In my forthcoming book, Traditional Micronesian Societies: Adaptation, Integration, and Political Organization in the Central Pacific, I argue that Micronesian matriliney originally provided adaptive solutions that promoted survival in societies settling, occupying, and developing island environments regularly subjected to typhoons and El Nino-driven droughts. I go on to suggest, however, that as the adaptive characteristics of matriliney became less relevant in a number of Micronesian societies, other aspects of matrilineal organization proved to be so useful in ongoing sociocultural life that matrilineal organization was retained throughout the region. I described these aspects as “spandrels,” borrowing Stephen Jay Gould/Richard Lewontin’s terminology. This paper suggests that these matrilineal spandrels—in particular, classic forms of conical clans, lineages, and the hierarchical leadership of chiefs that is rooted in them—have enabled Micronesians to successfully retain significant aspects of their traditional political organizations even while embracing the constitutional processes of American-modeled democracy. Counter-intuitively, the hierarchical organization of chieftainship and the importance of lineage organization actually provide important counterweights to the centralizing tendencies of the modern Micronesian states. This paper explores the continuing relevance of matrilineal social, cultural, and political organization in contemporary Micronesian life.