

## Where Are They Now? An Update on Husky Alum John Anthony

by John Anthony

I was a Husky gymnast during the mid to late 60's. A trampoline specialist who occasionally did floor ex. My start in gymnastics occurred about five years earlier when I was in junior high school. Dr. Hughes was part owner of a trampoline center that was strategically located on my route home from school. I walked by the center a couple of times and then one day stopped in to check it out. And the rest, as they say, is history.

During those early years, I got a chance to meet and learn from several of the Husky gymnasts: Bill Crow, Jim David, and Harold Lyons in particular. Three fun-loving, full-of-life characters who just about anyone would have a blast hanging out with. Once I got hooked on the trampoline, I decided to give some of Dr. Hughes' boys gymnastics classes down at the U a try. No big surprise to find tumbling and floor ex as other events that interested me, but the trampoline was my first love.

One of the things I've always appreciated about gymnastics in our part of the country is how strong the sense of community is here. After getting into some of the classes at the U, it wasn't long before I found my way down to the Seattle YMCA and the program George Lewis founded down there.

Since my high school didn't have a gymnastics program, the Y provided a competitive outlet for me and it was always fun to travel and compete alongside the Y's women's team. Quite a few of the Husky gymnasts came down to the Y to work out with some of the high school athletes as well as compete as part of that club program.

In addition to having a lot of fun with workouts and club competition through the Y, I'll always remember our Friday evening dinners after the workouts. Seattle's Chinatown was our most frequent stomping grounds and the Hong Kong Restaurant was without question our most frequent haunt. Large spaces to accommodate our big crowd and plenty of great food.

The other thing I'll also always remember about the YMCA program were the truly great people I met there, especially the parents who became role models for me. The moms and dads were all incredibly supportive of their sons and daughters and in addition to George Lewis, Dale Shirley, Jim Fraser and other volunteer coaches, really made that program possible. There's a great Facebook group set up for the Y and it's fun to see pictures of the old gang and their families. Every so often we'll have a reunion with several dozen of us getting together. Strong, lasting friendships to be sure.

When I think back on all of the people I've become friends with through gymnastics, a couple of people pretty quickly come to mind. I met Bo Bennett through the YMCA and Bo and I became lifelong friends, although keeping up with him over the years was always a challenge. Bo and I, often accompanied by one or two of the women gymnasts from the Y, took part in the Berkeley gym camp for several years. We would drop the women off for the first week of gym camp and then Bo and I would go down for a week on the beach at Santa Monica. We found a funky hotel close to Muscle Beach that became our base of operations. We'd often bump into UCLA gymnasts down there working out. One of our most interesting times occurred on one of the evenings when we got sidetracked a bit and ended up driving down Central Avenue in Watts during the riots. No fun at all and we were thankful when we finally found our way out of there!

The other good friend I've been fortunate to keep from those early Husky years is Terry Truman. While Terry was only with us for a year, we've stayed in pretty close contact over the years. Terry has a near photographic memory and it's always fun to hear him tell stories from our first year at the U. I had a chance to spend a bit of time with him and his wife Janice while coming back home from a motorcycle trip. His stories of some of our (my) shenanigans had me cracking up all night.

While other gymnasts from that era will probably remember me more for my poker skills than gymnastics skills, I did manage to make it to the '69 NCAA Championships with Yoshi Hayasaki where I tied for 11<sup>th</sup> on trampoline. It would have been fun to crack the top ten, but that was not to be. My other distinction is being the first Husky to throw a triple back, narrowly edging out Rick Fonceca who threw one shortly after me. Neither of us ever did one in competition and we both had a tough time remembering if we were doing a triple or a double so thankfully we gave up our triples shortly after we first threw them.

While still at the U, I started to work part time in the Seattle Parks Department, teaching a couple of tumbling classes and helping to supervise one of their recreation centers close to the U. That led to a full time position after graduation and a long and very interesting career in local government. I met Margaret, my wife of 37 years, at Parks but after we got married, the department was a little too small for the two of us so I moved off to the

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John with Rick Fonceca in the late 60's during one of their comedy trampoline shows

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City's Budget Office where I managed their public safety team. From there I did stints in Information Technology, Solid Waste, Transportation and then back to IT where I finally retired as the City's Deputy Chief Technology Officer. After leaving the City, I worked as an IT consultant for a few years and then one of my clients, King County, hired me away after 9/11 and I worked for them for another five years before hanging full time work up for good. I still do some occasional consulting in Emergency Management, another field I thoroughly enjoy.

One of the things I will always carry with me from my experience working in Seattle government are the great elected officials I had the good fortune to work with over the years. I still see Charley Royer, one of our Mayors, on the golf course from time to time. I have great memories of working closely with George Benson, one of our former Councilmembers. I met George when he became a Councilmember while I was working in Parks. I'd then work with him on a variety of budget, public safety, transportation, and solid waste issues over the years.

My wife and I live not too far away from the U and we're lucky to have our two grown daughters still resid-

ing in Seattle. Both of them have very interesting jobs and we're thankful to have them close by. I help moderate an online motorcycle forum and enjoy golf whenever possible as well as caring for our gardens. My wife who is also retired has been champion of the West Seattle Women's Golf Club for the last couple of years and participated in the qualifier for the 2014 US Women's Amateur championships.



*John and alum Bo Bennett*