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Celebrating Our Manâmkok'



(1) Kantan Chamorita masters/ Courtesy of CAHA. (2) Child showing respect to their elder. (3) Family mending a talâya/ Courtesy of MARC & Dr. Anne Hattori

This year in 2022, we celebrate the 59th annual Older American Month. This celebration, originally called Senior Citizens Month, honors those among us whose actions have shaped the very foundation of our lives today. Throughout the Marianas, we refer to our elders as *manâmkok'*.

Like most indigenous cultures, CHamoru/Chamorro elderly are the first teachers for children in the family or clan. Our respect for them grows as they age, for they play an important role as the source of knowledge on culture, traditions, genealogy, history, land, secrets, language, and crafts. With this knowledge, they lead the next generations into the future.

When a younger CHamoru meets *manâmkok'* they are expected to *ngingek'* which is the CHamoru/Chamorro way of showing respect and taking in some of that elder's spirit and wisdom. The word *ngingek'* means to sniff. The proper greeting towards a *manâmkok'* is to *ngingi* the back of their hand while saying either *ñot* for a man or *ñora* for a woman. By sniffing, we inhale the decades of wisdom and experience that they have amassed. The *manâmkok'* then respond to this gesture by offering a blessing to youth by saying, *dioste ayudi*.

The greatest respect we can show to our *manâmkok'*, however, comes from simply listening to their stories and

caring for them as they cared for us. When we help our *manâmkok'*, we are treated to nuggets of wisdom that span from how they secured the land for their family home to the recipe for the *tinaktak* they swear is better than anyone else's south of Yigo. When we listen to the tales of their life, we are reminded of how the lives we live were built upon the sacrifices and successes, the triumphs and tribulations, of those far older than us.

Click here to read more on our [manâmkok'](#), the act of [ngingek'](#), and listen to some of the stories we have collected in our [Voices of Our Elders](#) section.

Joaquin “Kin” C. Arriola

A Leader in Guam’s Postwar Era



Joaquin “Kin” C. Arriola (1925 – 2022) a prominent figure at the forefront of Guam’s legal history, passed away May 4. [Arriola](#), familial Arrot, was born to Vicente F. and Maria S. Arriola in 1925. In 1954, Arriola married Elizabeth Perez Arriola and together they had eight children—three daughters (Jacqueline, Anita, and Lisa) and five sons (Vincent, Franklin, Michael, Joaquin Jr., and Anthony).

Arriola was one of Guam’s leaders who took part in making the island what it is today. Guam’s current form of limited self-government took decades of vision, calls for justice, and tenacity by local leaders such as Arriola. These leaders caused the transformative social, political, economic, and other changes of the 1950s and 60s, that led us to where we are today.

In the 1940’s and right after high school, Arriola earned

a law degree. Becoming the second CHamoru/Chamorro, to do so. Returning home, Arriola ran for Senator in the [Guam Legislature](#), becoming the top vote-getter in three elections and serving for two terms as Speaker. As Speaker, Arriola had two primary goals—advancing Guam’s political self-governance through the creation of a locally elected governor and delegate to Congress, and the [reunification of the Mariana Islands](#). Despite not being able to bring together Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands, Arriola was pivotal in ending 20 years of Guam’s governors being [appointed by the President](#) in 1968, and in securing for Guam a [delegate to the United States Congress](#) in 1972.

Arriola was also deeply dedicated to the island’s education system, serving as Chairman of the Board of Regents for the College of Guam (1963-1966), predecessor to the University of Guam. Arriola saw that the people of Guam needed some level of independence, something of their own to be proud of, and an institution that

would produce good teachers locally instead of [contracting them](#) year after year from the mainland at great expense.

Friends and family would know Arriola was also a gifted musician, playing the church organ and piano. His musical talent helped him earn the money to pay for his higher education in Minnesota. After the occupation, he played in a band called Talo’fo’fo Five. Laughingly, Arriola stated that it was a great name which caught people’s attention despite, or perhaps to some degree because, there were only four members of the band, none of whom were from Talo’fo’fo.

There were not many lawyers on the island at the time of his return, so Arriola soon found himself busy taking cases and established what is now known as the Arriola Law Firm, Guam’s oldest law office.

Aside from his time as a senator, Arriola served as Chairman of the Territorial Planning Commission, the Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority (GHURA), the Board of Regents, the

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Photos of Arriola in the Guam Legislature (1955-1959 & 1967-1971)

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Popular Party and, later, the Democratic Party, as well as Executive Committee Chairman for the Pacific Conference of Legislators among other such positions. He has often been a keynote speaker at events and has won numerous awards and recognition such as the Guam Judiciary Husticia Award and the Judge Cristobal C. Duenas Excellence Award, as well as was conferred a Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) by the University of Guam.

For many years Arriola also served as Board Member, Secretary, and Counsel for Guam Savings & Loan Association (BankPacific), local counsel for Bank of America, and helped form and organize the Bank of Guam which he then served as its general counsel. He was local counsel for off-island corporations such as ESSO Eastern (Exxon) and AT&T, he organized and formed domestic corporations like Hotels of the Marianas, Inc (Hilton Hotel), and represented individuals and corporations in various locations around the world.

Joaquin “Kin” C. Arriola’s impact and legacy throughout Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands is undeniable. Guampedia sends its heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the family of Mr. Arriola, a trule leader in Guam’s postwar reconstruction.



Photos courtesy of the Arriola Family.

As we continue to celebrate our elders throughout the year, we are also reminded of how important their stories are in preserving our history and culture. Guampedia wishes to extend a hand in helping to document these stories for your family to remember their elders, as well as share these experiences with our website visitors who long to hear from the wisdom of our manamko’. If you are interested, please send us an email at [guampedia@gmail.com!](mailto:guampedia@gmail.com)



Clotilde Castro Gould/ Courtesy of Guam Council of the Arts and Humanities