

# PETALUMA PETE

## Kauai Beckons!

by Richard Somers



**P**ete and Nurse Patt will soon take to the air for a month on Kauai.

Bob the Swede's pilot (John Rooney) is making ready the Gulfstream G550 (Bob's ultra long-range version) for the trip to Kauai. This fine bird has a cruising altitude of 51,000 feet, a maximum speed of Mach .885, and she will travel 6,750 miles without needing a fill-up.

Thus, before baggage could be packed into a normal UAL flight from SFO to Kauai, Pete and Nurse Patt will already be there sipping a Mai Tai and counting the various species of exotic birds – especially the White-Rumped Shama Thrush. This bird has a repertoire of many songs, so it is never boring.

The White-Rumped Shama Thrush sings before daybreak and just after twilight, so it is hard to spot. However, it always arrives (and is seen) just before one must leave to return to the mainland. How it knows is one of Kauai's true mysteries.

Nurse Patt needs a rest as she has been sticking needles into eligible folks at a major HMO until her hands hurt. She will play golf with Pete most every day, and both will revisit friends on Kauai, as well as friends they have met from the United States and Canada over the past 36 years they have visited this remote, yet fairly-easily reached, island in mid-Pacific.

PJ and Lisa will join them for 10 days of the visit, as they do each year.

PJ will take walks to the ocean, which is a 5-par away, where she and Pete will watch for seals, porpoises, whales, and giant sea turtles as they pass the bluffs below the townhouse on the Southern point of Kauai.

PJ is Pete and Nurse Patt's daughter, who contracted encephalitis at nine months and thus needs 24-hour-a-day care, although she is the happiest person Pete has ever met. She has a great life and was this last year's Easter Seals Poster Gal, where her photo appeared on their vans and buses in the North Bay. Her smile could even put a smile on Bill O'Reilly's sour puss. Believe it!

Lisa is PJ's roommate and caregiver and has taken wonderful care of her for the past three years. She holds a master's degree in Clinical Psychology and is always analyzing Pete and Fred, his pet dead goat. This is fine with Pete, but it does bother Fred sometimes if the analysis is right after he has returned from a romp with the coyotes on Mt. Slow.

Bob the Swede just returned to the greater Stockholm area from a trip to the Canary Islands, so he remains in Jarna resting and talking with a recent Swedish lady who just bought a \$2,200,000 home on an island in the Stockholm archipelago. This home can only be reached by boat. The mystery woman actually has returned to Sweden to live a simpler life.

Happy Valentine's Day!

# PIECES OF MY PATH

## The Lost Art of Strolling

by Zoe Tummillo



**T**here is a picture somewhere in the family collections of my paternal Grandfather, Nicolo, sitting on a bench on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City. His legs are crossed, he is wearing a double-breasted suit with vest, high shoes (polished to a mirror shine); his arm is draped over the back of the bench.

He is gazing out across the water, and I can see him there as if it was yesterday. (I wish I had that picture!)

When I think of that Grandfather, I think of the spirit of labor. My sharpest memory of him is that of seeing him at work. His back had a permanent curve from bending over the shoeshine footrests of the concession he owned in the Pennsylvania Train Station in Trenton, New Jersey.

He cobbled and shined shoes, repaired any leather items, pressed and blocked gentlemen's hats, and cleaned leather gloves. He worked every day, and was open for business as long as there was a customer waiting. My father taught me that work ethic, and I know that it came directly from his father.

But on some Sundays, after church, good food, and chores, we sometimes would go to the boardwalks in Atlantic City or Asbury Park.

A memory of my Nonno relaxing is rare and special. And, it is closely tied to remembering the lost art of strolling.

To a little girl, the Boardwalk was an immense long porch stretching as far as I could see, made for the sole purpose of promenade! There was no question that no one ever got to the end of it! The Ocean was way over there to the East, and to get to the water would be like walking to the edge of the world.

Strolling the Boardwalk

on a Sunday required special preparation; and, there were rules! It had nothing to do with playing on the beach or in the water! Oh, no – this was about dress, demeanor, respect, and customs.

The women and men were fully dressed in all the required layers -- shoes with spats, shawls, purses dangling, and sewing in quilted bags for when we sat and rested.

From time to time Nonno would drop out, find a bench and tell the rest of us he was just going to sit a while and catch up to us later. I suspect he just liked to watch the people.

From time to time there would be small clusters of sheds selling cool drinks or ice cream, and it was a rare treat for Dad to say let's stop for something special!

The adults were always talking softly, and occasionally would order the children to move on ahead so they would be out of hearing range. I remember dilly-dallying along the edge of the boardwalk where you could jump a short jump down and be in the sand, but I don't remember being allowed to do so! We

were there to ... stroll.

It was something you did as a family, or with friends. Once in a while my Nonna would take me with her down the avenue where they lived. She brought along vegetables from her garden, and would say: Zoetta, we're going for a little walk!

And then we would stroll. Never rush. When we passed by someone on their porch, we acknowledged them! Nonna would say "ciao," pass a few words, and then share some of her vegetables or a fig. And we would ... stroll on.

Have you tried to stroll with someone recently? It is very difficult -- it is as though when one slows down and just meanders along, something has to be wrong!

What's wrong? Are you OK? Am I going too fast? Does your ankle hurt? What's wrong? Do you want to stop and rest?

Nothing. Yes. No. No! Nothing! No ...

I am just strolling. . . . and remembering.

## BALLARD STREET

by Jerry Van Amerongen



"Charles, you've been unfriended again!"

U.S. PATENT PENDING  
**BRODIE'S TIRE & BRAKE, INC.**  
 Tires • Auto • Truck • Brakes • Alignment & Shocks  
 Tune-ups • Smog • A/C Service  
 1276 Petaluma Blvd. N.  
 Petaluma, CA 94952  
 ASE  
**GOODYEAR (707) 778-7808**