

This monthly article highlights one of our branch members. We hope that you enjoy knowing a little more about your fellow members and the interesting life they have had. If you have someone you would like to nominate or if you would like to help author an article, please email the editor, Ron Nakamoto, at [ron.nakamoto@yahoo.com](mailto:ron.nakamoto@yahoo.com).



## ALAN GAUDIE

### *Family of Happy Hippos: What a lunch bill!!*

He's been to over thirty countries in six of the seven continents around the world. He enjoys and plans a long trip on average once a year. His most memorable experience was his visit to Tanzania on a safari to four national parks. He is Alan Gaudie, gardener, bowler and good bridge player. *(Editor's note: Tanzania is the 13th largest country in Africa. The country is the site of Africa's highest and lowest points: Mount Kilimanjaro, at 19,341 ft. above sea level, and the floor of Lake Tanganyika, at 1,155 ft. below sea level, respectively. Tanzania has 16 national parks, plus a variety of game and forest reserves. In western Tanzania, Gombe Stream National Park is the site of Jane Goodall's ongoing study of chimpanzee behavior, which started in 1960.)*

Alan was born in Berkeley, California, lived and went to school at Oakland Technical High School. He was the only son in a family of five. Both parents worked in accounting. His family had a close association with U.C. Berkeley "Cal" as his grandfather was the athletic equipment manager at Cal and his mother worked at the Cal Athletic ticket office in accounting. Alan got to spend some time in the locker rooms and around the area to admire the history in those halls. He recalls his grandfather giving him the leather helmet worn by Cal All-American football player, Rod Franz, who had a rather small head for a lineman. He wore it for years until his head got too big (literally). His two older sisters were very good students so he suffered from high expectations from several of his teachers in high school. He was class president of his 10th grade high school class and was in Junior Varsity basketball. In his senior year he served as the

Chief Justice for the Student Court. He applied and was accepted into U.C. Berkeley and started as a Chemical Engineering major. Everything was fine until his junior year when he ran into some tough courses, e.g. thermodynamics "...for which I lacked the motivation to do well." He transferred to business school and majored in accounting, which made for "...a perfect fit". Upon graduation he went to work for Peat Marwick Mitchell, one of the big eight accounting firms, becoming a CPA.

Alan, an American and patriotic, also joined the National Guard. Once inducted, he was bussed to Ft. Ord and took the basic aptitude test that helps the National Guard better profile the inductee's intelligence and aptitude. He scored high and was switched from Infantry to Adjutant General (Classification and Assignment Branch). Here he became the Assignments Administrator. One of his assigned duties was to find good athletes for the company sports team. He was at Ft. Ord when John F. Kennedy was shot. (Editor's note: JFK was shot on November 22, 1963. Do you remember where you were when you heard the news?) He completed his basic training and went from active to reserve status in the National Guard and was activated three times, once to patrol Watts, California.

His career with Peat Marwick ended after six years when management told him that while technically good, he would not become a partner unless he brought in new business – that meant "sales"). To Alan this meant "...he was an introvert and did not play golf." As it turns out, one of their clients, Fairchild Camera (the parent of Fairchild Semiconductor), needed a good accountant so he was sent over to interview and hopefully to keep them as a client. As it turns out he got the job but Price Waterhouse became their auditors. In the early 1970's, the Fairchild treasurer moved to Ampex Corp and took Alan with him. Alan had a number of assignments to include manager of international finance with travel around the world. In the 1980's, Ampex was bought a couple of times with management turnover at every turn so Alan decided to move on. He tried a few other companies until he went to Galoob Toys; a small company at the time that had just gone public. He served as the Senior Vice President of Finance and was able to move the company from pretax losses to net profits. It was an interesting time as he handled public offerings and negotiated large loans with preferred terms. The strangest experience he recalls was testifying in Hong Kong under British law in a court where Chinese judges wore black robes and white wigs. The case involved a suit where one of Galoob's Chinese manufacturers used contaminated water in their crying baby dolls. Galoob was bought by Hasbro and Alan finally retired near the turn of the century. Alan had "...made enough to provide a good comfortable life for me and my family."

Alan did not come from a faith-based family. His father of Scottish descent was very quiet and his mother of Irish decent had very strong views on religions other than her Protestant faith. Alan's beliefs evolved from a shallow, singular view to a most inclusive and open view of religions, race and individual tolerance. His spiritual journey continues to grow as his church (Unity Church, Palo Alto) became an integral part of his life inclusive of his previous service as Treasurer of the Church.

Alan met his wife, Sandy when she became a substitute for a blind date his fraternity brother had set up. They have been married for some 52 years and have a daughter, son and two grandchildren. His family is a great source of joy for him.

As mentioned in the introduction, Alan loves to travel and of course anyone that travel has a few stories to tell. Here are a few from Alan's exploits.

"In coming from Argentina to Rio, I wanted to change some money and the local bank said "No" (both countries were in a period of hyper-inflation). A young guard with a machine gun who spoke no English gestured me towards an elevator. I thought I was getting arrested but instead he escorted me to a hotel where I could exchange money. 'A Happy Ending'.

"Another experience started when we landed at Kilimanjaro airport in Tanzania. Our first visit was to Tarangire National Park where we saw about 100 elephants at once and had a young one dance around our truck in a threatening manner. We stayed at a site in the forest with tent cabins and a central dining building. We were escorted to our cabin by a native carrying a spear to protect us from hyennas. We continued with a visit to a Maasai village and danced with them. Their traditional dance was very active and involved lots jumping as high as possible. We visited Oldupai Gorge, the site of the oldest known human remains. We camped in the Serengeti National Park, saw and photographed every animal you'd want to see; lions mating, a lake full of hippos, the wildebeest migration, etc. Finally, we visited the Ngorongoro Crater where I got my best picture of a cheetah and also one of a male lion sitting outside the lady's room - everyone had to wait for him to decide to leave before they could enter. I have pictures of a rhino, full view, which is rare. It was a fabulous trip, which I wish I could experience again with another trip to Africa but am afraid to go for the fear of being disappointed.

"Life has been pretty good with the exception of a problem here and there. One of those unfortunate moments was the fourth of July when my wife and I were in Lake Tahoe while my son and a friend were on our roof watching and lighting fireworks. Of course, the roof caught on fire and the house soon became engulfed in flames. The fire department did a great job in saving what they could and for the next nine months we rebuilt our home to be better than it was. My Rod Franz leather helmet that I kept in the attic was lost in the fire. (The insurance adjuster had a hard time valuing the loss.) My faith was the only consideration that saved my son from destruction.

"For the most part beyond travel, I enjoy bowling, gardening, bridge, watching sports and playing with the grandkids."

Alan's parting words are "Wisdom comes with age, so enjoy it." I tried to get him to expand on the meaning for some of our slower Sirs and he added that "...you should not worry about getting older as you will not become smarter than you were before." Go figure. Go Warriors!!