



PAK President's Report March 2023

NEWS

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ABOUT OUR "IN OUR LIFETIME" MANTRA

My 74th birthday came last October. I remember when I used to look forward to birthdays. When very young, I tried to be older than I was, saying I was "four and a half" to make me closer to five. In the weird (nineteen) sixties, my peers and I

thought that old was being thirty. The Who had a hit song called “My Generation” with lyrics that said “...hope I die before I get old.” Having survived my thirtieth, fortieth, fiftieth, sixtieth, and seventieth birthdays, I now wonder if an eightieth is in my future. We reached another milestone in December 2022 when we celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. Like life, it just happened.

(insert 50th picture here)

My wife and I recently hosted a friend’s daughter visiting from Boston. This friend was my best man at our wedding fifty years ago. His only daughter is now 32 and is in residency for emergency medicine in Boston. When she was younger, we saw her often as her parents would visit us on Kauai and we would visit them in Virginia. We figured out that her last visit to Kauai was in 2013, when she was 22 and had just graduated from college. I had a boat then, an indulgence of fancy just about the time I retired. We went on an ocean adventure along the Na Pali coast. In previous visits to Kauai, we went on ATV rides in Kipu, and had her practice driving with her learner’s permit on the dirt roads of Polihale. We love her like one of our own and have enjoyed watching her grow into a beautiful woman and doctor from a bald baby girl.

(insert Alyson and BMW picture here)

(insert Alyson and parents picture here)

When we were planning her visit, she and her boyfriend had planned to stay for a couple of nights at cabins in Kokee, where they wanted to do some hiking. They went for a “short” but crowded hike on the Waimea Canyon rim, and the next day went on an 11 mile trek (much less crowded) on the Awaawapuhi/Nualolo trail. Even though we have been having terribly rainy weather for weeks, they were able to enjoy clear skies and beautiful vistas on their hike.

On their last day on Kauai, we joined them for a hike on the Maha’ulepu Heritage Trail. This is a hike we have done many times in the past, and have always enjoyed. At some point, we must have taken a different path, because we ended up in unfamiliar territory, and my two artificial hips were in a lot of pain. I started dragging my feet lazily instead of picking them up, and at one point fell when I stepped on a rock that moved. I was not hurt but was embarrassed that I had fallen on relatively flat ground, and that my body could no longer be taken for

granted to get me in and out of the trail, and my mind could not remember the route we had taken so many times before. Good thing we did not go with them to Nualolo! I imagined the hip pain I would have had on a hike twice the distance of Maha'ulepu with steep canyons waiting for those with unsure feet. I think those hikes and views are not in my future anymore; at least if I want to have any future at all!

(insert Nualolo photos (2) here)

So, what does the demise of my hiking days have to do with pickleball? I recall the saying "God never closes a door without opening a window." Effective January of 2023, I can now enter pickleball tournaments in the age 75-79 bracket. That means I will be on the younger spectrum of the bracket, and hopefully will have less deterioration than my fellow competitors, giving me a chance at medaling. If I keep this up, just by continuing to play and breathe, there may come a day when all I have to do is show up, and I'll get a medal for that!

(insert picture Nolan and medal at PAK tournament)

At PAK, we often use the term "In our lifetime" to set a deadline for getting dedicated courts for our enjoyment. It is a moving deadline, depending on your stage of life, but for some of us who no longer wishing to die before age 30, ala The Who, it points out that life is a journey, with a beginning, a middle, and an end and that we should enjoy every day as if it is our last, because one day it will be. To the many experienced and newbie players: KEEP ON PICKLING! Courts are coming. We can only hope soon enough for our aging players, including me.

Until next month (maybe),

Nolan Ahn, President