



DONALD LAU



According to Donald Lau, our student body president, he has been on a Magical Mystery Tour since the days when he, Shirley “George’s little girl” Fukumoto and Ronald “the brain” Ibaraki hung out in the student council office with Mr. Wong.

After graduation, Donald went to Valparaiso University in Indiana. They called him “Ho” for either Don Ho or Ho Chi Mihn, leader of the Viet Cong. Strange name, since he really looked Native American with his feathered Billy Jack hat and long, straight, black hair. He majored in Political Science with a minor in Social Work, while chipping ice off the sidewalks in the wintertime to pay for his education. He planned to become a lawyer but his social obligations (partying) got in the way.

Instead, Donald went to University of Michigan to get his Master’s Degree in Social Work. This Hawai’i boy finally made his escape from the midwest cold by delivering a car from Detroit to Sacramento. He got a job in the Bay Area as an advocate for childcare and children’s services for the Contra Costa Children’s Council in Richmond, California. By playing basketball with the locals in pick-up games under the pseudonym “Doctor Lau”, as well as being visible and active in the more exciting Bay Area political movements, he built a following in the community and was elected to serve on the Contra Costa School Board while still single and childless at the tender age of 29. With his strong community support, he was often re-elected, serving as a director of the school board for 12 years.

On April Fool’s Day, 1983, Donald began working at the YMCA. He is now Vice President and Executive Director of the YMCA of the East Bay-West Contra Costa branch. He directs programs providing the county with childhood education, childcare, mental health, and youth and family programs. He oversees a budget of \$13 million a year. Little did he know that gray hair and baldness came with the job. Actually, he loves his job and really enjoys his work. The gray hair and baldness just make him look smarter.

While Donald experienced his meteoric rise in politics and career, he found an audacious and beautiful woman named Shelly. An exciting courtship followed, and they were married. Donald and Shelly have two daughters, Morgan and Haley, and a son, Jordan. And ... 4 dogs and 2 cats. Shelly owns a landscape construction company so she works on construction sites with men while Donald works in air-conditioned offices with women (KHS grads are clever).

Since high school, Donald's proudest moments have been the graduation of his daughters from college. (Their son Jordan is at the University of California - Irvine September, majoring in business.) Being elected to the Contra Costa County School Board comes in second.

Donald says that people would be surprised to learn that he really likes having kids. He is not the wild and irresponsible man that they think he is. But considering his 33-year career working with kids, someone may have figured this out.

Donald's favorite memory from high school is The Big Game; not any one the school football team played, but the one that was played on a weekend on the St. Louis School field without permission. The Big Game started small but as the word spread, students came to help their friends, until each side swelled to about 50 players. Spectators came in droves (OK, maybe 10 of them). The core groups were the Cavaliers and the Intrepids on one side against the Centurions and Solteros on the other. No safety equipment. No cheerleaders, No referees. No time outs. No lunch. No medical personnel. Surprisingly no cops or school officials showed up either. The Big Game lasted over eight grueling hours and ended at sundown in a 6 - 6 tie with bits of clothing, fingernails, rubber slippers and unidentifiable objects strewn across the field. One hundred beaten and torn heroes limped or were carried home, and caught hell from their parents.

Donald still keeps in touch with his high school friends. Alex Kam lives nearby. When Donald visits family in Hawaii, he sees Andrew Nomura, David Paik, Lee Nakamura and others. Donald extends his thanks to everyone who has been working to put the reunion together. He is looking forward to coming to the reunion and catching up with friends he has not seen in years. If you would like to get in touch with Donald before October, email DLau@ymcaeastbay.org.