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RONGELAP

Mejatto move forced US action

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BOMI out \$25K over AG deal

PAGE 4

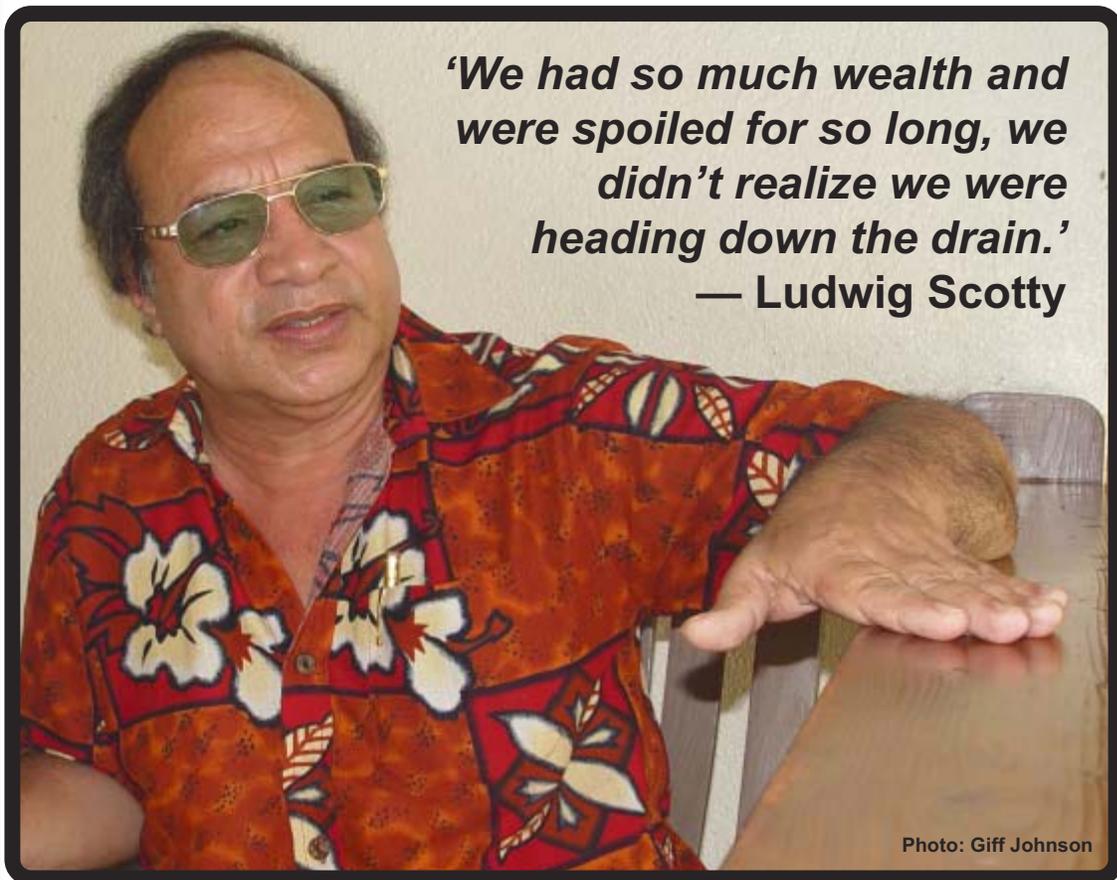
Bonanza for ship registry

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What's Juanita up to?

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*'We had so much wealth and
were spoiled for so long, we
didn't realize we were
heading down the drain.'*
— Ludwig Scotty

Photo: Giff Johnson

Nauru in rags, ROC has riches

Nauru is the newest Pacific island country to recognize Taiwan. It made the switch from China earlier this week.

The Nauru move comes just two weeks after President Ludwig Scotty met with Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian in Majuro — a move that was sharply criticized at the time by the Chinese ambassador to Nauru.

Nauru had had long-standing ties with Taiwan until former President Rene Harris changed to China in 2002.

In an interview with the Journal before departing for Nauru earlier this month, Scotty said that nearly \$1 million from China had been used to prop up the Nauru government's finances, which were down to zero when he took office last October. It was so bad that Nauru

**Workers get only
\$108 pay checks: P6**

By GIFF JOHNSON

government workers had not been paid for months. But given the magnitude of Nauru's financial problems — the Boeing-737 used by Air Nauru is on the verge of being repossessed following an Australian court order late last month confirming that the Nauru government owes \$15 million on the plane; and numerous Australian investments have been sold to pay off multi-million dollar loans that were delinquent — the Chinese aid

barely made a dent. Presumably, the Taiwanese government will provide a more significant aid package to Nauru. While in Majuro for the annual Constitution Day celebrations in May, Scotty talked to Chen, paving the way for the change. Nauru is now the sixth Pacific nation to recognize Taiwan.

The China-Taiwan diplomatic recognition battle is intense. But Scotty takes the view that the China-Taiwan dispute "is their own affair. Nauru is a friend to all."

Two weeks ago, he commented: "If China can't help Nauru with all I need, why not look to Taiwan to help in certain areas?"

That's just what Scotty has done by returning Nauru to the group of islands that has diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

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RMI alone in not having a fuel pact

By GIFF JOHNSON

Marshall Islands government officials learned this week that just about every island in the region — but not the RMI — has agreements in place with fuel companies to review prices on a regular basis. "The biggest difference between the Marshall Islands and most of the rest of the Pacific is that in most countries, there is a mechanism in place (to determine) how prices are to be built up," Jared Morris, a fuel expert with the Fiji-based Forum Secretariat, told a Petroleum Workshop held in Majuro this week.

In the Federated States of Micronesia, for example, the FSM government and Mobil have an agreement in place that includes a framework for pricing, he said. The RMI has no such arrangement.

"Without that mechanism in place to question fuel prices, you'll have the same situation no matter who supplies fuel," Morris said.

In response to questions about what leverage the RMI has in dealing with ExxonMobil, Morris said two things:

- Despite relatively small volumes in the islands, no fuel company wants to be replaced by a competitor which can make it easier for the competitor to pick up additional contracts in the region.
- Establishing an agreement with Mobil for fuel sales and pricing is not asking Mobil to do something it's not already doing in other countries.

Islands in the region have chosen many different options in relations with fuel companies to improve supply and prices, Morris said.

American Samoa's government owns the fuel storage facility, and bids it out for use by two oil companies to provide a measure of competition; Samoa also owns its tanks and bids out a contract to one supplier for a five year period that has produced the lowest fuel prices in the region; Fiji has three suppliers, but the government uses price control to maintain prices; the Marshall Islands has a single supplier (Mobil) that also owns its tank farm.

"There's no single 'right' answer," Morris said. "Each island has to decide the most cost-effective means for achieving a fair price."

The workshop reviewed the costs of delivering fuel from Singapore to Majuro, compared prices in each island, conducted practice negotiation sessions, and had the participants develop a fuel pricing 'template' for the Marshall Islands.

Mobil claims tanker on time: P3

‘Why bring the dry-dock to RMI?’

A talk on the review process for the proposed dry-dock sparked a barrage of questions and comment at last week’s Majuro Chamber of Commerce meeting.

RMI EPA consultant Caleb McClennen outlined the next steps in the environmental review of the proposed dry-dock.

A public hearing is scheduled for this Thursday, May 19, at 6pm at the Nitijela conference room; it is open to the public. Numerous questions and comments followed McClennen’s outline of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process. He made it clear that he was speaking only as a consultant for EPA, and not on behalf of EPA general manager John Bungitak or the board of directors.

The period for public comments ends on June 2, and McClennen encouraged people to submit written comments that will help the EPA board to evaluate the impact of the project.

He provided copies to the Chamber of the EIA prepared by Ching Fu, and said that the RMI EPA asked Ching Fu to focus its report on three primary areas: The proposed location, management of the waste from the dry-dock, and ongoing water-quality monitoring if the project moves forward.

The EIA addresses these and other environmental issues and is available from the EPA office.

Among the questions and comments from local business people at the meeting:

- Why bring the dry-dock to RMI?
- Aside from the environmental impact, what about the social impact and what government agency will review this and other issues that are beyond the authority of EPA?
- Will location of the dry-dock in Majuro make it more difficult for MIMRA to restrict fishing licenses — so as not to overfish tuna stocks — because foreign investors will say the government shouldn’t do anything to hurt the multimillion dollar Taiwanese investment?
- A reduction in licenses, which may be in the national interest to conserve tuna, will reduce the number of boats and hurt the dry-dock business.
- What is Ching Fu’s environmental record at the dry-dock it



Owners to be at hearing

Representatives of both Ching Fu (RMI) Ltd. and the Australian firm working for Ching Fu are expected to be at this week’s public hearing to speak on the dry-dock as well as to answer questions.

The RMI EPA is sponsoring the public hearing Thursday, May 19, at 6 pm at the Nitijela conference room. Steve Chen, president of Ching Fu (RMI) Ltd., is expected to be at the public hearing to provide testimony.

operates in Australia?

- In relation to the predicted economic benefit of the dry-dock to Majuro, will most of the dry-dock’s business go to locally based Taiwanese companies?

- What about ongoing water-quality monitoring and redundant monitoring systems on the dry-dock for handling waste?

McClennen fielded questions that related directly to EPA and the EIA review process. He indicated that the EPA is obtaining reviews of the EIA submitted from people in the US who are expert in the field, as well as requesting information from regulators at the port in Australia where Ching Fu operates.

Mobil claims tanker on time

Mobil claims that an article in last week’s Kwajalein Hourglass, which reported that the Mobil tanker was late in delivering fuel to Ebeye, is not correct.

Cecile Suda, Mobil’s public relations and government affairs manager, said: “The statement made in the Kwajalein Hourglass so far as it concerns Mobil is inaccurate.

“The power outage in Ebeye was due to the utility’s failure to

make payments to Mobil for fuel. Mobil had sufficient supply to meet the utility’s demand prior to the recent tanker arrival.” Army officials said they were referring to a shipment of oil, not fuel, being delayed.

Suda said that Mobil is working closely with KAJUR and the RMI government to resolve the utility’s credit and payment issues.

Ebeye’s power struggle: P??



Dr. Hilda Heine had plenty of family to wish her well at her University of Southern California graduation last week, when she officially received her Ph.D, becoming the first Marshallese to do so. From left: Jim Philippo, Dr. Wilfred Alik, Kaiki Alik, Daisy Momotaro, Heine, Johnny and Winifred Alik and Angeline Heine.

AG deal with Julie costs BOMI \$25,000

By GIFF JOHNSON

The RMI Attorney General's office concluded an agreement with a defendant that requires her to pay back only \$7,800 of the more than \$32,000 she still owes to the Bank of Marshall Islands.

In a plea bargain deal, Julie Kabua Andrike pleaded guilty to one count of embezzlement for stealing \$64,964 from the Bank of Marshall Islands more than two years ago.

The plea bargain agreement reached between the offices of the Attorney General and the Public Defender requires her to pay back \$150 every two weeks to the bank for two years, for a total of \$7,800.

Judge Richard Hickson, in accepting the plea bargain agreement last week, noted that Andrike had voluntarily paid back \$32,000. This leaves a balance due of \$32,964. Hickson sentenced her to a two-year jail term, all of which is suspended in favor of probation provided she makes the \$7,800 restitution payments to the bank during the two years. Assistant attorney general Whitlam Togamae, who prosecuted the case for the RMI, indicated that Andrike and her attorney, the Public Defender, "have arrangements with the bank." He said these arrangements were "confidential."

Bank officials told the Journal there is no such agreement, and a proposal from the defendant to settle the case was rejected by the BOMI board of directors several months ago as being unsatisfac-

tory. Togamae told the Journal that when the plea agreement was being negotiated there was "no precise calculation of how much" was required to be paid back. "We have two years (probationary period for repayments) and the defendant will have to talk to the bank," Togamae said. "There are provisions for that."

He also said that only the Public Defender's office, which represents Andrike, could discuss the terms of the plea agreement, and he would not disclose what was agreed to in the deal.

But the Public Defender's office told the Journal that there are no additional requirements or provisions in the plea bargain agreement beyond the court-approved two-year payback period amounting to \$7,800.

"The plea agreement says that Andrike agreed to plead guilty to embezzlement, be on probation for two years, pay back \$300 per month and obey all laws — nothing else," according to staff at the Public Defender's office. "This is what the AG came up with."

PD staff said that they had initially submitted a draft agreement for Andrike to pay back the amount taken until it was entirely paid off. The AG's office rejected that draft and submitted its own, limiting the pay back period to two years and \$7,800, they said.

Paper accused of sensationalism: P7

13 Senators say 'not us'

To honor public transparency and accountability and in accordance with our oath of (ilo kautiej an armij maron jela im melele ta ko dri kwelok ro aer rej komani im ekkar non kallimur ko am non office as members of the Nitijela as to the question posed by the Marshall Islands Journal, armij einwot ro uwaan Nitijela eo kab non uaake kajjitok eo ear walok ilo Marshall Islands Journan eo ilo week eo as God is our witness, we the undersigned do hereby assure the public that we did not lok im einwot ke Anij ej relaltak im lale ad jermal, kim ro rej sign ijin ilal, kim konaan kwalok non armij in Majol ke kim, receive any form of payment whatsoever as members of the Nitijela from the People's einwot dri kwelok non Nitijela eo ami kim ar jab bok jabrewot kolla ak money jen People's Republic of China ak bar Republic of China or from any other source. jen jabrewot jikin ko jet.

Sen. Michael Kabua (Kwajalein)



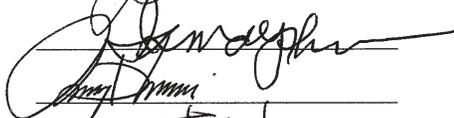
Sen. Jurelang Zedkaia (Majuro)



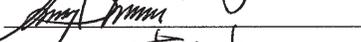
Sen. Christopher J. Loeak (Ailinglaplap)



Sen. Ishmael John (Enewetak, Ujelang)



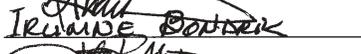
Sen. Rellong Lemari (Lae)



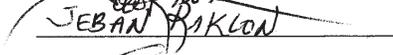
Sen. Justin deBrum (Kwajalein)



Sen. Irumne Bondrik (Lib)



Sen. Jeban Riklon (Kwajalein)



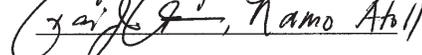
Sen. Caios E. Lucky (Ujae)



Sen. Abacca Anjain Maddison (Ronglap)



Sen. Kaiboke Kabua (Namu)



Sen. Hiroshi Yamamura (Utrik)



Sen. Fountain Inok (Wotho)




Rongelap Senator Abacca Anjain-Maddison met US Congressman Edward Markey of Massachusetts last week at the UN during the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty meetings.

Abacca sticks to her word

I was informed of the Journal offering an opportunity for the people of the Marshall Islands to know the truth regarding the PRC bribery controversy by asking Nitijela members a simple question: Which Nitijela member was involved?

This is my answer: "For the sake of Good Governance I was not involved in this unethical action. When I was sworn in and the Nitijela was packed with witnesses and people were listening to V7AB broadcasting live, I promised not to use my position for my own gain. In fact, all 33 members of the Nitijela made that promise."

The Marshall Islands Resort



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Majuro's premier hotel
Majuro's premier hotel

Workers earn just \$54 a week

The bad news is that government workers in Nauru are earning just A\$140 (US\$108) for two weeks' work. The good news is that this is a nearly 200 percent pay increase in just a few months.

In its riches to rags story, mismanagement and financial abuse by Nauruans, and scams foisted by international con artists have combined to toss this central Pacific nation's economy—once the envy of every island in the region—into a freefall without a parachute.

Nauruans have seen their per capita income plummet from the Pacific's highest to one of the lowest.

"People in Nauru have been used to a high standard of living," President Ludwig Scotty told the Journal. "The problem is that (we've) lived extravagantly since independence because there was so much money from phosphate. We had so much wealth and were spoiled for so long we didn't realize we were heading down the drain."

Scotty said that the government has "now raised the pay to A\$140 for everyone, including me." People aren't complaining too much because the reform is necessary. "It's painful but we have to accept it or go back," he said.

Cancer report set for US House hearing

A National Cancer Institute report which predicts that nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands directly caused about 530 cancers, an estimated half of which have yet to appear, is certain to be a point of discussion in next week's House hearing on the RMI's changed circumstances petition.

"The RMI government is extremely interested in the National Cancer Institute's projections of future cancer rates," RMI Ambassador Banny deBrum said. "It seems to me that the cancer projections certainly extend beyond the four (US-acknowledged nuclear test-affected) atolls into a broader population in the RMI."

Foreign Minister Gerald Zackios told the Journal that the National Cancer Institute (NCI) study and a report by the US Congressional Research Service "gives us information for a better appreciation of how to deal with the changed circumstances petition."

Zackios said the NCI study clearly indicates that many other islands — not previously acknowledged by the United States as radiation-affected — were exposed.

"We're finding people on remote islands with high percentages of cancers," he said, adding that the health care program only extends to people from Bikini, Enewetak, Rongelap and Utrik.

DeBrum, who is based in Washington, said: "The RMI government has been talking to the US government about the need to update the health care delivery and monitoring programs in the RMI for communities most impacted by the US nuclear weapons testing program."

He said that he looked forward to bilateral discussions about this, including the upcoming hearings on the changed circumstances petition and other nuclear issues, "to consider whether the recommendations by NCI should influence the type of health surveillance in the RMI.

"I am interested in learning from the US government its reactions to the NCI report and whether it thinks the NCI report justifies changes to the existing medical care and monitoring provided by the United States."



Note: 'We'll work tirelessly to settle'

The US House of Representatives will be the first US congressional body to hold hearings on the nuclear test compensation petition filed five years ago by the Marshall Islands government.

President Kessai Note announced last week that he had received confirmation from House Resources Chairman Richard Pombo that his committee will hold an oversight hearing on May 25 in Washington. "The United States Nuclear Legacy in the Marshall Islands: Consideration of Issues Relating to the Changed Circumstances Petition," is the theme of the hearing.

Note said that the Marshall Islands will "work tirelessly to make certain that the nuclear issue is settled in a fair and just manner."

Pombo visited the Marshall Islands briefly in January 2004. The Senate Energy Committee is also expected to hold hearings on the petition, but no dates have been set.

RMI leads fight against CFCs

The Marshall Islands is leading Pacific efforts to phaseout deadly chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by heading a regional strategy on ozone depleting substances (ODS). CFCs are the most commonly used ozone-depleting source.

Under the Montreal Protocol, the Marshalls is the first of a dozen Pacific nations to initiate the strategy's next phase. With funding from the Protocol's Multilateral Fund (PMF), a trainers' workshop was held in-country late last week to introduce local customs officers to ODS regulations and their application.

"The use of CFCs in Pacific island countries is at near-zero levels.

"Fiji halted their use in 2000, which has had a domino effect with other countries," said Emma Sale Mario, coordinator for the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP).

The project, supported by the UN Environment Program, will help the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu to end all CFC imports by the end of this year.

Journal accused of sensationalism

The Journal was criticized for "sensationalizing" a story about Julie Andrike's embezzlement case.

In a phone interview with the Journal on the result of the case, assistant attorney general Whitlam Togamae said Tuesday the case "was sensationalized" when it was reported by the Journal last November 5. He also said that the Journal incorrectly reported the criminal act as a "burglary" when in fact it was an embezzlement. Under the headline, "Andrike charged for robbing bank," the following story appeared on page 23:

More than a year and a half after a Bank of Marshall Islands employee allegedly stole more than \$64,000, the Attorney General's office filed criminal charges in the High Court.

Julie Kabua Andrike was charged last week with grand larceny and embezzlement for presumably stealing \$64,964 from the local bank on March 26, 2003.

Andrike pled not guilty to the two charges at an arraignment last Friday. Judge Richard Hickson set bail at \$500 and ordered Andrike to give her passport to the High Court and to remain in Majuro.

In an affidavit, Bank of Marshall Islands manager Heran Bellu said that after discovering the theft, Andrike was terminated and the matter referred to the Department of Public Safety for action.

A preliminary hearing for the case is set for December 14.



The Australian Ambassador to RMI Corrine Tomkinson.

Oz ambassador arrives June

Australian Ambassador Corrine Tomkinson will make her first appearance in the Marshall Islands in June after arriving in the Micronesian region in late 2004.

She will head the Australian delegation to a major fisheries conference that starts on June 1 in Majuro.

She is expected to present her diplomatic credentials to President Kessai Note as well as making introductory visits with various officials soon after her arrival.

She is based in Pohnpei.

MARSHALL ISLANDS

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Beware the water in Majuro's restaurants

An RMI EPA inspection of 17 Majuro restaurants last week shows that every single one had either "e. coli" or "coliforms" in their tap water, which is used for washing dishes and vegetables.

(Note: The EPA is referring only to tap water.)

The contamination of tap water in all 17 restaurants was described by an EPA official as "bad."

Most restaurant kitchens use water from catchment tanks that catch rainwater and use city water to top off, according to EPA laboratory chief Abraham Hicking.

"We've advised them to put bleach in their tanks," he said. "It's easy and it will solve the problem." He said EPA was not trying to scare people with their findings, but is doing this as part of its quarterly check to insure the safety of food and water in local restaurants.

Hicking said that none of the restaurants should have any contamination of their tapwater.

The three restaurants that had coliform (but not e. coli) contamination were: Labojie's Fast-Food, Kitco and AZ.

The others that tested positive for e. coli in their tap water: White House, Tide Table, DAR, Wan Hai Shen, Lathbern, Lucky Star, MIC Chit Chat, Payless Fast-Food, KNB, Flame Tree, Frank K Take-Out, Spencer's, Mother's Kitchen and Riwut Corner Take-Out.

Long Island Restaurant and Marshall Islands Resort's Enra were not included in this month's water check.

The tucker task force

Majuro's restaurants were rated last week by the RMI EPA Compliance Task Force, with seven of 18 gaining an 'A' rating.

Eight were rated 'B,' and three were graded 'C.'

The Task Force also included MALGov and Ministry of Health.

The EPA found that more than 50 percent of the staff checked did not have valid health certificates and all kitchens had contaminated water for washing.

On the plus side, 80 percent of the restaurants had proper toilet facilities and more than 90 percent have excellent solid waste management.

"All have good personal hygiene but need to exercise the use of apron and hairnet," the EPA said.



The Fowler family enjoys lunch at DAR Cafe.

The restaurant ratings



Name	%	Grade
White House	95	A
Tide Table	93	A
DAR	92	A
Wan Hai Shen	91	A
Payless	91	A
Long Island	90	A
Lathbern	90	A
KNB	88	B
Flame Tree	85	B
AZ	83	B
Labojie's	83	B
Lucky Star	83	B
Chit-Chat	83	B
Frank K	81	B
Spencer's	81	B
Kitco	79	C
Mother's	79	C
Riwut	70	C

Ship registry boosts gross tons by 1.4m

The Marshall Islands ship registry signed up vessels accounting for a record 1.4 million gross tons during April, the best month in the history of the registry, according to a release from the company.

This has increased the total gross tonnage to more than 26.5 million and expanded the fleet to 897 vessels.

Since April 30, 2004, the Marshall Islands Registry has grown by more than five million gross tons, totalling 213 ships. Forecasts are for the registry to reach 30 million gross tons in early 2006 for a total of 1,000 vessels, said a representative of International Registries, Inc. (IRI) of Reston, Virginia, which manages the operation for the RMI.

The many different types of vessels have been registered, including bulk carriers, container ships, mobile offshore units, tankers, and passenger ships.

IRI serves as the maritime and corporate administrator of the Marshall Islands and has worked to build a quality registry with a strong focus on safety and security, said the IRI release.

Recently, the registry was recognized by P.D. Thorne, Commander, US Coast Guard, who stated, "your commitment to quality shipping was evident as your registry's vessels calling on US ports compiled a superior 2004 Port State Control record, including more than 270 distinct arrivals without a single safety or environmental IMO detention."

"IRI has expanded its network of offices to many of the world's maritime and commercial centers so that the registry can be more responsive to customers' needs," said IRI president Bill Gallagher.

"As a global company it means that IRI can offer services 24 hours a day, covering all time zones.

Komanta found guilty of baby soliciting

A Marshallese woman was found guilty last week of soliciting a woman for an international adoption.

She was the second person to be charged under the RMI's adoption law that makes solicitation or facilitation of international adoptions illegal by people who are not licensed by the Central Adoption Agency — but is the first to be found guilty.

A trial earlier this month heard testimony from several people.

Although defendant Selthia Komanta denied the allegations filed by the Attorney General's office and the testimony given by several witnesses, Judge Richard Hickson found her guilty saying that he was "unconvinced" by her denials.

Hickson fined her \$1,000, with \$500 suspended for 12 months. She is to pay \$500 by May 31 and remain on probation for one year.

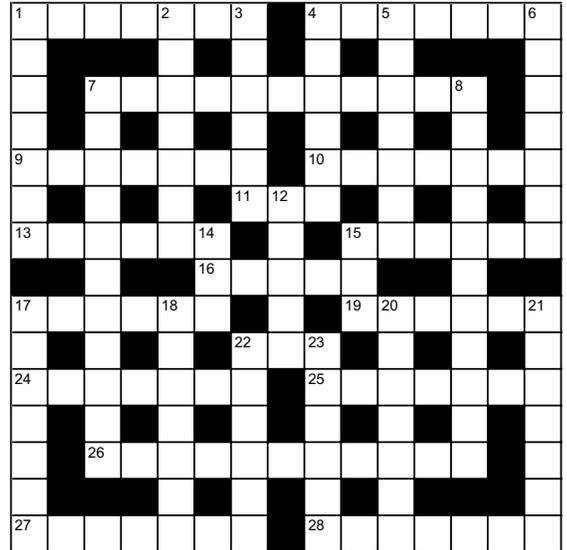
The RMI Riddle No. 35: Sponsored by CopyMasters

ACROSS

1. Groovy pals locked up.
4. World's widest water.
7. Visitor net under flame tree. (7,4)
9. Nice day around reef wrecker.
10. Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.
11. Dan, Hal and Lew's courier.
13. Boat bits on the bed.
15. Treads on Tuvalu exports.
16. Domesticated.
17. Salon or queen.
19. Is pop group angry about calculator?
22. RMI legal body. (abb.)
24. Aft, um, no it's harsher.
25. Chuuk atoll.
26. Customary.
27. Wave riders.
28. Nuns.

DOWN

1. Groovy clubs with lots of legs.
2. Sightseer.
3. Confused ladies got underway.
4. Boat that makes the rounds.
5. Present tide.
6. Tourney idiot used to find direction.
7. PUT (.) a business in Payless building. (6,5)
8. Gateway to the Pacific. (6,5)



12. Editor Frank Colby wrote: "Men will confess to treason, murder, arson, false teeth, or a wig. How many of them will own up to a lack of ----?"
14. Pig place.
15. Sad about school. (abb.)
17. Pandanus products.
18. Nag Note about weight.
20. Ralik's bathers.
21. 625-3391.
22. Remote roads.
23. I joined bivalves in the NCT.

Answers to RMI Riddle No. 34



Note: (abb.) = abbreviation
(3,4) = number of letters in words.

Need a pen to do the puzzle?
Buy your stationery needs at:

"The registry's exceptional growth in April is not only the result of new building registrations and reflaggings to the Marshall Islands, but also a continual commitment to providing the best service to current and potential owners/operators through a network of worldwide offices and professionals from the maritime, banking, and legal sectors.

"It is interesting to note that the registry has a good geographical spread in that the owners are from the United States, Europe, and Asia."

Peati tells her sad tale of losing a husband and son

By GIFF JOHNSON

Peati Maiava Malaki tells a painful story about being infected with HIV from her husband who contracted it while having an affair during their marriage.

The result: He's dead, and one of their two children has also died of AIDS, the deadly illness caused by the HIV virus.

Malaki is Samoan, a co-founder of the Samoa AIDS Foundation, and now a person who speaks to everyone she can about preventing HIV. She was in Majuro recently to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS.

"I never thought that HIV would infect and affect our family," she said. "It was so sad and there was so much suffering when I was infected."

The young woman with whom her husband was having an affair tested positive for HIV, and when health people asked her for a list of her sexual contacts, "the first name on a big list was my husband's," said Malaki.

He tested positive, and Malaki did too, in 1996. Her firstborn son was not gaining weight and was sick a lot around this time as he was turning one year old, "but I never thought about HIV," she said.

The baby was also HIV positive, never recovered from his sickness and died.

"I was very sad, and I wanted to tell him (her husband) that I would leave him," she recalled.

"But I was married to my husband and we had made our vows to each other."

So she took care of him as the HIV virus became AIDS and he grew sicker and sicker.

She described his illnesses, ranging from extreme diarrhea and high fever, to lumps around his neck and pneumonia.

"He lost so much weight, he looked like a skeleton," she said. "In the last days of his life, he prayed for my forgiveness."

"Although it brought tragedy and struggle to my family, I forgave him." He died in 1998.

Her employer abruptly terminated her, with excuses about poor work performance.

"But I knew it was because I was an HIV carrier," she said. She sued, and ultimately won a \$10,000 settlement from the employer.

Malaki had difficulty finding another job, too.

But after she made the decision to go public about her HIV status, she didn't want to

'I never thought HIV would infect our family'



'He lost so much weight, he looked like a skeleton. In the last days of his life, he prayed for my forgiveness.'

— Peati Maiava Malaki

go back to working in an office, preferring instead to do outreach to church, school and community groups to raise awareness about the HIV/AIDS problem.

The discovery that her other young son was not positive for HIV and her later decision to go public with her own situation have given her great hope. "Why I have courage

is because the Lord keeps me alive," she said.

In late 2004, Malaki and another Samoan founded the Samoa AIDS Foundation to carry on prevention work.

She's still the only Samoan who has come out and publicly acknowledged that she is HIV positive.

AROUND TOWN

Good job!

The Filipino Association of the Marshall Islands (FAMI) received very well-deserved praise the day the Nitijela closed up operations last week.

Senator **Nidel Lorak** heaped praise on the FAMI folks who, by their volunteer effort, installed hundreds more road reflectors along the main road in Majuro.

Nidel pointed out that FAMI members who provided this benefit to the Majuro community did so on the weekends and after work, in their own time and without any compensation. Every person driving a car at night appreciates this effort by FAMI.

But they're not through. According to Dr. **Alex Piñano**, the honorary consul for the Philippines in Majuro, FAMI's plan is to continue installing these road reflectors all the way to the end of Rita and eventually along the backroads, too. Hats off to FAMI!

Quality first

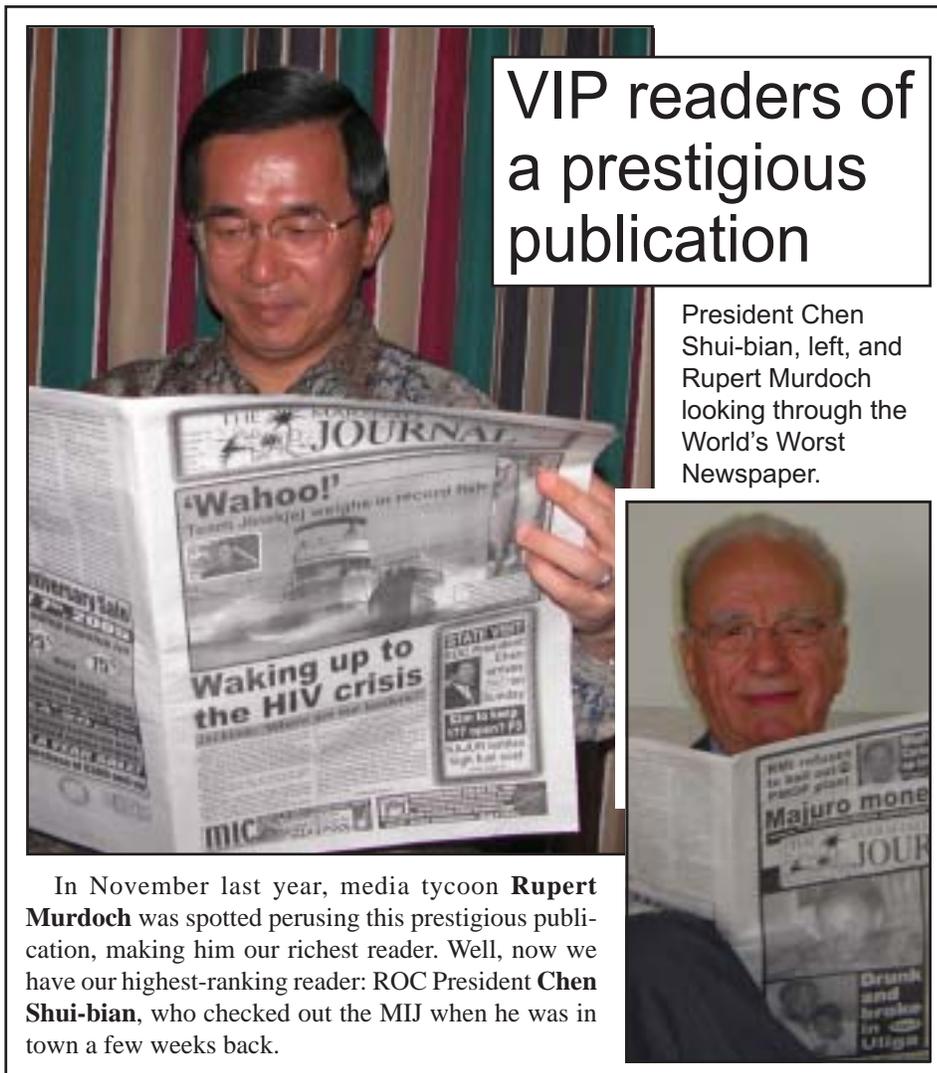
Okay, not everyone dislikes crooks.

What got us to this was the around town item in last week's paper reporting about some guys using walkie-talkies to stake out and rob several stores and offices in Uliga.

"You can determine the level of a society by the quality of its crooks," said one local guy, considering the new achievement of Majuro thieves. "That these guys are organized and using technology to facilitate their crimes shows you a certain level of sophistication."

No sweat

Marshall Islands canoe makers are so fast, they were actually asked to slow down so the tourists could enjoy watching them. That's the word we received from **Alson Kelen**, who is over in Maui this week with five Waan Aelon in Majel (Canoes of These Islands) guys building a canoe at the international canoe festival — the third year in a row they've done it. The two-week festival sees 40,000 visitors walk through to see seven or eight island groups building their own styles of canoe. "It's great promotion for the Marshall Islands," said Alson. They have two weeks to build their canoe. "The first year, it took them 11 days, last year 10. In Palau last year, at the Festival of Pacific



VIP readers of a prestigious publication

President Chen Shui-bian, left, and Rupert Murdoch looking through the World's Worst Newspaper.

In November last year, media tycoon **Rupert Murdoch** was spotted perusing this prestigious publication, making him our richest reader. Well, now we have our highest-ranking reader: ROC President **Chen Shui-bian**, who checked out the MIJ when he was in town a few weeks back.

Arts, with fewer tools than are provided in Maui, the WAM guys took only six days to crank out a canoe. "This year, we could do it in five days, but it's a tourist show and people want to see the building," he says. "So they said, 'we know you're almost finished, but can you slow down a bit?'"

"So I send the guys across the street to the Burger King for a break while I talk to visitors and hand out MIVA brochures."

Noticed, ignored

Apropos of the above item, Alson delivered the quote of the week: "While we're in Maui, I'm interviewed on TV and radio every day. Come home, I have to catch a taxi from the airport because nobody knows me."

Phew! At last

Mobil dropped its price to local gas stations by seven cents last Friday, and by Wednesday this week there was some relief at the pump with the stations dropping their prices. This is the first price reduction since Mobil raised gas prices by 35 cents in the March and April period. Gas came down by seven cents at most stations, though SEPS in Rita dropped by an amazing 10 cents.

This week, gas prices are: Ace's One Stop \$3.33, RRE \$3.30, Riwut Corner \$3.279 and SEPS \$3.269.

Terra incognita!

The Journal recently received a comprehensive inside report on the dealing of the so-called "Johnston Island Giveaway." The

Continued page 12

Around Town continued

guy who tipped us off was the current RMI Ambassador to Japan, **Phil Kabua**. Phil knew about all the dealings since, at the time he was Chief Secretary, RMI, and (more importantly) chair of the Coordinating Committee set up by President **Note** in July 2003 to handle distribution of items from Johnston.

We know that the final report on the Johnston affair was written by Phil himself because there is liberal use of Kajin Latin, a language he studied years ago at Xavier High School in what was called "Truk." For example, here's some quotes from the final report:

"This was terra incognita"; "Ergo, this was out of the question"; "The RMI responded and recognized PII's claim, a quid pro quo and a fair trade"; "There were, in toto, nine sea containers." Like who else except maybe Fr. **Rich** knows that much Latin.

Ergo, we concluded the final report was a nest of reliable info, exposing all the rabid details to the light of day, including unsecret documents signed by PII's **Jerry Kramer** explaining who got the 200,000 gallons of diesel fuel. Basically what happened was so simple, it was beautiful: RMI received 24 containers of stuff first, freight free, put the stuff in AMI's hangar, mismanaged the distribution and sale of goods, and netted only \$4,000.

According to the report: "Those responsible for the sale and auction lacked determination and the will to collect payments on some transactions nor did they have the commitment to follow up and collect delinquent payments later."

Next arrived nine containers in RMI that were refused by Hawaii. Meantime, though RMI worked out a deal with PII to pick up stuff at Johnston, and the agreement was made that along with certain items, PII would have sole ownership of the diesel fuel as a way of offsetting the high cost of sending barge *Benanga Dunia* #8.

RMI, to its benefit, received two operating incinerators and frozen food for the hospital and many vehicles. Second time the bid was held, RMI made over \$113,000 (28 times more than the first bid) for the general fund.

Chairman Kabua indicated that PII deserved a round of applause for vouching for and bailing out the committee whenever they were in hard times.



Winning puzzler Damian Reimers, above, and William Reiher, right.



Lakatus win Stardom for Wisdom

Lakatu **Damian Reimers**, who works with Matson's shipping agency, is this week's winner of Stardom for Wisdom, as he was the first person to bring his perfectly filled-in RMI Riddle to these prestigious offices. For his efforts, he wins a free ticket to K&K Theater thanks to movie manager **Charles Stinnett**. Runner-up in the stardom stakes is **William Reiher** of Public Works who also answered 100 percent of the clues correctly, but was a little slower making it to the Journal.

Chamber to help Sergeant Lejjena

The Majuro Chamber of Commerce voted unanimously at its meeting last week to send a financial contribution to Army Staff Sergeant Paul Lejjena, who is still hospitalized as a result of serious injuries he received in Iraq in late March.

"We wish to express our words of comfort to you and your family," Chamber president Carlos Domnick wrote on behalf of the business organization.

"We also wish to express our prayers for a full and speedy recovery in the weeks ahead.

"Your valiant efforts to bring peace and freedom to the people of Iraq is a true testa-

ment of how we, Marshallese, have always valued the bonds of relationship with other people.

"We literally go out of our own way to make other people happy."

Domnick said that Lejjena's efforts will always be remembered.

With the letter, Domnick sent \$500 from the Chamber of Commerce to assist Lejjena and his family with their costs while he remains under medical supervision in Texas.

Lejjena was the first Marshall Islander to be injured in Iraq when an 'improvised explosive devise' exploded as his vehicle was driving over it.

Let's build on President Chen visit planning

The Marshall Islands put on a tremendous welcome for Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian earlier this month. It was an incredible performance by literally hundreds of people in the Marshall Islands — from street cleaners and container painters to dancers and banquet organizers to fishermen and canoe captains to police and chaperones. It involved weeks and weeks of planning, coordination among multiple ministries, agencies and businesses, and cooperation to achieve a goal: Give President Chen a view of the best that the Marshall Islands has to offer during his two-day visit.

That this goal was accomplished, and then some, is undeniable. Even the most cynical observer would have to acknowledge that all of these preparations paid off in the form of good media coverage from the dozens of TV, film and other media who accompanied the President. The visit has and will produce hours of coverage on television stations back in Taiwan, which can have long-term benefits in tourism and other areas.

Without all the work and planning that went into the visit, Chen might have wondered what to do with 36 hours in Majuro. Instead, he has lots to remember: Banquets, a canoe ride and race, fishing tournament, trade show, speaking at the Nitijela, viewing the rarely performed jobwa dancers, etc.

What it proves is that when Marshall Islanders want to come to the table to make things happen, they can plan, coordinate and implement — all those things outside



consultants get hired to do here.

So there are 100 priorities needing attention in this country — public schools, waste management, government barriers to private sector expansion, illegal aliens, need for community sports facilities, Ebeye's power situation, etc.

What about utilizing the demonstrated ability of Marshallese to plan, coordinate and implement actions on just *one* of these target areas? Call it a 'pilot project' and tackle one problem that needs resolving. By limiting the action to one specific area and focusing a multi-agency response it should be more than possible to show results in a relatively short period of time. This, then, would offer a blueprint for additional problem-resolving efforts in key areas of priority that are currently lining up asking for attention.

Seeing results in a relatively short period of time encourages everyone to work harder, makes people more productive and, it goes without say, they'll like what they're doing more.

The RMI showed its potential with the Chen visit. Now it's time to harness that same energy and ability to solve a few problems affecting our communities and their quality of life.

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Reader riled over NTA's Internet block

I am writing this in response to your recent story about how NTA blocked "voice-over Internet" protocols so NTA customers could not use "net-to-phone," iChat and other voice-over software to make calls over the Internet.

It would be nice to know from NTA what "rights" their paying customers have.

I pay for Internet service and I expect to be able to use the advances this technology and service brings to the rest of the civilized world.

I shouldn't be penalized because someone operates illegally by re-selling overseas calling services — that is what the court system is for.

If NTA has actually "caught" 50 people as they claim, how come I am not reading about them being fined or prosecuted?

Who are they? What are their names? Publish them, please, I'd like to know who is responsible for this latest backslide in communication services.

Look, if NTA wants to raise revenues, why not just get rid of the Internet?

Better yet, block the phone lines so we can't send faxes and can



only make telephone calls. How about we just take out the phone system so we can only mail letters by airplane? Or cancel the flights so we can only send mail by boat. Or ask the shipping lines to stop coming here so we can ...Wait.

Maybe I should just stop there. The way it has been going lately, someone might just act on these ideas and before you know it we'd be wearing loin cloths, carrying clubs and communicating via ughs and grunts.

Jack Niedenthal, Commander, RMI Dark Ages Watch Force

Ban makes no cents

There is a controversy emanating from a recent act by NTA to cut out a phone service customers could use over their Internet hookup. Using the NTA service over computer costs .06 cents per minute, but if you use regular NTA phone service it costs you \$1.00 or more per minute.

NTA cut out the low rate service, saying it was causing it to lose money. Well, that's doubtful. With low cost, lots and lots of people will use the service, and when they use the service, it won't be a conservation like this: "Hey, this call costing me \$1.00 a minute so talk quick and hang up!"

No way. At six cents a minute, customers (yes, customers, the people who are always right, even if they happen to be poor Chinese fishermen making about .06 cents a day or hour) will get chatty.

So, punish everyone who is guilty of wanting to have a low communication cost just because we live in the Marshall Islands and are far away? If some people are making money selling the service to Chinese fishermen, so what? Isn't it legal to make money in the private sector?

How will the private sector be able to grow and be able to pay taxes to subsidize services like NTA if NTA smothers the private sector?

We saw how Tourist Trap was the first one to set up the Internet cafe. Then NTA copied the idea and made an Internet cafe at prices



lower than Tourist Trap. This was a good action because Tourist Trap had a good idea and NTA copied the idea and even made rates lower.

So, why doesn't NTA offer voice phone service for less than the other people who make money selling the service? Money in communications comes from high usage, not high prices. For example, why is the Marshall Islands Club popular? Low prices, stupid! Poor sailors will not spend \$1 to speak one minute, but they will spend \$2 to speak with their family for a half hour.

So lower rates obviously would make NTA more money while increasing use time on its service. This is the best way for NTA to both serve customers and make money.

And besides, it isn't fair to customers who invest in computers and equipment to use available technology to cut them off like common criminals.

They are not breaking any laws, only using a less expensive way to communicating. To deny customers a benefit is bad business, even if in the short term you make them pay more.

Farewell Rongelap

May 1985 • May 1985 • May 1985 • May 1985

Anjain's decision to move his people

This week marks the 20th anniversary of the Rongelap people's evacuation to Mejjatto. They decided to leave their atoll in May 1985, fearing continued radiation exposure.

Within days of Rongelap Senator Jeton Anjain announcing plans for the islanders to evacuate Rongelap on Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior in 1985, US officials began denouncing the move.

In fact, I recall one story carried by Guam's Pacific Daily News in which US officials blamed the move on outside agitators from Greenpeace. Anjain, of course, was annoyed by the condescending implications of the criticism. The decision was his, with the support of the community, but their determination to vacate Rongelap was a fact that Washington-based bureaucrats could apparently not possibly comprehend. But what made the accusation about Greenpeace being the motivator of the whole thing so amusing to those in the know was the initial reaction of Greenpeace to Anjain's request to evacuate the community of more than 300 people and their homes.

In 1984, Greenpeace's flagship Rainbow Warrior was preparing for a big tour of the Pacific the following year, and wanted to find out what it could do during a visit to the Marshall Islands.

Having arranged a meeting between Anjain and Greenpeace International official Steve Sawyer, I was in the room when the Senator asked Sawyer for help evacuating the community. Sawyer's draw dropped from surprise. As I recall it, his first reaction was to ask if Anjain meant a "symbolic" evacuation by the Rainbow Warrior of a few Rongelap people to garner some media attention.

No, that wasn't what Anjain had in mind at all. "My first conversation with Jeton Anjain is one that I will never forget," Sawyer told the Journal this week. "I was interested in exploring possibilities of what we could do to help, especially to help publicize their plight, but I had no idea things would move so quickly. In his very soft-spoken way Jeton was very direct. 'You have a ship. We need to move. Will you help us?'"

"Needless to say I was quite taken aback," Sawyer added. As discussions between Anjain and Sawyer continued, "I was struck by the enormity of what we were being asked to do, but even more

*You have a ship.
We need to move.
Will you help us?*

By GIFF JOHNSON

so by the enormity of the sacrifice that he and the rest of the community were willing to take," Sawyer said.

"A powerful and deep sense of the responsibility for the success of the operation began to settle over me, which continued to build over the months leading up to the actual move, and led to not a small bit of soul-searching and questions to myself in the wee hours — but I never doubted that helping them was the right thing to do."

Anjain's determination to move people off Rongelap forced the US government to respond. Largely, I believe, to prove he and Rongelap Islanders were wrong, the US government funded additional radiation surveys of Rongelap. But funny how the truth has a way of coming out.

These studies documented problems with Rongelap's environment needing further nuclear clean up and remediation. This led to further studies and the US Congress in the mid-1990s appropriating a \$45 million resettlement trust fund, which it has added to since. This, in turn, has paved the way for rehabilitation of Rongelap.

Anjain died in 1993, so wasn't around to see these results. But without him, Rongelap would not have taken the many steps to a future resettlement that it has made in the 20 years since people evacuated their home atoll.

Rongelap continued next page

Farewell Rongelap



Lemeyo Abon's story

By SUZANNE MURPHY

It's been 20 years since the people of Rongelap independently uprooted themselves and moved to Mejjatto Island on Kwajalein Atoll and this week 64-year-old Lemeyo Abon looked back at the decision that her community made and doesn't regret it.

"It was a difficult decision," said Abon, "but we knew it was the only safe option for us."

Between the years after the Bravo bomb test in 1954 and the final decision to move in 1985, Abon, like so many in the community, continued to live and eat off the land not knowing the facts or the full affects of the nuclear fallout on her home atoll.

At the time, the US continued to down play the affects of the nuclear fallout, with US Ambassador to the United Nations Harvey Feldman stating that "Rongelap was no more dangerous than Washington DC — and that locally grown food consumption would receive less radiation than residents of Denver Colorado."

Without any scientific data to prove the island was contaminated, save the fact that they were getting sick, the Rongelap community decided to leave their home atoll.

"Our Senator, Jeton Anjain organized a community meeting and it was during this meeting that we made the final decision to leave Rongelap.

"We thought if we moved from our land the US would finally consider our plight.

"It was a gamble with our lives. But we knew we were contaminated. Our main concern was the safety of our children and grandchildren. So many people were getting sick. All we wanted was for

the US to clean our island." Remembering back to the day her people started to move from Rongelap to Mejjatto, Abon recalls doing everything she could to stall.

"My plan was to be on the last trip, I wanted to stay on Rongelap for as long as I could. Those last few days I kept walking around the island just trying to absorb the island as much as I could," she said.

"My family and I were put on the second to last trip. As I was getting on the boat I cried and kept thinking, 'when am I going to return'— I'm surprised it's been 20 years, I never thought it would be this long."

About 300 residents of Rongelap were transported to Mejjatto in Kwajalein Atoll by the Greenpeace flagship Rainbow Warrior in May 1985. Like Abon, none of them really knew when or if they would ever be able to return.

"It took a day to get to Mejjatto," said Abon. "Although there was nothing on Mejjatto when we arrived nobody complained or even considered returning to Rongelap."

Abon recalls a warm welcome from the people of Ebeye.

"They brought us food," she said. "The iroj of Kwajalein really helped us, they provided us with food, and a clean island to live on."

At the time, there was only one building structure on Mejjatto built by the Rongelap council to house the women and children during the early days of settlement.

"We didn't stay in the house. Instead my husband and I used two

Continued next page

Farewell Rongelap

Mayor
James
Matayoshi



‘We need to move on’

While always remembering the past and fighting to correct past wrongs, current Rongelap Mayor James Matayoshi is planning on a brighter future for his people.

“We can’t stay wounded. We need to move on,” said Matayoshi. “We’ve taken a holistic approach of development for our return to Rongelap.

“Rongelap’s infrastructure has been built up to accommodate a community. We have a power plant, a reverse osmosis (water making) machine, the NTA cellular system is operational, the roads are paved, and we’re looking into pearl farming and tourism develop-

ment to create new jobs.” Matayoshi and his local government are creating what he calls a “stimulation plan” to kick start an economy on Rongelap. “The power plant will need operators, as will the reverse osmosis machine. In fact,” says Matayoshi, “we’re considering manufacturing bottled water and selling it.” Matayoshi sees many opportunities in returning to Rongelap.

“Once a community is established, we’ll need school teachers, a police force, health assistance and other service providers.”

According to Matayoshi, the local government’s development

Continued next page

Lemeyo Abon’s story

sheets of plywood from our (dismantled) house for shelter until our house was rebuilt,” she said.

1985 was a dramatic year for Abon. After years of eating and living off her contaminated island Abon had developed thyroid cancer and that year not only did she feel compelled to move from her home atoll she also had to undergo surgery to remove her thyroid.

Abon has scars on her body that tell a story of the US’s nuclear legacy in the Marshall Islands, but to Abon these scars are superficial. It’s the internal scars that you don’t see that hurt her the most.

“I have nothing to leave my children,” said Abon. “Cancer is the only ‘jolel’ (souvenir) I have to pass down to my children and grandchildren.”

Today Abon is being told that she can return to Rongelap but she

is skeptical. “I miss Rongelap and I do want to return but the US hasn’t finished cleaning it up,” she said. “They only cleaned one island. I want them to clean the whole atoll. As far as I am concerned the US hasn’t met its obligation to us. It’s still not safe. They told us it was safe before and we got sick. I don’t trust them anymore. I don’t believe it’s clean. What’s the point of having all this compensation money when we can’t even go home?” asks Abon.

“I’d rather be able to go home to a clean atoll and have no money than be in the displaced situation I am in now. Mejjatto is not our land and we’re (the Rongelap people) scattered throughout the Marshalls living on land that doesn’t belong to us.

“There is always the risk that landowners could tell us to move off their lands.”

Farewell Rongelap

Lijon Eknilang's story

"We had asked our national government to help us but they said no," said Lijon Eknilang.

During the years leading up to the move from Rongelap to Mejjatto, Eknilang was a councilwoman for the Rongelap Atoll Local Government.

"Originally the national government said that they would set aside \$20,000 to help us evacuate," said Eknilang. "But a few months later they changed their minds. We even asked the US and they denied us."

Despite the rejections from that national government and the US government, Rongelap elected leaders didn't give up.

"There were so many types of cancers," said Eknilang. "People were getting sick and frequently being sent off for medical treatments."

A community meeting was set up to decide the fate of the community.

"We asked the community to consider actually leaving Rongelap. Was is it what they truly wanted?" Said Eknilang. "We discussed everything with them so that when we did move off the island they wouldn't change their minds and say that we (the local council and Senator Jeton Anjain) were to blame."

According to Eknilang the whole community was in agreement that Rongelap Atoll was contaminated and they had to evacuate before more people got sick.

"We were worried for the safety of our children," said Eknilang. "Our main goal to move was to get the US to clean Rongelap."

Despite doors being slammed for the Rongelap people, Eknilang recalls that her senator continued to search out help.

"When our national government withheld the money for our evacuation, Senator Anjain and Senator Imata Kabua approached Giff Johnson in Hawaii," said Eknilang. "Giff told the senator about the Greenpeace boat Rainbow Warrior and introduced him to Steve



Sawyer. "The Senator then met with Sawyer and asked him to help and he agreed," she said. "When we finally moved to Mejjatto, even though there was nothing on the island, no food, no shelter our people didn't complain. For us it was better to suffer at Mejjatto than to risk staying on Rongelap."

James Matayoshi's story

plans are being funded through use of the interest earned from Rongelap's \$60 million trust fund. With funding like this the local government is aware that all options are possible, but what the local government wants is to ensure that the options they choose will actually establish a viable local economy.

One possibility Matayoshi says the local government is considering is to provide grants or seed money for private businesses to develop Rongelap's economy.

All Rongelap needs now is its people and Matayoshi expects that this year the first set of homes will be completed as the rebuilding homes at the existing sites for the original families has already

started. Meanwhile new families have the option to return with assistance the USDA, which has already agreed to provide the Rongelap people with low-interest 30-year mortgages. "The local government's role is to facilitate and inform (the Rongelap people) of the options that are now available to them," said Matayoshi.

"Many elders want to return and what we're doing is creating options for those who want to resettle.

"If things fall into place, we could have the first model community in the Marshall Islands.

"We have a future to look forward to on Rongelap and I'm looking forward to seeing a community there."

Farewell Rongelap



Rongelapese move their housing to Mejatto. In the background is the Rainbow Warrior. Photo: Hiromitsu Toyosaki

The two Rongelap resettlement photos on these pages were published in photo-journalist Hiromitsu Toyosaki's 1986 book 'Goodbye Rongelap'.

'We love the future of our kids'

By STEVE SAWYER

It seems to me that the whole evacuation experience is permanently engraved in my brain, both because it was one of the most powerful experiences of my life, and because I've been asked to re-hash it so many times, in part because of what happened a couple of months later in Auckland (when the Rainbow Warrior was bombed by French secret agents). Some of the memories:

- Sailing for the first time into the lagoon at Rongelap, seeing the church, the village, the cemetery and being greeted by 'boom-booms' carrying many of the women of the village singing to us with banners saying 'we love the future of our kids'; I remember looking around and seeing the crew all standing and staring in emotional shock.

- On I think it was the second trip (of four), we were a bit undisciplined about the numbers of people we let on board, and left the lagoon at Rongelap with probably more people than we should have taken. The wind came up, and Pete Wilcox (the skipper) decided that it was too crowded on deck to raise the sails safely, so while the Warrior wallowed its way towards Mejato rolling back and forth in a moderate swell, we had a hundred or more seasick Marshallese

to contend with! Needless to say, none of the crew got much of any sleep that night;

- I remember staying up most of the night during one trip with a fellow called Niktimus Antak trading stories about navigation, with us showing him the navigation gear on the bridge and explaining how it worked, and him telling us about traditional navigation techniques, which we'd all heard and read about — exchanging names in the different languages for the stars and constellations.

- When it came time to leave, I nearly had a mutiny on my hands, because a number of the crew didn't want to leave. 'We can't just leave them here'; 'We need to spend some more time helping them get settled in'.

But we had a schedule to keep, and a key date to make in Auckland and then Moruroa. After arguing about it for a while, I started to have some doubts and actually asked Jeton Anjain about this, and he seemed surprised, somewhat bemused, but was very clear that we should get on with what we had to do.

(The writer was the Greenpeace coordinator responsible for the Pacific voyage of the Rainbow Warrior in 1985, and participated in the evacuation of Rongelap Atoll in May that year.)

Farewell Rongelap

*On the day of departure,
84-year-old Sara Naptali
sat gazing out at the sea.
Photo: Harumitsu Toyosaki*

James looks back

“Nobody expected that it would be this long,” said Rongelap Mayor James Matayoshi as he reflects back on the move of his people from Rongelap to Mejjatto.

At the time Matayoshi was a sophomore attending Marshall Islands High School and living at Senator Jeton Anjain’s house and he recalls being around the senator while the decision to evacuate the people from Rongelap weighed heavily in the air for the senator.

“He (Senator Anjain) couldn’t sleep at nights,” Matayoshi said as he looked back on the years.

Matayoshi remembers Anjain as a man whose fear and concern for the well being of his people caused him great anguish and desperation as he was constantly contemplating the scenario of being the one responsible for evacuating the people from Rongelap.

“Senator Anjain knew the consequence of moving his people could be a political risk for him. But he weighed the people’s fears and their safety as his first priority,” said Matayoshi. “We decided to move for the sake of the children.”

Matayoshi description of Senator Anjain paints a picture of a man whose strength came from the support of his community.

“The national government turned us away. They said there was no money to help us move. They were basing their decision on the US department of Energy reports that claimed there was nothing for us to worry about,” said Matayoshi. “It was sad that the national government didn’t step up to the plate and help us out.”

Even without the help of his own government Senator Anjain pressed on in relocating the community and lobbying in Washington. His effort led to new US-funded scientific studies that found contamination problems on Rongelap requiring a clean up. This led to the US Congress appropriating an initial \$45 million resettlement fund — which the US Congress has increased subsequently.

It’s not over for the Rongelap people but as Matayoshi looks back on the accomplishments of Senator Anjain he nods his head and carries a proud smile as he tells us “it was a gutsy move on the side of our senator,” a man who Matayoshi recalls had trouble sleeping at nights.





US Ambassador Greta Morris (center front) with SDA's Emely Waterhouse, Aimee Boyd, Shara Erickson, Blinking Star Frasco, Sylvia Anuntak.

Big bonus for schools from Kwajalein club

The Yokwe Yuk Women's Club on Kwajalein is giving a total of \$48,000 in educational grants and scholarship assistance to schools and students in the Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia for the 2004-2005 school year.

The grants ranged in size from \$500 to \$2,500. This contribution marks the 41st consecutive year of the club's assistance to schools and students in the RMI, according to the US Embassy in Majuro.

US Ambassador Greta Morris last week presented Minister of Education Wilfred Kendall and private school principals with 15 checks totaling nearly \$17,000, on behalf of the Yokwe Yuk Women's Club. Ebeye schools earlier received their grants directly from club officials on Kwajalein.

Women's Club volunteers on Kwajalein raised the funds by selling handicrafts purchased from Marshallese and other Micronesian producers, and by re-selling donated goods at the club's Bargain Bazaar shop next to the dock security checkpoint on Kwajalein. All revenues from the Bargain Bazaar are designated exclusively for educational needs of Ebeye schools. Schools are invited to submit small grant requests for the 2005-2006 school year to the Yokwe Yuk Women's Club, Education and Assistance Committee, P.O. Box 448, APO AP 96555.



US Ambassador Greta Morris (center) with Majuro Cooperative School's Rebecca Archer, Heather Cumming, Anne Rittenhouse-Parry, and Jamie Melcher. Right, Assumption's Sandy Dismas, Morris, Cathy Kiluwe, Sister Lucille, and Sister Carolynn. Back row, Jabdrik Ittu and Paul Maddison.



Ailuk's Anrak wins case against cops

Police on Ailuk illegally arrested and prevented a local man from boarding an Air Marshall Islands flight last year, according to a ruling issued by the High Court.

But Judge Richard Hickson said that while the actions of two police officers were "technically illegal" they were made "in a good faith attempt to administer the law."

Hickson said to prevent this situation from happening again, "local police require training not punishment in the form of punitive damage awards."

Hickson said the case was important because it involved the power of local police on outer islands. In an unusual development, Hickson held the trial in the case on Ailuk Atoll earlier this year. The suit was filed in 2004 by Hemos Jack on behalf of Ani (Honey) Anrak against Ailuk policemen Wilfred Alfred and Nack Jidrok, and Acting Mayor Winta Alfred.

On April 30, 2004 Anrak had a valid AMI ticket to travel to Majuro, but prior to boarding the plane that was waiting to depart to Majuro, Anrak was approached by the two policemen who restrained him, preventing him from leaving the island.

Anrak had violated a local ordinance against drinking alcohol five days before he attempted to fly to Majuro. In May, a trial was held, he was found guilty, fined and given community service.

Anrak charged that he was illegally arrested and his constitutional rights violated by the police and acting mayor.

Although assistant attorney general Jack Jorbon, who defended the Ailuk officials, argued that they hadn't actually arrested Anrak because he was not detained after the plane departed, Judge Hickson ruled that their actions constituted an arrest by restricting his freedom of movement. "The actions of the local policemen trying to prevent (Anrak) from leaving the jurisdiction are understandable," Hickson wrote. "If the arrest had been made with a warrant or for breach of a court order, it would have been allowable. However, the circumstances surrounding the arrest do not fall within the situations that allow arrest without a warrant."

Hickson cited two provisions of the RMI Constitution, including one that states: "A search or seizure shall be deemed unreasonable as a matter of law if no warrant has been obtained despite adequate time to obtain one."

"The arrest is therefore in violation of (Anrak's) rights set out in ... the Constitution," Hickson added.

Hickson refused to award punitive damages and attorney fees to Anrak, but ordered the Ailuk Atoll Local Government to pay the expenses for bringing Anrak's counsel to Ailuk, deposition and court filing costs that totalled \$342.

Juanita's position of power

By GIFF JOHNSON

Ebeye power plant's diesel engines are blasting away behind the plexi-glass windows at the KAJUR power plant. At a desk, checking her routine 'punch list' and monitoring the gauges on the engine consoles is Juanita Kalles — at this moment, the only person on duty in the control room of the plant that supplies electricity to the 12,000 people on Ebeye and to the string of islands stretching north of Ebeye to Gugeegue.

But this is no big deal for Kalles, the first and only woman working in a power plant in the Marshall Islands. More than three years ago, she was attending the Gugeegue campus of the College of the Marshall Islands.

When that closed down in 2002, she applied for an advertised job with the power plant. KAJUR general manager Tusi Fa'afetai said at the time she applied, he asked her if she was sure that's what she wanted to do. The answer was an unequivocal 'yes.'

Fa'afetai and other KAJUR workers may have had some initial doubts about having a woman working in a job traditionally 'reserved' for men. But those reservations didn't last.

She's been on the job now for more than three years. And she says she loves it.



KAJUR power plant's Juanita Kalles.

Besides her role as a power plant operator, Kalles helps the maintenance crews with engine repair now and then. A Marshallese woman up to her elbows in engine grease? Doesn't phase Kalles in the least.

"She's one of my reliable power plant operators," says Fa'afetai, who recognized her for her abilities.

The power struggle

Ebeye's KAJUR power utility has been "on the edge of crisis every day" for the last four years, and needs the support of Kwajalein leadership to move past the "disaster" stage, general manager Tusi Fa'afetai said in a recent letter to leaders of Kwajalein Atoll.

KAJUR has been working "for the right to bring a promising future of reliable service and lift life standards of your people. However, we had been met with strong resistance and severe reprisals from the Ebeye leadership."

He wrote about the concern that both KAJUR and Kwajalein leaders have to resolve the legal status of KAJUR so that it is a fully functioning legal entity.

"Things are not heading in the right direction and delays don't help but compound the problem in your utility and our island," Fa'afetai said. "How long are we willing to remain uncertain and (and in an) expected crisis because of a decision that only takes a matter of YES and a SIGNATURE of a group or someone to make it happen?"

KAJUR's uncertain legal status and Mobil-monopolized fuel operation in Ebeye are the two biggest challenges, he said.

"To put this in context, KAJUR consumes on average about 110,000 gallons of fuel per month; as fuel prices have been hovering around \$1.90/gallon this year (it's currently \$2.15/gallon), that means about \$210,000 for fuel costs alone. In addition KAJUR is paying in advance on our fuel without any line of credit. This is important to appreciate before making any judgment about the manner in which KAJUR has been operating in deficit and how it uses grant funding to meet operational demand. KAJUR is obligated to provide essential services to the community, yet we're not allowed to recover our full cost as this would make electricity unaffordable. This policy makes it implicit that the RMI government would have to supplement our financial shortfalls otherwise there's no other option except to shut-down."

He said that KAJUR requested no less than \$800,000 in fuel subsidy for FY05 but only \$400,000 (was approved). "To exacerbate the problem, Finance proceeded to



Tusi Fa'afetai

Plant 'on the edge of crisis' every day



The Ebeye power plant

deduct income tax withholdings as well as pay a creditor directly, resulting in a net disbursement of only \$240,000 from the fuel subsidy," he said. "Our legal status plays a major role in implementing the proper legal channel to government and grant funding to improve and recover costs for the operation. "We cannot continue jeopardizing the operation by running unprofessionally and in a substandard manner due to lack of support and commitment from responsible parties to secure a permanent and a fair so-

lution for this problem.

"KAJUR will stand firm to do what is the right decision if it has to come down to the point where we have no choice but to shut down until the right approach is taken for KAJUR operation. KAJUR is like a wound without any proper treatment but is expected to heal by itself. We had plans and a vision but this doesn't come automatically without some support and proper action to make it happen."

More power plant stories, next page

Maie calls for new manager

Former Kwajalein Senator and alab Sato Maie is angered about having Tusi Fa'afetai running the KAJUR power company, and also about what he says are problems with the electrical service on the atoll.

In a letter to Iroij and Kwajalein Negotiation Commission Chairman Christopher Loeak, Maie launched a broadside against Fa'afetai, who is the general manager of the power company. Maie also included a few barbs at Chief Secretary Bobby Muller.

Maie asked Loeak: "How many more years are we going to be treated like the three stooges by having Tusi Fa'afetai, of American Samoa Power Authority, be manager for KAJUR?"

He said he couldn't understand Fa'afetai wanting to work in such a small power plant unless it was the attraction of high pay that is keeping him there.

"When ASPA first arrived in the Marshalls to take care of the small power plant in Ebeye, they asked RMI for \$6 million," Maie said. "Nothing really big was done with this \$6 million. The electrical lines between Ebeye and Guegeegue are nearly falling down."

In fact, today, the Marshallese boys working for KAJUR are the ones working on those electrical polls renewing the brackets that hold the electrical lines from falling down, the job that ASPA could have done, but had failed to do.

Maie also complained about KAJUR's billing system for debiting customers' payments for past bills. He said if you pay "\$100 for your electrical bills, \$50 will be used for what ASPA claims you've consumed, but the other \$50 is for paying (past) bills that you yourself don't have knowledge of. But when you ask them for your balance, their (ASPA) computers are always not working. So my question is: Is KAJUR owned by ASPA?"

Maie told Loeak that from the time of the Compact negotiation until today, he has heard no other voice about Kwajalein Atoll except for Bobby Muller's. "He is telling you what comes first as far as proposed projects involving Ebeye and other islands are concerned," Maie said. "We were being told that RMI has offered Kwajalein to US military beyond 2016. And in order for us to receive greater and higher land payment, we MUST SIGN the new LUA authorizing the US to use Kwajalein until 2086 — this after Iroij Amata Kabua, on behalf of the Mojen (domain) of Iroij Jeimata Kabua, during his administration as president, including Iroij Albert Loeak, Iroij Kabua Kabua and Leroij Neilan Loeak, had reduced the Kwajalein lease from 99 years to 15 years including 15 additional years US military optional that will end 2016!"

"Who owns Kwajalein? Are we (the iroij, alap, and people) being owned by the RMI (UDP) government? The Chief Secretary is not asking us but instead he is telling us."

Army gives emergency fuel

By MIG OWENS, Kwajalein Hourglass

Because of a delayed shipment from Mobil Oil last week, Ebeye's only power generation plant, Kwajalein Atoll Joint Utility Regulation, did not receive fuel needed to maintain the island's power.

In response to the situation, US Army Kwajalein Atoll Host Nation representatives Thursday located two drums of oil no longer used on the installation, which was then sold and transported to the neighboring island to avert an outage.

According to Maj. David Coffey, Host Nation chief, the help offered resulted in a win-win situation and was not what he considers extraordinary.

"Businesses on Ebeye have always been able to come here and buy critical items that are not available on Ebeye," he said. "There is already a process in place and that is how the transaction occurred so fast. KAJUR paid the full price to include KRS load factors and the reality is that we don't even use this oil anymore and we probably would have paid hundreds of dollars to dispose of this oil as hazardous waste in the near future."

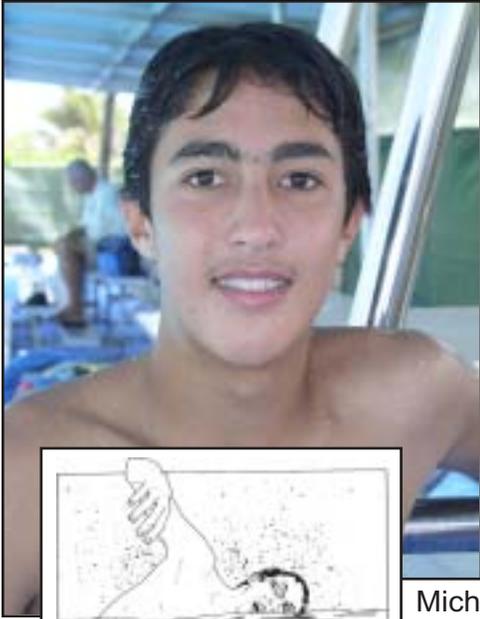
The plant accepted assistance from USAKA many times in the past, according to Coffey, up to and including providing them with technical experts and expensive diagnostic equipment. "We exceded them an entire machine shop of tools so they could manufacture their own parts. We regularly help them procure oil filters and spare parts. We have exceded and leased them smaller backup generators several times in the past. We transported main generators from Australia to Ebeye for free when they had a catastrophic failure at their power plant a couple of yeas ago," he explained.

Coffey said that recent soaring fuel prices have compounded Ebeye's power generation problems. "They have a modern, efficient power plant, but the price of fuel has risen so fast that money that had been earmarked for parts and maintenance has been sucked up by fuel purchases," Coffey said. "This translates into fewer qualified maintenance personnel, less parts stockage, longer periods between scheduled maintenance, etc."

When fuel prices started to skyrocket, the Host Nation office foresaw such problems, taking the concern all the way up to the Department of the Army to get permission to sell fuel to Ebeye, offering them an alternative to buying from Mobil.

"The Army could not find a legal way for us to do this so Ebeye continues to have problems and USAKA missed the opportunity for significant income to our Recreational Fund," Coffey said.

Coffey said that ongoing problems with restructuring, funding, lease agreements and staffing may lead to intermittent outages on Ebeye for the immediate future. Though KAJUR is the only power plant on Ebeye, there are backup generators at the critical nodes such as the hospital, cold food storage, and the telecommunications, sewage and water plants.



Michael and Ian Taylor from Kwajalein and Jared Heine of Majuro, attending college in Florida now, who are all set to head off to Montreal, Canada, in July to compete in the world swimming championships.

Stroke of luck for swimming lads

Micronesian Games gold medalist Jared Heine will lead a team of three swimmers from the Marshall Islands to the world swimming championships in Montreal, Canada, in July.

He will be joined by Kwajalein swimmers Ian and Michael Taylor in representing the Marshall Islands, according to acting secretary for the Marshall Islands Swimming Federation, Cris Lindborg.

Heine was a standout for the RMI at the Pohnpei Micronesian Games in 2002, winning nine medals in swimming competitions.

Lindborg, who has been involved in coaching swimming at Kwajalein since 1982, and has been head coach of international RMI swim teams for seven years, said that “our swimmers have been participating in the Micronesian Games since 1990.

“FINA (the international world organization that regulates swimming) sponsored two RMI swimmers to compete in the World Championships in Fukuoka, Japan, in 2001.”

Loren Lindborg and Carlos Notarianni represented the RMI at Fukuoka.

Because these RMI swimmers competed in 2001, the RMI was “sponsored to participate again at the next World Championships which were held in Barcelona, Spain, in 2003,” said Lindborg.

Carlos Notarianni, Jared Heine and Loren Lindborg competed for the RMI in Barcelona.

A benefit of the RMI’s competition in past international events, such as the 2003 World Championships, is future invitations.

Lindborg said that “we are invited to go to Montreal for the XI World Championships.” Again, the costs for the swimmers and swim officials are being covered by FINA.

But Lindborg cautioned about raising expectations for the RMI swim team in Montreal.

“We do not expect to medal at this event,” she said. “The competition is the highest level of swimming in the world — the ‘Olympics’ of swimming.

“Our kids will compete with the likes of Ian Thorpe, Michael Phelps, Alexander Popov — the fastest swimmers in the world. The intention is to participate to promote swimming in the RMI and to elevate the standards of our swimmers.”

In selecting swimmers to compete internationally, Lindborg said “we are looking at native Marshallese swimmers and if we can’t field any, then we look at speed, experience, availability and residency in the RMI.”

Lindborg added that “this is an amazing experience — to be in the same pool with the best swimmers in the world, to watch world records being broken — is one of the most inspiring experiences for young and old alike.

It also encourages our kids to take the sport more seriously and it provides the opportunity for native Marshallese swimmers to get involved in the sport.”

More sporting news, next page

MIHS girls win May Day comp

Laura boys win in soccer

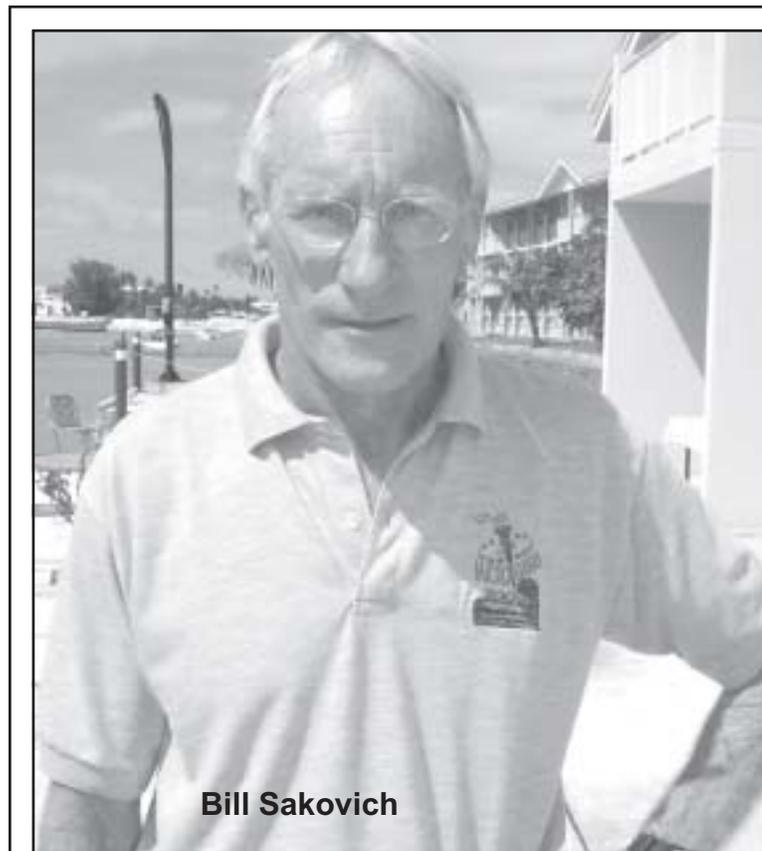
The Marshall Islands High School girls' team won the May Day soccer competition, while boys from Laura High School claimed the title in their division.

In the girls division, Laura High School came second and SDA High School in Delap, third. On the boys side, SDA Delap captured second place while Assumption High School took third. The games were part of the May Day activities sponsored by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

A summer soccer camp is being planned for elementary and high school-aged players. Dates will be announced in the next few weeks.



The MIHS girls soccer team with coach Hideyuki Shiozawa in the center.



Bill Sakovich

Sakovich holds swim clinics on Kwajalein

Former Micronesia Games Council chairman Bill Sakovich ran swimming clinics on Kwajalein earlier this month and is currently in Majuro working with the National Olympic Committee and the Ministry of Internal Affairs Sports and Recreation office.

Clinics on Kwajalein involved both Marshallese and American swimmers, said Sakovich. These included a number of Marshallese swimmers in the 10-11 age range who showed both enthusiasm and ability.

The future should be bright for development of RMI swimming because of these young Marshallese swimmers who are getting involved and are training at an early age, Sakovich said.

Before retiring from coaching on Saipan last year, Sakovich was well known in the Micronesia region for training highly competitive swim teams from Saipan.

ARE YOU AWARE?

THAT the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas' Division of Public Health has estimated that the annual cost of cleaning up betel nut stains is \$8,000?

THAT Marshall Islander Malone Joseph made the fourth quarter honor roll at the High School of the Pacific, which is on Hawaii's Big Island and is in its inaugural year?

THAT a vexillologist studies the history of flags?

THAT social security retirement fund collections in the first quarter of 2005 totalled \$3 million, six percent higher than the same period last year?

THAT former Majuro Mayor Mudge Samuel's 2003 election challenge was heard this week by Judge Richard Hickson and a decision on the dispute is expected to be handed down in the near future?

THAT about 75 percent of the people in the US live on 2 percent of the land?

THAT President Kessai Note left town for Honolulu last Friday to attend the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders and he'll be back in Majuro on May 24?

THAT according to the film's animators, the flick 101 Dalmations contains 6,469,952 black spots?

THAT former mayor of Majuro, Tarmile Ishoda, passed away early this week?

THAT according to that top tome Guinness Book of World Records, the Finnish word for a soapstone seller — Saippuakivikauppias — is the longest known palindrome in any language?

THAT EPA's public hearing on the dry-

dock will be held at the Nitijela Conference Room tonight (Thursday) at 6pm and all are welcome to attend and give their views?

THAT seguing right along, poor Ben Chutaro, who is perhaps the world's biggest Star Wars fan, is unable to attend K&K Theater's special showing of the episode 'Revenge of the Sith' on Thursday at 3pm, because he's got to prepare for that night's dry-dock public hearing?

THAT cockroaches break wind on average every 15 minutes?

THAT America's first nudist organization was founded in 1929 by three men?

THAT in a first for Majuro, three US Marine recruiters visited our town this week to begin what is to become an annual recruiting drive in RMI?

THAT a bloke called Josh Billings once said: "The best way to convince a fool that he is wrong, is to let him have his own way"?

THAT retirement, survivor, disability, and lump sum benefits paid by MISSA to more than 3,200 people totalled \$2.64 million, an 11 percent increase from the same period a year ago?

THAT while it would take 15,840,000 rolls of wallpaper to cover the Great Wall of China, the big question is whether they should use the pink paper with the pretty kitties or the dark red velvety stuff with roses?

THAT former MIVA boss Ben Graham graduates from Georgetown University in Washington this Friday with a masters degree in business administration and we want to say to Ben: "Good show, chap"?

WE'D LOVE YOUR ARE YOU AWARES?

EMAIL THEM TO JOURNAL@NTAMAR.NET