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Teno on new health regs:

'Workers must not bear costs'

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff

EMPLOYEES should be spared the additional expenses resulting from the implementation of new regulations on pre-employment health screening, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio said yesterday.

"I think that it is important that they (employers) bear the expense of the (health screening) because as health is more important than money," said Tenorio.

"I believe that the employer should bear all the costs."

Employers have recently aired concerns that the new health regulations recently promulgated by the Department of Public Health are "burdensome and costly."

Some employers are even reportedly looking at passing some of the added costs to the workers. Yesterday, however, business leader Joe Ayuyu said the new requirements are acceptable but that



Pedro P. Tenorio

the fee should be lowered. (See related story)

The new regulation directs newly-arrived employees to undergo health screening within 10 days, a provision employers find redundant as these workers have supposedly undergone medical checks in their country of origin. Health officials have however

maintained that medical certificates, in most cases, are not reliable as such documents can be forged.

Government has issued amendments to health screening regulations, which took effect last Feb. 25, after the Center for Disease Control confirmed that the rate of tuberculosis in the islands has doubled last year.

The amendments are meant to contain tuberculosis, AIDS and sexually-transmitted diseases.

Under the amendments, a sealed envelope bearing results of a worker's health tests will be forwarded by the employer from the private clinic which conducted it, to the Department of Labor and Immigration's Public Health Liaison Office.

There, the employer will be asked to pay \$20 for documentation prior to the issuance of a

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Business: New regs OK, but fees should be lower

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff

SAIPAN Chamber of Commerce president Joe C. Ayuyu yesterday said the business community is supporting the new nonresident workers' health screening regulation provided the fee is lowered at a reasonable level.

Ayuyu, who met with Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio and several health officials Monday, said the business community's only concern when it objected to the new health screening regulation was the additional cost, which he said was "way too high."

"The cost is our only concern. After the meeting, we were all enlightened about the magnitude of the problem. There are many sick people coming to the CNMI," he told Variety.

He added that both the government and business sector representatives agreed that the estimated \$150 additional expenses for employers of nonresident workers is not very reasonable.

Ayuyu said the business sector is proposing that the amount be lowered to \$50 to be collected by the Commonwealth

Health Center and the accredited private medical service provider that would do the screening.

"We support that everybody must be screened. We all agreed that \$50 is more reasonable for the business community to live with," he said, adding that public health is worth the additional expense.

Local health officials have reported an alarming increase of communicable diseases in the Northern Mariana Islands. Reports claimed cases of tuberculosis, HIV infection, and other sexually-transmitted diseases on the island have reached alarming levels.

"We need to protect the community but we also have to make sure the business sector will be able to afford the additional expense," Ayuyu said.

He explained that medical service providers will still be able to make profits if the screening rate would be lowered to \$50. He lauded how the CNMI government has always been sensitive to the business community's concerns.

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Rota nurses remain 'unpaid'-- Manglona



Benjamin T. Manglona

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff

ROTA HEALTH center's nurses have yet to be paid their salaries, the island's Mayor Benjamin T.

Manglona said yesterday.

"We still owe their manpower agency \$111,000," he said, but added that the agency may have already paid the nurses partially.

At the same time, the mayor said the nurses will be included in the government's payroll beginning April.

Still, he said, the financial condition of Rota's municipal government remains critical.

"We still need a permanent doctor," Manglona said. "At the Rota office of Public Works, only \$300 are left for their fuel needs."

With the delivery of essential public services at stake, the

Continued on page 19

Reyes seeks to 'maintain' tax rates on liquid fuel, cigarettes

By Mar-Vic C. Munar
Variety News Staff

REPRESENTATIVE Karl T. Reyes is proposing that tax rates for fuel and cigarettes be kept at 15 cents per gallon and 50 cents per pack, respectively.

Reyes' proposal is contained in House Bill 11-103 which seeks to eliminate the sunset provision in Public Law 9-22, which had raised the taxes on fuel from 10 cents to 15 cents; and cigarettes from 15 cents to 50 cents. The said provision

state that the "new" rates would be effective only for three years after the passage of the Act, after which the rates revert to the previous levels.

The three-year sunset provisions have lapsed, and the cigarette and gas taxes are back to the level prior to enactment of PL-22.

Reyes, chairman of the House ways and means committee, noted that his proposal to hold the 15 cents per gallon fuel tax is "closer" to the recommendation made by

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Karl T. Reyes

37,600 labor permits in '97

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff

A TOTAL of 37,600 out of the 42,500 applicants were issued nonresident workers permits in the last fiscal year, preliminary records at the Department of Labor and Immigration show.

Filipinos still comprise the bulk of the permit issuances, which numbered 18,121, followed by Chinese nationals, 15,440 of which were able to given permits,

according to DOLI's Labor and Immigration Information and Documentation System (LIIDS).

Bangladeshis accounted for 943 of the permits issued; Japanese nationals, 889 and Koreans 878.

There were also 235 Nepalese workers and 688 Thai nationals who were given entry permits.

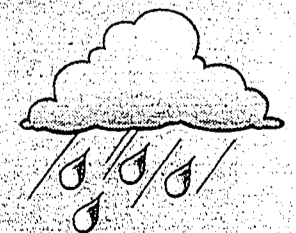
Meanwhile, LIIDS data showed that Filipino workers dominate almost all of the Commonwealth's

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SUNSET. The best things in life are free--such as the sunset, so this couple say. Photo taken at Quartermaster Beachfront. Photo by Mar-Vic C. Munar

WEATHER Outlook



Partly cloudy with a few showers

Council OKs Iraq deal



Members of the United Nations Security Council raise their hands Monday night during a unanimous vote in favor of a resolution warning Iraq of "severest consequences" if it violates an arms inspection deal. AP

By TOM RAUM
WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House insisted that U.S. forces would remain poised near Iraq for the foreseeable future while calls increased in Congress for more forceful efforts to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

"We will remain skeptical until we see full implementation of the agreement as it's been reached. And we will keep a significant force deployed in that region in the interim," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Monday.

U.S. Senate Republican leader Trent Lott, meanwhile, said he

would back legislation stating that Saddam should be tried as a war criminal and would support increased sanctions, money for a Radio Free Iraq and covert action to bring down the Iraqi president.

"Containment doesn't seem to get what we want," Lott told reporters.

Lott also denied he intended to snub U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan by declining to meet with him. He cited a busy schedule.

Annan canceled a trip to Washington planned for Tuesday, saying he needed to remain close to U.N. headquarters while the Security Council discussed the accord he reached with Iraq late last

month, but an aide said part of the reason was criticism by leading congressional Republicans of the deal, which averted U.S.-led air strikes.

Lott said Annan had requested a meeting to discuss payment of back U.S. dues to the United Nations, not to talk about the Iraq crisis. "I've met with him before, and I expect to meet with him in the future," he said.

Still, the incident served to highlight the sentiment expressed by many Republicans in Congress that Annan had made too many concessions to Saddam in the agreement.

Meanwhile, an exiled Iraqi op-

position leader, Ahmad Chalabi, urged Congress to provide "overt U.S. support, not covert U.S. action," including arms and air cover.

"Saddam is the problem. He can never be part of any solution," said Chalabi, who leads the Iraqi National Congress, an umbrella group in London that seeks to unite the numerous anti-Saddam groups.

Chalabi testified at a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Near East subcommittee called by Chairman Sam Brownback to consider whether Saddam could be overthrown.

"Given the past failures of the opposition (to oust Saddam) and the unwillingness of U.S. officials to back them up, is it realistic to support any opposition group?" Brownback asked without providing an answer.

Brownback also criticized Annan's role, saying, "The secretary general's agreement with Iraq has generated a lot of criticism — most of it well-deserved."

Another witness before the Senate panel, former CIA Director James Woolsey, blamed both the Bush and Clinton administrations for a "flaccid and feckless" policy

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Congress eyes options for removing Saddam

By ROBERT H. REID
UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The Security Council unanimously endorsed U.N. chief Kofi Annan's deal to open Iraq's presidential palaces to U.N. arms inspectors and warned of "severest consequences" if Baghdad breaks the accord.

Annan, appearing before the 15-member council, said Monday that it was now up to the Iraqis to comply "with what they have signed on paper."

"Whether the threat to international peace and security has been averted for all time is now in the hands of the Iraqi leadership," the U.N. secretary-general said.

President Bill Clinton hailed the council's action, also saying it is now up to Iraq "to turn the commitment it has made into full compliance."

"Tonight's unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council sends the clearest possible message: Iraq must make good on its commitment to give the international weapons inspectors immediate, unconditional and unrestricted

access to any suspect site, any place, any time," he said in a statement.

U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson said the vote was a victory for the United States.

But the unanimous vote came only after several council members insisted on guarantees that it would not give automatic approval for a military attack if Iraq breaks the accord.

China's U.N. ambassador, Qin Huasun, noted that Beijing had insisted "that there must not be any

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Saddam Hussein

Lawyer: Lewinsky was briefly alone with Clinton in Oval Office

By JOHN SOLOMON
WASHINGTON (AP)—Monica Lewinsky's lawyer said he believes his client was alone with President Bill Clinton in the Oval Office a couple of times but the visits were brief and others were working nearby.

"Being alone doesn't mean they had a relationship," William Ginsburg said.

His comments marked the first time Ginsburg has described Ms. Lewinsky's visits since it was learned last month that the former White House volunteer was cleared into the executive mansion three dozen times after she left for a Pentagon job in 1996.

In a hint of a possible defense strategy, Ginsburg is beginning to suggest what Ms. Lewinsky, who has remained silent, might say if compelled to tell her story to a U.S. grand jury.

An independent prosecutor is investigating claims that Ms. Lewinsky had a sexual relationship with Clinton and the president tried to cover it up.

Ginsburg said her visits to the White House were mostly work-related and to visit people other than Clinton, but on a couple of occasions she was briefly alone with the president. He said there was not enough privacy or time for any "salacious event" to occur.

"Secret Service agents or officers were posted at the door and people were working in the proximity at all times," Ginsburg said in an interview.

Ginsburg said the comments were based on his own investigation, not what his client may have told him.

Meanwhile Monday, a U.S. judge

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Bill Clinton Monica Lewinsky

Teno keen on amnesty bill

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff
THE ADMINISTRATION is inclined towards supporting legislation granting amnesty to the CNMI's estimated 5,000 to 15,000 illegal aliens.

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday said he favors such legislation, adding that illegal aliens should be given an opportunity to be repatriated or to seek lawful employment.

The governor, however, reiterated his administration's commitment to find ways of reducing the

CNMI's dependence on alien workers, who now comprise more than half of the commonwealth's population.

At the same time, Tenorio said the Department of Labor and Immigration (DOLI) has come out with a memorandum restricting the entry of alien workers from Bangladesh.

Assistant Attorney General Robert Goldberg yesterday said a similar memorandum affecting workers from China is "in the works."

Meanwhile, a bill that would

provide a six-month immunity period for illegal aliens has been filed in the House of Representatives.

Introduced by Rep. Manuel T. Tenorio (R-Prec. 1, Saipan), House Bill 11-76 would allow illegal aliens who avail of the immunity period to be "forever

immune" from all prosecution.

The illegal aliens could also be issued a temporary work permit of up to three months, during which he could seek a permanent job.

The bill states that if the alien wishes to be repatriated, DOLI would assist him to obtain money

for the air fare.

Under the bill, DOLI has to provide assistance to the alien or any of his family members who want to be repatriated.

Those who seek immunity would also be assisted by DOLI to seek sources of humanitarian relief.

APIL conference rescheduled

By Mar-Vic C. Munar
Variety News Staff
THE ASSOCIATION of Pacific Island Legislators (APIL) has rescheduled its annual conference, the maiden event to be held at the yet-to-be completed Tinian Dynasty Resort and Casino, House Floor Leader Ana S. Teregeyo has announced.

The conference, originally scheduled for April 29-May 2, has been moved to May 25-29.

"The new dates will ensure that the Resort will be completely finished and ready for occupancy," Teregeyo said in a memorandum to members of the House of Representatives.

Teregeyo, APIL treasurer, said she and APIL president, Guam Sen. Carlotta Leon Guerrero, met with Dynasty's management "to see firsthand the Dynasty and its multi-function rooms and guest rooms."

Teregeyo, in an earlier interview, said APIL members have

agreed to hold this year's conference on Tinian to "watch" the burgeoning casino industry in the island, and to study how this development would affect the economies in their respective islands. Casino industry is among the APIL's agenda.

APIL is composed of legislators from various Pacific islands states including the CNMI, Guam, Palau, Marshall

Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Nauru.

Also to be discussed are issues involving fisheries, juvenile delinquency and domestic violence.

May 25 and 26 is the schedule for Board of Directors' meeting. The actual conference starts on May 27 during which the APIL Webpage will be launched.



Carlotta Leon Guerrero



Ana S. Teregeyo

State funeral today for Prudencio M. Manglona

By Rick Alberto
Variety News Staff
THE CNMI today will accord state honors, including a 15-gun salute, to the late Prudencio Mendiola Manglona, father of Rota Mayor and former Lt. Gov. Benjamin T. Manglona.

The late Manglona, who is also the father of former Rota Mayor Prudencio T. Manglona, will be buried on Rota.

Manglona died last Feb. 23 at the age of 94.

He was a simple man, taking odd jobs as a carpenter, gardener foreman, painter foreman, and agricultural foreman.

He was an agricultural extension agent when he retired in 1980 at the age of 77.

All government department heads have been requested to attend the state memorial service at the Round House at 1:30 p.m.

At the heads' discretion, employees may also be granted administrative leave to enable them to attend the service, the Office of the Governor said in a memorandum dated Feb. 27 and signed by Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan, who was acting governor last week.

Cabinet members were instructed to wear dark trousers, white shirt and tie for men and dark dress for women.

Manglona interspersed his private jobs with several government positions including that of a precinct representative for district 2 (Tatachog), a delegate to the Micronesian Assembly Council, a member of the Homestead Review Board, a member of the Land Registration Team (Rota), and a member of the Rota municipal council.

He also served during the Naval Administration, Trust Territory Government and the Commonwealth Government "with distinction," according to an executive proclamation honoring Manglona.

"He will be remembered for the many contributions he made to his community," the proclamation stated.

TB-stricken worker stopped at airport, faces deportation

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff
A TUBERCULOSIS-stricken non-resident worker was arrested Monday night at the Saipan International Airport while reportedly on her way to leave the island.

The reason: A deportation order has been issued against her.

The order bars thirty-year-old Ming Hua Jin from entering CNMI again over the next five years.

Jin who was employed by the Sako Garments Corp., is now under quarantine at the Commonwealth Health Center pending her "official" exit.

She ran away late last month after learning that her employer, as advised by authorities, has bought a plane ticket for her repatriation to China.

The Department of Labor and Immigration has since put out a public notice on her but had apparently failed to locate her until she showed up at the airport.

It was not immediately made clear whether Jin's plane ticket was the one bought by her employer.

Upon notice from the Division of Immigration that... (Jin) has been lo-

Administrative Order issued Monday, has referred Jin to DOLI's immigration division explaining that, after being diagnosed with TB, the worker "no longer has an employment or residence status that allows her to remain in the Commonwealth."

"For failure to comply with the CHC medical treatment requirements... (Jin) is referred to the Division of Immigration for deportation," Asper's order further read.

"Upon notice from the Division of Immigration that... (Jin) has been lo-

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Ming Hua Jin

New cargo airline firm flies Saipan next month

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff
A NEW air cargo company will be flying Saipan routes next month, a development seen to boost shipping industry in the Northern Marianas and the rest of Micronesia.

The air cargo company, Asia Pacific Airlines, is proposing to fly several routes in the Micronesia, including Saipan, next month, according to the Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA).

Ports executive director Carlos Salas said the air cargo firm expressed intentions to transport mail and cargoes to different islands in the Pacific including Honolulu, Pohnpei, Saipan and Guam.

Salas said the cargo company will also deal with the shipment of fresh fish and other agricultural products from and to different islands in Micronesia and in Hawaii.

"This is a welcome development. We are supporting such services... we always entice companies to fly and serve the Commonwealth. We have all the reason to welcome such a development," Salas told Variety.

Asia Pacific Airlines, which is based out of Guam, has proposed to start flying Honolulu-Pohnpei-Saipan-Guam roundtrip route on April 15.

Salas said the company is also looking at expanding its cargo services to Solomon Islands, Indonesia and the Philippines, and eventually expand to the United States mainland.

He added that the company is

now in the process of securing the approval of the Department of Transportation (DOT).

The air cargo firm is looking at the possibilities of stopping in Majuro as part of its route.

US Postal Service officials in Hawaii are lobbying with the US military to provide increased cargo space on military aircraft for civilian mail to the Marshall Islands.

Earlier, Marianas Airline proposed to launch its first flight by the third week of March, flying Saipan-Tinian route, in time for the grand opening of the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino this month.

Tinian is fast becoming the hub of casino resorts in the Pacific region, with the expected rise of another multi-million casino complex on the island.

Salas said Marianas Air has written CPA, adding that agency is currently working out logistics with Tinian airport. He said the new carrier, which will use a Cesa aircraft model, is seriously taking its third week of March schedule.

A New Zealand-based airline company has also expressed intentions to provide air service to Guam-Saipan-Guam routes, though the CPA is yet to receive formal proposal.

Salas said executives of Coral International, who visited the Northern Marianas during the inauguration rites of the new CNMI administration, made an informal proposal to fly the service routes.

Store near CK cemetery robbed

By Ferdie de la Torre
Variety News Staff
ONE OF two persons reportedly sprayed pepper mace on a couple during a robbery pulled off at a store behind the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery Monday night.

The suspects, described as a man and a woman, carted away an estimated \$6,804 in cash and checks, according to public safety information officer Maj. J. J. Castro.

Castro said the robbery happened when GZL Store was about to close at 9:31 p.m.

Initial investigations showed that prior to the incident, Chun Gu, 47, owner of GZL Store, went out of the establishment to throw the trash.

Gu, however, went back to the store because he saw the suspects standing near their car.

The suspects then entered the store and asked for a pack of cigarettes. When Gu asked for payment, the male suspect pulled a pepper mace from his pocket and sprayed it at the businessman's face.

The suspect then turned to Gu's wife, Yang Ming, 35, and sprayed the mace at her. Ming, however, was not really hurt because she was wearing eyeglasses at the time.

The female suspect grabbed a bag near the cashier's counter before she and companion fled on foot, police said.

Both suspects were reportedly clad in black jacket. Police are following up on the case.

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Nominee to BPL has a pending land case

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff

THE ADMINISTRATION'S nominee to the Board of Public Lands, Pedro M. Atalig, has a pending land case before the Superior Court.

The board is an autonomous body that has sole authority over the CNMI's public lands.

In June 1996, the Attorney General's Office (AGO) filed a \$4 million civil suit against the then Supreme Court associate justice and six other individuals over an alleged land grab on Rota.

Appointed by the CNMI Supreme Court to handle the case, Guam Superior Court Presiding Judge Alberto C. Lamorena denied last December the defendants' motion of dismissal.

Atalig, a lawyer for the defunct Marianas Public Land

Corp. (MPLC) in the 1980s, was nominated last week to represent Rota on the Board of Public Lands (BPL).

Asked for comment, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday said he has full confidence in Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan who, as acting governor, made the appointment.

Atalig, the Variety learned, was recommended by Rota's elected officials.

If his nomination is confirmed by the Senate, the recently retired associate justice would serve until Oct. 14, 2001.

Atalig replaces Joaquin T. Dela Cruz, who was named resident director of public works by Rota Mayor Benjamin T. Manglona.

Besides Atalig, BPL's other current members are Tomas Aldan, who is the chair, Marian Aldan-Pierce, Luis

Limes and Manuel Villagomez.

The last four are all appointees of then governor Froilan C. Tenorio, who was strongly opposed to BPL's creation.

One of Tenorio's first acts upon assuming office in 1994 was the abolishment of MPLC for its alleged "highly anomalous transactions."

In a controversial executive order, Tenorio "delegated" MPLC's functions to the Office of the Governor and created a Division of Public Lands (DPL) under the Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Saying that Tenorio had abused his authority over public lands, the Legislature passed bills in 1996 and 1997 to reestablish an autonomous board.

Tenorio vetoed both bills, but in Spring 1997, the Legislature, by a one vote margin, overrode the veto.

Water sports operators feeling economic pinch

By Rick Alberto
Variety News Staff

JOE Tebei, a staff of the Saipan Jetski, idly waits for customers at the back of the Diamond Hotel on a Tuesday morning. It's a slow day, but the sad part of it is that it has become typical since the slow-down in visitor arrivals hit Saipan and visitors coming have become more budget-conscious, as a result of the economic turmoil gripping Asian economies including, to a certain extent, Japan.

The Saipan Jetski premises used to hum with customers who averaged 20 to 25 daily before the Asian turmoil in October.

"Now we average only 10 daily. Sometimes we get as low as six customers," Saipan Jetski owner and operator Clyde Aguon says.

Aguon says not only he feels the pinch but also the nine other jetski and banana boat operators.

Aguon has already laid off three locals under his employ, including one jetski instruc-

tor.

He has retained only two instructors who alternate each other every day.

When the day is too slow, Aguon says, they just go fishing and sell their catch.

The competition for the declining customers is such that a price war has developed.

Tour operators have devised a low-priced marine leisure sport package that consists of jetskiing, banana boat riding, and snorkeling.

Aguon has priced the package at \$55. All three activities in the package last for one and one-half hours.

But other operators have priced their package as low as \$40 for the same duration. Some have added a bonus activity: trip to the nearby Managaha Island.

The marine sports package is a child of the tourism slump. Before, according to Aguon, they offered only individual sports and they could hardly cope with the number of customers.

The \$55 price is in fact a real bargain considering the fact that the individual sports are priced as follows: snorkeling—\$35/30 mins.; jetski—\$35/30 mins.; and banana boat—\$25/25 mins. for a total of \$95.

"We try our best to sell the package. They pay us a little extra to help out with our daily expenses," Aguon says, adding that he would be happy with getting even just eight customers a day.

At the same time, he claims his business is losing.

The parasailing business is no different.

Josefina Teneda, administrative assistant for Auto Marine, Inc., says the number of customers they've got have declined by half.

"If before we got 50 customers in a day, now we get from 25 to 30," Teneda says.

Teneda says that the slow-down in customers started in October.

She says that because of the low value of yen against the dollar, many Japanese tourists have deleted marine sports activity from their tour budget.

"Now they're just content with sunbathing," she says.

She also says that Japanese visitors, who used to not haggle, now ask for discounts.

They also now look for \$5 budget meals, she adds.

Even if business income has dropped by about 40 percent, Teneda says they don't have any plan of folding up.

"We can still manage to survive," she says.

And so with Saipan Jetski, which has been in operation for nine years now.

"I'm not closing down. I'm hopeful and optimistic," Aguon says. "I know things will turn around. I'll wait a little bit more."

Tenorio 'warns' employers

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff

GOVERNOR Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday warned employers against abandoning their employees even as he vowed to look into reports that about 60 traders have fled the island in the past two months, leaving close to 100 workers behind.

"I believe that the employers have a responsibility to take care of their employees," said Tenorio.

"They can not just abandon them because of the economic situation," he added.

"I got to look into this."

Employers found to have abandoned their workers may permanently be barred from hiring nonresident workers should they attempt to put up business anew when the economy starts picking up.

Jeffrey Camacho, acting Labor director, has said the Department of Labor and Immigration has begun coordinating with the Department of Commerce in pinning down incorporators of firms that have thus far folded up or have been the subject of

Governor airs concern over abandoned workers' fate



Pedro P. Tenorio

abandonment complaints.

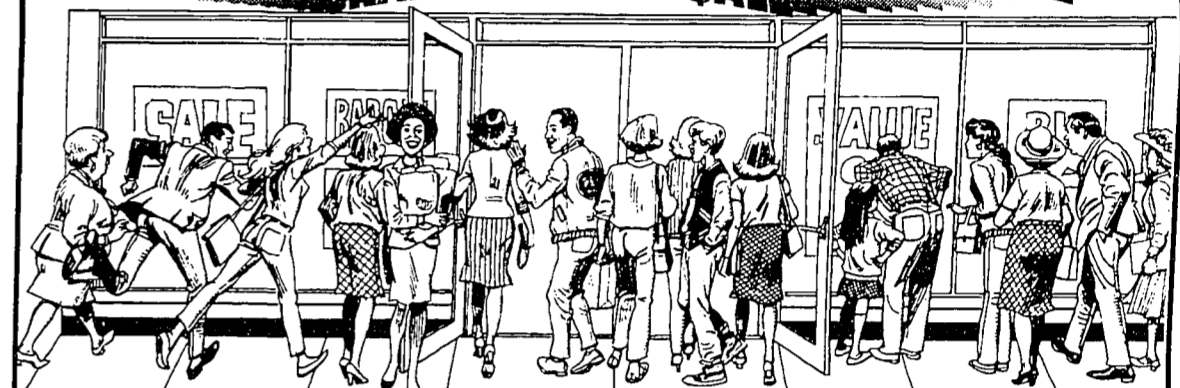
Independent estimates placed the number of firms that have closed down to about 40.

Most of these are tourism-related enterprises.

Further, records at the DOLI's Compliance and Monitoring Section (CMS) showed that close to 100 complaints involving about 200 workers and some 60 companies have been filed.

Painting a grim picture that could wait for nonresident workers in the coming months, Camacho said the mass repatriation of abandoned workers will not be far-fetched "if we can have the resources."

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Cop's lawyer seeks to avoid 'trial by ambush'

By Ferdie de la Torre
Variety News Staff

ONE OF 11 police officers charged for beating a burglary suspect has sought additional information about the case from the Attorney General's Office allegedly to avoid trial by "ambush."

John M. Chambers, counsel for defendant Police Officer Jesse Concepcion, asked the Superior Court to order AGO to provide them information needed to prepare for a defense on charges of assault and battery and misconduct in public office.

Chambers wanted to know the time and place that Concepcion allegedly committed each alleged assault and battery and the identity of all persons who witnessed such offense.

The lawyer also inquired what actions of the officer that caused the filing of assault and battery charge.

On misconduct in public office, Chambers requested to give them information about the time and place each alleged act was committed.

The counsel also wanted to know what action that prompted the filing of misconduct charge.

Concepcion was among the 11 police officers charged with assault and battery, and misconduct in public office for allegedly beating Francis Eugenio on Dec. 1, 1997.

The 20-year-old Eugenio was arrested and charged with two other persons for breaking into Wendy's Restaurant in Garapan last Nov. 29. Police Officer 2 Jose Borja Cepeda who responded to the crime scene was allegedly injured when Eugenio struck him on the head with a crowbar.

Chambers, in Concepcion's motion for bill of particulars filed Monday, said without the information defendant can not adequately prepare for hearing and as a result will be subject to surprise at trial.

"Indeed without the requested information, defendant is being subject to trial by 'ambush' on extremely serious charges which is contrary to

all notions of due process," Chambers said.

The purpose of a bill of particulars is to move specifically to define the charges so that the defendant is apprised of the case with sufficient clarity in order to allow the opportunity to prepare a defense and to avoid or minimize danger of surprise at trial.

A bill of particulars is necessary in order for the defendant to ascertain the manner in which each alleged crime was committed.

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fax 670/235-6040
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Complete and fax to Norwest Financial

Name: _____ Social Security number: _____
Address: _____
Loan amount requested: \$ _____ Monthly income* (after payroll deduction): \$ _____
Telephone number: (home) _____ (work) _____
Best time to call: _____ Birthdate: _____

*Income from alimony, child support, and separate maintenance need not be shown if you do not wish it considered as a basis for repayment.

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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

CAO near completion of new canoe project

By Laila C. Younis
Variety News Staff
THE large red canoe sitting near the Carolinian Ut in Garapan will soon find a new home in the Commonwealth Museum of Art and History and the Carolinian Affairs Office decided to build a new canoe to replace it.
Master navigator and traditional leader, Mau Piailug, has been requested by CAO to work on a new canoe that will be on display by the Carolinian Ut, according to CAO Acting Executive Assistant Simeone Odoshi.
"We will have to replace the canoe that is going to the museum, so we are working on a new one. Having a traditional canoe has always been a part

of our program," said Odoshi. "We have tried to get young people involved in the process, but they ask why work so hard on a canoe when you just buy a motor board or a fiber glass boat? It is important to witness this kind of traditional knowledge," he said.
"For the construction of the canoe, we used all natural methods. It was a learning experience for me to measure only with the stem of coconut leaves," he added.
Piailug also said that he was willing to share his knowledge with those interested to learn and need his services.
"I am waiting for people to approach me. I am willing to show how to build a canoe. For this canoe, it will depend on CAO on what to do with

it," said Piailug. "We will have a special ceremony for the canoe and we will set sail after it is completed," he said.
According to CAO staff member Gene Igisomar, the canoe is mostly made of trunks from a breadfruit tree and 'kalaskas', a native tree usually used for canoe construction.
"We started construction last December and we are now near completion. It was difficult to find that right kind of tree, since breadfruit trees are smaller here," he said.
According to Odoshi, CAO has a small library of traditional materials and video documentation for interested individuals. For more information, contact CAO at 233-3343.



Master Navigator Mau Piailug works on a rope for the new canoe being constructed by CAO yesterday. Photo by Laila C. Younis

CNMI Nutrition Council meeting

THE CNMI Food and Nutrition Council will be holding its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 11 at 1:30 p.m. at the Continuing Education Room (of the Cafeteria) at CHC.

The announcement was made Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11.
Included in the agenda are preliminary matters; correspondence (information only); and discussion on or-

ganizing of the Council, Council budget for FY 1998, membership and a possible amendment of the Council By-laws.
All interested persons are welcome to attend.

Local Pastor chosen as Hawaii District leader

PASTOR Barbara Grace Ripple of The Immanuel United Methodist Church in Koblerville was recently appointed superintendent of the Hawaii District of the United Methodist Church, as the church announced in a news release.

This year Ripple will take over the position of District Superintendent, overseeing the 39 churches of the district of which Saipan and Guam are part, each having one United Methodist Church.

Reverend Ripple founded the English-language congregation of IUMC on Saipan on April 5, 1992 and has served as its pastor since the beginning.

The English-language congregation was chartered as a United Methodist Church in the Hawaii District of the California-Pacific Annual Conference in April, 1995.

Rev. Ripple is a graduate of California State University, Northridge (1972) and received her Master of Divinity degree in 1985 from the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio.

She was ordained a deacon in the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church in 1983, and ordained as an elder in full membership in 1987.

A former elementary and secondary school teacher, Rev. Ripple began serving the church

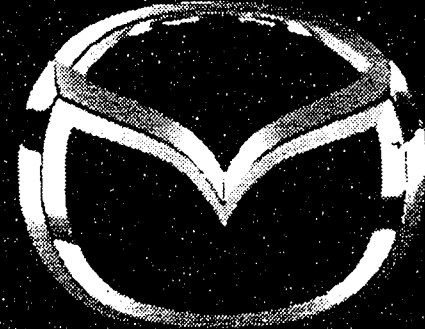
in 1977 as a Christian educator in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.

In 1981 she was appointed as the student pastor of Nelson United Methodist Church in northeast Ohio. Upon completion of seminary in 1985, she was appointed pastor of Epworth United Methodist Church in Massillon, Ohio, where she remained until her marriage to James H. Ripple in 1991, which necessitated a relocation to Saipan.

In addition to normal pastoral duties, Rev. Ripple has contributed to the community of the CNMI in many areas.


She was a founding coordinator of the Ayuda Network, Inc. (a network of social service providers), the founding chairperson of the Mental Health Planning Council, a member of the Head Start Advisory Council, a member of the HIV-AIDS Task Force, a member of the CJPA Supervisory Council, a member of the CHC Ethics Committee, and a member of the Emergency Food and Shelter Board.

From 1993-1995 she co-lead a weekly support group for victims of domestic violence, assisted by CHC Social Services Director Lauri Ogumoro. In 1993 Rev. Ripple began a weekly support group for survivors of sexual abuse which continues to meet.




mazda


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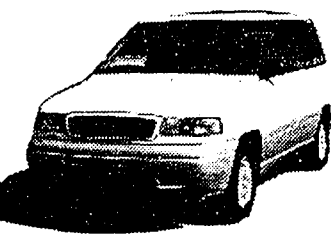
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AROUND the Islands

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Disabilities Council launches website

THE CNMI Governor's Development Disabilities Council has launched its Website which is now on-line effective last Monday, a news release said. There will be two webpages under the Council, 1) GDD Council and 2) Assistive Technology STRAID webpage.
Both webpages cover information about the program, mission, philosophy, current events, projects, activities, bylaws, reports, photographs of assistive technology equipment, linkages to federal/non-profit affiliates, federal grantor and the Northern Marianas.
Others include information/photographs of staff & board members, etc.
The purpose of the site is to

inform local, national and international site visitors about the Pacific DD Council and Systems of Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (AT Project).
The unique part of the site is its design accessible to visitors with disabilities.
For example, the text come in three different sizes: large, medium and small accessible for individuals who require large print due to visual impairment.
Most computers today come with voice read-out from text accessible for individuals with visual impairment (individuals who are legally blind). Individuals interested to visit our Website may access:

www.saipan.com/gov/branches/ddcouncil
To write to the DD Council via Electronic Mail, please dial: dd.council@saipan.com
Meanwhile, the Council on Monday also announced the distribution of the Children Coloring Book to Wendy's Fast Food Restaurant. Present to receive over 100 coloring books was Juanita Seman, Manager and her Assistant Manager.
Other restaurants invited and accepted the books but didn't attend the presentation is Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's.
The books will be included in each restaurant's Kid's Meal package.
"The purpose of the book is to raise awareness about children

with disabilities so they too are to be respected and included in our society," according to Mariano K. Camacho, Chairperson of the DD Council.
"Often times children without disabilities don't understand about children with disabilities, as a result, their attitudes become negative thus make fun of them or treat them differently," said Thomas J. Camacho, Executive Director of the Governor's DDCouncil.
"It's our hope that the coloring books which will be obtained by these children will have fun as well as serve its purpose (awareness) and also we hope parents/guardians will teach their children without disabilities that they are no different than they are," Camacho concluded.

NMC Sch. Lab opens registration

THE NMC College Lab School wishes to inform the public that it is now accepting applications for the 1998-99 school year.
The College Lab School provides classes for children 4-8 years old, from Early Childhood Education to Third Grade.
As a model school for teacher training, enrollment is very limited, so interested parents are asked to pick up an enrollment packet as soon as possible. Open registration closes March 13.
The College Lab School office is located in Building FS-3 in the Joeten Fina Sisu housing area. For more information, call Lucy Norita-Barnes at 235-5965.

BDC offers women & entrepreneur seminar

THE Northern Marianas College Business Development Center (BDC) announced it will sponsor a special workshop focusing on women entrepreneurs, to be presented by Kandace Aksnes, a visiting business consultant from Seattle, Washington, where she served as a business adviser with the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE).

Women interested in starting a new business or improving their current businesses are invited to participate in this seminar which will present information to aid participants in developing business, financial and marketing plans.

Guest speakers on Saipan will include Lynn Knight, President of Sunset Advertising, and Lydia Sablan, acting Executive Director of the Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA).

Knight will offer advertising insights useful to small businesses, while Sablan will present information on obtaining financing from CDA.

The seminar will be held at the Distance Learning Room (Building N) on the Northern Marianas College As Terlaje campus. The workshop will also be presented on Tinian and Rota on March 12 and 13, respectively.



Taking a break. Chad Jack and Gaylene Castro take a short break after playing near the Ada Gym Baseball field.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Development
Walkin's Bldg., Gualo Rai, Tel. 234-7145/7146/6293
Saipan, MP 96950

PUBLIC NOTICE
March 2, 1998

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, SECTION 11, GOVERNOR PEDRO P. TENORIO AND LT. GOVERNOR JESUS R. SABLAN, THROUGH THE CDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ARE HEREBY GIVING NOTICE THAT THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CDA) BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, AT 11:00 A.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CDA CONFERENCE ROOM, GUALO RAI, SAIPAN.

AGENDA:
I. ROLL CALL
II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
III. CPA BOND ISSUE
IV. ADJOURNMENT

/s/ JUAN S. TENORIO
Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

(Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

PREQUALIFICATION OF GENERAL CONTRACTORS FOR THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW POSTAL FACILITY IN SAIPAN SOLICITATION NO. 052571-98-A-0006 DUE DATE: MARCH 17, 1998

CONTACT: JOHN FRAHER - 650/615-7224 or GRACE BATESTING - 650/615-7206
PACIFIC FACILITIES SERVICE OFFICE
USPS
395 OYSTER POINT BLVD., STE. 225
SO SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94099-0300

THIS IS A NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREQUALIFY FIRMS TO CONSTRUCT A NEW POSTAL SERVICE FACILITY IN SAIPAN. THE USPS-OWNED FACILITY IS APPROXIMATELY 14,815 GROSS SQUARE FEET ON A 50,567 SQUARE FOOT LEASED SITE WITH AN ESTIMATED COST RANGE OF \$2,500,000 TO \$3,500,000. THERE IS NO FIXED MECHANIZATION ON THIS PROJECT. PLANNED CONSTRUCTION STARTING DATE IS AUGUST 1998 WITH A 300 CALENDAR DAY CONSTRUCTION PERIOD. PREQUALIFICATION STATEMENTS WILL BE EVALUATED BY THE OFFICER'S STAFF. PRIMARY FACTORS THAT WILL BE CONSIDERED AND ARE OF ALL EQUAL IMPORTANCE, ARE: QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE PROJECT SUPERINTENDENT; SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF A MINIMUM OF 3 SIMILAR SIZE PROJECTS WITHIN THE PAST 5 YEARS; FINANCIAL ABILITY TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT; ABILITY TO BOND THE PROJECT; CAPACITY TO TAKE ON THE PROJECT. OTHER FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WILL INCLUDE: MANAGEMENT PLAN AND SAFETY PLAN; KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL AREA; FIRMS FLUENCY IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE - PRINCIPALS, PROJECT MANAGER, SUPERINTENDENT AND OFFICE STAFF. NO FEWER THAN THREE OF THE MOST HIGHLY QUALIFIED PRIME CONTRACTORS WILL BE PLACED ON THE PREQUALIFIED CONTRACTORS LIST. IN THE EVENT THE NUMBER OF PREQUALIFIED CONTRACTORS IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO ENSURE ADEQUATE COMPETITION, THE POSTAL SERVICE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO PREQUALIFY ADDITIONAL CONTRACTORS WHO WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE SOLICITATION. INTERESTED PRIME CONTRACTORS MAY OBTAIN A PREQUALIFICATION PACKAGE AT NO COST BY SUBMITTING A WRITTEN REQUEST TO GRACE BATESTING AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS, OR BY FAXING A REQUEST AT 650/615-7243. THE PREQUALIFICATION PACKAGE WILL BE SENT BY MAIL TO FIRMS THAT REQUEST IT, IT WILL NOT BE FAXED TO THE FIRMS. PREQUALIFICATION STATEMENTS WILL NOT BE RETURNED. INTERESTED FIRMS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT THEIR PREQUALIFICATION STATEMENTS VIA U.S. POSTAL SERVICE FIRST CLASS, PRIORITY, OR EXPRESS MAIL.

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If you don't have access to a FAX machine, Call 234-9797/6341/7578 and a representative will help you place your ad over the phone.

Marianas Variety News & Views
FAX your ad to 234-9271

DPS looks into mysterious disappearance of tourist

By Ferdie de la Torre
Variety News Staff
THE DEPARTMENT of Public Safety is conducting an investigation into the mysterious disappearance of a Japanese tourist at the Bird Island Lookout in Marpi.

DPS Information Officer Maj. J. J. Castro said Yuji Watanabe, of Narita, Japan, was reported missing since Sunday.

Initial investigations showed that Watanabe, who was among members of a tour

package, rented a Toyota car with license plate ABH-617 on Sunday.

Watanabe allegedly told an agent that he wanted to buy a flashlight because he would go swimming alone at the Forbidden Island.

The tour agent allegedly advised the tourist to instead go to Micro Beach.

The Diamond Hotel's tour agent reported to the police that Watanabe failed to come back and missed yesterday's scheduled 5 a.m. flight for Narita.

A rent-a-car employee also called Diamond Hotel inquiring about Watanabe for not returning the vehicle.

Police officers spotted the car abandoned at Bird Island Lookout Monday at 2 p.m.

During a search, detectives found the car's ignition key inside the vehicle which was locked. The tourist's bag containing eyeglasses was found on a cliff's edge.

DPS is asking the public for information on Watanabe's whereabouts.

Full cable TV restoration on Rota soon

By Rick Alberto
Variety News Staff
MORE crewmen will be sent to Rota next Monday to begin the process of fully restoring the TV cable system on that island, the Marianas Cable Vision said yesterday.

MCV General Manager Joseph Butters told the Variety that the MCV will be sending three more linemen to do the restoration work.

Butters said they have already one man doing the job there.

Earlier MCV customers on Rota

had complained that they were either not receiving cable service or the cable service they were receiving was limited to only three channels.

The limited TV reception on Rota occurred after typhoons Keith and Paka which struck the CNMI last Nov. 2 and Dec. 11, respectively.

Rep. Alejo M. Mendiola Jr. wrote Butters last Monday to express the concerns of his constituents.

Mendiola requested Butters to send one or two additional cable specialists to "address this matter and have it

(problematic situation) rectified," Mendiola also told Butters that there are now about 100 residents from the village of Sinapalo who recently moved into their new houses in subdivision 2 who want to be hooked up to the TV cable line.

Butters said he could not determine how long the full restoration work would take place.

"The only thing I can say is that the (restoration) process will begin (on Monday)," he said.

Japan Airlines, American Airlines OK code-sharing

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff
A MAJOR codesharing program on routes between the United States and Japan have been reached by the two countries' flag carriers, the Variety learned yesterday.

The codesharing, reached between Japan Airlines and American Airlines, will complete a global alliance focused on the Pacific that already includes a fully reciprocal frequent-flyer program arrangement, the airline companies said in a statement.

The program also includes a computerized reservation system [CRS], joint venture for Japan and extensive cooperation in air cargo.

"With the codesharing, American and Japan airlines will put in place the final element of [our] alliance, linking route networks to deliver increased convenience and enhanced value for travelers and shippers in the US, Japan and other parts of the world," officials said.

JAL serves the US from Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Fukouka, Sapporo and Sendai to Saipan, Guam, Atlanta, Chicago, Honolulu, Kona, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Anchorage.

American Airlines, meanwhile, is flying Tokyo to and from Dallas/Forth Worth, Seattle/Tacoma and San Jose, California, and will inaugurate Chicago-Tokyo nonstop service starting May.

The airline company has also applied to the Department of Transportation for three other routes which include New York-Tokyo, Boston-Tokyo and Dallas-Osaka.

The JAL-American Airlines alliance will link a total of nearly 850 aircraft, 3,640 departures and 290 cities for American and American Eagle, with 137 airplanes, 610 departures and 70 cities for JAL and its units.

American Airlines chairman Robert Crandall, in a statement, said the cooperative network between the two companies will span the Pacific to link Asia with the US, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Latin America and points beyond.

"By this tie-up, JAL and American Airlines' networks will be expanded dramatically between Japan and the US beyond the gateways. We are confident that we will provide enhanced services to our customers in terms of the number of flights and connections," said JAL chairman Susumu Yamaji.

The start of the codesharing flights is yet to be determined, depending on government approvals, as well as the companies' marketing plans.

Marshalls marks 'Bomb Day'

By Giff Johnson
For the Variety
MAJURO—A U.S. nuclear test conducted 44 years ago in the Marshall Islands continues to produce fallout — in the form of excessive rates of cancer and contaminated lands — prompting Marshall Islanders to demand more compensation and medical care from the United States on the anniversary of the Bravo hydrogen bomb test.

Ceremonies marking the March 1, 1954 blast at Bikini, the largest hydrogen bomb ever detonated by the U.S. were held today in Majuro in conjunction with the national holiday known as Nuclear Victims Remembrance Day.

Oscar deBrum, the chairman of the Nuclear Claims Tribunal that is compensating islanders for health and land damages, said that the \$45 million provided to the Tribunal for compensation by the U.S. is seriously inadequate to satisfy the hundreds of claims that have been filed.

The Marshall Islands government, he noted, is taking steps to convince the U.S. that it should provide additional compensation.

On March 1, 1954, the Bravo test caused a snow-storm of radioactive fallout that blew onto many inhabited islands in the Marshalls, and contaminated American servicemen and Japanese fishermen in addition to islanders.

It took the U.S. two to three

days to evacuate the most severely exposed islanders.

Many of them suffered nausea, skin burns and their hair fell out within days of the blast.

While U.S. scientists declared nearby Rongelap Atoll safe for resettlement three years after the 1954 Bravo test and allowed islanders to return home, recent studies show the atoll is not safe and needs cleanup and rehabilitation work to make it habitable.

Rongelap Islanders evacuated their home atoll 13 years ago for fear of continued radiation exposure.

They are now gearing for launching a major nuclear cleanup and rehabilitation.

The fact that Marshall Islanders can't sue the U.S. for nuclear test damages irks some island leaders.

Bikini Senator Henchi Balos said he disagreed with the Marshall Islands government's action of espousing U.S. responsibility for the tests.

When the Marshall Islands accepted the total \$150 million settlement in 1986, it signed an agreement extinguishing all rights of Marshall Islanders to sue the U.S. for damages.

The senator said it wasn't right for the Marshall Islands to have taken away the

Vanuatu Ombudsman's report on the sale of gov't houses released

PORTVILA (Pacnews)—The Vanuatu Ombudsman's Office has released a public report on the 1993 sale of 71 government houses and land.

The latest is the sister report to the Vanuatu National Provident Fund Housing Loan Report of December 17, 1997, which led to riots in Port Vila by about 500 VNPF members.

The Ombudsman's Office states in the report that the Council of Minister's decision led by former Prime Minister Maxime Carlot Korman was illegal and discriminatory.

This was because the ministers accepted a priority list of those who should benefit from the sales including themselves and political secretaries.

The report states that VNPF loans were obtained to purchase

the government properties at a gross undervalue, and as a result the people of Vanuatu lost between 85 million vatu (\$US700,000) and VT152 million (\$US1.23m).

It says a government valuer, Emile Olsen, gave the government ministers and political secretaries VT200 per square metre of land while the National Housing Corporation rate was VT1,375 per square metre.

The report compares the value of former minister Willie Jimmy's land of VT405,000 as given by Olsen with that of a private real estate agent of VT3,300,000 - nine times greater.

It also notes that Olsen reduced the value of former secretary to Prime Minister

Korman, Maria Kalsakau's property from VT14.4 million to VT9.9 million.

The Ombudsman, Marie-Noelle Ferriex-Patterson, recommended that Korman and former Lands Minister Paul Telukluk never be appointed ministers or be responsible for public assets and that the members of the Council of Ministers responsible not to be chosen for high positions of responsibility again.

It further recommended that disciplinary hearings take place within 30 days for public servants involved in the issue and that the sales of the properties be annulled or that the true value of the properties be collected and paid to the government.

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Board of Directors of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), represented by Mr. Juan S. Tenorio, Chairman, and the Department of Public Works are soliciting sealed proposals for the Installation of Lighting of the Baseball Field in Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Proposals in duplicate, will be accepted at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan until 2:00 p.m., local time, March 16, 1998, at which time and place all proposals will be opened and read aloud. Any proposals received after the above time will not be accepted under any circumstances.

A bond of 15% of the total bid price must accompany the proposal. This security may be Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Bid Bond, made payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation.

The proposer is required to submit with the proposal: 1) a copy of a current CNMI-issued business license; 2) updated financial statement; 3) listing of existing and past projects including completion dates; 4) certification of tax compliance from the Department of Revenue and Taxation; 5) written confirmation from a reputable bonding firm as to the company's capability to obtain bond insurance and performance and payment bond; 6) copy of Builder's Risk and Workmen's Compensation coverage; 7) listing of manpower with copies of CNMI-issued work permits; and 8) listing of equipments.

Plans and Specifications of the project are available from the Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, Saipan, on or after February 25, 1998. A non-refundable payment of \$150.00 is required for each set; payment made payable to the NMHC. The Pre-Proposal Conference for this project will be held at 10:00 a.m., March 10, 1998 at the NMHC Conference Room.

Attention is called to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires the provision of training and employment, and the awarding of contract for work on the project, to low income project area residents and business concerns. NMHC also notifies proposers that it will affirmatively ensure that, in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority and women's business enterprises will be accorded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this RFP.

Attention is further called to the Labor Standards Provision for Wage Rate Determination of the Commonwealth, Classification and Salary Structure Plans, and payment of not less than the minimum salaries and wages as set forth in the Contract Document, must be paid on this project.

The Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in the said proposals, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the government's best interest. All proposals shall become the property of the Commonwealth Government.

/s/ JUAN S. TENORIO Chairman of the Board Northern Marianas Housing Corporation	February 13, 1998 Date
/s/ JOHN B. CEPEDA Acting Secretary of Public Works	February 17, 1998
/s/ HERMAN SABLAN Acting Director, Procurement & Supply	February 17, 1998

Healthline Some supplements hike risks of serious diseases

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff
IF YOU think dietary supplements like carotenoid and beta-carotene produce a protective effect against cancer, count yourself as one of the misinformed millions of people around the world.

Scientists of the International Agency for Research on Cancer [IARC] warned against using dietary supplements of fresh fruits and vegetables for cancer prevention.

IARC scientists particularly warned against carotenoid pills, stressing that fresh fruits and vegetables remain the first line of defense against cancer.

Epidemiological studies in different countries have shown that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables lowers the risk of developing cancer.

Results of these studies led to a widespread belief that plant constituents, such as carotenoids and beta-carotene, can produce a protective effect against cancer.

But a working group of 23 scientists from 10 countries, in December last year, met to

evaluate all the published data on the health effects of carotenoids, including the results of clinical trials in which high doses of beta-carotene were given to reduce cancer incidence and mortality in healthy populations.

"In none of these trials did the drug have a significant preventive effect," said Dr. Harri Vainio, chief of the Chemoprevention Unit at IARC.

He added that the drug, when given to regularly smoking volunteers, increased the risk of lung cancer and mortality from cardiovascular diseases.

"...until further information becomes available on how beta-carotene and other carotenoids influence the processes leading to cancer, none of these substances should be promoted to the general population as a tumor-preventive treatment," Vainio said.

He emphasized that cancer prevention by fruits and vegetables remains more effective than taking one or several of their constituents as dietary supplements.

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<p>MONTERO ES \$24,995</p> <p>4-Wheel Drive Automatic Transmission AM/FM Cassette Power Windows Power Locks Air Conditioning 7 Passenger Seating</p>  <p style="font-size: small;">Vehicle not exactly as shown.</p>	<p>MONTERO SPORT LS \$25,995</p> <p>Air Conditioning AM/FM Cassette Dual Air Bags Power Windows Power Locks Two-Tone Paint Fender Flares Aluminum Wheels Automatic Transmission Tinted Glass</p> 

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Elsewhere in the Pacific

Experts: Global emissions may threaten coral reefs

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — Coral reefs around the world are under threat from global emissions of greenhouse gases, a group of scientific experts warned Tuesday.

Rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are reducing the ability of coral animals to build the limestone skeletons that make reefs, they said.

The warning stems from an international meeting of marine experts in Boston last week, which included scientists from the Australian Institute of Marine Science in Townsville, the Australian federal science agency and the Australian National University.

It also followed a warning from

the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority which said last week bleaching was killing reefs along 620 miles (1,000 km) of the Queensland coast.

Australian Institute of Marine Science principal research scientist Terry Done said rising atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations increased the acidity of surface ocean water.

"In the long term it may interfere with skeleton growth by reef builders and pose a serious threat to the sustainability of reefs world wide," Done said.

Reefs might then not be able to cope with rising sea levels and become more vulnerable to cyclones, which are pre-

dicted to increase in some parts of the world.

Federal atmospheric researcher Barrie Pittock said the Boston report was a breakthrough because it recognized previously unidentified global effects on an ocean ecosystem.

The recent Kyoto agreement on a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions will have little effect on the problem, he said.

Done said coral reef managers had assumed global climate change would at worst have a neutral effect on coral reefs around the world.

"Our report suggests that governments, managers and scientists need to take a hard look at that assumption," he said.

Nena seeks unified effort on El Niño

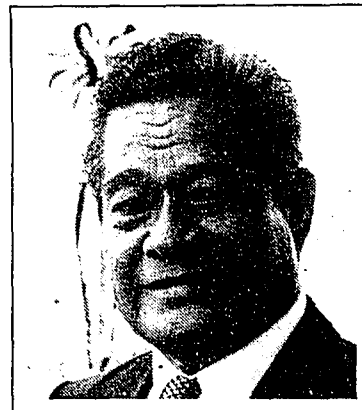
PALIKIR (FSMIS)—President Jacob Nena last week asked all FSM Governors for their cooperation on the El Niño problem facing the FSM.

The FSM National Government is about to formally ask the United States and other countries for assistance for which FSM will need detailed water need data for the past two months.

The action plan should prioritize the limited resources and a request for water delivery should specify the island requesting, amount of water requested and the expected date of delivery.

A request for assistance from the National Government should include reasons why a state is unable to respond satisfactory to such a state need.

Upon evaluation by the National Government will consolidate all information and present a request to the United States based on the information for a determination that there



Jacob Nena

exists an emergency or disaster under the applicable FEMA law.

nena suggested that such information be provided to the National El Niño Task Force Chairman T. Lam Dang, Department of Justice.

Dang joined the Department of Justice recently after serving in Pohnpei State Government.

Fiji to hike duties on tobacco

SUVA (Pacnews)—A special health fund is likely to be set up within the next few months, if the tobacco bill is passed by parliament.

Finance Minister Jim Ah Koy had stated in his budget address that there would be an increase in duty on tobacco which will then be used to set up the health fund, Island Networks Corporation reports.

Government expects to generate around F\$4 million (\$US2m) through the tax, which will be used on health expenditure and research.

Solomons takes delivery of computers from British Gov't

HONIARA (Pacnews)—The Royal Solomon Islands Police Training Academy has taken delivery of computer equipment and training aid worth \$30,000 (\$US6,500) from the British government.

The computers were handed to the police school by the British high commissioner in Honiara, Brian Connolly, SIBC reports.

Connolly says he hopes the Police Academy will benefit from the computers in their training programmes and administration work.

The police commissioner, Frank Short, expressed his gratitude for the generous assistance by the British government.

It's a whole new WORLD.

RP prepares for La Niña's floods

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Fidel Ramos said Sunday he has ordered precautions against the floods and heavy rains that the La Niña weather phenomenon is expected to bring to the Philippines this year.

La Niña, expected in June, has the opposite effects of El Niño, the worldwide weather phenomenon that has caused prolonged drought in the country since last year.

Ramos ordered government agencies to clean and repair all waterways and flood control projects before La Niña's onset.

A government statement said floods brought by La Niña could affect about 380,000 hectares (938,600 acres) of rice lands and wipe out a substantial part of the country's rice output this year.

Agriculture Secretary Salvador Enriquez said the government is considering steps such as delaying rice planting in some provinces until the rainy season has passed.

Last year, at least 7,718 tons of rice worth 65.34 million pesos (\$1.63 million) and 13,175 tons of corn worth 75.9 million pesos (\$1.9 million) were lost because of drought caused by El Niño, officials said.

The Philippines produced an average of 10.79 million tons of rice and 4.25 million tons of corn annually from 1994 to 1996.

The government has decided to import 650,000 tons of rice to replenish the country's buffer stocks.

The National Food Authority also is awaiting permission for the duty-free importation of 300,000 tons of corn, which is used mainly for hog and poultry feed.

Weather bureau chief Leoncio Amador, a member of a government task force dealing with El Niño's effects, has said about 90 percent of the country received less than 50 percent of normal rainfall from October 1997 to January 1998.



RP Vice-president and now opposition Presidential candidate Joseph "Erap" Estrada, center, and his running mate Edgardo Angara, left, are joined by the country's very popular movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. in greeting a huge crowd at their campaign rally. Eleven strong candidates are vying for the country's top government post. AP

Filipino overseas workers asking for investment fund

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff

WITH THE financial crisis still hounding the Philippines, overseas Filipino workers are now asking the government to set up investment funds to protect their economic interests, it was disclosed.

The International Union of Overseas Filipinos, Inc., an advocacy group for

OFWs, is asking the Philippine government to assist OFWs in creating investment funds pooled from the workers' dollar remittances and contributions to the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

The move was also aimed at making the workers' dollar earnings more productive.

Julius Magno, of the workers' group, said the government should not only monitor worker deployment but also help formulate an overseas investment scheme to serve as a buffer "for whatever will happen in the domestic economy."

OWWA officials have said that many overseas workers have already started setting up investment funds on their own.

A group of Filipino workers in the United Arab Emirates has collectively invested some PhP3 million in a local trust account with an assigned fund manager to be used for future investment projects.

A similar group in Saudi Arabia of Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia have preferred to keep their funds in a Saudi bank which they plan to use later in setting up their own bank.

OWWA said it does not only have the funds to extend assistance to overseas Filipino workers but it had already spent the better part of its revenue doing just that.

Continued page 20

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Malaysia tourism revenue dips

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia's tourism revenue dropped by about 1 billion ringgit (\$ 278 million) last year, when the country was hit by smog and worries about a virus, a Cabinet minister said Monday.

Preliminary figures showed 1997 tourism revenue of 6 billion ringgit (\$ 1.5 billion), down from 7.2 billion ringgit (\$ 1.8 billion) in 1996, said Sabbaruddin Chik, minister of culture, arts and tourism.

Sabbarudin said one factor that discouraged tourists was the Coxsackie B virus in Sarawak state on the island of Borneo, which many foreigners mistakenly thought had spread throughout Malaysia.

The virus killed about 25 children. He also said that smog from forest fires burning out of control in neighboring Indonesia had caused many cancellations of tourist visits.

Sabbaruddin, however, was optimistic about this year.



Jeweler G. Rajindran sits quietly waiting for customers at his shop in city of Klang of Kuala Lumpur. Consumer demand and tourism revenues have dropped dramatically since the Malaysian economy began faltering last July. AP

EU urges Japan to deregulate faster

TOKYO (AP) — European Union officials urged Japan Monday to speed up industry deregulation to boost economic growth throughout Asia, a Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Representatives from the EU arrived in Tokyo Sunday to talk with politicians, trade ministry officials and business leaders about how to loosen regulations in the financial services, telecommunications and transportation industries.

Japan and the EU agreed at a summit in January that they would spend more time talking about deregulation.

EU officials met Monday with a representatives from Japanese ministries and agencies and repeated their demand that Japan deregulate to achieve lower prices, more consumer choice and increased economic efficiency, said the ministry official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Politicians and business leaders from a number of nations have been pressing Japan to stimulate its economy to help lift the Asian region out of a months-old slump.

For its part, Japan asked European countries to lift regulations on legal services, employment and driving licenses.

Police defuse crude bomb in HK club

HONG KONG (AP) — Police on Monday defused a homemade bomb that had been planted in a karaoke club in a Hong Kong tourist district.

Police said a watchman saw smoke billowing from a paper bag in the lobby of the club in the Tsim Sha Tsui area of Kowloon Peninsula.

The bag contained a can stuffed with explosive powder, attached to a safety fuse, they said.

The club had not received any threats and it was not known who planted the bomb, police added.

Last year, 17 people died in a fire in a karaoke club in the same area following an arson attack by members of a triad, or Chinese gang.

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Food running out in North Korea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said it is running out of food, even though it has been sharply cutting the daily ration of grain for its 24 million people.

Quoting an unidentified government official, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said Monday that the communist nation's grain stock stood at 167,000 tons as of Jan. 1.

"With this stock, 300 grams (10.5 ounces) were distributed to each person on a daily average in January and 200 grams (7 ounces) in February. Even if 100 grams (3.5 ounces) are distributed in March, the stock will run out in mid-March," the official was quoted as saying.

International experts say a daily minimum of 450 grams (one pound) of food is needed to keep

an adult relatively healthy.

North Korea has suffered through three years of disastrous weather that aggravated problems caused by inefficient cooperative farming techniques.

The U.N. World Food Program issued a new appeal in January for 650,000 tons of food for North Korea this year.

The United States has committed 200,000 tons, or \$ 75 million, to the latest U.N. appeal. There have been no reports of major donations from other countries.

In the KCNA report, North Korea said it needs about 7.84 million tons of grain a year, of which 4.82 million are needed for food and the remainder for animal feed and other use.

But the North's grain output decreased drastically last year be-

cause of a prolonged drought, reducing the crop to 4.83 million tons, the KCNA report said.

The country expressed gratitude for outside food aid and said it was mobilizing "all the people and servicemen" to increase grain production this year.

Meanwhile, the World Food Program, in a statement issued Monday from its headquarters in Rome, said the North Korean warning that it is running out of food confirms earlier WFP assessments that international assistance is urgently needed.

The WFP added that it is currently supplying 98,000 tons of grain to 4.7 million of the neediest North Koreans, mainly children, and that the food aid should last the recipients through this month.



South Korean lawmakers protest in front of the National Assembly Speaker Kim Soo-hwan during a crucial parliamentary vote on President Kim Dae-jung's choice for a new prime minister at the National Assembly in Seoul, Monday. The voting was halted because of a dispute over allegedly illegal voting by opposition legislators. AP

Helicopter crashes near oil platform off Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — A helicopter crashed near an oil platform off Taiwan's outlying Tenghu Islands, killing the pilot, officials said Tuesday.

Rescuers were searching the sea west of Taiwan for the two other missing crewmen from the Monday night crash, the Teh-An helicopter company said.

The crash, Taiwan's third air crash in two weeks, raised concerns over aviation safety.

The Bell 412 helicopter crashed as it was preparing to land on the oil rig to pick up a worker for medical treatment in the southern port of Kaohsiung, officials said.

The United Daily News quoted witnesses as saying the copter exploded into a fireball after its tail hit a pillar on the oil platform, which was operated by the Netherlands' Continental Oil Co.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

March 2, 1998

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, SECTION 11, GOVERNOR PEDRO P. TENORIO AND LT. GOVERNOR JESUS R. SABLAN, THROUGH THE CDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ARE HEREBY GIVING NOTICE THAT THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CDA) BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, AT 11:00 A.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CDA CONFERENCE ROOM, GUALO RAI, SAIPAN.


- AGENDA:
I. ROLL CALL
II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
III. CPA BOND ISSUE
IV. ADJOURNMENT

/s/ JUAN S. TENORIO
Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

(Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).



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Clinton hits GOP tax plan

By Terence Hunt
WASHINGTON (AP)—Trying to kill a tax-revolt plan popular in Congress, President Clinton said it would be "reckless" to abolish the nation's tax code and try to build a supposedly simpler, fairer system from scratch. "We musn't buy a pig in a poke," Clinton said, calling the Republican-backed plan an "irresponsible scheme."



Bill Clinton



Trent Lott

Republicans want to make tax reform a major battleground for this year's midterm elections, and Clinton acknowledged that their proposal sounds irresistible. But he said the uncertainty surrounding the bill could be disastrous for family budgets, businesses and the economy. Republicans quickly accused Clinton of defending the status quo. "So are we to conclude that the president believes that the marriage tax penalty is fair and that the payroll tax is fair and that the American people are not overtaxed?" Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott said.

2001, guaranteeing that a replacement would be passed by Congress by July 1 of that year. Republicans are lining up to put their name on the bill even as they remain divided over replacement plans such as a flat tax or national sales tax.

"Under the guise of reform," Clinton said, "they have proposed what to me is an irresponsible scheme: to eliminate our tax laws without any system to replace it."

He said, "I will not permit it if I can stop it. But it shouldn't pass in the first

up with a White House briefing by Gene Sperling, director of the National Economic Council, and Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers.

The administration opposes a major tax overhaul but has proposed a series of simplification measures. Summers was noncommittal about offering any new ideas over the next few months.

"I think we have a tax code today that works better for Americans as they do what is crucial to them in their lives — raise children, send kids to college, prepare for retirement — than we've had in the past, as a result of proposals we've made," Summers said.

Clinton said, "No one concerned about fighting crime would even think about saying, 'Well, three years from

Senator wants more visas for skilled alien workers

By MICHELLE MITTELSTADT
WASHINGTON (AP)—Heeding the pleas of a domestic computer

industry hungry for talent, a leading Senate voice on immigration proposed Monday to sharply increase the number of visas granted to high-skilled foreign workers.

Currently, the United States allows up to 65,000 high-skilled foreigners into the country annually. Silicon Valley employers and others in the booming high-tech sector contend that cap is far too low, preventing them from hiring qualified foreigners for jobs they are unable to fill domestically.

Sen. Spencer Abraham of Michigan, who chairs the Senate immigration subcommittee, said he will seek to boost that visa category to roughly 90,000 people.

His legislation also would allow the government to let in 25,000 more skilled workers under a different category if the quota for high-skill visas is exhausted.

High-tech companies have been vigorously lobbying Congress and the administration to let them bring in more talent from abroad.

Last year, for the first time, the demand for "H-1B" visas 00 which entitle high-skilled workers to remain in the United States for up to six years 00 outpaced the availability.

This year, the cap could be hit by May, four months before the end of the federal fiscal year.

One industry study estimates that more than 340,000 jobs as computer programmers, systems analysts and other information technology posts go unfilled because of a shortage of qualified workers.

"It's going to cost America jobs and it's going to hurt our economy if we aren't able to fill these positions," Abraham said.

Rep. David Dreier of California, who is introducing a companion bill in the House, added: "We need to do everything that we can to ensure that the best qualified people are here in the United States, so that our industries are able to remain on the cutting edge."

Organized labor and other critics contend the industry is exaggerating the problem and recruits foreigners to hold down salaries.

They also suggest education and job retraining should be the means of increasing the domestic talent pool.



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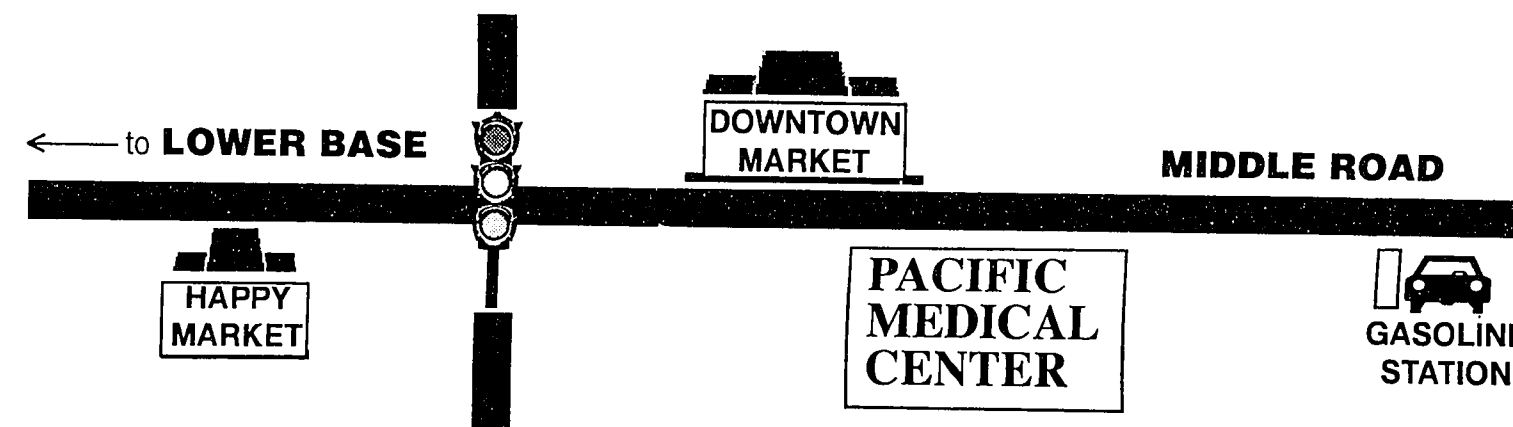
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For those firms that are interested in "getting involve" on such worthy endeavor, contact Mr. Ray Cruz or Mr. Richard Santos at 664-1702. Once again, Si Yu'us Ma'ase', Ghillisow, and Thank You for your continued support and good luck in your business endeavor.

/s/ Felix R. Nogis
JTPA Executive Director

xc : Governor

Congress advised about tobacco ads

By Laurie Kellman
WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House told Congress Monday that tobacco legislation is almost certain to be challenged in court unless lawmakers pass a bill that is acceptable to all sides.

Specifically, a proposal to ban tobacco advertising on the Internet, for example, "would raise significant constitutional concerns," White House Domestic Policy Adviser Bruce Reed said in a Feb. 27 memo to Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain, R-Ariz.

The memo, which ignores many of McCain's questions about the administration's positions on proposed tobacco legislation, nonetheless provides the clearest guidance yet from the White House on what kind of tobacco policy President Clinton would sign into law.

But anti-smoking activists warned that the White House was bowing to an industry that hasn't earned goodwill from the government.

"I would caution everyone in Washington, on both sides of Pennsylvania Avenue, not to believe the smokescreens of an industry that has been lying to us for the past 50 years," said Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J.

The White House, McCain and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, say that supporting the industry's requests is a matter of pragmatism.

The tobacco industry has said it will voluntarily restrict its own marketing and advertising if Congress provides it the protection from most lawsuits included in the settlement companies struck with states in June.

Beyond Hatch and McCain, little willingness exists among congressional leaders to grant that protection, especially in an election year. Several alternative bills to be considered by congressional panels this month would delete the lawsuit shields and require the industry to curb its marketing practices in exchange for other incentives.

Such a quid pro quo, the memo says, "would continue to raise substantial constitutional questions" under the First Amendment's free speech protections.

At a hearing scheduled for Tuesday, McCain's panel plans to hear testimony on the proposed marketing restrictions from Sen. Corinne Mack, R-Fla., the Federal Trade Commission and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The House is far behind the Senate in crafting tobacco legislation, as the issue isn't on the Republican leadership's priority list for the year. Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., a senior member of the House Commerce Committee, told reporters that producing a bill on the issue this year would be difficult.

Senate mulls use of gas tax money for highway spending

By Jim Abrams
WASHINGTON (AP)—Senate leaders agreed Monday to use a portion of the gasoline tax currently used for reducing the deficit to substantially boost spending on highway construction.

"For the first time in a long time every penny in those taxes will end up being spent on roads," said Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, who with Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., pushed for the gas tax revision.

The new revenue from the gas tax would be used to raise from \$147 billion to \$173 billion the amount to be spent on highway building and safety projects over the next six years. The Senate is now considering a massive highway spending bill.

"This is going to be a big boost to our economy," said Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., ranking Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee. He cited Transportation Department estimates that each additional \$1 billion spent on roads creates 42,000 jobs.

Gramm said senators, after a series of meetings in the office of Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., also agreed on a formula under which each state would get at least 91 cents back for every dollar they pay into the federal highway trust fund. Currently, some states, especially in the South, get back as little as 70 cents for every dollar they pay into the system.

More populated states have expressed concern about losing their current share of the trust fund pot, but Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., said Senate leaders agreed to create a pool of extra money for high-density states.

The deal would provide \$1.8 billion over six years to be divided among nine states: California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Lautenberg's office cautioned that the level of funding and the list of eligible states could change.

A parallel House bill would set the payback level at 95 percent.

The Environment Committee, in approving the highway bill last fall, set the spending level at \$145 billion, with an additional \$2 billion for safety programs, but there has been strong pressure to increase that level and Gramm and Byrd focused on the gas tax as the best way to come up with more money.

Under President Clinton's 1993 budget reduction package, 4.3 cents of the 18.3 cents a gallon in federal taxes was set aside for deficit reduction. In last year's

balanced budget deal between Clinton and Congress, the 4.3 cents was moved back into the highway trust fund, but was still reserved for non-highway uses.

Gramm insisted that the increased funding still met the spending caps set under the balanced budget deal, with new spending offset by savings in other areas of the budget. He said the Budget Committee would decide where that money comes from.

Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said he "had a difficult problem" with the spending increase, but agreed that "the people of this country deserve that highway trust fund money be spent on highways, and that's why it is very difficult to say we should not have this program."

Environment Committee Chairman John Chafee, R-R.I., said his committee would take up the Gramm-Byrd amendment on Tuesday, sending it to the floor, where it is expected to face little opposition.

The Senate is likely to spend another two or three weeks on the highway bill, a complex piece of legislation that also includes provisions on such issues as air quality and drunken driving.

The House, which has a bill asking for more money than the Senate, has yet to bring its bill to the floor. The current temporary highway bill expires on May 1.

Yeltsin names new Cabinet

By ANNA DOLGOV
MOSCOW (AP)—President Boris Yeltsin dismissed the minister of atomic energy and named three veteran administrators Monday to replace Cabinet officials he fired over the weekend, completing a shakeup aimed at meting out punishment for Russia's woes.

He also took a further step in his campaign to reduce government

spending, ordering the dismissal of personal security guards from a dozen top government officials including First Deputy Prime Ministers Boris Nemtsov and Anatoly Chubais, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported, citing presidential spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky.

No replacement was named for Atomic Energy Minister Viktor Mikhailov, who was relieved of his duties "due to a transfer to scientific work," according to the presidential press office.

Mikhailov, formerly the Soviet Union's top nuclear weapons designer, has long said he would like to return to scholarship.

Last month, Mikhailov announced that his ministry would shut down three of eight plants involved in nuclear weapons production due to severe funding shortages.

He has been an enthusiastic backer of Russian nuclear cooperation with foreign countries, including the construction of a nuclear power plant in Iran that the United States vehemently opposes.

Yeltsin appointed security chief Ivan Rybkin as deputy prime minister in charge of relations with other former Soviet republics.

Rybkin will replace Valery Serov, dismissed Saturday as part of the shakeup.

Rybkin has been the chief Russian negotiator with Chechnya, consistently voicing the need for a gradual approach to normalizing relations between Russia and the separatist republic.

He has been a counterbalance to Russian officials insisting on a tough stance, such as Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov.

"He showed himself very serious on Chechnya" and "can be counted on" to improve relations within the Commonwealth of Independent States, the organization linking former Soviet republics, Yeltsin was quoted as saying by ITAR-Tass.

At a government meeting on Thursday to assess Russia's economic performance in 1997, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin had singled out Serov for criticism, saying he had failed in his mandate to build strong ties with other former Soviet republics.

At an October summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the leaders of former Soviet republics had subjected Russia and Yeltsin in particular to withering criticism for the organization's ineffectiveness.

Workers . . .

Continued from page 1
 certificate.

This, however, is the procedure if the tests showed there is nothing wrong with the worker.

In cases where there are "ab-

normalities," the concerned private clinic is directed to submit the results to the Commonwealth Health Center which then notifies the employer for appropriate action.

The procedure would mean an additional cost of about \$80 for each worker, it was said.

Business . . .

Continued from page 1
 Ayuyu said the CHC is set to meet with private medical service players to negotiate a

uniform rate for the screening processes.

"The [new health screening] requirement is pretty reasonable, we are in favor and in support of this measure," he continued.

Reyes . . .

Continued from page 1
 Patrick Rizer, the energy consultant for the Office of Insular Affairs, that the CNMI raise its fuel tax to 20 cents per gallon.

administration is not inclined to raise fuel taxes, saying the CNMI is already paying high tax rates on fuel products.

Meanwhile, Reyes' bill which he calls "Fiscal Integrity Act," also seeks the reimposition of the excess credit tax on the Earned Income Credit under the Northern Marianas Territorial Income Tax, which was partially eliminated by PL 9-22.

"The Commonwealth can no longer afford to pay this credit," HB 11-103 states.

It added that "the Commonwealth's implementation of the Earned Income Credit in a manner that diverges from the US Internal Revenue Code exposes the CNMI government to potential liability in the tens of millions of dollars."

"Holding the gas tax at 15 cents is good enough. We cannot raise it further to 20 cents," Reyes said in an interview with Variety. "Our fuel tax is one of the highest in the world."

Raising the fuel tax by another five cents per gallon, he added, would cause too much burden on CNMI residents.

"An average family uses 150 gallons per month, costing them about \$271.50 per month," Reyes said.

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio, in an earlier interview, also said the

mayor urged for immediate action, citing Rota's need to continue receiving essential public services.

He insisted that the only way to head off a financial crisis is to grant him a 100 percent reprogramming authority over Rota's budget.

The delegation members are Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R), Sens. Edward U. Maratita (R), Ricardo S. Atalig (R) and Rep. Alejo M. Mendiola Jr. (R).

Rota . . .

Continued from page 1
 mayor reiterated his need for broad reprogramming powers over the Rota's budget.

"We have commitments and we have to meet them," he said.

Manglona said he is disappointed over Rota's legislators for their failure to grant him reprogramming powers, but added that he has already "done his part."

In a letter last week to the legis-

lators, the mayor urged for immediate action, citing Rota's need to continue receiving essential public services.

He insisted that the only way to head off a financial crisis is to grant him a 100 percent reprogramming authority over Rota's budget.

The delegation members are Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R), Sens. Edward U. Maratita (R), Ricardo S. Atalig (R) and Rep. Alejo M. Mendiola Jr. (R).

37,600 . . .

Continued from page 1
 industry sectors except garments.

Filipinos are most densely concentrated in the service sector with 8,597 workers, followed by the construction industry with 3,100. There were also 2,335 Filipino domestic helps, 2,041 Filipinos employed in hotels, and 1,589 Filipinos employed in restaurants.

There were only 389 Filipinos in the garment sector, an area dominated by Chinese workers which comprise 10,936 of the

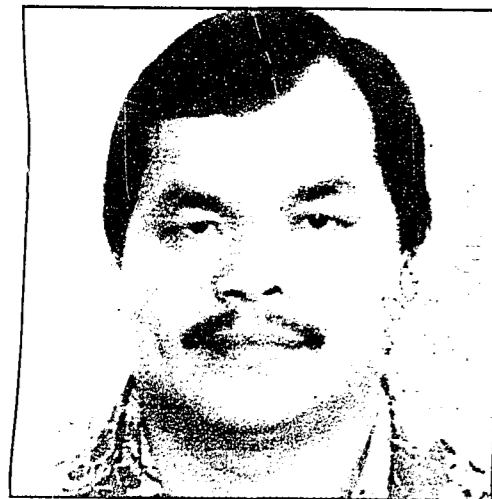
industry's 12,126 workforce.

There were 1,765 Chinese nationals employed in the construction industry and 1,660 in the service sector — karaoke bars and massage parlors.

Koreans are mostly employed in the service sector with 497 workers. And, like their Korean counterparts, Japanese nationals are also mostly concentrated in the same sector with 615 workers.

Nepalese workers were mostly employed in the hotels with 56 permits issued to them.

Death & Funeral Announcement



Former Congressman

MAXIMO "MAX" TORRES ATTAO



of Garapan was called to his eternal rest by the Grace of Our Lord on Wednesday, February 25, 1998 at the age of 44 years.

The Late Honorable Congressman Attao is predeceased by his
FATHER: Pedro San Nicolas Attao
PATERNAL: Vicente Megofina and Natividad San Nicolas Attao
MATERNAL: Jose Atoigue and Francisca Camacho Torres
PARENTS-IN-LAW: David San Nicolas Jones and Rosa Mendiola Jones
GRANDPARENTS-IN-LAW: Benjamin and Rosa San Nicolas Jones
MATERNAL: Jose Manglona and Maria Angoco Mendiola

He is survived by his
MOTHER: Ninfa Torres Attao, **WIFE:** Theresita "Terry" Jones Attao
CHILDREN: John Paul Jones Attao (Ella M. Villazon), David Peter Jones Attao, Michael Steven Jones Attao, Marie Therese Jones Attao and Maximo, Jr. Jones Attao.
BROTHERS/SPOUSES: Former Congressman Vicente "Ben" Torres Attao, Vice Speaker Jesus Torres and Ramona Tenorio Attao, Jose Torres and Ana Camacho Attao

BROTHERS/SISTER IN LAWS: Jose Takeda & Beck Jones Seman, Juan Taitingfong & Mako Jones Torres, Congressman Dino Mendiola and Letty Acha Jones, Jose Mendiola Jones, Benjamin Mendiola and Sherlyn Paul Jones.

He is additionally survived by numerous uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces.

Rosary is being said nightly at 8:00PM at the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan. Last respect may be paid on Thursday, March 05, 1998. The body will be released from the Commonwealth Health Center at 8:00AM and will be transported to the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe where a State Funeral Service will be offered at 10:00 AM. After the State Funeral, Service, the deceased will be moved to the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan where the Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at 4:00PM, and interment services will follow immediately.

Dinner will be served at the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan immediately after the funeral.
 Thank you and Si Yuus Maase Ginen Todo I Familia.

First Anniversary Mass

EDWARD MESA CABRERA

We invite all our relatives and friends to join us in commemorating the Fifth Anniversary of his passing unto eternal life by attending the nine days of eucharistic celebration at 6:00 a.m. at Kristo Rai Church, beginning on March 5, 1998 and ending with the anniversary mass on March 13, 1998. Breakfast will be served following the anniversary mass at Kristo Rai Church Social Hall.

Your attendance is greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU

DEATH AND FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

FERMIN CAMACHO MARATITA

Better known as "FEKO"

BORN: JANUARY 21, 1942 DIED: FEBRUARY 26, 1998
 was called to his eternal rest..

In his passing he now joins his predeceased parents and in laws: Roberto M. and Brigida C. Maratita and Ignacio and Rita Ch. Lizama

Survived by wife: Margarita Lizama Maratita

Children: Ellen (Alvin), Rosita (Abraham), Alfred (Lyza), Alex (May), Joan (Juan), Julita (Sylvan), Isabella (David), Erica (Glenn), Quindy (Dwayne), Robert, Steven, Rita and Fermin Jr.

He is also survived by numerous brothers, sisters, in-laws, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, relative and friends.

Additionally survived by twenty five (25) grand children

Nightly rosary is being said at his brother's residence Thomas C. Maratita in Kobleville (Saipan) and his residence in Songsong Village (Rota) at 8:00 pm.

Last respect, viewing and services will be on Friday, March 6, 1998 at his residence in Songsong Village (Rota) from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm followed by Christian burial service at San Francisco De Borja Church.

Thank You
THE FAMILY

Filipino . . .

Continued from page 13

At least P\$230.75 million from OWWA's P\$394.03 revenues in 1996 have been disbursed for programs and services for the benefit and welfare of overseas Filipino workers.

Some 68 percent, or about P\$268.21 million, of OWWA's 1996 revenues came from the indi-

vidual contributions of land-based and sea-based workers.

Land-based workers pay \$25 individual contributions, while contributions from sea-based workers are collected on a per contract basis with \$15 paid by the foreign employer and \$10 by the seaman.

Other revenues of the OWWA are generated from the agency's efficient investment program through government securities and other income.

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Quiet Two (2) Bedrooms • Swimming Pool
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Nice 3 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Concrete House with Ocean View
Quiet Rural Location in the Papago Area
24 Hour Water
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A= Abstain B= Be faithful C= Condom use
It's your choice.
Call 234-5100 (24 hrs.) for free confidential testing or info.

Two . . .

Continued from page 4

regarding an issue, we would know who to contact to voice concerns, etc.

As was taught to me "Democracy is not a spectator sport." My personal opinion is students still need to know the names of elected officials. (To eliminate any concerns, the quiz master gave specific instructions to use the legal name of the mayor, otherwise Uncle George would have also been correct for some.)

This event is a learning experience for our high school students who organize, solicit, write questions, act as judges, proctors, scorekeepers, setup and clean up.

The event teaches many skills—like planning, coordinating, working as a team, giving willingly of yourself—all of which are very important later in life.

Congress . . .

Continued from page 2

unsealed a motion by Clinton's lawyer, accusing special prosecutor Kenneth Starr of leaking grand jury material to the news media. Lawyer David E. Kendall asked U.S.

District Judge Norma Holloway Johnson for a hearing, at which Starr would be forced to prove he did not violate grand jury secrecy.

Kendall said he couldn't say whether the hearing took place or is scheduled, because of grand jury secrecy requirements. He has made such accusations publicly, and Starr denied the leaks but still ordered an internal investigation of his office.

Ms. Lewinsky's lawyers have repeatedly refused to describe the extent of her relationship with Clinton except to say it was "collegial." But

Lawyer . . .

Continued from page 2

automatic authorization of the use of force against Iraq in this current resolution.

Qin said that although China supported the resolution, "our misgivings about the possible abuse of this resolution have not been removed. . . . The passing of this resolution in no way means that the Security Council automatically authorizes any state to use force against Iraq."

The resolution endorsed the agreement that Annan signed in Baghdad last week with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz to allow U.N. inspectors, accompanied by diplomats, to visit eight presidential palaces which Baghdad had placed off limits.

Annan's agreement also reaffirmed the right of U.N. inspectors to enter all sites in Iraq to determine if the Iraqis have complied with U.N. orders, issued at the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf War, to destroy all long-range missiles and nuclear, chemical and

Council . . .

Continued from page 2

toward Iraq.

But he said it would be wrong either to send in U.S. ground troops or to try to arrange for Saddam's assassination, suggesting finding Saddam would be ex-

though some may think "trivial," I think these freedoms are very important.

It is these freedoms that allow individuals like Ms. Beth Nepaial to say whatever she feels, to devalue and demean the efforts of students without giving it a second thought.

At least she can sleep now.

KAREN L. BORJA
NHS Advisor/MHS Teacher

TB-stricken . . .

Continued from page 3

ated. . . (the employer) shall immediately purchase a one-way repatriation ticket and shall deliver the said ticket to the Division of Immigration, "Asper also ruled.

Asper likewise moved to revoke Jin's entry permit.

Jin's case came at the height of new

regulations imposed by government on the screening of the nonresident workers' health.

The emergency regulation was issued after a study done by the Center for Disease Control showed that TB has reached "epidemic" proportions in the Commonwealth.

The new regulation does away with skin tests to ensure accurate analysis. It also made HIV and syphilis tests mandatory.

providing ammunition for a defense that rested on the argument that Ms. Lewinsky did not have intercourse with the president.

Individuals familiar with Tripp's conversations with Ms. Lewinsky, dozens of which were recorded, have said the former intern spoke of having oral sex with Clinton. One time, however, she told Tripp that she asked Clinton why they did not have sexual intercourse and the president told her he could not risk it, the individuals said.

Ginsburg's recent public appearances, along with a television interview granted by Ms. Lewinsky's father, have also raised the prospect that while she did not fabricate a relationship with Clinton she may have exaggerated some details in the Tripp tapes.

"My daughter is a very excitable person," Bernard Lewinsky said.

biological weapons.

That is the main condition for the council to lift crippling economic sanctions imposed in 1990 after President Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, touching off the Gulf conflict.

Since last week, the British and Japanese, who sponsored the resolution, have circulated several versions in an attempt to satisfy all council members. The original draft warned Iraq of "severest consequences" if it violated the accord.

That was softened Friday to "very serious consequences," but in an apparent attempt to placate Washington, the "severest consequences" phrase was reinserted into the text on Monday.

But the difficulties encountered in reaching a consensus cast doubt on the Clinton administration's claims that if Iraq violated the deal there would be strong international support for military action.

During lengthy meetings throughout the day, envoys from such countries as Brazil, Sweden, Costa Rica and Portugal, which normally support the U.S. stand against Iraq, made

with financial support and some arms, such as anti-tank weapons, establish a "no-fly zone" over the entire nation and broadcast anti-Saddam messages into the country.

Also, be "prepared to use force from the air when _ and I say when, not if _ Saddam violates the agreement," Woolsey said.

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STELLA WILDER

YOUR BIRTHDAY

WEDNESDAY, March 4, 1998
By Stella Wilder

Born today, you are one of the most curious, fun-loving and experimental individuals born under your sign as well as being remarkably driven, determined and hardworking. It is likely that you will be attracted to the most unusual and unorthodox of careers, and this will demand that you build for yourself a life and a lifestyle that accommodates your needs and desires in the most unusual and unorthodox of ways. What is remarkable is that as strange as things may get for you, you live in a way that has others thinking that everything is normal and routine.

You seem to have boundless energy, and your concern for the people around you is unequalled. Even while working for your own gain, you are continually doing

things that benefit both your community and the world at large. You are one of the world's great benefactors.

Also born on this date are: Jane Goodall, anthropologist; Kevin Johnson, basketball player; Paula Prentiss, actress.

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.

THURSDAY, MARCH 5
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) — This is a good day to make that purchase you've been putting off for some time. It may be a case of now or never, so what's your decision?

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — You and a friend or co-worker may find yourselves at cross-purposes today, but you can work things out well if you just take it slow.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Keep your eyes on someone close to you today, and you'll learn an important lesson even as you uncover something that is cause for concern.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — The time has come for you to break with tradition and follow your instincts where a particular issue is concerned. You can wait no longer.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Take care that you don't jump to conclusions today. You must be willing to wait your turn when it comes to collecting information you need.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — You may not understand all of the messages that come your way today, but you'll realize that almost all of them can be of special benefit.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — You can count on someone else to come up with a plan today that fits you like a glove and allows you the freedom you need to explore a little.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — Progress comes in fits and starts today, but you'll be ahead of the game by day's end if you remain patient and diligent.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) — Take care that you're not settling for something under par today only to ease tensions between yourself and a friend. Get what you want!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) — You may have to get involved in something that doesn't particularly suit you today, only to uncover one or two very important answers.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Speak softly today, and listen carefully to what others have to say. You can get better results by being less aggressive and more receptive.

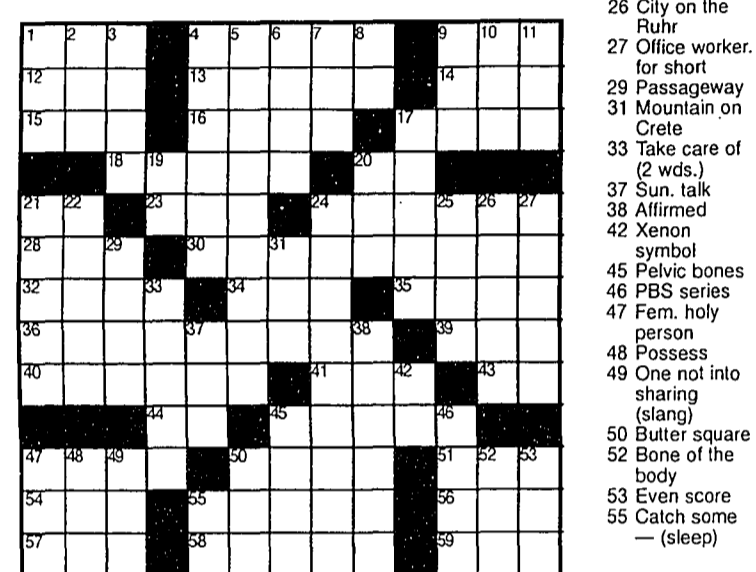
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) — Anything you try to do under the table today is likely to backfire on you, so you're going to want to keep everything above board.

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END Your Birthday 03-04-98

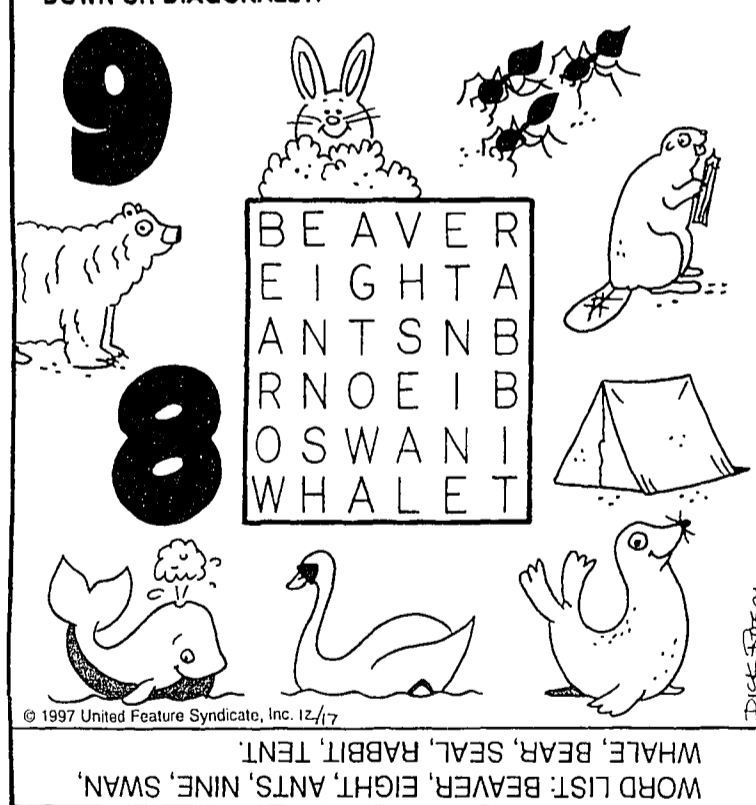
CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS
1 "Scooby —"
4 Plant firmly
9 Gigantic
12 Click beetle
13 Fathered
14 Bikini top
15 Article
16 Mark left by a wound
17 Applaud
18 Baseball great
20 Symbol for tantalum
21 Vigoda ID
23 The Lion
24 Large crowds
28 Evil
30 Chemist, e.g.
32 Burden
34 Harem room
35 Abate
36 Indis- pensable
39 Bernstein, for short
40 High regard
41 Southern St.

DOWN
1 Insecticide
2 Companion of aah
3 Utah city
4 Sends forth
5 Small universe
6 Donkey's cry
7 Ending with mountain
8 Former N.Y. mayor (inits.)
9 Container (abbr.)
10 Mr. Gershwin
11 Hiatus
17 A la —
19 — fresco
20 Heavy weight



KidSpot™ FIND THE WORDS. THE NAMES OF THE PICTURE CLUES ARE HIDDEN IN THE SQUARE. CIRCLE EACH WORD, GOING ACROSS, DOWN OR DIAGONALLY.



SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT STARTS WEDNESDAY!

TITANIC

EMOIE HOUSE
Wed/Thu/Fri 4:00-8:00 • Sat/Sun 12:00-4:00-8:00 • Mon/Tue 7:00
ADVANCE TICKETS ON SALE! (DURING BOXOFFICE HOURS)

1998 Budlight Dart League Statistics as of January 23

Team	Win	Loss	Pct	Big T-White Tuna	26	18	59
Norpac Dart Busters-A	42	18	70	Rudy's Rudettes	26	18	59
Crown Royals	34	26	57	Coffee Care	21	23	48
MGD Dont Touch My Beer	24	21	53	Angus Beef Eaters	17	27	39
Oleai Beach Burns	32	28	53	Oleai Totally Uncorked	13	31	30
Lens Strikers	30	30	50				
Rudy's White Trash	22	23	49				
Revolution X	28	32	47				
R.C.A.	20	25	44				
Akashi	0	45	0				

Agassi . . .

Continued from page 24

"I'm playing very well. To win any tournament does great things for you."

Agassi started slowly and seemed on his way to a second straight first-round Scottsdale exit. He double-faulted to give Portas a 3-1 lead in the first set and had trouble handling Portas' 118 mph (189 kph) serves.

But Agassi was just settling in. "There's not going to be any one-'n'-done this year; I'm here for the duration," he said.

In the second set, he broke Portas for the first time to take a 2-

0 lead, then broke him in three of the 24-year-old Spaniard's next four service games.

"I played him good the first set," Portas said. "After that, I was a little bit tired. In the second set, he returned all my serves and I could do nothing."

Agassi's own serve began to sizzle as his success continued, winning at love in both the sixth and eighth games of the third set.

Albert Costa, the world's 22nd-ranked player, broke Dosedel in the second game and was ahead 3-0 before his Czech opponent rallied to tie the first set 4-4.

Dosedel went ahead 5-3 in the tiebreaker, but the Spaniard won the last four points.

Sportsbits . . .

Continued from page 24

40km bike, 10km run. For more information, contact Stuart Smith at 256-0292.

Taga Classic Body Building Championship

The Body Building Association has scheduled the Taga Classic Body Building Championship

for May 9th. Deadline for interested competitors is March 13th. The association has established a \$25.00 annual membership fee.

The time and venue for the championship have not been determined yet.

For more information, contact Ty Izuka at 234-7514 or Abner Venus at 234-5911. (P.T. Castro)

Team . . .

Continued from page 24

Roots rallied eight runs with Paul Camacho hitting a 2-run homer and his brother Cris a solo homerun. In the sixth inning they scored another three runs with Mike Camacho hitting 2-run homer.

Greg F. Camacho and Mike Camacho was three for three while Mike Remsen of 7-Up hit a 3-run homer in the bottom of the sixth.

Game Three
MGD Starters 20, Northwest 2
The game between the Starters and the Northwest was shutoff in the fifth inning.

The Starters started off with five runs in the first inning and then rallied eight runs in the second in which Ed Cepeda batted a 3-run homer followed by Joe Saures with a solo homerun.

Dave Santos also batted a three-run homer in the second inning.

In the third inning they managed to score five runs and in the fifth inning two. Ed Cepeda and Florencio Falig were both three for four.

Game Four
Taga Warriors 9, Chelus 6
The fourth game was forfeited in the third inning because Chelus lacked a player.

Game Five
Hit & Run 13, Turtles 6
The Hit and Run was scoreless in the first two innings.

In the third inning they rallied six runs in which Bart Jackson scored a two-run homer.

They scored one in the fourth, four in the fifth and two runs in the sixth. Jeff Cabrera was three for three.

In the sixth inning Allan Agunon hit a solo homerun.

Wizards stop Lakers; Hornets rout Wizards

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chris Webber had 31 points as the Washington Wizards handed the slumping Los Angeles Lakers their second straight loss, 96-86 Monday night.

Shaquille O'Neal had 28 points and 15 rebounds, but Los Angeles could not rebound from Sunday's 101-89 loss to the New York Knicks.

The Lakers, who are without injured point guard Nick Van Exel, lost for the sixth time in 11 games.

The Wizards recovered from their worst loss of the season, a 103-77 drubbing by Dallas on Saturday.

The Lakers, the NBA's worst free-throw shooting team, were just 12-for-22 from the line, including 6-for-11 in the fourth quarter.

O'Neal was 4-for-9.

The victory put the Wizards above the .500 mark and into ninth place in the Eastern Conference.

Washington improved to 3-3 with one game to go in its longest homestand of the season.

Hornets 112, Warriors 83
In Charlotte, North Carolina, Glen Rice's club-record 135-game streak of scoring in double figures ended, but Matt Geiger scored a career-high 29 points to lead the Charlotte Hornets past road-weary Golden State.

Geiger hit 13 of 17 field-goal attempts and grabbed seven rebounds before head the rest of Charlotte's starters sat out the last quarter of the Hornets' fifth consecutive victory.

Rice, who had averaged 27

points in his previous nine games, was held to nine points on 3-for-11 shooting. The Warriors still lost their fourth road game in five nights — all by at least 20 points.

Pistons 100, Mavericks 94
In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Grant Hill had 35 points as the Detroit Pistons defeated Dallas.

Jerry Stackhouse had 20 points, including four straight during a crucial run late in the fourth. Jerome Williams had a career-high 14 rebounds.

The Mavericks, who couldn't build on Saturday's 103-77 blow-out win over Washington, got 21 points each from Michael Finley and Cedric Ceballos, who had 17 from the free throw line.



Tiger Woods, of Windermere, Fla., chips up on the 18th hole during a playoff against Billy Mayfair in the final round of the Nissan Open, Sunday in Valencia, Calif. Mayfair won the playoff when he birdied the hole. AP

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

INVITATION FOR BID

IFB98-01

The Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA) through its Chairman, Juan S. Tenorio is soliciting competitive sealed bids for an office space for the CDA branch in Tinian.

The building must be conducive for office use, a concrete structure with a minimum office space of 800 square feet ground floor, air-conditioned and ample parking. The building must be easily accessible to a public road and situated in San Jose Village, Tinian. The building should have adequate lighting, electrical outlets, indoor toilet, and meet the ADA requirements. Owner must maintain public liability insurance for not less than \$100,000 per accident and not less than \$300,000 total coverage for a one time aggregate claim. Owner must also provide coverage for typhoon, fire and extended coverage for the building. The term of the lease is for one (1) year with the option to renew for additional periods by the Lessee (CDA). Interested Lessor should submit their written bid in a sealed envelope marked IFB98-01 no later than 3:00 p.m. Friday, March 20, 1998.

Attention bids and/or queries to:

Ms. Lydia M. Sablan
Acting Executive Director
Commonwealth Development Authority
P.O. Box 2149
Saipan, MP 96950

The Commonwealth Development Authority reserves the right to reject any proposal in the best interest of CDA.

/s/ LYDIA M. SABLAN
Acting Executive Director



SPORTS



1997 BANMI Basketball League:

Just for Fun wins by default

By Priscilla T. Castro
Variety News Staff
JUST FOR Fun won by forfeiture against Unified Team, most of whose players didn't show up last Monday

at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. In the second game the Toyota Wheels defeated Get Covered Surf, 101-96. George DeGuzman was the lead-

ing scorer for the Toyota Wheels with of 32 points.

Edwin Bubos gathered a total of 28 points.

Bob Lee also assisted the Wheels by contributing 15 points.

The Toyota Wheels are now in second place to the Nationals with 10 wins and 1 loss.

Roy Matagolai, Hi-Five's leading scorer with 38 points while D. Sablan scored a total of 25 points.

Matagolai scored 16 points in the first half and second half he scored a total of 22 points.

Individual Results:

Toyota Wheels(101)-Frank Iglecias-28, Edwin Bubos-8, Ed Cosino-9, Noel Remolano-8, Cerelo Terreon-2, George DeGuzman-32, Bob Lee-15.

Hi-Five(96)-George Masga-10, D. Atalig-2, F. Ayuyu-11, Roy Matagolai-38, D. Sablan-25.

BANMI standings

Team	Win	Loss	L.A. O'Acas		
Nationals	12	1	Kontrarios	2	9
Wheels	10	1	Spoilers	0	13
Pac. Trading Lite	10	2	Women's:		
Get Covered Surf	9	4	MTC	6	0
Rep. Peter Lebwel	5	6	Just for Fun	3	4
Hi-Five	4	7	Unified	1	6

Agassi dominates first-round opponent in Scottsdale

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (AP) — Andre Agassi, bent on a turnaround after the worst season of his 12-year pro career, knocked sixth-seeded Albert Portas of Spain out of the Franklin Templeton Tennis Classic with a 3-6, 6-1, 6-2 first-round win Monday night.

"I started stepping up the pace, and he was unable to respond," Agassi said after improving his 1998 match record to 12-2. That equals his victory total of 1997, when he was 12-12 and finished out of the ATP Tour top 100 (No. 122) for the first time.

No. 2 Albert Costa was the only seeded player to beat the first-round jinx this year with a 7-6(7-5), 6-1 win over Slava Dosedel of the Czech Republic.

All seven Spaniards in the 32-man field played on Monday, and only Albert Costa and Carlos Costa were left at the end.

Carlos Costa defeated No. 3 Magnus Norman of Sweden 6-4, 7-6(8-6); Jeff Tarango upset No. 5 Francisco Clavet of Spain 4-6, 7-6(7-5), 6-4, and Dominik Hrbaty of Slovakia

ousted No. 7 Julian Alonso of Spain 6-2, 6-2.

In other singles action, Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti beat Javier Sanchez 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 and Sjeng Schalken of Monaco defeated Galo Blanco 6-3, 7-6(7-4).

Agassi, whose career swung from a No. 1 world ranking in 1995, when he won seven times, to 141st at one point last year, won in San Jose, California, two weeks ago for his first title in more than a year.

That improved him to a No. 50 ranking. It wasn't enough to merit a seeding in the \$340,000 Scottsdale event, the first outdoor ATP Tour tournament of the year in North America, but stamped him as the favorite in an event he won in 1993 and 1994.

It also gave him the feeling that his training regimen — he has lost 16 pounds (7 kilograms) to reach a playing weight of 165 (74 kilograms) — is starting to pay off.

"It's more because it's a reflection of where things are," he said.

Continued on page 23

Sportsbits

THE REGULAR meeting of the NMASA has been postponed for March 12th at 6 p.m.

All coaches have been asked to turn in their list of prospective athletes for review and should be prepared to make a brief report of their training at this meeting.

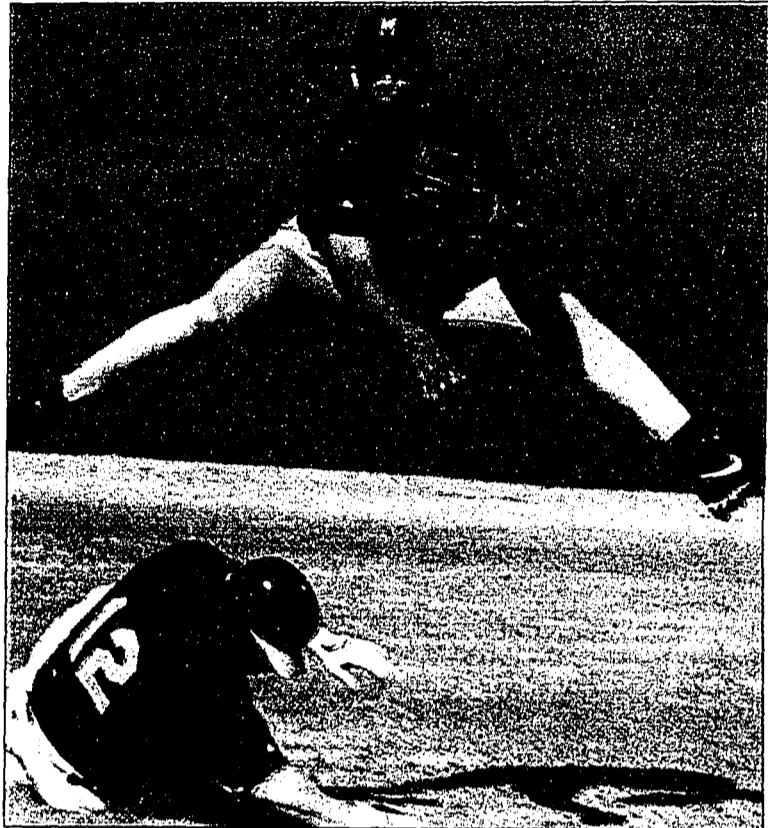
The meeting will be held at the Gilbert C. Ada Gym Conference Room. You should also be well on your way in your fundraising efforts.

5th Rota Blue Triathlon

The 5th Rota Blue Triathlon will be held on Saturday, April 11th, starting at 7:00 a.m. at East Harbor on Rota.

Distances are 1.5km swim,

Continued on page 23



Milwaukee Brewer second baseman Eddie Zoskey goes high into the air as he tries to complete a double play against the Oakland Athletics Sunday in Phoenix, Ariz. Oakland's Matt Stairs (12) was out at second, but Dave Madigan was safe at first during this 4th inning action at Phoenix Stadium. AP

Castro SGA February Ace

By Priscilla T. Castro
Variety News Staff

THE SAIPAN Golfers Association's monthly championship event took place last Saturday, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

Jess M. Castro won the championship in which he netted a score of 72.

He had a total gross of 87 and a handicap of 15.

Second place winner, Mel Sablan had scores of 38 front, 43 back for a total gross score of 81 and handicap score of 8 in which he has a net score of 73.

Third place winner Edward Manglona scored 47 back, 43 front for a gross score of 90 and a handicap score of 13 and a total net of 77.

The low gross winners went to Joe Camacho with a score of 78, followed by Frank Castro with 80 and SGA President Ray Diaz with a score of 87.

The next scheduled SGA tournament is slated for March 14, at the Rota Golf Resort.

All interested members should contact Ray Diaz at 234-5997.

The general members approved an additional prize of \$500.00 with a minimum participation of eight players.

1997 SSA Men's Night League:

Team Familia defeats I Luv U Man, 17-9

By Priscilla T. Castro
Variety News Staff

TEAM Familia defeated I Luv U Man, 17-9 during the first game of the SSA Men's Night League at the Susupe Softball Complex last Monday.

Team Familia was scoreless in the first inning.

In the second inning they ran in three runners, Jerry Ayuyu hit a solo homerun in the second inning while Wilbur Ada hit a 2-run homer.

In the fourth inning Team Familia rallied eight runs and in the

fifth inning they scored another four runs.

In the fifth inning Jerry Ayuyu and Tony Kapileo hit a solo homerun a-piece. Jerry Ayuyu was perfect four for four while Bernard Keleliman was three for four.

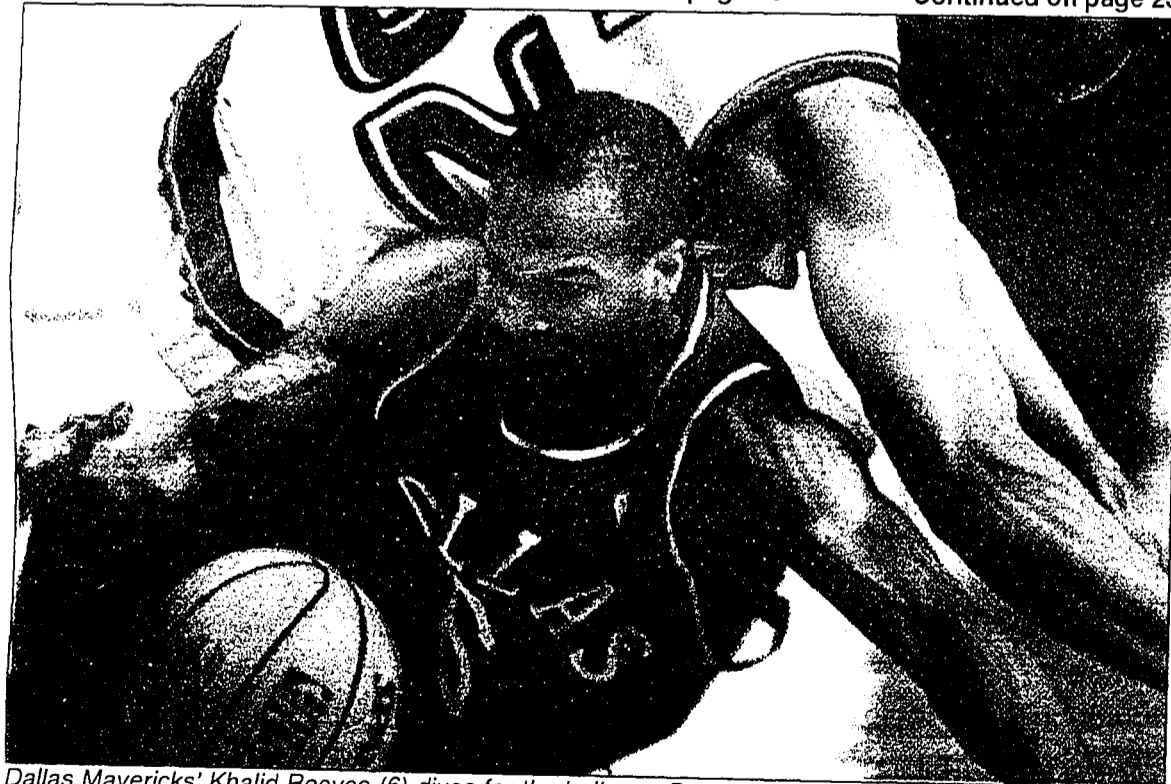
Game Two

Camacho Roots 14, 7-Up 13

In the second inning Tony C. Camacho hit a solo homerun while in the second inning Camacho Roots scored two runs.

In the fourth inning Camacho

Continued on page 23



Dallas Mavericks' Khalid Reeves (6) dives for the ball over Detroit Pistons' Don Reid (52) during the first quarter in Auburn Hills, Mich., on Monday. AP

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