



NATHAN M. SHISHIDO, M.D.

1950 - 2022

submitted by: Mark Lau, M.D.



As we mourn the sudden passing of Dr. Nathan Shishido, we should also celebrate his life. During his orthopedic practice at Humboldt Orthopedic Associates, he garnered great respect and loyalty from his patients, as he showed loyalty to them.

He always strived for a high standard of care and integrity. He never hesitated to ad-

mit he was wrong and was ready to assume responsibility for less than ideal outcome. He also insisted on evidence based facts before undertaking any new treatment or surgical modalities.

Nathan also celebrated life to its fullest. He was an avid kayaker, cyclist, fisherman, skier and jogger. He was also kind and gen-

erous with his time, always ready to assist his colleagues in patient care. His impact on orthopedic care on the Northcoast cannot be measured. Even as he was struck down by a terrible progressive degenerative neurological disorder, he remained stoic and retained a humanistic perspective of life. We will miss him and his loud infectious laughter..

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Memories of Nathan Shishido, MD

By Bonnie Cyr, long time Practice Manager

If you are lucky enough to have a totally unique personality like Nathan Shishido in your life you can consider yourself very fortunate indeed. His energy and intensity comprise a combination that just makes you want to stand back and watch it fly by, hoping that some of that drops off and you catch it. I was in Nathan's life for his entire time in Humboldt County – first as the Business Manager of his medical practice, Humboldt Orthopaedic Associates, and then as Bookkeeper for Sawbones Partnership, the group of physicians who own the Practice building, which he managed for several years after he retired.

The first thing you realized about him is that he was more than a person and a half of commitment to anything he chose to do, from medicine to his hobbies – like fly fishing, river kayaking and kayak surfing, and bicycling – all of which he pursued with passion. When he first arrived at the Practice, he was energetic enough to handle the stress of being on call for orthopaedic emergencies and loved the complex injuries. He called them "juicy cases" because they were so difficult and required

attention and energy beyond the routine. He could also be incredibly kind. When my husband died, Nathan called me and said that we needed to plant a tree in our front yard in memory of Roger. He brought a tree and several buckets of various soil amendments, dug a very large hole, poured his ingredients of fish guts, manure, and compost, into the hole and then wanted some of Roger's ashes to add to the mix to make sure we had the exact ingredients to grow a beautiful tree in his memory. It has been Roger's tree for the five years since he died. It will now be Nathan's tree as well. Then, because he knew I was afraid to be alone, he made it his mission to find a dog for me. His dog, Sky, was an enormous long-haired German Shepherd and, according to Nathan, the most intelligent dog likely ever known. He wanted me to have the same thing for comfort and protection in my new future. His efforts found Aika, my own canine companion.

I choose to write this from my perspective, my experiences with him that were unique to me. I knew him for so many years and have an abundance of stories but

my daughter, Heidi, also worked in the office with Nathan for 10 years so I asked her to help me with her ideas about him as a boss and a friend. Here is what she would add:

1. He abhorred the idea of infirmity (especially in himself). Don't know how or if you would want to express that, but I feel it was an important part of his persona.

2. For all of his eccentricities, he was at the heart of it all, a good man trying hard to do good things. Personally, I always felt a deep admiration for him because of that. For me -- like for most people, I think -- it's pretty hard work to try to be good and do good. When you see someone, on a daily basis engaging in that same struggle, and really putting in the work -- when they fail, you root for them anyway. You put your hand out to help them up just as you would want someone to do for you. And when they succeed, their victory becomes your hope for victory.

Okay, well, I waxed a little poetic there. But I was trying to pin down how I really felt about him, and I think that about sums it up...

-Heidi Lampietti McDonald §