

FACING ALZHEIMER'S

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THREE EXPERTS

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to Prevent
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And ...
Do I Need One?**

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MAUI: Kalama Heights Senior Community, Kaunoa Senior Center, Hale Mahaolu, Hale Makua, Maui County Executive Office on Aging, MEO, Love's Thrift Store (Kahului), Oceanview Adult Daycare (Kahului), Napili Coffee Store, Roselani Place

MOLOKAI: Na Puuwai

LANAI: Na Puuwai, Ke Ola Hou O Lanai

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■ For distribution location questions or requests, contact Sherry Goya: 808-722-8487 | SGoyaLLC@aol.com

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Printed by Journal Graphics, Portland, OR | 503-790-9100 | info@journalgraphics.com | www.journalgraphics.com

Alzheimer's disease and related dementias that affect us in our later years can be especially troubling. I believe we fear that dementia will squash our independence and make it impossible to multitask—an activity based heavily on recent memory. Maybe we fear that the future will not have a role for “elders.” In past generations, most elders lived with their children, and seniors could gracefully “slow down,” taking on smaller roles in managing the household. Expectations were reasonable. Elders were respected for their long-term memory and the wisdom it brings to current challenges.

Despite our fears, dementia has the potential to touch every family and you may already be a patient or a care partner. We all need to know the latest information and what to plan for as we get older. As my tūtū says, “It is what it is.” We are fortunate to have three dedicated experts take the time to share their knowledge with us so we can put our fears aside and help our families, friends, neighbors and yes—ourselves—look at this disorder head-on. Alzheimer's has a face, and it is ours.

Our December/January issue, with Father Bill Petri's story and a tour of Kalaupapa had great reader reviews. We love to hear from you, so please post your comments at www.generations808.com, or email us a picture, like the new Episcopal Deacons did.

News: America's Health Rankings® Annual Report found that Hawai'i ranks No.1 among all states in overall health. Our strengths are a low prevalence of obesity and very few preventable hospitalizations. We need to do better job immunizing our youth for tetanus, diphtheria and Whooping Cough (Tdap vaccine) and we have to clean up our act and reduce the incidence of Salmonella food poisoning. A third area of improvement is to reduce excessive consumption of alcohol.

It's very clear that health and wellness is something achieved by increasing awareness and activating the entire community to adopt healthy attitudes and habits. *Generations Magazine* is pleased to be a positive resource for living in Hawai'i. ■



Every Day is Brand New!

Katherine Kama'ema'e Smith, Associate Editor



Deacons Paul Lucas, Malcolm Keleawe, Mahi Beimes and John Tomoso of the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i love *Generations Magazine*!

Correction: Makani Kai Air provides interisland flights and regular service to Moloka'i airports at Ho'olehua and Kalaupapa: **808-834-1111**, info@MakaniKaiAir.com. Their website for persons who wish to visit Kalaupapa and take the Damien Tour is: www.HawaiiSaintTours.com.

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Photo courtesy of Alzheimer's Association

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WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S 2016 CALENDAR

- Aug. 27 – Kaua'i, Kapa'a Beach Park
Sept. 3 – O'ahu, Ala Moana Beach Park
Sept. 17 – Hilo, Liliuokalani Gardens & Park
Sept. 24 – Maui, Keopuolani Park

Our Contributors

Generations Magazine calls upon Hawai'i's experts—from financial and legal advisors to health care professionals and noted chefs—to produce informative and meaningful resources for our local seniors and their families. We are grateful for their contributions.



MIGUEL GONZALEZ, President, Catalyst Factor Agency Public Relations, is a former newspaper reporter with the Los Angeles Times and Agence France-Presse (AFP) news agency in Paris. He is the founder of Catalyst Public Relations with offices in Los Angeles and Honolulu. Gonzalez also teaches Public Relations seminars designed to make PR services more available to small-business owners. He and his wife, Melanie, are the proud parents of Sebastien Omri, age 2.



MAILE KAWAMURA, Executive Director of the Arthritis Foundation Hawai'i, is responsible for planning, implementing, managing and evaluating of all events and programs of the organization. She brings together corporate partners, medical and community leaders and community volunteers to raise funds and awareness for the 120 different forms of arthritis and related diseases that affect over 236,000 individuals in Hawai'i.



ALAN MATSUSHIMA, Enagic™ Ionized Water Consultant, developed a keen interest in naturopathic health began 40 years ago, as a food and beverage director and restaurant owner. In his second career as a mortgage broker, Realtor and insurance agent, Alan raised his family, helped his community and traveled the world. Today, in eight countries, he pursues his life theme: "Help as many people as you can," educating and advocating for the health benefits of ionized water.



SANTIAGO RIVERA, Chief Operating Officer, Interim Healthcare Honolulu, is an innovative senior executive with over 20 years of international experience in healthcare administration. His expertise supports the company's continued growth and community commitment in O'ahu. His goal is to grow Interim Healthcare Honolulu to meet the needs of a growing senior population while maintaining solid support for the highest quality in home care services and social integration.



JEFFREY SISEMOORE, JD is Director of Planned Giving and Major Gifts for the National Kidney Foundation of Hawai'i (NKFH). Jeff brings a legal and financial background to NKFH and is devoted to helping people who wish to support the mission of NKFH by showing them how their charitable desires can be achieved while benefiting themselves and their families. Jeff is available for consultation at 589-5976. Register for a free eNewsletter and check out the wealth of information at www.kidneyhawaii.org.



STEPHEN B. YIM, JD, LL.M. is a sole practitioner tax attorney specializing in elder law and the areas of estate planning, and supplemental needs planning for families who have children with disabilities, charitable tax planning, estate and gift tax planning, estate administration, trusts and wills. He currently teaches M.B.A. and M.A. students at University of Hawaii and Hawaii Pacific University, and many public workshops, including Generations Magazine Aging in Place Workshop.

And a continuing mahalo to our ever-present contributing partners (in alphabetical order):

PAMELA CUNNINGHAM | MARTHA KHLOPIN | SCOTT MAKUAKANE | JULIE MOON |
ANNETTE PANG | EILEEN PHILLIPS | TERRY SHINTANI | JEFFREY SISEMORE | SCOTT SPALLINA |
JANE YAMAMOTO-BURIGSA | MICHAEL W. YEE | STEPHEN YIM

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—M.K.*

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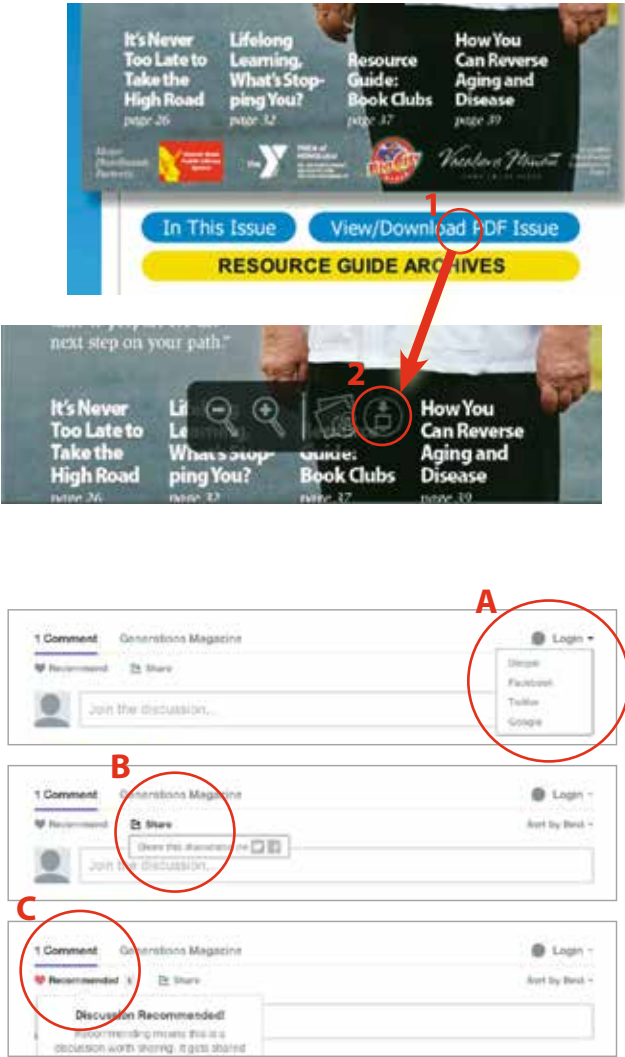
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It is so nice to know that all the back issues are also on **www.generations.com** just a couple of clicks away. And we certainly love to read your comments on the articles. We want to keep the dialogue open. ■



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Went Holoholo Around Town

by Sherry Goya, Generations Magazine Staff

Two great events drew crowds to downtown Honolulu and Percy and I were happy we were able to get in on the fun.

Dec. 4th, the Department of Parks and Recreation's annual "Outstanding Senior Recognition Program" is an event that *Generations Magazine* loves to attend. That's where the outstanding

seniors from their various programs throughout O'ahu are introduced, as well as the District Council Executive Board. Everyone in attendance has a conscious appreciation of what the City & County, Department of Parks and Recreation senior program does for them. GM also receives recognition for their support of O'ahu's seniors.

The City facilities are not just a place to meet on a regular basis, but they offer educational,

entertaining and energizing programs, as well as excursions around the island. Many groups have weekly meetings with guest speakers and a board of directors. Their meetings bring the community together, provide a sense of belonging, and create opportunities to continue an active lifestyle.



Dancers from the Nā Kūpuna o Ko'olau



Crafts and goodies abound at the county fair.

Annual Mayor's Craft and Country Fair

2015 was the 41st year of the "Mayor's Craft and Country Fair". This annual event provides an opportunity for the Department of Parks and Recreation's senior citizens clubs and partnering agencies to sell their handmade one-of-a-kind craft items, jams, jellies, cookies and pickled vegetables. The seniors are very talented, and the variety of creations was perfect for gift giving. Even *Generations Magazine* staff couldn't resist buying beautiful yarn lei and pottery to give their partners at future events.

Profits made from the handicrafts help to support the participating clubs with functions throughout the year. The fair also featured information from vendors of various senior services, entertainment, demonstrations, a cooking contest, as well as a health and fitness expo.

For information regarding clubs and recreation activities for adults over 55 years old, please call the Makua Ali'i Center at 808-973-7258. ■

Stories for and about seniors and their caregivers are always worth sharing, like a 100 birthday announcement, send it to me, Sherry Goya, with a photo.

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Kūpuna Can Grow Readers

by Generations Magazine Staff

Justin was in kindergarten when Kalihi Kai Elementary School began Golden Moment Hawai'i, a collaboration between Kristy Yamaguchi's Always Dream Foundation (ADF) and Hawai'i P-20 to bring "Always Reading" into Hawai'i public schools. It's a very simple program: it offers kindergarten children a wide variety of books, which parents commit to read to their children—a little every day.

Each week, Justin's teacher handed out "little red bags" for students to take home—each bag contained three different books to take home so their parents could read them the stories.

Like many retired seniors, Tūtū Helen De Castro helps raise her grandson, so she began reading to Justin, every day for 15 or 20 minutes, before dinner or bedtime. The children liked the little red bags more than the school library. The parents loved the quality time, and Justin looked forward to getting "my books" every week.

"Reading is so important," says Grandma Helen. "In math you have to read the problems. When something goes wrong with a computer, you have to read the directions to fix it. Reading opens the whole world to kids. 'Always Reading' opened up Justin's world, too."

Kindergarteners sponge up everything that comes their way. "Justin listens to a story a couple of times, and by then he has it memorized. He counts to 10 in Spanish, and memorizes all the dialogue on his Leap Frog DVDs. I wish he would memorize Grandma's shopping list!" says Helen.

Now Justin is a first-grader and little red bags are only for kindergarten kids, but he and Helen still read together every day. "Finding new books to read to my grandson is always on my shopping list," says Helen. She likes Walmart, the Library and Savers for books on all reading levels. She also gets bargains on used books at some branches of the Hawaii State Credit Union.




Justin loves reading with his Tūtū Helen, as much as she does with him.

"A funny thing happened," adds Helen, "Justin has started writing his own stories. His classmate draws nice illustrations, and I get to staple the 'book' together. With just a pencil and a piece of scratch paper, he is happy to amuse himself. When we go to the grocery, he rides in the cart and reads his book."

Helen offers this advice: "Grandparents can do a lot to support the literacy of their grandchildren; if you read to them every day, they take to it." ■

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Yes! A Memoir of Modern Hawai'i

Author: Walter A. Dods, Jr.

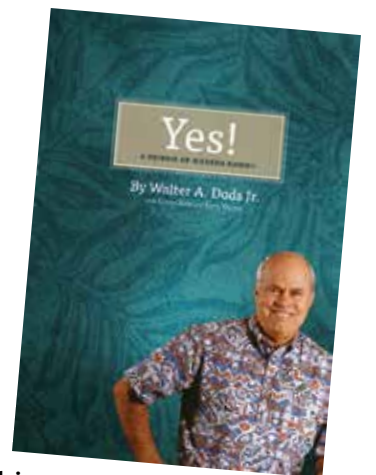
Politicians must join ranks with leaders from business, labor and community groups to accomplish common goals. Crafting many of these alliances in modern Hawai'i are public relations and marketing professionals like Walter A. Dods, Jr., former chairman of First Hawaiian Bank, Alexander & Baldwin and HawaiianTel, and a campaign organizer for governors and senators.

In Dodd's new book, *Yes! A Memoir of Modern Hawai'i*, he shows how dreams and schemes become a reality for corporations like First Hawaiian Bank, and state officials like governors Cayetano and Ariyoshi and U.S. Sen. Inouye. It's a fascinating view of events we only know from the outside—the savings and loan disaster or Ariyoshi's journey from, "who's he?" to a household name. Dods' candid account of the 2008 HawaiianTel bankruptcy and First Hawaiian's debut venture in Japan define the high stakes he faced. Sober analysis and backing up his "Yes!" with results

is an important lesson for all executives.

Yes! is more than Dods' personal account of his many accomplishments. Pull quotes reveal the deep relationships Dods forged with champions of Hawai'i business, government and community service, proving again that all deals, are between people. Like his other achievements, this beautiful memoir is a collaboration with two Honolulu Advertiser journalists—Gerry Keir and Jeff Burris—who covered Hawai'i politics and business for decades.

Yes!, *A Memoir of Modern Hawai'i* is available in local bookstores and directly from Watermark Publishing, **808-587-7766** or www.bookshawaii.com. The price is \$19.95, and all proceeds go to Aloha United Way. ■



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POHAI NANI



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The background of the entire page is a deep purple. On the left and right sides, there are black silhouettes of two people's heads and shoulders, facing each other in profile. In the center, the title 'FACING ALZHEIMER'S' is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the title, the subtitle 'THE PERSPECTIVE OF THREE EXPERTS' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The text is centered between the two silhouettes.

FACING ALZHEIMER'S

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THREE EXPERTS

The Alzheimer's Association of Hawaii estimates that by 2025, there will be 35,000 Alzheimer's disease patients over the age of 65 in the state. Almost as many elderly patients will suffer from other related dementias associated with hardening of the arteries or Parkinson's disease. As our population ages, planning and delivering care to dementia patients is sure to touch your life.

It is time to lift the veil and reveal the face of this disorder that lurks in the shadows. Let's shine a bright light on the habits that can help us protect our brains, accurate resource information, clinics that specialize in early diagnosis and treatment, and new therapies on the horizon. If you learned about Alzheimer's five years ago, you might be surprised at what our experts have to say.

“Alzheimer’s disease is most challenging because it is the only ‘top’ 10 disease in our country without a cure.”

Kore K. Liow, MD, Director & Clinical Professor of Neurology, Hawaii Pacific Neuroscience; Chair, Work Group on Prevention & Treatment of Alzheimer’s Disease, Hawaii 2025 State Plan on Alzheimer’s Disease & Related Dementias. kliow@hawaii.edu

Dr. Liow, why is early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease so important?

Every 69 seconds, another person in the U.S. is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s-type dementia, progressively decreasing brain function that is not necessarily associated with aging. On the mainland, most dementia patients have Alzheimer’s disease. However, in Japan vascular dementia with decreased circulation in the brain is more common. Our blended ethnic community has increased incidence of vascular-related dementia compared to the mainland. Because we treat vascular dementia differently from Alzheimer’s, early treatment and prevention with supported lifestyle changes can reduce the risk of stroke. Sometimes blood flow to the brain can be improved, restoring normal brain function. Particularly in Hawai‘i, it is crucial that persons with early memory loss be evaluated and diagnosed quickly to rule out treatable vascular disease, and other reversible and treatable disorders that mimic dementia.

While we do not yet have a cure for Alzheimer’s disease, current medications can temporarily slow the progression of the disease and keep the patient functioning normally longer. More can be done to preserve the remaining brain cells when treatment begins early. We would like the patient to help plan their treatment and plan ahead for the time when they will need full-time care. Early on, when they are still functioning, they can make their wishes known, participate in clinical trials and research, and help prepare advanced care directives.

What other conditions mimic Alzheimer’s?

We had a patient who was erroneously diagnosed with Alzheimer’s seven years ago and told there was nothing that could be done. She was left to deteriorate and was in a wheelchair be-

cause she could no longer navigate. Her brain MRI showed a treatable condition of normal pressure hydrocephalus, meaning excessive fluid in brain. When we treated her by draining the fluid surrounding her brain, she could walk normally again. Other conditions like vitamin B-12 deficiency, hypothyroidism, and clinical depression affect cognitive function so that people may think they have dementia. But these disorders are treatable. Therefore, it is important that all memory loss be evaluated early for reversible causes.

How do you diagnose Alzheimer’s or other dementia at Hawaii Pacific Neuroscience clinic?

Well, it is not an easy diagnosis. First, we obtain an accurate patient history, comparing past and present behaviors, moods and cognitive function. We need to test brain function with electrical activities using EEG (electroencephalogram) and look for structural abnormalities with brain MRI. Because of the complexity of the brain, many of the tests and interpretation of results requires



A multidisciplinary team of doctors reviews current cases.

consultation with a specialist skilled in this field. At Hawaii Pacific Neuroscience, we bring the specialists to the patient in our “one-stop shop” neuroscience center where patients consult with a multidisciplinary team of neurologists, geriatricians, neuropsychologists, psychologists, wellness coaches and nutrition specialists all in one location, so caretakers do not have to travel to different locations for these specialized tests and treatments. All the testing is performed in one facility, and interpreted by our specialists trained in the field of memory and dementia. This way, we can provide an accurate diagnosis quickly and recommend an individualized treatment plan or if appropriate, a research or clinical trial.

How do you treat Alzheimer’s disease?

Currently, we have some medications that alter transmission of signals between cells in the brain to temporarily slow the progression of Alzheimer’s. Our goal is to see patients before they become forgetful, because treatments are most effective early on. Our goal is to begin nutritional regimens and brain exercises to stimulate different parts of the brain and increase blood flow to the brain before the patient loses the capability to retain or re-train memory using brain mapping and brain stimulation exercise. Reminiscent and music therapy help keep patients functioning at normal levels longer. We want patients working on-site with our psychologist, neuropsychologist and cognitive specialists, and wellness nutrition coach.

We have also been successful in bringing clinical trials of new research medications and therapies for dementia to Hawai‘i, joining the worldwide community in advancing the science and understanding of Alzheimer’s and the quest for better treatments and a cure. Much research has been directed toward blocking the aggregation of amyloid protein precursors. These proteins lock together to form “plaques” between brain cells and can block the normal connections we make when thinking. Researchers are also looking at ways to dissolve tau proteins that form in the brain and pinpointing how brain cells die.

Hawaii Pacific Neuroscience is one of 46 sites in U.S. selected to conduct clinical trials with drugs that work on novel drug receptors. In addition to slowing memory loss, we also hope these drugs will help modify the behaviors that are so troubling to patients, families and caregivers.

Why does dementia patients’ behavior change? Is it a personality change?

We normally have “filters” we use to hold back inappropriate words and behavior and choose responses that match the situation we face. Choosing, deciding and planning our actions and words are cognitive functions of the brain. As dementia progresses, the patient loses the cognitive ability to exercise their natural filters—they cannot control their thoughts and actions—so their behavior and conversation become inappropriate. Patients may become agitated without cause, react in unexpected ways or believe their delusions. As a result of agitation, they may ask questions over and over. It is helpful for families to remember that inappropriate behaviors are the result of the cellular breakdown of the brain—not the intentions of the patient.

We believe that the demanding physical and psychological needs of dementia patients require a team approach to diagnosis and therapy. Our care delivery model is to have a geriatrician (board-certified physician who specializes in elderly patients) examine the patient physically and also assess for any advance-care planning that may be needed. This exam is followed by an evaluation by a neurologist specializing in neurodegenerative disease who develops an accurate diagnosis and looks for reversible causes of dementia. Patients then undergo memory tests administered by a neuropsychologist. Based on the results of the testing, our psychologist or cognitive specialist designs “brain games,” brain stimulation and mapping exercises that maintain brain the patient’s brain health. The family is involved in treatment, nutrition and wellness coaching, as they often cook for the patients and can support lifestyle modifications.

At Hawaii Pacific Neuroscience, we now follow over 2,000 memory loss and dementia patients from all the Hawaiian Islands and Pacific Rim. Families know that they can come to one place for all their specialists’ appointments, specialized tests, latest treatments and compassionate memory care. Our groundbreaking research and clinical trials bring hope to those who have failed all other therapies and allow Hawai‘i to join the worldwide scientific community in the search for new treatments for these disorders. »

“It takes a team to provide care to each Alzheimer’s patient, whether at home, in a care home, foster home or nursing home. I call the members ‘care partners.’ They can’t make the patients happy, but they can make them comfortable and support their wishes, no matter how tough it gets.”

Chris Ridley, Director of Social Services, Life Care Center in Hilo and Program Specialist for Alzheimer’s Association on the Island of Hawai‘i. 808-443-7360



As a social worker, how soon do you become involved with Alzheimer’s patients?

This is a disease that impacts everyone. I consult with patients, and their families and friends at every stage of their path—from diagnosis to end-of-life. In fact, even before diagnosis, I teach public seminars all over Hawai‘i, encouraging friends and families to help forgetful people get diagnosed and seek treatment.

Early on, patients can participate in their care plan, envision how they want to live out their days and communicate that to their care partners. Some forgetfulness is caused by chemical imbalances or other disorders that can only be tested and treated by a physician. Maybe your fuzzy thinking is due to deficiencies of vitamin B12 or vitamin D. Perhaps a tumor or a slow thyroid is causing your confusion. Memory loss is also a symptom of depression. All these problems can be treated and possibly reversed, so it is very important for persons with memory loss or behavior changes see their primary care physician and get a full check up. I recommend that they go with a care partner—someone who will go the distance and help them look at all the possibilities.

Some patients believe that because there is no treatment for Alzheimer’s disease, there is no point to going to the doctor. At the moment, there is no cure, but there are treatments and medications that help patients perform normal functions longer. I say, “Don’t wait; don’t worry.” Take a proactive stance. All treatments work better when patients get started at the very first signs of memory loss. Creating new diet and exercise

habits can improve blood circulation to the brain. Creating more opportunities for social engagement and mental/emotional/spiritual stimulation will exercise every part of the brain and improve overall thinking. Learning new things stimulates new pathways in the brain. Some foods protect brain cells from damage.

The FDA has approved some medications to treat the early and moderate stages of Alzheimer’s disease and age-related dementia. These medications may help maintain cognitive function temporarily. Again, treatment needs to start early.

If diet, exercise and social engagement improve memory loss, do they prevent dementia?

It looks that way. I give a talk called “Healthier Habits for a Healthier You” that shows the great benefits of the Mediterranean and Dash diets for heart and brain health.

It’s very easy to fall into the habit of eating a high-fat diet. Seniors sometimes lose their sense of smell and taste and wind up eating salty and sugary foods that play havoc with high blood pressure and diabetes. Changing your eating habits can improve your current health, increase longevity and keep your brain healthy. These same diets are good for your bones, too.

Are most dementia patients living at home?

Yes. The Alzheimer’s Association and Life Care Center believe that people with memory loss do best when mainstreamed in the community. Patients thrive in familiar surroundings, among their loved ones. Whether patients are at home or in a

facility, it still takes a large team of care partners to help them. Patients in good physical health may need care for many years, driving the cost of custodial care beyond the family’s financial capabilities. For these reasons, we support home care and adult day care for dementia patients.

Part of my work is meeting with the family of every newly diagnosed memory loss patient and helping them plan to keep their loved one functioning at the highest level. It is critical to get the patient to make decisions about how they want to live out their life. I ask the family to get as much information from the patient as possible, and make sure all care partners know that their role is to honor the path their loved one selects. You would be surprised what patients say is most



Social workers and case managers help patients and families navigate care options.

important to them. Some families need to share their feelings face to face—to clear the air and find comfort. I always tell families that their only job is to keep the patient comfortable. The road will be difficult, and they can’t be feeling guilty because the patient is not happy. When the job gets too much for them, it’s OK to get help. Care partners cannot protect the patient from the disease, but they can support the loved one’s wishes.

What advice do you give to care partners dealing with strange and upsetting behaviors?

Care partners have feelings, too. We want our loved ones to have good days, remember us and respond appropriately. Sometimes we get caught off guard by harsh or cunning words or behaviors—and it hurts. We get frustrated listening to the same comments or questions over and over. We teach care partners to “interpret” the need that

might be generating the behavior and to analyze why the behavior makes us angry. For example, one family member was exasperated because her dad would shower so long that he used up all the hot water every day. When she analyzed his behavior, she found dad soaping himself again and again, forgetting that he had already washed. When all the shower gel was all gone, he would get out of the shower. She solved the problem by putting the soap in a very small container. Dad could only soap up once, rinse and get out of the shower.

Another care partner came to dread the late afternoon when his brother would continually ask, “When are we going to eat?” until dark. The support group suggested that the question stemmed from a need for comfort. Dinnertime is often associated with relaxation, family interaction, a full belly and the end of work. So instead of trying to answer the question, he found little ways to comfort his brother in the late afternoon: additional small snacks, a walk or looking at photos. With added comfort, the questions stopped. Like a mother interprets the cries of her baby, care partners must look behind the words and behaviors to find out what “need” their loved one is trying to express. Respond to the need, not the behavior.

Everyone caring for an Alzheimer’s patient should be in a support group. On Hawai‘i Island, going to a meeting 20 miles away is a hardship. The Alz.org website has virtual support groups online. You don’t even have to leave your home to get new information and solutions to your problems. You may call the Alzheimer’s Association hotline at **800-272-3900**, or check out the ALZConnected and Message Boards on **Alz.org**. You can always call the Program Specialist for the Alzheimer’s Association on your island.

Remember, one person cannot do all it takes to care for a dementia patient. A care team of family, friends, neighbors and church members may still not be sufficient to meet all the needs. County, state and nonprofit agencies may have services in your area. At some point, you may need paid home care or home nursing services. Plan ahead and don’t wear yourself out before you ask for more help. Don’t skip meals and go without sleep because your loved one is active all night. Be sure you have all the resources you need to keep yourself healthy. Learn how to receive help and practice being a receiver as well as a giver. ”



“We must redefine caregiving and create a community that is aware.”

Christine Payne, Executive Director of Alzheimer's Association, Honolulu.
1-800-272-3900



2015 Walk to End Alzheimer's supporters gathered at Ala Moana Beach Park.

Tell us about your organization.

In Hawai'i, the Alzheimer's Association delivers most of the education on Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. Our education and support groups are for patients and care teams who are helping dementia patients: families, neighbors, friends and care providers. In addition to support groups, educational seminars and a robust website with many resources, we provide a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week helpline for all questions and concerns about dementia and dementia care.

Awareness begins with the need for early diagnosis. We are struggling with several barriers to getting patients to visit doctors who can help them with memory loss. What we hear people saying is that because there is no cure for dementia, why should they bother going to the doctor.



Photo by Barbara Kinney

Awareness and early diagnosis is important for caregiving and understanding Alzheimer's.

Some people are probably afraid, too—so how does early diagnosis help?

There are at least two very good reasons to get a diagnosis and to do it right away. The first; there are other medical problems that mimic Alzheimer's, and some of them are reversible if caught in time. The second; there are a lot of big decisions you need to make so that your family will not have to make them for you. Making your wishes known now will prevent a lot of family turmoil later on, and family members will feel good if they know what you want. It is important to understand that if you wait, you may not be legally competent to make these decisions.

Let's talk about how your organization helps family caregivers.

The family is usually intimately involved with caring for dementia patients. Our organization aims to help the family, too. Awareness is really needed for all who wish to help care for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease.

We run into a lot of “guilty” caregivers who think that they should be able to care for mom all by themselves. More than any other disease or

disability, Alzheimer's seems to cause this extreme guilt in caregivers. However, it is not only inappropriate, but unhealthy. It is absolutely necessary for caregivers to take time for themselves. I cannot stress this enough. The level of care required for dementia patients is beyond what one person can provide. Caregivers are not superhuman and everyone has to change their concept of what caregiving is supposed to be.

We recommend that families work as a team with neighbors, friends, church, civic clubs, county and state support services, and paid service providers. Care for an Alzheimer's patient takes twists and turns. Every patient is different and nobody can predict what symptoms each patient will encounter. With a team approach, the responsible daughter, son or spouse can stay healthy themselves, and have the time to manage care schedules and plan for the next phase of care.

When I was caregiving, I found it hard to ask for help. Is this a common problem?

Yes, this is a very common problem in Hawai'i, where we have a cultural bias against asking for things. Our way of life centers on giving, but we don't take; we offer, but we don't ask. The cultural ideal is to not burden others. It may be very difficult for the caregiver to ask for help. That is why we have the helpline (800-272-3900). Families may start here with us by making one phone call. We will refer them to other services and get the ball rolling. Alzheimer's Association can make it easier to ask for help and put you in touch with other care partners who have answers.

Today there are 26,000 Alzheimer's patients in Hawai'i. We estimate that there are 69,000 people who identify themselves as caregivers. You probably know someone who is helping care for a person with dementia.

The last thing I want to tell readers is that care comes in small packages. I have people tell me, “I'm not a caregiver; I just buy the groceries every week,” or “I only sit with Dad on Sunday so Mom can go to church.” These little gifts of running an errand or giving the main caregiver a few hours of respite are very important ways to give care. And they are very culturally acceptable in all our island communities.

So don't be shy about the good you are doing. You are helping more than you know.

What should our readers do to connect with Alzheimer's Association?

Visit our website—it's a library of helpful information. If you know a family who is struggling to get dad or mom diagnosed, or needs help developing a care team, give them our helpline number or send them to our website. If you want to help the family of a friend with Alzheimer's, we can suggest how best to offer your assistance.



Facing Alzheimer's disease or related dementia takes courage and the energy of a large care team—family, friends, neighbors, pastors, co-workers, volunteer care partners, paid care professionals and public service employees. It all begins with awareness. Share this article with everyone who needs to know what our Hawai'i experts have to say. ■

alzheimer's  association®

Information & Services at
www.alz.org

- 24/7 Helpline: 1-800-272-3900
- Care Partner Support Groups (O'ahu and Neighbor Islands)
- Practical Classes for Caregivers, e.g., “How to address challenging behaviors”
- Wandering Solutions: MedicAlert™, Safe Return™ and Comfort Zone™ Program
- Community Resource Finder
- How to Plan for the Future
- Online Forums and Message Boards

These are just a small example of what you'd find online.

ALZHEIMER’S & CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUPS (SG)

OAHU — contact Pamela Ah-Nee, 808-591-2771				
Aiea	Alzheimer’s SG	St. Timothy’s Episcopal Church	98-939 Moanalua Rd.	3rd Mon, 7pm
Aiea	Pearl City Caregivers SG	Kapiolani Medical Center	98-1079 Moanalua Rd.	2nd Tue, 7pm
Honolulu	Alzheimer’s SG	Kilohana UM Church, Rm. 6	5829 Mahimahi St.	2nd Mon, 7pm
Honolulu	Alzheimer’s SG	Central Union Church, Fireside Rm.	1660 S Beretania St.	4th Thu, 10am
Honolulu	Alzheimer’s SG	The Plaza–Punchbowl, Activity Rm.	918 Lunalilo St.	4th Sat, 3pm
Honolulu	Eldercare SG	residential / 808-395-9082	710 Ahukini St.	4th Sat, 9:30am
Honolulu	Koolau Caregivers SG	First Presbyterian Church	45-550 Kionaole Rd.	1st Thu, 7pm
Honolulu	Makiki Caregivers SG	Community of Christ Church	1666 Mott Smith Dr.	4th Mon, 7pm
Honolulu	Project Dana	Honpa Hongwanji Betsuin	1727 Pali Highway	2nd, 3rd, 4th Wed
Honolulu	VA Caregiver SG	VA Matsunaga Spark Center	459 Patterson Rd.	2nd Mon
Kailua	Alzheimer’s SG	Castle Medical Center, Wellness Ctr.	640 Ulukahiki St.	3rd Tue, 6pm
Kailua	Castle Hosp. Caregiver SG	Castle Medical Center, Pikake Rm.	640 Ulukahiki St.	4th Thu, 10am
Kaneohe	Alzheimer’s SG	King Intermediate School, Port. 1	46-155 Kam. Hwy.	2nd Sat, 10am
Kapolei	W. Oahu Caregivers SG	The Caregiver Foundation	891 Kamaaha Ave.	4th Thu, 7pm
Mililani	Mauka Alzheimer’s SG	The Plaza–Mililani	95-1050 Ukuwai St.	4th Wed, 6:30pm
Wahiawa	Ctrl. Oahu Caregivers SG	Wahiawa General Hospital	128 Lehua St.	1st Thu
Hawaii Kai	Alzheimer’s SG	Lunalilo Sun Room	501 Kekauluohi St.	3rd Thu, 10am
BIG ISLAND — contact Chris Ridley, 808-443-7360				
Hilo	Alzheimer’s SG	Church of the Holy Cross	440 W. Lanikaula St.	2nd Tue, 10am
Hilo	Alzheimer’s SG	Aging and Disability Resource Ctr.	1055 Kinoole St.	2nd Wed, 5pm
Hilo	Alzheimer’s SG	Hawaii Island Adult Care	34 Rainbow Dr.	3rd Thu, 9am
KAUAI — contact Humberto Blanco, 808-245-3200				
Lihue	Agency on Elderly Affairs	Piikoi Building	4444 Rice St., Ste. 330	3rd Thu, 2pm
Princeville	Alzheimer’s SG	Church of the Pacific	4520 Kapaka St.	2nd Thu, 3pm
Puakea	Alzheimer’s SG	Regency–Puakea	2130 Kaneka St.	4th Tue, 4:30pm
Westside	Alzheimer’s SG	Kauai Veterans Memorial Hosp.	4643 Waimea Cyn. Dr.	4th Thu, 3:30pm
MAUI — contact Lynsey Capone, 808-242-8636				
Kahului	Alzheimer’s SG	Adult Day Care Center	11 Mahaolu St.	4th Tue, 3pm
Wailuku	Alzheimer’s SG	Hale Makua	1540 Lower Main St.	3rd Thu, 5:15pm

For online information on caregiving support groups, log on to these sites:
Alzheimer’s Association Aloha Chapter | www.alz.org
The Caregiver Foundation | www.thecaregiverfoundation.org/support-groups/
Rehabilitation of the Pacific | www.tinyurl.com/rehabpacific

SENIOR ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

AD = Alzheimer’s Disease			
FACILITY	UNITS	MONTHLY (\$)	AD CARE
15 Craigside – Honolulu 808-533-5416 / www.15craigside.org	170	3,200–6,000	No
Aiea Heights Senior Living – Aiea 808-488-5521 / www.aieaheightsseniorliving.com	22	1,460–1, 680	No
Arcadia Retirement Residence – Honolulu 808-941-0941 / www.arcadia-hi.org	250	3,200–6,000	Yes
Hale Kuike – Honolulu 808-595-6770 / www.halekuike.com	26	7,680–9,250	Yes
Hawaii Kai Retirement & Asst. Living – Honolulu 808-396-0720 / www.holidaytouch.com	370	3,100–up	No
Holy Family Care Home – Kaneohe 808-239-7993	45	1,513–5,000	No
Kahala Nui & Hiolani Care Center – Honolulu 808-218-7001 / www.kahalanui.com	360	3,200–7,500	Yes
Kalakaua Gardens *Opening April – Honolulu 808-518-2273 / www.kalakauagardens.com	196	4,500–up	Yes
Kina Ole Estate – Kaneohe, Kailua 808-233-4455 / www.kinaolehomes.com	32	6,700–up	Yes
Kuakini Geriatric Care Inc. – Honolulu 808-547-9741 / www.kuakini.org	221	3,955–4,500	Yes
Lunalilo Home – Honolulu 808-395-1000 / www.lunalilohome.org	42	4,990–6,000	Yes
Manoa Cottages – Honolulu 808-426-7858 / www.manoacottage.com	51	5,500–11,000	Yes
Manoa Senior Care – Honolulu 808-440-0560 / www.manoaseniorcare.com	88	6,450–up	No
Oceanside Assisted Living – Hauula 808-293-1100 / www.oceansidehawaii.com	127	2,795–5,195	Yes
One Kalakaua Senior Living – Honolulu 808-983-4400	166	1,895–2,963	No
Palolo Chinese Home – Honolulu 808-737-2555 / www.palolohome.org	50	3,387–7,177	No
Pohai Nani Good Samaritan Retirement Comm. – Kaneohe 808-247-3448 / www.pohainani.org	264	3,092–6,723	No
The Plaza Assisted Living – Honolulu, Mililani, Pearl City 808-792-8800 / www.plazaassistedliving.com	561	n/a	Yes

This resource guide is simply a short list of facilities on Oahu only. It is always a good idea to do your own research on every facility before making your decision. You may want to also contact the Executive Office on Aging’s Long-term Care Ombudsmen at 808-586-0100 or go to www.hawaiiadrc.org for more information.

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Joan Packer, 94 yrs, working on the bosu ball and suspension system for core stability, balance & strength!



Wendell Murakawa, 68 yrs, doing a sideout squat on the Total Gym gravity system. Improves balance, strength & flexibility!

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TAIZO DIANE JAI RON KELLY

Water Does Matter

by Alan Matsushima, Health and Wellness Consultant

There are many common misunderstandings about water, H₂O, the second most important resource our bodies need to function properly. Here are some common questions and misconceptions:

Some say water is water.

Most of us think that bottled, purified water is better for us to drink because it has gone through a filtration process. We prefer it over water that comes out of the tap. There is another kind of water, so different from bottled and tap water, and the only similarity is that it looks like just regular water. It is called “ionized” water. Ionization is the process whereby water passes over electrically charged medical-grade metal plates and undergoes a transformation. Single-source or tap water molecules separate into two kinds of water, alkaline and acidic water, each with negative and positive electrical charges. The pH (acid or alkaline properties) change, and the water molecules are restructured for more efficient absorption by the body.

What makes water good to drink?

From a health and wellness standpoint, the best water to drink is water that can hydrate you on a cellular level, to neutralize free radicals and alkalize your body. Ionized water has these special capabilities.

What's the importance of optimum water pH?

The pH or “power” of hydrogen is a measurement of the acidity or basicity of a liquid. The optimum pH of circulating human body fluids should be about 7.365, which is slightly alkaline. Most people are slightly acidic due to lifestyle conditions. A chronic acidic state results in a compromised health profile, often followed by sickness and pain.

Why is ionized water the best water to drink?

A major cause of most illnesses and a state of compromised health can be traced to a body that is hyperacidic and dehydrated. Ionized water is

the best water to drink because it is the most effective and efficient liquid to alkalize and rehydrate the body.

How does ionized water work within the body?

When you consume ionized water, the negatively charged, ionized, alkaline restructured water will rapidly move through your organs into your cellular level while it is neutralizing free radicals and hydrating the body.

What are the beneficial effects of drinking ionized water?

Some people will experience increased positive energy levels, easier elimination of body wastes and reduced pain from inflammation-type ailments (arthritis, gout, acid reflux). People also report improved skin tone (“shiny” or “rosy”) and overall body toning.

Does ionized water cure illness?

Ionized water does not cure anything. However, when a state of balance is attained, the body is better able to cure itself. The medical term is “homeostasis.” Consuming ionized water is one of the most effective ways to reach this natural state of balance in the body. ■

ENAGIC USA INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTOR
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The Benefits of Walking: Happiness & Health

by Maile Kawamura, Executive Director, Arthritis Foundation Hawaii

Walking, a simple exercise that is good for nearly everyone, is one of the best forms of exercise for people with arthritis. Walking strengthens your heart, helps your lungs work more efficiently and helps maintain joint flexibility. For people with arthritis, joint flexibility and muscle strengthening are important because joints may become limited in mobility and muscles weaken with inactivity. Walking can help you gain all the added benefits of exercise, including weight loss and stress control. It is also an easily accessible exercise and doesn't require a gym membership, expensive equipment or special skills.

Walking is one of the safest forms of exercise, as it puts less stress on the body than most other forms of aerobic exercise. Walking is considered a light intensity activity that builds stamina and boosts cardiovascular fitness. Many people who begin a walking program report feeling happier, more in shape, a renewed sense of energy and a reduced feeling of pain.

Walking has many other benefits for your mind, body and spirit. You can walk with friends or family members, walk with your pet or start a walking program, such as the Arthritis Foundation's Walk With Ease, at your workplace. You can listen to music or an audio book while walking, plan your walk routes around different neighborhood parks or sites, or participate in a fundraising walk.

When you start walking, make sure you warm up and cool down for a few minutes before and after your walk. It is always good to include some gentle stretches to get your muscles moving. Walk at your own pace—one that is comfortable for you. It is also important to stay hydrated. You

may want to bring a bottle of water or a sports drink with you.

As always, before starting any exercise plan, it is suggested that you talk to your doctor or health professional to determine the best level of intensity and length of time for your walks. Make sure that you have the appropriate shoes for walking—shoes should have flexible soles, good arch support and cushions inside.


Wear loose and comfortable clothing that keeps you cool while you walk. Always remember to walk in a safe area; let others know your route and when you plan to return, and carry your cell phone in case of any emergency.

The Arthritis Foundation's Walk With Ease Program is designed for people with arthritis. For more information on this or other programs, please visit www.arthritis.org/hawaii or call 808-596-2900. ■



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Information in this article is from the Arthritis Foundation's Walk With Ease, Walking and Arthritis, and Exercise and Arthritis.

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Good, Healthy Posture

by Julie Moon, Physical Therapist



How many times have you heard these words while growing up, “Stand up straight! Don’t slouch!” It was a valuable message; good posture helps your body function efficiently. It improves endurance and contributes to an overall feeling of well-being. For seniors, maintaining good posture is vital, not only when exercising, but also for carriage support all day long. As we age, compression of the spine and less flexible muscles make it more difficult to maintain good posture. Over time, uncorrected poor posture can lead to balance problems and predispose you to joint injuries. Many individuals with chronic back pain can trace their problems to years of poor posture. When our shoulders are forward, the chin comes forward, tightening the chest and weakening muscles in the back.

Every inch the head moves forward, adds another 10 pounds of weight to your spine. Being

aware of these changes and consciously working to correct them can keep you looking younger and feeling pain-free. Correct posture keeps organs aligned on the inside, and muscle and bones in proper position with the least strain on the outside. Good posture can help you do more with less effort, breathe easier and feel great. Posture affects everything we do, so continue to age well by practicing good posture. ■

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Three Ways to Prevent Alzheimer's

by Terry Shintani, MD, JD, MPH

Living longer is an important goal—but not if we can’t remember our friends, loved ones and even who we are. Long life is one of the reasons why Alzheimer’s disease (AD) can be so devastating. Here are three important things you can do to prevent Alzheimer’s disease:

VITAMIN D

This nutrient has long been known to be important for healthy bones, but scientists now believe that vitamin D may be extremely important in maintaining brain health. In a study published this year in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, researchers observed over 1,600 seniors for six years. Participants who were only mildly deficient in vitamin D were 53 percent more likely to develop dementia. Those who were severely deficient were 125 percent more likely to develop dementia. While this was just a correlational study, there are other benefits to vitamin D that make it a good idea to consider optimizing your blood level of vitamin D.

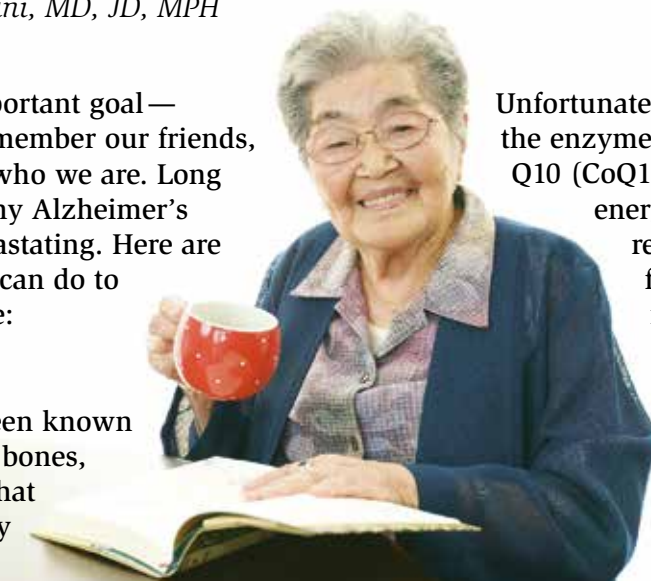
The recommended blood level of vitamin D, or 25-OH-D3, is up around 50 nanograms/milliliter (ng/ml). You do have to be careful not to go too high, so your physician should monitor your blood periodically.

REDUCE YOUR NEED FOR STATINS

Controlling cholesterol is also very important in preventing AD. I think we all are aware that high cholesterol can lead to heart attacks and strokes. What most people don’t know is that memory loss can be a result of mini strokes. Memory loss can also result from the slow decline in brain circulation due to cholesterol causing a narrowing of arteries. So it is important to keep cholesterol under control to prevent mini strokes and reduced blood flow to the brain.

What surprises most people, however, is that very popular “statin” drugs taken to lower cholesterol may also cause memory loss. Statins work by blocking the production of cholesterol.

Unfortunately, statins also block the enzyme that makes coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) which is required for energy. Because the brain requires this energy to function, it is not surprising that statins can contribute to memory loss. This statin side effect is why it is so important to lower your cholesterol through diet and to reduce your need for statin drugs.



TRY GREEN TEA

One of the hallmarks of AD is the presence of “amyloid plaques” in brain tissue. These plaques disrupt the connections between nerve cells in the brain. As a result, mental function declines. Several studies suggest that green tea may be helpful in preventing the formation of these plaques. Research published in the “Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences” by Chinese scientist Mi Hee Lim and her team shows that one of the compounds in green tea is a powerful flavonoid known as Epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG). It binds to beta-amyloid protein and prevents it from forming plaques. So consider drinking green tea as a possible way to ward off AD. ■

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Setsuko, 84 years old, said "Since starting aquatherapy, my balance has improved so that I don't need to use my walker as much at home anymore."

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Medicare and Alzheimer's Disease

by Pamela Cunningham, Hawai'i SHIP Coordinator

The Hawaii SHIP is repeatedly asked this question, "Does Medicare cover Alzheimer's Disease?"

Medicare's coverage is based on "medically necessary" procedures, not disease diagnosis. For example, if I go to my doctor and he orders blood to be drawn to see if my medication is at a therapeutic level, Medicare would pay for both the doctor's visit and the visit to the lab. A doctor's examination and laboratory tests are covered whether the patient has Alzheimer's disease (AD), cancer, epilepsy or other diseases.

Does Medicare cover...

HOME HEALTHCARE? This benefit is based on a prescription from your physician for a medical reason and it is not for 24-hour care. If you just need someone to keep an eye on Mom while you are at work, it is not a medical need and it would not be covered by Medicare. If Mom fell and broke her leg and was in a non-weight bearing cast, she might need home care for a short time to assist with bathing or physical therapy in the home. These services would be covered whether Mom has AD or not.

LONG-TERM CARE? Not covered by Medicare. Medicare has a "skilled nursing facility care" benefit, but it is again based on medical necessity. Eligible skilled care must follow a hospital stay of three or more days--that is admission to an inpatient hospital, and care must be at a skilled level. Your doctor must certify that you need the daily services that can only be provided by licensed nursing or therapy personnel.

PRESCRIPTIONS? Medications that are needed to assist in the treatment of AD will be covered under Medicare Part D (or through your Medicare Health Plan if it includes Part D). We suggest that you always take your Part D plan formulary booklet with you to your physician visit to make sure that the drug that is prescribed is under your plan formulary. If the medication is not covered by the plan and your physician says that it is medically necessary, you and your physician can appeal to the plan and ask them to cover it for you. There are five levels of appeals (so "no" does not mean "no" until the fifth level).

Medicare Health plans are required to cover all the Medicare A & B benefits, but may have different co-pays and added benefits. Be sure to study your "annual explanation of benefits" that you receive each fall from your plan.

The answer is that Medicare covers medical needs and medication. Custodial care and long-term care sometimes required for AD and patients with other chronic diseases are not covered. Whenever you have questions on Medicare coverage, Hawaii SHIP has the answers. ■

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This SHIP project was supported, in part, by grant number 90SA0004-02-00 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C., 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.

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Disability: Facts and Faces

by Jane Yamamoto-Burigsay, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist in Hawai'i

Perhaps the most misunderstood Social Security program is disability insurance, SSDI. Some people mistakenly think that beneficiaries are "on the dole" and getting easy money for minor impairments. That's not the case.

The Social Security Act has a very strict definition of disability. To receive a disability benefit, a person must have an impairment expected to last at least one year or result in death, and so severe that it renders the person unable to perform any substantial work in the national job market, not just their previous work. SSDI does not include temporary or partial disability benefits. Therefore, Social Security disability beneficiaries are among the most severely impaired people in the country and tend to have high death rates.

Also, Social Security conducts a periodic review of persons who receive disability benefits to ensure they remain eligible for disability. We work

to prevent, detect and prosecute fraud, and often investigate suspicious disability claims before awarding benefits—stopping fraud before it happens. These steps help to ensure that only eligible persons have access to disability benefits.

Americans place a high premium on self-sufficiency, but it is reassuring to know that Social Security disability insurance is there when needed.

Meet a few people who have benefited from Social Security when they were most in need—at the new Faces and Facts of Disability website, www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityfacts. They're happy to share their personal stories with you. ■

For questions, online applications or to make an appointment to visit a Social Security office, contact:

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Insurance For Grown-Ups

by Martha Khlopin, Radio Host of "Morning Drive With Martha"

If you remember the term "grown-ups," it is time to make sure your insurance coverage is aging as gracefully as you are. I volunteer at Kokua Kalihi Valley elderly community center in Honolulu and each month we celebrate birthdays. In December, I celebrated the birthdays of two centenarians who turned 102 and 100 years old and my own mother's 90th! As I spoke to their family and friends, I learned that the adult children were slowing down and finding it harder to assist their parents. An individual's needs, both emotional and physical, can grow with age. Those living beyond their 80s may have outlived their spouse, siblings, close friends and the relatives they counted on to look after them in later years. In some cases, their adult children may need assistance. In reality, few ever imagined they would need help with daily living—activities like cooking, bathing or walking. The centenarian's children in their mid-70s have Medicare insurance as

their primary coverage, just like their parents. Health needs are met, but no one had looked into the type of insurance that covers non-medical care. If your grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles, are heading into their 70s, whether you are a Generation X, Millennial or Boomer, it is time to be the "grown-up" and look into insurance coverage for non-medical services that help us age gracefully. ■

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New Ways to View Alzheimer's Disease

by Annette Pang, Relationship Life Coach

Candy Crowley, CNN chief political correspondent, once said about her mom, who had Alzheimer's disease in 2012, "I want to tell you how much I miss my mother. I miss her most when I'm sitting across from her."

Crowley, her siblings and numerous families have similar reactions and remorse when they realize that their aging loved ones are not remembering or are asking the same things repeatedly.

"Alzheimer's creates a kind of friction that the family needs to be strong for," she said, offering this advice: "You have to hold on to things and know what is true in life."

Caregiving is one of the toughest times for family caregivers and their relationships. Alzheimer's disease forces a family to adapt and thrive as parents turn into strangers. Because the loved one still looks the same, it is hard to accept the change. Rather than feeling dread and draw-

ing away from one another, caregivers need to huddle, grieve, hold each other's hands and talk gently to find solutions and ways to cope with the "new normal."

As a life coach, I suggest a family powwow to air worries, fears and frustration. Saddened and distraught family members need skillful guidance and a proven sequential process. It is not a time to "wing it" and haphazardly connect to one another. Reach out to professionals like Pamela Ah Nee of the Alzheimer's Association and Project Dana Caregiver Support Group. You are not alone on this road—even if it's painful and filled with unknowns. It is possible to take pleasure in your aging loved ones and each other. ■

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Hop On Da Bus!

by Brittany Nakamoto, Generations Magazine Intern

I greeted few kūpuna at the bus stop in front of Nordstrom at Ala Moana Shopping Center with one question: “Why do you like riding the bus?” All agreed on a few things—the bus is convenient, a pleasant experience, and a great place to meet new and interesting people.



This is Debbie Taylor, who takes the same bus to Kai-lua after 25 years and likes that there is “no worry about parking.” Others like Mirsada Dumisic have been taking the bus for five years, and she and her husband have even sold their cars.

Here is information on the senior fares:

- **One-way fare = \$1** with proof-of-purchase of a \$10 senior card or a valid U.S. Medicare Card. To purchase a senior card, you must go to TheBus Pass Office (at Kalihi Transit Center) and it entitles you to the reduced senior fare for four years. Bring your state identification card, birth certificate, passport or driver's license for proof of age. The monthly pass can be purchased either at the TheBus Pass Office or the Satellite City Hall. Note that the Satellite City Hall only accepts cash.
- **Unlimited rides**, monthly or annually, are offered for seniors by the C&C of Honolulu:
 - **\$5 per month.** A monthly pass sticker is given to affix to your senior card.
 - **\$30 per year.** This annual bus pass allows you unlimited rides during the calendar year on regular or express service buses. A two calendar-year pass for \$60. You must purchase their initial



annual pass at TheBus Pass Office.

Once you purchase a pass, you may renew your pass by mail. The Pass By Mail Program will mail you an application to renew the month before your annual pass will expire. Once TheBus receives your application and payment, the office will mail you a new sticker to put on your current pass card. If seniors do not wish to do this by mail, they can always go to the TheBus Pass Office and renew in person. Either way, TheBus is a great bargain.



As I hurried to take her picture before May boarded the #17 for Makiki, she said, “Taking the bus is convenient because it stops right in front of my house and the bus drivers on #17 are friendly.” Dumisic chimed in, “The new buses are fantastic! The seats are clean and not too high.”

You might enjoy getting out and around town without the hassels of driving, so get your senior card and pass today and hop on Da Bus! ■

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Patient Transport is News

By Miguel Gonzolez, Public Relations Consultant, Avalon Health Care Hawaii

For seniors who are frail or disabled, transportation in O‘ahu can be challenging. Doctor’s visits are not that simple—scheduling a care partner to ride along, long waits for pickup, and worrying if there will be a long line at the doctor’s office. Steps and elevators add to the fun, and sometimes one visit takes up the entire day! Don’t mention the cost.

Senior living and extended care facilities are growing and expanding services. One service is transporting residents and clients to and from their medical appointments. The move to providing transportation has some serious benefits for patients and their families. If a loved one visits dentist, eye doctor, podiatrist, their heart specialist and internist just once a year, that spends five vacation days. Hiring an aid and a private, accessible van to provide transport sounds good, but having new helpers is stressful on your loved one, and it is difficult to assess whether your loved one is safe and comfortable during transport.

In September, the first large care provider on O‘ahu announced that they were forming a separate transportation division to provide reliable and accountable in-house transportation for clients who have to visit hospitals and medical appointments. Patients, families and staff documented transport issues and the obvious answer was to serve the patients. For routine outside therapies like dialysis, which already takes a toll on the patient, reliable transportation is crucial.

Now in operation for three months, the transportation division is getting a good report card from patients, and staff. As the numbers of long-term care patients and assisted living residents increase in Hawai‘i, accessible patient transportation will become a greater need, and health care facilities that want to provide a quality experience for long-term patients will be obliged to consider expanded transportation services just to compete for clients.



This transportation innovation is another indicator that Hawai‘i care providers are gearing up for the future when a large portion of our population will be 85 years old and older. ■

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MEO is Rolling on Maui

by Generations Magazine Staff

Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO) is a hub for transportation throughout Maui County. It lives up to its motto: "Helping People... Changing Lives" by coordinating the services of over 20 different agencies and nonprofits, and providing low-cost specialized transportation with grant support from the county of Maui, Department of Transportation. These services are particularly important to seniors and persons with disabilities.

The Maui County Department of Transportation contracts with Roberts Hawaii, Inc. to run the Maui Bus fixed route MEO starts the next sentence MEO runs the complementary paratransit service. Disabled riders must qualify for the paratransit service through Maui County Department of Transportation. Riders of the fixed route and paratransit may purchase daily or monthly bus passes on any Maui Bus or paratransit vehicle and at Maui Mall in Kahului at the County Business Resource Center or at the Wharf Cinema Center Management Office in Lahaina.

MEO's most recent collaboration with the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) created the One-Call, One-Click Transportation Resource Center to assist veterans and military families getting around Maui to take care of business. To use the service, veterans just have to register with the Maui County ADRC. For more information call **808-344-1703** (8am-4pm) or visit **www.Maui1Click.com** anytime.

MEO Human Service Transportation also offers rural shopping shuttles in Hana and on the islands of Molokai and Lanai. MEO is the only public transportation on these islands. Disabled riders living outside the 3/4-mile service area of paratransit may use the Ala Hou service.

Ala Hou "On the Move Again" accessible vans serve persons with disabilities who have registered with MEO and live more than 3/4-mile from the fixed route. Reservations may be made 14 days in advance for scheduled service, daily from 8am to 4:30pm.



Photos courtesy of MEO

Other human services transportation include Senior Services, Day Health, Nutrition, Leisure, Employment-to-Work for low-income workers, Dialysis and after school Youth Transport. Up-country Maui citizens may connect to local financial and medical offices on i-Shuttles.

Through Maui County Department of Transportation, MEO offers fare discounts for individuals with verified disabilities who use the fixed-route Maui Bus Service. Low-income workers may also receive free rides to and from work. ■

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Free Seminars Help Seniors Plan For The Future

Seniors represent one of the fastest growing segments of our population. "Sixty two years and better" represents a whole new set of priorities, choices and challenges. This raises a huge need for new information and an understanding of what you'll need to age gracefully. Baby Boomers, those born between 1946 to 1964, now represent one in five people in Hawaii.

As we age, we're faced with decisions regarding how and where we will live the next phase of our lives. The most common scenarios are: The children have left the "nest" and now our home is just too big; in our younger days we were comfortable painting the house or trimming the trees but as we age these maintenance tasks have become more and more challenging; my spouse used to take care of all the house matters and now I'm alone and overwhelmed.

The major benefit of this seminar is that it may provide peace of mind knowing that there are many options that allow you to age gracefully. Many Baby Boomers & their parents aren't sure of their options. The Ihara's have developed The Complete Solution for Seniors. Their Free Senior Living Options Seminars will provide information that will help you and your loved ones with this challenging transition. Over the years, thousands of seniors and their adult children have attended this all-encompassing seminar.

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Presented by The IHARA Team

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Alzheimer's Disease Awareness

by Eileen Phillips, RN, Attention Plus Care

The toll on families and individuals caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease can be life-changing. We often hear from family caregivers about the impact Alzheimer's disease has on their lives and their need for support.

More than five million people in the United States are living with Alzheimer's disease. By 2025, it is estimated that there will be 35,000 patients in Hawai'i older than 65 with Alzheimer's and other related diseases (ADRD). With our rapidly aging senior population, more information and awareness about this chronic illness will be needed.

"Increasing public awareness of Alzheimer's disease is an important goal of care providers," said Wesley Chang, chief administrative officer of Attention Plus Care. "Fear and stigma associated with Alzheimer's disease can prevent individuals from seeking help. Information and education can change that and make a positive difference."

"By efficiently mobilizing clinical resources, family members can better assist those living with chronic diseases like Alzheimer's to achieve and maintain a level of independence and quality of life," Cynthia Baker, BSN, RN, recently explained in a workshop for seniors and caregivers. "Licensed home health agencies can provide skilled nursing and therapeutic services, helping kūpuna to remain at home safely and avoid preventable hospitalizations."

With ongoing collaboration, experience in teaching and care coordination, home health providers are valuable team members in the care of ADRD, and especially helpful with transitions between care settings.

"The Alzheimer's Association Aloha Chapter exists to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion

of brain health," said Pamela Ah-Nee, program specialist at the Alzheimer's Association Aloha Chapter. "We are grateful to partner with care providers who provide safe and reliable care for our loved ones living with dementia-related illness."

To improve the management of ADRD, Hawai'i care providers partner with support groups such as the Alzheimer's Association Aloha Chapter. Together they work to conduct education and public awareness campaigns to focus on early and accurate diagnosis, risk factors, warning signs, brain health, difficult behaviors and the importance of advance care planning and caregiver coping strategies.

"Age is a risk factor for Alzheimer's disease, so the earlier we start understanding the illness, the better," added Chang. ■



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Don't Let Falls Trip Us Up

by Santiago Rivera, Chief Operating Officer, Interim Healthcare Honolulu

Falls become more common and more serious as we age. The good news is that there are steps you can take to help prevent them. First, identify the health factors that can increase your risk for falling: poor eyesight, reduced reaction time, reduced muscle strength and medications that affect alertness, blood pressure or balance. Whenever you feel unsteady, use a cane or walker and promptly replace worn rubber tips. Be careful around pets and don't leave clothes or newspapers on the floor to trip you up.

BATHROOM SAFETY CHECKLIST:

- Grab bars for toilet, bathtub or shower
- Slip-resistant rug next to the bathtub or shower
- Mounted or suction liquid soap dispenser on the bathtub/shower wall
- Nonskid strips on the bathtub/shower floor
- Sturdy plastic shower chair

- Raised toilet seat and toilet armrests to maintain balance getting up and down
- An extra-long sink mirror, for use when sitting

BEDROOM SAFETY CHECKLIST:

- All clutter cleared away from all pathways
- Lamp, flashlight and telephone are within easy reach of the bed
- Night-light pathways—bedroom to bathroom
- Raised mattress to ease getting in and out of bed

Visit www.tinyurl.com/ReduceFalling for a copy of this Home Fall Preventions Checklist. ■

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The Humane Society has a special program called Senior to Senior, where persons over 60 may adopt any dog or cat over 6 years of age — free of charge. Many seniors prefer smaller dogs that are older, have more settled personalities and are already housebroken and trained. Retirement gives us more time for a pet and a deeper need for companionship. If you want a little encouragement to get out for your daily exercise, a pet has a special way of getting you to your feet!

The Hawaiian Humane Society is an education and advocacy organization that shelters, protects, rescues, reunites and rehomes animals. It is O'ahu's only open-admission shelter that welcomes all animals. Established in 1883, this nonprofit organization is not a chapter of any group because there is no national humane society. The humane societies on neighbor islands: Hawaii Island Humane Society, Maui Humane Society, Kauai Humane Society and West Hawaii Humane Society are separate entities. Gifts made directly to these independent organizations help local animals.

Christina Kam, Communications and Events Manager at The Hawaiian Humane Society says that seniors make excellent volunteers because many are retired and have time to devote to helping animals. They show up on schedule to walk dogs in the morning and help clean the cat house. They even do community presentations on behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society. "Seniors may



also become foster families and care for the animals in the comfort of their own homes," says Kam. "Please ask your readers to contact us and learn more about volunteer opportunities."

Need more encouragement? Just look at this cute dog who was up for adoption in January. We missed the chance to give him a home then — but the pet of your dreams may be waiting for you right now at your local Humane Society. ■

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Help Your Employees with Retirement

by Michael W. K. Yee, Financial Advisor and Certified Financial Planner

As a small-business owner, one of the greatest benefits you can provide to your employees is a retirement plan that helps them save for their financial future. Your contributions to a retirement plan are a deductible business expense, and a strong compensation package helps you compete for and retain talented people.

As an employer, you have flexibility in choosing a plan or combination of plans that work for your business. Broad categories include:

DEFINED BENEFIT PLANS

A defined benefit plan, such as a traditional pension plan, enables you to make annual contributions, which can be adjusted each year. Some plans feature an automatic annual increase, allowing you to reward employee loyalty. The plan pays out a specified benefit to retired employees.

DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLANS

A defined contribution plan allows the employee, the employer or both to contribute to an individual account for the employee. A 401(k), allows the employee and employer to make consistent, tax-deferred contributions. The monies in the account are invested and participants choose investments that have the potential to grow tax-deferred. These plans allow annual contributions of up to \$18,000 in 2015 and 2016. The employee has the ability to borrow from the plan to cover emergency needs, and employees age 50 and over may make “catch-up” contributions up to an additional \$6,000 a year to build for retirement. Employers have the flexibility to establish vesting schedules or options such as a Roth 401(k), funded by after-tax contributions but with the potential to provide for tax-free withdrawals in retirement. Both Roth 401(k) and pretax 401(k) savings plans require minimum distributions in retirement. Both savings instruments will prepare your employees for retirement.

IRAs

There are two types of individual retirement accounts (IRAs) that allow you to make tax-deferred contributions. The Simplified Employee Pension

(SEP) IRA option is one of the easiest and least costly plans to create. As the employer, you make 100 percent of the contributions, which are immediately vested for the employee. In 2015 and 2016, the maximum contribution can be 25 percent of an employee’s salary up to a total contribution of \$53,000. It’s not possible to set up a Roth version or to offer loan provisions.

A SIMPLE IRA is a second option you can use if your business has less than 100 employees. Like a SEP, it’s easy to establish and administer, and the plan requires employers to match the employee’s contributions. In 2015 and 2016, the maximum contribution to a SIMPLE IRA for an individual is \$12,500, with an additional \$3,000 allowed for employees age 50 and older.

DON’T FORGET ABOUT YOUR RETIREMENT

It’s important for business owners to understand all their options when it comes to saving for retirement and helping your employees save for their financial future. While you may be hoping that the proceeds from the future sale of your business will provide for your retirement, you could be putting your future at risk if you’re not saving in another vehicle. A lot could happen to affect the value of your business or your ability to sell it. Establishing a retirement plan may provide a more secure source of future retirement income to supplement the sale of your business assets. Consider working with a financial advisor who specializes in small business retirement plans. A professional can help you make the best choice for you, your employees and your business. ■

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Michael W. K. Yee, CFP®, CFS®, CLTC, CRPC®, is a Financial Advisor and Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner with Ameriprise Financial Services Inc. in Honolulu, Hawai‘i. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies, and has been in practice for 28.

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What is a POLST And Do I Need One?

by Scott A. Makuakane, Counselor at Law, Est8Planning Counsel LLLC

If you were to collapse unexpectedly, how aggressively would you want emergency medical personnel to act in trying to keep you alive? If you were a typical, healthy, individual, you would probably say, “do whatever it takes to keep me going, even if you have break a few ribs to do it!” (This can happen during CPR — cardiopulmonary resuscitation.) However, if you were in the end stage of a terminal disease, such as a cancer that had spread throughout your body, and you knew your death were imminent, you may say, “keep me comfortable, but if my heart should stop, please let me go. Don’t try to resuscitate me.” That is where a Provider Order regarding Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) comes in.

A POLST is a special document that you and your doctor (or nurse practitioner) discuss, fill out, and sign to state your wishes about the measures that should be taken to keep you alive. It is different from an Advance Directive in that emergency personnel will follow it, provided that they are aware of its existence. Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are required to do whatever they can do to restore and stabilize your heartbeat and breathing and take you to an appropriate facility for treatment. They will not take the time to read your Advance Directive and try to figure out how it might apply to your situation. But you can see how in some cases, resuscitation procedures may not be appropriate or wanted. A POLST, being a medical provider’s order, will be followed by the EMTs. Your Advance Directive will not come into play until you are in the hospital, and at that point, the EMTs may not have done you any favors by keeping your heart beating.

Almost all 50 states have some version of the POLST, but some call it by other names. In New York, it is called MOLST, and in West Virginia, it is MOST. VA medical centers have their own term, SAPO, which stands for State Authorized Portable Order. Whatever the alphabet soup used to name



Emergency first responders will follow a POLST from your doctor.

the document, all of the orders generally work the same way.

In Hawai‘i, if you have a POLST, we recommend that you print it on lime green paper so it will be recognizable immediately. The trick is to have your POLST nearby and in a conspicuous place in case you should need it. EMTs are trained to look for the green form and follow the POLST order. You can post a copy near your bed, and you can carry it with you when you leave the house. Just make sure your loved ones know where to find it if an emergency occurs.

Note that the POLST does not have to say “don’t resuscitate me.” It can say the exact opposite if that is your wish. Either way, most people do not need a POLST. However, for someone whose death is imminent and who doesn’t want to risk being kept alive artificially against his or her wishes, a POLST is essential. ■

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Knowledge is a Gift

by Jeffrey B. Sisemoore, JD, National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii

We talk a lot about gifts and how to structure your gifts for maximum benefit. But one of the best gifts we can give ourselves is knowledge to stay healthy. Aging gracefully also preserves our savings and financial resources for our later years and for our heirs.

Many nonprofit organizations offer public information about your health and lifestyle that can benefit you and your family. National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii offers important information about kidney disease at www.kidneyhi.org. Most people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) have no symptoms until the disease is advanced, so wise practices include regular exercise, a low salt diet, weight control, monitoring blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels, not smoking, drinking moderately, avoiding NSAID pain medication and getting an annual physical.

Primary risk factors for CKD include diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, a family history of kidney failure and age over 60. Secondary risk factors include obesity, autoimmune diseases and urinary tract infections.

The National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii also schedules free screenings throughout the year. Just call to find out exact dates and times.

Knowledge keeps us healthy. As healthy givers, we are able to support our families, our favorite charities, and leave a legacy too ■

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The Most Difficult Conversation

by Stephen B. Yim, Attorney at Law

During the winter break, I read a book called *Difficult Conversations, how to discuss what matters most*. The authors teach ways to engage in conversations, maintain good relationships and convey and receive meaning and intentions without blame and defensiveness. They point out that the key to engaging in successful difficult conversations is to talk about feelings, intentions, underlying meaning and past experiences that shape who we are. Attempting a difficult conversation without sharing feelings and intentions is compared to throwing a live hand grenade. The results are usually destructive.

Making your will or trust can be the most difficult conversation of all because it is often a one-way conversation. And sadly, when reading these trusts and wills, we find that they tell “what to do” and “how to do,” but leave out the author’s deepest meaning, intent and wishes. No wonder

only 30 percent of people ever make a will or trust. Worse yet, 70 percent of wills and trusts do not go as intended because they omit the person’s intention and leave the heirs to guess.

So, I encourage you to consider making your estate plan if you haven’t yet done so. If anxiety, fear and uncertainty are holding you back, this is where an attorney skilled in estate planning can guide you. When you do engage in this process, make sure that in this most difficult conversation, you relay not only the legal “how to,” but also work with your attorney to convey your deepest meaning, intentions and wishes. ■

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Join the movement for end-of-life choice in Hawai‘i

California is the 5th state to legalize medical aid in dying, thanks to Brittany Maynard, the 29-year-old with terminal brain cancer who moved to Oregon to take advantage of that state’s Death with Dignity law. Her story galvanized a community.

We want the same for Hawai‘i. Every movement needs its storytellers and now, Hawai‘i needs personal stories to put a local face to this all-important issue.

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Beware the 'Friendly' Stranger

by Scott Spallina, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

It's difficult to believe that anyone would take advantage of our aloha spirit. Unfortunately, the Prosecutor's Office has seen an increase in cases of friendly strangers who turn out to be con artists preying on seniors.

Edith (*not her real name*) was walking through Kapi'olani Park when Alexander Nebre approached her. He said that someone told him that she needed help. Coincidentally, Edith was having problems with her plumbing. Nebre said he was a licensed plumber and contractor and could help her out. When invited into her apartment, Nebre "found" extensive termite damage. "Luckily" for her, he could make these repairs for a fraction of the cost of a "big company with lots of overhead."

Edith fell for Nebre's lies and paid him over \$20,000 for repairs, which he never did. In December, Nebre was sentenced to 15 years in prison and ordered to pay back \$100,000 he stole from Edith and five other seniors. The average amount court-ordered defendants return to their victims is \$25 to \$50 a month. By my calculations, Edith and the other victims will be paid back in 166 years!

"Friendly" con artists can be found anywhere, but often target seniors in home repair stores, like The Home Depot and Lowes. They say they have

some expertise that the overwhelmed homeowner needs, and they can do the job significantly cheaper than any competitor.

A great many of these so-called "experts" are unlicensed and unqualified. They either ask for payment up front or ask the victim to purchase materials, but they take the receipt. They might produce a phony invoice for materials—an invoice they found and stamped "Paid" themselves. The victim accepts this as "proof" that their money was used to buy materials/tools for the job.

"Cheap and cash-only" repairs are very tempting. If a "friendly" stranger wants to do work for you, ask not only for their license number but also for identification. A con artist will use a legitimate license number that belongs to someone else, so call the Consumer Resource Center (1-800-394-1902) to see if the license and name match. Also ask if there have been any complaints about that person. If this seems like too much humbug, remember, one simple phone call can save you thousands of dollars and keep you from having to call the police or meet with me. ■

To report suspected elder abuse, contact the Elder Abuse Unit at: **808-768-7536** | **ElderAbuse@honolulu.gov**
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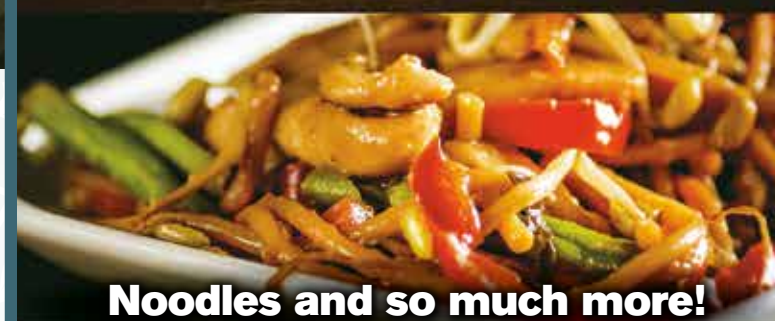
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