



Sharing Information & Giving Support to Hawai'i's Family Caregivers

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Leaving a Legacy: Recreating Our Work and Life

by Jody Mishan

This article is an excerpt from a presentation given by Jody Mishan at the HPGS Conference in September 2008.

When my father was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 1999, I went to Florida and brought him back to Hawai'i, where he lived with me until he passed in late November 2006. Of all the things I've accomplished in this life, caring for him was the most difficult but also the most important thing I've done. And I was so proud of him, for enduring the loss of his capacities one by one, with gratitude, humor, grace, and love. He was a war hero, but even more heroic on his journey with Alzheimer's. This is part of the legacy he left for me, teaching me values of courage, compassion, sacrifice, and a deeper love and commitment than I ever thought was possible, leading me to recreate my work and life.

During the early caregiving years, I was lucky enough to attend a poetry and journaling workshop given by the Alzheimer's Association and run by Frances Kakugawa, retired teacher and poet. Frances urged us to find "the divine" in caregiving. Out of our workshop came the book *Mosaic Moon: Caregiving through Poetry*. I'd like to share one of the later poems about my Dad, written shortly before his death:



Warrior

*Without caregiving
I would not have had the opportunity
To become a warrior.
In advocating for a helpless person,
Rendered a nonentity
By a society of impotent and cruel Systems.
I had to fight
For his rights, for my rights.
It's only when you are vulnerable
And innocent
That the Systems brutalize you.
When I needed to pay caregiving bills,
and could not work,
A government taxes without heart or logic
No breaks, no compromise.
A medical system
not giving equal care or attention
Once past 80 years old and demented.
A social system that doesn't offer services*

*Unless you're poverty stricken...
From the day you lost your brain cells,
I have put on my war paint
And banged the drums of vigilance.
Fought the battles of compassion.
Sailed over the vast sea of patience,
A minefield of uncertainties.
As you enter the final stages of Alzheimer's,
I'm still Bruce Lee in the room of mirrors,
Expecting the enemy from every side,
Unable to relax my defensive posture.
Before all of this I was a warrior without skills
Or worthy battles.
You have given me this power and challenge.
I am eternally grateful.*

I took Dad to the ER one night when he seemed to have pneumonia and a high fever, the last time he ever went. The ER doctor never touched him in

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Leaving a Legacy

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the almost 12 hours that we were there. No one touched him, except to take blood and temperature. Our CNA was with Dad when I was not, so we know this. After all the tests, the doctor's diagnosis was advanced Alzheimer's and the breaking down of his body temperature regulation. They sent us home despite his high fever. But no one looked in his throat or felt his neck. So I did what I always do, I wrote a letter to management and complained.

There are countless anecdotes of eight years worth of bad experiences and things that didn't work. If I had not been present to protect him, he would have been sentenced to a lonely and impersonal fate, a fate that so many of our elders endure today without loved ones who advocate for them when they are helpless. First the illness of a loved one breaks your heart. Then it gets broken again and again when you discover the lack of quality and choice available in care support services. So I learned to advocate for change.

Caregiving is a battleground, demanding discipline, commitment, patience, compassion, and selflessness—qualities that are hard for Baby Boomers in some respects. We perfected instant gratification, rebelled against boredom and bureaucracy, disdained authority, and broke rules. Free love, sex and drugs brought freedom from stifling sacrifices that we saw our parents make and we vowed never to be trapped like that. We rallied against war and injustice. Years later, we find ourselves battling a system that's flawed, anticipating an unprecedented Age Boom, in crisis mode, without enough personal savings or long term care or health insurance. The quality of life for our aging parents, for us and for future generations, is worth the fight. Baby Boomers have big mouths and will not accept less than the best.

Caregivers need tax breaks. We need more services and an easy way to find them. We need employers who understand. We need financial counseling and assistance during and after the journey, something that is not yet in place.

There are visionaries and heroes in our Hawai'i aging network, role mod-

els who are leaving a legacy. They work in education, health care, government, non-profit organizations, and business. They are our neighbors, volunteers, friends, and family, making a difference every day. Whether it's healthy aging, helping our frail elderly and disabled, or supporting the dying through their final passage in life, significant progress has been made, driven by these individuals and groups.

A friend recently gave me his Plecostamus, a dragon-like catfish that eats the algae in fishponds and tanks. He said he was afraid it might die in his tank eating only algae tablets. He heard I had a koi pond in my house and brought it over. It's only about 6 inches long, but these catfish can grow to 2 feet. Within a week, patches of clean floor started to appear on what was once a very dark bottom. Plecostamus was at work, cleaning and eating, little by little. Amazing what a small and determined specialist can do. The interesting thing is that it is nourishing itself as it does this, and represents that hero in all of us, working for positive change. We nicknamed him Barack Obama, by the way.

It is amazing what we all can do with small bits of progress every day, small acts of kindness, not giving up, working in our *kuleanas* and *ahupuaas*, in our homes, our jobs, and families, small solutions that add up over time. We can clean up the systems, the long term care pond. Big hearts and big mouths can win big victories.



The Executive Office on Aging is the state agency whose mission is to promote dignity and independence of older adults, and to help prepare for the rapid expansion of Hawai'i's aging population.

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Caregiver Services: Where Do I Start?

The best place to start in getting information on caregiver services in your community is your county office on aging. They can be reached at the following numbers:

Honolulu Elderly Affairs Division
768-7700

Kaua'i Agency on Elderly Affairs
241-4470

Maui County Office on Aging
270-7755

Hawai'i County Office on Aging
961-8600 (Hilo)
327-3597 (Kona)

Family Caregiver Awards Program 2008

The Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition partnered with KHON2's Elderhood Project for the 2008 Family Caregiver Awards Program. The program seeks to improve the quality of life of caregivers by recognizing the work of community organizations that support those caregivers as well as honor individuals that exemplify their commitment to caregiving.

The Kupuna Education Center at Kapiolani Community College (KCC) was the recipient of the Education Award. KCC offers a series of workshops designed specifically for family caregivers interested in learning skills for the care of their elderly parent, spouse, or relative. The workshops are taught by experienced health and elder care educators.

The recipient for the Support Award was Project Dana. Project Dana adopted the concept of nurturing the "total person" in providing support to family caregivers. This practice



has been highly successful and has been ongoing since 2001. It has created an environment for caregivers to bond, build lasting friendships, and be nurtured in a comfortable zone to get re-energized, to continue to provide care, and to reduce the stress from their caregiving responsibilities.

The Advocacy Award was given to the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA). During the legislative

session, PABEA, appointed by the Governor to advise the Director of the Executive Office on Aging, advocated for issues that enhance the quality of life of Hawai'i's seniors and their caregivers. PABEA members, who are all volunteers, devote a considerable amount of their time and energy by speaking with legislators prior to and during the legislative session, meeting weekly to discuss their progress, and providing written and oral testimony at public hearings. PABEA also participates in legislatively mandated task forces such as the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force and the Paid Family Leave Working Group. PABEA attends the Kupuna Caucus and the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place meetings. They partner with other organizations to collectively advocate for issues affecting older adults.

As a result of PABEA's advocacy efforts and successful partnerships this past session, the Legislature passed a dozen pieces of legislation in the areas of financial assistance to family caregivers, respite services, Kupuna Care services, pedestrian safety, affordable prescription drugs, adult protective services, grandparents raising grandchildren, and balancing work and eldercare.

Tien Nguyen from Honolulu County, Colin Okumura from Maui County, and Alfred Reis from Kaua'i County, and Clarita Waldram from Hawai'i County were the award recipients for the individual Family Caregiver Awards.

Congratulations to all of these award recipients for their compassion and service!

State Opens 1st Hilo Aging & Disability Resource Center

After three years of planning and construction, the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Hawai'i known as Kahi Malama (A Place of Caring), is celebrating its grand opening on November 14, 2008 in Hilo. The State's first "one-stop shop" for long term care information and resources will serve Hawai'i County's older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers seeking assistance to care for loved ones.

The ADRC project is a national initiative of the U.S. Administration on Aging, Centers of Medicaid and Medicare Services. Hawai'i and 42 other states have been striving to improve the public access to long term care information and services in the community. With additional funding from the Hawai'i State Legislature and the County of Hawai'i, and in collaboration with the State Executive Office on Aging, the Hawai'i

County Office of Aging (lead agency for the pilot site) is moving its operations into this brand new facility. Kahi Malama will be located near other public and private aging and disability service programs agencies such as the State Department of Human Services - Adult Community Care Services Section, ARC of Hilo, Services for Seniors, Hawai'i County Nutrition Program, the Coordinated Services for the Elderly Program, Senior Employment and Training Program, Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i, State Department of Health Adult Case Management Program, Alzheimer's Association and the University of Hawai'i at Hilo School of Pharmacy.

City and County of Honolulu Elderly Affairs Division is establishing the second ADRC pilot site by developing a comprehensive website along with Kaua'i County. They expect to be launched in Spring 2009. There are additional plans to establish future ADRC sites for Maui, North O'ahu, and the Hamakua district on the Big Island. For more information of the Hilo ADRC site, contact (808) 961-8626 or www.hcoahawaii.org.

Healthy Living Programs Offered throughout State



Ke Ola Pono teaches participants practical ways to manage their conditions (left). Enhance Fitness (above) incorporates cardiovascular exercise, strength training, and flexibility exercises into a 1-hour class that meets 3 times a week. The program also combines exercise with safety, such as practicing getting in and out of the tub (right).

Through Healthy Aging Partnership, hundreds of Hawai'i's older adults and caregivers have participated in two health promotion programs designed to help keep them healthy, active, and independent: Ke Ola Pono, the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP), and the Enhance Fitness Program. These programs help family caregivers take care of themselves and their loved ones.

Ke Ola Pono (CDSMP) is a six-week program that teaches participants how to take care of themselves and do the

things needed to manage their chronic conditions. Classes are small, allowing classmates to get to know each other and work together to achieve their health goals. Many participants make friends and keep in touch after the sessions, continuing to encourage and support each other. Ke Ola Pono is offered on O'ahu, Kaua'i, Maui, Moloka'i, and the Big Island through the Area Agencies on Aging and their partners, as well as through Alu Like, Inc. For more information, please contact Leslie Tanoue at 808-535-1322.

The Enhance Fitness (EF) program is offered at six neighborhood sites on Kaua'i through the Kaua'i County Agency on Elderly Affairs. Participants meet together three times a week for an hour-

long class that includes fun aerobic and strength training exercises designed to work the cardiovascular system and improve muscle strength and flexibility while fostering supportive friendships between participants. Kaua'i seniors can enroll in the class by contacting Naomi Sugihara at 808-241-4470.

For more information on the Healthy Aging Partnership or these programs, please contact the Executive Office on Aging at 808-586-0100.

The Healthy Aging Partnership is a statewide partnership between the Executive Office on Aging and the Department of Health Community Health Division, the County Area Agencies on Aging, and local, non-profit service providers.

Honolulu's Caregivers Conference

Caring for Family, Caring for Yourself

After a year hiatus, the Elderly Affairs Division again partnered with AARP Hawai'i to sponsor the Caring for Family, Caring for Yourself: Caregivers Conference. The event was held on Saturday, November 1, 2008 at the Sheraton Waikiki Hotel.

A capacity crowd heard keynote speakers, Dr. Bill Thomas and Jennie Chin Hansen. A graduate of Harvard Medical School, Dr. Thomas is an international authority on geriatric medicine and eldercare. He is currently an AARP Visiting Scholar and also the founder of the Eden Alternative, a global non-profit organization that is committed to improving the

care received by people living in institutions and in their own homes. Dr. Thomas also appears on the KGMB's year-long Genius of Aging broadcasts.

In celebration of AARP's 50 years of service to people age 50+, the audience heard Jennie Chin Hansen, AARP National President, speak during lunch about balancing work responsibilities with caregiving. Ms. Chin Hansen teaches nursing at San Francisco State University and is a Senior Fellow at the University of California. She retired after 25 years as executive director of On Lok, Inc., a non-profit organization providing integrated and primary long-term care community-based services in San Francisco. On Lok was the prototype for the Program of All-Inclusive

Care for the Elderly (PACE), signed into federal legislation in 1997, making this Medicare/Medicaid program available across the nation.

Also during the lunch program, news anchor Kirk Matthews of KHON2 Morning News presented Ms. Tien Nguyen with the 2008 Family Caregiver Award. Mr. Matthews has a keen interest in aging and caregiving issues and was instrumental in initiating the Elderhood Project at KHON2. The Elderhood Project seeks to help caregivers find solutions to challenges facing elders.

During the conference, over twenty sessions on various topics were presented, including dementia and stroke care, legal and financial issues, long-term planning, and self-care activities for caregivers. Attendees were given information about community resources and services from over forty exhibitors.

It worked for me

with Karen Koles



With the holidays almost upon us, it's time for this reminder: Mochi in any way, shape, or form is a choking hazard and might be a food that you will want to avoid for your loved one because mochi does not liquefy as quickly as ice cream or Jell-O does.

If you transport your loved one in your car, you've probably read that the back seat is a safer place than the front passenger seat. But if you've tried this, you know that the back seat slopes back ever so slightly, just enough to make exiting the car a little bit tricky. One caregiver tried this: She looped a length of clothesline around the base of the headrest

of the front passenger seat several times forming a soft "handle" that her father could then grasp and use to pull himself forward, making it much easier to exit the vehicle. It also saved wear and tear on her back!

Here's another hint from the same caregiver: wireless doorbells. These units are available at hardware or discount stores and are much less expensive than those advertised on television! One caregiver pinned a transmitter to her mom's blouse, using a large safety pin. The transmitter comes with a press bar on the unit that makes it easy for arthritic fingers to locate. The set she bought came with a second transmitting unit, which she placed in the bathroom. The receiving unit was mounted in a central part of the house, but because the units are wireless, the caregiver could carry it in her pocket when going out to water the yard!

This particular receiver had a choice

of several tones so the caregiver could tell who was ringing for help. The tones are quite loud, so you may want to listen to the bells before purchasing. You could also wrap washcloths around the receiver to soften the volume.

Another caregiver worried about her dad's attempts to walk around without caregiver-assistance. Dad had a walker but for reasons of safety, supervision was required. The solution to this problem was a simple one. She tied a tiny set of wind chimes to Dad's walker. Wind chimes start tinkling at the slightest movement and sound so much more soothing than a bell.

Is your loved one on a time schedule for medications? Learn how to set the alarm on your cell phone. Most cell phones will allow you to program the phone to ring several times each day at predetermined times.

Have you used tennis balls on the back legs of a walker? We've found that the constant friction of the tennis ball on the floor frequently causes holes to develop, making it necessary to replace the tennis balls quite often. Try using silicone glides instead. These glides may be purchased at hardware stores or from medical appliance catalogs and seem to take much more punishment than tennis balls.

In a much earlier issue, we described cutting a T-shirt up the back and sewing bias tape at the neckline to fasten the T-shirt after dressing your loved one. Here's an improvement on that idea which will work as long as there are no tubes or lines that might be affected. Cut the T-shirt up the back, but STOP when you reach the crew collar. No fasteners needed! Simply slip the T-shirt over your loved one's head.

Finally, be sure to monitor your loved one's weight. In the case of one caregiver, she noticed changes in her dad's appetite, behavior, physical activities, and even his sleep pattern. During a visit to his physician, she mentioned these changes along with his weight loss. The doctor adjusted the dosage of his medications, and within a few days, the problem was resolved.

Disclaimer: The suggestions in It Worked for Me were found to be helpful by contributing caregivers and are not to be interpreted as fact or intended to guarantee similar results.

Outstanding Senior Volunteers

The Executive Office on Aging and the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs are pleased to recognize the 2008 Older Americans Award recipients for Outstanding Senior Citizen Volunteers. The male and female honorees for each county are:

- Norberto Baysa (Honolulu County)
- Gladys Takamoto (Honolulu County)
- Gordon Cockett (Maui County)
- Gwendolyn Ewalani Shim (Maui County)
- Naoko Ho (Kaua'i County)
- Richard Kashiwabara (Kaua'i County)
- Irene Nagao (Hawai'i County)
- Tom Poy (Hawai'i County)

The leadership demonstrated by these award recipients, our Outstanding Older Americans for 2008, shows that Hawai'i will benefit greatly from the growing population of older adults because they have proven to be one of our greatest resources. They have led the way, showing support for our society by providing millions of hours of volunteer, community, and civic service through formal organizations, as well as a variety of informal arrangements.

They have enhanced our communities and personal lives by sharing and transferring knowledge of cultures, values, and life experiences among generations. Because of these honorees, the contributions of older adults will continue to flourish in the coming years. These individuals are among the most active and engaged of our elder adult population in Hawai'i. They have shown that by working together, there can be improvement to our quality of life, while paving the way for future generations. Read on to learn about the valuable contributions of each honoree.

The Executive Office on Aging will be seeking nominations for the 2009 Older Americans Awards in February. Please be sure to nominate an outstanding senior volunteer at that time.

O'ahu Outstanding Male Volunteer. Norberto Baysa, MD, age 75, was nominated by the Wahiawa Rainbow Seniors Club. As the club's president, Dr. Baysa always looks



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Outstanding Seniors

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for ways that will benefit seniors.

Dr. Baysa volunteered his services during a major physician shortage at the Wahiawa Clinic. He continues to serve on the various boards for Wahiawa General Hospital and its affiliated companies. He is also a volunteer internist with the Aloha Medical Mission, helping uninsured patients and contributing thousands of hours.

Dr. Baysa volunteers as team physician for the Waiialua High School football team and has participated in numerous community service projects through the Kiwanis Club.



O'ahu Outstanding Female Volunteer. Gladys Takamoto, age 91, has volunteered at the Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center for over 23 years.

She answers phones and assists senior callers. She also makes sure seniors keep their AARP Tax Assistance appointments, conducts a quilting class, and is very involved with the Japanese Cultural Club.

Takamoto participates in recreational activities with Hawai'i Medical Center patients and makes sure gifts are wrapped and delivered during the holiday season to Kuakini Medical Center patients. She also serves as an escort shopper for frail seniors. Gladys says, "volunteering fosters camaraderie, laughter, and good fun."

Maui Outstanding Male Volunteer.

Gordon Cockett, age 77, was selected in part because of his service and leadership in Maui Unite!, a cultural and environmental preservation group he co-founded. He also served as president of the Maui chapters of the Hongwanji and is a member of the Save Honolulu Coalition, the Hawai'i Task Force, and Faith Action for Community Equity.

Cockett is a respected kupuna of Lahaina who is dedicated to creating a better life for Maui residents. Prior



to retiring, Mr. Cockett served as a policeman, store owner, and restaurant manager.

Maui Outstanding Female Volunteer.

Gwendolyn Ewalani Shim, age 67, was selected for her work with a myriad of organizations, including Na Kupuna O Lokelani, Na Kupuna O Maui, Aha Hui Kaahumanu, Na Wahine O Kamehameha, Hale O Na Alii, Hui No Ke Ola Pono, Alu Like, the Chinese Club, Habitat for Humanity, Hawaiian Community Chorus, Ka Hale A Ke Ola, and the Royal Order of Kamehameha.

Shim's four personal achievements past age 60 include learning to speak Hawaiian, feather lei making, playing ukulele, and building her own home at Waiehu with the help of Habitat for Humanity. Prior to retirement, Ms. Shim worked as a mortgage secretary and was head custodian of Lokelani School in Kihei.



Kaua'i Outstanding Female Volunteer.

After a 31-year career as a Home Economics teacher at Waimea High School, Naoko Ho of Waimea continued her commitment to service to the community. A long-time member of the West Kaua'i Lions Club, she has chaired various committees benefiting the youth of West Kaua'i, including the Vision and Hearing Testing and Scholarship committees, and the "Sight is Beautiful" poster contest.

Ho is also a board member of the Waimea Alumni and Friends Foundation. A member of the Japanese Cultural Society, she has served in leadership positions and actively participates in their community projects. Ho serves in leadership positions and participates in various volunteer service programs at the Waimea Senior Center.

Ho is also active with the Kaua'i Japanese Cultural Society, Na Kupuna Council, Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, Kaua'i Retired

Teachers Association, Hawai'i State Teachers Association Retiree, and the Democratic Party.

Kaua'i Outstanding Male Volunteer.

Richard M. Kashiwabara of Lihue is one of the most hardworking volunteers helping veterans, community organizations, and people in need. Generous with his time, he is known for his tenacity, dependability and not leaving until the job is done.

Agencies such as Kaua'i Hospice, Special Olympics, Kaua'i Okinawan Club, Kaua'i Farm Bureau, Kaua'i Veterans Council, Retired Senior and Volunteer Program, and the Disabled American Veterans-Chapter 5 have benefited from Kashiwabara's generous nature. He has been recognized by several organizations, including the Kaua'i Okinawan Club, Hui Alu, and the Kaua'i Veterans Council. The retired Kaua'i electrician was also the recipient of the President George Bush Award for volunteering over 11,000 hours through the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.



Hawai'i Island Outstanding Female Volunteer.

Possessing nearly limitless compassion, Irene Nagao, 71, understands tough love, forgiveness, second chances, and dogged determination. After age 60, Irene faced many difficulties that strengthened her outlook on life. She attended MADD support meetings for more than 13 years and trained to become a volunteer victim advocate in 1996. Nagao works for the Hawai'i Community College Rural Development Program facilitating the meetings for the Mayor's Task Force on Employment Solutions and the "Going Home" program, which focuses on the re-integration of inmates to society.

Nagao was instrumental in the formation of the Business-Education Partnership Program, which helps students prepare for work in the real world. She is also involved in the Ju-

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Tutu's Corner

Success in School: Make the Most of Educational Resources for Your Grandchild

The education system has changed a lot since you were in school. There are many options and choices for today's students. Start by scheduling an appointment to speak with your grandchild's teacher. Good communication between the school and a student's caregiver, whether that is a parent or grandparent, sets the foundation for success. During that meeting, ask about the resources they can provide for your grandchild. Here are a few things to ask about:

Free and reduced lunch program. Based on your income, your grandchild



may qualify for a free or discounted breakfast and lunch program.

Before and after school programs. Most schools offer fun learning programs and/or supervised care for a fee. Based on your income, you may qualify for county, state, or federal programs that cover these fees. Ask for contact information for programs in your area.

Tutoring. If your grandchild attends a school that isn't scoring well, the school is required to offer free tutoring services to students. Many other schools also offer this benefit.

Academic/behavioral concerns. If you have questions about your grandchild's learning ability, ask the teacher if he or she is seeing the same issues and if there is a need

for special education services. For behavioral concerns, ask if there is a counselor available or if the school can refer you to a counselor in the community. There may also be peer support groups on campus.

Language assistance. Every state requires screening to ensure a student can speak English well enough to be successful in school. If not, services are available according to state guidelines. In addition, schools should be able to talk with a student's parent or caregiver in their language. Ask for someone who can speak your language.

Health services. Find out if the school has a nurse onsite. Also ask about health insurance.

Career/college preparation. For high school students, a guidance counselor should be available to keep track of your grandchild's high school credits, ensuring he or she is prepared for graduation. In addition, the school should help students prepare for college and career choices.

Schools are trusted partners in educating children. A strong relationship between the child's home and school ensures that students receive the support necessary to succeed, both in school and in life.

Reprinted from the AARP Foundation's *GrandCare News*.

Outstanding Seniors

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nior Achievement of Hawai'i Island Program and helps with recruitment, fundraising, and aiding other programs. Nagao serves on numerous Boards and committees including: Hilo/Laupahoehoe/Waiakea Complex Community Alliance, Hawai'i Chamber of Commerce, Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawai'i, Hilo High Career Technical Education Health Services Pathway Advisory Committee, State Adult & Community Education Advisory Council, Huiaina Internship Program, Waiakea Business Academy Advisory Committee, Youth Builder's Project of the Hawai'i County Comprehensive Strategy for Juvenile Justice Steering Committee, Big Island Task Force on Criminal Justice Committee, Friends of the Big Island Drug Court Committee, Zonta Club of Hilo, Ainako Community As-

sociation, and is Chair of the ATH-ENA Committee of the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce.



Hawai'i Island Outstanding Male Volunteer. Over the last 30 years, Tom Poy has been a dynamic force in his Laupahoehoe community and the entire Hamakua

coast. From being the President of the Laupahoehoe Senior Club since 1989, to volunteering at the State Department of Public Safety Correctional Industries from 1993-1996, he has shown the breadth of his care and giving to the people of Hawai'i.

Poy has been a volunteer for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, President of ILWU Hawai'i County, and President, participant and volunteer for the "Get the Drift and Bag It" beach clean up program. He vol-

unteers for Coordinated Services for the Elderly, the Hawai'i County Nutrition Program and participates in activities through Parks and Recreation, like sign waving for the Hamakua Ho'olaulea Say No to Drugs Campaign and the Hamakua Kupuna Festival.

Poy has been involved with North Hilo Community Council for 33 years, and the Hawaiian Civic Club of Laupahoehoe for 38 years. He is also a member and volunteer for the Laupahoehoe Neighborhood Watch.

It is with great pride and respect that the Executive Office on Aging and the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs honors the 2008 winners of the Older American Awards for Outstanding Senior Citizen Volunteers.

Medicare Update

Medicare Open Enrollment Begins November 15th

Plans change. You change. Shop and compare. Each year plans adjust what they cost and what they cover. Now is the time for people with Medicare to review the changes being made by their current plan and compare it to others to make sure it still meets their needs. Those



who don't have prescription drug coverage can also enroll in a drug plan during open enrollment. All people with Medicare should:

- Review the 2009 costs for their current drug and health plan (look at premium, co-pays and deductibles).
- Compare the cost and coverage to other plans in their area (check to

Important Medicare Enrollment Dates

- **November 15, 2008:**
Open Enrollment Begins. Enroll as soon as possible – the sooner the better – to avoid any inconvenience at the pharmacy counter in January.
- **December 31, 2008:**
Open Enrollment Ends.
- **January 1, 2009:**
Coverage Begins.

see if the plan covers their medicines, works with their pharmacy and doctors).

- Choose a plan that meets their needs.

Some beneficiaries may see significant premium increases or changes—such as reduced coverage in the gap—if they stay in the same prescription drug plan in 2009. Medicare encourages individual beneficiaries to review how their plans are changing and what other options are available. There are four ways to review and compare plans:

1. Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227, TTY 1-877-486-2048). 24 hour help is available from trained Medicare representatives.
2. Visit www.medicare.gov. Compare costs, coverage and more. Get an estimate of your out-of-pocket costs for the year.
3. See the listing of plans in your Medicare & You handbook and information sent to you by your plan.
4. Talk with local Medicare experts at your State Health Insurance Assistance Program, Sage PLUS, by calling 808-586-7299 or 1-888-875-9229.

People with Medicare should also be aware of Medicare fraud and identity theft. To help protect Medicare beneficiaries when speaking with plans and others about their Medicare prescription drug coverage, Medicare urges them to protect their Medicare number as they would their credit card information. People with Medicare should not give their information to anyone who comes to their home (or calls them) uninvited selling Medicare-related products. If you or someone you love is not sure if a provider is approved by Medicare, simply call 1-800-MEDICARE.

E LOA KE OLA



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MAY LIFE BE LONG