

# WALKER WRITES ...

MAHALO AND ALOHA to the delegates of the 23rd Biennial Assembly who supported me for State President for the 2019-2021 board term. I would also like to extend my Aloha and Congratulations to state officers: Vice president Susan Goya, Secretary Ethel Fleming and Treasurer Patrick Frane.

The convention was held at the Daniel K. Inouye Airport Conference Rooms on June 28, 2019 and included excitement and unexpected surprises.

First, it was different because our convention was a one-day affair instead of the usual over night meeting. Second, the proceedings were interrupted by two fire alarms that required all delegates to evacuate the meeting halls and march out to the parking area. Was it faulty wiring, error, prank or smoking? We never found out but whether the interruptions were intentional or not, evacuating the halls gave the delegates a break from the session to enjoy some fresh air and time to socialize with friends. The evacuation was also a nice chance to stretch our legs.

Regardless of the unexpected occurrences, delegates were tolerant and flexible and accepted the surprise interruptions. Many were inconvenienced but we survived and persevered, completed our business, had lunch almost on time, executed the elections, and adjourned on time.

There were different opinions about whether our convention site met our needs or not, but we were won over by the "ono" Hawaiian food that was served for lunch. The squid luau and chicken long rice were something worth waiting for, especially for one who had missed one's breakfast. Truly, the convention lunch compensated for the unforeseen and unexpected interruptions during the day. A majority of the 110 delegates that submitted their evaluation forms concluded that the convention location, meals, flights, and program scored in the top tier with good or excellent comments. Of course there is always room for improvement and suggestions will be reviewed before the 2021 assembly.

On behalf of all who attended the 23rd Biennial Assembly, I extend thanks to the Oahu Chapter officers and members for the hard work and effort they exerted in planning and carrying out the convention.

With help from the State officers, board members, HGEA staff and all of you, I intend to work toward the goal of making HGEA Local 152 Retirees Unit the most active unit in the country. Let us work together to achieve this goal.

Together let us also continue to increase our membership numbers. Chapter presidents and officers are more than capable of creating interesting and fun activities to encourage new retirees to join the retirees unit. I will also rely upon Chapter leaders to initiate exciting activities to help increase membership participation.

This year, I propose that we become active in the Kendall Scholarship Fund by encouraging all retirees to assign one dollar a month using the "Authorization Agreement for Direct Payment (ACH Debits)" form. Delegates who attended the B.A. received these forms but others can pick them up at their local HGEA offices. I believe this action will dedicate more money to the Kendall Scholarship Fund so that more scholarships can be awarded annually. I encourage retirees statewide to participate.

Again, thanks to HGEA staff for their support, to Randy Perreira for his counsel, to Mahie and Tammy for their leadership, and to all the delegates for attending and adding to the camaraderie of the Biennial Assembly.

In Solidarity,  
Ruth



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*"Join us in voting for Bennett Yap for ERS Trustee. He will work hard to protect our pensions and the pensions of current and future public workers!"*

Ethel Fleming and Ruth Walker, HGEA Retirees Unit

## WORDFIND Good Qualities

- |            |            |             |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| Attentive  | Ethical    | Patient     |
| Bright     | Flexible   | Pleasant    |
| Charitable | Friendly   | Polite      |
| Cheerful   | Generous   | Respectful  |
| Confident  | Happy      | Resourceful |
| Courageous | Helpful    | Smart       |
| Decent     | Humane     | Thankful    |
| Easygoing  | Kind       | Thoughtful  |
| Educated   | Optimistic | Trustworthy |
| Empathetic | Organized  |             |

L E E B O S U Q X E H Y U E O T E K J O  
 F U M V U V D A L E E H N N P N D I U F  
 C J F P I B E B E F L T Q A T E U N J E  
 S H X E A T A N C C P R A M I D C D T T  
 E M E X C T N G E F F O B U M I A B W Z  
 I V A E I R H E M X U W O H I F T N N R  
 U F P R R F U E T E L T X D S N E V E G  
 P D A M T F C O T T E S K V T O D S N T  
 T H G I R B U W S I A U R P I C P I N P  
 C J D N N O D L F E C R R O C E O A A X  
 L U F T H G U O H T R T Z M C G S T S B  
 Y L D N E I R F X F R L G T Y A I C U W  
 W F Y J N F C P L Y S W F S E E W N O D  
 E C O U R A G E O U S U A L N K E G R I  
 S T S T N B X E P D L E P T Q J E Q E S  
 C S H N N I T H A N K F U L F T J C N G  
 T T Y I B E S U X O R G A N I Z E D E D  
 N H O L C X C K M Y A F N L J I Z S G V  
 G L E R D A A E K C C R O H A P P Y C L  
 D O S B Z B L L D O R P N M I Y M O I N

# HO`OLAHA

P U B L I C A T I O N O F T H E R E T I R E D P E O P L E

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## HO`OLAHA

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Communications Specialist

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## Aloha, Retirees!

Hope you are enjoying your retirement, pension and health benefits that you earned working as a public worker. I'd like to introduce myself to those of you who don't know me, and humbly ask for your vote as one of your Trustees of the Hawaii Employees' Retirement System (ERS). My name is Bennett Yap. I'm an HGEA board member, HGEA steward and the HGEA treasurer overseeing complex investments of union trust funds, staff pensions, retiree medical and our arbitration and emergency reserves. During the last two years, under my direction, we have improved fund performance to an 8.32% return while investing prudently and keeping our risks low.



As a 25-year employee of the State of Hawaii, working as an information technology manager for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, I have dedicated my career to public service because I believe in our mission to serve the people of our state much like you dedicated yourselves to serving the public in your careers.

As public workers, many of us enjoy our jobs and find them rewarding, but we all struggled with the low pay and high cost of living. We make sacrifices and we make ends meet as best as we can. At the end of a long career, we need to be able to depend on our pensions, benefits that were promised to us when we were hired. I pledge to protect your pensions now and in the future.

We must also safeguard and grow those funds so that they will be there, not only for us, but for the next generation and future generations. Many of my family members and friends are public workers and teachers. My niece is a teacher at Pohakea Elementary. She's a little more than a decade into her career, and I want to make sure that our pension funds are strong and robust so that when she retires in 2049 or so, the ERS will be strong, fully-funded and paying out to the retirees of her generation.

Just a little more about me. I'm a local guy born and raised in Kaneohe, a product of both the DOE and private school with experience overseeing diverse investment funds. I care deeply about the health and continuation of the Employees' Retirement Fund and will work hard to ensure its current and future success. I humbly ask for your vote when you receive your mail-in ballots this September.

In Solidarity,  
Bennett Yap

## 2019 STATE BOARD DIRECTORS



### RETIRES UNIT STATE BOARD

Front Row: Ava Kridler, Ethel Fleming, Ruth Walker, Arlene Shimokawa, Susan Goya, Thomas Oi, Evelyn Togashi  
Back Row: Aileen Obina, Dennis Schwind, Patrick Frane, Muriel Masumura, Timothy Albao, Audrey Aki



### OAHU CHAPTER BOARD

Front: Edwina Luke; Middle Row: Jean Arakaki, Yolanda Faria, Ava Kridler;  
Back Row: Victoria Kim, Audrey Aki, Melvin Whang, John Wadahara



### MAUI CHAPTER BOARD

Front row: Leticia Hedani, Charmaine Bissen, Harvey Matsui;  
Back Row: Steve Criss, Dennis Schwind. Missing: Mary Wagner



### HAWAII CHAPTER BOARD

Front: Olga Hayashi, Charlene Sugihara; Back: Virgil Medeiros,  
Aileen Obina, Vicki Calica, Evelyn Togashi;  
Missing: Glenn Hansen, Ruth Walker.



### KAUAI CHAPTER BOARD

Left to right: Timothy Albao, Dolores Kaauwai, Roy Nishida, Thomas Oi,  
Elizabeth Ludington, Ethel Kauahi, Asako Iwamoto. Missing: Carol Saiki

### VOTING IN THE ERS TRUSTEE ELECTION (Note: The following information on the ERS election comes from the Summer 2019 issue of the ERS Holomua newsletter.)

All members of the ERS – active members, retirees, former members with vested benefit status – are eligible to vote and should receive a ballot. One seat is for a general employee and one seat is for a retiree of the System. **Retirees are eligible to vote for both the general employee and retiree seat.** The term for each seat is six years, beginning January 2, 2020. The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the ERS and is comprised of eight members, four of which are elected by the membership: two general employees, a teacher and a retiree. Of the four positions, the general employee and retiree position will be open for election. The other four positions of the eight-member board are appointed by the Governor: three are citizens of the State of Hawaii (one of whom is an officer of a bank authorized to do business in the State or a person of similar experience), and the fourth is the State Director of Finance who is an ex-officio member by statute. As these elections are conducted by mail-in ballots, please ensure that the ERS has your most current address. Active members may update mailing addresses through the personnel offices of your respective departments. Retirees and terminated vested members may have mailing addresses updated directly with the ERS. Please refer to the ERS website at [ers.hawaii.gov](http://ers.hawaii.gov) and refer to the ERS-211. Mailing Address Change form found under: Retirees > Pension Forms. The expected ballot mail out will be in September.

## CHAPTER NEWS

### OAHU

**Sept. 4, 2019:** Bingo

**Sept. 11 & 25, 2019:** Line Dancing

**Sept. 13, 2019:** Medicare 101 with Kaiser Medicare Account Manager, 9:00 a.m. HGEA hall.\*

**Sept. 19, 2019:** General Membership meeting, 9:00 a.m.

**Sept. 26, 2019:** Crochet

**Oct. 7, 2019:** Bingo

**Oct. 9 & 23, 2019:** Line Dancing

**Oct. 16, 2019:** Movie Day

**Oct. 24, 2019:** Crochet

**Nov. 6 & 20, 2019:** Line Dancing

### KAUAI

**Sept. 16, 2019:** General Membership meeting, 9:30 a.m.

**Oct. 14, 2019:** Movie Day

**Dec. 9, 2019:** Christmas Party

\*\*\*Kaiser and HMSA will be attending all September General Membership meetings.\*\*\*

Kaiser Permanente Medicare Account Manager Charina Masatsugu will be conducting the Medicare 101 presentation on Friday, September 13, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Oahu HGEA first floor meeting hall for HGEA retiree members interested to learn about the basics of Medicare. Please call Tammy at 543-0054 by Monday, September 9, 2019 to confirm your attendance.

The same presentation will be held on Maui, September 17, 2019 following the general membership meeting.

### MAUI

**Sept. 17, 2019:** General Membership meeting, 9:00 a.m. UPW Hall. Medicare 101 presentation to follow membership meeting.\*

**Oct. 7, 2019:** Bingo, HGEA office at 5:00 p.m.

**Nov. 20, 2019:** Movie Day

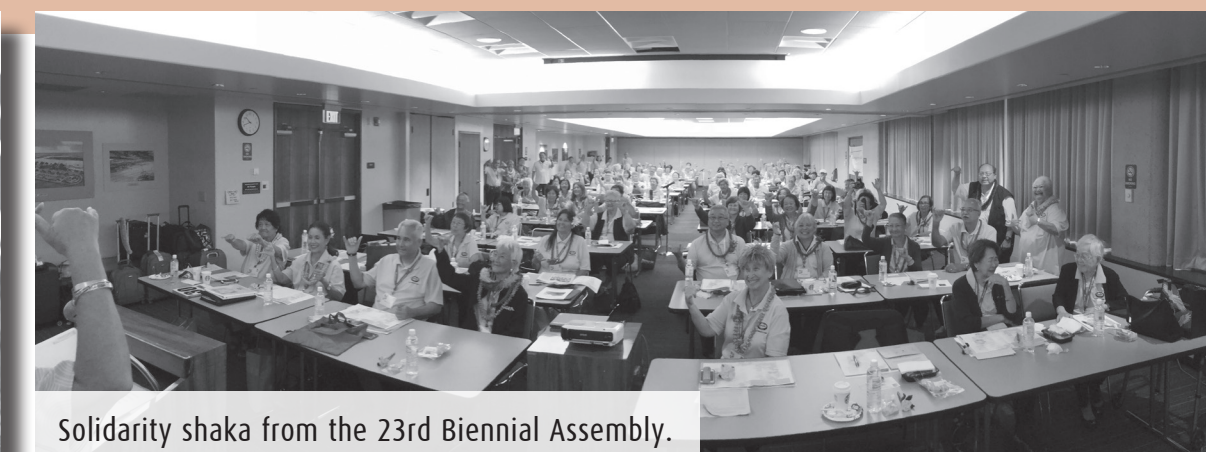
**Dec. 10, 2019:** Christmas Party

### BIG ISLAND

**Sept. 17, 2019:** Hilo Blood Bank, Auntie Sally Kaleohano's Luau Hale. 7am – 3:30pm.

**Sept. 18, 2019:** General Membership meeting 9:30 a.m.

**Sept. 21, 2019:** Hilo Alzheimers Walk. Queen Liliuokalani Park, Tea House parking lot, 7 a.m. registration, 8 a.m. walk. Walkers and monetary donations requested. Send check donations to HGEA Hilo office or online to Hilo Alzheimers Walk.



Solidarity shaka from the 23rd Biennial Assembly.