

Memories Not About a Virus

By Cindy Peters

It was 2006 and our office staff was looking forward to our summer picnic. Every year our building managers would treat us to a summer gala. This year it was going to be a Luau complete with a roasted pig, rice, fruit salad, Hawaiian buns, cookies, pineapple upside down cake, punch and water. They were even passing out leis.

Our office was one of the middle Kaiser buildings located between Havana and Parker Road. The back yard of the building was spectacular with a pond, fountains and ducks. That location has a beautiful view of the mountain range. The party was very decorative with the colored tables and chairs. They even provided live music for our lunchtime entertainment.

In order to not overcrowd the party due to the large number of tenants in the building we attended the party in shifts based on our lottery number which was somewhere in the middle.

When it was our turn we rushed into the elevator from the 5th floor down to the 1st floor. We barely pushed the elevator button when the elevator suddenly jumped and lurched. It became stuck in-between floors. It was an extremely hot day and the elevator only allowed standing room for us 10 ladies. We pushed the emergency button in the elevator. We waited for 20 minutes as we felt as if we were melting from the heat. There was no response from maintenance. I was in front and I tried with all my might with another lady to pry the elevator door open. Another 40 minutes went by and our perspiration was permeating the stink in the elevator. Finally, after one hour in the elevator two more ladies stepped forward and they were able to pry the elevator door open.

We had to step up from the elevator as it was stuck between floors. We were so glad to be free from our trauma that we raced down a flight of steps to the bottom floor. We must have been quite a sight as we sweaty ladies with stringy hair arrived at the picnic. We were so thirsty and hungry by the time that we arrived at the buffet. The live music had already stopped as the musicians had left. There was barely a drop of water or punch left. There were crumbs of food left on the buffet, however, and there was plenty of pineapple upside cake. I hate pineapple so imagine my discouragement with the food choice.

Then one of the ladies in our group had a great idea. She announced that we all needed to walk next door to Dora's Mexican Restaurant. The air conditioner felt heavenly when we arrived. We all ordered our favorite Mexican foods and a round of margaritas. Oh, believe me, we felt no pain after that luncheon. I think the trauma of the event must have bonded us ladies. Because to this day we look forward to our Happy Hours. Instead of Aloha it is now Olé!