



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us for lunch

MONDAY, July 27, 2009

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, Drinks, Dessert by Eloise, \$5.00 Donation

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

12:00 Program: Patricia Urieff, Grandparents Raising Grandparents: Problems and Issues.
MSW, ACSW, LSW, employed with twenty-four years of experience providing social work services to children and families including grandparents raising grandchildren.

Questions and Answers

12:50 Announcements

1:00 Adjourn

Board meeting: 10:00 a.m. preceding lunch.

HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE

The season begins June 1 and goes through November. The experts are predicting a normal season of 3-5 tropical cyclones forming in the Central Pacific Ocean. Plan NOW for emergency evacuation plans, stocking up on food and water, survival kits, flashlights, radios, batteries and personal medications.

**KOKUA COUNCIL BOARD VOTES TO RECOGNIZE FILM MAKERS
MARC DELORME AND AUDREY KUBOTA**

By expressing support for the "**Graying of Hawaii**" film's main points and appreciation for what they accomplished (despite many obstacles). The filmmakers are making copies of the DVDs available free to be distributed at our luncheon meetings. See next page.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT, *Larry Geller, President*

The Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans (HARA) and the Kokua Council are very pleased to provide you with a just-released DVD at our luncheon meetings of an independent documentary entitled *The Graying of Hawaii*. This 56 min. local production, recently broadcast on PBS Hawaii, will offer you a stimulating exploration of the demographic shift that is at our doorstep and the challenges and opportunities this shift offers our community.

How will we solve a long-term care crisis that is already here? How long can we continue to rely on family caregiving to make up for a lack of services? How do we develop home and community-based services in order to support aging-in-place at home? These are just a sample of

concerns being raised as people question the ability of our community to support one of the fastest growing senior populations in the country.

Clearly, a dialogue needs to occur in order to reassure Hawaii residents that government is doing all it can to meet basic senior, family and community needs and that administrations are working on formulating policy to address this demographic shift.

As always, HARA and the Kokua Council stand ready to engage in this dialogue. We hope that you will find insight in the documentary and we look forward to a greater discussion on dealing rationally and caringly for seniors who help build our community.

NOTES FROM JUNE LUNCHEON

Tony Lenzer, Vice Chair, attended the Alliance of Retired Americans national convention in Washington D.C. The attendees lobbied their representatives for: establishing a public plan option to compete against private health insurance plans; maintaining tax-free health care benefits; and creating the opportunity for early retirees (ages 55-64) to buy into Medicare. Other items on the agenda: repealing the prohibition against Medicare negotiating volume discounts with pharmaceutical companies; ending taxpayer subsidies to private insurance companies that run Medicare Advantage programs; and including the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Act in health care reform to help Americans with the daunting costs of long-term care.

Pat Stanley spoke briefly about the Democratic Party Kupuna Caucus and their testifying in the State Legislature for bills supporting Senior Centers, stimulus funds for health care, coverage for uninsured transparency of care facility inspections on the internet.

Marc Delorme and Audrey Kubota, filmmakers of "Graying of Hawaii" were recognized and in response to questions, spoke of the trials and roadblocks in making the film. The TV station received 65 phone calls, 12 emails, and 5 tweets. "That," they said, "is a huge response for their programs."

Main Speaker **Stuart Ho, Chair of the Legislative LTC Commission**: The Commission will explore four areas: management, currently different government departments handle separate pieces of financing and services; effect on workforce, employers have stake in this because too many of their employees lose work time by caregiving; economic issues, informal caregivers now save state millions of dollars but bear burden themselves, providers of services, waitlists, beds, workers.

The first year was spent in raising money to pay the expenses of the commission, i.e. researchers. They have accomplished this mostly from commission members. They have had focus groups to help identify the problems. The next step is research, where we stand, where to go; and finally, how to finance a program.

Congressman Neil Abercrombie will be speaking to the PABEA (Policy Advisory Board for Elderly Affairs) Legislative Committee on Friday, August 7, 2009 at 9:30am, room 406 at the Executive Office on Aging offices, 250 S. Hotel Street. Meetings are open to the public.

MESSAGE FROM WASHINGTON: PREPARING FOR THE FLU SEASON

From Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security, and Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, who are leading the efforts to prepare our Nation for the coming flu season.

We are making every effort to have a safe and effective vaccine available for distribution as soon as possible, but our current estimate is that it won't be ready before mid-October. This makes individual prevention even more critical. Wash your hands regularly. Take the necessary precautions to stay healthy and if you do get sick, stay home from work or school.

We are doing everything possible to prepare for the fall flu season and encourage all Americans to do the same — this is a shared responsibility and now is the time to prepare. Please visit Flu.gov to learn what steps you can take to prepare and do your part to mitigate the effects of H1N1.

Age Survey Looks at “How Old People Feel”

The older people become, the younger they feel and the more likely they are to see “old age” as a time occurring later in life, according to a national study. The New York Times reported on the survey on Wednesday. The Pew Research Center surveyed approximately 3,000 adults 18 and older via land and cellular telephone lines in February and March of this year. The study found that most adults over age 50 feel at least 10 years younger than their actual age. One-third of those between 65 and 74 said they felt 10 to 19 years younger, and one-sixth of people 75 and older said they felt 20 years younger.

On average, survey respondents said old age begins at 68. However, few people over 65 agreed; they said that old age begins at 75. Respondents under 30 said that 60 marks the beginning of old age. The researchers also asked young adults what they expect aging to be like and older Americans how it really is. Younger people tend to think growing old will be worse than seniors report, the researchers found. Older adults said they had experienced the negative aspects of aging—including illness, loneliness and financial difficulty —far less often than younger people anticipated. But older participants also said they found less time for family and leisure activities than younger adults expected they would when they reach old age.

Senate Panel Questions Private Insurers' Credibility, Shows Need for a Public Plan

As the public health plan option, adamantly opposed by insurers, is considered in the Senate, the Senate Commerce Committee released a report last week exposing greedy and dishonest acts by insurance companies. The report showed the industry's obvious motives to profiteer at the expense of sick people. Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Jay Rockefeller IV (D-WV) released the findings as part of a multi-pronged assault on the credibility of private insurers and as evidence of the need for a public plan.

The Committee also heard testimonials last week from three health care specialists, including the former vice president of communications at big insurer Cigna. Witnesses stated that insurers sell "junk" policies that do not cover needed care.

Moreover, insurers have deliberately instilled confusion upon consumers by using Ingenix, a subsidiary of UnitedHealth, in order to systematically underpay for out-of-network care, placing an additional burden on many patients who pay higher premiums in order to use doctors and hospitals outside their insurer's network. As a result, consumers have paid billions of dollars in medical bills that were supposed to be paid by insurers.



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WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

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 advocates and 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.,
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