

WHAT IF WE TOLD THE TRUTH?

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From: www.hawaiireporter.com

What if we told the truth and looked only at the truth, where would the news be? We live here and it bothers me that people cannot be accountable for their own actions. It bothers me how there is a convenient and hungry media to sensationalize and promote this kind of action. The two outstanding media sensations include the flooding from the Ka Loko reservoir and the death from flesh eating disease. Lives are lost.

Here are some common sense facts to the Ka Loko tragedy:

- In the late 60's the "hippies" moved in to Hawaii and purchased land to build their homes. The "yuppy" homes are built all over the islands and the upper middle and higher class residential neighborhoods created.
- It does not appear that any of the people who bought their properties looked around and asked why didn't the previous generations live in these areas? Did anyone think to talk to the residents from previous generations to understand the conditions that existed before the construction of these neighborhoods?
- It is a wonder how some people felt that it was "their" land and the modifications to the topography was needed to make room for their decorative fountains, golf courses, roads and driveways, more houses, etc.
- Today we investigate to find out who is to blame for the modification and destruction of the land to the extent that it has taken lives. The flooding downstream of the Ka Loko reservoir caused the death of at least 7 lives.
- The area was modified by one of the land owners and the topography changed significantly. So significant is the removal or destruction of the flood gates on the reservoir, the elimination of the little creeks outside of the reservoir flood gates, and the extinction of the little Hawaiian goldfish. Today 7 lives can be added to the destruction.
- Our grandfathers and their parents and generations before us did not construct homes in these areas, and most likely for good reason.
- There is sadness in the loss of lives, and the revenge and seekers of justice want to find out why lives had to be lost. There is a need to blame the government and the need for lawsuits. Some say there is a need for justice.

Before the accusations are made and the lawsuits filed shouldn't everyone look at their actions and the level of their responsibility? The disrespect for the land in the occupancy in an area that is susceptible to flooding; the changing of the topographical configuration; and the modification and destruction of the previously built reservoirs are the result of actions taken. In the search for justice should we also pursue the injustice to the taking of the land, and the cheating of the people?

Here are the common sense facts with the flesh eating bacteria death:

The discharge of millions of gallons of untreated sewage in the Ala Wai was a decision made and now criticism seems to be in order. The discharge to the Ala Wai is a decision based on the acceptance of the lesser evil. Allowing the sewage to back in to the homes of the residents or discharge to the Ala Wai is a decision that no one wants to make. The decision to drink to drunkenness and the result of this behavior, e.g., fighting, results in a fall or he is thrown in to the Ala Wai is one made individually. An infection develops days later, medical attention is not sought, and the result is death. It is common knowledge that the flesh eating disease is caused by a common bacteria. Flesh-eating disease can be caused by a number of different bacteria, including group A streptococcus (GAS). GAS is a very common bacteria. Many people carry it in the throat or on their skin without getting sick. It is the same bacteria that causes strep throat, and can also cause impetigo, scarlet fever and rheumatic fever. In rare instances, GAS will cause serious illnesses, including pneumonia, meningitis, blood poisoning (bacteremia), streptococcal toxic-shock syndrome and flesh-eating disease. (Public Health Agency of Canada)

- We have the right and the freedom to choose to drink to drunkenness.
- We have the right and the freedom to behave in a manner that may not be acceptable to everyone.
- We have the right and the freedom to seek medical treatment for our injury and illness.
- We also have the freedom to blame others for our irresponsible behavior and to seek revenge or payment in this endeavor.
- Our fathers and grandparents taught us not to swim or fish in dirty water. They also taught us to respect our waters. Too bad not everyone were taught the value of respect of the land and the waters.

It is with deep regret that we mourn the deaths. We mourn the losses, but we must insist on responsible and accountable behavior. Irresponsible behavior and lack of accountability seems to be the norm these days and the perception that we have to blame everyone else must be unacceptable. The investigations will continue, the finger pointing will be in the media and the cost of irresponsible behavior will cause everyone to pay for the lack of accountability.

Finally, we've forgotten the root cause in the destruction of our land and the acceptance of this kind of behavior. We know that the choices made by the government to delay or disregard the need to upgrade or expand our infrastructure are long-standing problems. Blaming and finger pointing by the politicians will continue and the media will sensationalize these stories. We know that the justice and the quest to right the wrongs of past generations will remain unanswered and unaccountable. We can only hope that our leaders, politicians, and our judicial system will act responsibly.