

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us for lunch  
MONDAY, October 22, 2007

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
NOTE EXTENDED TIME

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

**AGENDA:**

- 11:30 Luncheon: Govinda Vegetarian Buffet, Brown Rice, and salad, Dessert by Eloise. \$5.00 donation
- 11:45 Welcome, Introductions and Remarks, *Larry Geller*
- 12:00 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Legislative Community Forum: Round table discussion by key government administrators, legislators and community advocates. BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!**
- 1:15 Vote for Kokua Council 2007 legislative Priorities
- 1:30 Adjourn.

Luncheon Host: Norita Nelson

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

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**SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON: What in the World is Going on with Medicare?**

Pamela Cunningham, Sage PLUS

Medicare's attempt to give choices to Social Security beneficiaries has resulted in an overwhelming 9 private insurance companies offering 16 various policies called Medicare Advantage Plans and 46 offering prescription drug plan options. Each one may have different benefits, co-pays and deductibles. Sage PLUS' job is to help people narrow the choices to which one is best suited to their needs if they decide to change from original Medicare. If you wish to choose a new plan you can do so only once a year from November 15 – December 31; with the new plan starting January 1. Cunningham suggests considering the criteria below when considering a change. Sage Plus will also help you file an appeal if you are denied any benefits. Call 586-7299 for information and help and/or use [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) "compare Health Plans."

1. Will I gain any benefits from the new plan?
2. Is my current plan something that I can change? (If it is offered through a retirement package, you may have fewer options and need to check with the company's plan administrator).
3. What will my out of pocket expenses be if I am in the hospital, my doctor visit, use ambulance service?
4. Do my doctors, hospitals and other providers understand and work with the new plan?
5. Do I pay more if I go to a doctor or facility outside the plans network? Does the plan have a network?
6. If the plan provides drug coverage—are the prescription drugs that I take covered by the plan? Does it work at my pharmacy choices?

## Letter to Editor

For many years, I have had supplemental health insurance through Michigan Public Schools Employees Retirement System. Early this year, the Blue-Cross-Blue Shield of Michigan sent me a new card for Medicare Advantage. Since then, most of my medical bills have been delayed or rejected. The reason is the plan is too cumbersome. Instead of going first to Medicare, which sets its payment, and then to the private insurer, it goes to the insurer. Then they send it to Medicare. Since the Medicare Advantage program can't process its payments for benefits until Medicare responds, the delay is impracticable. Moreover, the health care providers weren't informed of the new process. Currently, medical bills from early in the year are still being processed. Imagine if hospitals have to reject or expel patients for unpaid bills. This procedure is foolish and will never work -- unless this is a plan intended to privatize Medicare, charge higher fees to patients, and give more money to insurers. In either case, it should be replaced. *Jerome G. Manis*

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## PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING ADVOCACY ISSUES

### CRITERIA

- Issues must be timely and compatible with our Mission Statement.
- There must be a lead advocate plus support capacity to pursue the issue.
- We should target no more than four issues at any legislative session, but should be flexible enough to consider critical issues emerging during the legislative session.
- We have identified and will utilize the following levels of legislative advocacy: serving as lead advocate for an issue, and mobilizing full support; support for an issue where others take the lead in championing that issue; endorsing an issue, by writing support letters or signing off on testimony. In addition, Kokua Council will provide members with information only about some issues, without taking formal positions on them.
- The process for selecting legislative issues will be as follows: members, as will churches and other organizations will be polled to identify issues of concern; the Legislative Committee will sort through issues proposed for formal action, and recommend a legislative agenda to the Board of Directors; the Board will make the final decisions on the legislative agenda.
- The Board of Directors recognizes that some legislative issues take years to achieve closure, and will consider these annually for possible supportive action.

### Process and Timeline for Choosing Legislative Priorities

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| October  | Board will prepare community forum and ballot to present to members.   |
| November | Newsletter will print suggestions from speakers.   |
| December | Board will categorize priorities according to levels of advocacy (see above) and assign lead advocate.   |
| January  | Members will choose level of activity to support priorities. Lead advocate will prepare talking points for use in preparing testimony, training, telephoning legislators, and letters to editor; lead advocate will assemble teams for support of issue. If there is enough interest, a training session will be scheduled to prepare people for visits to legislators, preparing testimony, and testifying. |

### LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is mandated through the Older Americans Act of 1965, and now through our own statute (HB807) passed recently in the 2007 legislative session, to advocate for residents of licensed nursing homes, adult residential care homes and assisted living facilities. Our goal is to have an ombudsman representative assigned in each of these facilities. If you may be interested in training to become a volunteer or want to know more about the LTCOP, please call John G. McDermott at 923-8829.

### ITEMS OF INTEREST

• *Consumer Reports*, in a recent issue stated, "Long Term Care Insurance policies are too risky and expensive for most people. Some of the insurers who sell such policies are financially weak and premiums sometimes increase considerably, forcing policyholders to drop their coverage before they ever have a chance to use it."

- U.S. Census Bureau figures indicate that the population of 100-year-olds living in the U.S. was only 66,000 in 1999. However, by 2050, the Bureau projects that number to increase to 834,000 (courtesy of the San Diego, California-area's *North County Times* newspaper).

- On a recent NBC talk show "Meet The Press," former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, weighed in on Social Security. "Social Security is not (in) a big crisis. We're approximately 2 percentage points of payroll short over the very long run. It's a significant closing of the gap, but it's doable, and doable in any number of ways," Mr. Greenspan stated. He expressed far greater concern about Medicare.

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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

**One Voice for Livable Islands** is promoting two free training opportunities for members of the public who would like to become involved in helping to ensure that Oahu is a bicycle and pedestrian friendly island. Participation in each workshop is limited to 40 so if you are interested in participating in one or both of these workshops, please call 545-6008 or email [onevoicehawaii@gmail.com](mailto:onevoicehawaii@gmail.com) at your earliest convenience to request your space in the training.

### **Workshop #1: Designing Healthy Neighborhoods Around Transportation**

Saturday, October 27, 2007, Ala Moana Hotel, Ilima Room, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (lunch provided)

**Workshop #2: Creating Great Communities through Public Involvement.** Choose one of the following two sessions. Both workshops are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with lunch.

Saturday, November 3, 2007, John A. Burns School of Medicine, UH Manoa, Room TBD

Tuesday, November 6, 2007, Ala Moana Hotel, Carnation Room

**Saturday, October 27: Aging in Place Workshop/Fair**, Ala Moana Hotel, 9:00a.m.-2:00p.m. Speakers will present information and resources. Vendors and service providers will have booths. Free, thanks to corporate sponsors. Registration is not necessary but limited seating for panel discussions. For more information, call Tony Wong, 535-7600.

These two FREE workshops are for all Hawaii nonprofit advocates. RSVP to attend either or both.

**"Ethical Lobbying in Hawaii"** will be presented from 8:30 to 11 a.m., on **Tuesday, November 13**, at the Capitol Auditorium. This workshop is designed for nonprofit advocates, attorneys, consultants and others who work with the Legislature to develop public policy. Hear ethics experts explain how to lobby within the rules. RSVP by November 1 – space is limited. Questions? Call Melissa Pavlicek, (808) 523-3695. Presenters include:

Ann Bailey, chief counsel of the California State Senate Legislative Ethics Committee

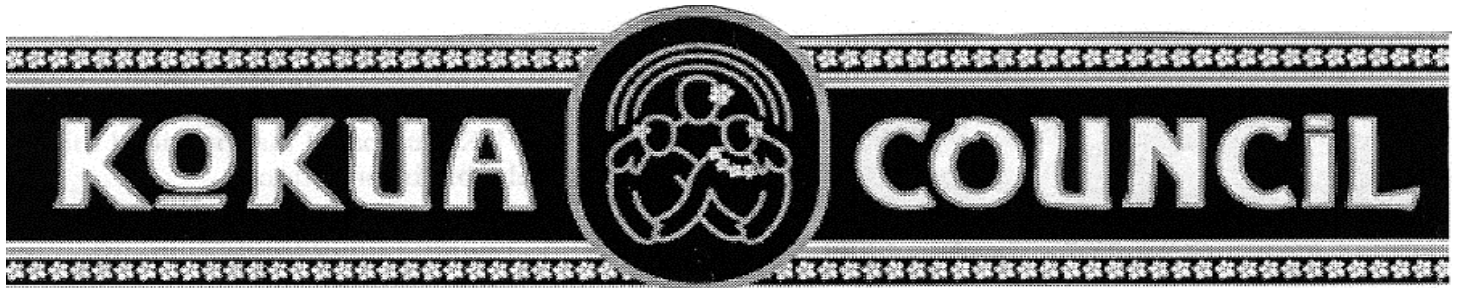
Daniel J. Mollway, executive director and general counsel, Hawaii State Ethics Commission

Charles Totto, executive director and legal counsel of the Honolulu Ethics Commission

**"Building Coalitions and Political Power for Nonprofits"** will answer questions, such as: How can we build authentic, lasting, effective coalitions in the competitive world of nonprofits? What are key characteristics of honest coalitions, which honor the autonomy of agencies and dignity of individuals while creating an environment for collaboration and cooperation? What mentalities must nonprofits adopt to build real power for social change?

From 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Capitol Auditorium, HANO presents Timothy J. Schmaltz, MSW, coordinator of Protecting Arizona's Family Coalition, a diverse alliance of social and health agencies, faith based groups and community organizations dedicated to protecting and increasing health and human services funding in that state. Benefit from the experience of real coalition building—the struggles, the fragile nature of relationships, the successes, the failures and strengths necessary to succeed in the world of power politics. RSVP by November 1. For more information, contact Sally Ley, [sley@hano-hawaii.org](mailto:sley@hano-hawaii.org), (808) 529-0455.

*"Normal is one damned thing after another. Neurotic is the same damned thing all the time."*



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## COMMUNITY FORUM

Public Invited

Free

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 11:30 - 1:30**

THE HARRIS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,  
Miyama Main Hall  
Nuuanu and South Vineyard Blvd.  
Ample parking - driveway off Nuuanu

Panel discussion by key government administrators, and legislators followed by community advocates.

CAMPAIGN REFORM, CAREGIVER SUPPORT, AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
ELDER ABUSE, HAWAII RX PROGRAM, LONG TERM CARE

Representatives from nonprofit and other organizations involved with seniors as well as advocacy groups who have needs/concerns that can be helped legislatively or by other means will present their issues.

### **Please Join Us for Lunch!**

11:30 a.m. Luncheon - \$5.00 donation

*Govinda Vegetarian Buffet, Salad, Desserts from Eloise, Drinks*

To reserve a lunch or

**For more information call or Laura Manis, 597-8838**



c/o Harris United Methodist Church  
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.  
 Honolulu, HI 96813

### 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
Vice President	Tony Lenzer, 261-2095, tlenzer@hawaii.rr.com	Treasurer Advocacy	Evelyn Shepard, 595-4025
Vice President	Laura Manis, 597-8838, manis@lava.net	General Info	Eloise Monsarrat, 839-1545
Secretary	Betty Sugarman, 261-8936, betty333@lava.net		
Newsletter	Jeanne Y. Ohta, 373-3186, jyohta@hawaii.rr.com	Website:	www.kokuacouncil.org

### 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