



“Creating a better Hawaii for our elders”

HPGS Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 24, Issue 4

November 2013

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Lifetime Member Spotlight: Dr. Eldon Wegner, Professor Emeritus, University of Hawaii at Manoa

By: Leanne Clark-Shirley



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Our first Lifetime Member Spotlight presents Dr. Eldon Wegner, Past-President of HPGS (2010). Dr. Wegner developed a personal and professional interest in gerontology while he was teaching medical sociology at UH, and affiliated with the Center on Aging soon after its establishment in the mid 1980’s. As his passion for aging policy and legislative issues grew, Dr. Wegner was appointed as an ex-officio to Hawaii’s Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA) in the 1990s, on which he continues to serve as the Vice-Chair of the Legislative Committee of PABEA. He also sits on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition, and is an active voice at the Hawaii State Legislature’s Kupuna Caucus. Recently he has developed an interest in ‘active aging,’ and helping people define and live a meaningful life post-retirement.

Dr. Wegner believes a notable strength of HPGS lies in its statewide membership of academic gerontologists, administrators, and service providers of programs and policies which address needs of our older population. As a co-sponsor of the annual Aging and Disabilities Report, HPGS realizes part of its mission in educating the wider community and legislators on the priority issues and advocating for the funding services that enhance the quality of life for older adults, including the frail elders and their caregivers. To the HPGS

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membership and future members of Hawaii's aging network, Dr. Wegner emphasizes a tremendous need for work in this area.

Dr. Wegner believes Hawaii is a remarkable place in which to age, given the environment conducive to health and wellness-oriented activities, and the culture that emphasizes healthy living. He also feels that there is a better, more inclusive attitude toward aging and older adults here compared to the mainland.

Message From the HPGS President



I am grateful for this opportunity to have served as your 2013 HPGS President. Special mahalo to **Suzie Schulberg** (Past President/Conference), **Shannon Miyazaki** (President Elect/Nominations), **Michiyo Tomioka**

(Secretary/Publicity), **Kyle Yanabu** (Treasurer/Fundraising), **Merlita Compton** (Member-at-Large/Publicity), **Dane Marcouiller** (Member-at-Large/Communication/Website), **Christy Nishita** (Member-at-Large/Programs & Continuing Education), **Tony Lenzer** (Member-at-Large/Scholarship), **Leanne Clark-Shirley** (Member-at-Large/Membership), **Samantha Tsoi** (Member-at-Large/Fundraising), and **Percy Ihara** (Member-at-Large). Thank you to **Michelle Sagucio** for managing the newsletter and email blast communications as well as **Suzie Schulberg** and **15 Craigsides** for hosting our HPGS meetings. Your strong volunteer commitment and support to HPGS and its mission is appreciated.

This past year was packed with valuable educational sessions. We started off 2013 with a special presentation by **Laura Bauer**, Director of National Initiatives for the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, and **Valorie Taylor** of Child &

Family Service, who spoke on "The RCI – Reach Intervention for Caregivers of Persons with Dementia" on March 27, 2013. **Karen Peterson** and **Peggy Sanches** of Giving Back discussed "Move with Balance Healthy Aging Activities for Brain and Body" on June 14, 2013 in Wailuku, Maui. **Janette Sargent-Hamill**, independent filmmaker, presented "Your Family, Your Story – A Guide to Digital Storytelling" on July 11, 2013. Dr. **Lani Leary** spoke about "No One Has to Die Alone: How to Change the End of Life from Fearful to Hopeful" on September 12, 2013.

Our HPGS Scholarship Committee: **Tony Lenzer**, **Chris Ridley**, and **Cullen Hayashida** selected a number of recipients this year. Charna Underwood and Jennifer Chomko, both University of Hawaii at Manoa students pursuing their Bachelor of Social Work degree were each awarded \$1,000 undergraduate scholarships. In addition, Toni Miller of Hawaii Pacific University and Gilbert Menor, a UH at Manoa graduate student, were each awarded \$1,000 graduate scholarships. Tiare Lando and Brigitte Hanog were awarded the Eldercare Worker Training Awards.

HPGS will be an exhibitor at the 2013 Hawaii HCBS Conference: A National Perspective for Local Aging and Disability Professionals at the Hyatt Regency Waikiki Beach Resort & Spa. If you have not registered for this conference from December 3 to 5, 2013, please visit the 2013 Hawaii HCBS Conference website.

Please join us at our December quarterly meeting on December 12, 2013 at the Jade Dynasty Chinese Restaurant at Ala Moana Center as I pass the baton on to next year's President, **Shannon Miyazaki**, and she installs her new 2014 Board of Directors and Officers.

May you have a peaceful holiday season.

Mahalo,
Felicia Marquez-Wong,
HPGS 2013 President

HPGS Quarterly Meeting

Meet our new Board Members and bid Aloha and Mahalo to our out-going Board Members at our next HPGS Quarterly Meeting on:

Thursday, December 12, 2013

12:00 noon

Jade Dynasty Seafood Restaurant

Ho`okipa Terrace, Upper Level 4
Ala Moana Center, 1450 Ala Moana Boulevard,
Honolulu, Hawaii.

Parking is free. SE Parking on 4A is the closest to the restaurant.

Cost: \$15.00.

Lunch will include: 4 courses and dessert

Please RSVP to Christy at cnishita@hawaii.edu by December 6, 2013. For more information, please call Felicia Marquez-Wong at 547-8145.

Pre-payment by check to HPGS will confirm your reservation. Send to: Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society, P.O.Box 3714, Honolulu, Hawaii 96812.

Call for HPGS Newsletter Articles

Please e-mail announcements, short articles (3-5 paragraphs long), or pictures (including captions) that may be of interest to individuals in the gerontology community that you want to include in the February 2014 issue to hpgs.hawaii@gmail.com by February 5, 2014. Depending on relevancy, urgency, and available space, not all articles submitted may be included. Content may also be edited.

HPGS E-mail List

If you have not been receiving e-mail updates and would like to, please e-mail us at hpgs.hawaii@gmail.com with your name (first and

last) and e-mail address. Please also inform us if you would like to receive the quarterly newsletter via e-mail instead of snail mail.

NATIONAL NEWS

Check In With Social Security Before Traveling Outside the United States

*By: Jane Yamamoto-Burigsay,
Social Security Public Affairs Specialist in Hawaii*

Mark Twain once advised people to "Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Americans today have taken that advice to heart, and are visiting places around the globe—often for vacations, and sometimes to relocate in another country. If you are one of these people and receive Social Security benefits, we offer a special website: "Social Security Payments Outside the United States." Here you can find answers to such questions as "will my Social Security payments be affected? Do I have to let Social Security know I'm out of the country? When should I do it? What happens if I need to contact Social Security while I am out of the country?"

You can find answers to all of these questions and others at www.socialsecurity.gov/international/payments.html. The website features a "Payments Abroad Screening Tool", which asks you a few short questions to determine if your payments can continue. The page also offers links to publications, such as *Your Payments While You Are Outside The United States*, which explains how your benefits may be affected and other important information you need to know about receiving Social Security benefits while outside the country.

And one more important point to note. If you receive Social Security benefits as a dependent or

survivor there are additional United States residency requirements that may affect your benefit payments while you are outside the United States.

It also is important to note that there are different provisions for anyone receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. Once you have been outside the United States for 30 or more days in a row, your SSI cannot start again until you have been back in the country for at least 30 consecutive days. There are special rules for dependent children of military personnel who leave the United States and exceptions for students studying abroad.

So if you receive Social Security or SSI benefits and are planning to travel or live outside the United States, you'll first want to pay a visit to www.socialsecurity.gov/international/payments.html.

A Novel (But Good) Idea For A Holiday Gift

*By: Jane Yamamoto-Burigsay,
Social Security Public Affairs Specialist in Hawaii*

Do you have family members or friends on your gift list this holiday season? And are you once again wondering what to give them? Well, you might think about giving them something that will help them for years to come — assistance in creating their own *my Social Security* account.

It's imaginative, practical, and potentially very valuable. Here's why. For many people, there is no gift as precious as time. And when they weigh the value of time spent waiting in line in a government office, or time spent with friends and family after quickly conducting Social Security business online, they will be grateful indeed. And the gift of helping them apply for a *my Social Security* account has all the variety of a holiday candy sampler.

After creating a *my Social Security* account at www.socialsecurity.gov, a person can:

- get an instant, personalized estimate of future Social Security benefits;

- apply for retirement, disability, spouse's, and Medicare benefits;
- check the status of a benefit application;
- change address and phone number, if receiving monthly Social Security benefits;
- sign-up for direct deposit of Social Security benefits;
- use our benefit planners to help better understand Social Security options when planning for a financial future;
- request a replacement Medicare card; and
- apply for Extra Help with Medicare prescription drug costs.

Wow! That's a pretty impressive package for the holiday gift-giving list. So be creative. Visit www.socialsecurity.gov and share the gift of potential time-saved with a relative or friend.

November As A Month of National Recognition

By: Felicia Marquez-Wong

If you are one of the 15 million Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers in the United States, thank you and we honor you. It is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month and National Family Caregivers Month. Calling our older relatives and visiting them regularly can mean so much when they are living alone. When you are managing their chores and errands, providing the physical care of feeding, bathing, and toileting, and supervising an older adult 24/7, then it is also important to reach out for support. It's also important to look at how we manage our stress levels, take care of ourselves, and stay informed about realistic care options. November is also National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. Did you know that an estimated 1.6 million Americans living with life-limiting illness, and their families, received care from hospice programs in communities across the nation? We are encouraged to increase our understanding and awareness of care at the end of life. Let's share your end of life thoughts with your family and friends.