



**HAWAII'S VOICE FOR A BETTER FUTURE**  
Please join us for lunch

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2007**

**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: Eggplant Parmesan w/Pasta, salad, Dessert by Eloise. \$5.00 donation
- 11:45 Welcome, Introductions and Remarks, *Larry Geller, President*
- 12:00 PROGRAM: Lynda Johnson: Current problems in our community's nursing home services, shopping for a nursing home, getting into a nursing home and the pitfalls in the whole process.
- 12:45 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lunch Host: NORITA NELSON

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: 10:00 A.M. PRECEEDING LUNCH

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**A Victory for Kokua Council—Embedded Interns**

Business and industry representatives will not be allowed to work as interns for legislators, according to new state House and Senate rules.

Last session Hawaii employees lost the important protection of health care premium regulation, raising the issue of whether an HMSA Foundation executive working as an intern in Rep. Bob Herkes' office might have played a role in the defeat of that legislation. The issue was brought to light last year when Kokua Council president, Larry Geller asked the Ethics Commission to investigate. The Ethics Commission has not settled the issue, but nevertheless, the presence of these corporate people within legislative offices was a questionable practice from several points of view. Kokua Council appreciates the change but, we will remain vigilant.

**13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL PRIMETIME WELLNESS FAIR**

Thursday, March 29, 8:30am to 1:00pm

Neal Blaisdell Exhibition Hall

For those 50+ FREE

## President's Letter—*Larry Geller*

If you're an older person living in Honolulu, best thing to do may be to stay off the streets. At least until the City Council issues body armor to anyone over 55.

2007 is only a few days old and already the body count is climbing. Recently, a 91-year old pedestrian was hit in Liliha.

Much of the eldercide is taking place in crosswalks. There is little excuse for drivers hitting pedestrians anywhere, but particularly when they are in a crosswalk. It doesn't matter whether the person crossing is young or old, moving quickly or slowly, or whether the light has changed before they have managed to get across. It's just not ok to hit them with your car, period.

Many drivers are calling for education. I agree with that: education of drivers.

I seldom refer to letters in newspapers, but one that was printed in the *Star-Bulletin* 2007/01/19 impressed me as particularly obnoxious. I think the writer would be an ideal candidate for an education program. The problem is, many other obnoxious drivers may agree with him. That's part of the

problem we face. His letter was practically a death threat to our elderly. He's pretty explicit, closing with the advice "Step onto a roadway and you take your life into your hands."

The behaviors he describes are commonplace and normal. People these days talk on cell phones whether they are walking or driving. Which is the more dangerous? I've experienced drivers cutting in front of me in a nearby crosswalk while talking on the phone and gesturing with one hand. It's unlikely, by the way, that granny even owns a cell phone, but if she happens to be talking on one while crossing, drivers should take care that she does get across safely, not take aim.

I hold that deaths and injuries would be reduced greatly if (1) the traffic signals were fixed to eliminate the problems uncovered by the AARP survey, released last August but never implemented by our traffic people, and (2) if police were regularly deployed at intersections to enforce the laws already on the books so that drivers are alert (for cops, if not yet for pedestrians) every time they make a turn or approach a crosswalk.

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### Notes from January Meeting: Project OASIS

Doug Kreider, Geriatric Mental Health Specialist from Project OASIS (Older Adult Specialized Information Services), operates out of the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii. While acknowledging that the state has made great progress in meeting the mental health needs of its citizens in the past 15 years, Doug asserted that services for older adults have not expanded sufficiently to meet community needs, which will grow as the baby boomers mature and people continue to live longer.

Project OASIS, a demonstration project funded by the federal government, is designed to expand the capacity of the state of Hawaii to serve older adults with serious mental illness and their caregivers. This will be accomplished with several strategies.

1. The evidence-based practice Family Psychoeducation will be provided to adults 60 and older with serious mental illness and their family caregivers in Maui County.
2. The educational component of this model will be the source of educational sessions for family caregivers, paraprofessional, and professional mental health and social service providers in Maui and Honolulu Counties.
3. A geriatric mental health specialist provides consultation and training to staff of the state-run Maui Community Mental Health Center and certain private mental health service agencies in order to build their capacity to serve older adults on Maui.
4. Specialists in Maui and Honolulu Counties will facilitate communication and collaboration between the aging and mental health service networks, which have not collaborated well in the past for various systemic reasons. After start-up, the program plans to serve 150 consumers, 200 caregivers, and 40 providers per year.

Besides building awareness about Project OASIS, Doug urged Kokua Council to support legislation, which would strengthen family caregiving and mental health services. He also recommended that members become familiar with community mental health resources and that they be sensitive to the possible mental health needs of their family, friends and neighbors.

To the Editor:

I was disturbed by your statement “Mental health, especially for older adults, has never received the attention it should” in the description of the Oasis project. My work for the State of Hawaii consisted of training, on every island except Lanai, primary care physicians, psychiatrists, public health nurses and social workers in psychiatric treatment for the elderly. I even made house calls. Unfortunately, this

ended when my position was eliminated 33 years ago. It is distressing to me that this has been forgotten. Even more distressing is wondering if any of this work has been continued? Having a trained psychiatrist with the Health Department to work with community and social workers would be valuable. Seniors deserve and need mental health services, as do all Hawaiians.

*Betsy Weiner, M. D.*

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### HOW TO SEND TESTIMONY TO LEGISLATURE

**Please include your name, position/title, organization, contact information, position on the measure, the hearing date, bill title and committee to which your testimony should be referred.**

Testimony for Senate hearings may be faxed if less than 5 pages in length, to the Senate Sgt-At-Arms Office at 586-6659 **at least 24 hours prior to the hearing.** Testimony for House hearings may be faxed to House Sgt-At-Arms at 586-6501. When faxing, please indicate the Committee to whom the testimony is being submitted, the date and time of the hearing, and the required number of copies needed for submittal (as listed on the hearing notice. (For

example, “persons wishing to testify should submit **25 copies** of their testimony to the committee clerk, Room 215, State Capitol, **24 hours prior to the hearing**”.)

Public Access Room also accepts testimony, makes the necessary copies, and delivers them to the hearing. To utilize this option, email your testimony as an attachment to the Public Access Room at [testimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:testimony@capitol.hawaii.gov), and include same information as above. If submitting testimony via email, please do not also submit through other avenues.

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### SENATE MAY END DEALS BETWEEN DRUG COMPANIES THAT DELAY GENERIC ALTERNATIVES

Key senators from both political parties say they would back legislation that would stop drug makers from striking deals to restrict the introduction of cheaper generic drugs. According to Reuters, the bill planned by Democrats **Patrick Leahy** (D-VT) and **Herb Kohl** (D-WI) targets an increasingly common tactic used by brand-name drug makers—“legal settlements that involve payments to generic rivals to delay the introduction of generic alternatives.” The deals cheat Americans of billions of dollars in savings, regulators on Wednesday told lawmakers seeking to ban the arrangements. The Federal Trade

Commission (FTC) and others allege the settlements allow brand-name pharmaceutical companies to pay off would-be generic competitors, which then agree to delay introduction of their less costly but otherwise identical versions of the original medicines. The FTC issued a report on Wednesday, coinciding with a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on the topic, that shows the settlements have become more common since two 2005 appeals court decisions upheld their legality. Typically, a generic manufacturer makes more from such a payment than it would from actually selling its version of a drug.

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**Centenarian Certificates:** Not long ago, reaching 100 years old was a milestone for only a few. Now, more people are taking care of their health and living to be 100, and Elderly Affairs Division would like their families to know that their centenarian may be honored with a Certificate signed by Mayor Mufi Hannemann, accompanied by a Letter of Congratulations from Karen Miyake, Honolulu County EAD. EAD invites anyone who may know of a centenarian to call 523-4545 and provide the name, address, date of birth of the senior, a telephone number and Point of Contact so that EAD may send a Certificate to acknowledge the milestone accomplishment.

“To talk with elders—give the time and attention you would give to other friends.” *Betsy Wiener, M.D.*



20 South Vineyard Blvd.  
 Honolulu HI 96813  
 www.kokuacouncil.org

**Hawaii's Voice for a Better Future**

**Who Are We?**

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. There is a \$5 annual membership to defray printing and postage costs. At each meeting, topical issues are presented for discussion and possible action. 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. **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

**Mission:** "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. "

President	Larry Geller, 540-1928, lgeller@igc.org	Treasurer Ed. Fund	T.J. Davies tjdavies@juno.com
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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.

<b>INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS</b>	<b>LIFE MEMBER</b>	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS</b>	<b>DONATIONS</b> _____
___\$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