

# HUI LIMA KOKUA HAWAII CLUB NEWSLETTER

## FEBRUARY 2021

It's already February and almost one year ago when we first heard of the coronavirus. Like everyone, I'm looking forward to the day we can get together and meet in person for food and fellowship. In the meantime members of the club have been sharing their biographies. This month Ron Wong, our treasurer for decades, is featured. –Lynette Inouye

Corresponding Secretary Lynette thought that members might want to know something about this guy who's been showing up at Hui meetings for the last 50 years. Ron Wong here. I've been a member of the Hui Lima Kokua ever since joining the organization in the early 1970's, 10 years after its founding by a bunch of homesick veterans from Hawaii in 1963. I had just been assigned by the Navy to work with the Seabees at Port Hueneme.

I was born on Maui, spending my first years half way up the slope of Mt. Haleakala in Makawao. Mother was a teacher at the local grade school and Dad worked at the bank in Paia. The family moved to Honolulu when I was five and where I started my schooling. After a year at a private school, I started my second grade at St. Louis College where I completed my education taught by the Brothers there. I grew up in the Makiki district of the city with much of my youth occurring during the WWII years. I spent a great deal of my leisure time going to sporting events, football and baseball at the Honolulu Stadium in Moiliili and basketball at the Civic Auditorium, both locations within my walking distance. Upon graduating from high school I matriculated to the University of Notre Dame. There I entered the NROTC program and graduated with a commission as a Navy Supply Officer.

During my Navy career of 23 years, I served on six ships and at numerous shore activities in California, in Washington, D.C., and in Hawaii at Pearl Harbor. One funny thing is I joined the Navy to see the world, but my detailer kept sending me back to Hawaii, with two ship assignments at Pearl Harbor and shore duty at CINCPACFLT on Makalapa and at the Navy Supply Center Pearl. However, ships I served on did take me to Europe, South and Central America, and all over the Western Pacific. 'Twas a world travelling experience, all on Uncle Sam's dime.

After I retired from the Navy, my wife and I had the opportunity to pick a location to raise our family with three children, the oldest being seven at the time. The Navy would send me anywhere we wished, even back to Hawaii. With my nomadic Navy life behind me, I wanted to set up a stable life in a relatively small community, that we found in Ventura. I decided I didn't care for a second career but wanted to experience growing up with my children. I was able to do things with them that I wasn't able to do in my youth: travelling to interesting places, going camping and fishing, and participating in organized sports (I coached them in baseball, basketball, and soccer). I also got involved with their education, serving as President of the PTA at their elementary, middle, and high schools. Besides these activities with my children's programs, I spent time supporting local veterans' programs through the American Legion, Notre Dame Alumni programs that required my taking numerous trips to the campus in Indiana, and enjoying the many Hui activities over the years.

With my three living on the East Coast with my nine grandchildren, I envy grandparents who have theirs within shouting distance. With my getting my first serum shot this week, I hope to be able to see them all before too long. Stay well.

*HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY*