



Pulse of '62



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(The Saint Louis Class of 1962)

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“On Grandfathers and Grandkids”

by Larry Lau

By now, most of us are in grandfather mode (or even, great-grand). We are so proud and joyful. We help whenever and however we can. Frequently, this means babysitting, family gatherings and group vacations.

We know all about dirty diapers, teething, first haircuts, baths and giggles, earaches and doctor visits. We can see, at pre-school age, what personality will emerge in the adolescent and young adult. We all know our grandchild is the cutest, smartest, and most loving there ever was.

Perhaps now, we can experience parenting with a little different eye than on our first go. We have some hard-earned parenting wisdom to pass on to our children, the “on duty” parents. Some of this is gratefully received, and others, they just insist on struggling through themselves.

I’ve chatted with some of our ’62 Crusader classmates and everyone was willing to exercise his “bragging rights”. I heard some common themes and many unique things too, about our collective Saint Louis grandchildren.

Some live close by and others may be out of state. They range from infants, to full adults. We all lookout as best we can for our legacy. Always, we wish we could have more time with them.

My own two grandchildren are 3 years and 6 months old respectively. So, I’m relatively new at this.

David Jinbo has one granddaughter who’s just a nod away from becoming a teenager. It’s going to be a new ball game, he says. “Just trying to get her through high school (Mid Pacific).” The young grow up so quickly and



age takes a toll on us all too easily. Right now, she’s a typical girl, interested in clothes, music, hula and Hannah Montana.

She and the rest of the family, volunteer their time to worthy causes.

More grandchildren? “Maybe.” David’s younger son just got married, so there’s hope here. A recent highlight was a whole family trip to California, Disneyland and Las Vegas.

Blitz Harry has four children and four grandchildren, ages 21, 14, 4 and 3. The 21-year-old is now an adult and graduated with the first Maui Kamehameha School class. She’s his “Portagee Princess”. In fact, he’d love another granddaughter to spoil as his grandfatherly duty!

His 14-year-old grandson lives with Blitz and seems headed for a culinary career. To have an idea of what you want to do with your life is not a bad feat. Blitz has also created generous education funds for the two younger boys.

The grand family is international, with touches of Hawaiian, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Cambodian and Caucasian.

“How vulnerable little ones can be” is what **Ron Staszko** told me. He was headed for the hospital the day I talked with him. One of the grandchildren was having surgery that day. Most parents or grandparents have



had some sort of calamity in their years. Then, the only important thing to you is to fix your

loved one. Especially the children, because they’re so little and so helpless.

Ron’s family is spread among San Francisco, Sacramento, Idaho and Texas. He has 5 children and 11 grandchildren, all less than 12 years old. He’s retired now, and can allocate his time to be with all his grandchildren, the closer ones more often, but also special trips to see the more distant.

A special memory for Ron was when he felt “old”. This was when he was first called “grandpa”. A more happy one was his first fishing trip with his third granddaughter. She’s now the family fishing “pro” at their Idaho home.

Montana is home to **Felix (Trey) Moran** and 2 granddaughters, ages 2 and 4 years old. This makes it easy to visit and babysit, but he’s not “keen on changing diapers”.

Two more grandchildren, a boy 12, and a girl 9, live on Camano Island, Washington. Visits here are much less often, because of the distance.

“So much can happen in a short time” in their growth and development. He’s seen how babies become crawlers, toddlers, pre-schoolers then small people in the blink of an eye. Felix sums up the grand parenting experience with “patience”. His wife, Connie, likes to quote Paula Dean: “If I had known that grand children were this much fun, I’d have had them first.”



Some of our mates penned their own grandfather stories:

Here’s what **Joe Durocher** wrote:

Linda and I have 10 grandchildren and 1 great grandson. We became grandparents at the ripe old age of 40. My grandchildren taught me just how special children are.

As a parent I was too worried – worried about how they would turn out, worried about spoiling them, worried about spoiling them too much, just worried. As a grandparent I now know how resilient they are. How they are like sponges – they soak up EVERYTHING, good and bad. So we try to give them good memories, the only things that are really important in life.

If I had to choose one instance, it would be when I was watching our third granddaughter, Kirra, (the two oldest were away since their father was in the military). She was three or four at the time and was telling me about



her daddy who had a surfboard and a boogie board. Then she looked at me with those big beautiful eyes and

said, “Grandpa, I don’t have a boogie board.”.

I immediately rerouted the car, went to Costco and bought her a boogie board. The look on her face said so much more than any words. From that moment I knew, I was going to spoil my grandkids PERIOD! And that is what we have done since. Grandchildren are precious gifts from God, enjoy every second with them.

From **Jerry Languit** (three sons, 4 grandsons, 1 granddaughter, ages 1-10):

First, all of my grandkids are unique individuals and I do end up hosting Sunday dinners to ensure I see them.

We can spoil them and enjoy their interaction then have their parents deal with the consequences.

My most poignant anecdote regarding my grandkids has to do with my first grandson. My third son was a 16-year-old high school dropout who happened to have a 15-year-old girlfriend. Not a good living relationship as they both soon learned that they were expecting.

They asked my advice. Tap dancing, I reasoned that they had neither financial stability nor means to raise a child. And being so young, I did not believe that as child-parents themselves, they could provide for a baby properly.

But the decision to have the child—or not—was theirs to make. My prospective daughter-in-law was not a ‘churched’ person, but my son was a non-voluntary product of a parochial school education. Nonetheless, I feared the worst: abortion. They surprised me by enlisting



my support: to provide a stable place to live while they raised their baby. I could hardly refuse

That was in 2004. Over the last five years

(and two more grandkids) my son held-down two jobs, then parlayed those work experiences to earn a job as a patrolman with the Albuquerque Police Department. While at the home front, my daughter-in-law demonstrated amazing maturity in becoming a most responsible young mother and woman.

I do not believe this story is unique. There are many similar instances experienced by fellow alumni.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A graduate of the University of Oregon, Larry Lau retired from a professional IT career in 2003. He and his wife of 40 years, Ginger, reside in La Pine, Oregon, close to their children.

Invitation to Respond:

It is the objective of “Pulse of ‘62” to present a broad cross section of contemporary subjects and views that will stimulate interest and promote positive response from our classmates. You are invited to respond by e-mail (garydemello@yahoo.com) or postal service (SLS Class of ‘62, 4207 Carnation Place, Honolulu, HI 96816-3905).

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