

December 2014, Molokai Hawaii

After a few challenging years, the gods and goddesses seemed to smile on us in 2014. Lorraine and I are both healthy (for old folks) and our “farm” is doing well and provides fresh food every day -- eggplants, long green beans, jicama, cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, beets, corn, cauliflower greens, peppers, taro, sweet potatoes, and various squashes like Golden Hubbard, (see pic right) Kabocha, Hyoton, bananas, mangoes, papayas, jabongs (Chinese grapefruits) Tahitian limes and our first lemons and oranges, plus tropical fruits like pineapple, sugar apple, mountain apple, chocolate sapotes, acara boi and soon sapodillas and breadfruit. It’s all GMO – Grow My Own! In fact our food production has increased enough (despite the horrid bugs) that we are now selling overage from Pu’uhonua Produce, our wholesale business, to a local farmer who sells them retail in his fruit stand downtown.



We flew to Oahu for a week last month and spent Thanksgiving with Jim and Cindy Rector, cruising friends we’d met in northern Tonga in 2008. They have a lovely cedar log cabin on the north shore in Waialua and spoiled us with turkey and all the trimmings. On Sunday, they met us at Dukes Canoe Club for wild afternoon dancing along with my favorite Army Ranger, Bill Moore and his wife. Then we buzzed up to our friends, Mike and Janet’s home overlooking gorgeous Diamond Head crater for a special pasta dinner. Earlier that day we had driven out to Makaha on the west side for a wonderful champagne brunch and eggs Benedict with other boating friends, Gladys and George. Long fun day!

The rest of the time, beginning upon our arrival the day before Thanksgiving, Lorraine and I “shopped till ready to drop” and hauled all the stuff to our pal John’s place to repack everything for shipping by barge. Lorraine had called John to let him know we were coming and wanted to visit and he said, “We are going to Washington DC, “Why don’t you house sit?” What a godsend!

Black Friday at Costco was no worse than any other day at the super store and we bought enough supplies (that we cannot grow ourselves) during our multiple trips to hopefully last a year. Also bought supplies from the feed store, Home Depot and other places that do not exist on Molokai.



We purchased 7 fruit trees and one smell good, a Paklan, from Frankie’s Nursery in Waimanalo, (we have already planted more than 70 trees – see pic left.) Sadly on the way back to the John’s house something attacked me. My upper torso was a mass of welts and they even got into my crotch! As soon as we got to John’s house I stripped and showered and threw my clothes in the laundry. Washed the bedding too since we had no idea what it was but they itched for days. Turns out there must have been fire ants on one of the trees I moved. What nasty little buggers!

After many hours repacking dozens and dozens of boxes, we loaded them into John’s van; ferried them down to the shipping terminal first thing Monday morning; and hand carried them all into a container to

be loaded on a barge. Lorraine and I found a small chest freezer and an inexpensive recliner and schlepped them to the wharf too.

John came home with his kids our last evening on Oahu and we had a wonderful time with them and flew home the next day. After landing on Molokai we washed *everything* again and put our luggage into Green Peace, (our own shipping container) and set off a bug bomb. No more bites. Next day the barge arrived and we loaded all those boxes, freezer etc. into our truck, drove home and spent days unloading and storing everything. Life on Molokai.

Before sailing to the South Pacific in 2007, while anchored on Southern Cross off Waikiki, we enjoyed the finish of the Molokai Hoe -- a grueling 38-mile canoe race across the channel from Molokai. Lorraine said in awe, "Wow, I would love to learn how to paddle some day." In August this summer she steered a beautiful traditional koa wood Polynesian outrigger canoe in the State Championships on Oahu. *I could not be more proud of her.*



Lisa and Ricky McDaniels, friends from the Bay Area we had not seen in 35 years, came to visit in August. Lots of catching up and fun boogie boarding on the west end of the island. Our hanai family, Bruce and Terri Cosby, flew to the big island in June for a diving adventure and then came to Molokai for several days and treated us to a snorkel trip on the reef (our first time on this island.)

In 1982, during our first cruise to Mexico, a horrific storm hit Cabo San Lucas and tossed 27 boats on the beach. One boat sailing offshore got so severely hammered, they decided to give up cruising and asked us to deliver their boat to Dana Point. We took the money from that job and bought a new 10-foot Avon inflatable and still have it! This year I rebuilt our old outboards (the one in the picture is from 1990) and unpacked the Avon and hung it from the garage ceiling so we can drop it in the bed of the truck to take it down to launch at the wharf.



Our pictures are still not hung inside where we want them, but the entire exterior of our beautiful home got a new paint job this year and 4 more solar panels on the roof. 2014 was the hottest summer/fall since moving here and we installed two solar attic ventilators and a skylight. Lorraine started sewing again and has made really attractive valances for all the windows.

Both our grandsons graduated high school in 2014 and our daughter, Christina, has returned to school and is studying to be nurse. Our granddaughter Eileen and her husband, Tyler and son Joel bought a house in Arizona and are doing well. Our son-in-law Bob still lives in Washington with Robin near our great granddaughter who just came through heart surgery successfully. What a relief and overall a really good year.

Lastly, most of you remember the Save Gulliver campaign we mounted when sojourning at Fanning Island in 2008. A cruising couple crashed their boat on the island and when they left, they abandoned their Cocker Spaniel puppy, Snickers, and blue and gold macaw, Gulliver. The authorities would have had to kill the animals had we not intervened. We got magazines and media and friends in Honolulu involved and the animals were rescued. Snickers rode to Honolulu on a huge NCL cruise ship and was met by our pals Peter and Laureli and the local TV stations at the dock. What a celebrity! An angel named Jack offered to adopt the puppy and after passing quarantine flew him to his home in Arizona. He is now named Curly Boy and is thriving.

We built a cage and loaded Gulliver on an inter-island trading ship and they delivered him to Christmas Island where he was met by Peter who had arranged to fly him to Hawaii. Eventually Gulliver ended up safe and sound in a bird Sanctuary also in Arizona. Obviously a happy ending, but saving the pets was only secondary to my purpose. I had hoped to bring attention to the wonderful people who live in the Line Islands (Kiribati) 1000 miles south of Hawaii and are among the poorest humans on earth.

Sadly, though, after all the hoopla, they were pretty much forgotten by everyone but one very special friend named Carlton Smith. He started an organization named Pacific Islands Medical Aid that has performed true miracles for the islanders for years now. Please click on this site <http://pacificislandsaid.org/> and check it out.



Unlike huge organizations like Red Cross that use donations to support CEO's, 30,000 employees and massive infrastructure, every penny donated to Pacific Islands Medical Aid goes directly to the projects you designate. I do not know anyone who has lots of extra money lying around, but if you feel the urge to do something special for people in need this season, please consider donating to this wonderful cause.

Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season and a great 2015. Love and aloha, Robby and Lorraine

Below: Gas prices on Molokai in 2014. Yikes!

