

HAB FORUM

HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND Advocating for Independence, Equality, Opportunity

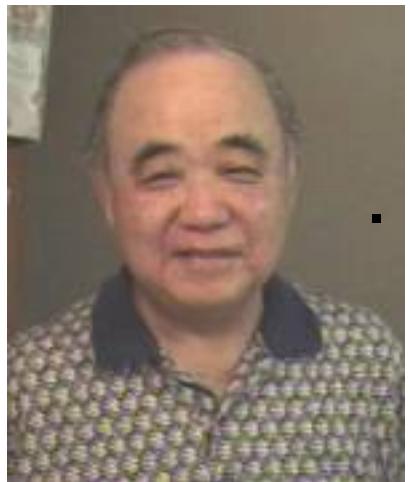
ALOHA! The Hawaii Association of the Blind (HAB) is proud to introduce everyone to the **HAB Forum**. This newsletter is published twice a year.

HAB is an organization comprised of blind and sighted members, who strongly believe in advocating for independence, equality, and opportunity for all blind persons.

The officers of HAB are:

- President: Warren Toyama, vendor at the Tripler Army Medical Center
- First Vice-President: Filo Tu, President and CEO of Blind Vendors Ohana
- Second Vice-President & Scholarship Chairman: Don Thomson, Professor at Leeward Community College
- Secretary: Maureen Sheedy, student
- Treasurer: Amelia Cetrone, retired hotel CEO
- Board Members:
 - Myles Tamashiro, vendor at Kona Airport
 - Norman Ota, dark room technician at Tripler Army Medical Center

- Toshiyuki Takano, retired vendor



PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Warren Toyama

Annual Convention

The 37th annual state convention for the Hawaii Association of the Blind will be on March 20, 2004. Imagine, 37 years of advocating for the blind in Hawaii! Congratulations to all you HAB members who make our organization effective. Here are more details about the convention:

Date: March 19, 2004 (Friday) – Hospitality
March 20, 2004 (Saturday) – Convention

Place: Pagoda Hotel

Contact: **Norman Ota**, 834-1079 or **Filo Tu**, 861-1300

Russian Delegation

A small delegation of Russian library directors toured Hawaii's facilities for the blind in order to broaden their horizons to improve services for Russia's blind.

This delegation met with six members of HAB for an afternoon of interesting discussions and later a dinner at the Pagoda restaurant. The HAB participants were Don Thomson, Norman Ota, Filo Tu, Myles Tamashiro, Julia Toyama, and Warren Toyama. The Russian participants were Nataliya Ivanovna Baukova (library director), Tamara Pavlovna Chudivnova (library director), Olga Vilovna Osipova (library director), Nail Ibragimovich Safargaleyev (library director who is totally blind), Irina Mikhaylovna Novikova (facilitator

who is fluent in English), and Cheryl Lewis (local coordinator).

A cordial exchange of ideas flowed freely. Topics included HAB's activities and its underlying philosophy, and the Russian state of affairs. Both groups felt that this kind of exchange was most helpful to all concerned.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

- Myles Tamashiro,

Chairman



Aloha! Everyone had a wonderful time at the Thanksmas party (Thanksgiving and Christmas combined) on November 29, 2003. The food was incredible, and the fellowship and music was terrific. Thanks to Julia Toyama for coordinating the food preparations. A monetary collection was

taken to aid the Lokahi project.

Our annual New Year's party was held on January 10 at the Wisteria Restaurant. Everyone enjoyed the ono food while Filo rocked the party with some good music. Thanks to everyone who shared their singing talents! We had fun playing bingo and winning all the great prizes. The highlight of the night was the raffle for a \$100 bill. Other raffle prizes included a box fan and a beautiful glassware set. The party was a great start into 2004.

Future events include a picnic and a bowling tournament.

Fundraising Committee – Myles Tamashiro, Chairman

The newly formed Fundraising Committee is made up of Myles Tamashiro, Norman Ota, Miriam Onomura, and Nora

Ota-Burrows. HAB's first fundraiser will be selling Zippy's Chili. Tickets are \$5 each and will be sold from May 1 to June 30, 2004. Let's all make this a great sale!!

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT – Norman Ota and Filo Tu, Co-Chairs



The membership committee must do two things. First, we need to try to recruit new members while also keeping in touch with interested parties. Second, we must try to retain current members by assisting them to be active within the organization.

In hopes of recruiting new members, we held a get-together with current members and people interested in joining HAB. A lively discussion took place, and the outcome was encouraging.

It seems that interest in our organization is growing. The November Thanksmas party (Thanksgiving and Christmas combined) and the January New Year's party had a large turnout of members and guests.

The Membership Committee will be sure to follow up on any guest who is interested in joining our organization, or who just wants more information about HAB.

We are looking forward to the next few months when we will be working on increasing membership and organizing a fundraising event. Anyone who has ideas or things of interest to look into, please let us know.

The membership committee thanks everyone who helped with the Thanksmas and New Year's parties. A special thank you to Julia Toyama who helped organize the HAB Christmas

card mailings.

For membership referrals, please call Norman at 834-1079 or Filo at 861-1300.

HAB Scholarship – Don Thomson, Chairman

The Hawaii Association of the Blind is offering scholarships to legally blind college students who are also Hawaii residents. The students may be attending any accredited university or college regardless of location. May 15th and November 15th are the deadlines for Fall and Spring applications.

Scholarships may be offered on an annual or a semi-annual basis as determined by the scholarship committee. The committee reserves the right not only to accept or deny scholarship applications, but also to determine the amount and duration of the scholarship. Scholarship recipients must re-apply in order to be considered for future scholarships. Those who are denied a scholarship are eligible to re-apply in the future. Scholarships will not exceed one-year in duration and are not expected to be less than \$500 per semester.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be legally blind as defined by national standards.
- Must be planning to attend college for the period which he/she is applying.
- Must be a resident of the State of Hawaii.
- Must not be a member of any national organization other than The American Council of the Blind, the parent organization of the Hawaii Association of the Blind (since other national organizations have their own scholarships).

Persons who are not affiliated with any national organizations of blind people are encouraged to apply.

For further inquires, Phone: (808) 455-0367 or Email (thomsond@hawaii.edu)

Scholarship Application

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEE REPORT – Yoshiko Nishihara and Miriam Onomura, Co-chairs

HAB's Refreshment Committee continues to do a marvelous job of providing delicious pastries, sandwiches and manapua for all the monthly meetings. Thank you Yoshiko and Miriam!

The Hawaii State Committee of Blind Vendors – Filo Tu, Chairman



This is the most difficult time that the Committee has ever encountered. The reason for this is the misconception by the Business Enterprise Manager, Stephen Teeter, of what the vending program is all about. It is very important for the vendors not to be misled by this person. Mr. Teeter's way of thinking is

that the Committee and the vending program are just one entity. They are not! Mr. Teeter was hired by the State to run the program. The Committee was elected by the Blind Vendors. The Committee belongs to the Blind Vendors.

It is time for us as Vendors to come together and reclaim our Committee and protect our rights. We don't have all the vendors

with us. A few feel Mr. Teeter is correct. Most of the vendors who support Mr. Teeter are members of the NFB Merchants Guild and therefore hold an opposing view from the rest of us.

We urge all Vendors to study both Federal and State regulations that govern the Business Enterprise Program. Mahalo!

HAPVI Report – Amy Downard

Ringing in the New Year is always a good time to reflect on the past year's accomplishments and highlights. HAPVI, the Hawaii Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments, has enjoyed a good year. The HAPVI summer convention was a grand success. It was held on August 23, 2003 in the Iris Room at the Pagoda Hotel. This was a great event for parents and families to learn important details about services for their children, and to network with each other for support and fellowship. Convention presenters included Fusako Miyashiro from LBPH, Amy Downard a teacher of the visually impaired, Dr. Paul Ban from the DOE Special Education Section, and Julia Toyama and Filo Tu from the Hawaii Association of the Blind.

The feature presenter, Susan La Venture, President of the National Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (NAPVI), shared her firsthand experiences from a parent's perspective, and she spoke about national news and updates.

Another positive outcome of this convention was that HAPVI officially joined the national affiliation of NAPVI,

arranged by Myles Tamashiro, Precisent of HAPVI. Now, HAPVI members will be able to access more info, get advocacy updates, and gain access to national parent networks.

The membership of HAPVI has steadily increased over the year. Families gather throughout the year for potlucks, picnics, and informative meetings. At each meeting, more new and friendly faces appear. These are the best opportunities for parents to share their highs and lows, receive and give emotional support, and learn how to effectively advocate for their children.

So as we start the New Year with great anticipation and zeal, look for more upbeat news from HAPVI as we head into a most promising year.

New HAB Members

Louise and James Horio

Ronald and Elizabeth Flomata

Laureen Kukino

Lynne Milner

Get Well Soon

Helen Kitchen Branson

Louise Horio

Yoshiko Nishihara