

Dear Friends,

Aloha! Only a few more months to go before the start of the 2009 legislative session on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Please let me know if you have any ideas to help improve life in Hawaii. Here are a few things I'd like to share with you.

Please contact me if I can help you in any way. My phone number is 586-6830 and my email is [sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov). Mahalo for the privilege of serving you!

### **Listen-Story**

I'll be hosting my next "Listen-Story" meeting at the Waikele Starbucks (next to Borders bookstore) at 9 a.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2008. I hope to see you there!

### **State Budget Picture Looking Bleak**

You might have seen on the news recently that the state could face a \$900 million deficit by 2011 unless major cuts to the budget are made. This announcement comes on the heels of a report by the Council on Revenues which lowered the state's projected tax revenue forecast by 1%. If you're not familiar, the Council on Revenues is made up of nine economists who make projections about the health of Hawaii's economy. As a result, Governor Lingle has instituted a state hiring freeze and has asked her departments to look at cutting lower priority programs. The State is also increasing the issuance of general obligation bonds for construction projects to help stimulate the economy

### **Kapolei Sunset Festival a Success**

I was happy to serve on the planning committee for the 2008 Summer Kapolei Sunset Festival which took place at the Kapolei Regional Park on September 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. I've been a strong supporter of these events since my days on the City Council. This year my office helped coordinate a Health Fair, which offered flu shots and provided booths to various healthcare organizations. We also designed the logo for the event. Special mahalos go to Obed Donlin and the American Youth Soccer Organization's Leeward Region 269 for once again co-sponsoring this event with the City and County. Thousands of families were able to enjoy this nice festival because of their efforts.

### **Drive Safe 4 Ewa Keeps Our Roads Safe During Christmas Season**

I'm serving as a member of the planning committee for the 2008 Drive Safe 4 Ewa Campaign. Other committee members include Ewa Weed and Seed, Hale Pono Girls and Boys Club, Ewa Beach Lions Club, Kapolei City Lions Club, Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii, and HPD. The purpose of the campaign is to bring awareness to the problems of reckless and drunken driving during the Christmas and New Year's holidays. We'll be having a kick-off event, which is open to the public, at the Kapolei Police Station on November 29<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am. We'll also be sign holding in Kapolei on December 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. My office is

helping to organize a poster contest for Ewa and Kapolei middle/high school students. If you'd like to get involved, please contact my office at 586-6830.

### **HMSA Offers Online Care**

As a member of the Legislature's Keiki Caucus, I'm often made aware of developments which have the potential to make life better for our keiki and families. At a September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, Ms. Jennifer Diesman of HMSA shared important news that could be beneficial for all of us. In January 2009 HMSA will become the first health care plan in the nation to collaborate with two leading national corporations, American Well and Microsoft, to make online health care services available to Hawaii residents 24-hours a day. This will make health care services more readily available by allowing you to talk to a doctor live and on demand via the web or by phone. Doctors will be able to review patient information, talk with and see patients, prescribe medication, and recommend follow-up care. For more information, please contact Ms. Diesman at 948-5459.

### **World Champion Waipi'o Little League Makes Hawaii Proud**

I joined with colleagues, Will Espero, Ron Menor, Clarence Nishihara, David Ige, Marilyn Lee, and Ryan Yamane to honor the World Champion Waipi'o Little League players and coaches at a fundraiser for the team at the Waipi'o McDonald's on September 13<sup>th</sup>. As you know, the Waipi'o Little League team returned to Hawaii on August 25<sup>th</sup> after winning the U.S. Championship in an emotional come-from-behind game against Lake Charles, La. The team also crushed Mexico by a score of 12-3 in the World Championship game. The games were held in South Williamsport, Pa. The team is led by manager Timo Donahue. Third baseman, Pikai Winchester, is a Kapolei resident and a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student at Holy Family Catholic Family. His 5-year old younger brother Paliku, who has been diagnosed with lymphoma, is an inspiration to the team. The Waipi'o players received a hero's welcome upon their return to Hawaii, participating in a Parade of Champions in Waikiki and many other community events. The Waipi'o McDonald's held the fundraiser for the team to help their families recoup some of the expenses they incurred during their long stay on the mainland. Each player received a \$100 McDonald's gift card and a certificate from the State Senate.

### **Masina Vagatai Excels in Mpact Girls Club**

I very much enjoyed presenting a surprise certificate from the State Senate to Masina Vagatai at an award ceremony at Makakilo Rec Center during the Makakilo Assembly of God's church services on September 21<sup>st</sup>. Masina was recognized for being named an Honor Star in the Mpact Girls Club. The Mpact Girls Club is similar to traditional Girl Scouts but is based on the Bible. Mpact is part of the National Girls Ministries program that has been reaching out to girls and cultivating the highest character and moral standards in them since 1955. With clubs for all ages, Mpact provides an environment of support and accountability while developing the girls' gifts and abilities. In addition, members build lifelong relationships with mentors who encourage them to be spiritual leaders. Masina Vagatai, a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Kapolei Middle School, has been a part

of the MPact program since she was in kindergarten. In the last 3 years, she completed the rigorous 36 units for the Stars Club. I commend Masina for the strong faith and commitment that she demonstrated in completing the requirements to become an MPact Girls Club Honor Star.

### **Kapolei High Students to Build Classrooms**

I was thrilled to be a part of the groundbreaking ceremony for two portable classrooms at Kapolei High School on September 5<sup>th</sup>. Kapolei High woodshop instructor, Brian Ichida, and his students will be the ones actually constructing the classrooms. Mr. Ichida wanted to offer project-based learning for his students with an emphasis on both classroom and on-the-job experience. This project will set the standard and raise the bar for all other high school woodshop classes. Mahalo to the Department of Education, University of Hawaii, Plywood Hawaii, and Honsador Lumber for their contributions in making this innovative project a reality.

### **Old Timers Boxing Club**

A tennis buddy from Makakilo recently asked me if I'd ever heard of the Old Timers Boxing Club. Not being a boxing fan, I admitted I hadn't. I was told that this club was formed in Waipahu in 1986 by the famous Yasui brothers: Johnny, Tommy, Freddy, and Eddy. The club provides an opportunity for boxers of all ages to come together and talk story about the impressive history of boxing in Hawaii. They currently have about 50 members, but are looking to reach out to other boxers who may have lost touch with their old friends and past competitors. The current president is Bobby Lee of Maui and their secretary/treasurer is Bobby Hayashida of Waipahu.

My friend informed me that Mr. Hayashida contacted various media outlets a few months back and invited them to one of the Club's quarterly luncheons to do research for an article. Mr. Hayashida was told that boxing in Hawaii is no longer of interest compared to new sports such as mixed martial arts. My office emailed all of media to see if they might consider doing a story to highlight the Club and its members. I was more than a little disappointed to not hear back from any of them.

Mr. Hayashida is dismayed that boxing is no longer popular, given the tremendous success that Hawaii residents have had with the sport. He told me that he's heartbroken that the young people of today don't even know the names of Hawaii boxers who achieved great success for themselves in the 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s.

Some of the notable boxers that Mr. Hayashida fondly remembers include Dado Morino from the Big Island who was crowned the flyweight champion of the world in 1946. There's Carl Bobo Olsen from Kalihi who was the world middleweight champion in the 1950s. Both of these fine men are now deceased.

Then there are the three national champions from 1946 who are still members of the Club: welterweight Robert Takashita of Pearl City, flyweight David Puna of Kalihi, and bantamweight Tsunishi Maruo of Pearl City. Club founder Freddy Yasui was also a national champion in 1936.

We should all be aware of generous people like Albert Silva of Waipahu, welterweight territorial champion in 1947, who has been training youngsters at the Waipahu Rec Center for 40 years. And there's Masa Nakaoka who built a boxing gym above his Kalihi paint shop in the early 80s and allows people of all ages to train there at no charge. Both Albert and Masa should be commended for helping keep youth off the streets and engaging them in physical fitness.

The Club meets every three months for lunch at the Oahu Veterans Center (1298 Kukila Street in Honolulu). Their next luncheon is Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 2pm. Yearly dues are just \$5 to join and the luncheon is \$10. For more information, please contact Mr. Hayashida at 677-4501. Let's support these living legends and get boxing back into the ring!