



Hawaii District HSTA-R

HI-LITES

March/April 2013



President's Report

By Niyati Brown

It has been said that the only constant is "change". It has been a year decidedly full of changes. This year we lost a true mentor and champion in Wayne Joseph, our past president. He set the stage to bring our district into the electronic age and promoted fairness in government for all retirees. He will be greatly missed by all of us on the council as well as those who knew him from school and running events.

As a district, we continued to make strides in community involvement and community service. The West Hawaii Community Club led the way with fun events for members, island wide. They took groups to a candy factory, made pupu's for the holidays, and toured Anna Ranch as a piece of Big Island history. Whenever they get together, fun is sure to follow. Jo Ann is a super coordinator for all of these events.

On the east side, members focused on service projects like Wayne's favorite Big Island Marathon on St.

Patrick's Day, helping the Blood Bank, and working to raise funds for the local Hospice. Betty Ann Yoshimura does a fantastic job of coordinating service projects for us on the island.

Both sides of the island became involved with holding many pre-retirement workshops to explain to active teachers the process of retirement. Workshops were well attended and well received wherever they were held. As our teaching community ages, this service will become more and more needed without the benefit of Institute Days.

We held two annual meetings in Kona and in Hilo. The meetings were well attended and appreciated. JoAnn on the west side and Avis on the east side really outdid themselves in planning this year. Everyone had a great lunch, heard fantastic speakers, and went home with special prizes. Some commented that it was the best annual meetings we have ever had. An added bonus was that we raised \$300.00 from a silent auction to donate to the local food bank. Our treasurer, Lois, is the best. She keeps us in the black and on a roll to using member's money faithfully.

COLA Catch-up

Aloha Friends,



The formal COLA Committee is no more, but I'll be writing periodic updates regarding progress on improving the PRA benefit. It is a legislative priority of your Association. This session's bill (SB 1369) was heard by the Senate Judiciary Committee in February but was then deferred; effectively killing it for the session. Albeit disappointing,

this was still a big step forward in that prior bills had never reached hearing before. So, we're following the pattern of many bills that move gradually toward eventually becoming law. Our task lies in doing more effective lobbying to get a bill pass committee leading to a vote by both houses.

Your Legislative and Lobbying team will continue to monitor other bills affecting the ERS, EUTF, etc. throughout the session. Please continue to support all their efforts by simply thanking your elected Rep/Sen for supporting HSTA-R whenever you happen to cross paths with them. Mahalo, Y. "Joe" Tanaka.

By: Arleen Yoshimura



Wayne "Big Dog" Joseph came into HSTA-R like a "Knight in Shining Armor". First as VP and then as President, Wayne was an Outstanding Leader and a Dear Friend. He put his Heart & Soul into everything whether it was setting up our Valuable Website or making history in a clean sweep of all of the 2012 HSTA-R State Awards.

On January 22nd, Our Wayne went Home after a Courageous "Fight for His Life" against Brain Cancer...He is Truly an Inspiration. Thank You from My Heart to Each and Everyone who Prayed for Wayne & assisted in getting hundreds to join together in "Wayne's Prayer Circle". We were able to help Him stay with us for a year.

I was humbled when Wayne's loving wife Randee asked me to assist with Wayne's Service. All of us working together gave Our Beloved Wayne a Super "Celebration of Life". My sincerest gratitude to all of the HSTA-R & HSTA members who helped "Make it Happen". In Randee's words..."What a noble and honored reception you made for Wayne and my family. It was an enormous undertaking and all of you rose to the challenge and did an absolutely fantastic job. You all represent a wonderful organization...but much more than that each one of you are beautiful, loving and giving individuals. Each and every one of you worked so hard to make the day PERFECT, and it was. Thank You."

Randee also shared that Wayne's..."message was to always stay positive, stay active, eat healthy and give back to the community. So I will continue to do as he wished us all to do and hope you can too."

To Our Dearest Wayne...Rest in Peace. We truly miss Our Beloved Wayne...but he lives on not only in our thoughts, but also in Our Hearts. And someday should you happen to see a Blessed Angel jogging along, Smile and "Never Shy Away from Running with the Big Dog". With All Our Love & Humble Gratitude.

Note: To contribute to Wayne's Scholarship Fund, please send donations to:

Wayne "Big Dog" Joseph Scholarship

HCR 1 Box 5445

Kaau, HI 96749

Checks can be written to: **Wayne "Big Dog" Scholarship.**



HSTA-R Lobby Day Briefs

On February 14, 2013, HSTA-R members met with State Legislators to discuss three bills of concern. Big Island delegation included Cynthia Sallee-Brown, Lorraine Hora, Stephen Ono and Y. Joe Tanaka. We met with Senators Gilbert Kahele, Russell Ruderman and Malama Soloman and Representatives Mark Nakashima, Clifton Tsuji, Faye Hanohano and Richard Onishi. Other legislators did not respond to our requests for appointments or were unable to meet with us that day. We entered into discussion on **HB 546**, which originally dealt with changes within the EUTF to address the State's unfunded liability. The bill was totally changed to establishing a 12 person Task Force to investigate alternate and new ways to address the unfunded liability.

HB 1179 (companion SB 1354) was heard in committee but was deferred for this session. This bill would have changed the PRA (Post Retirement Allowance) percentage to start lower and increase over a period of time. An ERS study on the cost of such change has been completed but has not been released. Since this has been the focus of the COLA Fairness Committee under Y. Joe Tanaka's leadership, we expressed our sincere appreciation to Representative Mark Nakashima and Senator Gilbert Kahele for introducing the bills and initiating discussion.

HB 1174 (companion SB 867) dealt with removing the "cap" (specified dollar amount) that public employers are required to pay for health benefit premiums for retirees. With the increasing cost of health care premiums, should a carrier's premium cost exceed the "cap", retirees would be required to pay the difference out-of-pocket, thereby diminishing the retirees' health benefits.

Keep abreast of any bill's progress by logging in to www.capitol.hawaii.gov and typing in the bill number. Also, keep the conversations going with your legislators.

Election Results

District – Council At Large (2 yrs) – Betty Ann Yoshimura, Gary Kaku, Ingrid Nishimoto.

District – Delegates to HSTA-R State Assembly (2 yrs) – Y. Joe Tanaka, Lorraine Hora, Gary Kaku, Helen Tanaka, Betty Ann Yoshimura, Karlen Ono, Myrna Watanabe (1yr)

State – Delegates to HSTA Convention –Justin Wong, Roger Takabayashi, Jean Dobashi, Vaughn Tokashiki, Stephen Ono, Linda Tavares, Lorraine Hora, Susan Hagiwara, Jeanne Fukuoka, Jan Turner, Bettye Wakabayashi.

State – Delegates to NEA-R Annual Meeting – Justin Wong, Roger Takabayashi, Jean Dobashi, Vaughn Toakshiki, Stephen Ono, Linda Tavares, 1st Alt. Lorraine Hora.

Thank you for voting for District representatives at our Annual Meetings. Thank you for voting for State Representatives by returning your mail in ballots.

Annual Meetings

East Hawaii – February 8, 2013 at Coconut Grill Restaurant.

Approximately 60 attendees enjoyed a morning of good fellowship, interesting speakers, tasty food, great door prizes and raffle items to benefit The Food Basket. State HSTA-R President, Vaughn Tokashiki, shared the good news that the Governor was withholding bills regarding taxing pensions and raising monthly medical premiums for retirees. He also informed us that CVS Silverscript representatives, at the last EUTF Trustee meeting, reassured members that those adversely affected by the change in prescription drug coverage from Informed RX to Silverscript will be reimbursed. The reorganization application of HSTA-R as an IRS 501 © 4 corporation has been delayed. Papers will be re-filed by the lawyer. Deidre Sumic from ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) spoke about services for caregivers. JoAnn Abiley, Manager of The Food Basket, spoke briefly about the service they provide to Big Island. Volunteers are always welcome. Anyone can donate excess seasonal fruit and vegetables from their home gardens.

Featured speaker was Audrey Wilson, columnist for Hawaii Tribune Herald, who spoke on “Doing My Passion in Retirement”. She referenced a book by David Freeman titled “100 Things To Do Before I Die”. One of her passions is to write a novel. She engaged members to share their passions.

Door Prizes provided the highlight for the afternoon. The Grand Prize of \$50 gift certificate to Coconut Grill was won by Clarita Maneja and the large gift basket from Floral Mart was won by Faith Louie.

West Hawaii – January 31, 2013, at West Hawaii Civic Center Conference Room

About 30 retirees attended to hear Mr. Gerry Silva, State AARP President, speak about the current and future outlooks for Social Security and Medicare programs. Pictures are posted on the State website under WH Community Club. Door prizes and delicious bento lunches were provided.

Community Service

March 17, 2013 - Big Island International Marathon

A big Mahalo to members who helped out in the Finisher’s Booth and the HSTA Aid Station.

This was a heartfelt event because of the recent death of Wayne “Big Dog” Joseph who organized and ran this yearly event. He will be fondly remembered.

May 23, 2013 – Blood Bank of Hawaii Donor Drive

Volunteers are needed to staff the refreshment table as well as volunteers to donate refreshments.

If you can help, please call Betty Ann Yoshimura at 935-6560.



Lorraine Hora
648 Hinano St
Hilo, HI 96720

Stamp



Easter Greetings
TO ONE AND ALL



New HSTA-R Members

Welcome to members who retired in December – Roy A. Kubo, Debra Marie Jordan, Julie S. Matsushima, Rosemary L. Nunogawa, Christine A. Copes, Gail M. Loeffler, Merry Lynn Navares, Charlene H. Miyashiro, Jean M. DeMercer-Breece, and Winfred H. Onishi. May you enjoy the days of retirement and we hope to see you at our activities.

State Website: <http://www.hstaretired.org/>

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

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