



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

September 2005

**Please Join Us for Lunch!**

**Monday, September 26, 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 – Chili, Salad, Drinks, Dessert by Eloise \$5.00 donation
- 11:45 Welcome, Introductions and remarks, Larry Geller, President
- 11: 50 **Program: “Working Together to End Homelessness in Hawaii”**. Laura Thielen, Executive Director, Affordable Housing and Homeless Alliance
- 12:45 Announcements
- 1:00 Adjourn

Lunch Host: Grace Furukawa

**BOARD MEETING: 10:00 A.M. PRECEDING LUNCH**

**Notes from August Meeting:**

**Financial Exploitation *with Lei Shimizu & Calvin Lum***

**The Law:** Wrongful or negligent taking, withholding, misappropriation, or use of a dependent adult’s money, real or personal property.

**Signs of Financial Exploitation:**

Unprecedented transfer of assets from dependent adult to another; drastic changes in bank accounts; frequency or amount of withdrawals; withdrawals from automated banking machines when the person cannot get to the bank machine; caregiver receives frequent expensive gifts from elder; caregivers name has been added to bank account; elder signs on a loan; checks frequently made out to “cash;” numerous unpaid bills; signatures do not resemble elder’s or adult cannot write.

*To Find Help, call Adult Protective Services, 832-5115, no need to leave name*

**ABOUT THIS MONTH’S SPEAKER**

**Laura E. Thielen:** Executive Director of Affordable Housing and Homeless Alliance, January 2005 to present. The Alliance is an advocacy agency focused on creating and maintaining affordable housing throughout Hawaii; it educates policy makers on issues relating to homelessness and affordable housing; and administers variety of grants from HUD and other entities.

Previous employment: Kalihi-Palama Health Center/Health Care for the Homeless Project, Project Coordinator July 2000-September 2004; Case Manager/Quality Assurance Worker June 1998-July 2000;

Hawaii State Legislature, Research Analyst, January 1998-May 1998. She has also covered the Human Services and Housing and Health Committees for the minority caucus in the House of Representatives and wrote speeches and conducted research for members of the House.

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### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT *Larry Geller*

Breakfast table conversation at our place this morning: "Honey, if the tsunami sirens started sounding right now, are we ready for a disaster?" Response: "No."

We do have toilet paper, but we have no food or water put away, and while I know there are batteries, a flashlight and a portable radio around here someplace, I'd have to go digging to find them. By that time, we'd be looking at water rising outside the windows.

Moving from the personal, is Hawai'i ready for a disaster? How do we know? How do we check? Have we been given emergency directions recently on what to do? Sure, there's some stuff in the phone books, but these days, not everyone has a phone book and who reads them anyway.

On a Federal level, it's clear that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has let New Orleans and the Southern states down big time. It may be relevant that (according to the *Boston Herald*, September 3) "The federal official in charge of the bungled New Orleans rescue was fired from his last private-sector job overseeing horse shows." It appears that Mike Brown got his

job, according to the report, because he was a leading GOP activist. He had no specific experience that would qualify him to head up FEMA.

We need to know who is in charge in Hawai'i and why we are not hearing regularly about disaster planning, including both what we need to do as individuals and what the state is doing. What will happen when power fails at hospitals, nursing homes, police stations and other facilities?

There are many significant questions to be answered, only a few of which have even been asked. For example, Senator Gordon Trimble has repeatedly questioned the wisdom of locating a biochemical laboratory facility in the Kaka'ako Peninsula, yet it is there, and we have no idea of the risk it poses in the event that a tsunami or powerful storm releases its biological toxins into the environment.

If there is any benefit to the tragedy still unfolding in New Orleans, let it be that it goads us into considering and improving our own preparedness.

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### PATIENT'S RIGHTS

You can:

Refuse treatment;

Almost always leave when you are ready to;

Might be able to have better food brought in from the outside;

Wear your own clothes;

Limit visits by chaplains, friends, even family members;

Refuse to have residents troop through your room on rounds.

"No one knows what you want until you say so." *Irene Zbicak, Society for Health Consumer Advocacy*

### Good Web Site *Tony Lenzer*

[www.NIHSeniorHealth.gov](http://www.NIHSeniorHealth.gov) has a wide range of health topics, but is especially valuable for the visually or hearing impaired. The site has large text to begin with, but it also has a button to increase text size if needed, together with another button to provide contrasting colors (instead of black letters on a white background, it offers yellow letters on a black background). In addition, the reader also has the opportunity to hear any of the text segments.

## PUBLIC MEETING

### HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

State Capitol Auditorium

October 15, 9:30 to noon

### FIND OUT HOW TO STOP HEALTH INSURANCE RAISES, WORRYING ABOUT THE CAP, CANADIANS CUT HEALTH CARE COSTS BY ONE-THIRD

*Sponsored by Kokua Council and Healthcare for all Coalition*

### ARE MEDICARE PART B PREMIUMS GOING UP AGAIN? A Message from AARP

Medicare Part B premiums could increase for three years in a row. The biggest increase in history occurred last year when the premiums increased 17%. The premiums could go up again in 2006 to \$89 a month.

It could happen because of increased Medicare payments to physicians. While AARP believes doctors should be paid fairly for their services, Medicare beneficiaries should not be expected to bear excessive increases in out-of-pocket spending. Older Americans are willing to pay their fair share, but the increase would come at a time when they are already paying more for their health care.

AARP is prepared to work with Congress to find ways to prevent more increases in beneficiary premiums.

### Error messages seen on the computer screens in Japan where they are written in Haiku

#### Aren't these better than "your computer has performed an illegal operation"?

Chaos reigns within.  
Reflect, repent and reboot.  
Order shall return.

A crash reduces  
Your expensive computer  
To a simple stone.

Program aborting:  
Close all that you have worked on.  
You ask far too much.

Three things are certain:  
Death, taxes and lost data.  
Guess which has occurred.

Windows NT crashed.  
I am the Blue Screen of Death.  
No one hears your screams.

You step in the stream,  
But the water has moved on.  
This page is not here.

Yesterday it worked.  
Today it is not working.  
Windows is like that.

Out of memory.  
We wish to hold the whole sky,  
But we never will.

Your file was so big.  
It might be very useful.  
But now it is gone.

Having been erased,  
The document you're seeking  
Must now be retyped.

Stay the patient course.  
Of little worth is your ire.  
The network is down.

Serious error.  
All shortcuts have disappeared.  
Screen. Mind. Both are blank.

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. There is a \$5 annual membership to defer 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. "

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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

\_\_\_\$5.00

LIFE MEMBER

\_\_\_\$100.00

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

\_\_\_\$25.00

DONATIONS \_\_\_\_\_

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