

Even a surgeon general in the house can't fix Hawaii ills

It's the last Sunday in August and time to "FLASHback" on the month's news that amused and confused:

>> After baffling citizens with a COVID-19 decree that closed beaches and parks but left water parks and gyms open, Gov. David Ige and Mayor Kirk Caldwell told everybody to just stay home. They debated whether to use a hammer or scalpel, then went with a chainsaw.

>> Ige insisted his pandemic decisions are "data driven." He gets his data from the "Big Q" in the newspaper.

>> Health Director Bruce Anderson downplayed COVID contact tracing, saying it's only one prong of his pandemic response. The other prongs are obfuscation, blame shifting and information stonewalling.

>> The Health Department said ambulance services could be cut 20% as the budget deficit grows. The state has bigger priorities in a pandemic than ambulances, such as public worker pay raises.

>> U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams visited Hawaii to consult with local leaders. Unfortunately, he's not the kind of surgeon who performs brain transplants.

>> As COVID surged, tourism promoters had to drop plans to market Hawaii as "the safest place on Earth." They'll have to work with "the most fut-less place on Earth."

>> Maui Mayor Michael Victorino warned on the pandemic: "Frustration and ignorance is all coming together." Yikes, is the Legislature coming back into session?

>> Caldwell won't put city Managing Director Roy

FLASHback



DAVID SHAPIRO

Amemiya on leave after he was called before a federal grand jury as a subject in a corruption probe. The mayor hasn't let ethics stop him for 7-1/2 years — why start now?

>> Mayoral candidate Rick Blangiardi led primary election voting on a pledge to clean up city hall, with support from former first lady and United Laundry Service president Vicky Cayetano. I'm not sure that's the kind of dirty laundry that needs cleaning.

>> His general election opponent, Keith Amemiya, who's endorsed by most labor unions, Bishop Street execs and Democratic pols, is selling himself as a fresh political

face. He's the new face of the old boys.

>> Rail CEO Andrew Robbins said taxpayers won't know what we're obligated to or what we're getting from a \$1.4 billion construction and operations contract until after a decision is made. It's a procurement process called legalized pickpocketing.

>> Hawaii's Rim of the Pacific war games, which usually involve dozens of nations, hundreds of ships and thousands of personnel, were downsized because of COVID. This year, 20 admirals from 10 countries played with boats in their bathtubs.

And the quote of the month ... from Ray Vara, CEO of Hawaii Pacific Health, on pandemic rules:

"Half of the population is scared because they don't know what's going on, and half of the population is not scared enough because they don't know what's going on." Ige and Anderson are scared they'll never get their fingers out of their noses.

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Ige

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Anderson