



President's Message

Unlike my last message to you, this one is a little longer because there is so much to tell you. Please read this message all the way to the end--even though you think I'm rambling.

I hope that you have been watching the presidential debates on television because they have been very interesting and enlightening, both in content and excitement. I know some of you feel that you are too busy to take part in politics—but please remember, there is no aspect of our lives that is not regulated, in part, by the candidates who are elected through the election process.

We have always been told that every vote counts, so please exercise your constitutional right to cast a ballot at the national, state, and county level. Government is only as effective as the people who are elected by us, the constituents.

In this vein, thank you to the HSTA-R Legislative Action Team (LAT) and the HSTA-R Retirement Issues Committee (RIC) for all the work they do monitoring the legislature and the legislative process on behalf of our retirees.

- **LAT** members-Norma Villarmia, Phyllis Ida, Mae Kishimoto, Darlene Pang, Jo-An Goss, Carol Nitta, Stephen Ono, Joanne Ing, Glenn Fernandez, Beverly Gotelli, Jeanne Fukuoka, Yvonne (Linda) Tavares, and Vaughn Tokashiki
- **RIC** members-Carol Nitta, Lanny Busher, Norma Villarmia, Phyllis Ida, Darlene Pang, Mae Kishimoto, Jo-An Goss, Joanne Ing, Yvonne (Linda) Tavares, Jeanne Fukuoka, Vaughn Tokashiki-Oahu, Steve Harman, Sharmen Graydon-Maui, Gary Kaku, Cynthia (Niyati) Brown-Hawaii Island, Kevin Nunn, Sandra Gage, and Chair, Beverly Gotelli-Kauai

Thank you to the many HSTA-R retirees who volunteered their time and efforts to help HSTA. You worked at the HSTA re-election last year and the statewide HSTA Elections this year. You help at your District and Community Club community activities. You helped when you were in the classrooms, and now that you are retired, you are still helping. So, Thank You.

HSTA-R and HSTA are currently exploring options for an office administrative staff position for HSTA-R. This person would take over the responsibilities that HSTA-R's Emeritus President, Justin Wong, now does so well. HSTA-R has grown to the point that a permanent staff member is needed to take care of our business.

Change is nothing to be worried about, nor should it be feared. Change happens and should always be seen as an opportunity to move forward, not be paralyzed into inaction. Change means that it will not be business as usual, which can be a good thing. I say this because your HSTA-R is also changing. It is not business as usual.

HSTA-R today is not the same HSTA-R that was established in 1995. The membership has grown tremendously since the first Delegate Assembly. We now have over 5,600 retired members, divided into four districts (Oahu, Kauai, Maui, Hawaii Island) and three community clubs (Molokai, Lanai, West Hawaii).

Your HSTA-R Executive Committee, District officers, Community Club officers and their respective councils, and the HSTA-R Board of Directors are exploring new ways of doing things that will benefit retired teachers. There is outreach into the community and participation in activities organized by the districts and community clubs.

So, change is on the way and with that, I wish everyone a happy, productive, and fun filled year.

Vaughn Tokashiki, HSTA-R President

HSTA-R Elections Report

The eleven (11) HSTA-R delegates elected to the HSTA Convention, on April 16-17, 2016 at the Hawaii Convention Center are: Roger Takabayashi, Justin Wong, Jean Dobashi, Vaughn Tokashiki, Yvonne (Linda) Tavares, Stephen Ono, Robert (Bob) Hu, Carol Nitta, Lorraine Hora, Susan Hagiwara, and Joanne Ing.

The six (6) HSTA-R elected delegates to the NEA-R Annual Meeting from June 29-30 and the NEA Representative

Assembly (July 2-7 2016) in Washington D.C. are Odetta Fujimori, Roger Takabayashi, Justin Wong, Jean Dobashi, Vaughn Tokashiki, and Yvonne (Linda) Tavares.

MAHALO to all who came to help with the ballot preparation and counting and for the on refreshments and lunch. Another Mahalo to those who ran for the HSTA Convention and the NEA RA.

Sandra Low, Clarice Roby, Haunani Kauahi

Hawaii State Teachers Association-Retired 2016-2017 Proposed Budget

HSTA-Retired Proposed 2016-17 Budget

INCOME

Dues - NEA-R/HSTA-R (5,200 x \$75) \$397,500.00
Dues - HSTA-R Only (200 x \$45)* \$ 9,000.00

TOTAL INCOME: \$406,500.00

EXPENSES

NEA-R DUES (5,300 X \$30) \$159,000.00

HSTA-R ACTIVITIES

\$247,500.00

GOVERNANCE:

Executive Committee \$ 4,500.00
Board of Directors \$ 4,500.00
Delegate Assembly \$ 9,000.00

COMMITTEES:

Bylaws (HSTA) \$ 600.00
Communications \$ 400.00
Elections (HSTA) \$ 800.00
Legislative Action Team Activity (Gau) \$ 900.00
Membership Services (HSTA) \$ 400.00
Retirement Issues Committee (GR) \$ 6,000.00
Government Relations (HSTA) \$ 400.00
Finance \$ 800.00

DISTRICTS:

District Allocations \$ 27,000.00
District Newsletters (4 x \$450) \$ 1,800.00
District Awards \$ 700.00
Community Clubs (2 x \$50 + \$2 per member) \$ 850.00
District/Community Club Presidents Meetings \$ 1,000.00
District/Community Club Grants \$ 1,500.00
Election Committee \$ 4,500.00
Membership Committee \$ 8,000.00
Publications \$ 10,000.00
Affiliate Dues & Activities (HARA, Conference) \$ 1,000.00
HSTA Convention \$ 5,000.00
NEA-R Annual Meeting/NEA-RA \$ 16,350.00
NEA-R Organizing Conference \$ 10,000.00
Pre-Retirement Planning Cadre \$ 6,000.00
Other Activities \$ 1,000.00
President's Contingency \$ 1,500.00

ADMINISTRATION:

Administrative Services \$ 10,700.00
Equipment \$ 1,300.00
Supplies \$ 1,500.00
Postage \$ 500.00
Air Travel \$ 36,000.00
Auto \$ 2,000.00
Lodging \$ 4,000.00
Accounting Services \$ 5,000.00
Legal Services \$ 14,000.00
Insurance \$ 5,000.00
Outside Services \$ 5,000.00
Miscellaneous \$ 1,000.00
Training \$ 10,000.00

HSTA MOA \$ 27,000.00

TOTAL \$406,500.00

*Includes grandfathered HSTA-R only members.

The HSTA-R Finance Committee met in January and February to work on the proposed 2016-17 budget. The Finance Committee is made up of Chair Beverly Gotelli, Vice Chair Justin Wong, Secretary Lorraine Hora, Jean Doshashi and Joanne Ing.

We prioritized what we felt was important to members and programs that are necessary to the Association. Although we continue to grow it is not a large increase. Our membership is at a steady pace as we become an older generation. We currently have approximately 5,600 members.

The budget reflects an increase in the district grant's, which is a competitive grant for each District to apply for. As part of our agreement with Benefit Plans Solution we have outsourced the reconciliation of our checking account. We continue to monitor our savings to get the best interest available for our funds.

We hope you will review the budget and should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at bgotelli@msn.com.

The Committee recommends you adopt the budget if you are a delegate to the HSTA-R Delegate Assembly in April.

Beverly Gotelli

HSTA-Retired Focus Group

Thank you to the participants in the Focus Groups on January 19-20, 2016. There were four groups of randomly selected members. The groups were comprised of the following categories: Delegate Assembly members, new members (within last 5 years), middle members (6-12 years), and long term members (13+ years). Each of the four groups had at least one member from the neighbor islands.

The report has recently come in and the HSTA-R Focus Group Committee will be meeting soon with Anthology Group to go over the results.

Once the findings is shared with the Committee it will go to the HSTA-R Board of Directors then the Delegate Assembly. The Delegate Assembly which is the highest governing body of HSTA-R will work on developing an action plan based on the results.

We're looking forward to having the results shared to our members via the next edition of the Messenger.

Once again we want to thank you our members for participating and giving us valuable input on the direction of HSTA-Retired. **Beverly Gotelli**

HSTA-R Molokai Community Club

Our second council meeting was held on January 15, 2016. We made plans for our upcoming Spring General Membership meeting. We also discussed our upcoming election of a Secretary (1 year) and Council Representative (2 years).

The General Membership Meeting will be held on March 3, 2016. Our speaker will be Judy Mikami. Her topic is Nu Puuwai's Services for Seniors. Lunch will be provided.

Roberta Mangca

District News From Around The State

Oahu District

The holiday season is a busy time for HSTA-R Oahu district as many of our members volunteered to man the Salvation Army "Angel Tree" project. For the past three years, we have been visible at the Kahala Mall and the Pearl Ridge Shopping Center. HSTA-R members assist with the collecting of items requested by children and seniors. This Angel Tree project is one of our most popular community service activities. Volunteers report stories of how this project has touched them. All in all, it is a great project, which keeps our volunteers coming back every Christmas.

During December our council was busy preparing for our February general membership meeting in which officers and general assembly delegates were elected. They are also secured a place and worked on out the details of our Meet and Greet meeting which was held at the Bay View Golf Course. We tried to locate our general membership meetings at different places to encourage attendance/participation. A district grant was awarded by HSTA-R to help fund this activity. After the meeting, an evaluation was done to determine whether to continue at this location.

Through a NEA grant, leadership training sessions will be conducted by June Motokawa and Sharon Mahoe. The Oahu council was the first group to be involved in this training. The goal is to develop a larger group of members who will assume district and state responsibilities.

Council members were busy submitting testimony and lobbied legislators to pass bills which would require ERS to automatically deduct health insurance premiums from retirees who are now required to pay a portion of their health insurance premiums. *Joanne Ing*

Maui District

The Christmas season began for Maui District with the annual Christmas Luncheon. This year Jackie Davis and Patricia Lopez did an outstanding job of planning and presenting a delightful event at the Kahili Restaurant in Waikapu. Guests enjoyed games, delicious food, door prizes and a gift of holiday music and song from our member, George Kahumoku. Brenda Wong was honored for her exceptional work in establishing this annual event for our District. Special note was made of the beautiful lei which Lydia Furomoto makes for guests at our General Membership meetings and the untiring work that Nelson Chung gives to each event we hold were honored.

District elections were held at our General Membership meeting in February. Following the presentation by Heather Greenwood-Junkermeier on "Creating a Health History," results of the balloting were announced. The officers and Council members elected for a two-year term are: President, Sharmen Graydon; Vice President, Steve Harman; Council, Amy Arakaki; and Jackie Davis, Leonard Habersham.

Maui's delegation to the annual Delegate Assembly for 2016 has 9 members, 5 are carry-overs from 2015: Cecelia Balinbin, Leonard Habersham, Nora Kawasaki from Lanai and Deborah Takahashi and four new delegates, including Sally Mangca from Molokai, Myrna Fung, Steve Harman, Marilyn

Ueno and Jane Tesoro. Ray Hart was elected to be a successor delegate.

Following the meeting, lunch was provided for attendees at the Pa'ina Food Court at the Maui Campus of UH in Kahului.

Several of our members assisted HSTA Maui Chapter in their state elections held on February 18.

We continue our involvement with the MEO Planning and Coordinating Council. We will take advantage of MEO services when we have our final General Membership meeting of the year on a visit to the Ulupalakua winery followed by a tour of the Kula Hospital on June 3. *Sharmen Graydon*

Kauai District

Kauai Council participated in it's annual December event for Child and Family Services providing them with gift cards. The cards were distributed to foster children and others in need to brighten their holiday season. Thank you, to our Community Services Committee Stella Shimatsu and Marjory Nakashima and to all who contributed to this project.

January was an active month starting with meeting our legislators and participating in the opening of the 2016 Legislative Session. On January 26th, we held elections and heard from Brenda Shiroma from VEBA at our general meeting. She explained our long term insurance plan. Several members discussed how easy it was to access the plan when needed and the excellent service they received. Remember, contact numbers are available in the front of your HSTA-R calendar for VEBA and other useful websites and phone numbers. Thank you, to all who volunteered to run for office and continue to help us grow.

Crucita Todd participated in the focus groups for the Anthology Survey. HSTA-R is 20 years old and the emphasis of the survey was to see if HSTA-R is doing a good job of communicating to its members and do our members know what benefits are available to them.

On February 16th, HSTA-R members helped with the HSTA 2016 elections.

Planning is underway for our next luncheon, "HSTA-R Kauai; Who Are We?" as well as our next membership meeting which will include Smith's Boat Tour on the Wailua River.

Sharmen Graydon

Hawaii District

The Big Island council has been busy with events to challenge our retirees to more action within the organization. In December, we took a whole day at the booth in Macy's for the local hospice group. Members took shifts in pairs and helping to make the holiday season brighter for those in need.

The West Hawaii Community Club toured the facilities at the West Hawaii Youth Academy and saw the wonderful ideas that students have come up with. The club also held a wreath making event in Kona to engage members. Congratulations to JoAnn Iwane for her efforts to keep our west side members both entertained and informed. The club's next event will be a workshop on book binding.

The annual meeting in West Hawaii took place on January

(Continued on page 4)

New, You Can Use

Please remember to inform the Employee Retiree System (ERS) and the Employee Union Trust Fund (EUTF) as soon as possible if you are a survivor of a State retiree who has been receiving Medicare Part B reimbursement. Those who neglect to report the death immediately must negotiate a repayment schedule with the EUTF. Failing to do so may result in cancellation of all health benefits. Wow! That was heavy information. I'm starting to make a list of eligible single state workers that might want to share mangoes, avocados, lychee, and Medicare reimbursements with me.

A recent study of Generosity found that there is a relationship between generosity and greater well being. Those that volunteered their time and talent, and who donated money, were happier than those who didn't. The study found those who were generous with family and friends not only were the happiest, they were also in better health. Practicing gratitude can lower blood pressure and build a stronger immune system. Studies also show that being thankful can strengthen relationships. I get it! Tomorrow I'm going to share my popcorn with someone, and then I'm going to thank them for eating my popcorn.

Our direct answering machine number for HSTA-R is (808) 840-2258. When leaving a message, please speak slowly, this is not a race to the top, and spell your first and last name, and your street name. I do have a good memory, just short. Why didn't someone tell me that when you get older you go through the terrible two's again....now I've got two chins, two spare tires, and two really big ears. *Linda Tavares*

HSTA-R Bylaws & Resolutions Committee

At their November 26, 2015 meeting, the HSTA-R Board of Directors approved the revised bylaws of the four Districts (Kauai, Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii) and two Community Clubs (Lanai and Molokai). Previously each of the Districts' bylaws were adopted by their District Councils. The two Community Clubs were previously adopted at their General Membership Meetings. West Hawaii Community Club only needed to make editorial changes.

For the Delegate Assembly we did not receive any proposed amendments before the deadline. To date we have not received any proposed resolutions or proposed NBIs.

We will be working at the HSTA Convention on April 16 and 17 and the CBR meetings before and after Convention. *Sheila Black and Roberta Mangca*

(Continued from page 3) - Hawaii District

28th. The East Hawaii meeting took place on February 5th. Both events drew in lots of members and helping them to learn about the organization, participate in elections, and just have fun with friends they remember from before retirement. Attendees received door prizes and everyone went away with one or two prizes. *Niyati Sallee-Brown*

HSTA-R Retirement Issues Committee

The Retirement Issues Committee has been keeping track of two bills introduced for HSTA-R. HB 2016 and SB 2428, which would require, that public retiree premiums owed to the Employer Union Trust Fund, be deducted from their Employees Retirement System pensions. While most retirees have their EUTF premiums deducted from their pensions, currently, some retirees and future retirees are billed for a portion of their premiums and must pay for them individually. The proposed legislation would change that and require that all retiree EUTF premiums would be deducted from pensions by the ERS.

Representative Mark Nakashima and Senator Gil Keith-Agaran assisted HSTA-R by introducing the bills in the legislature. Working with HSTA, HSTA-R lobbied legislators and testified in support of both HB 2016 and SB 2428. We would, especially, like to thank Kendra Ito-Mizota, HSTA Government Relations Specialist, for her assistance.

HSTA-R feels that this legislation is a win-win for both the state and all public employees. The RIC will continue to monitor these bills as they continue through the legislative process.

Beverly Gotelli

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The **MESSENGER** is the quarterly publication of the **Hawaii State Teachers Association - Retired**

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