



# Hawaii District HSTA-R

# HI-LITES

December 2012/January 2013

## HSTA-R Hawaii Island

### Presidents Report



The most important thing you can do as a retiree this quarter is to watch what is happening in the state legislature and let your local representatives and senators know how you feel on retiree issues. This is looking to be the most controversial of years where your state benefits and pension are concerned.

We have already been alerted that the governor possibly has plans to once again introduce bills that could tax pensions, cost retirees in paying part of the cost for insurance premiums, and cut back on the benefits current and future retirees might be entitled to. We must be on alert to these possibilities.

There is a great website that I would like all retirees to be aware of this year. Please go set up an account at the following website: [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). From there you can see bills that have been introduced, track them through committees, and write testimony in favor of yourself and other retirees. For instance, let's say a bill is introduced to tax your pension. You could go to the website and write a short message to your legislative person telling them how that will impact your finances. You might say something like, "Being on a fixed income that would be reduced by taxing would cause me to have to choose between food costs and medicines.", a very real scenario for many retirees. Tell your own impact story.

Your voice WILL be heard. Legislators take personal statements very seriously. You have to put a face to the pain retirees feel when this kind of legislation happens. To say nothing, often makes them think it is alright to take that money from your pension, make you pay more, and receive less. We must speak up and be heard loudly.

Please join me this year in letting your voice be heard in the legislature and the governor's office by signing up and helping us when we call on you to send testimony. Please register at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). The pension and medical benefits you save may be your own. Mahalo

Niyati Brown

President HSTA-R

Hawaii Island



December 16, 2012

## Your COLA #41

Aloha and “Best Wishes” for a jolly Xmas Season and Happy HI 2013 to all! This is the last of 41 articles covering your Association’s goal to improve the Post Retirement Allowance (PRA) benefit for all public retirees. After arduous work to bring awareness of PRA faults to various parties, work shall now continue through legislative/ lobbying efforts to attain the goal above. The COLA Fairness Committee has “sunsetted,” and I will be helping with legislative efforts as a member of the Retirement Issues Committee and Lobbying Team.

The cost study on our proposal to modify PRA for new hires completed in September has not gone before the ERS Board of Trustees yet. It is now expected to go to “committee” in January and subsequently to the Trustees. It’s another bump on the road, but I am pleased that the study is pau and will “reach” us in due time.

I express sincere appreciation to HI District for supporting the project over many years. Changing anything to do right for all is always very difficult. We have come to the midpoint in improving PRA and will continue to work collaboratively to make PRA fairer for all. Please stay tuned and keep up your support.

Mahalo.  
Joe Y Tanaka

### “LIVE WIRE” 12/12

By: Arleen Yoshimura



Our VP Avis Mortemore shared some information which is very valuable since a lot of retirees travel. So I am featuring her article in this column.

I Wish You and Yours a Most Joyous Holiday Season and a New Years Blessed with the BEST !!! With Love & Humble Gratitude, Arleen

By: Avis Mortemore

When we retire we look forward to taking trips to places we only dreamed about. The last thing you want is to have your credit card blocked so you don’t have money in a foreign country.

My husband and I took a trip to Italy. After researching, we discovered that VISA and MasterCard are easily accepted but American Express isn’t universally accepted. We also learned that we should let our credit card carriers and banks know when we would be traveling out of the country. They will block international transactions unless they know that you are making the transaction. I notified them in advance and reminded them before I left. Also ask them to raise the amount you can take out daily.

It is cheaper to use the ATM machines to get euros rather than the Money Exchanges which tended to charge a percentage plus at least two euros. Your bank may charge only \$1 for the transactions from the machine.

We took travelers’ checks but didn’t use them. We tried using a travelers’ check in Brooklyn, New York at a prominent drugstore but they refused to take it and if used in Italy, they charge a fee.

I heard of a couple who went to Europe and didn’t let their carrier or bank know so they had to cut their vacation short because they had no way of getting cash. The bank has a block on European charges unless they know you are traveling. A simple call to the bank would have solved their problem. That is a nightmare we can all avoid. Talk to your banks and credit card carriers and double check by using the NEA Members’ Benefits website and then have a great time.

## **Elections**

1) Anyone interested in running for the 3 Council At Large seats must submit their names to Avis Mortemore at [mortemora001@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:mortemora001@hawaii.rr.com) or call 959-7920 by January 25, 2013. Presently these seats are held by Betty Ann Yoshimura, Gary Kaku (appointee) and Ingrid Nishimoto (appointee). Seats on the Council are for 2013-2015.

2) Those wishing to run for the 7 seats for HSTA-R State Delegate Assembly on April 26, 2013, at Honolulu Country Club, must submit their names to Avis Mortemore at [mortemora001@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:mortemora001@hawaii.rr.com) or call 959-7920 by January 25, 2013. The highest 6 vote getters will serve two year terms and the 7<sup>th</sup> position will be a one year term. (This will even out the number of delegates elected each year. Hopefully this needs to be done this year only.)

ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS IN BOTH EAST HAWAII AND WEST HAWAII. Save the dates and plan to bring a fellow teacher retiree to join us in revisiting friendships, learning about senior services, and, most of all, having FUN.

## **Community Service**

### **Big Island Marathon**

Sunday, March 17, 2013

Bayfront

6:30 am - 9:30 am

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

### **Blood Bank of Hawaii Donor Drive**

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Aunty Sally's Luau Hale

8:00 am - 5:00 pm (4 shifts)

Refreshment table donation needed

If you are willing to volunteer time and/or donate refreshments, please contact Betty Ann Yoshimura at 935-6560.

### **Newberry Quiz Bowl**

April, 2013 in West Hawaii

Details later

Volunteer help is requested. Contact Paula Kamiya at 883-2285 or Julia Tao at 959-7887.

## **Important Note**

For those members who are Medicare eligible – Beginning January 1, 2013, the Medicare medical insurance deducted from your Social Security amount will be \$104.90 per month. If your deduction is different from this amount, you must send a copy of your benefit statement to EUTF so that you receive the correct amount reimbursed quarterly.





Lorraine Hora  
648 Hinano St  
Hilo, HI 96720



**Annual General Membership Meetings:**

**West Hawaii**

Thursday, January 31, 2013  
9:00 am - 1:00 pm  
West Hawaii Civic Center  
Community Conference Rm Bldg G  
AARP rep. - Soc. Sec., Medicare  
\$5.00 bento lunch  
RSVP to JoAnn Iwane at 322-9386  
or email [malobrka@gmail.com](mailto:malobrka@gmail.com)  
by January 24, 2013

**East Hawaii**

Friday, February 8, 2013  
9:00 am - 1:30 pm  
Details to be announced later  
by Email or phone tree  
RSVP to Avis Mortemore at  
959-7920  
Or email  
[mortemora001@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:mortemora001@hawaii.rr.com)  
by February 1, 2013

**New Members**  
.Welcome Rosebella Tabucbuc, Alfred Navares, Randee Perreira and Gloria Phillips-Jones. May you enjoy your retirement days and hope to see you at our activities.



**Hawaii District Council 2012 -2014**  
**President** - Cynthia "Niyati" Sallee-Brown  
**Vice President** - Avis Mortemore  
**Secretary and Editor**- Lorraine Hora  
**Treasurer**- Lois Shimizu  
**Council-at-Large**- Y. Joe Tanaka  
Bettye Wakabayashi  
Arleen Yoshimura  
Joyce Hirata  
Betty Ann Yoshimura (2)  
Gary Kaku (2)  
Myrna Watanabe (2)  
**West HI CC Pres**- JoAnn Iwane  
**State GR Chair** - Steve Ono  
**Past President** - Wayne Joseph