard Tajiri's Christmas Hawaii sold Christmas trees in the parking lot.

In 1984, 404 Piikoi Street along with additional adjacent acreages which are currently occupied by the condominiums Nauru Tower, Ko'olani and Waihonua, was purchased by the Nauruan Government's Trust, Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust with the intent of developing five luxury condominiums on the property.

Completed in 1990, the first tower, Nauru Tower was a highly successful project. The second condominium, Hawaiki Tower broke ground in 1996 with as much anticipated success. Initially, the project was not selling as well as its predecessor, but fortunately, a prospective buyer from China pointed out that the address of the project was a big reason. The number "4" is considered an unfortunate number to the Chinese and other Asian cultures because it sounds very similar to the Chinese word for death, whereas the number "8" is the luckiest number in Chinese culture because it sounds similar to the Chinese word for wealth, fortune, and prosperity.

Thus, the decision to change the address was initiated. Given the choice of address numbers from 2 to 428, the decision was made to change the address to 88 Piikoi Street, which today is the address we identify with Hawaiki Tower.



A/C Maintenance: Frequently Asked Questions

As warmer months approach, our home's air conditioning systems rapidly advance from a luxury to a necessity. For some, especially those with southern and western facing exposure, properly performing AC systems are critical to maintaining daily sanity. AC repairs are costly and often accompany long waits for replacement parts. In this article, Adam Negele, the President of Tradewinds Cooling, answers many of our questions regarding common AC subjects.



Before we begin, here's a quick overview of the typical home-owner's AC unit. Majority of the high-rise condominiums built within the last 25 years are constructed with a style of AC unit known as "water-source heat pumps", also commonly referred to as "condenser water heat pumps". Each condo unit typically has one or two AC units serving the bedrooms and another serving the living room area. Each AC unit is identical in terms of the types of components they contain and the operation that the components perform. There are three main components to the AC unit; the cabinet, the refrigeration section and the blower (fan) section. The cabinet refers to the sheet metal box that the refrigeration section and blower section "live" in, and the refrigeration and blower section become the "guts" of the AC unit. The sheet metal box is either fastened to wall studs hiding behind the walls and acts to secure the AC unit in place or free-standing in a closet, usually shared with the hot water heater. The refrigeration section and the blower section that live inside the cabinet are generally concealed with a large cover plate that is accessible from the hallway or bedroom. The cover plate acts as an access cover to the guts inside, and also acts as a pathway for warm air to enter the AC unit in order to then be cooled (conditioned) and supplied back out into the home. Each condo AC unit is connected to a set of supply and return water lines which run up and down the building, better known as condenser

water risers. These condenser water risers pump cooler water through the AC unit, and return warmer water back to a cooling tower on the roof of the building. The term "heat pump" is derived from the process that the AC unit performs, whereby a compressor "pumps" heat from a low temperature heat source (warm air inside the home) to a higher temperature heat sink (building condenser water).



Q: My AC unit doesn't seem to be blowing cold air. We've had it off for the last 6 months and the last we checked it worked fine. How can something be wrong with it if it hasn't been used?

A: A body in motion tends to stay in motion. Believe it or not, mechanical equipment likes to be used, AC units included. Yes, running your AC unit requires power which costs money, and this doesn't mean you need to run the AC 24/7, but periodically running the unit allows the mechanical components to stay in motion, which is what they were designed to do.

Q: I haven't had any maintenance done to my AC unit in a while but I don't really want to hire someone to do it, is there anything I can do myself?

A: Periodic maintenance is an unfortunate requirement if you're looking to prolong the life of

your AC unit and keep it performing at its best. The good news is it's not all that hard if you're the kind of person that doesn't mind looking underneath the hood. There's also an entire manual written to help you through it. If you don't have a copy of the manual and you wish to not find it via a good old-fashioned google search, we can easily email you a copy upon request. The easiest and most important item of maintenance that a home-owner can perform is the filter change. The filters are not expensive, but some sizes need to be ordered as opposed to being readily available. Any retail customer can call or walk into a local AC supply house such as Cosco refrigeration or Admor HVAC supply and inquire to purchase a replacement filter. To check your AC filter, use a screwdriver on the two screws securing the wall-cover plate in place. The screws should be 1/4 turn and don't need to be completely removed to pull the cover off. Be careful not to yank too hard on the cover if it's stuck; just support the weight with a foot while you find the position of the screw that releases the latch. Once you have the cover plate removed, the filter will be immediately visible at knee-level, and it will slide out of the track that it's in. You'll need to note the size when finding a replacement, L x W x H. Filters are rated based on how much filtration the filter is able to perform. For comparison, a typical residential AC unit filter has a MERV rating of ~4-8. A MERV rating of 13-14 is typical for hospital rooms and some labs, and the highest rating from 17-20 is typically associated with HEPA filtration. ~Caution~ a higher MERV rated filter is not always better for your AC unit. The existing filters are 1" thick, and the more filtration that a filter performs, the overall amount of cold air that your AC unit can push can potentially decrease.

Q: *What happens if I don't regularly change the filter?*

A: The filter's first and foremost job is to protect the heat-transfer coil from getting dirty. Once the heat-transfer coil gets dirty, the amount of AC your unit produces will drop off drastically until it either shuts

itself off on an internal safety control device, or a component failure occurs. The heat transfer coil is essentially a series of copper tubes that have small and sharp aluminum fins bonded to the copper.

Cold refrigerant flows through the copper tubes while warm air from the home is moved across the aluminum fins. The heat from the air is transferred through the metal surface to the refrigerant and viola, the air leaves the AC unit nice and cold. In a nutshell, if you don't keep a clean filter in your AC unit, you're probably fine for a little while, but over time as the filter gets dirty, some of that dirt starts making its way onto your heat-transfer coil, which starts to reduce the AC units ability to make AC. Additionally, the dirty filter causes the blower fan to work harder and move less air. Yes, you can always clean your heat transfer coil with a brush or a vacuum, but maintaining a clean filter is an easy way to stay ahead of a dirty coil.



*Clean vs. Dirty
A/C filter*

Q: *What are the most common problems encountered during an AC service trouble-call?*

A: The most common issues that we encounter are failed compressors, failed condenser water control valves, failed or noisy fans & fan motors, or refrigerant leaks. Without going too deep, these scenarios typically require some level of troubleshooting to diagnose and resolve. To make matters worse, the original AC units were built utilizing a style of refrigerant known as R-22. This style of refrigerant was identified a number of years ago as being a contributor of ozone depletion, but due to its popularity in the AC market, it could not

simply be eliminated and instead required a phase-out process. In 2021, R-22 refrigerant is no longer produced domestically and can only be obtained through means of recovery or reclamation from existing R-22 systems. This means that finding a new replacement R-22 compressor to replace an existing failed one, is not easy to do and is very expensive. The good news is that the AC unit manufacturer offers a brand-new refrigeration section which utilizes a newer style refrigerant with readily available replacement components. The cost of the refrigeration section is significantly higher than the cost of the compressor alone, but it replaces all of the old refrigeration and heat transfer components that are quickly approaching the end of their useful life cycle.

Q: *If I want to replace my AC unit with a new one, do I have to cut it out of the wall?*

A: If you want a new AC unit from a different manufacturer, yes, you will likely have to open up the walls around it in order to remove the entire cabinet. However, if you'd prefer not to have holes made in your walls, the existing AC unit cabinet doesn't have to come out for you to get a new AC unit. Remember, the cabinet is just the sheet metal shell that the refrigeration and blower section live in, so as long as the cabinet is not deteriorating inside your walls, there's no reason to change it.

Simply by removing the front wall-cover and looking inside should give you a pretty good idea of the condition of the unit, and chances are extremely unlikely that the cabinet is in decent shape. As stated previously, the manufacturer offers a replacement refrigeration section as a complete module, as well as a similar module for the blower section. That means you can replace everything inside of the AC unit cabinet in two separate modules, rather than worrying about each individual component. Each module installs relatively quickly and usually within a day's worth of work you essentially have a brand new AC unit.

Q: *Is it common for AC contractors to offer free estimates?*

A: It depends if you know what problems your AC unit already has and you can explain it to a contractor, you shouldn't have to pay for an estimate. Or, if you know that you want the refrigeration section or blower section, or both replaced, you shouldn't have to pay for an estimate. The contractor just needs to know the model and serial number of your particular AC unit, which is again found by removing the access cover panel. However, if you have a problem and don't know the cause, but you want repairs to be made, it will be challenging to find a contractor willing to troubleshoot for free. The next challenge is finding an AC contractor that you can trust, and not all contractors are the same. The reality is that the condo AC units are connected to a building-wide condenser water system, which is a system specific to high-rise/larger condo buildings, and is not a common residential style system. This means that most residential AC contractors won't be very familiar with your system and may not have the expertise to correctly troubleshoot. Commercial AC service companies are generally more familiar with troubleshooting this style of AC units, but are often very difficult to get a hold of or are not interested in servicing retail customers.

Finding a service contractor that is knowledgeable, responsive, and trustworthy is not easy. If your only option is to open the digital phone book, a couple of good qualifying questions are, "are you familiar with ClimateMaster vertical stack condenser water heat pumps", and/or, "do you have a lot of experience with water-cooled AC systems"?

WINE PAIRINGS W/LOCAL FAVORITES

BY: ROBERTO VIERNES, MASTER SOMMELIER

Do you believe there is a wine pairing for every dish? As sommeliers, we tend to think so. We get all kinds of requests for what wine we would pair. Lately, because so many of us are eating at home more often, I happen to think that many of us are eating more traditional 'local' dishes. In this article, I will share some home-cooked, soul food wine pairings, I've created, that would be accessible for everyone to enjoy!

I bet you had some Shoyu Chicken in the last couple of weeks, whether it was from the lunch wagon or your mom's tried and true recipe.

Maybe it has some 5 spice and/ or anise, ginger and onions but the main thing is that it is salty and a touch sweet. Because of this sweetness, I definitely lean towards a red wine that has plenty of ripe to overripe fruit; something jammy. Most red blends will do the trick: Prisoner, Conundrum Red and the like, but a new one on the market that you should also try is **Intrinsic Red Blend** (\$20). A blend of Malbec and Cabernet Franc, it has a truly unique flavor profile that you will not soon forget.

SHOYU CHICKEN



POKE



There are dozens of styles of Poke from spicy to sweet, from Ahi to Mussels, with or without seaweed; you get the idea. But as long as there is raw fish in the mix, Riesling is the best pair. Yes, Riesling can be sweet, but I am not necessarily looking for the sweetness here. The pair works because of the acidity in Riesling. **Chateau Ste Michelle** (\$9) makes one of the most accessible Rieslings in the business. It completely overdelivers for the money and has just the right amount of sweetness and acidity to take your poke pupus to the next level.

Pork used to be my favorite meat and I'm Filipino, so I have some experience in the matter. Lechon is harder to find but Kalua Pig is everywhere. That delicious, smoky pulled pork is so versatile going into buns, tacos, lumpias and of course by itself. For me Pinot Noir is by far the best match for pork. If you have not already tried Pinot Noir from Oregon, you owe it to yourself to do so. They are every bit as good as their California counterparts. In fact, I make a Pinot Noir in Oregon called **FIL Pinot Noir**. The 2017 FIL Pinot Noir (\$40) is my finest to date and is killer with Kalua Pig.

KALUA PIG



GARLIC SHRIMP



Many believe that garlic kills all wine pairings, but I am not included in that number. In fact, for a dish like Garlic Shrimp with all that butter and garlicky goodness drowning your noodles (or rice), a nice Chardonnay would be perfect, but you need a really good one. One that has plenty of richness, sweet oak butteriness in it and plenty of intensity. For this I recommend **Stags Leap Wine Cellars 'Karia' Chardonnay** (\$32) from Napa Valley. It is plenty rich but balanced and has the wonderful butter and vanilla that compliments the butter and garlic.

One of the all-time local favorites is the Loco Moco: beef patty with fried egg on rice and gravy all ovah!

Everyone has their favorite version of it, easy over egg, add mushrooms or truffles, maybe fried rice, prime ground beef, etc. My recommendation is Grenache.

The richness of the dish needs something with heft and and earthy, Grenache serves it up beautifully along with some savory and meatiness as well. **Kermit Lynch** blends Grenache with a few other Rhone grapes in his **Cotes du Rhone** (\$19). It exudes the plump, hearty and savory nature of its origins and is a great foil for the Loco Moco.

LOCO MOCO



FREE RANGE VS. ORGANIC VS. CONVENTIONAL FARMING

Imagine, you are walking through the grocery store and realize the next thing on your list is eggs, you walk over to the refrigerated section and spot the eggs, but what do choose? Cage free? Organic? Free range? This article discusses the differences between the terms free range, organic and conventional farming.



Organic: Many people forget that organic farming is actually the traditional way of farming, which includes the use of organic fertilizers such as compost and controls, fewer pesticides, recycling of animal waste, animal grazing and organic feed. Organic certification must also abide by strict animal welfare regulations. Like free range, the animal must be given access to the outdoors, must only be fed certified organic feed that was grown without artificial fertilizers or pesticides and may not receive hormones or antibiotics at any time, aside from vaccinations to prevent disease.



Free Range: The term free range, also known as free roaming or cage free, refers to food from animals that have access to outdoor spaces or free access to graze or forage for food. Free range or cage free can sometimes be misleading, when someone sees the term "free range" they may picture animals roaming the open fields all day every day, which could be the case but it could also be an environment that is not any better than conventional farming. All food raised free range are not organic, the main difference being what they are fed. Standard free range farms allow an "anything goes" type of feeding method.

Where as organic farms, in order to be labeled as organic, must only feed the animals organic feed that has not added any animal by-products. Due to the fact that "free range" can be used so loosely and that the USDA free range regulations currently only apply to poultry, the term is mainly used as a marketing term.

Industrial or Conventional: This type of farming allows the use of antibiotics and hormones in animals as well as chemical and artificial fertilizers and pesticides to add nutrients to the soil and crops. It may also include the use of genetically modified seeds, where as organic farming does not allow this and seeds must be organically grown in order to be classified as organic. Industrialized farming allows factory farming and practices that often compromise animal welfare, which is one of the main differences people consider when deciding to consume organic or conventional. Both organic and free-range practices allow animals to access the outdoors, where as conventionally raised animals live in close quarters confined to cages or buildings. While allowing access to the outdoors doesn't guarantee better living conditions, organic and free range are considered more humane living systems than conventional farming practices.

Produce Showcase: Crazy About Kale

What is Kale?

Before kale was known as a powerhouse superfood, this leafy green was most frequently used to line catering trays and food displays. Now regarded as a symbol of pop culture, this cruciferous vegetable has a cult-like following, and for a good reason – it is one of the most nutrient dense foods that you can consume.

Use:

Kale is extremely versatile and can be consumed either raw or cooked. You can eat kale raw in a salad (substitute it in place of lettuce) or blend it in a smoothie, steam or sauté it in stirfrys and soups, or bake them and see them transform into tasty kale chips.

Health & Nutrition:

With just 33 calories per cup, a single serving of kale contains more than your recommended amount of vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamin B6, vitamin C; and has 2 grams of fiber and 3 grams of protein. Kale has high levels of lutein and zeaxanthin, which are 2 antioxidants that may help slow vision loss. It is also extremely rich in vitamin K, which is not only essential for blood clotting but also for bone health. The list goes on and on, but you get it – kale is good for you!

With that said, here is a simple and delicious kale salad recipe to help you incorporate kale into your diet. The best thing about this recipe is that you don't need exact measurements – you can go by taste. This salad also keeps very well and even tastes better the next day.

Easy Peasy Kale Salad

- 1 – bunch of kale (chopped)
- 1/2 – lemon (cut into quarters)
- 1-2 cloves of garlic (finely chopped)
- 1/4 cup – shredded parmigiano reggiano cheese
- Red onion
- Grape or cherry tomatoes
- Drizzle of olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste



- (1) Cut off the stem and chop the kale into bite-sized pieces.
- (2) Gather your kale into a mixing bowl, add your olive oil and squeeze your lemon juice. Using your hands (with a plastic glove if you prefer), massage the kale with the olive oil and lemon juice until it appears to soften. This is a very important step in preparing raw kale in salads as it helps with the bitterness.
- (3) Add in the parmigiano cheese, garlic, red onions, and tomatoes and toss together.

~ There you have it *chef's kiss*, bon appetit! ~