

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Polynesian Cultural Center

December 3, 1982

After Twenty-three Years Hurricane Visits Isles



If we could have seen a movie?



Twenty-one power poles were downed between Laie and Kahuku.

The word of the hurricane began for most members of Kahuku-Laie-Hauula community with the 6:00am news programs and weather reports Tuesday November 23. It was the most popular subject of greeting, "Hey, have you heard there's a hurricane coming?"

The Kahuku High School students were in classes when an unscheduled bell rang. There were only seconds of "What's happening?" before most assumed it was a hurricane warning and the students streamed out of the school grounds heading for homes some as far away as Kaaawa and Sunset Beach.

The PCC employees upstairs in the administration building were enjoying a Thanksgiving buffet when a special meeting was called of key personnel who serve on a committee that comes together in such crisis events. This group, under the direction of Cultural Group Director, Carl Fonoimoana, immediately began planning measures that would be necessary in the event that Laie would be hit.

Center Employees Mobilized Quickly



Center Cultural Group Director, Carl Fonoimoana, had the responsibility of key decisions during Iwa's visit.

At PCC damage to the buildings was minimal. The Tongan cook-house had collapsed, along with part of the Maori Village fence, but most other damage was confined to trees. A coconut tree in Hale Kuai collapsed on the fence there, and another holed the fence near the employee entrance gate.

PCC Maintenance crews were on the job very early and by noon the Center was clean again. Crews worked hard to hook up generators needed in order to keep food safe and to secure key areas of the Center. In Laie's streets, piles of rubbish mushroomed outside people's homes as families cooperated to clean up. Those with gas stoves boiled water and cooked meals for others without electricity, and residents took stock as they prepared to celebrate Thanksgiving the next day.

Laie Families Lose Ulu

Jean Mapu remembered the "Please no pick" sign she had tacked to her family's ulu tree which now lay flat on the lawn; Larry Au, who had been hard hit by the flood in March was grateful for nothing more than wind damage to his bananas.

Tevita Pasi, Tony Haiku, and Roy Watanabe, Laie's most qualified electricians, continued their work from the night before. Ruby Collins and Dana Myers waited in line at the BYUH cafeteria for 40 minutes for breakfast. Other students took off for Honolulu to buy food supplies and try to find somewhere to do their laundry. Charlene and Doe Horomona had worked to clean up the Maori Village at PCC since 6:00 am, and the PCC trucks were busy filling their 6th and 7th loads of debris. Alice Logan, manager of the Center's Shop Polynesia, swept water out of the Hale Kuai area, and many employees checked out their houses then reported to work to help clean up there.



IWA Notes:

Kanamu Kekauoha and Harvey Alisa were busy with decisions concerning the ifs, buts, and shoulds of their temple wedding and reception sheduled for the next day.

Tauamo Malufau heard her favorite breadfruit tree fall over at 8:30 pm. She cried over the loss, remembering how she had planted it ten years ago even before she built her house on the corner of Moana and Lanihuli Streets. PCC's Tongan Chief Alamoti Taumoepeau and his family admired their new chain-link fence only just completed by PCC Maintenance workers that afternoon. They were not to know that later that night Iwa would break ironwood limbs that would crumple the fence.

Andrea Bruner, dorm parent for Hale 5 on campus, heard a loud crash and saw the shadow of something large loom outside her window. When she focused her flashlight on it, she saw that it was part of the huge rubber tree which was much admired by campus residents. By morning it was discovered that both rubber trees which stood at the men's and women's dorm entrances had been badly damaged in the night.

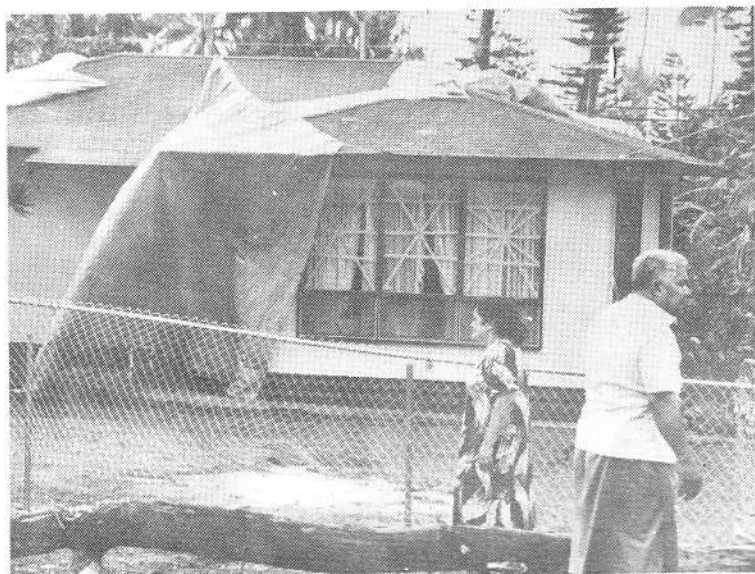
Elders Fellows from Australia and Waldmann from Illinois heated celery soup over a candle and amused themselves singing hymns, talking story, and telling "Mormon" jokes.

Emily "Mom" Enos, her husband, and two grandsons listened to the wind thrashing outside and worried at the way the house shook in the force of the storm.



Employee Gate 4 at PCC.

Community Shots Reflect Community G



Alamoti Taumoepeau outside his home



A Maintenance crew hoists coconut tree.



Kids find football fun in Iwa's unique weather.

Community kids began playing touch football on the flooded campus lawns, and they were soon joined by students who left their darkened dorms to play in the unusual weather. Locals watched the surf, but because of the direction of Iwa's winds, the North Shore was spared the dangerously high surf that hit leeward areas of Oahu.

Tuesday night was strangely dark in Laie's usually busy community. Families sat huddled in their living rooms listening to the news reports describe Iwa's path and progress. As electricity went out all over the island, radio stations blacked out, leaving only the sound of Iwa's eerie roaring and the rattle of roofs creaking in the rain.



Cleanup crew in Hale

A Swiss biker from Zurich, found stranded at the new chapel, gratefully accepted an invitation to stay the night with the Forester family, and ate a meal of boiled breadfruit with coconut milk, canned corned beef and beans with them. PCC Security continued vigil with the yellow station wagon providing a sense of comfort to those familiar with its route.

Goodwill in Sharing Burden of Cleanup Job



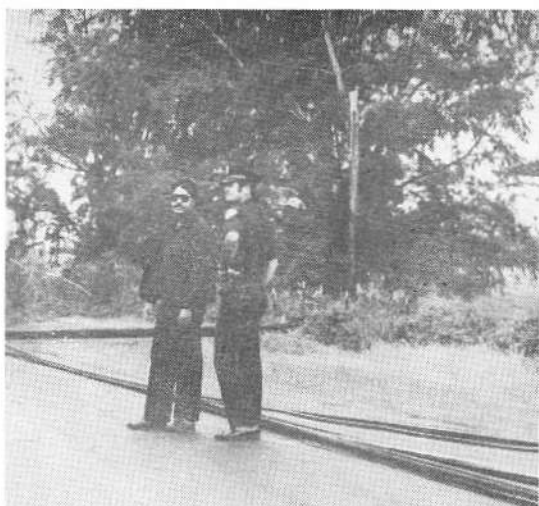
Key men in the crisis: the Electricians.



Kahuku Burger Mill roof strewn on road.



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Honolulu Police Officers were among those who worked around the clock to keep community safe.



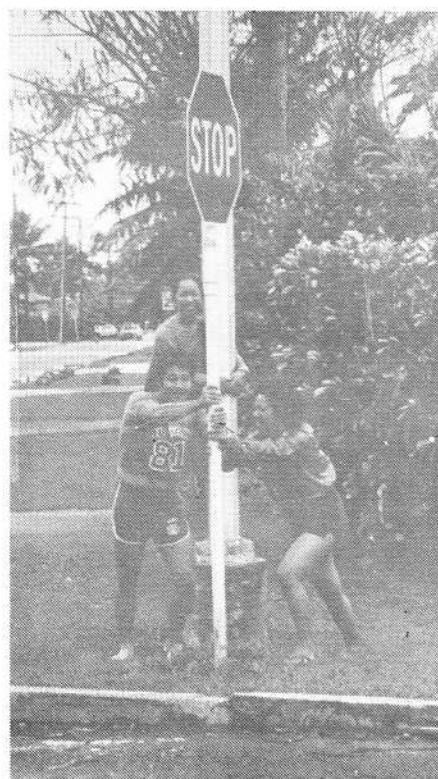
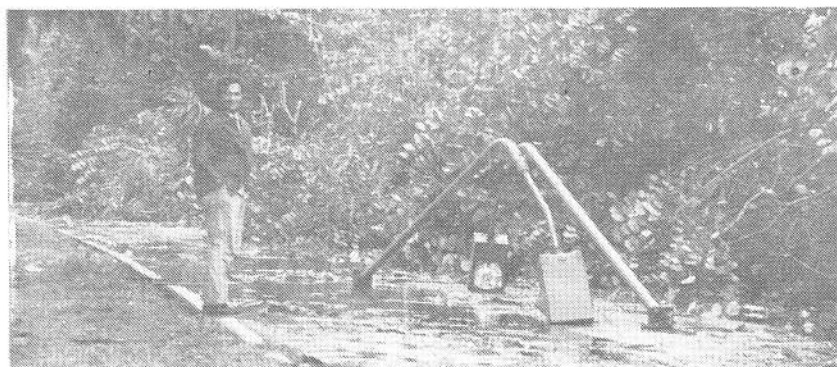
Fallen trees on Temple Visitors Center lawns.

Telephones and electricity began faltering and soon failed that afternoon even before "Iwa" arrived, and local stores quickly filled with customers seeking flashlights and canned goods, bread, candles, etc. Homeowners taped their windows as Civil Defence authorities broadcast messages suggesting ways that people should prepare for the expected winds and rain.

As the hour before dark approached, ironwood tree limbs and coconut leaves began flying in the strong winds. Rainshowers soaked everything and the sounds of cracking tree limbs alerted residents that this was no ordinary Kona storm. Coconuts fell in bunches, and weaker trees began toppling. The Garside, Gellert, and Elkington families worked to keep

their length of Naniloa Loop passable as ironwood limbs began falling across the road. A coconut tree in front of the Hawaii Temple smashed onto the road, and a light pole on Laie Point began to lean precariously across the street. The road around Laie cemetery was already blocked by a fallen tree, and hundreds of fragile banana trees were already broken in two as easily as toothpicks.

PCC Well Organized for Emergency



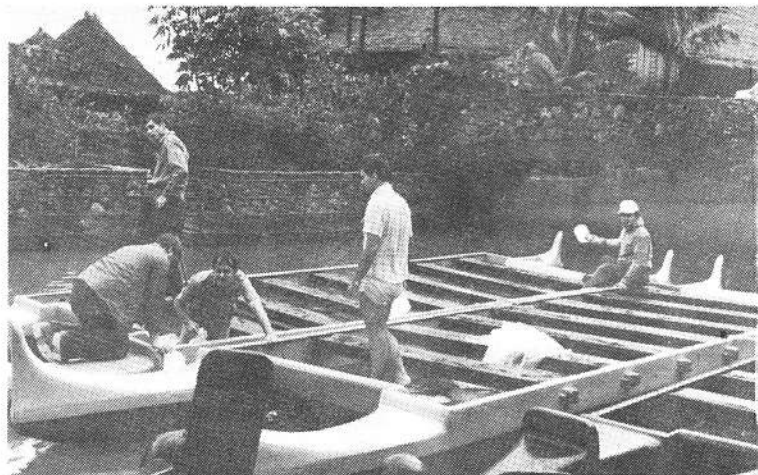
Smashed fence, banana trees, light poles, adults quick to organize, and kids clowning on unexpected holiday from school.

Residents Show "How to Keep Busy" After a Hurricane

The morning after dawned clear and in the light it was readily apparent that Iwa had wreaked havoc during the night. Tree branches and leaves littered the roads and yards. Coconuts dotted lawns like large marbles, lauhala trees stood beheaded, breadfruit sat splattered on driveways, and roofing iron lay scattered like playing cards.

By 8:00 am, those who were about, were already familiar with the wider damage: 21 power poles lay flat on the road between Laie and Malaekahana, and cars negotiated the tangle of cables that lay strewn in thick mud; the roof of the gas station across from Kahuku High School had blown off and damaged the Kahuku IGA store, - which had also lost part of its own roof; Kahuku Burger Mill and Games Room were extensively damaged; the ventilating hood from the BYUH cafeteria had blown right across the Aloha Center roof and landed on the road.

In addition, Iosepa Street fronting PCC was impassable due to smashed light standards and broken trees; a limb from Bill Kanahele's tree had punctured the roof of Sione Niu's bedroom; Alan Uye-hara's ironwood tree leaned on Andy Macatiag's house, and Roger Higg's apartment roof was partly blown off.



Cooperative Education Coordinator Bill Harris gains work experience!

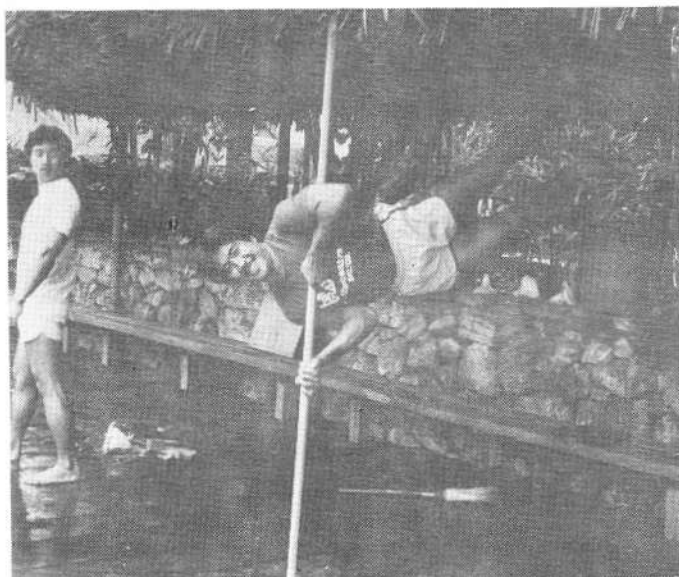
Trio gathered coconuts felled by Iwa.

Unusual Scenes in Laie:



Center Maintenance worker stands in lagoon to cut tree felled by wind. (Left)

Workers are surrounded by fallen branches of a PCC rubber tree. (Below)



Student demonstrates how Iwa's wind wrapped him round a pole. (top)

Andy Macatiag is literally "up a tree".

