



President's Message - Vaughn Tokashiki

Seasons Greetings! The Holiday Season is the time we count our blessings, appreciate the good things in our lives, and share quality time with our families and friends.

It is also the time when we reflect on our life and the positive influence we had on our former students. Like a small stone, dropped into a pond, whose ripples spread out infinitely, our hope is that our influence was like the stone dropped into the pond.

Many of us will never fully understand or appreciate the impact we had on the lives of our students. I have no doubt that all of us created learning environments that fostered creativity, provided a safe environment, and most importantly, a compassionate and caring atmosphere for our students who came from family situations that were as diverse as there are families.

Even though we are fully retired, I am positive that we still have education on our minds. Our children, grandchildren, and perhaps even great-grandchildren are in the schools. Therefore, it is our Kuleana to care about what happens in Hawaii's schools, both public and private.

I am thankful that HSTA-R has finally received approval for our 501(c)(4) application as a non-profit organization under IRS rules. I am also thankful that HSTA-R has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Benefit Plan Solutions/VEBA to manage our Membership records.

Finally, your HSTA-R state officers look forward to again meeting and talking to our fellow retirees at the HSTA-R Delegate Assembly on Friday, April 25, 2014 at the Honolulu Country Club.

Happy Holidays!

HSTA-R CALENDAR

Many apologies for the errors you may have found in the HSTA-R 2014-2015. Hopefully, you have received the fixes to the calendar provided by the printer. If not, you will be receiving them shortly. Moving forward, it is our hope that errors like these will not be repeated in the future.

That being said, it is our hope that you enjoy using the calendar for the next two years.

2014 HSTA-Retired Legislative Priorities

Retirement Issues

- Support legislation to allow the pensions of public employees to keep up with the cost of living.
- Support preservation of current retiree benefits.
 - ▶ **Oppose taxing all retiree pensions.**
 - ▶ **Oppose eliminating reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums.**
- Support the improvement of retiree benefits.
- Support the repeal of two Social Security provisions:
 - ▶ Government Pension Offset (1977)
 - ▶ Windfall Elimination Provisions (1983)
- Support the preservation of Social Security and Medicare.
 - ▶ **Oppose the privatization of Social Security.**
 - ▶ **Oppose the privatization of Medicare premium offset plans.**
- Support legislation on a long range plan toward eliminating the unfunded liability of the Employees Union Trust Fund Health Benefits.

Health Issues

- Support legislation to allow bargaining Unit 5 members and retirees to participate in a VEBA trust.
- Support the preservation of health care benefits for retired public employees by opposing legislation to eliminate reimbursement of Medicare Part B.
- Support the improvements of health care benefits for retired public employees.
- Support proposals to lower the cost of prescription drugs and allow approved drugs to be imported under federal supervision.
- Support state and national health reform legislation to make affordable health care available to all Americans.
- Support legislation on long term care.

Education Issues

- Support HSTA's Legislative Priorities.
- Support legislation to adequately fund Hawaii's public schools.
- Support HSTA and its commitment to the improvement of public education.
- Support NEA's recommendation for the ESEA reauthorization bill.

End of the Year Reminder! - Beverly Gotelli

As the year comes to an end, only to quickly it is a good time to take a look at some of our financial papers. I attended the EUTF Open Enrollment meeting and was reminded it is a good idea to update our documents. We all have Life Insurance from Royal State National Life Insurance Company; you may have forgotten you have this. Now is a good thing to give them a call and inquire if you have named a beneficiary. Some financial advisors suggest you put your life insurance policy in your Trust Fund.

Does it matter what you do, of course it does. It is only a phone call away on Oahu call 539-1600 neighbor islands 1-888-942-2447. Take the time to call and check if you have named a beneficiary, don't put it off and do it today.

HSTA-R/Government Relations

By the time this article reaches you, it would be a new year and we would like to extend to you a Happy New Year, 2014!!

This also means that the Hawaii State Legislature would begin a new "session" for the year 2014 and in anticipation of this session, we suggest that you monitor the bills that may impact us.

We strongly urge you to follow the activities of three committees of both houses. These are the Labor, Judiciary, and Finance committees. While other committees are also important, the above three committees would be receiving and considering bills/proposals that would have direct impact on us as RETIREES. Please help express your concerns by submitting testimonies to the members of these committees, especially if you are a constituent of the members in these committees.

Of course, other important legislators to contact regarding your concerns, are the House Speaker and Senate President. As the "leaders" of the Legislature, they should be informed of your concerns on specific issues, as they assign and lead the caucuses regarding the merits/demerits of each bill, as it progresses through the committees.

We do hope that 2014 would be a Happy New Year and look forward to having your support and involvement in the coming legislative session. *Carol Nitta and Stephen Ono*

Hawaii State Teachers Association - Retired

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

HSTA-RETIRED OFFICERS

President:	Vaughn Tokashiki
First V. President:	Yvonne (Linda) Tavares
Second V. President:	Jeanne Fukuoka
Secretary:	Glenn Dave Fernandez
Treasurer:	Beverly Gotelli

News You Can Use

The latest HSTA-R /NEA Membership count as of November 5th, 2013 is 5,314. NEA is so excited about your membership that they want to thank you for being an NEA Member by giving you TWO FREE magazine subscriptions! These subscriptions are absolutely FREE, with no obligation to purchase anything! Please go to www.neamag.com/TWOFREE. Offer expires June 30, 2014. Remember, you need to order your magazines before you enter the next doorway in your house.

Here's some important information to keep on your refrigerator. HSTA-R and NEA-R dues, annually is \$75 (\$6.25 a month). NEA Lifetime members pay only \$45 for HSTA-R dues Annually (\$3.75 a month). Keep the info on your refrigerator because that is the door you open the most. Tax time is soon to come.

All of our members received the new 2014-2015 calendar in November. The calendar was absolutely GREAT....until 10 "oops" were found. We felt like throwing in the towel, but you know what that means....more laundry. So, please get your calendar and make the following corrections.

Error number 1: February 1, 2014 - is listed as a Friday. February 1 is on Saturday. Please make the change on your calendar.

Error number 2: July, 2014 - the Hawaiian for July is misspelled. It should be spelled Iulai.

Error number 3: August, 2014 - August 24 (the 4th Sunday) should have shown a fifth Sunday the 31st, and should be written like this 24/31. On that same week, Friday is listed as the 30th....it should be the 29th (it is also a fifth Friday). Saturday of that week is listed as 31. It should be 30th (a fifth Saturday). What is actually amazing is that this unusual 5 Fridays', 5 Saturdays', and 5 Sundays' won't happen again for another 823 years. I don't think you and I will have to worry about this happening again in our life time. Please mark changes.

Error number 4: September, 2014 - September 14 is listed as Grandparents Day. Grandparents Day is September 7th. Great! Now we have 7 less days to wait before our big celebration begins. Please make the correction on your calendar.

Error number 5: October, 2014 - October 13th is listed as Columbus Day. There is no Columbus Day in Hawaii. It should be Discoverers' Day.

Error number 6: June, 2015- the Hawaiian word for June should be Iune. We will be in trouble if the kupuna find out.

Error number 7: 2015 - July 3rd is listed as Independence Day. Independence Day is always July 4th. Please make the correction. I don't know about you, but I'm still waiting for my Independence.

Error number 8: September, 2015 - Grandparents Day is missing. Wow! No respect. It is September 13. Please mark your calendar.

Error number 9: October, 2015 - Once again, there is no Columbus Day in Hawaii. It is called Discoverers Day and is on October 12.

Error number 10: November, 2015 - November 16th is listed as Veterans Day. Veterans Day is always on November 11th. Bah humbug!

Starting tomorrow-whatever life throws at me...I'm gonna duck-so it hits someone else.

Yvonne "Linda" Tavares

District News From Around The State

Oahu District

Submitted by Joanne Ing, President

Happy Holidays!! As I reflect on 2013, I realize that the HSTA-R Oahu district has had ambitious plans for the year. Our three "Cs" (Communication, Connections, and Community) began with the task of designing and implementing a system by which we could quickly disseminate information to our members. Thanks to the hard work of Tom Aitken and Rose Shin we were able to input 1800 email addresses into our system of which 1560 are valid. We will continue to update our email addresses with the goal of keeping our members informed.

Connections are fostered by timely communications. Our General Membership Meetings at the Waialae Country Club have been well attended with attendance exceeding 180 participants, thus allowing the council to personally connect with our members. Our "Meet and Greet" activity for new members has resulted in new "faces" on the council. These faces have taken on leadership roles on our various committees.

Better communications and connections have enabled the Oahu District to branch out into the community. This venture has been slow as HSTA-R Oahu has been primarily an advocacy group for teachers and now is beginning to focus on community service. Through the persistent and conscientious efforts of Kathy Tanaka, the district has collected approximately \$1000.00 in cash donations and 40 boxes of canned goods and school supplies for the Hawaii Food Bank and the Community Clearing House. Moreover, our emails to members, have been instrumental in recruiting HSTA-R Oahu member volunteers to assist with The Children and Youth Day event (sponsored by Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland office), with the Hawaii Pacific Health activities and with the Salvation Army's Angel Tree Project. I am hopeful that more retired teachers will become involved with our community service focus. As we work with other volunteers, we have fun, while providing assistance to other non-profit community agencies. Satisfaction comes from knowing that we remain empowered to influence individual lives.

I look forward to 2014, the Year of the Horse, which promises increased energy and possibilities for our lives.

Kauai District

Submitted by Jean Dobashi

HSTA-Retired Kauai District held its second Medicare Education meeting on Monday, October 14th at the Kauai War Memorial Convention Hall in Lihue.

The meeting covered the "unfunded health care" liability. All States are now required to disclose their pension and health care unfunded liability. While the state addresses this issue, our speaker Herb Hussey (sitting in for Luis Salaveria of Department of Budget and Finance), spoke about how other states continue to face similar problems. We should be proud of the good efforts the State, the unions and retirees are taking to address this issue.

On the question of Medicare, the retirees on Kauai were

asked what role they wanted to have as the Federal Government addresses the cost of health care. Retirees must be actively engaged and aware about the federal discussions. When asked directly, the Kauai retirees said, "Yes, we very much want input in our health care plan."

Lauri Paleka from MSP: Medicare Senior Patrol, addressed the Kauai attendees about the volunteer group that is organized to assist Medicare retirees. MSP, a federally funded program, seeks to educate and make retirees aware of ID theft, Medicare waste and abuse. The goal is to have educated and involved Medicare retirees here on Kauai. Those who did attend had positive and appreciative comments to share and how informative this meeting turned out. We want to thank those who attended and also MAHALO to our speakers who educated us, again.

Maui District

Submitted by Sharmen Graydon, President

Maui District's attempts to secure a location for PAR (Public Access Room) legislative training were futile. We will try again next year.

Our successes include having helped plan and deliver our pre-retirement workshop at Maui Chapter's Institute Day. Both sessions were standing room only and were well received. We also had volunteers at the voter registration table.

Our Chapter Grant applications were approved. The first will allow members on Lanai to attend our December general membership meeting that has become an annual luncheon in Lahaina. The second grant allowed us to purchase name badges identifying the wearer as a volunteer with HSTA-R.

On September 13th we welcomed a new council member, Sue King. She replaces Amy Shinsato who resigned for grandparent duty. Our nominating committee has already met and is developing a slate of candidates for elections in February.

Our first newsletter of the year was distributed mid-October by our very capable editor, Nelson Chung, who also sends out notices and reminders as needed.

The first general membership meeting of the year was held September 25th with Pamela Cunningham from the Office on Aging as speaker. We provided lunch for attendees because this encourages socializing following the meeting.

Eight of us attended a "birthday party" on September 24th for Senator Gil Keith-Agaran, and on October 26th we had a table at the MEO Senior Fair. As a member of the Planning Council we received the table at no charge.

2013 HSTA-Retired Dues

<u>Membership Type</u>	<u>Dues Paid</u>
HSTA-R Only	\$ 45
HSTA-R & NEA (Life)	\$ 45
HSTA-R & NEA (Annual)	\$ 75
HSTA-R & NEA-R (New Life)	\$295

2014 HSTA-R Elections



Wanted:

10 Delegates to HSTA Convention
5 Delegates to NEA-R and NEA Conventions



The 2014 HSTA Convention will be held on April 12-13, 2014 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel. HSTA-R is entitled to 11 delegates, including the HSTA-R President. Ten (10) additional delegates will be elected to the HSTA-R delegation. In this election, the top 10 candidates will become delegates, and the next 10 will be alternates. Air and ground transportation, hotel, and meals for delegates will be provided by HSTA-R.

The NEA-Retired Annual Meeting and NEA Representative Assembly will be held from June 28 to July 6, 2014 in Denver, Colorado. HSTA-R will have six delegates, including the HSTA-R President. In this election five (5) delegates and a like number of alternates will be elected. Partial funding for expenses will be provided by HSTA-R to delegates who attend both meetings.

Candidates for election as delegates to either meeting (HSTA or NEA) must be members of HSTA-R and NEA-R.

For more information concerning these elections, contact Haunani Kauahi (808) 536-7831, Sandra Low (808) 395-9039, or Clarice Roby (808) 551-0164.

Elections Timeline

December, 2013	Notification of elections
January 10, 2014	Nominations deadline
January 24, 2014	Ballots mailed
February 14, 2014	Ballots return deadline
February 18-19, 2014	Ballots counted
February 21, 2014	HSTA-R Board of Directors certifies election report

2014 HSTA-R Nomination Form

Nominee: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Member making nomination: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

(Check below the election(s) for which the person is nominated)

- HSTA Convention Delegate
- NEA-R Annual Meeting and NEA Representative Assembly Delegate

Mail this form to:

**HSTA-Retired Elections Committee
1200 Ala Kapuna Street
Honolulu, HI 96819**

Nominations must be received in the HSTA office via mail or fax (808-839-7106) by **4:00 p.m., January 10, 2014.**

Please include a biographical sketch (60 words or less).