

Finding Aid

**Hurricane Iniki
September 11, 1991**

Two views

**Written by
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And
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A local Kaua'i couple remember their days after Iniki devastated Kaua'i. A husband and wife provide unique commentaries on life after the hurricane – David Anderson, a woodworker, who stays at their home helping others in the neighborhood while managing the clean up and repairs for their home. Dr. Karen Ratliff reports to duty at G.N.Wilcox Hospital. She views the island on several levels – seeing more of the devastation to the environment and the physical damages and problems to Kauai's population as they try to reconstruct their homes and their lives.

They were on vacation on Lanai, having a really great week away exploring the island's back roads when TV news announced a hurricane in Hawaiian waters. They worried as Kaua'i closed up to protect it's people and began making plans on how to get home.

After a flight to Honolulu on Sunday, they learned that the Lihue airport was closed. Dr. Ratliff was able to obtain two seats on a C130 carrying emergency equipment to Kaua'i. Arriving near sunset, staying that night at her Mother's home in Lihue – without phones, without electricity – the first inkling of what was to be “the new norm” for weeks to come.

Their two reports give a home view and a view from being in the thick of things at the hospital with only an emergency generator providing medical care to all who needed it. With low water pressure, no phones and no beepers, it was a “mash” unit existence for the doctors and staff during the early weeks. Dr. Ratliff spent many days without leaving the hospital and without a way to phone home for 5 weeks.

The day-by-day challenges as the island struggled through the Iniki recovery efforts is described by these two commentaries.

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