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# Hooser, Morita up for confirmation

Senate to vote today on Abercrombie appointments

Nathan Eagle  
THE GARDEN ISLAND

HONOLULU — Two long-time Kaua'i lawmakers will make a marked transition today in their careers as public servants if the state Senate confirms their gubernatorial appointments as expected.

Gov. Neil Abercrombie in February nominated Rep. Mina Morita to serve as Public Utilities Commissioner and former Sen. Gary Hooser to head the Office of Environmental Quality Control.

Also scheduled for floor action today in the Senate is the appointment of Patricia McManaman as director of Department of Human Services.

If the confirmation hearing goes as anticipated, Morita said she plans to resign and be sworn into office in time to start her new job Tuesday at the PUC. Her seat representing the 14th District, which spans from Kapa'a to Hanalei, will be filled by one of the candidates put forward by the Hawai'i Democratic Party.

"The role of a Public Utilities Commission has to evolve beyond setting rates ensuring investors a fair and reasonable return, to being a critical factor in the implementation of various policies to achieve a prosperous and sustainable future for Hawai'i," Morita said Wednesday in a statement to the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection.



Hooser



Morita

Hooser stepped down from his seat as the sole senator representing Kaua'i and Ni'ihau in the state Legislature for an unsuccessful run last year to be lieutenant governor.

"One of the core missions of the OEQC is 'education and outreach,'" Hooser said in his testimony March 3 to the Senate Committee on Energy and the Environment. "As the resources of the office stabilize, staff will increasingly be engaged in reaching out to other agencies, planners and others who utilize the Chapter 343 process (the state law governing environmental assessments and impact statements) ... My goal would be to help build the OEQC into

See Confirmation, A6

## No harmful levels of radioactivity expected in Hawai'i

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission says harmful levels of radioactivity are not expected in the United States due to damaged nuclear reactors in Japan.

Earthquakes and a tsunami have damaged at least two nuclear complexes in Japan. Officials have declared states of emergency at six of the country's 55 reactors.

Inside:  
See A3 for coverage on developments in Japan

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# Diverse crowd competes in inaugural Tri Fest

Dennis Fujimoto  
THE GARDEN ISLAND

NAWILIWILI — Maliana Kauai and the 2011 International Garden Isle Tri Fest shared one thing in common — both enjoyed the event for the first time.

The Garden Isle Tri Fest opened this weekend at Kalapaki Bay to several hundred athletes, ranging from 7-years-olds to experienced tri-athletes.

Kelvin Moniz — the Kaua'i Independent Food Bank operations manager, one of two charitable beneficiaries of the inaugural event — said Tri Fest was designed to attract a more international field of participants to enjoy the island.

Moniz was helping at the transition area, Sunday, the second day of the event.

Despite the full schedule of other athletic events on the community calendar, Moniz said the C4 Waterman Kalapaki Paddleboard Challenge attracted a good-sized field with several "photo finishes" giving spectators a thrill.

Also scheduled on Saturday were a 10K Run, a 5K Fun Run/Walk and the Kids Duathlon.

"We attended the Skills Clinic with JJ Johnson, the event producer, Saturday," Kauai said. "It was kind of practice for the Sunday triathlon."

Sunday morning triathlons hit the waters in staggered starts outside the Kaua'i Marriott Resort and Beach Club from as early as 7 a.m. The event was broken down for kids ages 7 to



Photos by Dennis Fujimoto/The Garden Island

**Maliana Kauai, a seventh-grader at Kapa'a Middle School, shows off her medal after completing the Youth Triathlon at the Tri Fest International, Sunday.**

10, youth ages 11 to 15, juniors ages 16 to 19, a sprint duathlon, sprint triathlon and Olympic triathlon.

"It was fun," said Kauai, who competed in the youth group following her birthday on March 4. "The swim portion was fun. I had fun on the bike portion although some of the hills were a little tough. But my favorite part was the run because I like to run."

Mele Kauai, Maliana's mother, said she's been swimming to condition for the event, and picked up a sponsorship from the Philippine Island Hawai'i Island bicycle group who provided her with a PIHI team shirt and paid for her carbo party Friday night.

"This is her first triathlon and I am very excited for her," Mele said. "It is new for us. She has had to learn a lot about this event

See Tri Fest, A6

# Giving back



Dennis Fujimoto/The Garden Island

**Federico Cadiente Jr., the caretaker at Samuel Mahelona Memorial Hospital, helps Frank Marsh of the Kaua'i Orchid Society in securing an orchid specimen to one of the trees in the hospital's courtyard while Josie Pablo, the activities director, watches in the background, Saturday.**

## Orchids enhance history of Mahelona

Dennis Fujimoto  
THE GARDEN ISLAND

KAPA'A — A local floral group gave back to the community this weekend through a service project at a Kapa'a hospital.

Josie Pablo, activities director at Samuel Mahelona Memorial Hospital, said the Kaua'i Orchid Society brought over a supply of orchid plants Saturday to place in trees lining the hospital's courtyard.

"The orchid plants are going to love this new home," said KOS member Sandy Jacob, who got help from her husband Sid. "We don't have trees this big at home so we can't do it."

KOS members use one of the hospital's rooms for their meetings three or four times a year, Pablo said. "This way, they said they can give back to the hospital."

There was no shortage of volunteers as residents of the hospital's long-term care unit crowded the KOS group

who explained about the care of the plants at their new home.

"This is a beautiful day for doing this," said Gary Henderson, KOS president. "The hospital has an interesting history and is the oldest hospital on Kaua'i."

Henderson noted the hospital was built in 1917, the year Queen Lili'uokalani, the last Hawaiian monarch, died. The hospital will celebrate

See Orchids, A6

# A hitchhiker's guide to the Legislature

## Understand, participate in Hawai'i's law-making process

Léo Azambuja  
THE GARDEN ISLAND

LIHU'E — You may have lost that burning desire to change the world. But you could still change the way your community is run by asking lawmakers to introduce bills or by sending in testimony to the state Legislature.

Each year the legislative session opens on the third Wednesday of January, which was Jan. 19 this year.

The Legislature is divided into two main bodies: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

New bills can be introduced in basically three ways: bundled together by common interest groups; prepared by executive branch agencies and introduced by the president of the Senate or the speaker of the House; or by House representatives or state senators.

Common citizens can play a large role in their

communities, by reaching out to their state representatives or senators, and asking them to introduce bills that could be relevant to their area. Kaua'i's state delegation is comprised of Sen. Ron Kouchi, D-Kaua'i and Ni'ihau; Rep. Dee Morikawa, D-16th District; Rep. Jimmy Tokioka, D-15th District; and Rep. Mina Morita, D-14th District. However, Morita is expected to resign this week due to her gubernatorial appointment to the Public Utilities Commission. The state Democratic Party will be submitting a list of names to fill her seat.

It's too late in the game to introduce bills this legisla-

tive session as the deadline was Jan. 26. But there's ample time to testify on every bill still alive in the Legislature. Written testimony does just as good as spoken.

Once bills are introduced, they are referred to committees that are relevant to each bill. The various House and Senate committees then get to work, revising each bill.

"If people want to increase the odds of something passing into law they will sometimes have a representative and a senator introduce identical measures," said Suzanne Marinelli, Public Access Room

See Legislature, A6



**Tri Fest International race director Peter Bourne chats with Leo McCarthy in the bicycle transition area after McCarthy completed the Sprint Triathlon, Sunday.**



## Vetting Rep. King's 'crimes'

The investigative efforts of Sen. Joseph McCarthy, the most unjustly maligned man in American history, to reveal extensive networks of Kremlin-directed agents seeking the destruction of the Republic isn't "McCarthyism."

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