

Bishop Camacho gets named to 902 panel

By Haldee V. Eugenio
Variety News Staff

IN ORDER to have a representation from the religious sector, the CNMI's 902 consultation team has appointed Bishop Tomas A. Camacho as its new member.

Camacho, the Bishop of Chalan Kanoa, already attended yesterday's meeting of the 902 panel at the Aqua Resort Club.

Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan, chairperson of the panel, told the Variety that the appointment of Camacho gives the Church a voice in the 902 talks.

He added that the team may appoint some more members in the future since the schedule of possible talks between the CNMI and the US representatives is still being ascertained.

The CNMI team has now seven members, including Sablan and Camacho.

The others are Juan N.



Tomas A. Camacho

Babauta, Resident Representative to Washington; Jose Ayuyu, president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce; Senate President Paul Manglona; House Speaker Diego T. Benavente; and former Justice Ramon Villagomez.

Only Sablan, Camacho and Manglona were present during yesterday's meeting, but Sablan said that the team does not need

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For the garment industry

\$325 worker fee mulled in House

By Haldee V. Eugenio
Variety News Staff

IF THE Legislature approves the proposal of a House special Committee to increase by \$100 the impact assessment fee, then CNMI garments companies will have to cough up \$325 for each non-resident worker they employ.

The current non-resident worker's fee in the garments sector is \$225.

Committee chairman Oscar M. Babauta said that while the committee considers imposing a \$100 for the garments sector, it is still looking for other alternative sources of funds to refill the government's emptied coffers.

It is reported that the CNMI government's revenues went down by as much as \$16 million



Oscar M. Babauta

as of March due to the dwindling economy.

He said that increasing the workers' fee by \$100 will add at least \$1.3 million to the government's general funds, or to

the \$240 million government budget for FY 1999. The estimated number of garments workers in CNMI is placed at 13,000.

"It would do an additional income for the government as far as revenues are concerned," he said, but added that "the government does not want to hurt much the business sector."

Babauta pointed out that although the garments sector has favored an increase in workers' fee, the \$100 amount is still a rough figure.

"There is no concrete decision yet. But we've been discussing this with the Saipan Garments Manufacturers Association, and they do agree, as a way of helping the government meet its financial

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PSS Commissioner of Education Rita H. Inos (center) talks to GTC Elementary fourth graders about their "History of San Roque Village" book they recently published.
Photo by Laila C. Younis

NMI gets more highway funds under new US law

THE CNMI will receive an additional 10 percent in federal highway funds each year for the next six years as a result of the signing of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century by President Bill Clinton yesterday.

"This new law gives us even more resources to build and maintain the roads people in the Commonwealth use daily," said Resident Representative Juan N. Babauta in Washington.

"We are particularly fortunate to receive these federal highway funds since we do not pay taxes into the federal highway trust fund. And we should appreciate the 10 percent increase," he said in a news release.



Juan N. Babauta

In fiscal year 1997, the CNMI received about \$3.31 million for highways from the federal government.

Under the new law the CNMI will receive \$3.64 million in fiscal year 1998 and every year

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Construction starts over at MHS Gym

By Laila C. Younis
Variety News Staff

IT IS no longer quiet at the construction site of the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Workers from Pacific Northwest Construction Company are busy completing the first phase of the gym, according to MHS Principal Dr. Jim Denight.

"We have modified the design of the gym from two-stories to one story and there will be five classrooms included," said Denight.

"We started the construction work about one month ago, and

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Couple hid in closet as thieves ransack home

By Jacob Leon Guerrero
Variety News Staff

HAGATNA, Guam — A Tumon couple hid in their closet Tuesday morning while thieves made off with several items including a car and the keys to their home.

According to the victims, the suspects knocked on the door at about 10:40 a.m. and refused to leave when the male victim requested that they do so.

The frightened couple hid in

their closet as the suspects forced their way into the home and removed a purse, a men's wrist watch, a cassette player, the couple's Toyota MR2 and the keys to the apartment.

They were seen leaving in a red American-made 4 x 4 pickup truck, with the Toyota belonging to the victims.

The couple has requested that their identity remain secret—the

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WEATHER Outlook



Partly cloudy with isolated shower

FORUM A Meeting Place For Our Opinions... And Yours...

STRIKE THAT!
By Ferdie P. de la Torre



Fujian Gang on Tinian?

A CHINESE woman residing on Tinian recently received a call from a man, inquiring on the whereabouts of her father. When she told him he was not around, the caller, presumed to be Chinese, allegedly instructed her to inform her father to prepare \$1,300 cash which he would later collect.

A few minutes later, the male caller accompanied by about eight more Chinese men arrived at the house. The caller walked into the house and handed to the woman a white paper with Chinese words written on it. The man told her to give the paper to her father where he should put the money.

The daughter explained to the group to just come back the next day because her father was not around and she didn't have enough money at the time. The group left, but the same caller later contacted the daughter, directing her to tell her father to prepare \$2,600 before 10 p.m. If they could not produce such amount, the group would break everything in the house, the caller allegedly warned.

The gang came back, knocking on the door that night. The mother of the Chinese family told them they didn't have such money. It infuriated the gang. The group leader said they would instead triple the amount they had demanded. The group then allegedly started smashing the family's pick-up truck. One of the suspects also allegedly grabbed the son and tried to pull him out from the house.

The group left, but after an hour they called again telling the family to produce \$10,000 by June 4 or else they would kill all of them. The family's father had been allegedly hiding from the group for fear of being killed. Sources said after the incident, the family had sought the police's assistance resulting in the arrest of two of the suspects.

There are some indications that the extortion may have been perpetrated by a notorious Chinese gang known as the Fujian Group. Remember in 1996 when members of the group sowed terror in the Chinese business community on Saipan?

It was reported in mid-1996 that eight Chinese nationals had been injured, one of them was shot while four were also "marked for death" in separate extortion-related incidents since the gang's intensified operations started in early part of that year.

In less than two months, however, police officers arrested 16 suspected members of the Fujian Group and most of them were subsequently convicted and deported. Nothing had since been heard about the gang. But sources said the extortion racket was renewed by a splinter group early this year.

The gang was reportedly named after the lush Fujian Province in China which has more than 26 million population. Reports had it that most gang members were themselves victims of illegal recruitment. They formed their own group to survive through extortion, victimizing fellow Chinese.

The extortion racket has been allegedly going on for the past few years, but the Chinese community was scared to report it to the police. Some gang members are reportedly armed with guns, thus very dangerous. The Newsweek magazine reported in its June 21, 1993 edition that Fujianese are also increasingly active in the international heroin trade.

Newsweek reported that Fujianese criminals had been involved in six out of eight major heroin busts by the US Drug Enforcement Administration's 41, a New York-based unit that specializes in Southeast Asian drug traffickers.

The root cause of the problems was attributed to the gradual relaxation of the Beijing's control over southern China-particularly Fujian province, where some corrupt government officials have reportedly helped the smugglers load ships.

If the recent incident on Tinian was indeed related to Fujian Group's racket, our police officers should be on alert. They should not allow the extortion and terrorism to recur on the peaceful island of Tinian.

Our law enforcers should immediately do something to neutralize this gang. The Chinese community should also learn to break the silence and trust our law enforcers just like what the family on Tinian did. With a booming economy, there is no room for such gang-activities in a small, peaceful and friendly island.

DURING a recent trial in the Superior Court, a lawyer asked a witness if he and his boss spoke English. The witness did not understand the question, so the defense lawyer had to repeat it thrice. The witness finally answered: "I don't know any English. I just guess, guess, guess. Obviously confused, the counsel said: "I don't understand!" The judge intervened: "I do...so please continue."

Later during cross-examination the same lawyer repeatedly raised questions to another witness. Even with the help of a translator, the witness could not give an answer related to the question. The lawyer repeated the question for the fourth time. The witness still could not get it. The lawyer finally lost his patience and gave up: "Forget it!"



JACK ANDERSON and JAN MOLLER WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

Christmas in September for EPA

OFFICIALS at the Environmental Protection Agency's Chicago office celebrated Christmas a few months early last year, courtesy of \$1.5 million in "free" taxpayer money. As the 1997 fiscal year was drawing to a close last September, the EPA's Chicago office had still not spent \$1.5 million of the \$5 million it had been allotted to enforce the Superfund law, which holds polluters responsible for cleaning up the toxic waste they spew into the environment.

To help enforce the law, the EPA gets money from Congress each year. That money is then doled out to various regional offices around the country. But government agencies that don't spend their entire budgets know that those budgets are likely to be cut the following year; their bosses will figure that they didn't need all that money they were allotted. In other words, they get punished for saving money. Officials at the EPA's Chicago offices didn't want to see this happen to them, so they decided to go on a shopping spree when they discovered an extra \$1.5 million lying around.

So brazen were these bureaucrats that they passed a binder around the office detailing the loot they planned to purchase. The binder even came with a cover sheet trumpeting the "FY97 Superfund Enforcement Dollars Spending Spree: Christmas in September." It shows computer equipment being showered with money, with a large Christmas tree in the background.

Among other things, Chicago EPA officials bought top-of-the-line laptop computers, extra-large computer monitors to reduce employee eye strain, multiple \$20,000 scanners, \$55,000 worth of Xerox equipment and approximately 200 high-powered Zip disk drives.

And even if EPA employees play rough with some their new toys, they aren't likely to break them. One expert told us the laptops, which cost \$3,500 each, are ideal for someone who's picking them up and tossing them down, like a UPS driver. Which leads us to ask: Is rough treatment of expensive computer equipment common at the Region Five office? EPA official Tim Fields made no excuses for "Christmas in September."

"It was obviously a mistake," Fields told our reporter Ashley Baker. "It's not that the purchases were illegal, but it was a mistake.

We obviously have a larger responsibility to spend Superfund money on cleanup projects. What happened in Chicago is an anomaly. We will make sure it doesn't happen again." Added EPA spokesman Dave Cohen: "It would be silly to let an incident like this obscure the larger picture of what we are trying to do. Of course the mis-expenditure of even one penny should not be overlooked, but the commitment here has been, and is, that every penny in the program be spent on cleanup." Nevertheless, EPA official Fields defended the purchase by noting that there were "no pressing (clean-up) projects" in the six states overseen by the Chicago regional office.

But that's not what Vice President Al Gore seems to think. Just two weeks ago, the eco-friendly veep condemned Republicans in Congress for not giving enough money to the EPA for cleaning up toxic waste. Information furnished to us by a Gore staffer lists no fewer than 60 sites in the Chicago region in need of cleanup. In other words, there may have been some other way to use that \$1.5 million after all.

The next time EPA staffers want to celebrate Christmas in September, we suggest they stop for a moment to consider the people who have to live near those sites.

MINI-EDITORIAL — A short item in the paper this week explains why campaign finance reform will once again die a gruesome death on the floor of the House of Representatives this week.

It seems that House Republicans, while "dialing for dollars" recently, were able to raise upward of \$10 million in record time, much of it in the form of "soft money" contributions. And these are the folks who are supposed to off the lucrative spigot of special-interest graft that gets incumbents re-elected?

House Speaker Newt Gingrich, whose GOP majority is in serious jeopardy this November, has seemingly made a cold calculation: The voters may get mad at us for killing campaign-finance reform, but we can buy them back with the money we're raising from our friends in the business world.

We'll know in November if his trick worked.

Continental improves fleet

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff
CONTINENTAL Micronesia is hoping to completely improve its fleet in three years, a move seen to pacify government officials' concerns on the airline's apparent deviating commitment to the region.

"We expect by the year 2001 to have entirely brand new aircraft in this region. This is the first time that Continental has been able to do this for the region," Continental vice president for sales and promotion Walter Dias said.

Dias said the airline company has committed to bring in new aircraft for the region "and the 757 are the first wave of those new aircraft." "The fifth one will actually come in the next couple of months and then, in

the year 2000, we will start replacing all the 727 with new generation 737 aircraft," he said.

He said the improved Continental fleet is expected to make traveling to Micronesia more appealing for tourists. "We're really excited about that and we think this will really create a great product for Micronesia and will make our region much more appealing for tourists," he said.

Continental has initially shelled out \$200 million for the procurement of five new airplanes to replace its DC-10 and 737 aircraft. Dias said the airline company is investing \$40 million for each 757 aircraft.

"This will be a significant investment. We are expecting to replace all our old airplane models with 757 aircraft by the year 2000," Dias told Variety.

The move came amidst reports on economic and tourism slump but Continental executives remain optimistic over the future of tourism in Micronesia, including Guam, Northern Marianas and other Pacific Islands.

"If you kind of look around, everybody seems pulling back but we are hoping it will be a temporary situation," Dias added.

Dias said the purchase of five new 757 aircraft should dismiss speculations that the airline's expansion move was very untimely given the economic situation in the whole of Asia.

"It is, in fact, timely because the new models will replace DC10s which are very expensive to maintain," he stressed.

He said the airline company is expecting to save at least \$16 million this year, from the purchase of the new 757 models, since these have only two engines, compared with the DC10's three.

"The new airplanes will increase reliability and reduce maintenance and fuel costs," Dias said.

He added that the move will help Saipan, since the new aircraft models will enable Continental to spot flights in Nagoya and Osaka.

Dias said the carrier's Japanese passengers going to Saipan increased at a faster rate than total Japanese tourists to Saipan, resulting in a market share increase of 0.8 percent for the airline.

Continental changed its routing to some Japanese cities in April last year to fly directly to Guam, citing the restrictions imposed by the Narita airport.



Stop In The Name of Junk Food Law! A student elected as a "Junk Food" Police Officer patrols the Tanapag Elementary School campus for possible junk food offenders at the TES Cultural Day recently.

San Antonio public park project planned

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff
THE DIVISION of Public Land (DPL) has proposed that a parcel of land across the building housing the Department of Labor and Immigration (DOLI) in San Antonio be used for the construction of a park.

Public Lands Director Bertha Leon Guerrero, in an interview, said a private firm has proposed that they be allowed to build the park which is similar to the one constructed last year across the Gilbert C. Ada gymnasium in Susupe.

The firm, said Guerrero, was actually "asking for a children's park." The division, she added, instead moved to request the Board of Public Land (BPL) to "designate the entire strip that's there for the public park."

She said the developer may still need to coordinate with appropriate government agencies on "whatever it is they want to do with the lot."

"This include working with the Division of Parks and Grounds for the necessary landscaping job. The lot is currently being used by enrollees of the nearby Hopwood Junior High School for recreational activities.

Old MPLC office not fit for use by Headstart students

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff
THE 50-year-old Capitol Hill building which used to house the public land division's office is not fit to accommodate young school children as Rep. Dino Jones wanted done due to acute structural deficiencies.

In an interview, DPL Director Bertha Leon Guerrero said the building has electrical problems and leaks. It also is heavily infested with termites, she said.

"We (can't) put our little children up there," said Guerrero. Jones recently filed House Resolution 11-29 urging government to have the old building used for its Headstart Program, special education project and kindergarten schoolers.

Jones, Guerrero said, had apparently thought the division abandoned the facility. "We wrote him (Jones) saying we did not leave it without intent of coming back," said Guerrero.

Guerrero said she requested that the division hold its office elsewhere after "computers (started blowing up)" due to obsolete electrical installation.

"The leaks," she added, "were going between walls." Guerrero said she opted to transfer the office to its present one in As Lito because she "did not want to wait until someone gets hurt or fire breaks out."

A request for proposal had been circulated for a structural assessment of the building, she said. The division, according to her, has however, yet to make a selection

20 Bangladeshis sue to collect unpaid wages

By Ferdie de la Torre
Variety News Staff
TWENTY Bangladeshis have sued their former employer and a security agency to collect at least \$193,331 in unpaid wages and damages.

The complainants, through counsel Jay H. Sorensen, asked the Superior Court to enforce the Division of Labor's administrative order issued last May 8 against Antonio P. Marcham doing business as Amco Security Agency.

The Labor entered the order requiring Marcham and the agency to pay the unpaid wages, attorneys' fees and costs of action.

Labor found that Amco completely failed to provide the contracted employment or wages for complainants. Marcham and Amco were also barred from permanently hiring non-resident workers in the Commonwealth.

"The complainants are not equally at fault in this matter and are eligible for transfer relief. Complainants should be granted 60 days to transfer to new employers," said the Labor's order.

Sorensen said the respondents did not seek an administrative appeal and have not paid any of the amounts. "No good cause exists for delay in the enforcement of the order," said Sorensen in the complaint.



Bertha Leon Guerrero

Dino Jones

from among the bidders that have submitted their recommendations. "We want a structural assessment to tell us if it's worth another 20 years," Guerrero said.

She explained government could drastically save on rental expenses if the building is to be renovated or rebuilt instead.

Paying monthly rentals, Guerrero said, "is too expensive." "Investing it (money) in a new building will definitely allow us big savings," she said.

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Reyes to block ex-Froilan official if named DOC head

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff
SENATE Majority Leader Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan) is urging his partymate Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to appoint a qualified Republican as Commerce secretary.

Reyes, in a letter to the governor, noted that one of the potential nominees to the post worked for Tenorio's predecessor, who is a Democrat.

"With all due respect," Reyes said, "I have some serious concerns pertaining to this nominee and I intend to do everything within my ability to see to it that this person is not supported by (the other senators)."

A copy of the letter was leaked to the Variety yesterday.



Pete P. Reyes
Asked for a comment, Reyes expressed surprise over the leak, saying his letter was not intended to be publicized.

...sion that there is friction between this Republican Legislature and a Republican governor," he said.

"My letter was only to inform our governor of what I, as his supporter and partymate, feel about this issue," Reyes said. "It is not a show of disrespect and I will never disrespect the governor. There is no friction between this Legislature and (Tenorio)."

Reyes said he wrote the letter to prevent a probable cause of "ill feelings and demoralization" among loyal Republicans.

"I think the governor would even appreciate my effort to communicate what my opinion is of this matter," he said.

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Underwood meets with President Kim

By Sara Grant
Variety News Staff
HAGATNA, Guam—Guam Rep. Robert Underwood yesterday met briefly with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung at a luncheon hosted by Vice President Al Gore in Washington D. C.

President Kim is expected to address a joint session of Congress to ask for economic support for South Korea.

In a telephone interview, Underwood told the Variety that he extended feelings of sadness about Korean Airlines crash 801 to the president and told him about the memorial for the victims recently erected on Guam.

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Robert Underwood
"I invited President Jung to come to Guam and he said that he had heard Guam was a very beautiful place," he added.

Guam's top teacher selected

By Maxine Hillary
Variety News Staff
HAGATNA, Guam — First Lady Geri Gutierrez hosted the annual Teacher of the Year Award at Government House this week. The honors going to John F. Kennedy High School Physical Education teacher, Barbara Lott Gilman.

The Santa Rita resident has been teaching for 27 years, 14 of which have been on Guam.

A member of the Guam's Goals 2000 Committee, the instructor believes in motivating students to push hard to become high achievers. Says Gilman, "Throughout the activities that I teach, I try to encourage students to go beyond their own ability or perceived ability and to have a sense

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Manila office's fate known tomorrow

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff
WHETHER the CNMI's office in Manila will be shut down or further downsized will be known by the end of this week, Health Secretary Joe K.P. Villagomez said yesterday.

Villagomez, together with the

governor's special adviser on finance and budget Mike S. Sablan, visited the office recently.

In an interview, Villagomez told reporters that the office will no longer have a medical referral section, but did not elaborate.

Variety sources on Capitol Hill said the Department of Labor and Immigration (DOLI), for its part, considers the labor functions of the office as an "unnecessary layer of bureaucracy," citing the CNMI's alien labor hiring moratorium law.

Sources said the office's five-man staff is likely to be reduced to two, with the office itself abolished after a year.

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio's acting spokesperson recently told the Variety that the office's employment processing division may be retained as the hiring moratorium law allows for certain exemptions.

Frank S. Rosario added that the Manila office can still prevent workers with fraudulent documents from entering the CNMI.

But the office will be moved to a smaller and less expensive room space, he said.

Current office rental expenses cost the cash-strapped CNMI government close to \$36,000 every year.

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OPA denies PIMC appeal

THE OFFICE of the Public Auditor has denied the protest filed by the Pacific Marine and Industrial Corp. (PIMC) on the Commonwealth Utilities Corp's alleged irregular awarding of contract for a 10-megawatt power plant on Tinian.

In dismissing the appeal, OPA said PMIC "did not file a timely protest" with the Director of Procurement and Supply.

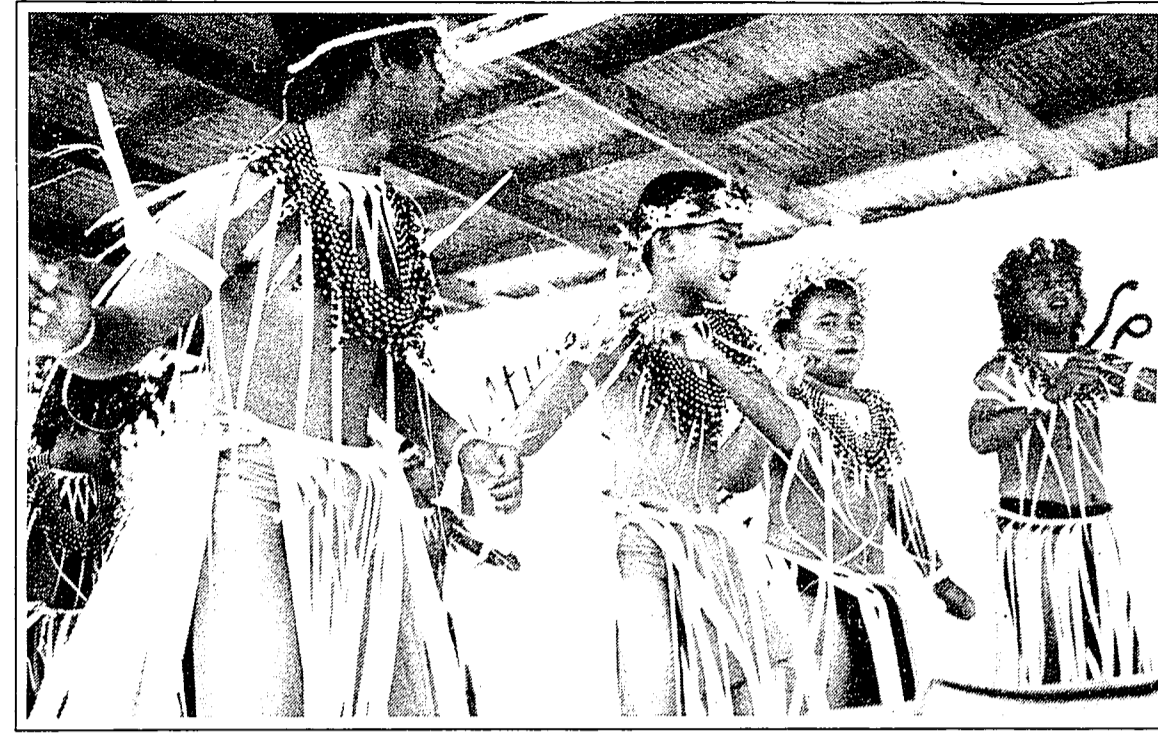
PMIC had protested CUC's contract with Telesource, claiming among other things that the company did not meet the technical specifications provided by the Request for Proposals.

The RFP called for two 5 MW units, but the contract provided for four 2.5 MW units, according to PMIC.

"CUC never developed a short list of responsible offerors and never engaged in any meaningful negotiations with parties other than Telesource," PMIC alleged.

PMIC, which was among the five bidders, said its offer was "financially more advantageous than

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Young students at Tanapag Elementary School perform a traditional Carolinian dance at the TES Cultural Day recently.

Still no police or fire substation for Marpi

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff
CONSTRUCTING a Marpi fire and police substation in the immediate future appears remote.

Public Land Director Bertha Leon Guerrero, in an interview,

said the Board of Public Land (BPL), which recently heard a request Rep. Dino Jones, her office to coordinate with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) regarding the proposal.

Moreover, DPL has yet to identify a "suitable place" for the substation.

"(Government) is still trying to locate a good place for that," said Guerrero.

She said DPL will send a letter to DPS officials informing them of Jones' request and asking them to assist them on the guidelines.

"That's something that we need to do... write to DPS and tell them that good congressman is trying to locate a place for them... (they) might want to meet with us and let us know what the specific requirements of their needs are," said Guerrero.

Jones, according to Guerrero, has been very "aggressive" in following up on his request.

If it pushes through, a substation can address emergency situations that may arise in Marpi as well as nearby San Roque and Tanapag, Jones' jurisdiction.

However, officials conceded it may take a longer time to build a substation considering Marpi's "underdeveloped" state.

The division, it will be recalled, has been planning to develop two home-stead areas accommodating nearly 500 lots in Marpi but can't proceed due to the lack of needed infrastructure — power and water supply.

In a related development meanwhile, Guerrero said DPL has "finally" identified a Kagman site from which to build a similar substation.

Guerrero said the place is adjacent to a community center which is being built by the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. (NMHC) through a grant it has obtained.

Fund: No need to worry over M. Lynch case

By Haidee V. Eugenio
Variety News Staff
THE NMI Retirement Fund has assured the public not to worry about the \$437.1 million payment of Merrill Lynch to settle claims by Orange County in a US case. The Fund wanted to clarify that its own financial adviser, Merrill Lynch-Hawaii, is a different entity.

Fund Administrator Edward H. Manglona yesterday told the Variety that the Merrill Lynch is only an advisor, and not an investment agent, of the Fund's monies.

"It will not affect the money and earnings of the Fund because in the first place, Merrill Lynch doesn't manage our money. They only provide the Fund's Board of Trustees with financial advice," said Manglona.

The Fund chief said that the consultant firm's concern is to provide the Fund with vital information on new investment schemes, money managers and help hire financial managers.

"Even if Merrill Lynch is required to pay that amount of penalty or what, it is not going to affect our operations here," he said.

Local government employees fear that the Merrill Lynch' more than three-year involvement with the Orange County's bankruptcy, and its recent decision to pay the latter with \$437.1 million will also lead to the CNMI Retirement Fund's bankruptcy.

As of end of March, the Fund's assets were placed at \$301 million.

Earlier, Manglona said that the Fund relies on Merrill Lynch' expertise, adding that it is a huge company "with a deep pocket."



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AROUND the Islands

The Around the Islands section covers community stories, local events, and cultural activities. Should you have a story you would like to share, or an event that needs to be covered, contact Laila at 234-6341

'Teacher's Dreams Come True' seeks support

By Laila C. Younis
Variety News Staff
ONE teacher is taking matters into his own hands. Marianas High School Special Education Instructor Tim Whisenand recently organized "Teacher's Dreams Come True", (TDCT) a private funding organization focused on helping teachers.

"We have just started and we would like the support of our community to help teachers get the little and important supplies that they need," said Whisenand.

"Sometimes it gets difficult to get classroom supplies and with direct funding from 'Teacher's Dreams Come True', it will be a lot easier," he said.

Whisenand pointed out that TDCT will "actively seek" minimal cash donations (\$1 to \$2) for raffle tickets with prizes of "major value".

"The profits of these donations will be distributed directly to Public School educators who show the need for educational materials," he said.

According to Whisenand, the prizes for TDCT's upcoming raffle is one Nissan Sentra Automobile and one Yamaha Virago Motorcycle.

"We will be selling the raffle tickets at the 'Saipan Business Fair' during Price Costco's Anniversary Celebration on June 20 and the 21," he said.

From the proceeds, Whisenand hopes to have two \$500 "grants" to give to selected teachers.

"We are asking all interested teachers to submit the details of the needed items and planned use of the items," he said.

"TDCT is happy to join PSS in the pursuit of excellence in education for all students. And we are hoping the community will support us in our effort," he added.

Interested teachers can send their information to TDCT AAA-706 Box 10001 Saipan MP 96950-8901.



'Teacher's Dreams Come True' Coordinator Tim Whisenand and his wife Jun Whisenand will be seeking community support for teachers. Photo by Laila C. Younis

NMC School Lab offers Summer Camp

YOUNG children ages four to ten will have something to do and somewhere to go this summer with the opening of the Northern Marianas College Lab School Summer Camp in Fina Sisu next week, a press release from the college said.

"We have many activities planned to both entertain and educate the kids," Principal Lucy Norita-Barnes said.

She said participants will be involved in gardening, cooking, baking, arts and crafts, swimming, outdoor sports, field trips to interesting places, computers, music and dancing.

The camp will be held Monday to Friday, June 15 to July 10 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. each weekday.

There are a total of 30 openings for participants, 15 for students ages four to six and 15 students ages seven to ten.

The fee is \$250 for the 19 days of activities. For more information about registration for the summer camp, contact Lucy Norita-Barnes at 234-5498, extension 2203.



Food Booth vendors at the recent Tanapag Elementary School "Cultural Day" show some of the healthy food they sold at the festivities. Photo by Laila C. Younis



IES Instructor Ron Synder tries his best husking a coconut during the school's annual "Cultural Day" recently. Photo by Laila C. Younis

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AROUND the Islands

The Around the Islands section covers community stories, local events, and cultural activities. Should you have a story you would like to share, or an event that needs to be covered, contact Laila at 234-6341

Senator awards top Rota scholars



The Camacho family gathers for a photo with GTC Elementary graduates Serafin Camacho (left) from Kindergarten and Johnathan Camacho from 6th grade last Tuesday. Photo by Laila C. Younis



GTC Elementary School Sixth graders applaud for their fellow classmate awardees during last Tuesday's graduation ceremony. Photo by Laila C. Younis

FOR THE tenth straight year, the top three graduates from Rota High School were awarded scholarships from Senate President Paul A. Mangiona during their recent graduation ceremony, a release from the senator's office said.

The winning students for the 1997-1998 school year were Rachel M. Taimanao, Valedictorian and Mary S. Gancuangco, Salutatorian.

Winning third place honor was Vanessa DLC Quitugua.

The first place student received \$1,000, second place \$700 and third place \$300.

The scholarships were awarded at the commencement ceremony.

Continued on page 20

MHS announces 1998 graduation

MARIANAS High School announces its 1998 Graduation Ceremonies, and school officials are seeking assistance, said a press release.

"Our single most important event will take the combined efforts and resources of the administration, faculty, staff, and parents to successfully make this a memorable occasion for your children, and our students," it stressed.

Traditionally, the MHS PTA was responsible for providing the graduation day's refreshments.

The school is asking for the community's help and requesting donations to cover the cost of refreshments.

The upcoming Awards Ceremony will be held on June 19, 1998 at the MHS Campus and the Graduation Commencement Exercises will be held on June 26, 1998 at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater.

On Thursday, June 11, 1998 at 6:30 p.m. in the MHS Cafeteria, there will be a PTA meeting to discuss the coordination of the refreshments for the Awards Ceremony and the Graduation Ceremony.

Happy Birthday
to our loving mom
Christina Villazon

From:
The Kids (T.J., Christopher, Julio John, Michael & J.J.)

Deadline for Children's Parade extended

THE deadline for the "Children's Circus Parade Marchers" has been extended to June 19th.

Registration forms may also be picked up from a Community Support Committee member or at the Division of Youth Services Office in Garapan.

The parent's meeting for interested participants has also been changed to June 23rd.

For more information, please contact Carmen at 322-4811 or Connie at 664-2550.

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Games played in the evening during weekdays and weekend games played all day.

Manager's meeting 5:30pm, June 19th, Ada Gym Conference Room.



Faisao says permanent CAO chief needed now

By Haidee V. Eugenio
Variety News Staff

THE CAROLINIAN Affairs Office has not been able to perform efficiently its main function of promoting and preserving Carolinian traditions since its executive assistant is still in an acting capacity for six months now, it was learned.

Rep. Melvin O. Faisao, himself a Carolinian, told the Variety that the Governor needs to appoint the executive assistant for Carolinian Affairs Office so that programs can already be instituted.

"We have so many programs for the promotion and preservation of Carolinian traditions and culture that are being hampered because the CAO does not have its own executive assistant," Faisao said.

The executive assistant for CAO needs to be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate.

Faisao said that CAO needs to prepare, as early as now, for big cultural events such as the Cultural Heritage Week in September and the commemoration of Chief Aghurubw. Therefore, he said, the governor should appoint the executive assistant for CAO as soon as possible.

"We need to start planning by July for that event," he said.

The legislator added that CAO Acting Executive Asst. Simeon Odeshi has been in the office since December, and until now, nobody has been appointed to the position.



Melvin O. Faisao

"The governor should put his acts together and appoint the executive assistant so that the CAO will start initiating the programs for the Carolinian community," said Faisao.

He continued, "If I were the governor, I would appoint Odeshi right now because it has been dragging for seven years now."

He added that the governor should appoint someone who is accepted by the Carolinian community, but did not elaborate.

"The governor has already appointed the executive assistant for indigenous affairs, and we are still waiting for that of the CAO's," he concluded.

Faisao added that as soon as the governor appoints the executive assistant for CAO, he would see to it that the office will get proper funding.

New Guam law clears way for home loan guarantee program

By Jan Furukawa
Variety News Staff

HAGATNA, Guam—A newly-enacted law will allow Chamorro Land Trust leaseholders who have been waiting to build on their property to proceed with their construction plans.

Public Law 24-220 enacts rules and regulations under which the Chamorro Land Trust Commission's

home loan guarantee program can be administered relative to home loans.

According to Commission spokesperson, Ron Teehan, eight applications for home loans with conventional banks are awaiting final arrangements between the commission and those banks.

The commission has been approached by three banks interested in

participating in the program.

First Hawaiian Bank, Bank of Hawaii and Citizens Security Bank all have local branches and prior relationships with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, he noted.

Teehan on Monday said the commission could probably guarantee 300 to 400 loans.

Continued on page 19

Tenorio signs PSS building fund bill

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff

GOVERNOR Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday signed into law a bill that would earmark \$2 million a year for the Public School System Building Fund.

Introduced by Rep. Karl T. Reyes (R-Prec. 1, Saipan), the bill, H.B. 11-186, allots the funds to pay the loans PSS incurred in the construction of new schools and classrooms.

But the loans should not exceed \$15.685 million, according to the bill.

The new law, P.L. 11-14, directs the Finance secretary to deposit \$2 million annually from liquid fuel tax collections into the PSS Building Fund.

Besides Reyes, Reps. David M. Apatang (R-Prec. 1, Saipan), Melvin L.O. Faisao (R-Prec. 3, Saipan), Maria T. Peter (Ind-Prec. 3, Saipan) and Manuel A. Tenorio (R-Prec. 1, Saipan) co-sponsored the bill.

Meanwhile, the governor has named Antonio Adriano to represent Saipan on the Parole Board.

If his nomination is confirmed by the Senate, Adriano would serve a



Pedro P. Tenorio

six-year term.

The governor's three earlier nominees have declined the post.

Early last month, Tenorio withdrew the nomination of Ramon S. Salas, who, he added, is "unable to accept the position."

A Division of Public Lands employee, Salas was nominated last April 24 to represent Saipan on the board for a six-year term.

Tenorio, in April, withdrew the nomination of Perry B. Inos to represent Rota on the board.

Continued on page 20

Yona man yields 'ice'

By Jacob Leon Guerrero
Variety News Staff

HAGATNA, Guam — David Taimanglo Quichocho, 24 of Yona was arrested Tuesday evening and charged with possession of a controlled substance and violation of probation.

Methamphetamine was found in the glove compartment of the

blue Nissan Sentra Quichocho was driving after Officer Frank Benevente pulled him over in Malojloj for speeding.

Benevente searched Quichocho's vehicle when a routine computer check on his vehicle revealed outstanding warrants. Quichocho was booked and confined.

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PAL starts hiring new pilots

By JIM GOMEZ

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Financially beleaguered Philippine Airlines said Wednesday it has begun the process of hiring replacements for about 600 striking pilots who have repeatedly defied government back-to-work orders.

The pilots' union has refused the labor department's attempts to formally deliver the back-to-work orders and continued its walkout despite appeals from President Fidel Ramos.

An airline spokesman said job applications from local and foreign pilots are being processed, but declined to say how many have applied.

Labor Secretary Cresenciano Trajano said he would summon union and airline officials to another meeting Wednesday to try to end the dispute but indicated he was losing patience.

"The union can't just openly

defy our orders," Trajano said.

The pilots began the strike Friday to protest a management policy of ordering pilots to retire who have reached 20 years of service or flown 20,000 hours, regardless of age. The policy puts about 200 pilots in danger of forced retirement, the union said.

PAL, however, said it was not a unilateral management policy but a provision in a collective bargaining agreement signed by airline and union officials.

The airline earlier announced plans to reduce staff, slash costs and cut flights to survive a financial crisis.

PAL says the strike is causing daily losses of 150 million to 200 million pesos (\$3.8 million to 5.1 million) in lost revenue, pushing it "closer to the brink of insolvency."

It said it lost 8 billion pesos (\$205 million) in the last fiscal

year — three times more than the previous year.

PAL president Jose Antonio Garcia said the strike caused several potential foreign buyers of the airline, including Northwest Airlines, to break off talks and could force the airline to shut down.

"Closing PAL is an option. If there are no pilots and operations, what work can we do?" Garcia said after attending an emergency meeting of PAL's board of directors Tuesday.

Trajano said the strikers defied a deadline for reporting back to work of 6 p.m. Tuesday. The 620-strong Airline Pilots Association of the Philippines said the order should be formally delivered to its lawyer but refused to say where she was.

The union demanded that PAL also pledge in writing to stop unilaterally retiring pilots, but the airline has refused.

PAL said it could only fly 16 out of 80 domestic and international flights scheduled Wednesday.

The strike has affected thousands of passengers and is threatening to prevent many Filipino and foreign guests from visiting the country to celebrate the June 12 centennial of the declaration of Philippine independence from more than 300 years of Spanish colonial rule.



Workers put up a street lantern in the shape of a flag on a lamp post Friday in Manila in preparation for the centennial celebration of Philippine independence on June 12.

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OSHA requires all employers who employ 10 or more employees (or have employed 10 or more employees in the past calendar year) to maintain injury or illness records. Failure to do so will result in OSHA citations and penalties.

Information on these requirements will be provided by an OSHA representative.

Attendance is limited to the first 50 who register.

For more information and registration call 670-323-1200.

Bad loans in Philippines rise

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Non-performing loans in the Philippine banking sector rose to 7.6 percent of total loans as of March 31, the central bank said Tuesday.

The central bank's treasury director, Amancio Tetangco, said the rise from 5 percent at the end of 1997 wasn't surprising given the impact of the region's financial crisis.

He called the level manageable.

The central bank has forecast that the ratio of non-performing loans will rise to about 8 percent by the end of the year.

He said those banks that are ex-

periencing financial difficulties are smaller institutions.

Central bank officials earlier Tuesday denied a report in a local newspaper saying that monetary authorities have put 17 allegedly ailing banks on a watch list.

"We have no such list," central bank deputy governor Alberto Reyes told a radio station.

The report came a day after the central bank announced the closure of a small Manila thrift bank, Commonwealth Savings and Loan Bank, which was placed in receivership.

The central bank has said two other small banks — Richmond

Bank and Fortune Savings and Loan Association — have problems, but are preparing rehabilitation programs.

Reyes said the country's larger banks are well capitalized and in sound financial health.

etangco said the regional currency crisis has prompted the central bank to set up a special monitoring team to scrutinize various aspects of the banking system in addition to existing oversight in areas such as foreign exchange and bank deposit movements.

"But there is no watch list of banks," he reiterated.

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Retired employees still on gov't payroll

HONIARA (Pacnews)—The task force reviewing the Solomon Islands public service has discovered that a number of civil servants who have retired years ago are still on the government payroll.

The 86 retired officers are among 235 public servants who have so far been identified as having reached the retirement age of 50, and would be retired under the government's reform programme.

A spokesman from the office of the prime minister says investigations are being carried out to establish who benefits from these ghost payments.

The spokesman says these are the sort of things the government would like to clear before it can determine the number of public servants to be affected by its redundancy exercise.

He says the strike notice issued last week by the Public Employees Union demanding the government to sign its proposed redundancy agreement is therefore very premature.

Negotiations underway to regulate shipping industry

MELBOURNE (Pacnews)—Negotiations are continuing in the Cook Islands to deregulate the shipping industry.

One company currently has a monopoly on shipping to the Cooks and the Cook Islands government is a share holder, Radio Australia reports.

The business sector in the Cook Islands has been lobbying for three years for full deregulation of the industry, but the government is considering limited deregulation.

Donald Beer, from the Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce says deregulation of shipping would significantly reduce the cost of living.

New Solomon FM radio

HONIARA (Pacnews)—An FM Radio service to be provided by the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation SIBC, the Wantok FM, is expected to be inaugurated by the end of this month.

SIBC's general manager, James Kilua says additional technical equipment for the service has been received and he expects the service to be up and running before the July events, SIBC reports.

Kilua confirms that the Board of Directors of the Corporation, during its meeting Monday, gave the go-ahead for the inauguration to proceed.

Wantok FM will mainly provide music and news, and will broadcast on 96.3 on the FM dial.

Elsewhere in the Pacific Vanuatu Gov't urged to delay VAT imposition

PORT VILA (Pacnews)—Vanuatu's chamber of commerce and industry, is appealing to the government to postpone the implementation of the Value Added Tax until January 1999.

The chamber says it supports the government on VAT, but that timing is an important factor because the current economic climate is "extremely volatile", Radio Vanuatu reports.

It says the lifting of import duties would flood the country with imported items, causing problems for

local manufacturers.

At the same time they say ni-Vanuatu will be expected to face a high cost of living, while small businesses would close operations.

The department of customs and tax, has explained that the introduction of VAT is vital because the country's economic activities and population are growing, while

the government revenue is stagnant.

VAT comes into force in August.

Meanwhile, the chamber of commerce and industry petitioned the government Tuesday, warning that a nationwide strike could come if the government fails to consider its concerns.

Better communication links in Melanesia eyed

HONIARA (Pacnews)—Solomon Islands says it would like to see the necessary communication links strengthened in order to fully realise the trade agreement among the Melanesian countries.

Minister for State assisting the prime minister, Alfred Sasako says this is one of the issues which Solomon Islands will bring up at the 12th annual summit of the Melanesian Spearhead Group countries.

Sasako said in order to realise the full potential of the MSG trade agreement, communication links including air and sea transport among the Melanesian countries must be strengthened. He says the MSG member countries need to follow the trend in the global market such as sharing airline costs in order to promote trade activities.

Fiji plans to host the 12th MSG summit in July, but Sasako says Solomon Islands would like it to be held just before the Pohnpei Forum Summit in August in order to save costs.

Sasakawa Peace Foundation to assist in training projects

NUKU'ALOFA (Pacnews)—The Sasakawa Peace Foundation of Japan has granted \$US65,000 to fund the first project of its kind in the Pacific.

This is known as the archaeological training programme in the Pacific Islands, Tonga included, Radio Tonga reports.

The project will train Pacific islanders as site recorders in order to compile site inventories for their respective islands.

Then, they will watch over site developments to protect sites or recommend survey by professional archaeologists before the destruction of sites.

It will teach Pacific islanders to take care of their own cultural heritage, how to identify sites, and how to map and record them in order to establish inventories.

Islanders will also learn archaeological excavation methods and restoration techniques for archaeological structures.

The training grounds are on various sites in Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia.

Asang new coordinator for Pacific isle program

HONOLULU (Pacnews)—The new Pacific Program Coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee in Honolulu is Isebong (Bonnie) Asang, originally from Palau and Guam.

Asang, who speaks English, Palauan, Chamorro and Japanese, succeeds Kilali Alailima, who has returned to Samoa.

Among her duties will be to develop greater public awareness of Pacific concerns within the United States as well as foster the

sovereignty and self-determination goals of indigenous Pacific peoples. Asang worked for 20 years in several positions at the Pacific Daily News, Guam's main newspaper, before accepting a variety social service positions in Guam and Hawaii.

Her academic degrees are from the University of Guam and the University of Oklahoma.

Currently, she is a doctoral student in education at the University of Hawaii.

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US won't ease N. Korea sanctions



President Clinton, right, answers questions during a joint press conference with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, left, Tuesday in Washington. South Korean President Kim is on a four-day state visit to Washington.

By Terence Hunt WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton welcomed South Korean President Kim Dae-jung as a hero of freedom Tuesday but reacted coolly to his suggestion that the United States ease sanctions against rival North Korea.

Clinton said he would work with Kim on a "policy of reciprocity" that could lead toward reconciliation between the North and the South, still technically in a state of war.

But Clinton made clear that progress hinges on positive steps by communist North Korea.

North Korea should respond to Kim's "far-sighted overtures, and let's get this show on the road, as we say in America," Clinton said.

He said he was "very hopeful" of improving relations in the next few months and years.

Kim said, "We have nothing to fear from North Korea."

He said it was up to the United States whether to lift sanctions. "But we would not oppose, and we would cooperate."

The 74-year-old Kim got a triumphant welcome, from a 21-gun salute on the South Lawn at midmorning to an elegant State Dinner featuring honey ginger glazed lamb, crispy rice cakes, baby bok choy and spring vegetables.

The two leaders signed an open-sky agreement allowing unrestricted air service between the United States and South Korea.

To spur badly needed investments, Clinton also reinstated South Korea's eligibility under the Overseas Private Investment Corp.

It had been suspended in 1991 because of concerns about workers' rights.

OPIC provides risk insurance for U.S. companies doing business in developing countries.

Kim's visit climaxed four decades of persecution by authoritarian governments in South Korea.

He survived death threats, imprisonment, house arrest and ex-

ile before becoming president early this year in the first transfer of power to an opposition party in his country's history.

Supporters cheered Kim's name as he walked to the South Lawn with Clinton.

"Today, the triumph of democracy in Korea is also a victory for the democracy-loving people of America," Kim said.

Clinton expressed confidence in economic reforms Kim has undertaken to lift South Korea from the economic crisis that has swept across Asia.

Kim said his country was facing its worst financial problems since the Korean War, but declared, "With the support of the Korean people, I will surely succeed in this struggle."

Kim has been urging a more open, flexible approach toward North Korea, including an easing or even elimination of sanctions on North Korea as an inducement for it to open up to the

outside. Clinton and Kim concluded their talks with a news conference at the Old Executive Office Building.

With a heavy focus on tensions on the Korean peninsula, Clinton encountered no questions about the grand jury investigation into the Monica Lewinsky case.

Kim said he spoke to Clinton about his policy of trying to engage North Korea and was assured of U.S. support.

Clinton said Kim did not ask him to lift sanctions but instead to support a policy of reciprocity, "which would enable us to move forward with the reconciliation of the North and the South." Clinton said some of the U.S. sanctions would require approval by Congress "but there is some executive flexibility there."

Clinton said that Kim's initiative, and four-party talks that include China and the United States with the two Koreas, "can really lead us to some progress in here in the next few months and years. So I'm very hopeful."

Administration officials said the idea of lifting sanctions was very preliminary and needed to be developed with concrete proposals to which the United States could respond.

Kim acknowledged reservations about dealing with North

Korea's reclusive leader, Kim Jong Il.

"Based upon our experience," the South Korean leader said, "it's very difficult to say that you can trust a communist."

But we feel the need to negotiate, and once you've reached an agreement, to hold them up to that agreement."

On other points at the news conference, Clinton:

- Left open the possibility of using American military force to end the violence against ethnic Albanians in the Serbian province of Kosovo.

"We have explicitly said we do not believe any options should be taken off the table," Clinton said.

- Defended his decision to go to Tiananmen Square in China during a state visit, despite objections stemming from the 1989 government massacre of pro-democracy students. "I am going to be the guest of the Chinese.... They should be designing the terms of the arrival ceremony, not me."

Clinton was asked no questions about Whitewater or the Monica Lewinsky controversies.

Russian vessel escapes while in Korean custody

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Maritime police said Tuesday they were searching for a Russian ship which broke court-ordered custody and ran away with two South Korean guards held captive.

Chavshov Alexay, 36, the Russian owner of the 683-ton refrigerator ship Tibiya, was arrested at Kimhae airport late Monday as he tried to slip out of South Korea, police said.

Alexay was accused of in-

structing his vessel's 18-man crew to flee after talks broke down on how to pay \$ 1.5 million he owed to a South Korean ship-repairing company.

When the ship docked at Pusan port on the southeast coast on April 7 for repair, the South Korean company filed suit with a local court, seeking payment of \$ 1.5 million incurred for earlier repair work.

The Pusan civil court accepted the suit and ordered

the ship impounded pending auction.

Court-hired private guards were posted on the ship on three-day shifts to enforce the court order.

But when new guards sailed out early Monday for a shift change, the Russian vessel was gone, police said.

The Foreign Ministry said it has asked the Russian government to help search for the runaway ship.

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Nevada Gov. Bob Miller, right, shakes hands with Akira Kondo, president of Japan Airlines, after they announced the launching of JAL's direct flight to Las Vegas in Tokyo Tuesday. The direct flights will actually be launched twice a week from Oct. 2, 1998. AP

\$9-M in drug control funds for Asia-Pacific

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Australia announced a \$ 15 million (US \$ 9 million) program Tuesday to combat drug trafficking in the Asia-Pacific region and to finance crop eradication programs in the Mekong Basin of Southeast Asia.

Most of the funds will be used to develop an Asia-Pacific law enforcement cooperation program and extend Australia's law enforcement liaison offices throughout the region, according to Foreign Minister Alexander Downer.

Other funds will be used for eradicating illegal crops and providing alternative means of livelihood for farmers in the Mekong Basin of Southeast Asia, strengthen customs services in the Pacific, provide education for drug

abusers and for health services among addicts.

Downer announced the program — known as "Safer Streets, Safer Borders" — during the second day of a three-day U.N. General Assembly special session on drugs, during which representatives of about 150 nations are to endorse a comprehensive program for combating drug use worldwide.

"Ultimately, if we are to protect our streets, we must also protect our borders and our own region," Downer told the General Assembly.

He said the "Safer Streets, Safer Borders" program was "an important step in that direction."

"I welcome the U.N.'s comprehensive approach to the drugs

problem which addresses not only controls on the supply of drugs but also places increased emphasis on demand reduction and alternative development programs," Downer added.

"The elimination of illicit drugs remains the first and ultimate goal," he said. "But the reality is that drugs continue to reach those who are prepared to risk their health and often their lives using drugs."

He said Australia supports the goal of reducing demand for drugs — which leaders of drug-producing nations say is essential if narcotics control measures are to be effective.

"This is an indispensable element in tackling the world drug program," he added.

Thailand's troubled largest conglomerate restructures

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — In a potent symbol of Asia's economic crisis, Thailand's largest conglomerate — which has more investments in China than any other firm in the world — has announced a major restructuring.

Charoen Pokphand Group revealed late Monday it would consolidate 12 core agribusiness companies into a single entity listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand.

The move reflects the start of a back-to-basics strategy by a company that over 70 years has become an Asian business empire and even surfaced in the campaign contribution scandal that touched U.S. President Bill Clinton.

CP Group expanded during the Asian economic boom into everything from chicken and shrimp farming to beer, motorcycles and pharmaceuticals.

Founded by Chinese immi-

grants to Thailand, it has plowed money back into the old country and is the number-one investor in China in terms of projects.

Analysts say the expansion left the company overextended and heavily in debt once the Asian boom went bust last year.

Chairman Dhanin Chearavanont was cited by The Nation newspaper Tuesday as saying CP will sell off non-core assets to maintain the growth of its agribusiness, telecommunications and 7-Eleven store franchise.

CP recently sold part of its stake in 12 Lotus discount mega-stores in Thailand to Tesco Co. of Britain.

A motorcycle plant opened in Shanghai to great fanfare two years ago has been sold to Chinese authorities. A Heineken brewery joint venture and other businesses are also up for sale there.

Dhanin said that Ford Motor

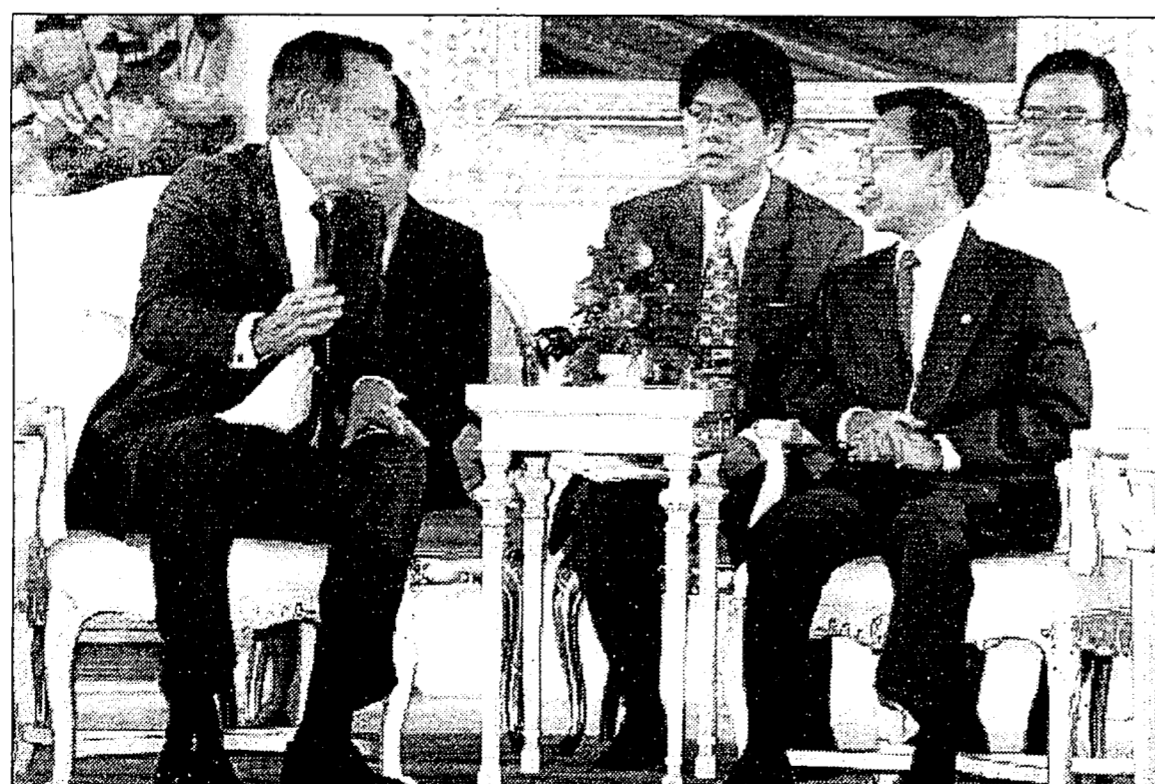
Co. is interested in buying CP Group's other motorcycle plant in China to use as a platform for an engine production company.

"People still look for partnership with us because we have quality management in China," Dhanin was quoted as saying.

In the Thai restructuring, the company announced it will merge 11 subsidiary agribusiness concerns into its biggest listed company on the SET, Charoen Pokphand Feedmill.

Once the merger is complete, CP Group said, the feedmill company will rank among the 20 biggest listed Thai companies by market capitalization. Most of the group's holdings are not listed.

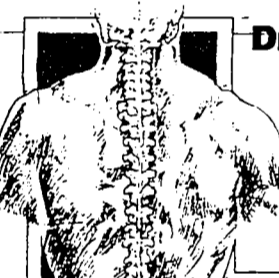
Of the 11 companies to be merged into CP Feedmill, only three are listed and will eventually be delisted: Bangkok Agro-Industrial Products, Bangkok Produce Merchandising and Charoen Pokphand Northeastern.



Former U.S. President George Bush, left, talks with Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai, right, through interpreters at the Government House in Bangkok Friday. Bush visited on the invitation of Thai media tycoon-turned-politician Thaksin Shinawatra. AP

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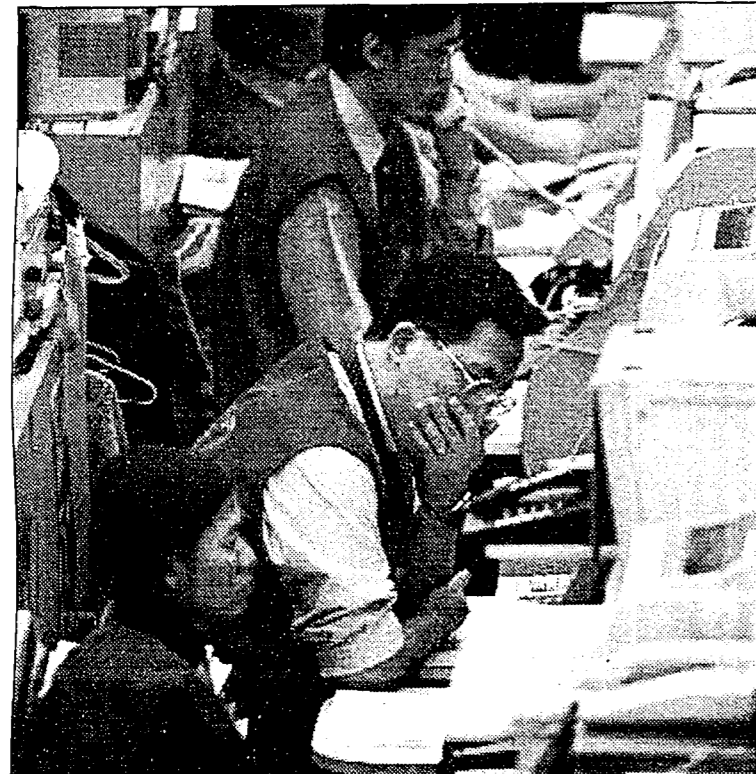


Make your reservations by calling (Tinian) 328-2233 and asking to be transferred to be any of the restaurants above. Round trip ferry tickets are \$30 per person, which includes a \$10 meal discount, a \$10 match play voucher, and a \$5 slot token voucher.

Free Gift For All Fathers

HK property market turns sour

By PRISCILLA CHEUNG
HONG KONG (AP) — Young, ambitious and well-paid, Elizabeth Chung was set to become another shining success story in this haven of unbridled capitalism.
 But real estate — traditionally Hong Kong's king of investments — has messed up her life.
 Chung was only following conventional, middle-class wisdom here when she invested heavily in property last year.



A trader at the Hong Kong Stock Market covers his mouth while shares fall during the afternoon trading session on Tuesday. Brokers attributed the slump to worries about the weakening Japanese currency, which investors fear could lead to a devaluation of the Chinese yuan. AP

However, her timing was terrible. The 28-year-old is now saddled with mountains of debt on apartments whose value is plummeting. The bills eat up nine-tenths of her income.
 Asia's economic crisis combined with a government drive to increase the housing supply has turned the market for property — which accounts for one in ten jobs and roughly a third of Hong Kong's economy — upside down.
 As the property market sinks, so does the entire economy.
 Some purchasers face losing their down payments — in some cases, their life savings — because they cannot get mortgages.
 Chung sees no way out for herself. She and her fiancé Gary Cheng even have postponed a fairy-tale wedding. "Worse comes to worst, I'll file for bankruptcy," Chung said.
 "I'm glad we didn't get married,

other expenses to take on large mortgages.
 Others jumped in when optimism over the handover to Chinese rule last July 1 sent prices soaring.
 Chung escaped together 2.17 million Hong Kong dollars (\$280,000) for down payments on four apartments.
 Three in Hong Kong were valued at 10 million Hong Kong dollars (U.S. \$1.29 million), one in the neighboring Portuguese territory Macau somewhat less.
 She emptied her savings, borrowed from her mother, brother and fiancé. Besides the mortgages, she borrowed part of the down payments, too.
 She figured she and Gary would live in one apartment.
 As property value and rents increased, the others would provide a stable income.
 Other buyers, including a group that protested recently in Hong Kong, face losing their down payments.
 Because property values have dropped so much, cautious banks won't lend enough money to cover the balance of the purchase price.
 "I always thought you can't go wrong with property," Chung said. "The Chinese have always bought houses and fields with their spare money."
 But not everyone in Hong Kong is prosperous, and the government is also one of the world's largest public housing landlords.
 In a bid for popular support, Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa promised to provide 85,000 new apartments every year for 10 years.
 He also started selling public housing apartments for about a tenth of their value to turn tenants into homeowners.
 Such policies alone could have taken some steam out of the housing market.
 But no one counted on Asia's financial crisis.
 Although Hong Kong rode it out initially, the economy shrank by 2 percent in the first three months of the year, and even Tung's housing construction plans look increasingly fragile.
 Unemployment is at a 14-year high.
 The stock market has fallen dramatically.
 Interest rates are high to protect the currency.
 Property prices have fallen about 40 percent and major developers have slashed prices to stimulate demand.
 Meanwhile, rental prices are dropping and potential buyers are biding their time.
 "Why buy when rents are getting cheaper and cheaper?" asked economist Ho Lok Sang.
 "The market's dead," said Wilson Cheung, owner of a small real estate agency in the upscale Midlevels area.
 "No one's buying, and we only get an occasional customer who wants to rent."
 Tung said recently that property prices are now about the right level. That is more bad news for Chung, whose apartments lost 35 percent of their value.

because I don't want to drag (Gary) into this sorry mess."
 In many ways, it's hard to feel sorry for Chung, who makes 100,000 Hong Kong dollars (U.S. \$12,820) a month as a business manager. Even in this prosperous, and costly, society, that's a lot.
 Buildable land is at a premium in small, mountainous Hong Kong.
 For decades, the government has released it slowly, keeping demand high and prices rising.
 Many middle-class people saw property as such a solid investment that they were willing to skip on

PUBLIC NOTICE

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THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CRM OFFICES:

APPLICANT	DATE RECEIVED APPLICATION	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. TAN HOLDINGS CORP.	08/14/98 SMS-98-X-234	APARTMENTS	SAN VICENTE	MAJOR SITING	CERTIFIED COMPLETE(03/02/98) APPROVED(05/12/98)
2. AMERICAN LAGENTE CORPORATION	01/05/98 SMS-98-X-01	STAFF HOUSING	GUALO RAI	MAJOR SITING	CERTIFIED COMPLETE(05/05/98)
3. UNO MODA GARMENT	03/27/98 SMS-98-X-74	GARMENT FACTORY OPERATIONS	SAN ANTONIO	MAJOR SITING	CERTIFIED COMPLETE(05/11/98) APPROVED(06/04/98)
4. PROA INC.	03/27/98 SSLRm-98-X-78	SURVEY	OBYAN BEACH	SHORELINE APC LAGOON & REEF APC	APPROVED(06/01/98)*
5. VISTA INTERNATIONAL	05/26/98 SSm-98-X-128	FILMING	SHORELINE AREAS	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(05/26/98)*
6. R & C TOURS, INC.	05/29/98 SSm-98-X-129	FILMING	SHORELINE AREAS	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(05/29/98)*
7. HOTEL NIKKO SAIPAN	05/29/98 SSm-98-X-130	OUTLET MAINTENANCE	NIKKO HOTEL	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(06/03/98)*
8. HYATT REGENCY SAIPAN	05/29/98 SSm-98-X-131	CHAPEL	HYATT HOTEL	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(06/03/98)*
9. GOOD DAY COORD.	06/01/98 SSm-98-X-132/3/4/5	FILMING	SHORELINE AREAS	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(06/02/98)*
10. BUNKA-SHA INC.	06/03/98 SSm-98-X-136	FILMING	SHORELINE AREAS	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(06/04/98)*
11. EDWIN CASTRO	06/01/98 SLRm-98-X-137	BANANA BOAT	SUSUPE LAGOON	LAGOON & REEF APC	UNDER REVIEW*
12. DAHICHI HOTEL	06/03/98 SSm-98-X-138	WOODEN STAGE	GARAPAN	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(06/05/98)*
13. MABU CORPORATION	06/04/98 SSm-98-X-139	FILMING	SHORELINE AREAS	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(06/08/98)*
14. BUNKA-SHA CO., LTD.	06/05/98 SSm-98-X-140	FILMING	SHORELINE AREAS	SHORELINE APC	APPROVED(06/08/98)*

Publication of the above list is in accordance with CRM Regulations which require all permit applications to be published in a local newspaper within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the CRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the CRM Office within fourteen (14) calendar days of publication of this notice. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local CRM Coordinators. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a CRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the CRM Office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the CRM permit decision as provided in CRM Regulations, Section 8 (G).

Japan bank denies rumor on ties with Swiss Bank

TOKYO (AP)—Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan Ltd., a major Japanese credit bank, denied a rumor Tuesday that it would dissolve its tie-up with Swiss Bank Corp.
 "This is completely false, and there is no truth in it," the Japanese bank said in a statement.
 Long-Term Credit Bank's share prices moved sharply lower on the rumor, falling by 14 percent from Monday's finish to 155 yen (\$1.10) per share at the end of Tuesday's morning session on the Tokyo Stock Exchange.
 Long-Term Credit Bank Vice President Masami Suda told a news conference that the bank had asked the Securities and Exchange Surveillance Commission, Japan's securities watchdog, to investigate the rumor.
 Last year, Long-Term Credit Bank and Swiss Bank agreed to form a strategic alliance to take advantage of Japan's "Big Bang" financial deregulation effort.
 In the statement, Long-Term Credit Bank said that the securities joint venture created by the alliance, LTCB Warburg Securities Ltd., had already started operations, and said other joint operations — private banking and investment trusts — will soon be launched.

According to Clinton:

China decision was 'routine'

By John Diamond
WASHINGTON (AP)—President Clinton said Tuesday he had made a "pretty routine" decision in allowing a U.S. company headed by a major Democratic donor to export a satellite to China while the company was under federal investigation.
 His comment came as elements of an aerospace industry defense strategy emerged in response to the Justice Department's inquiry into whether Loral Space & Communications and other industry representatives illegally gave China information useful in improving missiles.
 At a White House news conference with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, Clinton said he followed the advice of the State Department, Pentagon and National Security Council earlier this year in approving the export of a Loral satellite for launch on a Chinese rocket.
 "From my point of view it was a pretty routine decision," said Clinton. The president is preparing for a trip to China that will include arrival ceremonies at Tiananmen Square, the focal point of Beijing's 1989 crackdown on dissidents, and he said Tuesday he will not object to that plan.
 "They should be designing the terms of the arrival ceremony, not me," Clinton told a news conference.
 The House overwhelmingly urged the president last week to reconsider the appearance in the square; several human rights groups are protesting the Clinton visit.
 Meanwhile, the Justice Department and congressional committees are investigating whether Loral CEO Bernard L. Schwartz, a Democratic Party donor, got Clinton's help in winning approval for the satellite export in the face of the Justice inquiry.
 Internal documents examined by The Associated Press indicate U.S. and European aerospace industry officials who investigated a 1996 Chinese rocket accident at the center of Justice's inquiry got inadequate advice from a Loral security expert about what technical information could be shared with the Chinese.
 The admission is contained in an unreleased report Loral submitted June 17, 1996, to the State Department.
 The document, prepared by outside experts hired by Loral, appears to contain key elements of a possible defense strategy should the government take action against Loral or its senior executives.
 For example, the document indicates that the rocket accident study was screened to remove missile-related information before it was given to Chinese officials, and that a Loral representative told U.S. officials in advance how the accident study would proceed.
 Loral's acknowledgment that it could have done a better job briefing scientists and engineers on U.S. export control laws, while embarrassing, also points to the company's effort to comply with those laws.
 Such efforts, however flawed, may complicate any prosecution aimed at showing an intent to violate the law.
 A copy of the Loral submission to the State Department was examined by the AP.
 Elements of the report were confirmed independently in interviews with investigators, defense lawyers and industry officials.
 A Chinese Long March 3B rocket, a commercial version of China's



Bill Clinton

ICBM, exploded and crashed into a village on Feb. 15, 1996, carrying with it a Loral communications satellite.
 Insurance underwriters, wary of backing future launches on Chinese rockets, insisted that Western aerospace experts review China's own investigation into the accident.
 Loral helped assemble an independent review committee consisting of U.S. and European satellite and rocket experts.
 On April 22, 1996, William Schweikert, Loral's technology transfer control manager, briefed the IRC.
 He told the committee members that because the accident review involved getting information from China and not providing information to China, there was no need for Pentagon export security officials to be present.
 He also said that merely accepting or rejecting China's own conclusions on the crash would not constitute technical assistance.
 Loral's June 1996 report to the State Department, which described this briefing, criticized its content.
 Space Systems/Loral "acknowledges that Mr. Schweikert's briefing was deficient," and was "not representative of the generally high quality" of Schweikert's security briefings, the outside experts wrote.
 The IRC was headed by Dr. Wah Lim, then of Loral and now of Hughes.
 The committee's staff director was Nick Yen, who is still employed by Loral.
 It was Yen who, on May 7, 1996, faxed the committee's 200-page preliminary report on the rocket accident to China Great Wall Industries Corp., the state-owned firm that runs China's commercial rocket program.
 Yen, Lim and Schweikert did not return phone calls seeking comment.
 Loral's outside experts said that while it was a mistake to send the accident report to Chinese officials without notifying the State Department, the report had been cleared of sensitive information.
 "Mr. Yen stated that he made a conscious effort to exclude any detailed technical analysis that the IRC members and staff included in their submissions to Mr. Yen," the outside experts wrote.
 Later the same day of Schweikert's

security briefing, Yen traveled to Washington and briefed officials of the Departments of State, Transportation, Commerce and Defense on what the IRC planned to do, Loral's outside experts said.
 U.S. government agencies disagree on whether the accident report, which confirmed China's own conclusions on the cause of the crash, constituted a breach of U.S. security.
 The Pentagon said last year that China got valuable rocket guidance information.
 The CIA this year said there was no damage to U.S. national security.
 Government officials and lawyers familiar with the investigation say Justice is developing a case that could argue that merely telling the Chinese that their own analysis of the rocket crash was correct constituted an illegal transfer of military technology.
 But under the federal regulations that govern the transfer of defense information, a successful prosecution may require showing intent, according to George Newhouse, Lim's lawyer.



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Pittsburgh billionaire helps finance critics of Clinton

By KAREN GULLO
WASHINGTON (AP)—Check the finances of some of President Clinton's noisiest critics and you're likely to find the financial support of conservative billionaire Richard Mellon Scaife.
 The Pittsburgh philanthropist's foundations gave millions of dollars last year to groups run by Clinton critics, according to annual reports that have become available in recent days.
 "The money is important," said Mark Levin, president of Landmark Legal Foundation, which received \$525,000 last year for two Scaife foundations.
 "It's one-third of our budget. We wish we could get more."
 Grants to anti-Clinton groups were only a portion of the \$25 million in donations that four Scaife foundations handed out to a range of organizations.
 But the money has supported a cottage industry of presidential critics who dog the administration with lawsuits, write unflattering articles about the latest turn in the Monica Lewinsky case and go on talk shows to criticize Clinton and defend Whitewater prosecutor Kenneth Starr.
 Landmark's Levin takes aim at the administration in pieces published in conservative journals, in press releases and in speeches.
 Levin's group pounced when The New Yorker magazine published an article that said Linda Tripp, a central figure in the Lewinsky case, didn't disclose on a security form for a Pentagon job that she had once been arrested.
 The group called on Attorney General Janet Reno to open a criminal investigation of the disclosure.
 The department declined.
 Scaife, an heir to the Mellon banking and oil fortune, rarely gives interviews. Yale Gutnick, his attorney, and Richard Larry, an official at the foundations, did not return phone calls.
 The American Spectator Educational Foundation Inc. has used its Scaife money to underwrite an investigation into Whitewater.
 The group, which publishes the American Spectator magazine, received \$950,000 from two Scaife foundations last year, more than nearly any other grantee.
 The Scaife foundations have since discontinued their support of the Spectator.

Scaife grant recipient Larry Klayman, whose Judicial Watch received \$550,000 last year, has filed lawsuits against the Clinton administration on a myriad of topics, ranging from campaign finance to the FBI files-gathering controversy.
 Klayman has taken depositions from presidential aides and run snippets of the deposition tapes on talks shows, where he is a frequent guest.
 Klayman said "we are very proud to receive the support" from Scaife, but said the grants "represent a minority of our support."
 David Horowitz, an author whose Center for the Study of Popular Culture received \$450,000 from a Scaife foundation, says the Pittsburgh billionaire is "unfairly pilloried" and says there are no strings attached to the money.
 "What this guy has done is funded investigative reports into the dark areas of the president. What on Earth is wrong with that? It's the American way," said Horowitz, adding that grants from left-leaning foundations to liberal groups far outweigh grants to right-wing groups from conservative foundations.

Tenorio . . . Continued from page 10

Tenorio said Inos is unable to accept the position, citing his residency on Saipan and not Rota.

Reyes . . . Continued from page 6

He reiterated the Republican legislators' pledge to work with the administration, saying that he remains "committed to this pledge and have shown my commitment."

Guam's . . . Continued from page 6

of pride in what they have accomplished. Among Gillman's accomplishments is her involvement as advisor to the JFK Islanders in Motion, a ballroom dance organization that she's taken to the Brigham Young University Dance Camp.

OPA . . . Continued from page 6

Telesource's. The contract also covered the training of operators and the transfer of operation and ownership of the facility to CUC.

Senator . . . Continued from page 9

nies held last Friday on Rota. The Senate President has been awarding scholarships from his personal funds for the past ten years to the top students from Rota High School.

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to the Parole Board upon the request of the nominee himself, citing "personal reasons." The nominee is the brother of former Hawaii liaison officer Henry I. Sablan.

conscious of the fact that there are a lot of qualified Republicans out there who could be named as Commerce secretary.

Education in 1970. She's been nominated for the "Who's Who Among American Teachers."

Dec. 13, 1997 to initiate a review of such file, then waited for another four calendar days to file the protest, missing the 10-day requirement for filing of a protest.

"They have continually and consistently maintained superior academic standing in their perspective field of study in some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the nation," he said.

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
TRANSAMERICA CORPORATION, Plaintiff,
v. YOON CHUN HYUNG and P & Y CORPORATION dba HAPPY MARKET, Defendants.

SUMMONS TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after service of this Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Eric S. Smith, the Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is at Fourth Floor, Horiguchi Bldg., P.O. box 5133, Saipan, MP 96950.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Jerrone Wang, Wayne Perry, Javon Shantiverlet, Joye Beraroz, Rowell Panason and Kim, Young Sp., Plaintiffs,
v. General Express Corporation, an incorporator dba the Vessel Service for tackle, gear and equipment etc., Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the court has ordered by the Court in this matter on June 5, 1998, to sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereunder, all of the right title and interest of Defendants in and to the following property.

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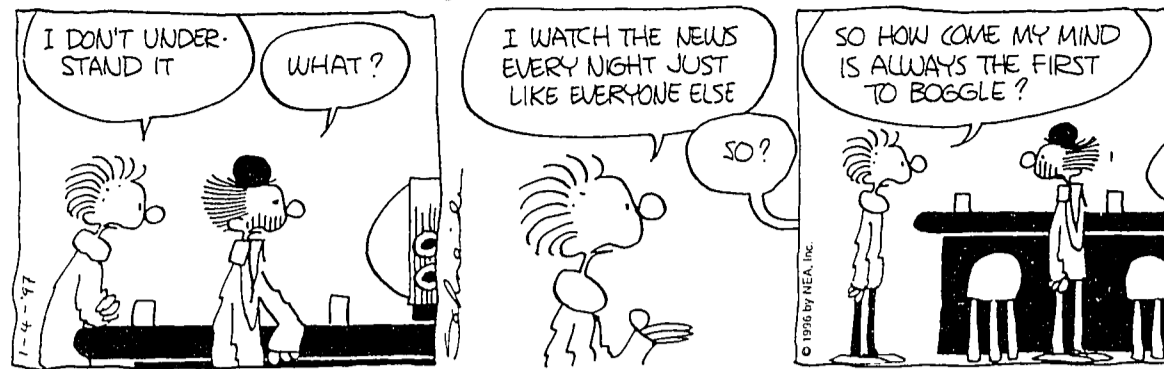


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STELLA WILDER YOUR BIRTHDAY

THURSDAY
Born today, you are likely to show remarkable ability and aptitude at an early age. Follow your instincts and trust your abilities, and you can make a name for yourself as one of the "greats" in your chosen career — provided it is a career that allows you to develop your singular talents to the fullest. Not only do you have a good deal of "star quality," you are also able to inspire others to perform well under your guidance.

You have an open and generous nature, and you're always willing to lend a helping hand to someone in need. You never let yourself buckle under pressure, and when the going gets tough, you often feel as though you have finally come into your own. You never run from a challenge.

Also born on this date are: Adrienne Barbeau, actress; Chad Everett and Gene Wilder, actors; Joe Montana, football player.

To see what is in store for you tomorrow, find your birthday and read the corresponding paragraph. Let your birthday star be your daily guide.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12
GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — You must follow the rules at all costs today. A loved one will be able to lend you valuable assistance when you need it the most.
CANCER (June 21-July 22) — You can contribute to the manufacturing of your own legend today — and all you have to do is be yourself. Make sure the hype doesn't get to you!
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — You can afford to be a flexible today. Don't give up what you believe in, but be more accepting of others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — You may find yourself in a difficult mood, and a friend is sure to tell you so. Don't take things personally.
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — Focus today on issues that have been developing over the past days and weeks. You may find that an old agreement cannot be honored.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) — You will find a way to get along with someone more uptight than you are. Trust in your sense of humor.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) — You're going to have to plan a journey carefully today if you expect to reach your destination on schedule. Certain obstacles are stubborn.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Don't let yourself be bothered by those who are unable to see things from your point of view. Your comprehension is complete.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) — You may have trouble getting a friend to agree to an experiment today. Be patient, and discuss the possibilities with care.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) — You may have made up your mind today about something that concerns those around you, but they can be trusted to make up their own minds.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — You may have to choose today between a friend's requests or a lover's demand. A last-minute inspiration can enable you to indulge both.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — You must strive to be a little more practical at this time. Focus on financial matters; a realistic look should bring you down to earth.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

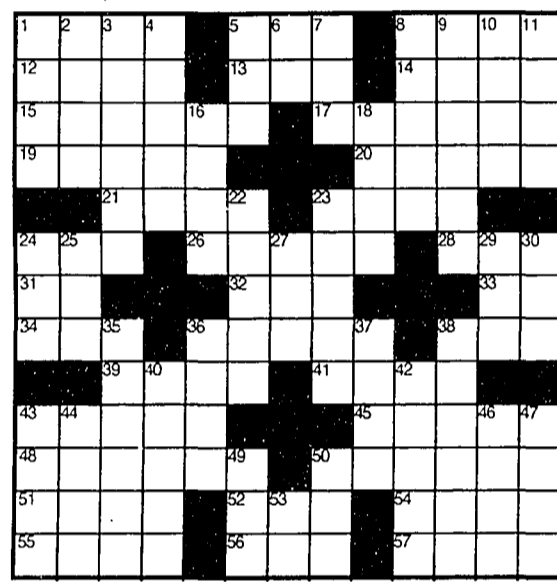
ACROSS
1 Which thing?
5 Sesame
8 Edible fish
12 Othello's lieutenant
13 Ending with infant
14 Raines or Fitzgerald
15 A Stone
17 Actor Darce
19 Have dinner at home (2 wds.)
20 Move smoothly along a surface
21 Hastens
23 Sheltered from the wind
24 Tea variety
26 Cinnamon or nutmeg
28 Transgress
31 Borgnine ID
32 From — Z
33 — Deum"
34 — de plume

DOWN
1 Sagacious
2 Sound of laughter
3 Writer
4 Japanese gateway
5 Sn is its symbol
6 Negative
7 Mr. Ayres
8 "Beauty and the Beast" character
9 Associates
10 Winter coaster
11 Identical
16 Washington
18 — of Man
22 — capsule
23 Fruit of the oak tree
24 100 yrs.
25 Cable network
27 Call — day
29 Japanese statesman
30 Lincoln is his cap.
35 Mich —
36 — gin fizz
37 Marquis de
38 — a trois
40 Apportioned
42 French painter
43 Producer — Tors
44 TV's Kaplan
46 Ms. Hagen, et al.
47 Camp shelter
49 Sweet potato
50 Depot (abbr.)
53 Eastwood ID

Answer to Previous Puzzle

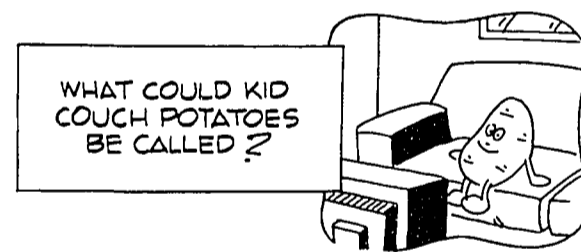
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DOR STIRED BRA
THE SCAR CLAP
MAURY TA
AV LEO HORDES
BAD SCIENTIST
ONUS ODA EASE
NECESSARY LEN
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TRIBSEN
SOHO PLUS ORT
TWO ZATRE VIL
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Bishop . . .

Continued from page 1

to constitute a quorum to decide on certain matters regarding the pending talks.

"The 902 does not live by quorum because the Covenant does not require it," he said.

Sablan pointed out that the CNMI panel sent on Monday a second letter addressed to President Clinton's special 902 representative Edward Cohen, the deputy solicitor of the US Department of Interior, inviting him to Saipan for the talks.

Sablan said that perhaps, the second letter might do the trick since Cohen failed to answer the CNMI panels' first letter dated May 27.

"I don't know what happened to the first letter, but maybe the second letter would do," he said, adding that the panel faxed a copy, and at the same time sent the original copy to Cohen.

Preliminary talks are expected to resume once Cohen responds.

Sablan said that the CNMI panel would lay on the discussion table the issues on Federal takeover bill, CIP funding, and labor and immigration laws, among others.

areas of discussion my group had decided upon. This include how best we can enforce Federal laws applicable to us, and social and economic cooperation between the US and the CNMI," Sablan said.

"What we want is for the United States to give their cooperation and to respect the provisions of the Covenant that we agreed upon. We want to make an impression that we are not a foreign government," Sablan said.

Over the six years covered by the new Transportation Equity Act, the reformulation Babauta sought will bring the CNMI an extra \$3.64 million — the equivalent of an extra year's funding.

In signing the new law, President Clinton unleashed a torrent of public works money amounting to \$203 billion to pay for everything from widening highways to flush toilets at rest stops.

for each worker on top of the \$225," said Babauta, who is also the chairman of the House committee on commerce and tourism.

The legislator explained that this increase will not be an additional burden to the workers since under the present laws, it will be illegal for employers to impose deductions to employees.

"Other deductibles currently allowed under the law like the workers' fee is legal. The additional \$100 cannot be imposed by the employer to the employee because that is not in the contract. It is illegal for the employer to go back to the employee to deduct it," he said.

Lite . . .

Continued from page 24

the league with 48.87 weighted average.

Lary Santiago of MGD Don't Touch Me came in second posting a total of 48.40 weighted average.

Crown Royals' Frank Santos came in the third spot with 47.60 weighted average.

For the Mixed Doubles Category, the team of Lydia & Manny conquered the top spot of the team standings with 126 wins in 198 games, collecting a 64 winning percentage.

Joel & Mara came as second with 122 wins in 198 games posting a 62 winning percent advantage.

Paul & Jean finishes the season and landed on the third spot with 113 wins in 198 games for a total of 57 winning percentage.

For the individual players, Paul Cielo tops the rank with 46.46 weighted average while Sebastian Morel came in second by posting a 46.42 weighted average.

Joselito Mari came in the third place with 46.42 weighted average.

The new start season will start its August and SEDA is preparing for an improvement over the previous season.

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NMI . . .

Continued from page 1

through fiscal year 2003.

Babauta said he has kept his eye on highway funding throughout his eight years in Washington. In 1992, he convinced the Federal Highway Administration to reformulate the division of funds among the US insular areas of American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the CNMI.

As a result the CNMI share increased 25 percent.

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Anyone with information may call CRIME STOPPERS at 477-HELPER, or Guam Police at 472-8911. One of the suspects is described as a local in his twenties, 5'9" with shaved head and weighing about 180 lbs.

The other is a local in his early thirties, 5'9" with black medium length hair.

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Critics call the legislation pork, but travelers won't have to look far to see the results: Over the next six years, the federal government will spend \$167 billion improving, widening and extending its highway system.

It will spend an additional \$36 billion improving mass transit systems across the US.

Critics say the new law, which contains 40 percent more spending than the bill it replaces, is a pork-filled, election-year plum for Congress.

While the new law also includes \$719 million to encourage states to crack down on drunken driving, supporters lost their fight to include a provision penalizing states that failed to adopt a 0.08 percent blood alcohol standard for drunken driving.

Lawmakers did approve \$7 billion for 1,500 special projects designated by House members and \$2.35 billion for projects recommended by individual senators. (With AP reports)

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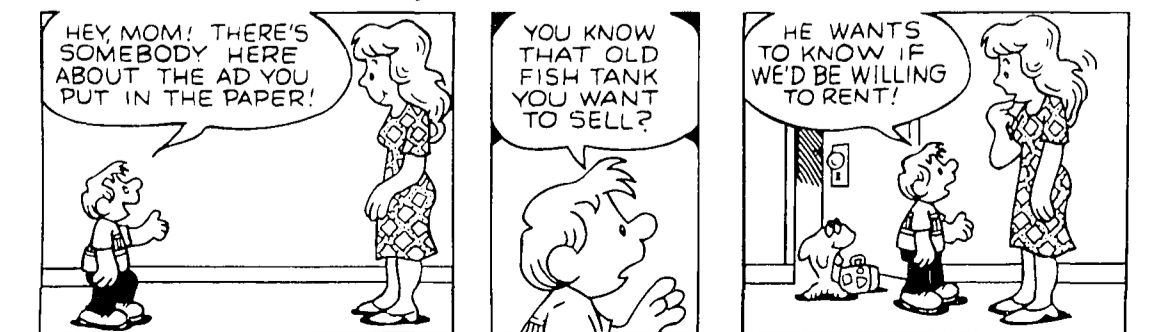
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SPORTS



Saipan Major League

Miller Lite wins over UMDA to stay on top

By Frank M. Palacios
For the Variety

TONY Camacho went three for four and Francis George knocked in two runs and also scored the go ahead run as the league leading Miller Lite Brewers avenged their only loss of the season to the U.M.D.A. Aces.

Chris Nelson was untouchable

in the first four innings shutting down the power hitting brewers on a three hitter with six strike outs as the Aces led 2-0 on James Soback's two-run, two-out single, before the Brewers finally put one on the scoreboard when Frank Pangelinan doubled in Nick Guerrero making it a 2-1 game after five innings of play.

The Aces pulled away in the top of the sixth with four runs on three hits highlighted by Soback's third RBI of the game and two Brewer errors, but the latter countered with four runs of their own led by Frances George's two-run single making it a 6-5 ballgame.

Elmer Sablan, who relieved starters Dominic Chong then shut down the Aces in the last three innings on a two-hitter while the Brewers managed to slip by two runs off Nelson and company for their eight win in nine outings.

The Aces dropped their fourth loss of the season, but remains in second place with a 7-4 mark. Winning Pitcher for Brewers was Elmer Sablan (5-1).

It is only the second setback for Nelson in twenty-four decisions dated back to May 1995.



A highly spirited Raymond Rojas of the Pepsi Giants reacts after his team's recent win over the Kraft Tritons. Pepsi won Tuesday against the Tritons to win the Guam Major League Baseball Championship.

Photo by Eduardo C. Siguenza

Pirates, Tigers, Padres win Sunday's LL games

LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM STANDING (As of Sunday June 7, 1998)

TEAM	WIN	LOSS	PCT	GB	TEAM	WIN	LOSS	PCT	GB
S/R D-9'ers	10	1	.909	-	Garapan Pirates	6	6	.500	4 1/2
San Vicente A's	10	2	.833	1/2	Kagman Rockies	5	7	.417	5 1/2
OL Aces	9	2	.818	1	Tanapag Falcons	4	7	.364	6
Kautz Glass Tigers	8	3	.727	2	Little Knights	3	8	.273	7
Blue Jays	7	4	.636	3	Kagman Lions	3	9	.250	7 1/2
C.K. Padres	7	5	.583	3 1/2	Cardinals	1	10	.091	9
Hustlers	6	5	.545	4	Team Toyota	1	11	.083	9 1/2

By Frank D. Palacios
For the Variety

A.J. Guerrero struck-out ten batters and also went two for four as the Garapan Pirates double up team Toyota, 18-9 in the first game of Sunday's Little League action.

The Pirates rallied for seven runs in the top of the second behind four base on balls and never look back the rest of the way.

Mayron Duenas was three for three and Kevin Ada knocked in three runs for the Pirates. Winning Pitcher: A.J. Guerrero (1-0) Losing Pitcher: Ryan Cabrera (0-1)

In the next game Bobby Coldeen and Joel Crisostomo combined on a two-hitter with thirteen strike-outs to lead the Kautz Glass Tigers to a 17-5 run-over the St. Jude Hustlers. Crisostomo also hit a homerun and knocked in five runs for the Tigers. Winning Pitcher: Joel Crisostomo (2-0) Losing Pitcher: Jason Reyes (1-3).

In the other game, Jack Cabrera went three for three with three doubles and three runscored and Edgardo Imperial went two for two to lead the C.K. Padres to a 12-8 victory over the Kagman Lions. The Lions led 8-7 after 4 1/2 innings of play but the Padres rallied for five runs in their half of the fifth to take the lead for good. Winning pitcher was

Jack Cabrera (2-1) while losing pitcher was Jun Indalecio (0-1).

In Saturday's games, Tyron Fitial went three for four with two doubles and four RBIs and also strike out six batters in 3 1/3 innings as the Kagman Rockies defeated the Little Knights 14-5 in the first game.

The Rockies jumped on top 9-0 after two innings and never trailed the rest of the way. Winning pitcher was Jonathan Benavente (1-0) and losing pitcher was Gregory Camacho (0-5).

In the other game, Bill Benavente and Sam Babauta each went four for four with Benavente recording a double and a two-run homer to lead the League leading San Roque D-9'ers to an 18-5 blow-out over the Tanapag Falcons in the second game. Myron San Nicolas was three for four with a double and homer for the falcons. Winning Pitcher: Ricky Jones (2-0) Losing Pitcher: Myron San Nicolas (0-1).

The Dandan Blue Jays took advantage of twelve San Antonio Cardinals base on balls scoring eleven runs to a 17-9 decision in the third game. Ian Babauta Leo the Blue Jay with four runscored and two RBIs. Winning Pitcher: James Kintol (2-0) Losing Pitcher: Carl Martin (0-4).

Pepsi Giants cap great GML season with finals win over Kraft Tritons

By EDDIE SIGUENZA
For the Variety

HAGATNA, Guam—It's a huge, giant decade for Pepsi in the Guam Major League, and no one can dispute that especially after Tuesday's title-clinching effort.

The Pepsi Giants, who entered the GML in 1986, capped an incredible season by winning the 1998 championship following a 10-6 victory over the Kraft Tritons Tuesday. Pepsi clinched the Best-of-7 series 4-1 and stopped Kraft from winning its second straight championship.

These two teams have decided the last three champions, with Pepsi winning it all in 1996 and Kraft last year. Aside from Kraft's 9-2 victory over the Giants on Sunday, Pepsi had the upper hand in every offensive and defensive category.

"The third game was the turning point of this series," Pepsi Manager Ray Aguon said of his team's 10-9 victory last Friday. "I say that because they were up on us and we came back. Then we just held on to our lead in the last inning. A lot of breaks went our way. It's hard for a lot of teams to come back after getting into a 3-0

deficit."

The Giants combined seasoned veterans with fresh rookies and good hitting with surprising pitching. Pepsi's offensive onslaught, one that produced 44 runs in the five games, was led by outfielder Benjie Pangelinan, who was named Championship Series' Most Valuable Player.

The 26-year-old Pangelinan set a new championship batting average mark by hitting .667 (14-for-21), which included six RBI, six runs scored, two doubles, a home run

Continued on page 23

Silver Streak this June 20

By Louie C. Alonso
Variety News Staff

The 5th Annual Tom Picarro Memorial Fun Run kicks off next Saturday, June 20, 1998.

Dubbed as "The Silver Streak," this special event was organized by DFS Saipan Limited.

The race will start at DFS Saipan Galleria in Garapan at six in the morning.

Aside from promoting physical strength and endurance, this annual event was organized as a fitting remembrance of DFS to their late former president, Tom Picarro.

Registration forms are available at DFS Saipan Galleria, The ADA Gymnasium, Saipan Fit-

Continued on page 23

Lite Beer leads SEDA Masters

By Louie C. Alonso
Variety News Staff

LITE Beer has maintained its leadership status at SEDA's Master's Division topping the overall team standings on their bracket this season.

The beermen posted a 153 wins in 270 games gathering a 57 winning percentage at the end of the season.

Pacific Amusement Playboys came in as second place in the standings collecting 143 games in 270 games, posting an average of 53 winning percentage.

Oleai Beach Restaurant is on the third spot with 122 wins in 270 games. On the individual Master Player Standings, Bong Mendoza of Pacific Amusement Playboys leads the pack with 58.60 weighted average.

Oliver Arguelles of Norpac Dart Busters came in second to Mendoza with 56.49 weighted average. While Ding Foragay of Lite Beer Ano Pa came in to conquer the third spot with 53.90 weighted average.

In the A Division, Norpac Dart Busters-A is on the lead once again in the overall team standings with 146 wins in 240 games, posting a 61 winning percentage.

Lens Strikers and Revolution X is tied on the second place with 143 wins in 240 games, collecting a total of 60 winning percentage.

Crown Royals came in on the third spot with 135 wins in 240 games posting a 56 winning percentage.

On the individual player standings, Renato Reyes of Revolution X tops

Continued on page 23

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