Where’s Annette

Margaret Greenberg

Annette Swisher Kakazu hasn’t been seen in CMG circles for quite some time. So a couple of us set out to find her.

She is living the good life on an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean over 2500 miles from Los Angeles and over 3800 miles from Tokyo. In the Hawaiian Time Zone, there is no Daylight Saving Time. Hawaii is 5 hours behind EST and 2 hours behind PST. In summer, add an hour.

As you can see on the following map there are three “Interstate” highways: H1 - H3. Former state road 78 is now H201 and connects H1 to H3. Visitors may find it a little odd to see a sign for an interstate on an island that doesn’t connect to another state. The federal government funds these roads to connect Oahu’s numerous military facilities.

Oahu is one of the oldest islands on the Pacific Island chain. It is the third largest of the Hawaiian islands and has 70% of the state’s population. It does not contain any active volcanos. Generally the weather hovers around 80 degrees, dropping to around 50 at night in the winter. When there are trade winds there is no need for air-conditioning. Most often the wind blows from the east; however, there is the occasional south wind from the Big Island (Hawaii) that brings vog (volcanic smog) from the active volcano, Kilauea.
Hawaii, once the major producer of pineapple, is not even in the top ten percent because growing and canning been off-shored to Thailand and elsewhere where costs are lower.

The town of Wahiawa is located in the center of Oahu, between the Waianae and Ko'olau mountain ranges, where the Kaukonahua Stream splits into its North and South Forks. It is the home to the Kukaniloko site, the birthing stones, where Hawaiian royalty was traditionally born. We also know that there was a warrior training school that still exists as part of Schofield Barracks Military Reservation.

Wahiawa originally was a plantation town. It was home to various ethnic groups who made around $15/month working the pineapple and sugar cane fields. Most homes in the area are at least 80 years old, as are its permanent residents, who are descendants of the original immigrants. California Avenue, (the major street) is known for having more churches on it than any other street in the nation. A major tourist attraction is Dole Plantation just outside the city. All roads to the famous North Shore go through Wahiawa, you’ll see acres and acres of coffee and coca (chocolate) trees in place the cane and pineapple fields.

On the morning of Dec 7, 1941 (Pearl Harbor Day), the town was attacked by the Japanese on their way to Pearl Harbor. Aerial support for Pearl Harbor was based at Schofield Barracks and Wheeler Air force base (right outside of town). The Japanese were able to ground all aircraft on these two bases, as well as riddling the two bridges and Main Street with bullet holes. Causalities and wounded were brought to Schofield. Residents claim that ghosts of the dead soldiers haunt the two bases. Please note on the map, that Wahiawa was the only civilian target. An interesting note: It was in this attack that Annette’s uncle became entombed on the USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor.
The picture to the left is Annette and Alan’s house. In typical Hawaiian fashion, there are many flowers and plants surrounding the house. In the sunlight is night blooming Jasmine.

When asked about her current situation, Annette said,

“About 3 years ago, I got my doctorate in Chinese Medicine and moved to Wahiawa, Hawaii (my husband’s family home). Life in Hawaii is not what you’d expect it to be. Not like on vacation or *Hawaii Five-O*. The middle class live in houses of less than 2,000 sq feet which cost around $400,000. Ocean view or larger homes (like you see on TV) cost at least $2 million. BTW, contrary to popular belief businesses do not close when the surf is up (but some schools on the North Shore do).

Cost of living is very high and wages are about three fourths of what you make on the mainland. The major industries are either travel or military related. The island culture is extremely different, we speak different languages here: English, Japanese, Hawaiian plus Pidgin (a mixture of all three). It’s a very small close knit society. The locals all know everyone in town. They know who is related to whom, who you’re parents/grandparents were. It is difficult to do anything without all your relatives knowing. The whole family gets together once a month. We bowl, play golf, and even paddle board together.

It is difficult to keep in touch with my family and friends back on the mainland. Generally, we use Facebook or Skype. Phone calls in general are quite difficult; Honolulu is six hours [in months with DST] behind NYC. I used to travel back and forth, Hawaii to Ohio, but now airfares average over $1,200-- so it’s just as expensive as going to Asia or Europe. On the other hand, we can travel to Asia quite economically. We just returned from Japan, I have a whole bunch of pictures up on my Facebook page.

In the past three years, I have mostly been taking care of my 91 yr. old mother-in-law. It is not common practice to put your elders in homes here. Recently, she has been put into a convalescent care, because she entered the last stage of Alzheimer’s. So I can focus on my future.

To keep myself busy: I volunteer at the Buddhist temple (that Alan’s grandparents helped build). Two afternoons a week I am a Honu guard, play the samisen and rescue animals. My samisen group is giving concerts on September 1 and December 1. Currently our zoo consists of two Golden Retrievers (one is 13 months old, paralyzed and blind), four lovebirds, two Amazon parrots (yes, what you see in the zoo), a min-pin, and a chi-hui-hui. Any spare time lately is spent drying and canning food. It’s hurricane season here. If something were to happen, the islands may be cut off a while 😊.
Generally, residents spend a lot of time outdoors and eating is their favorite pastime.

My Chinese Medicine Clinic’s start-up costs are quite high as well as office rental ($1200 for 900 sq. feet) and not having a source of income other than my husband’s… well it’s very difficult. So, I have been trying to get back into IT."

Luckily for her, the military, banks and various Japanese businesses are located throughout the island.

Despite high COL, it’s a great place to live because of the weather and the wonderful mix of cultures. No ethnic group totals more than 50% of the population; therefore, everybody is in a “minority” group.

The picture shows Annette on a recent trip to Japan with Alan and his grand-daughter.

Annette tries to keep her friends and family up-to-date via Facebook. Recently, she became the proud mother of a college graduate. June 9 her son, Dan Roth, graduated from Ohio University with a degree in Hospital Administration.

If you have a Facebook account, you may contact her by sending a message. Alternatively, try LinkedIn or her professional website, Askacupuncture on Facebook.

For readers unfamiliar with Annette, a little bio:

Annette grew up in Ohio and received both her undergraduate and masters degrees from the University of Toledo in Computer Science. Her first job was at Procter and Gamble in Cincinnati.

She has a long history with CMG in Ohio. Jim Derenzo, Joe Stranges and Annette founded the first Ohio Region of CMG which was known as I7x region, so named because major Ohio cities are on Interstates that begin with I7n (I-70, I-71, I-75, and I-77). Annette mentioned that the three of them ran it for “years” and, when they burned out, the region went dormant. Some time later, it was resuscitated by Dan Tartaglia. For four years, she was regional chair of I7X. Additionally, she became CMG Secretary.
After Dan unexpectedly passed away, the region was regrouped. Today it's called Ohio Valley\textsuperscript{ xv}.

In 1993 she received the Legent International Resource Manager of the Year\textsuperscript{xvi}, the only year it was awarded. For CMG’01, she authored, "Presenting to Non-Technical Managers"\textsuperscript{xvii} She was quite active in the conference in 1993 and 2000 – 2006 when she served on the International Conference Committee, on the board of directors and was Secretary as well as International Advisory Council Chair.

While a CMG director in 2003/2004, Annette served as Executive Publication Editor & Chairperson: in charge of all publications. She managed a core group of eight, who had numerous volunteers reporting to them. Additionally, she was responsible for the Conference Proceedings, Journal, Bulletin and the monthly Internet publication called Measure-IT.

\textsuperscript{1} The Federal Aid Highway Act (1956) was enacted, primarily, to ensure a road system for emergency transporting military equipment. It was based on the German autobahn, that General Eisenhower observed during WWII. President Eisenhower was impressed with the efficacy of those roads for emergency transportation of military equipment.

\textsuperscript{iii} http://www.hawaiistateparks.org/parks/oahu/kukaniloko.cfm
\textsuperscript{ii} http://www.dole-plantation.com/
\textsuperscript{iv} http://sugarmillhawaii.com/chocolate.htm
\textsuperscript{v} To learn more check out this site, among others, regarding preparedness and see how thinking has changed from that time. http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/AAF/7Dec41/7Dec41-1.html
\textsuperscript{vi} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaiian_Pidgin
\textsuperscript{vii} Flights and connections are an issue in addition to the costs.
\textsuperscript{ix} http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/hawaiian-monk-seal/
\textsuperscript{x} http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdMG4cpz0UA&feature=related
\textsuperscript{x} http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRCHaSSir-o&feature=relmfu
\textsuperscript{x} Miniature pinscher or mini-pin and Chihuahua
\textsuperscript{xii} http://www.akakazu.org/
\textsuperscript{xiii} https://www.facebook.com/#!/just.annette
\textsuperscript{xv} http://www.ohvcmg.org/
\textsuperscript{xvi} Legent was formed by the merger of Morino Associates and Duquesne Systems in 1989\textsuperscript{xvi}. Legent was purchased by Computer Associates in 1995. Management was quite busy with the mergers and the award was lost in the interim two years.

\textsuperscript{xvii} Check for the name Annette Swisher-Roth in CMG’01 Proceedings