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ISLAND EDITION

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OBITUARIES

'Pua' Detroye-Mokuau, 44, champion surfer, lifeguard

By Bunky Bakutis

Advertiser Leeward Oahu Bureau

MAKAHA — Charmaine Mapuana "Pua" Detroye-Mokuau, a woman revered for her dedication as a lifeguard and her enthusiastic devotion to Hawaiian culture, died Sunday.

Mokuau, 44, was of pure Hawaiian descent.

Her hula brothers and sisters of Halau 'O Mililani will begin chanting to greet the sun "E Ala E" at 6 a.m. Monday at Makaha Surfing Beach. Memorial services will begin at 9 a.m. Mokuau's ashes will be scattered in her favorite surfing

area. Leeward Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

"She enjoyed taking care of people, especially children. Her smile and spiritual presence helped heal everyone she came in contact with. She was 'Auntie Pua' to everyone," said close friend Kathy Terada, a nurse practitioner at Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center. Terada and Mokuau exercised together almost every day for over 20 years.

"I'm very, very grateful for our years," Terada said. "She taught me everything about surfing, fitness, health, family and, most important, spirituality."

Mokuau was born in Honolulu but often visited relatives in Waianae. After graduating from Radford High School, where she was a cheerleader, she worked as a counselor for truants at the Waianae Rap Center.

She began her career as a lifeguard in 1981 at Makaha Surfing Beach and developed into one of Hawaii's top waterwomen. She was a champion surfer and paddler and was honored by the city for her work.

Mokuau also is credited with numerous rescues on the Leeward side. "She saw things before they would happen," former district lifeguard captain

Brian Keaulana said. "She'd be in there before people would even realize that they were in trouble."

When Mokuau learned that she had cancer, she took a year off from her job to do "more things, especially learn my Hawaiian culture," she said, and to fight her battle through spiritual healing, physical fitness and nutrition.

Her focus seemed to work: six months after detecting breast cancer last June, all signs of her disease had disappeared. Suddenly last Friday, tests showed noticeable oxygen loss in her blood. Three days later, Mokuau

died.

She is survived by her husband, Dale "Butch" Detroye; mother, Gertrude Apio; sister, Kawai Smith; brothers, William "Moku" and Pat Mokuau; and nephews and nieces.

Mokuau most recently worked at restoring Kaneaki Heiau in Makaha Valley. Using traditional Hawaiian thatching techniques learned from "Uncle" Eddie Kaanana, she helped remake hale at the heiau. Her last wish, according to her husband, was to restore agricultural heiau Punana'ula, in Waianae Valley at the base of Mount Kaala.