



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us for lunch
MONDAY, September 25, 2006

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: Various Subway Sandwiches, salad, Dessert by Eloise. \$5.00 donation

11:45 Welcome, Introductions and Remarks, *Tony Lenzer, Vice-President*

12:00 Program: Kat Brady: Women Behind Bars

12:45 Announcements

1:00 Adjourn

Luncheon Host:

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

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Kat Brady serves as Coordinator of the Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative working on developing effective interventions for Hawaii's offenders and to improve the quality of justice in Hawaii. She is the only community member of the Judiciary Intermediate Sanctions Working Group and is a justice advocate who is actively engaged in bringing the community voice into venues where it has rarely been heard. She also works to increase public participation into reforming public policy. Her areas of focus include environmental, cultural, gender, juvenile and social justice issues.

NOTES FROM AUGUST MEETING – DISASTER PLANNING

Hurricane Katrina taught the entire country a lot of painful lessons about hurricane preparedness, and the tough job of evacuating the elderly, sick and disabled. While the Federal and State appropriated funds to plan and prepare here, the two disasters last winter, sewage spills on Oahu and the dam breaking on Kauai diverted some of the money. Most activity is in the planning stage.

"(We) at least identified 30 public facilities mostly schools, across the state that we can start designating and then equipping as a special needs shelter," Teixeira said. The idea is that Farrington and other large high

schools, like Castle and Kaimuki, have lots of space and a full-service cafeteria, so they have the room to accommodate both the general public and those with special needs.

In the meantime, if you live in condos, find out what is planned to prepare for disasters. If you live in homes and have to evacuate (or condos) here is what they suggest you need to have ready. Will you need help? Who are the people who can help you? Before you leave your home, turn off the utilities, take along an inventory or pictures of your possessions, vital records, insurance coverage, 3-5 day supply of food, water, medications, flashlight, toilet paper, batteries, radio, sleeping gear packed in something you can carry or wheel. If you have a caregiver, she should accompany you with enough supplies of her own. Notify family or friends where you will be.

It will take years to fully implement an effective disaster program. With new housing developments and schools being built as the population grows, the plans must be constantly revised.

Civil Defense can always use volunteers and will train. Call 523-4121 if interested.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER: Sitting on Top of the Hill Larry Geller

The race for Hawaii's 2nd Congressional seat has been dominated by one bit of ugliness—the younger challenger thinks the incumbent is too old to serve in Congress. I wonder, if he succeeds in the election, will he remove himself from office when he reaches the same age, and give up his seniority just so a younger person can move in? Of course not. By the time Ed Case reaches Daniel Akaka's age, he'll likely accumulate something called "wisdom" and realize the folly of his earlier argument.

Age is an issue elsewhere on the November ballot. There is a State Constitutional amendment to remove an arbitrary and discriminatory limit on the age of state justices and judges. Kokua Council strongly recommends that its members support this amendment. Look for it on your ballot and please vote "yes."

Hawaii presently requires that judges retire at 70. This is not only a violation of civil liberties but also a waste of valuable judicial talent, experience,

Ed. Other ways to review fitness of judges regardless of age. The Judicial Selection Commission reviews judges who wish to continue in office at the end of each term. This review includes an examination of the judge's performance and solicitation of public comment. The Hawaii Commission on Judicial Conduct investigates reports of judicial misconduct.

and yes, wisdom. There are plenty of examples here, on the Mainland, and around the world of judges and other professionals (even members of Congress) serving way past that age.

Some of the most learned opinions are penned by, well, the most learned judges, not the ones springing fresh from a few years of law practice. We have a special name in Hawaii for our respected elders: *kupuna*.

Each of the cultures that comprise our community has a history of respect for those who are able and willing to carry on with their jobs when they could instead be comfortably retired. We don't believe in discarding the valuable resource they represent. If someone is good at what they do, let them continue to serve. We should recognize that they are not "over the hill" but are in fact sitting on top of it.

So vote "yes" to remove age discrimination in the judiciary.

KUPUNA CAUCUS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS- September 1

Legislators Ihara, Chun Oakland, Stevens, Arakaki, Theilen and a roomful of administrators and advocates, listened to four presentations that will be taken into consideration for introduction to the 2007 legislature. The last meeting considered change to the Adult Protective Law.

Marya Grambs, Exec. Dir. Mental Health Association of Hawaii: **The Personal Needs**

Allowance of \$30 per month has been the same since 1986 while the cost of living has increased tremendously. The PNA goes to Care Home Clients and nursing home patients on government support o pay for clothing, toiletry, transportation, entertainment, and over-the-counter medication. An increase to \$50 as provided by many other states and is recommended.

Sesnita Moepono, Atty. Power of Attorney.
Suggested using New York's bill as a model, since our bill is open to abuse by allowing self-gifting to appointed agent, no accountability of expenditures, no record of revoking or changing of person assigned as agent.

Lloyd Lam, Office of Insurance Commissioner for Health Insurance. Oversight of health insurance sunset in the last legislative session and should be reinstated. The oversight insured that there would be no unreasonable raises in premium

rates, solvency of companies, and no undercutting of rates to drive out other insurers. (*Kokua Council was instrumental in passing the original bill.*)

Sarah Robinson, Prepaid Funeral Plans.

Services and products contracted at time of purchase may not be available at time of need and higher prices items are often the only products available. The plan keeps 30% upon cancellation even if no services are provided, while the mortuary keeps interest and money earned through investment of you payment

Next meeting will be October 6, 1:30, Room 229 State Capitol.

COMING EVENTS

Preparations for the elections and the 2007 legislative session are in full swing. Not only are there candidate forums but following the format of the Silver Legislature, many government agencies and nonprofit advocacy organizations are going out to communities to find out the concerns of citizens. Below is a list of meetings. All are free and open to the public. You might like to put your ideas into the pot and at the same time become more informed.

- September 19. State Capitol, Room 325. PABEA sponsors community listening session, 9-11 am
 - September 23 Primary Elections. GO VOTE!!
 - September 25 Kokua Council Luncheon Meeting, "Women Behind Bars." Open Public Meeting, Lunch if desired. See page one for information.
 - October 4, Hale Koa Hotel, 11:30 lunch if desired. Noon program. "AARP members Question the Candidates"
 - October 6, Kupuna Caucus, State Capitol, Room 229, 1:30
 - October 23, Kokua Council, Community Forum. Harris Methodist Church. Community advocates, government as well as nonprofits will explain and ask for support for their issues (3 minutes each).
 - November 3, Kupuna Caucus, State Capitol, Room 229, 1:30
 - November 7, General Election, GO VOTE!!!!
 - November 13, 14 Hawaii Pacific Gerontology Society, Hawaii Convention Center
 - November, TBA, Kokua Council meeting at Hawaii Public Radio, "Health Care Crisis"
 - December 1, Kupuna Caucus, State Capitol, Room 229, 1:30
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LETTERS

Dear Mr. Geller,

I recently read in the Advertiser about Kokua Council meeting with State of Hawaii officials regarding our preparedness for the next hurricane. I believe more should be done to prepare us.

SB960, which was made into law by the 2005 legislature (they overturned the Governor's veto) provided funding for individuals who wished to improve their homes for emergency shelters.

You might want to check it out. You should get a reprint directly from the Hawaii State Legislature website, http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/splsession2005/status/acts_list.htm and contact your senator or representative to find out how you could go about qualifying for the funds.

Nelson Yoshimoto

Ed. Note. SB960: Appropriates funds for tsunami and hurricane preparedness efforts including updating maps, installing and maintaining alarm sirens, constructing additional shelter space, retrofitting public shelters, developing residential safe room design standards, mitigation, shared mitigation grants, providing around-the-clock alert staff, and expanding public education campaigns. Appropriates funds from the Hawaii hurricane relief fund and improves the loss mitigation grant.



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
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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	
___\$5.00	___\$100.00	___\$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