



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR LUNCH**

**Monday, MARCH 22, 2010**

**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: Vegetable, Meat Lasagna, Salad, and Dessert by Eloise**—\$5.00 Donation

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

**12:00 Program: Project Dana, “Caregiving is Everybody’s Business.”** Rose Nakamura, founder and administrator, and **Karen Ginoza**, Harris United Methodist volunteer. Project Dana is an interfaith program to connect older members of the community with volunteers who provide companionship, run errands, and generally embody the Buddhist principle after which the project is named. “*Dana* is about extending compassion and care, without any reward or recognition,” says Nakamura, who for 20 years has done just that. Harris UMC has recently joined the Project Dana network made up of 33 churches and temples and growing...

12:30 Questions and Answers

12:45 Announcements

1:00 Adjourn

**Lunch Host: Doug Kreider**

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

**DON'T FORGET!**

Time to pay your 2010 Kokua Council Dues—look at your address label to see the last payment date. Individual dues continue to be \$5.00, Lifetime \$100, Organization \$25.

Send payments to:

Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard, Honolulu HI 96813.

Donations are welcome.

Check our website at [www.kokuacouncil.org](http://www.kokuacouncil.org)

Winner of the gift card for Consolidated Theaters is Eleanor Moe!  
Thank you, Eleanor for participating in Caregiver Day and completing our survey.

## NOTES FROM FEBRUARY MEETING

"Together We Can" Elizabeth Bethea

Bethea has a degree in Social Work and has been an activist for 40 years. After only seven weeks under her belt as Director of the Elderly Affairs Division (EAD) of the City and County of Honolulu, she sees one of her duties is to bridge the gap of the different departments involved in providing services for the elderly. She has worked in a care home and understands the problems involved in caregiving. She believes that a website for posting inspections of care homes is necessary service for families and is exploring what would be involved in creating the website and its legal ramifications.

In order to bring the waitlist down for KUPUNA CARE, the department will need more funds from the Legislature. A bill, SB2469 EMERGENCY AND BUDGET RESERVE FUND (rainy day fund) includes additional funds for Kupuna Care as well as funding for many other health and social services is now before the legislature and needs letters of support. (*Kokua Council is supporting this bill and asks its members to send letters of support to their legislators in both Houses with specific reference to Kupuna Care.*) The one-stop center (ADRC) has a site now at Leahi Hospital staffed by a live person to help access services. She also plans to reconvene an advisory council for community input and advice.

## HELP FROM THE FEDS

As of the end of January, Hawaii received \$1.26 billion in federal obligations. Over \$300 million has been allocated to reduce the tax burden for about 500,000 workers in Hawaii. And, they are seeing it in a larger "take-home" paycheck. Over 60,000 people have received extended unemployment benefits.

Over \$262 million in shovel-ready infrastructure projects have been let in Hawaii,

with hundreds of millions more on the way. Here are a few highlights of what's under construction:

- \$20.3 million for a bridge replacement on Kamehameha Highway at Punaluu Stream in Punaluu, Oahu
- \$31.9 million to upgrade the electronic baggage screening system at Honolulu and Kahului airports
- \$20.7 million to improve the runway at the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai
- \$9.6 million to build a new Visitor Emergency Operations Center at Volcanoes National Park and to renovate the federal building in Hilo

## ADVOCACY FOR JUSTICE AWARD

Inaugural Recipient: Kat Brady & Community Alliance on Prisons

Community Alliance on Prisons is pleased to announce that Kat Brady and the community initiative she has coordinated for more than a decade was the first recipient of the Advocacy for Justice Award at the Critical Criminology & Justice Studies Mini-Conference on Thursday, February 4, 2010 at the Ala Moana Hotel.

Renowned UH Manoa criminologist Meda Chesney-Lind, who nominated Community Alliance on Prisons for the award said, "Kat Brady is admirable and this is a well deserved award for all the untold hours she has worked on behalf of those who have so little access to the corridors of power. She has spoken with and for them, and does it tirelessly and with good humor (and most of all) persistence."

Sen. Will Espero, Chair of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs said, "Kat has definitely earned this special award. Her initiative and tireless efforts is a model for commitment and dedication to a cause. She is an effective advocate."

The total number of House members not seeking re-election in 2010 as of February is 32. Of those, 18 are Republicans, and 14 are Democrats.

## **NEW RULES NOW IN EFFECT FOR CREDIT CARD COMPANIES**

The new rules mean that credit card companies can no longer retroactively increase rates, charge misleading late fees, or use over-limit fee traps. A provision that Senator Akaka authored requires credit card companies to tell consumers how long it would take and how much interest they would pay if they pay only the minimum required payment. His language also requires companies to disclose the minimum payment needed to get out of debt in 36 months and will provide information for consumers to access reputable credit counseling assistance.

### **SAFEGUARD NUMBER #1: IF YOU HAVE A PRE-PAID FUNERAL TRUST**

It is best to keep it but:

- Make sure your next of kin or other relatives have a copy
- Explain to them that the purpose of the plan is to guarantee the cost of the funeral
- If the funeral director or the cemetery asks for more money to pay for anything more, refuse to pay it

If you are considering buying one; consider all the options: opening a designated savings account (you keep the interest); using present savings; donating your body to U.H. Medical School.

*Illinois has the first ever cemetery oversight board and has just started to meet. The board is among the safeguards enacted to protect the public from deceptive and unfair practices by cemeteries.*

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### **SURVEY RESULTS—25 respondents**

1. What do you think the governor and legislators should do to meet this economic crisis?

Cut salaries of high pay government officials and higher taxes on the most wealthy  
Cut unnecessary items but keep direct services, get more transformational grants  
Make Kupuna Care an election issue

2. Have you been effected? Yes: 19 No: 6

How?

Increases in cost of living, taxes, unemployed, getting behind on bills, had to get welfare, less business & cancellation of contracts, affected dental coverage, money for college

3. What issues are of greatest concern to seniors?

Affordable health care (10), financial stability, long term care, financing care giving, grandparents part in keeping families together, education for caregivers, social services to keep Kupuna active and engaged, tax benefits for caregivers, lack of support from Executive Office on Aging.

### **MORE ON RAINY DAY FUND**

We must continue to urge legislators to preserve the Rainy Day fund, SB2469, for its intended purpose, that is, maintenance of safety net health and human service programs. The Rainy Day law specifically prohibits use of the fund for collective bargaining, i.e., educational furloughs.



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens  
 of Hawaii Education Fund, Inc.  
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.  
 Honolulu, HI 96813  
<http://www.kokuacouncil.org>

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**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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<b>Website</b>	<b>www.kokuacouncil.org</b>		

**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