

On My Mind
12/30/05

need an NGO to provide trash containers, pick-ups at schools, at post offices

as look at coming year and improving economy, useful to compare with FSM?

gov't vehicle use - use own car, pay mileage.....

Recently, the Office of the Attorney General urged that more money be spent on the campaign against smoking.

NMIRF stock earnings

In order for CNMI to activate those ships to assist CNMI, some things have to be in order. First, the President of the United States must first declare our area as a Disaster Area, then DHS-FEMA will come into play as those ships are DOD assets. Next, if we see that we will need them, we will recommend to the Governor to request it thru FEMA.

re: Grotto dive and lack of appropriate investigation (police tested gear above water, not under water)

I love the way it is assumed that everyone has access to tv.....

Also Fiji guy vs Abe Malae - slick! But cover different areas.....STILL need Malae - for mgmt.

The CNMI may be suffering from a slowing economy, but strangely enough, that doesn't seem to affect the restaurant business. Several new restaurants and coffee shops have opened recently, and two I know of have added lunch service to their former dinner-only hours. There's the new Chinese restaurant next to Wendy's on Beach Road, and two new restaurants, one Japanese and the other Jeff Boyer's new place, across from Memorial Park in Garapan. Then there are the new coffee shops - one in As Lito, one in Susupe next to Church's chicken restaurant, and the other Jeff Boyer's, which also has a coffee bar.

Both Naked Fish, itself a fairly new restaurant, and the Abyss have recently begun opening for lunch.

What does it mean? Of course, restaurants close, too. But it doesn't seem to be at the same rate as new ones open. Are more people eating out? Are people merely looking for a new experience? Or are restaurants settling for smaller and smaller pieces of the same pie - as the same number of people now have an even wider choice than before?

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PSS - and others - need to build accountability into funds granted by legislature - Trib 5/9 p 2

small scale venture: publish Sam's students' works

what are Chinese tourists going to do? Jap/ war sites not of interest

availability of info not necessarily an FOIA issue - but of who knows, and who is willing to share on Guam, see truck emitting black smoke, told to report it (PDN 4/26) True in CNMI?

government by cliff-hanging - CUC fuel payments, PSS teacher payments, HPMR renewal

Iraq war - technology keeps more wounded alive - though wounds may be terrible.....(clipping)

NMC accreditation satisfied by La Fiesta transfer - who accredits NMC gov't for acquisition?

Illegal dumping at PR dump shows need for transfer station

whatever happened to social eyesore beauty contest?

From Ed Klingsberg: Randy Fennel says law requires member of Treasury present at opening of poker machines; metered NMC reduced cost in half! ; JoeTen opposes increase in minimum wage since it hires so many locals

punitive fee for littering not big enough to deter people from doing so

need for large meeting places when JoeTen library space gone

corporations not held responsible, held accountable since not considered person

war on terrorists being won; war on terrorism is not.

Give aid, education, to countries where immigrants coming from. If have it there, won't emigrate...from UN report on economic and social affairs

that the following locations within the Third Senatorial District are hereby designated as poker, pachinko slot and similar amusement machines zones:

(A) Locations fronting Chalan Pale Arnold (Middle Road) from the extreme south end where it intersects with Monsignor Guerrero Road extending North to the La Fiesta Building across from Nikko Hotel;

(B) West at the Navy Hill intersection and turning south on Beach Road starting where it meets American Memorial Park and extending south on Beach Road pass PIC Hotel, continuing on the main road in Koblerville pass the fire station, pass Hannam Market, over to the As Lito Road intersection; and

(C) Turning north on As Lito Road to the Shell Station at the intersection of Monsignor Guerrero Road; and turning west to Beach Road intersection at Microl Corporation.

Open airport to other vendors - magazines and books and newspapers (need to check!)

Highway bill

Zoning priority - strip malls

sad that doctors who go into nursing deprive community of doctor services

would add, in addition to very limited tourism infrastructure, the failing local infrastructure generally--power of late, the constant beach pollution and lack of responsiveness (here and Guam) to federal threats of fines for maintaining a healthy community, water quality problems on both islands. Also, year after year, vandalism of property and purse snatchings, graffiti and litter, show (at best) no improvement in solving the problem.

Also, the hotels are now entering the maintenance upkeep stages of their lives (note the upgrades and improvements being made); the newness factor gone. The challenges of dealing with ever-changing local laws and regulations re: labor and other threats (I think the attempt to take back the Nikko by Ted Mitchell left a big imprint on Japanese investment/economic observers as JAL/Nikko was prepared to implode the hotel before they left if forced out of their multi-year agreement) has made this a tough place for someone to sensibly try and get something started.

The days of venture (risk) capital are gone for Japan. There aren't too many Willie (deep pockets) Tan's around who have the money to put up now, and even if things continue to slide, or crash, he will own a major chunk of the island when things start to turn around some day. Plus, he is getting things on the cheap these days. Also, he has long known the ways of the island, which buttons to push, which local people to lobby, his local staff being well-paid to protect his interests.

The Chamber and others (existing businesses talking about CDA's QC) say not enough attention paid on longtime investment folks, keeping them happy. True, from my observation point. They are taken for granted. Frank points out that the hotels are changing hands; new buyers. But the sale price has to represent a major loss.

The cliff-like falloff in new business started with the advent of the \$100,000 security deposit. But it took years for its cumulative effect to take hold. And, finally, just recently, has it been done away with.

The CNMI is surely its own worst enemy when it comes to understanding the economic world. Bill Stewart has said for years, not for publication, 'the CNMI has done wrong just about everything possible, to undermine its own economic future.'

I can't believe someone in MVA isn't meeting with airline executives, hotel executives, and tour

executives every week. Airlines, hotels, and tour companies are the life blood of our tourist industry. Somebody should be on top of this at all times. (Bud)

It would be irresponsible to pretend that I have any answers. But one can speculate. One of the tertiary reasons could very well be the increase pressures to be put on the tourism industry with a closure and downsizing of the garment industry. Any hotel manager who has been here any time at all would probably realize that far more pressures is going to put on the industry to make up for the losses in tax revenues. This at a time where media challenges of increased fuel costs and airline transportation is tempting JAL to seek greener pastures.. Combine that with the somewhat overenthusiastic and optimistic projections about the benefits of the new Chinese tourism market could have raise alarm bells within the Japanese community. I would also add that the Commonwealth has done very little to improve the tourism infrastructure in the past 20 years. This is leading more and more tourist to select more aggressively marketed destinations. Unfortunately, we have consistently been convinced that our proximity and historical ties with Japan would guarantee a constant market. No matter what happens in the rest of the world. (Sam)