

Three “tickets” in one Day

This is the picture of my Austin Healey. It was the perfect car for a single guy in Hawaii to own. But it did get me into a little trouble once in awhile. The short notice trip to pick up the boat in the Philippines was one of those days.



I had left the house for what I thought was going to be a normal day. Little did I know I would end the day chasing the sun across the Pacific on my way to sea for the next 3 months. I had left the house early, but I was going to be late so I was a little heavier than normal on the accelerator.

Sure enough going down the Kamehameha Highway from Pearl City to the West entrance to the Base; I got stopped. In Hawaii, the police don't drive “normal” police cars. The State of Hawaii gives the police officers funds to buy their own cars, under certain specifications; the end result is, it's hard to spot a cop. I missed this guy and he pulled me over. I was only slightly over the speed limit and it was early so he let me off with a warning.

When I got to the shop it was in turmoil. The message had been received about having to get a relief for one of our guys already at sea. I was immediately approached as I was the most likely candidate as mentioned before. The discussions didn't last long; they changed over to the planning stage real quick, so after about an hour at work, I needed to go pack so I could catch the plane at the airport. Off I went back to the house in Pearl City.

Almost as soon as I left the base, again by the west gate, I got stopped again. It was the same cop. After he came up alongside and started in:

“I thought I told you to keep the speed down?” he said.

I said, “Yes, you did but that was before I just got ordered to go to sea today. I'm going home to pack my sea-bag and get on my way to catch a boat.”

“No excuse.” He said as he was getting out his ticket book.

“You can give me a ticket, if you wish, but I'm not going to be here for the next six months.” I added. “I just got my orders and I'm going to catch a boat, and I won't be back here till October or so.”

He put his ticket book away and said, “Listen, I told you once to keep the speed down. Just because you're leaving is not an excuse, but I will let you off again. But keep the speed down please.”

I thanked him and left. I got home and my sister, Cynthia was up, so I let her know what had happened and that I wasn't going to be back for awhile. I packed, we said our goodbyes and I left.

On the way back – you guessed it; I got stopped again – by the same guy, three times in almost as many hours. I knew I was in trouble this time.

As he approached me, he was holding a business card. He handed me the card. “I know that you’re going to sea. On this business card is a phone number; I want you to call that number as soon as you get back. I have a full description of your car at this point. So believe me you had better call.”

That was it. I took the card, and I was on my way. I left my car at the shop, got driven to the airport and I was on my way. Three months later, I was back.

I called the number as instructed. It was the cop that answered the phone. He gave me an address and told me to go to that address on the coming Saturday. He would see me there.

That following Saturday I went to the address and I was surprised when I found it to be a residential neighborhood. I was expecting the police station, or court house or something official, but it wasn’t it was a private residence and parking was a hassle as the street was crowded with cars. I finally parked a good distance away, and went up to the front door of the house.

I was greeted at the door by a huge Hawaiian, I told him who I was and that I had been told to come to this house. He let me in and led me to the back yard. There was a huge Hawaiian Luau going on, with dozens and dozens of people there. The place was packed. My escort said loudly as we stepped out of the house into the backyard. “Hay, Bro, anyone invite this howly (sp?) to dis party?” There across the yard was the cop that had stopped me over three months ago. He got up and said, “Yeah bro, dat one belongs to me.” And he came over to us.

As he got to me he stopped, put his arm around me, and turned to the crowd. “Say, bros, dis young un is a sailor, and he likes to go fast. He drive a little yellow sports car and I got him three times in one morning! I wan you to remember him, and if you see him step out of line, I want you to get him, and get him good.”

I suddenly dawned on me that this Luau was a Luau of Hawaiian Cops, perhaps all of them. I was screwed. He continued to walk me around the party having me introduce myself to all the male attendees, one at a time. This took over an hour. I stayed at the party after I had met everyone – and I realized that my higher than normal speeds were going to be greatly curtailed.

When I left the party, I went straight to the auto section of a local hardware store and bought 30 cans of blue spray paint. When I got home I painted my car blue. It needed to be done anyway – but now I had real motivation.

PS Once you are invited to one Hawaiian Luau by a Hawaiian, it’s not socially acceptable to not be invited and attend all of them. For the next two years I attended Hawaiian Police Officer’s Luau’s on a regular basis. It was good fun – and I never got stopped again.