

On My Mind  
2/28/08

There's been much speculation as well as some misinformation making the rounds in regard to the future of CNMI's only public radio station, KRNM. The following is offered in an attempt to rectify the situation. In the past, KRNM has been funded primarily by Northern Marianas College, which holds an FCC institutional license for a public radio station, namely KRNM. NMC has paid for housing KRNM, for its power consumption - rather high, given that the equipment must be kept in a cool climate 24/7, and that transmitter costs are also high **[Bud: ARE there high costs in getting the broadcasts out?]** - for the salary of its lone full-time staffer, Station Manager Carl Pogue, and for satellite and program fees.

KRNM receives some funds from "underwriters" who are acknowledged at the beginning and/or end of particular programs of their choice, but is not allowed, by the terms of the FCC license, to accept commercial advertising. It also obtains some funds from listener contributions offered during its twice-a-year fund-raising campaigns, but these represent but a small percentage of total costs.

Thus, with NMC's decision that it can no longer afford to support KRNM to the extent it has in the past, KRNM is being forced to seek substantial amounts of new funding. NMC has given KRNM until May 30<sup>th</sup> to find funding to support it until the end of the fiscal year. Once that has been accomplished, KRNM must find steady funding for its operational, staffing, and program costs if it is to stay on the air.

A proposed budget for doing so, drawn up by Pogue, shows that \$128,700 would be needed annually. This includes \$70,000 for 2 staff, \$4,000 in equipment, \$7,000 in engineering and legal contractual support, \$25,000 in program fees to National Public Radio and Public Radio International, \$2,500 in communication costs, \$5,000 in equipment maintenance and repair, \$15,000 in utilities, and \$200 in office supplies. Not included are another \$4,000 in desirable computer upgrades, or any travel. Nor is rent - NMC has indicated it might be willing to continue housing the station if it can meet its other costs elsewhere.

KRNM is eligible for educational tax credits, and Pogue has had some success in garnering additional support from the local private sector - some of whose members have agreed to donate their tax credits to the station. Grant funding is also being pursued.

Homeland Security may be willing to contribute to KRNM in return for access to the station in case of emergencies, and to broadcast its message; the U.S.

Department of Interior may be willing to contribute in exchange for airing of information about labor and immigration issues.

So - the station is not dead yet, and indeed, may survive after all! Underwriters still need to know how many listeners KRNM has - that people care. So, be sure to vote "Yes!" on this week's Tribune poll!

For more information, contact Carl Pogue at 234-5766, or e-mail him at [carlp@nmcnet.edu](mailto:carlp@nmcnet.edu).

It is somewhat dismaying to realize, however, that the last [15th] legislature passed 128 new laws. Surely that sets a record of some sort?

Department of Corrections Lino Tenorio was quoted in the <EM>Trib</EM> earlier this week as saying that the new prison could accommodate up to 500 inmates, based on a projected of prison population. Wouldn't it have been nice if he'd said, instead, that the

Will be interesting to watch which of the outgoing members of the House find new positions with the government....

Then there's Lower Base. Along the shore of the lagoon. More potential prime real estate on public land, which is instead being dirtied, polluted, abused, kept out of the market. Yes, it's convenient to have container yards and oil storage tanks close to the harbor, but "close" is, after all, relative. To move some of those facilities inland, away from the lagoon, would mean a distance of only a few miles. Rehabilitating the area might take some doing, but it makes no sense to keep it dirty just because it always has been.

Public land should be used for the benefit of everyone, but much of the public land that comprises Lower Base - especially along the shore - does not. Isn't it time this was re-evaluated as well? Not all commercial dock space has to be ugly, after all. In some cities, they have been redeveloped into profitable tourist attractions.

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Some of those, who'd been there before, even expressed their pleasure at being

re-elected in terms of how much they liked their "job" and how happy they were to have their "jobs" back.

Excuse me, but when did being a legislator become a "job"? Aren't legislators, who make the laws the rest of us must live by, supposed to be representatives of the people who elected them? Aren't they supposed to be working on laws that help the community, that represent the people's best interests, that improve the lives of their constituents, and the economy? Aren't they supposed to be answering to the people? Serving the people?

Perhaps it was just a poor choice of words, because doing all those things could be considered a "job" too, but I would have much rather heard those legislators say they were happy to [again] be in a position to work towards helping their people and their community prosper, towards improving education, towards improving the infrastructure.

Prime real estate on Capital Hill another neglected asset....

- While it's been mentioned that military build-up plans should include measures to prevent the brown tree snake from entering the CNMI, there's been no mention of taking measures to prevent any other kind of invasive species - be it mollusks, rodents, insects or what-have-you - from entering. Equipment and ships themselves could easily act as carrier carriers for such pests, particularly if they come direct from Okinawa, where safeguards may not be in place to check out-going cargoes.

"There are good reasons to begin with a presumption against government action. As coercive monopolies that spend other people's money taken by force, governments are uniquely unqualified to solve problems. They are riddled by ignorance, perverse incentives, incompetence and self-serving." From "Don't look to gov't to cool down planet" by John Strossel in opinion column in MV, 11/21/07, p 12 from "Townhall")