

COOK ISLANDS HERALD

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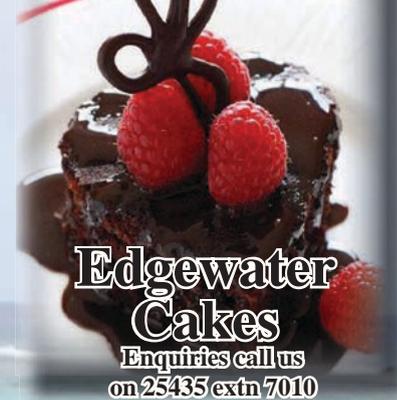
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PRESS STATEMENT

From: Wilkie Rasmussen, Leader of the Opposition

Norman George officially resigns from Cook Islands Party

The long serving Member of Parliament for the island of Atiu Norman George met on Monday morning with the Leader of the Opposition and Democratic Party to discuss his return back into the Democratic Party. He was accompanied in this meeting by former Democratic Party MP Eugene Tauava who proposes to be the Demo running companion for Mr George at the next general elections in just over a year's time.

Mr George presented Mr Rasmussen with his official resignation letter from the Cook Islands Party. This letter was signed by the Secretary of the

Cook Islands Party Constituency Committee of Teenui Mapumai, Denina Tuariki on the 24th of October 2013. Mr George informed Mr Rasmussen of this letter several weeks ago but Mr Rasmussen asked to cite the letter and says that this is a positive development in so far as Mr George's plans to rejoin the Democratic Party is concerned.

Article 6 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Cook Islands Party provides that any member of the Cook Islands Party wishing to resign and if that member is a registered financial member, that member may do so by writing a letter to the Secretary of the Electorate Committee of the Constituency.

"Ultimately the Democratic Party wants to win back both seats in Atiu. And they were seats traditionally held by us."

Mr Rasmussen continues to stand by the position that he and the Democratic Party held that Mr George must resign from the CIP and to stand for the Demo in a by-election or general election Mr George must win the nomination of the Democratic Party committee of the constituency that he stands for.

But the Leader of the Opposition said that he will hold further discussions with his caucus and Party Executive on the new development and indeed with Mr George and Mr

Tatuava.

Mr Rasmussen said that with this positive development, he will try and go to Atiu to hear directly from the people there and get some directions from there.

"At this stage, I'm agreeable with Mr George working towards the Demo's ultimate goals unconditionally and I want him to be patient and take it step by step until the Democratic Party caucus and executives have full confidence in him".

Mr George needs to respect my leadership and my style of management of the Democratic Party and show loyalty to work with my team towards winning the elections.

KARERE KI TE ITI TANGATA KUKI AIRANI

Turanga matutu o te Demo

Na William Heather Jnr (Smiley), Tauturu Arataki O TE Tū Akatanotano e te Democratic Party

Kia Orana kotou katoatoa i te aroa maata o to tatou Atua. E ra mataora teia noku no te mea te kite nei au i te turanga maraoroi o ta tatou putuputuanga koia oki ko te Democratic Party. Kua akamata ia teia putuputuanga e Papa Tom Davis e kua "turu ia e Tangata Nekeaere," i ta te reo imene akakite anga mai kia tatou. Kua tupu te Demo ki te maata i teia nei e kua Kavamani mai ana i te au tuatau i topa ki muri. Kua arataki ia mai ana e Papa Pupuke Robati, Papa Terepai Maoate, Papa Ropbert Wigmore e i teia tuatau kua kite tatou e ko

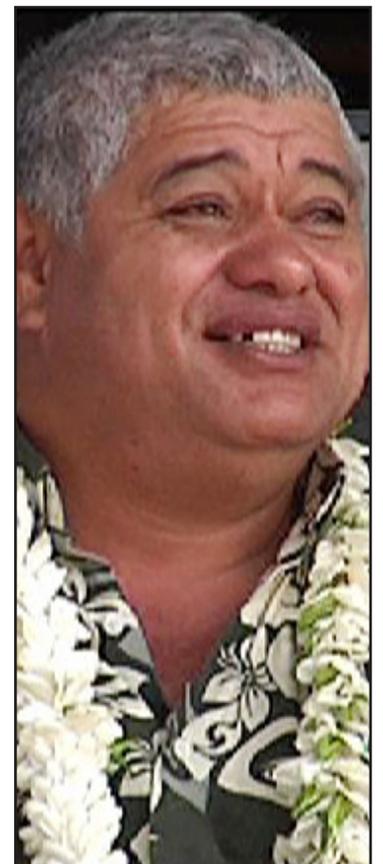
Papa Wilkie Rasmussen te Arataki o ta tatou party.

Te rekareka nei au i te akakite atu kit a au turuturu e kite iti tangata katoatoa e te Matutu nei te turanga o te Demo i teia ra e kua papa te reira no te tamaki atu i roto i te ikianga a teia openga mataiti ki mua e tu mai nei me kore ra i roto i nga marama mua o te mataiti 2015. I teia au tuatau nei kua tuku mai to tatou au taeake i te pae enua ki vao i te karere akamaroiroi ki te Arataki e te akapapu mai nei ratou e ka autua tatou i teia ikianga e tu mai nei. No reira kamaroiroi mai tatou i Rarotonga nei.

Kare au i mataora i te rongo anga au e kua rere akaou te Prime Minita ki

Tinito ki tetai uipaanga. Ki aku e maata roa te uipaanga a teia taeake e aere nei, kare ake rai au i kite ake me kua noo mai ana aia ki te basileia i tetai epetoma, kore ake rai, oki mai no te ori aere, nga mea miniti ua ake kite kainga te rere akaou atu ra. Aue tau teia tu e.

Te inangaro nei au i te tuku i te reo akapumaana e te akamaroiroi ki te au taeake anganga o te are tunu varaoa o Turoa no te mea kua ka teia ngtuare i te a'i i teia openga epetoma i topa ake nei. Te akaaroa. Pera katoa kite au ngtuare tei rokoa e te tumatetenga mate, na te Atua e akapumaana mai ia kotou katoatoa. Kia Orana e Kia Manuia.



Democratic Party gearing up for General Elections

By Wilkie Rasmussen, Leader of the Opposition

It has been some time now since I've made some comments about the status of the Democratic Party and where it is heading to. Most of my columns have always been about current issues of the day that the Government has failed to address or that the public has expressed concern about. I've talked about fires destroying schools and people's home and the failure of this Government to stop the arsonist from setting houses on fire. As if on cue we now hear of the Turoa Bakery and Saltwater Café being gutted by fire destroying the livelihoods of a number of local people. I feel deeply for them. I've also written about depopulation, corruption, high taxation, pensioner being taxed, and purse-seine fishing and so on.

In this column however, I wish to be a bit different because of a couple of positive developments that had happened recently. First, I heard on video footage which was not aired on television comments by Papa Tupui Ariki Henry, son of Cook Islands Party founder and first Premier of our country encouraging the Grey Power Movement to vote for the Democratic Party and throw this Government out. He said this at the meeting between Grey Power and the Prime Minister Henry Puna over the failure of the PM to deal with the pensioner's tax problems. Never before have I heard a Cook Islands PM heckled and generally talked down by the elderly, who plucked up enough courage to mobilize and protest to those in authority. Papa Pui was a former Minister of the Crown and a seasoned politician and for someone like him to say "vote the CIP out" signals serious shifting of support and loyalty. Papa Pui, Papa Dan Kamana and Papa Kura Strickland, all ex CIP Ministers

are people I respect very much.

Secondly, Papa Kura Strickland had now put pen to paper and wrote a letter to the editor in Maori expressing his disappointment of this Government. This is in addition to his calls to the local radio chat programme where he told the country that he is now shifting his support to the Democratic Party.

This Tuesday however was a highlight for me. The "maverick" MP Norman George, who stood for the CIP in the 2010 general elections came to see me and present his letter of resignation from the CIP which had been accepted by the electorate Secretary, a provision required under the CIP constitution. Mr George was a long serving Demo MP from Atiu, with intermittent breaks in that membership and who was elected as a CIP MP in 2006. Either he is or he comes close to being the longest serving MP in the Cook Islands.

Mr George wants to join the Demo team and while there may still be some issues to deal with over his intention, the positive development is that his gesture of meeting with me and expressing his intention without conditions helps the Demo in gearing up for the next general elections. Norman George presents to the Demos the capturing of two seats in Atiu. That excites me because these two seats were looking difficult for the Demo's to win. With his unbreakable hold in Atiu I am very confident that those two seats will be for the Demos after the next general elections.

Demo supporters should be prepared to gear up and get ready to battle and wrestle away the Government from Henry Puna and Mark Brown. Both these guys especially the PM seems impervious to criticism and to faults and failures of their own making. So let's get moving.



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BTIB lays formal complaint with Ombudsman

By Charles Pitt

On Monday 4 November the Chairman of the BTIB George Pitt wrote to the Ombudsman Mr Tearoa Tini to lodge a complaint at the actions of the Fin Sec Mr Richard Neves alleging interference with the BTIB process.

The issue relates to Mr Neves efforts to gain BTIB approval as a foreign enterprise, for NZ based company Kew Consulting to manage the \$60 million water project jointly funded by China, New Zealand and the Cook Islands.

Pitt advised the Ombudsman the BTIB was presently reviewing the application by Kew Consulting. However, Pitt said that in the past two weeks, Mr Neves had taken it upon himself to personally manage the application and allegedly coerce the BTIB CEO and the Board to approve the application without carrying its usual checks.

Pitt also alleged Neves had pressured Minister Hon Mark Brown and the Prime Minister to intervene.

Pitt said Neves actions were deplorable and showed disrespect for the functions of the Board.

He asked that the Ombudsman

investigate the matter and advise.

Response by Richard Neves, 5 November 2013

Thanks for the opportunity to respond Charles.

The Te Mato Vai project was announced at the Pacific Islands Forum hosted here in August 2012. Cabinet has endorsed the overall structure for the governance of the project. This involves the project Governance Group, a project steering group, a stakeholders group (for consultation). The Governance Group comprises representatives from the governments of the Cook Islands, New Zealand and Peoples Republic of China.

The Project Steering Group comprises representatives from:

- China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation
- Cook Islands Investment Corporation
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Planning
- New Zealand High Commission

The Stakeholders group is open to new members with a significant interest and representing key constituencies, it currently comprises representatives of:

- Koutu Nui
 - Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce
 - Cook Islands Council of Women
 - Cook Islands Tourism Council
 - Ministry of Agriculture
 - Ministry of Education
 - Ministry of Health
 - Ministry of Internal Affairs
 - National Environment Service
 - Office of the Prime Minister
 - Ports Authority
 - Te Aponga Uira
 - Te Ipukarea Society
 - Telecom Cook Islands
- Both MOIP and MFEM are the principles of this project and accountable for delivery, it is these two institutions that have undertaken the procurement of a project management outfit to manage extensive civil works which will ultimately reinvigorate a water supply network which is old and does not serve the people

of Rarotonga. The provision of potable water to people is a fundamental objective of the Government.

As the principles of the project I believe that both MOIP and MFEM are entitled to a reasonably detailed explanation of why a decision has been made to defer or decline the registration of Kew. Such a deferral comes at a cost to the Crown and ultimately the tax payer.

I (and others) have explained directly to Mr Pitt and the officials of BTIB the importance of this project and the need for objectivity in decision making. Everyone involved in moving this project is conscious of the need to consult with all people in the community on this project and move forward with it. That is why we have set up a formal meeting group which incorporates a number of critical stakeholders and this group is scheduled to meet regularly, I believe there have been at least two meetings of the consultative group.

If the Chairman of the BTIB feels so aggrieved about my behaviour I would also recommend he take up the opportunity to complain to the Public Service Commissioner and his Minister.

Outer islands consulted on Tax Review

Over the next week, MFEM Economic Advisor James Webb will be completing consultations with the Southern Group on the proposed changes in the Tax Review. James has already visited Aitutaki, Mangaia and Atiu, and will be in Mauke and Mitiaro this coming week. Public meetings have been held in Mangaia and Atiu, and a consultation with business owners in Aitutaki (a public meeting was held in Aitutaki earlier in the consultation process).

While on each island, James has also been consulting stakeholders in local governments about Budget and economic development issues.

"Each of our islands is unique and faces unique challenges. There are, however, many

common issues in the Pa Enua that affect all islands. Cost of living, transport links, completion of capital projects, labour shortages and depopulation – these are all present in Rarotonga but can be exaggerated in smaller communities." Webb said. "Many of these issues are complex and have no easy fix, but there are policy changes we can make at the country level to try and address them across all islands. The Outer Island Funding Formula (first implemented in the 2013-14 Budget) gives Island Governments more control over their operational finances, and the Tax Review aims to boost local incomes. The more responsive Island Governments can be to their local needs, and

the more we can boost local incomes, the better off all of our islands will be. There is always more we can do – particularly on infrastructure, transport and planning. Ultimately it is about improving the quality of life and providing viable economic opportunities for each island and the country as a whole."

"Regarding the Tax Review: There are specific issues that some individuals have (often outside of the scope of the Tax Review), and it's important that they be heard and considered. Overall though, once the community understand the full changes, they are broadly supportive (especially for the increases to local pensions and personal income tax cuts). In the long run, increasing incomes by more than the price rises is

the only way we can effectively combat cost of living for our communities."

"It would have been good if we could have gone to the Northern Group at the same time, but we are budget constrained and it was too expensive to charter our own flight with existing funding. The aim is to have these same discussions in the Northern Group when the next opportunity arises to join someone else's mission."

"On a more personal note, I would like to thank the islands that have received me so far. I have a much stronger appreciation of life on your islands and have been humbled by the kindness and generosity of the people who live there."

James Webb, Economic Advisor

Finger prints a key factor in burglary case

By Charles Pitt

Don't point your finger at me!"

That short, sharp remark from Crown Solicitor Martha Henry to her more senior colleague Norman George in the High Court last Friday morning preceded the re-commencement of the case involving the theft of pearls from the Nikao residence of Prime Minister Henry Puna and Mrs Akaiti Puna in June last year.

Crown Solicitors Martha Henry and Cheryl King were appearing for the Police in their prosecution of unemployed 27 yr old Fijian Indian William Atumaisa Nuku Wade whom Police allege broke into the Puna home and stole a quantity of black pearls.

Police later found a quantity of pearls at Wade's residence which they allege belong to the Punas.

Norman George represented Wade who initially resided with his wife's family next door to the Puna house. Wade had come to the Cook Islands in 2006. He had lived next door to the Puna house for 2 years. After the Police visited him in relation to the theft, Wade and his young family at the request of his in-laws, moved to Takuvaine.

Friday saw Police continue their giving of evidence, at times under torrential cross examination from George himself a former Police Detective, before a panel of three JPs; Chief Justice of the

Peace John Kenning, Georgina Williams and Mata Nooroa.

The hearing proceeded before an empty Court. One consolation was the air conditioning was working. However, it was still warm enough for George to request permission to remove his jacket. The floor near the main door has still not been repaired for what must be more than a year now. It is a tripping hazard and should be fixed before someone is injured.

Resuming on Friday following lunch, George told the Court he would be making application to call four witnesses. This included recalling an earlier Crown witness to give evidence as to ownership of the pearls found at Wade's residence. George said the Crown witness when giving evidence earlier, did not have his prescription glasses with him and so could not allegedly properly identify the ownership question. George said under S3 of the Evidence Act 1968, a witness could be recalled to rebut evidence.

George's application was opposed by Crown Solicitor Henry on several grounds, one relating to procedure. She said there must be something new, fresh, but in this case there was nothing new, significantly different to recall the witness. Henry said the witness had said he could see.

The Court adjourned to

consider George's application. Resuming at 2pm the Court announced that their decision on the application to recall the Crown's earlier witness would be reserved until Monday when the Court resumed at 9am.

The Court resumed on Monday at 9.45am and it was announced that George's application to recall an earlier witness had been declined.

Throughout Monday, Police continued to give evidence in relation to their investigation.

Police allege Wade broke into the Puna home by way of removing three glass louvers to gain entry then after a search he found and stole pearls belonging to the Punas. Detective Senior Sergeant Teroa, a 14 year veteran with Police, and a qualified finger print specialist, testified that the position of the finger prints indicated the louvers had been opened from the outside. However, under often intense cross examination by George, He could not verify that the windows were the actual point of entry and conceded that someone with a key could have gained entry.

Wade's finger prints were found on three of the louvers. Teroa testified that regarding each of the prints found on the louvers, there were 14-20 points which matched Wade's prints. A peer review by an Auckland Police finger print specialist verified this. However, finger

prints found inside the house could not be matched to Wade because of the poor quality of the prints.

The Court adjourned at 12 noon.

The Court resumed after lunch, at 1pm with the commencement of George's case for the defendant Wade.

Chief JP John Kenning however, had some difficulty adjusting his chair; "Let me get this chair right!" To which George quipped, "I don't have a mechanism to spring you out of it!"

George said the onus of proof lay with the Crown to prove beyond reasonable doubt; breaking in, entry -whether achieved, and intent to steal-in Wade's mind.

George said there was no clear established point of entry. Police thought the person had gone through the louvers. The question was whether breaking and entry was achieved?

Wade proceeded to give his evidence. Wade did not deny the finger prints on the glass louvers were his. He explained the reasons why his prints came to be on the louvers and claimed he did not enter the premises. He denied stealing the pearls and said he had the greatest respect for Henry Puna who once assisted him when his car would not start.

The Court adjourned at 1.45pm and will resume at 9am on Friday.



Our Frontpage model 3,000 finger prints in Police records



By Charles Pitt

One of the unusual and little known facts to emerge during the course of the Police case in the High Court against William Wade which resumed on Monday (see report on page 5), is the number of finger prints held in Police records.

Finger prints form a crucial part of the Police case against Wade.

During his evidence, Police finger print specialist Detective Senior Sergeant Roimata Peraua admitted Police held 3,000 finger prints in their records.

Criminals will need to be careful what they touch considering the expertise held by Peraua. He is a 14 yr Police veteran and is second in charge of the Criminal Investigation Branch-CIB where he has been for 9 years. Since 2003 he has been in charge of the Forensics Portfolio.

In 2005 he had completed a crime officer's course with NZ Police.

In 2006 he completed 1 yr of training in the science of finger prints.

In Vanuatu he completed an advanced finger printing methodology course conducted by Australian Federal Police.

He is the only finger print

specialist in the Cook Islands Police.

Peraua also disclosed that the traditional method of identifying offenders by finger prints has changed. Previously at least 12 points of identification were needed. It has now been accepted by the Pacific Finger Print Specialists Association that no pre-determined number is needed. Other criteria are used such as print quality, quantity, comparison, analysis and verification by peer review.

In Wade's case, the peer review was done by another specialist with NZ Police in Auckland.

Although he was subjected to intense cross examination by Wade's defense lawyer Norman George, a former NZ trained Detective, George was moved to congratulate Peraua on his achievements and qualifications.

Cook Islands Police may not have all the forensic resources one may see on Police television shows like CSI-Miami, but they do the best with what little they do have including salary levels that are shockingly low. It is time the Minister for Police ensured these important personnel are properly remunerated.

Our frontpage girl this week is 19 year old Hinano Wearing. Hinano was born and raised here in Rarotonga and is currently working up at Whatever! Bar and Grill. She is a tattooist, completed her apprenticeship in a tattoo parlor in NZ and is interested in starting a tattoo parlor here in Rarotonga, doing all sorts from Polynesian to contemporary. Check out our website www.ciherald.co.ck. and facebook page: www.facebook.com/ciherald



Cook Islands Herald goes QR

The Cook Islands Herald now has a QR (Quick Response) code. Simply scan this code into your Iphone or Smartphone and it will automatically take you to the Herald Website in your phone's internet browser.

Correction

In the story on page 5 about the Court case involving William Wade, the Police finger print specialist is named as Det. Snr Sgt Teroa. His name is actually Det. Snr Sgt Roimata Peraua.

EIA a potential gridlock for \$60 million Te Mato Vai project

The \$60 million Te Mato Vai (TMV) project is highly unlikely to begin in January 2014; in fact it could be delayed till June 2014 or even longer due to the bungling management by the Secretary of Finance Richard Neves. Totally out of depth and lacking the capacity of practical experience to drive the project Neves is overcome by the enormity and complexity of the project.

Biggest mistake Neves made was to wrestle the project off the Ministry of Infrastructure and Planning's (MOIP) experienced public works Minister Teariki Heather. This project is multilayered and will only progress proportionally to the capacity and skill level of the self confessed principal Neves. While it may be a scoop for Neves' CV due to the cost and significance of the fiscal donors this project, mishandled, this internationally unprecedented endeavor will be a major nail in the Cook Islands Party's coffin at the next elections.

Neves simply has bitten off a lot more than he can chew, his compulsive addiction to control people and the administration of the public sector is beginning to magnify his shallow basis to be responsible to oversee the \$60 million TMV. In the last year Neves has developed an arsonistic fetish igniting fires that are reaping negative political consequences, none of these are being extinguished and not one will generate votes for the CIP at the next polling day.

Neves refuses to extinguish the pensioner's back tax fire which shows signs of becoming a destructive bush fire. By abolishing the two year back tax, the Grey Power will cease their gatherings of discontent. The tax reform

proposals, Neves' brand of economics, (Nenevanomics) is being contested by discernable members of the public and now the Te Mato Vai fire. With the additional fires conjured up at the Ministry of Marine Resources, our jet setting politicians unwisely have become oblivious to the concerns of growing discontent.

Grey Power are planning to hold weekly protest assemblies in public places to raise their matters of concern.

Neves may as well be running the Democratic campaign because voters are being forcefully driven in that political direction by his gung ho administration style. Neves is solely building a gridlock that will seriously jeopardize the whole project.

With so many fingers in so many pies the thinly spread, inexperienced Neves is becoming increasingly forceful in fast tracking the dawdling TMV. Neves not once but twice endeavored to have Business Trade and Investment Board (BTIB) Chairman George Pitt removed or stood down from being involved in the review process of foreign consultant company Kupa Engineering and Water Consultant Limited (KEW) for foreign enterprise registration. KEW are contracted to provide a project management unit for the TMV valued at nearly \$3 million.

In a circulated letter that included the Minister of Finance Mark Brown, Neves made the ridiculous claim Pitt threatened Samoan Latu Kupa the KEW project manager. In a second widely circulated letter, Neves stated "Unfortunately my request for the Chairman to stand aside for the decision making process around this has been ignored, and in fact pilloried when I believe I had good reason to request

him to stand down from this decision." (Dated 22 October)

At a BTIB meeting on 24 October 2013 KEW's application was deferred not declined as Neves is incorrectly propagating. Neves has since adopted bully boy and intimidation scaremonger tactics to force BTIB to reconvene and approve KEW's application. Neve's interference of BTIB's due process is a shameful overstatement of his self perceived imaginary powers which are not tolerated by the BTIB.

The whole purpose of BTIB's existence and integrity is to be independently autonomic of political interference with the importance of upholding national interests. Under their legislation BTIB has wide ranging operational authority a fact lost on by Neves who has a self serving selective opinion of the BTIB's legal frame work.

Any concerns regarding KEW's application is to be received from them not a government official or a politician. Why Neves has chosen to interfere with this protocol is evident he has disregard for the rules that do not suit him or serve his purposes. A complaint is being registered with the Office of the Ombudsman according to Pitt.

Serious consideration must be given as to whether Neves continues as the principal of TMV. The project hasn't started and it has already become controversial and a contentious political hot potato which Neves has no inclination how to defuse. It's time Minister of MOIP Teariki Heather stepped up to the plate, seize control of TMV and guide the project to fruition, end of story. This is not a desk bound, pen pushing job, but a task for real men not boys.

Neves ought to take the advice of eating humble pie and

step aside and let experienced public works professional Teariki Heather get on with the job. In the mean time Neves needs to enroll at the Ministry of Culture in a crash fast track course of indigenous Cook Island protocols and customs, a matter he has no regard for or sensitivity. Then Neves ought to give priority to preparing an Environment Impact Assessment because there are no exemptions for TMV as advised by the National Environment Service (NES) several times this earlier this year.

The time line of and approval for EIA consent for a project this size could take up to six months or longer if the public's responses require further consultation. As a former Chairman of the Environment Council, I recommend Neves start preparing the EIA now. It took the Tepaki Group team of four people working nearly five months on an EIA for the redevelopment of the Sheraton project before it was submitted to the then Environment Council for consideration, it took more time before it was green lighted.

EIA approval is not retrospective and public responses can result in significant delays much to the frustration of an applicant. Be warned Mr. Neves, a discontented public will gridlock the project when the EIA is advertised for public consumption and review. Get yourself a good navigating negotiator to ensure TMV is not mazed or stalled in the processing for approval.

- George Pitt

Note: A copy of this opinion piece was forwarded to Richard Neves on Tuesday for comment, however at time of going to print Tuesday evening no response had been recieved.

No approval yet for Petrocean's undersea pipeline

By Charles Pitt

Contrary to a statement by Chris Vaile in Wednesday's CI News that government had approved in principle a new undersea fuel pipeline for Tahitian based company Petrocean's fuel tanker to offload fuel at Rarotonga, Ports general manager Bim Tou told the Herald on Wednesday morning that government had not given any approval as yet for such a proposal.

Tou explained that back on 10 September 2013, Cabinet directed that;

1. A lead agency be designated to coordinate the proposal from Petrocean for construction of an off-shore anchorage and over-reef undersea pipeline for discharge of fuel to Pacific Energy in Nikao.

2. Ports Authority, Tau, Internal Affairs, CIIC and NES be consulted.

Tou said Ports Authority has

been designated the lead agency and the other parties will be consulted. He stressed that no plans have been submitted yet, no business plan and no feasibility study. Tou said the parties would meet including other technical experts, when there is something to study and evaluate such as a feasibility study.

He said he apologized to Triad if last week's discussions with the other agencies had been taken out of context.

Tou said the anchorage would likely cost about \$2.5 million. Petrocean would be using a mid range tanker out from Singapore which is bigger than the coastal size tankers used now which are out of Suva. However he said it was premature to speculate on matters.

He said Vaile was concerned about the risk of damage to the environmental and commercial/



Ports Authority General Manager - Bim Tou

monopoly issues that may see a replay of the Toagate saga. Bim acknowledged these were valid concerns. Tou said it was likely the Ministry of Marine Resources would also be included in discussions.

CITC Christmas promotion

On Wednesday CITC's George George announced the CITC Supermarket promotion for Christmas. There will be \$20,000 worth of prizes up for grabs including for instance TV, Notebook and Smart Phone. There will be weekly draws and a final draw at 2pm on 28 December at the CITC Supermarket. Check out the details when you next call at the Supermarket.



Cook Islanders to raise national issues at international climate change forum

A delegation from the Cook Islands will be amongst the thousands attending the global climate change conference in Warsaw, Poland this month.

The Cook Islands are one of the 195 Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This year the 19th Session of the UNFCCC will see the Cook Islands focus on several key issues including Loss and Damage, Climate Change Financing and Climate Change Adaptation.

"Being a cluster of small islands in a vast ocean, the Cook Islands are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Our vulnerability makes it crucial that we strengthen our resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change," said Ms. Ana Tiraa, Director of the Climate Change Division of the Office of the Prime Minister.

Under the Loss and Damage agenda, the Cook Islands are supporting the call for the development of an international

climate risk insurance facility. It's at the UNFCCC COP 19 that the global community will discuss the options for risk management and reduction; risk sharing and risk management mechanisms; and approaches for addressing rehabilitation measures.

When it comes to Climate Change Financing the Cook Islands is advocating for new and additional climate financing as well as direct budget support using national systems and procedures.

"It's at the international level that the decisions are made which flow onwards to impact on the work that we carry out in our country to address climate change. By attending these meetings we ensure that our voice and concerns are considered," said Tiraa.

The delegation of eight under the Cook Islands badge are funded externally, while four are from within the Cook Islands, three are Cook Islanders based with a regional organisation and will provide advice and



Ana Tiraa - Delegation Leader

support to the delegation; and one delegate based overseas provides legal counsel for the team.

The UNFCCC COP 19 will take place in Warsaw, Poland from 11 to 22 November, 2013.

For more information on this event please visit: www.unfccc.int, should you wish to receive news from the Cook Islands delegation at the climate change event please contact Celine Dyer on celine.dyer@cookislands.gov.ck

Re-shuffle of portfolios

Last Friday, the Prime Minister confirmed a reallocation of portfolio responsibilities to his Ministers.

The key changes include a shift of responsibility for Seabed Minerals and Natural Resources to Minister Brown; Internal Affairs to Minister Glassie, Justice to Minister Heather; and Environment to Minister Turepu.

The Cabinet reshuffle comes after the departure of Tom Marsters as Deputy Prime Minister, and the appointment of Kiriaiu Turepu as Minister for Agriculture.

The Prime Minister has retained responsibility for Foreign Affairs and

Immigration; Marine Resources; and Transport. Under the new changes, he has allocated the following:

Hon. Mark Brown
Seabed Minerals and Natural Resources

Head of State
Cook Islands Pearl Authority
Sports

Hon. Teariki Heather
Justice

Hon. Nandi Glassie
Ombudsman
Internal Affairs
Parliamentary Services

Hon. Kiriaiu Turepu
Environment
Business Trade and Investment Board

Other responsibilities remain unaffected.



Kiriaiu Turepu



Nandi Glassie



Biggest driving force behind the uptake of renewable energy

Staffers at a leading overseas technology company did a quick poll in which they asked respondents who they thought was the biggest driving force behind the uptake of renewable energy.

Almost half (49%) replied it should be Government, a quarter thought consumers (25%), and the remainder said business (26%).

The main reason cited for why it was imperative that Government should get involved was climate change.

In the Cook Islands, Government is showing the way with renewable energy developments while two main businesses on Rarotonga have invested significantly in photovoltaic systems. Thanks to net metering there is also a solid solar community on Rarotonga.

Here are some simple facts: no matter how much we attempt to save, the world is going to need more and more energy. At the same time, climate change is a reality. Conventional energy generation from fossil fuels is the biggest man-made contributor to global warming, so developing renewable energy sources is important. Why so?

Because renewable energy generation technologies, in contrast to fossil fuels, produce no direct greenhouse gas



Unveiling the inverters for the new PV arrays at the Ministry of Education in January this year

emissions and thus, offer the promise of zero-carbon electricity generation and a significant role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions to avoid climate change.

Greenhouse gases trap heat from the sun and warm the planet's surface which many people have blamed for causing rising seas and weird weather all around the globe.

Renewable electricity generation is also attractive for government because it makes the electricity generation system less reliant on diesel generated electricity and thus less exposed to volatility in global fuel markets.

Harnessing free sources of energy like the sun, wind and

tides for electricity production will lead to reduction in diesel consumption (the current main source of electricity generation on Rarotonga).

Many supporters of renewable energy highlight the potential for job creation from investing in more renewable electricity generation and tout its improvement of the Cook Islands "green" image.

It all sounds good, but at an individual or personal level, it's not difficult to see the resistance to real actions. Many people overseas share the poll opinion that the governments must take the leading role in renewable energy exploitation.

And today, in most cases,

renewable energy is more expensive than conventional so some kind of financial incentive programs must be laid out as is the case in the United States and Europe. Governments, so the argument goes, must lead by example and smooth the way to utilise the renewable energy sources that are available.

Businesses need to keep developing and promoting products for utilising renewable energy and to train consumers to use them.

Equally important to the market economy is the real need for products so that consumers can take their stand by buying them and utilising systems based on renewable energy.



News Briefs *By TeRiu Woonton*



Dance to raise funds

The Upa Upa girls will be conducting a Dance fitness fundraiser in support of Avatea Primary School. The fitness fundraiser will be held at the Tupapa Centre on Thursday the 7th of October from 5.30pm to 6.30pm. Entry fee is \$7 per person, which includes light refreshments afterwards.

Runathon for fire

This Saturday the 9th of November, Avatea School will be holding a runathon starting at 7am in town, going towards Arorangi and then around the island in aid of the fire-stricken school. Donations to the school students will be very much appreciated.

Gala day to raise money for school

This Friday the 8th of November the ex Nukutere College Pupils Committee will be holding a gala day at the Nukutere College grounds, in aid of the rebuilding of Nukutere College. Chairperson of the ex pupils committee and one of the founding members of Nukutere College, Emma Williams, says the gala will not only go towards Nukutere College but it will also help assist with Avatea Primary School. The gala day will include umu and BBQ food to last all day and spin the wheel. Over a period of time, the ex pupils will also be doing a collection over a period of time, where each ex student will donate \$100 towards Nukutere College.

Wellington students unite

In an update from the Victoria University of Wellington,

Cook Is Association, the Cook Island students attending the Victoria University unite in many ways to empower members to succeed in their academic and professional development goals during their time at Victoria University while embracing the unique Cook Islands way of doing things. The Cook Islands Association at Victoria University do a number of academic, cultural, sporting and social events throughout the year.

Sevens results

Here are the results from the 2013 International Sevens in Heaven Finals which took place on Saturday the 2nd of November. In the shield final Rebels 25- Titikaveka Colts 7, in the Bowl Final Araura Enea 24-Shuzi Flying Dragons 43, in the plate final ICBH Arorangi Cowboys 5-General Transport Tabusoro 40, and the CUP FINAL Teimurimotia Stallions 19-Bombay Hawks 26. Player of the tournament went to George Taina from Bombay Hawks and top trie scorer went to Ben Partridge from Teimurimotia Stallions who scored 8 tries.

Tongans too good

The final score for the game Tonga versus the Cook Islands saw Tonga defeat the Cook Islands 22 to 16. The result was cruel on the Cook Islands winger Chris Taripo, who scored all his sides points and delighted the stadium-record crowd of 8,544 with his tries. Chris Taripo was awarded man of the match award. Cook Islands next game is against Wales this Sunday the 10th of November. Last week the Cook Islands played USA, where USA defeated the Cooks, 32 to 20.

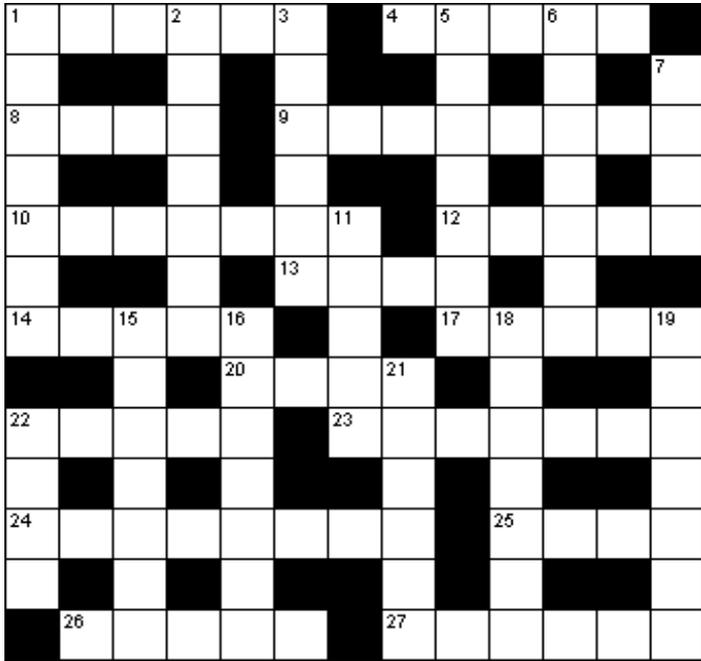
Tivaevae Exhibition

At the Punanga Nui Market on Wednesday morning Theresa Porea , Ina Bishop and some other mamas displayed some of their colourful Tivaevae. It's Theresa's first exhibition. - *Nio Oti*





CROSSWORD

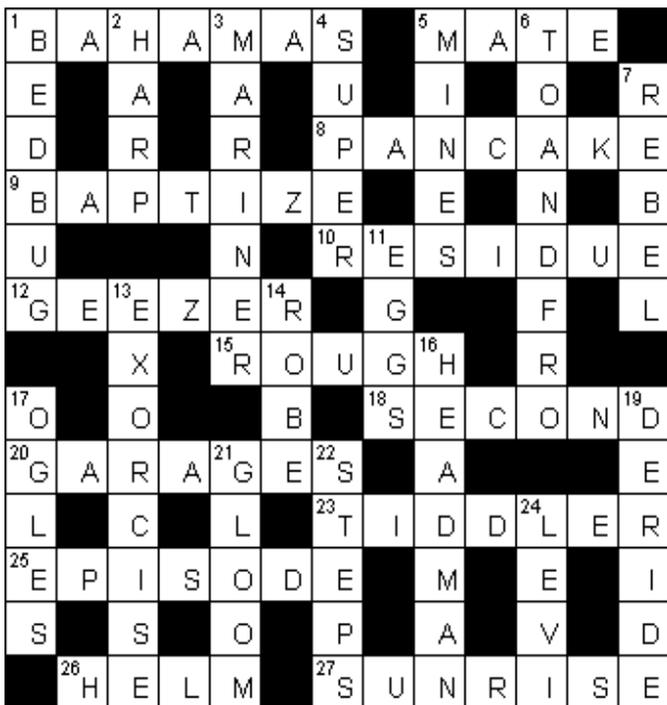


Across

- 1. Jerk rapidly (6)
- 4. Dark tertiary colour (5)
- 8. Procurer (4)
- 9. Fashion industry (3,5)
- 10. Chirping insect (7)
- 12. Tumults (5)
- 13. Deal out sparingly (4)
- 14. Scoop (5)
- 17. Flat circular plates (5)
- 20. Musical staff sign (4)
- 22. Any red wine (5)
- 23. Neck scarf (7)
- 24. Sociable (8)
- 25. Anorak (4)
- 26. Essex town (5)
- 27. Fashions (6)

Down

- 1. Of local interest (7)
- 2. Average (7)
- 3. Having horns (6)
- 5. Left work (7)
- 6. Instruments of offence (7)
- 7. Street of stabling (4)
- 11. Emblem (5)
- 15. Somerset town (7)
- 16. Branch of biology (7)
- 18. Babyhood (7)
- 19. Walks with long steps (7)
- 21. Lichen (6)
- 22. Horse's gait (4)



The COMPUTER MAN Tech Tips

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Best Windows 8 Apps

Windows 8 has many interesting features, but the most important has to be the Windows Store.

It's now easy to enhance your Windows 8 laptop or Windows 8 tablet with a host of powerful apps - games, multimedia, tools, productivity and more - and these can then automatically be installed on all your other Windows 8 or Windows 8.1 systems in a click or two.

You'll have to find them first, of course, which is something of a challenge, since the Windows Store now has thousands of apps competing for your attention.

The new Windows 8.1 version, currently available as a preview, makes drastic improvements to the discoverability of apps, but in the meantime we've been scouring the latest releases for the hidden gems. Read on for our guide to the best Windows 8 apps currently available.

OneNote

Microsoft's well-known note-taking application is available as a free Windows 8 app, and syncs all of your thoughts and ideas across multiple devices and platforms through the magic of SkyDrive.

The OneNote app itself works well within the clean, tiled look of the Windows 8 start screen and there are plenty of features to explore, from the ability to annotate your notes with drawings and scribbles to the option of tagging your notes to make them easier to organise.

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News Briefs *By TeRiu Woonton*

Fisheries training

Four government employees from the Cook Islands and Samoa took up fellowship training attachments this week with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, FFA. Saiasi Sarau, an Observer also doing monitoring, control and surveillance work at the Ministry of Marine and Latisha Maui, a vessel monitoring system assistant also with Ministry of Marine attended the training. "A key reason for the FFA fellowships is the high priority placed by member governments on building adequate Monitoring Control and Surveillance capacities in national Offshore Fisheries Divisions and Maritime areas. Our members rightly identify this as essential to their development agendas and we are very pleased to be able to contribute," says FFA Director General James Movick. During their two-week intensive program with FFA, the fellows will gain inside knowledge of the agency's work. Through personal mentorship with technical experts and advisors, they will also gain insights into how their daily work challenges at national level feed into the regional fisheries development agenda. The participants will have specially organised sessions across the management, operations, development, and corporate services divisions of the agency. They will also gain insights into IT developments and better understand how FFA works with their national Fisheries Information Management Systems. This is important for understanding how information technology helps countries monitor who is fishing in their Exclusive Economic Zones – and whether they are meeting license conditions or not.

Cook Islands Students Association

The annual Taokotaiaanga event was hosted by the Cook Is Association from the 30th of August to the 1st of September. 2007 was the last year that the Cook Is Association joined the event, and major highlights from the weekend included the visit and motivational speeches from Cook Islands PM Henry Puna and MP for the NZ National Party, Alfred Ngaro. The next annual gathering of the Taokotaiaanga will be held hosted by the Cook Islands Ass from the 8th to the 13th of July. It will feature seminars, cultural performances, speech and debate competitions and networking opportunities. This year also, Rachel Hockin, a dedicated student to Victoria University who was born and raised in the Cook Islands graced the runway of the 2013 world of wearable art show held in Wellington. She had created a garment inspired by Cook Is dance costumes. She commenced her studies at Victoria University in 2010 and is enrolled in a Master of Design Innovation. She is currently doing her thesis on Cook Islands dancing, focusing mainly on costumes and how it could fit into the exciting world of wearable technology. The committee for the Cook Is student Ass consists of Tapaeru Hermann as President, Tekura Moekaa Vice President, Kairangi Buchanan Secretary, Peru Kimiora- Treasurer, Communication Officers Alisha Allan Moetaua and Brienela Taura and cultural officers Kate Ngatokorua and Tungane Nicholls.

Mauke school gala success

The Mauke school gala which was held early last month saw an astonishing amount of \$3,775.50 being raised for the renovation of Mauke School. Tuakana Moetaua, Chairperson for Mauke School says the day was filled with fun activities and food, which was sponsored by generous businesses across Rarotonga and Mauke.

Taka eira 2013
Trade Days
Thur 28th & Fri 29th November
10am - Opposite Banana Court

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◆ Entertainment ◆ Food

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 **Business Trade Investment Board**
Cook Islands

Tupapa Grab First Win – But Only Just

The Tupapa women's team recorded their first victory of The Edgewater Resort and Spa round robin cup when they beat the young Te Ava Rau side on Saturday.

It wasn't all easy going for Tupapa though who edged out the win by just 2 wickets. Te Ava Rau batted their full 20 over's with Naomi top scoring (25 not out). Tupapa managed to chase down Te Ava Rau's score of 73 in the 13th over, with Claudia and Tia top scoring with 19 and 15 not out respectively. The win lifts Tupapa into 7th place on the table while Te Ava Rau occupy lonely last, winless this season.



Nikao Lose A Wicket vs Matavera in the Weekend During The Edgewater Resort & Spa Round Robin Cup

TENDER



MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING TENDER

RAROTONGA BRIDGES AND DRAINAGES

Ngatipa Drainage Improvements - Contract No. C13/05

Tamoe Storm-water Drainage Improvements

- Contract No. C13/06

Matavera Stream Crossing - Contract No. C13/08

Betela Bridge Upgrade - Contract No. C13/09

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Planning seeks tender proposals from Contractors for the above contracts.

A copy of the Tender Document per contract number including specifications can be collected during work hours from the MOIP office in Arorangi. A non-refundable deposit of \$100 will be required before the tender document is issued.

Tenders close at 3pm on Friday, 15th November 2013, and must be submitted to the MOIP Office in Arorangi and in accordance with the requirements of the Tender Document. Tenders must be submitted in two sets hard copies inside a sealed envelope labeled "CONFIDENTIAL" and addressed to:

The Secretary

Ministry of Infrastructure and Planning
Arorangi, Rarotonga, Cook Islands

and subsequent markings below to include the following:
Tenderers name, contact person, and contact details; contract name and number; and closing time and date.

Enquiries to: Tenga Mana, Project Engineer

Email: tenga@oyster.net.ck, Phone: +682 20321

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Economy driven by strong growth in tourism says ADB Bank

The following is an extract from the Asia development Bank Macroeconomic assessment of the Cook Islands, completed in June 2013.

ECONOMY

A. Economic Conditions

13. The Cook Islands economy has registered positive growth during the past two years. The economy has recovered from the setback caused by the global economic crisis and the preceding escalation in commodity prices. This recovery has been driven by strong growth in tourism. Economic growth was marginally positive in FY2011 when GDP increased by 0.8%. In FY2012, GDP increased by 5.3%. The growth rate is expected to slow to 4.1% in FY2013 and continue to be positive through the coming two years. The private sector has expressed positive sentiments on the state of the economy.

14. The economy closely tracks the economic cycle in New Zealand. New Zealand is the Cook Islands' major economic partner providing over 80% of commodity imports and 60% of tourist arrivals. Inflation in the Cook Islands follows movements in New Zealand prices, interest rates in the two countries are closely aligned and the number of tourist arrivals reflects the state of the New Zealand economy. Given these circumstances macro indicators for the New Zealand economy, which indicated growth of 2.1% in 2013 and 2.6% in 2014, provide a useful guide to the prospects for the Cook Islands economy.

15. The Cook Islands does not implement an independent monetary policy. The use of the New Zealand dollar as its currency effectively eliminates the use of monetary policy as an instrument of macroeconomic management in the Cook Islands. A key benefit of this arrangement is that it avoids the need to maintain an adequate level of foreign reserves to protect the domestic currency. The close linkage between the Cook Islands and the New Zealand economy also offsets the potential risk of disparate

terms of trade movements undermining the Cook Islands economy.

16. Policy formulation lacks an appropriate evidence base. Estimates of the importance of the tourism industry to the Cook Islands economy have ranged between 60% and 90% of GDP. While the mission believes that the 90% estimate considerably overstates the sector's importance there is no doubt that tourism is the leading sector and dominates economic activity. An accurate estimate of the contribution of tourism—based, for example, on the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Tourism satellite account recommended methodological framework—would strengthen tourism policy.

17. Tourist accommodation is approaching capacity. For the past two years tourist accommodation has been fully booked during peak periods. Tourist arrival statistics indicate that the numbers of arrivals in the shoulder and off-seasons are increasing. While this spread of arrivals is improving the utilization of existing accommodation, if the forecast levels of growth are to be achieved, it will be necessary to consider the means through which tourist accommodation can be expanded, for example, through increasing the number of hotel rooms or increasing home stay availability. Alternatively, accommodation providers could introduce seasonal tariffs, increasing tariff rates in the peak periods and reducing rates in low season—bearing in mind that any increase in rates risks diverting tourists to other holiday destinations. New tourism infrastructure development would have to take into account competing demand for scarce resources and sustainability issues with respect to water supply and sanitation on the islands. An assessment of private sector plans for increasing capacity is necessary

to understand the nature and extent of the accommodation constraint and the government's policy response, if any.

18. The contribution of agriculture and fisheries to the economy is under-valued. The primary industry sectors are important for household consumption; in addition they substitute for some imports and contribute to export income. The exclusion of household production from GDP estimates means that the contribution of the primary industry sectors to the economy is substantially under-valued. In reported GDP data the sectors are each estimated to contribute less than 1.5% to the monetary economy which, a priori is very low. There is an urgent need to better understand the value of this sector through quantifying the growth of the sector over time, considering what has underpinned the growth, and looking ahead to the opportunities and the risks for the sector's future growth and contribution to GDP. Currently efforts are being made to diversify the economy through the revival of the pearl industry, the introduction of new crops and the elimination of production/marketing constraints but without the broader understanding of the sector that would provide the lessons for policy makers in encouraging the sector's growth in the future. Capacity constraints and land tenure issues are obvious challenges that will require to be addressed.

B. Economic Outlook

19. The economy is expected to grow over the next two years, albeit at a slower rate than in the previous two years. Current estimates, are that real growth will fall to 1.4 % in FY2014 (from 4.1% in 2013) due to a 24.8% reduction in capital investment associated with the completion of construction activity. Although a strong performance of the tourism sector will be critical to

achieving growth targets, the challenge will be to develop a broader economic base to reduce the country's reliance on tourism. Diversification of the economy is needed to build resilience to external shocks.

C. Employment and Investment

20. The workforce participation rate is over 70%. The 2011 census showed that the employed population totalled 6,938. Slightly over 8% of the currently active workforce indicated that they were unemployed. The relatively high participation rate is believed to reflect the combination of the out-migration of working age adults and the high participation rate of foreign workers. Aside from the periodic censuses, there is no systematic collection and analysis of labour market data. Other indicators could be used to show trends in the labour market. These include contributors to the Cook Island's Superannuation Fund (CINSF) and the addition of question(s) on workforce VAT returns.

1 Census 2011—Summary Indicators table, p4.

21. Over 40% of employed Cook Islanders work for the public sector. Public sector employment has become increasingly important for resident Cook Islanders. Over the past decade, most of the growth in the size of the workforce has been in public sector employment—which has increased from 30% of the workforce in 2001, to 40% of the workforce in 2011. At the same time foreign workers have become increasingly important in the non-public sector, now accounting for over 37% of the non-public sector workforce. Given the reservation price of local labour, it seems likely that this trend will continue. Foreign workers fill the gap between demand and supply of labour at the prevailing wage level. While some Cook Islanders may be unemployed, that may be

Continued page 23

From the South Pacific to Shandong – in Fifty Hours

1 18 golfers were in the field at Nanshan International Golf Club in China's northerly Shandong province for the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship which took place from 24 October to 27 October 2013. No one travelled as far – rather, for as long – to get here as Kirk Tuaiti of the Cook Islands.

Tuaiti left his home on Aitutaki, an atoll located in the outer reaches of the South Pacific islands, on Friday, flew to the main island of Rarotonga where he spent the night before catching his flight – and crossing the international date line in the process – to Auckland. A 13-hour transit in New Zealand's most populous city was followed by a 12-hour connection to Guangzhou in southern China, where he waited another three hours before boarding one final flight for Qingdao. He was collected three hours later and journeyed the remaining 230km by car, arriving at the course on Monday afternoon after approximately 50 hours of travel.

One would think Tuaiti might be somewhat jaded following his epic adventure, but he was having none of it. "It's great to be here; there's no way I was going to miss playing here," he beamed following a practice round on Wednesday.

Tuaiti was joined at Nanshan by his compatriot, New Zealand-based Ned Howard, and was matter-of-fact about the golfing facilities in his homeland.

"The course I play – Aitutaki Golf Club – only has nine holes and is about the size of the driving range here," he said in reference to Nanshan's state-of-the-art training centre. "Our greens are cut to the same height as the tee boxes here, so it's taking a bit of time to adjust."

Tuaiti, a well-built 25-year-old who grew up in Australia before returning to the Cook Islands to help out with his family's fishing charter



Kirk Tuaiti

business, is his nation's top player and was nominated to represent the archipelago at the AAC following his win at the Rarotonga Championship earlier this year. A three-handicapper with a powerful swing, Tuaiti is realistic about his chances of winning, but says getting his hands on the trophy isn't the reason why he has travelled so far.

"For us to be represented at this tournament is a huge deal for the Cook Islands," said Tuaiti. "Raising awareness and competing at an event of this stature can only be positive for the growth of golf back home."

On being reminded about the effort it took to get to Nanshan, Tuaiti smiled: "It's just as well I like travelling," he said.

For the record

By Charles Pitt

Of the 118 players from 34 countries in the field at Nanshan International Golf Club in China's northerly Shandong province for Asia-

Pacific Amateur Championship October 24 to 27, 60 made the cut.

Kirk Tuaiti from Aitutaki representing the Cook Islands did not make the cut but his fellow Cook Islander Ned Howard who is based in the Bay of Plenty, NZ, made the final field of 61.

The final was played over 18 holes, on the par 72 course and four rounds were played. Howard did not fare so well in round 1 finishing 10 over. However, he fared better as the final progressed. In round 2 he finished 5 over, in round 3 he was again 5 over and in round 4 he finished 2 over. His total was 306 placing him 49th equal.

The tournament was won by Lee Chang Woo from Korea with a total of 281. Lee scored an under 3 in his final round.

Three Australian golfers finished in the top ten.

All six NZ golfers made the cut with the best finisher ending up 19th.

Other Pacific nations

represented were; Fiji, PNG, Samoa (one finished 57th equal), Solomon Islands.

The Championship was broadcast by TV to 150 countries reaching millions of viewers.

Organized by the Asia Pacific Golf Confederation, the Masters Tournament and The R&A, the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship winner receives an invitation to the Masters the following year and, along with the runner(s)-up, advances to International Final Qualifying for The Open Championship.

Each year, invitations for the championship are sent to the leading players from the APGC-member countries. Each country is automatically provided with two positions, which are to be filled by their highest-ranked players from the WAGR. If there is only one or no players from a member country in the rankings, they are able to nominate one or two players accordingly provided the player/s have a handicap of 5.4 or less.

We are the future

By Hareta Tira Passfield

Hey guys, I hope everyone is looking forward to the sevens. It should be awesome! I can't wait to see everyone's costumes and the dance that Nana and the gang are planning. From what I've heard it's going to be great. I know a few people dancing and I know how good they are, so I'm sure it's going to be fantastic!

I don't know if you youngsters know about the debate that our country is having with the Sea Bed Mining. In fact I know there are people out there that do not know a thing about the issue. Which is crazy. Seabed mining is a huge issue. I didn't know much about it till I got the opportunity to take part in a local debate a few weeks back.

For those of you that

don't know what it is, let me fill you in. At the bottom of our sea we have these things called manganese nodules. They are valuable, so valuable that companies from all around the world want come to our waters and get these nodules. The Cook Islands could get millions, maybe billions, from this. But before that can happen we have to have legislation in place, that will regulate the mining. Sure, billions of dollars sounds great but we don't know the environmental impact it will have. There could be a chance that the machines that are going down there could be destroying some amazing creatures that we don't know anything about? Who knows, maybe there is a cure for cancer or AIDS down there? There are other potential environmental impacts, like maybe on our fish that we

rely on.

The money that we could get from the Seabed mining could be used for better health facilities and better schools. It also could be used to pay back the debt that this country is in with countries like China and New Zealand. It may replace our dependency on aid from foreign countries.

In my own opinion, I am fully for seabed mining, but only if the companies follow the precautionary principle. Big words. If you don't know what it is, it is a principle that means that, if the mining company can't show that their work will have zero or very little impact on the environment, then they can't mine until they can. Our environment is beautiful and I'd hate to see it ruined

You're probably wondering what this has to do with you? If the mining



does take place it won't be before 2020 and that means most of us will be out of school by then and will be looking for jobs. The mining may provide us with lots of job opportunities. This should motivate us to go over seas and get qualifications so that we can come back work for the mines, instead of looking overseas for jobs.

Some of us are going to be future leaders of this country, so we need to get familiar with today's issues. It's time we start caring, because we are the future.

Bakery and café destroyed by fire

A fire was reported to authorities at 2.16am on Saturday morning, where a fire had broken out at the premises of Turoa Bakery and Saltwater Café, which is located at the front of the building. Two appliances from Puaikura and 3 from the Rescue Fire Service managed to get to the scene at approx 2.31am, and by the time they got to the scene, the building had been well-engulfed by the fire. With the efforts of the fire trucks that had to draft water from the sea they managed to get the fire under control at 3.30am. Willie Hagai, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, says it is one of biggest fires they have had to put out, apart from the recent

school fires. Fortunately no-one was on the premises and the biggest challenge for them was the fact that the fire was so close to the main road. It is understood that Turoa Bakery is closed on a Friday because of the Sabbath and while both the owners of Turoa Bakery and Saltwater Café were at the scene from the beginning of the fire right throughout the end, it was too late for the fire fighters to save anything. Hagai says while local investigators are still investigating the scene, insurance investigators will arrive tomorrow morning. At this stage, the cause of the fire cannot be determined, but if anyone has any information regarding Saturday morning's

fire, no matter how big or small the information may be to come forward to either the fire safety of the Cook Islands Police. The recent fires have affected the Rarotonga Community and Hagai would like to encourage businesses and homeowners, especially homes and businesses which are unmanned to keep an eye out on the property or invest in security. It would also be good timing for community watch teams to come together and revive the community watch scheme. He would also like to extend a huge thank you to the Puaikura Volunteer Brigade, the unsung heroes who helped assist in putting the fires out at Turoa Bakery and Saltwater Café.

Hagai also raised concern regarding burning bush fires and rubbish heaps that spiral out of control when no one is watching it. "After starting your fire, stay with it ensure it is under control and do not leave until it is out," he encourages the public. He says there have been 24 callouts to bush fires over the past month, the recent one which occurred just before lunchtime on Monday in Titikaveka, where two Fire safety trucks were called to the scene to put the fire out. He says with water pressure relatively low during this period, it is important to consider the wind and its direction, your neighbor and what you're burning to prevent the fire from going out of control.

How to experience God's blessings (according to Psalm 128)

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

I have never met anyone who does not want to be blessed in life, and most importantly to be blessed by God! In Psalm 128 are important lessons that we could learn from if we are to be blessed by God.

There are two parts to this Psalm (1) is our attitude towards God which is to respect (or fear) Him, and to obey His laws (or walk in His ways), and (2) is the blessings of God. In other words if we do what God want us to do then He will bless us. In the home environment if the children listen and do what their parents ask them to do then they will receive some form of blessings. This is no different from the things of God! In other words the Psalmist is saying "Don't expect God to bless you if you don't respect Him and obey His laws!" "No pain, no gain!" "There's no such thing as free-lunch!" v.1 reads "The Lord will bless you if you respect Him and obey His laws." The question is 'How do you respect God?' The answer is 'We respect God by doing what is right in His sight!' One important question is 'What are the laws of God?' The answer is, read your Bible and you will find the laws of God! Anyway, here's one of God's laws "You shall have no other gods before Me!" (Exodus 20v.3)

Many people treat TV as their God, and are too lazy to go to Church! Some spend too much time doing things that takes them away from God! Things that prevent them from reading their Bible or praying to God, or even singing to God! That is why the Psalmist said "The Lord will bless you if you respect Him and obey His laws." v.2 reads "Your fields will produce, and you will be happy and all will go well." This verse is speaking to us as individuals. The work that you're doing prosper because you respect God and obey His laws. The root-crops

Encouragement Column

With Senior Pastor John Tangi

that you're planting produces manifold because of Him! Your boss is pleased with your work performance because you're doing it honestly, faithfully, in the fear of the Lord, and in accordance to His ways, His laws, His righteousness! v.3-4 speaks about you and the family. It reads "Your wife will be as fruitful as a grapevine, and just as an olive tree is rich with olives, your home will be rich with healthy children. That is how the Lord will bless everyone who respects (fear) Him." This is speaking about the joy, the peace, the respect, the love of God in the home – the father, the mother, the children and everyone else in the home! It doesn't mean that life is plain-sailing, smooth, no! A little argument now and then is expected because of our human nature. But what the Psalmist is saying here is that, most of the time life is good in the home! But this can only happened if we "...respect (fear) God and obey His laws (or follow His ways!)" v.5 reads "I pray that the Lord will bless you from Zion and let Jerusalem prosper as long as you live." This verse speaks about the city Jerusalem. For us today, Jerusalem is the community we are living in. Even the island we are living on – this is our Jerusalem.

Friends, I'm sure all of us want to see things happening for the 'good of all' during our lifetime! According to the Psalmist, this will only happen if we "...respect (fear) God and obey His laws (or follow His ways!)" v.6 reads "May you live long enough to see your grandchildren. Let's pray for peace in Israel." This verse is speaking about the future generations and the peace in the nation of Israel. This verse is



also speaking about the future generations in our nation, and the 'peace of God' in the Cook Islands! As individuals, God will bless you! As families, God will bless members of the families and those in the households! God

will also bless our community, the future generations and also the nation! Therefore, we need to respect God and obey His laws! And do what is right in His sight!

May you have a God blessed week! Te Atua te arua.

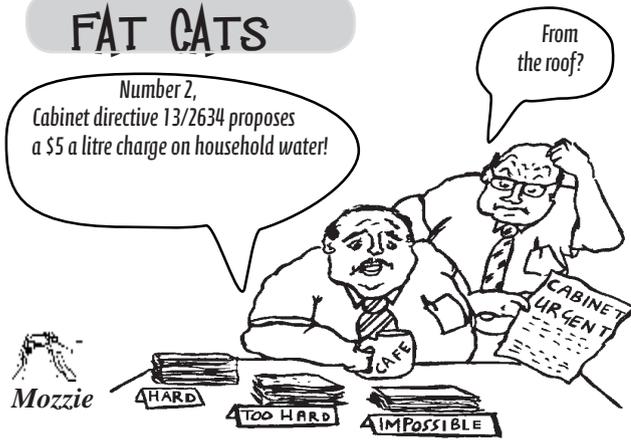
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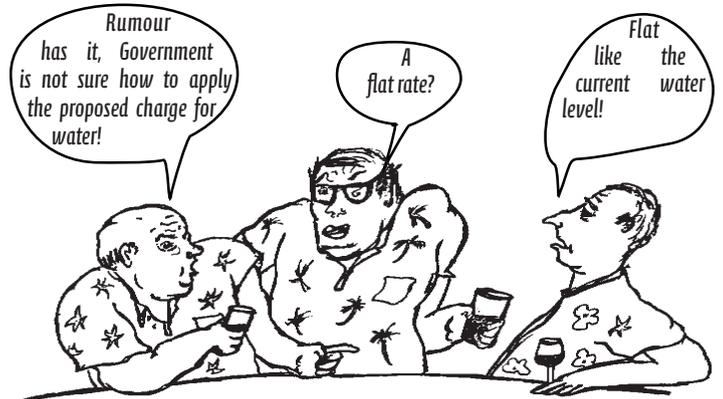
Inspirational messages to uplift and empower you

Sunday at 10.30am

FAT CATS



COCONUT ROUNDTABLE



In the League game against Tonga, did you spot the Cookie player who was tackled, got up and facing the wrong direction, played the ball back to the Tongan side whereupon a Tongan player snapped the pill up, ran and scored a try! Good grief! And aren't these professional players?



After going down three times in a row, our League boys should give up doing that energetic and physically sapping war chant and dance before the game. Save it and only do it at the end-if they win!



Tricky Dickie has almost completed the transition to full blown Cookie! Noticed how he is always wearing a pareu shirt and jandals? Now he just needs the flower tucked behind an ear! Still, a full transformation may be some time off, after all, he is an Aussie and they bowl under arm!



What's going on in the MFEM building chooks? There seem to be more holes in the staff establishment than a block of Swiss cheese! Even the Aid team is down by four players! But the Mandarins could be scraping the bottom of the barrel—they want to draft in the Pukapuka PhD!



Local chook lounging about at the international terminal spotted Tupapa's Mighty Magic Maggie Man of Action! MMMM was boarding the big bird to wing his way to the Kingdom of Tonga along with

CHOOKS CORNER
WITH BIG RED



the Demos Selina. Off to a chin wag at the MP's private, exclusive Club, the CPA (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association). How did the chook know it really was MMMM? Why, he was wearing his Action Man leather jacket-of course! And he took with him the obligatory chilly bin-an old Cookie tradition!



The big environment international conference is on, the COP, but is our leader going? Unlikely. At the COP every world leader gets about 3 minutes to say something. Even sleepy Jim Marurai had his 3 minutes of fame one year! Surely our leader has something to say about climate change? Close on 20,000 people are expected to attend. He could say something about the climate change taking place within his own office where all three policy staff have applied for jobs elsewhere!



In all the rampant dodging, ducking, weaving, swaying and diving by the PM and tax officials over their mitts being tied by law on taxing the NZ Pension,

there's been no mention of amending said law to exempt the NZ pension from tax. Why is that? Under the proposed reforms, local pensioners will get their pensions increased to cope with the rise in VAT but NZ pensioners will not. Is that fair? Why not just exempt all pensions whatever they are, from Tax? This government must be in very bad financial shape to have no other recourse but to go after the elderly. And to do it at a time when MPs and officials continue to travel overseas does not set a very good example of a government trying to be prudent.



Seen all that Kung Fu silliness on the silver screen where fancy foo fighters dish out 150 blows and kicks and leap through the air in great Hollywood style before the baddie actually goes down? (Probably from exhaustion). In real Chinese Gung Fu, only one hit from a master with both feet on the ground, will suffice. The baddie does not get up. And another thing, in real Gung Fu, there are no fancy Black Belts, sashes or any other fancy coloured belts. After

20 years of study and practice, a person might be able to call himself a Master depending on one final test. That is, if your opponent cannot see your blows coming, you are then considered a Master. Real Gung Fu is not taught in public classrooms for a fee, it is handed down within Chinese families and the knowledge kept secret.



Minister for Sport, Spark Down, needs to leave the Cook Islands Rugby League team and return home. Since he has been with them, they have not won a single game! Is he jinxing the team?



Local chook asks will the EIA process for the big water project be speeded up if Tricky Dickie takes over responsibility for EIAs from Toti's lot! After all, Tricky Dickie seems to have taken over every other important function to the extent of making several Heads almost redundant! Is Mac running MOIP or is Mac just another yes man pandering to Tricky Dickie? Someone needs to grab Mac by the head and ask, "Mac! Are you there?"

Cook Islands
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Rakei Toa boys plant trees

The National Environment Service (NES) Education Unit revitalized its tree planting program with Rakei Toa students last Friday.

The 7 students and teacher, Merle Pukerua were part of an integration project carried out by the National Environment Service to plant native trees along the coastal areas which avoids land erosion.

Students along with NES staff planted miro and tamanu trees thanks to Nikao MP, Ngamau Munokoa and her family who donated the seedlings to NES for this purpose.

The tree-planting program took place across from the Nikao Maori School, at a vacant area near a stream, in which NES staff was able to educate the students about the importance of native trees and plant life to our country.

Teacher, Merle Pukerua says, having her students work alongside NES staff is important not only is it educational but gives them an opportunity to care for the plants the students have named on a daily basis.

Senior Education Officer, Matthew Rima says, the program will be extended to other schools on Rarotonga, with the next being this month with Rutaki School students.





Economy driven by strong growth in tourism says ADB Bank

From page 17

because they choose not to work in some sectors. Foreign workers may also provide skills that are not otherwise available. Their labour has a positive impact on growth but can give rise to issues of which the government should be cognizant—including disputes arising over contractual conditions and the living and working conditions of foreign workers vis-a-vis those of Cook Islanders.

22. Additional private sector investment may be needed to support broad based growth. Incentives for private sector investment are available, but although private sector investment data are available from the Business Trade and Investment Board (BTIB), they have yet to be compiled or analysed. The Mission is therefore unable to comment on the extent of private sector investment required to meet desired growth rates and or whether such private sector investment levels are achievable. Data on both domestic and foreign investment require to be compiled to assist in policy development and implementation.

23. Public investment in infrastructure and financial reserves is increasing. The Cook Islands Government plans to increase its investment in physical infrastructure over the next three years, with investments reaching \$51 million in FY2014/15. This level of investment is considered necessary to develop and

upgrade infrastructure water, power, ports and roads. Currently however very few projects have been identified for future public investment. The Government's loan amortisation fund is accumulating foreign reserves; in addition the CINSF could be expected to provide a source of domestic investment funds in the future. The role of public investment in a small country such as the Cook Islands is significant and is a major driver of economic development. The implementation capacity of government to undertake investment is however limited, and there may be scope for outsourcing investment through public/private partnerships.

24. The current headline inflation rate has stayed below 2% over the last 2 years. The use of the New Zealand dollar as the country's currency and the fact that the bulk of imports are from New Zealand, links inflation in the Cook Island to price movements in New Zealand. The flow on effect of New Zealand prices is typically lagged by one period. Domestic cost factors also affect the level of inflation. The Mission does not see any factors that would result in a pronounced change in the headline inflation rate from its long run trend. In its December 2012 Monetary Policy Statement the New Zealand Reserve Bank predicted a gradual rise in the inflation rate to its upper target range of 2%. The flow on effect of price rises in New Zealand is likely to raise inflation in the Cook Islands to around 2%.



PUBLIC NOTICE – FUEL TENDER 02/2013

Te Aponga Uira (TAU) invites tenders from qualified companies for fuel hosting and delivery services.

The tender documentation is available from TAU offices during business hours, and can also be emailed out on request. Completed tender forms and templates will be accepted by mail, email or hand delivery until 3pm, Monday 25 November 2013 Cook Islands time.

Contact Marlene Cuthers, PO Box 112, Rarotonga, Cook Islands. Phone +682 20054, Fax +682 21944, email: marlene@electricity.co.ck

PUBLIC NOTICE



Business Trade Investment Board
Cook Islands

**VAKA EIVA TRADE DAYS
STALL SPACES AVAILABLE**

When: Thursday 28th and Friday 29th November 2013
Venue: Opposite Banana Court, Maire Nui Drive

Limited space available for Food & Beverage and Arts & Crafts Vendors.
Reserve a stall now!

Criteria and Registration Forms available.
Registrations close Wed 13th November, 3pm.
Contact: Trade and Marketing Staff, Taimata Allsworth or Te Tuhi Kelly.

Phone: 24-296 or Email: taimata.allsworth@cookislands.gov.ck for further information.

VACANCY



SENIOR AUDIT MANAGER

The Cook Islands Audit Office (CIAO) is mandated under the Constitution of the Cook Islands to carry out the financial statement audits for all Crown funded agencies and special reviews and investigations into matters that arises in respect of the management of public resources which in its opinion justifies further investigation.

The Senior Audit Manager is responsible for the:

- quality assurance of all Crown and Financial/SOE audit reports;
- overall management of the Crown and Financial/SOE audit team;
- strategic planning of the divisions work plans and training programmes; and
- on-going enhancement of audit methodology and work programmes.

Preference will be given to applicants with the following qualities and qualifications:

- tertiary qualification, specifically in the area of accounting, business or financial management;
- ACA or CA qualification is highly recommended;
- 5 – 8 years of relevant work experience or experience in a similar leadership role;
- good knowledge and understanding of Government and business systems;
- computer literacy;
- excellent written and oral communication skills and the ability to write effective reports.

Applications will be kept strictly confidential. Send covering letter and CV to:
Anne McMahon: anne.mcmahon@cookislands.gov.ck
Applications close 4pm Saturday, 9 November 2013

VACANCY



**CROWN LAW – COOK ISLANDS
Junior Lawyer**

The Crown Law Office, Rarotonga is seeking to employ a Junior Crown Counsel. The position will suit a graduate or lawyer with up to 18 months PQE and excellent research and drafting skills. The work is varied and across a broad range of legal issues involving the Crown.

This is an opportunity to provide legal support to Government that is challenging and with plenty of potential to develop.

Expressions of interest together with a full CV are to be provided by 8 November 2013 to Dorothy Ivaiti, Crown Law Office in an envelope marked "Junior Lawyer vacancy", PO Box 494, Avarua, Rarotonga, Cook Islands or by email to Dorothy. ivaiti@cookislands.gov.ck

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