

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Office of Senator David Y. Ige-16th District

Volume 2, Issue 5

April 12, 2005



Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Welcome to the fifth issue of the Community Connection!

As we approach the last weeks of the legislative session, I hope that those of you who would like to visit the Capitol will do so.

I especially encourage everyone to come by and see more artwork that has been created by students in our community. On display will be photographs taken by the students of Pearl City High School and *gyotaku*, the traditional Japanese art of fish printing, and other works created by the students of Waiiau Elementary School.

Sincerely,

David Y. Ige
State Senator
16th District

TALK OF THE TOWN

KAMEHAMEHA HIGHWAY COORIDOR PROJECT

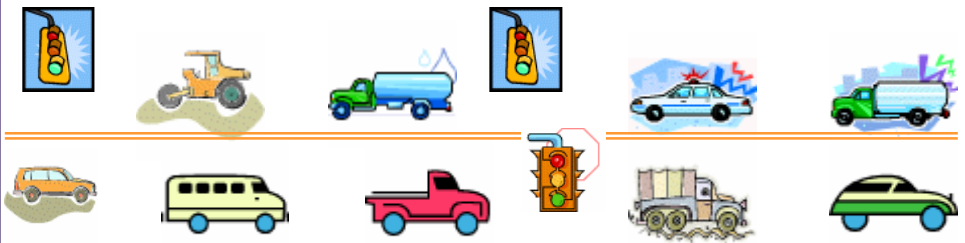
On Wednesday, **April 27, 2005**, the Department of Transportation (DOT), in conjunction with Pearl City and Aiea area legislators, will hold a town meeting to discuss the Kamehameha Highway beautification and safety project. Officials from DOT and consultants from Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas, who have been contracted for the project, will be presenting their preliminary plans for the highway project. Primarily, contractors and state officials have been focusing on traffic flow and safety issues, especially the widening of sidewalks for pedestrians and the construction of durable medians for traffic safety, without compromising the aesthetic possibilities of the Kamehameha Highway corridor. Consultants will also be requesting public input and ideas for the project, in order to address the needs of our Pearl City/Aiea community.

The **Kamehameha Highway Corridor Project** will improve roadways that stretch from the Ewa end in front of Sam's Club and Home Depot to the Diamond Head end that runs past the Arizona Memorial and Pearl Harbor Gate. The project will also affect highly used streets, such as Aiea Access Road, which feeds into H-1, Moanalua Freeway and the Aloha Stadium parking lots.

This project has been a concern for our community for a number of years. However, due to limited funds and competing transportation needs, the project has progressed very slowly. While other communities have witnessed improvement projects on their roadways, Pearl City and Aiea residents have patiently waited for their main artery of traffic to receive attention.

An initial community meeting with officials from DOT was held in 2002. At that time, comments from residents and concerned citizens were noted and included as a major part of the project. Since then, other issues regarding Kamehameha Highway, traffic and pedestrian safety and residential growth have affected the corridor and created other newer concerns. This meeting will be a renewed effort to address long-standing needs, as well as the future of our community.

Please join us on the 27th to listen and to have your ideas heard!



YOU CAN HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

- ~ By driving slowly and carefully whenever passing our schools and by stopping whenever school buses are stopped and flashing their lights. Of particular concern are the streets surrounding Highlands Intermediate School, a school that has been chosen an AIG Hot Spot.
- ~ By contributing to the bottle and can collections being conducted at both Pearl City Highlands Elementary and Alvah Scott Elementary Schools. Donations may be dropped off behind the Alvah Scott cafeteria until 9 a.m. on the first and third Mondays until May 15. PEACHES will accept deposit-redeemable beverage containers at their school from 7 – 9:30 a.m. on April 27.
- ~ By taking canned goods to Pearl Ridge Elementary School to help them with their campaign to feed the hungry. Drop off canned goods in front of the school from 7:15 a.m. – 7:45 a.m. from Monday, 4/25 through Friday, 4/29.

Getting to Know ...

GENE AWAKUNI

the New Chancellor for UH West Oahu

On March 1, 2005, **Gene Awakuni** began his new job as chancellor of **University of Hawaii-West Oahu (UHWO)**, the only part of the UH system that, despite being in existence since 1976 and having an increasing enrollment, has never had permanent quarters for its students or staff. Our community and the University of Hawaii are fortunate to have someone like Mr. Awakuni, a local boy and a product of the UH system, leading UHWO.

He graduated from Kaimuki High School and went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Masters of Social Work from UH Manoa. He also earned a Masters of Education and Doctorate of Education degrees in counseling and consulting psychology from Harvard University. For the last 25 years, he has lived and worked on the mainland at the University of California at Irvine, Columbia University in New York, and most recently was vice provost for student affairs at Stanford University.

Mr. Awakuni is happy to be home and committed to fulfilling UHWO's master plan, which calls for an enrollment of 7,000 by 2010. In order to do this, he has been visiting legislators and networking in the community to gain more support for a full service academic institution in a permanent facility. Currently, UHWO serves over 800 students and offers four baccalaureate programs and four undergraduate certificate programs. Many of their students are non traditional — older adults, retired military personnel, military spouses and people seeking second careers — who benefit from the small student-to-teacher ratio and can also achieve their academic goals by taking courses through distance learning technology.

With over 70,000 students in the public schools in Leeward Oahu, and ever expanding development in the Ewa plains, it is imperative that we support the expansion of UHWO into its permanent campus and buildings. Fulfilling this vision would enable those seeking degrees to meet their goals within their own community.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES TO...

+ **Michael Nakasone**, recently appointed bandmaster of the Royal Hawaiian Band, the nation's only fulltime municipal band. He is well known in our community, having served as director of the Pearl City High School band for 28 years, taking it to national renown through performances at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York and the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena. Under his leadership, the Pearl City High band received the John Philip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Flag of Honor, the only Hawaii school to receive this major honor.

+ **Merynn Ito** of Aiea who earned a spot on the University of Nebraska golf team and placed eighth in the Mountain View Collegiate tournament with a 3-under-par 69 in the final round. Merynn has been playing golf since she was nine years old and won the state high school championship in 2000 as a junior at Aiea High. In addition to playing golf, Merynn is pursuing a career in journalism and has twice been selected National Golf Coaches Association Scholastic All-American as well as being selected for the first team Academic All-Big 12.

+ **Tobi Kanehira** and **Tehane Higa**, both senior at Aiea High and **Chelsea Arakawa**, senior at Pearl City High for being selected to the Advertiser All-State Team for Girls Soccer by a vote of nine coaches and media form throughout the state. In addition, Aiea's **Ambree Ako** and **Amanda Yungblut** and **Chimene Sienkiewicz** of Pearl City were named to the Second Team, while **Kelli-Ann Chang**, Aiea, **Joanna Oliveros** and **Amber Horn**, Pearl City, were Honorable Mentions.

+ Leeward District Science Fair winner **Andrew M. Abe** and his teacher, **Aaron Tominaga** of Pearl City High who were awarded \$1000 McInerney Foundation Scholarship awards.

LEST WE FORGET...

- **Specialist Kyle K. Fernandez** of Pearl City. While serving with C company, Second Battalion, Fifth Infantry Regiment in Miam Do, Afghanistan, his humvee was struck by an improvised explosive device on October 14, 2004, killing him and Staff Sergeant Brian S. Hobbs of Mesa, Arizona. He was 26 years old.

- **Marine Lance Corporal Blake A. Magaoay**, a 2002 graduate of Pearl City High School, who enlisted in the United States Marine Corps to serve his country. He trained at Camp Pendleton, and his assignment to the First Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, First Marine Division, First Marine Expeditionary Force took him to Fallujah where he was involved in the fierce fighting to regain control of the city from the insurgents. He was killed in an enemy ambush on November 29, 2004. He was 20 years old.

- **Dick Kenney**, counselor at Pearl City High for 29 years. Perhaps best known for his barefooted kicking at Michigan State, and for being instrumental in the 10-10 tie between the Spartans and the Irish of Notre Dame in 1966, billed college football's "Game of the Century" by the media. Kenney was a coach to hundreds of young athletes in baseball, football and other sports at Waipahu, Pearl City and Damien High Schools, while also serving as a counselor.

"Life never dies,... Only the forms shall pass away and not the spirit's breath." (Buddhist poem)

The **COMMUNITY CONNECTION** is published and distributed by the **Office of Senator David Y. Ige**.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us!

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