



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please Join Us for Lunch!

Monday, February 28, 2005

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church
Nuuanu Ave. and South Vineyard Blvd.
Ample parking - driveway off Nuuanu Ave.

AGENDA:

11:30 Luncheon – Pizza, Salad, Drinks, Dessert by Eloise \$5.00 donation

11:45 Welcome, Introductions and remarks, Larry Geller, President

11:55 **Program: Our Future. Our Fight. The Real Facts about Social Security**

Speaker: Alicia Maluafiti, AARP Associate State Director for Advocacy, including Social Security Reform and Role of AARP.

Questions and Answers

12:45 Announcements

1:00 Adjourn

Host: Julia Duarte

BOARD MEETING: 10:00 a.m. Preceding Lunch

Program for March: Debbie Morikawa, domestic violence as it affects the elderly and the work of The Awareness Foundation.

**FROM GRUMBLE TO RUMBLE: How You Can Make a Difference
Hawaii Silver Legislature Coming Soon!!**

A mock legislature for persons over 50.

November 17 and 18, 2005,

8:00 a.m. 3 p.m., State Capitol

As the first step in implementing our grant, we are preparing for the first phase – finding the issues that concern residents in various parts of Oahu. These issues will be written up as bills to be used in the training workshops of phase 2 and presented at the model legislature in November.

We Need Your Help

Do you have a meeting scheduled during May, June or July?

May we have one hour during this meeting to tell you about the Silver Legislature and find out what your concerns are?

Call Laura Manis, 597-8838 now for information or to volunteer a meeting place.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

PRESIDENT'S LETTER Larry Geller

The news is full of dire warnings about Social Security these days and the need to privatize at least part of the plan in order to save it. If you can read between the lines, you'll figure out that far from "saving" Social Security, Bush's privatization plan will actually drain it of the revenue it needs to continue providing full benefits until 2042.

Currently, workers pay into the system to cover the benefits for those who are already retired or disabled. The Social Security trustees confirmed that the system is solvent until 2042, and the General Accounting Office stretched that solvency date until 2052. Taking even part of the tax revenue out of the system for private accounts would remove the funding it needs and endanger the secure retirement for people of every age. According to the Wall Street Journal, taking away even two percentage points for private accounts would create a gap of up to \$2 trillion over the first ten years.

The biggest losers would be women, the poor and the disabled. Wall Street companies, on the other hand, would gain about \$75 billion a year, and the financial markets are salivating in

anticipation. So watch the mainstream media for spin. You'll need all your skills to read between the lines that the PR machine will be churning out.

In fact, it will take only a simple adjustment to allow Social Security to continue providing full benefits. One answer that you'll have a hard time finding in print would be to back off ever so slightly on the tax breaks now enjoyed by the rich. Bill Gates pays exactly the same amount in Social Security Taxes as someone earning only \$87,900 a year. Between the lines you have the answer. Raising the ceiling even to \$100,000 would eliminate a huge chunk of the deficit and Social Security can continue on smoothly past 2052.

Changing the subject: The administration also wants to severely limit class action lawsuits by forcing them into Federal courts, limit medical malpractice claims, and cut off asbestos suits. Let's apply our critical thinking skills to this proposal. Although referred to as "tort reform," reading between the lines you'll know that this is bad for consumers. It takes away their right to go to court and undermines their right to trial by jury. Again, the winners are the big corporations. And again, you'll have a hard time finding that out by reading the print.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have a table at the PrimeTime Exhibition, sponsored by First Hawaiian Bank at Blaisdell on March 23 from 8 a.m. to 4p.m. We need volunteers for 2 hour shifts who will pass out our literature to publicize the Silver legislature. The table will also have goodies and literature from the co-sponsors of the Silver Legislature. Please call Carolyn Golojuch at 779-9078 to volunteer.

ABOUT THIS MONTH'S SPEAKER

Alicia Maluafiti is the Associate State Director of Advocacy and Communications for AARP Hawaii. Her responsibilities include directing AARP's advocacy initiatives (federal, state and county) local public policy and legislative agenda, representing AARP before policy makers, regulators and other public officials, as well as the media, on issues impacting AARP priorities.

She also develops strategic relationships with coalitions and partners in support of AARP initiatives, recruits and manages AARP's volunteer advocacy hui for AARP's political and communication priorities, and develops and implements communication strategies, including government relations, media relations, public relations, advertising, volunteer and internal communications.

Previously, she was the manager of Community & Government Relations at HMSA for over 11 years.

CLEAN ELECTIONS AND PUBLIC FUNDING

Notes from last months meeting

If the bill introduced by Clean Elections Hawaii passes the legislature this session, candidates may choose between two options. According to Laure Dillon, of Clean Elections Hawaii, their bill will cut all connections between donations by special interest groups and the candidates freeing them from the burdens of fundraising and being influenced by big donors. Then they will be able to concentrate on what is good for the state. Six states already have such laws. To qualify candidates collect \$5.00 from a certain number of residents in their district. The \$5 goes to the Hawaii Election Campaign Fund not to the candidate. Candidates voluntarily agree to spending caps and fundraising limits in exchange for public financing of their campaign.

Robert Watada, head of the Campaign Spending Commission, agrees that the largest contributors are big corporations and because of that have too much influence but says he is introducing many amendments to the existing law which will put some controls on that. One amendment bans direct contributions from corporations, unions and banks but allows them from PACs which are separated segregated funds. Other amendments prohibit contributions from being used for community and charitable organizations, ban contributions from government contractors and require electronic filing from all candidates. Qualified candidates receive money from a state fund created by a \$2 checkoff on state income tax forms.

Donation in memory of Ruth Ellen Lindenberg-Shig & Janet Nakashima

Health Information

DEHYDRATION AND THE COMMON COLD

From Caregivers Newsletter

Some of the common symptoms of dehydration include dizziness, drowsiness, headache and amber-colored urine. Dehydration occurs when you lose water and electrolytes from your body and you don't have enough water to carry on your regular bodily functions. The solution: drink about 8 glasses of liquid daily.

When someone gets a cold, mucous membranes become inflamed and swell and become more porous. If there is a fever, more water is lost through perspiration. Diarrhea compounds the problem.

Instead of running to the medicine cabinet or the drug store, increase your intake of water. When dehydrated, a sore throat will feel even worse, and cough medicines such as Robitussin are rendered ineffective. The drugs act by increasing secretion of water into the respiratory tract to remove foreign particles and bacteria from the lungs. So, if you don't have enough water you can't secrete and you have a dry hacking cough instead.

Simply put drink more water. But if you have heart or kidney disease, fluid may be restricted, so please consult with our doctor first.

Mission Statement

“Kokua Council seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves.”

Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii
 Education Fund, Inc.
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.
 Honolulu, HI 96813

Who Are We?

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. Kokua Council seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves. "We embrace diversity and extend a special invitation to any senior or intergenerational minded individual interested in advocating for these important issues in Hawaii." All are welcome. There is a \$5 annual membership to defer printing and postage costs. At each meeting, topical issues are presented for discussion and possible action.

WHEN 4th Monday of every month, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **WHERE** Harris United Methodist Church @ Nuuanu and Vineyard Blvd., Ample parking and a light lunch are provided for \$5 **REACH US** c/o Harris United Methodist Church, 20 South Vineyard, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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JOIN KOKUA COUNCIL!

Yes! I want to join Kokua Council. Here are my annual dues and my contact information. I understand that my phone number will be added to the Kokua Phone Tree and I will receive the monthly newsletter and occasional e-mails. Our fiscal year starts in January. Please make checks payable to Kokua Council.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	LIFE MEMBER	ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS	DONATIONS
____\$5.00	____\$100.00	____\$25.00	_____

Name _____ Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Mail to: Treasurer, Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd.,
 Honolulu, HI 96813