

FAKATUFONO NIUE

TAU TALA NIUE

TTN #75

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- Eliminating Violence against Women Workshop
- More on FEMM
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Celebrating Niue's Initial Report on the Convention of the Rights of the Child

From Fale fono:

Premier Talagi would like to express most sincerely the sympathies and condolences from the Government and the people of Niue to the people of New Zealand, particularly the families, relations and friends in the community of Greymouth, for the tragic loss they have experienced in the death of their 29 fathers, sons, brothers, uncles, partners and friends in the Pike River Mine disaster. "We would like you to know that we share your loss and grief through our thoughts and prayers in your time of pain and dark despair. May God Bless you and Guide you through your ordeal in the days ahead."

- Hon Minister Pokotoa Sipeli is away this week. All matters pertaining to his portfolio are to be directed to the Acting Minister, Ekepule Billy Talagi.

Fono Ekepule notes:

**From the Fono Ekepule
[Niue Legislative Assembly]
on Wednesday 24 November
last week:**

The Tabling of Bills:

- The Supplementary Appropriation Act 2010 was passed by the Assembly in all three Readings
- The Niue Trust Fund Amendment Bill 2010 was also passed in all three Readings



The Tabling of Reports:

- Report from the House Committee on the Twinning Arrangements between Pacific and Australian Parliaments and Legislatures was deferred due to the absence of both the House Committee Chair and Vice Chair
- The Niue Philatelic and Numismatic Company Annual Report 2010 was endorsed by the Assembly

The Tabling of Regulations:

- The Territorial Sea and Exclusive Economic Zone License [Fees] Regulations 2010 was noted by the Assembly

Motions:

Three motions were presented for debate:

1. That all land taken or given by the Crown be returned to the Magafaoa [family] when they are no longer being used for the purpose taken or given

The motion was withdrawn

2. That the same amount of monetary assistance for prizes that Government grants to the Growers and Women's Crafts be the same for local crafts [such as the men's crafts] was carried
3. That Government conducts a feasibility study to see if it is viable to set up a medical insurance policy for all Niue residents so as to provide better and faster medical services to our people. This motion was deferred until the next Fono Ekepule meeting

Questions:

Twenty questions were presented and duly discussed.

Summary:

- Premier Toke Talagi is happy with the way the Fono Ekepule supported the two Bills that were presented for debate and each after the three required Readings were passed.
- "We have a balanced budget," announced Premier Talagi, "now I hope that people will see what we are trying to do and the rationale behind them. It will also show our commitment to transparency and practising the principles of good governance."
- New in this meeting, especially in reference to the Appropriation Bill, is the way we have included the funds from the NZAID funding of special projects so that we can debate them in the house but bearing in mind that project donors need to agree to what we have decided.
- The Fono also decided that we need to invest in a residence for the Niue High Commission in Wellington

A more detailed account of the Fono Ekepule meeting will be published in the next TTN, Issue #76. Ed

NIUE SCHOOLS CELEBRATE THE



CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Children are God's greatest gift to mankind and to the world and it is the godsworn and god given duty and responsibility of every parent, caregivers and governments to make sure that they grow safe, happy, healthy and strong, and the opportunities to safeguard and develop their god given talents so that they can contribute to the good and well being of the society in which they chose to live.

The Niue High School hall reverberated with happy and joyful sounds of brightly garlanded children on Friday morning as they sang and danced to celebrate the launching of 'Niue's

Initial Report on the Convention of the Rights of the Child,' an important document designed to assist countries make better informed decisions in what to do with their children.



An important visitor from UNESCO, Dr Isiye Ndombi, UNICEF Pacific Representative who had been on the island for two weeks meeting Government and Community leaders and to celebrate the finalisation of 'Niue's Initial Report on the Convention of the Rights of the Child.'

ECE Representation to the Convention promise...

UNICEF officer, Miss Kasey Tyler spent two weeks working with the Hon. Minister Jacobsen, the SOG and the Niue CRC Committee to get the initial report up to its most up-to-date data and reported positions from various departments, and much sincere thanks and appreciation goes to the Minister and the CRC committee, for this work could not be possible



without the dedication of those who have contributed to developing the initial CRC report.

"Every child has the right to life; to protection and care; to a quality education and the right to play," said Dr Ndombi to parents and children who were present.

Primary School Junior Syndicate...

calls Niue to account for the promises its leaders made in honouring the rights of children in this country, promises that it made when Niue ratified this convention in 1996, fourteen years ago. We therefore are all witnesses to this accounting – parents, government and community

leaders, government departments and civil society – you will all need to work together in the implementation of this Convention, and to remember what effort is being made when we look at the Report." Extra witnesses, our High Court Judge, Patrick Savage, the



...and Niue High School in full support ...

New Zealand High Commissioner, HE Mark Blumsky were also there to celebrate the launching.

Hon Minister O'love Jacobsen thanked the parents for attending the event and acknowledged the presence of the New Zealand High Commissioner HE Mark Blumsky and the visiting High Court Chief Justice Patrick Savage. "I know that our children are well looked after, thanks to the parents and caregivers, they do not suffer from hunger nor are they



Now which one is the Pied Piper?



Bakers, butchers and candlestick makers all are to witness that the Rights of the Child are kept...[above and below]



impoverished, but we still have more to do and that is why we are all here today. This Report exists to ensure that parents account to the government in the hope that they treat all you children properly."

Dr Ndombi told the happy throng of what he had found in the two weeks he spent 'on our beautiful island.' "In my discussions with the Government leaders we have identified issues that needed to be done or improved. Data information needs to be better co-ordinated; several government departments need to work closely together and civil society could be more involved because the programmes

detailed in the Report will need to be implemented.”

After the formal speeches the children launched their own celebration programme, beginning with items from the Early Childhood Centre with their special style of entertainment, everything in miniature, with bright happy faces doing the best they could and receiving the loudest response and encouragement from the audience.

The Junior primary classes did not need to be on the stage to mount their own performance and getting attention from their audience. Their items, delivered from the floor where they were sitting, were beautifully orchestrated with their items that resonated in the large school hall lasting all of ten minutes of joyous singing and swaying in concert with their music – this is a new one for us as everyone want to be seen and heard and preferably elevated for maximum exposure.



The senior primary as usual were in a class of their own, followed by an additional supporting items from their senior members from Niue High School.

At the end of the ceremony was a group

Only a child is capable of showing pure, unadulterated joy...

photograph in

which everyone wanted to be part of but did not happen successfully – there simply were just too many eager future stars to be included in one shot from our camera.

An afterthought:

Although as human species or *homo sapiens* consider ourselves as the most intelligent in the entire animal kingdom some of us are not very bright when it comes to nurturing and looking after our children the way all other animals do theirs. That is why the United Nations drafted this very important convention to ensure that future generations grow up not to be abusive and violent towards one another. Despite this International agreement urging nations and societies to desist from this form of behaviour there are a few who do not need the Convention in order to champion the Rights of the Child – their children, such as those of the Kalahari Bushmen, are loved and cherished equally regardless of how they behave, reminding us of an old saying ‘that in the end we will only reap what we sow.’

Niue Tourism:

Ms Vanessa Marsh to be one of the Miss South Pacific Pageant Judges

By the time you get to read this Ms Vanessa Marsh, holder of three Beauty Pageant titles Miss Teen Niue 2006, Miss Niue 2008 and Miss South Pacific [MSP] 2008. But it does not end there – Vanessa is one of the judges to the



Miss South Pacific 2010 Pageant which has already started in Papua New Guinea. Ms Marsh is the first Niuean ever to be so honoured.

Premier Talagi is rapt with Ms Marsh's selection. "To be one of the judges in this event, watched by just about everyone in the Pacific region, Australasia and South East Asia for starters – we are talking about millions of viewers world wide is a big plus for us and the exposure will be to our advantage." But Premier Talagi was disappointed with the lack of coverage response from the Pacific Region media, who should be the first to recognise this important development for our country.

Ms Marsh has been appointed to be the local counterpart to Mr Hayden Porter, the Senior Tourism Development Manager, when she returns at the end of the Pageant competition.

While Ms Marsh's presence in the Pageant elevates our status in the Region spare a thought too to Miss Maria Mitimeti who represented Niue at the 2010 MSP in PNG. This is the third time that Niue has two participants in this extremely popular event: in Tonga 2005 when Ms Sina Hekau handed over her MSP crown; in 2009 when Ms Vanessa Marsh was there to hand over hers and this year Ms Marsh again to be the judge.

These are the kinds of exposure that we need to keep our country in the forefront of the Region and many thanks to Maria Mitimeti for her role in ensuring that we are there for this pageant. We hope that Niue Tourism had contributed appropriately to help Maria's campaign in PNG because it would not do to know that we cheapskated on someone who had contributed so much in advertising for our country.

Tourism Office Jobs Up for grabs:

We heard on Television Niue last night that the staff of three at Niue Tourism Office will be made redundant and to reapply for two jobs come December – not a happy prospect for anyone with Christmas just around the corner, or worse still when they might not be able to get their jobs back. TTN spoke to one staff member who explained that their contracts were expired earlier in June this year but were told [via email] 'not to worry – that their jobs were safe at least for another 12 months.'

But premature redundancy, following a decision by the Tourism Authority Board, has changed all that for the three employees who are unsure if 'redundancy' for them means a severance pay for their stress. The three have also asked for transfers to other departments but so far there is no word to suggest that this will happen. Premier Talagi mentioned in an interview with BCN the on Tuesday evening this week that he is sure the three people will be offered employment, either back at the Office or elsewhere in the government services. The Premier was surprised that this has happened but he is determined that no one who lives here should be out of work.

Niue Tourism Office is one of four Corporations [Niue Power, BCN and Niue Development Bank are the others] whose activities are controlled by their own respective Board of Directors. TTN hopes, that from past experience and practises notwithstanding, that the three redundancees will be fairly re-considered and not because they [the Board] has already pre-selected their replacements – this will not go down very well even though such practises have been known to happen many times before.



Good bye and Welcome...

The entertainers to farewell the departing and arriving passengers at the airport every Friday, an event that Hayden Porter is determined that it becomes a permanent feature in the way we

treat our visitors. “I aim to maintain this small but very enjoyable ceremony, rain or shine, hail or snow,” he told TTN. Since there is very little prospect of the latter two happening [rain or snow, that is] we hope that the visitors will continue to flock to our paradise like they have been for the past five months.

INTERNATIONAL WHITE RIBBON DAY

“It would be awesome if Niue could become the first country in the world to completely eliminate violence against women,” Constable Ramona Jackson told TTN last week. “But failing that we would



like some support on Thursday when we march from the Market to Makini Hall where the main event will be held. Everyone is invited, bring your family and friends, wear your white ribbon and put on your wrist bands to show your support.”

The march from the Niue Market to Makini Hall was well represented by all sectors of the community, perhaps more so because for the first time this week it

was not raining. Premier Talagi led the main body of the marchers that included the New



Zealand High Commissioner, members of Parliament, Heads of Government Departments, private sector representatives and parents – all showing their solidarity behind the Police banner.

Before the formal

speeches vegán inside Makini Hall TTN was convinced that of all the nations in the world and in the Pacific Region Niue would be among the first to be declared 100% to love, cherish and respect their women. We were shocked to find that this is not so – Violence against women, we heard, is the second most common crime on our island. “Men who perpetuate violence,” said HE Mark Blumsky in setting the tone of the speeches for the day, “are cowards.”



Constable Ramona Jackson telling us how it is...

We don't need legislations, workshops or events such as this to tell us that we do not have the right to abuse another person, physically, mentally or in any other way. Premier Talagi told the supporters. “Violence in any form is unacceptable; we do not condone violence towards women and there is no excuse or reason to do so towards anyone – we all know that.” Premier Talagi went on to tell of his own background with his parents, that his father never once in his life showed or commit



COP Mark Chenery... ‘domestic violence does not discriminate...’

violence towards his mother. “My parents were the role models in my life and whose codes of behaviour that I have followed in my own.”

COP Chenery reminded supporters of Mr Victor Tamate who came earlier this year to help mount a crusade against violence, whose stories were horrific to hear and should have been a deterrent. “The peculiar thing about violence is that it does not discriminate,” he told his listeners. “It doesn't care whether you are rich or poor, or indeed if you are from China or from Niue.”

Violence towards women we were told goes hand in hand with alcohol and that is most prevalent in a relationship especially between married couples. Mr Ahohiva Levi's story of his next door neighbour's domestic relationship

was a common occurrence while he was growing up – the issue of not having dinner ready on time [particularly when the husband came home drunk] was a common excuse for violence erupting. “But bear in mind that not all causes of domestic violence can be attributed to men,” he cautioned.

DOH Ms Anne McLean told us that only this week an MOU with Cabinet, Health and Police was signed for the said parties to work together and to ‘share freely information needed to prevent violence in the home.’ “While we may be able to treat the injuries suffered I believe that preventing it is a better way.”



Health Team members putting on their best display of support... Women.

There were more men and young people attending this observation that were normally found in previous events, a fact that was noted and appreciated by Mrs Diamond Tavevihi, Acting Director of Community Affairs. Curiously the offenders, such as smokers not attending a Smoke free rally; alcoholics not wanting to be seen in an Alcohol Anonymous event or indeed the perpetrators of domestic violence not appearing on last Thursday’s awareness march to Eliminate Violence Against



The Police skit - disturbingly real...

Violence.” Simple enough to say but as we all know but difficult to do without the courage or the belief that it will not happen again despite the Molestation Order by the Police.

On the other side of the awareness promotion is an accusing finger pointing at the way the families and the communities maintain the perpetuation of this crime that is made clear by this often quoted saying: ‘see no evil, hear no evil speak no evil.’ Aiding and abetting a crime of violence by remaining silent about it is not a solution said the event organiser Constable Jackson. “We cannot do anything if you do not report this to the Police,” he said – ‘Break the silence, end the

A skit prepared by the members of the Police Department was blatantly raw in their message – a scene that no one wants to see, reminds of or acknowledges. But like many other forms of habit or behaviour that exist in every society, such as issues that may or do damage our health, like smoking, alcohol or eating fatty foods – these can be eliminated simply by banning their entry to our country. But violence, especially against women, is virtually impossible to solve while we do not have the appropriate models to show future generations how to live in peace and harmony with love, to cherish one another or showing respect to

another person's rights to life. Education raises awareness and empowers everyone to break free but especially the women who should not up with the battered women syndrome. At this day and age, no one needs to suffer in silence, speak up and speak out, there is no need to hide anymore or keep violence a secret. Everyone has a right to live a peaceful life.

"But is there an effective way to protect our women from domestic violence?" asked Premier Talagi.

COP Chenery fielded this question with quotes of programmes world wide that have made progress but as we do not have the money, safe places or refuges in Niue we would need to find solutions amongst and within ourselves that best fit our reality.

Part 2: **FEMM OUTCOMES**

A Roadmap for Strengthening Public Finance Management in FICs

1. **approved** the Roadmap for strengthening public financial management for application as part of the tools for implementing the Cairns Compact.
2. Ministers **welcomed** Australia's announcement of a \$3 million contribution to the Pacific Region Audit Initiative (PRAI), through a partnership with the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions, an initiative which was discussed in FEMM 2008. PRAI aims to strengthen cooperation between national audit institutions in the Pacific region and improve accountability in managing public resources.

Options to Improve Access to, and Management of, Climate Change Resources

- Ministers **agreed** to the need for strategic focus and urgent action to address access to, and management of, current and proposed funding for climate change in the region.
- ... and that in pursuing options for improved access to and management of climate change resources, the focus of activity should be at the national level in the first instance, and where appropriate regional and international options should be considered, for example, a regional climate change facility.
- ...and that the Secretariat coordinate the development of an options paper in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, including SPREP, to be presented to FEMM 2011
- And further **requested** the Secretariat to develop a consultation process, in a timely manner that enables economic and environment officials, and other stakeholders

Update on the Regional Remittance Issues

- ...**welcomed** the presentation by Australia and New Zealand on the costs of remittances, and **noted** very high costs of remittances to the region and to explore and prioritise support for domestic initiatives in both sending and receiving countries to promote lower remittance costs.
-
- Update on the Regional Regulatory Stepladder
- ...endorsed in principal the Framework, as the basis for consultation with FIC jurisdictions on adapting, and implementing reforms at national level and encouraged FICs to liaise with development partners and donors, to provide the resources required to adapt the model policy and legislative framework.

Summary:

1. ... **thanked** the government, and people, of Niue for their excellent arrangements for the 2010 FEMM.
2. The next FEMM to be held in Samoa in 2011
3. **agreed** to admit the Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific, and the Oceania Customs Organisation, as observers.
4. the Secretariat draft a set of criteria to guide observer membership, which should focus on observers' ability to contribute to economic performance and economic growth in FICs.
5. iii. all countries provide a written update on measures taken to broaden the economic base and increase growth, with selected countries to make presentations at the 2011 FEMM;
6. iv. a further update on the Forum Private Sector Dialogue be presented to FEMM;
7. v. the World Bank explore the possibility of a regional facility to assist with Small and Medium Enterprise financing, and report back to the 2011 FEMM;
8. in collaboration with development partners with relevant expertise such as the World Bank or the PFTAC, for report back to FEMM 2011, on matters including but not limited to:
9. investigating (including discussions with relevant financial institutions) whether domestic regulatory or payment system arrangements are a constraint to lower remittance costs and reporting back to FEMM 2011;
10. supporting financial awareness efforts, consistent with the MoneyPACIFIC Goals; and
11. promoting transparency in remittance costs of RSPs operating in their country.
12. ix. the Secretariat, liaise with PFTAC, to provide a report at the 2011 FEMM on the study on interest rates;
13. x. the ongoing monitoring of performance in implementing the decisions of FEMM identify the most appropriate methodology based on lessons learnt from previous Stocktakes, and the planned mapping by the Cairns Compact Reference Group of various reporting to Ministers in order to streamline reporting, and report back to FEMM 2011 on the proposed way forward.

Matua Manaia Sports

Names have been called to be registered and take part in the above mentioned Mini Meet next month on December . Village teams need to be ready with their team or village uniforms in their respective colours, not only in order to compete but there is something magical in being able to be visibly identified as a member of your community – it spikes your heart and revs up your sense of patriotism when you see your colours breasting the tape at the end of the track. The 75 plus elderly also received a special invitation via NEVAT to participate in the marching so if you have a matua Tupuna who is keen and able and would like time out, please bring your Tupuna to Paliati on Saturday morning, they will be marching under Tau Penina Nukututaha.

The NAA President, Mrs TaniRose Fakaotimanava-Lui would also like volunteers to take part as Officials, preferably those who have had the appropriate training.

Forum Pacific Voyage 008 Aborts cargo operation

We have received advice from Reef Shipping that the vessel *Forum Pacific*, Voyage 008 has been diverted to the next port of call after failing to secure safe anchorage at Alofi, not that it would have made any difference because of the rough sea conditions the ship would not have

been able to be worked. See below [in blue] for the rescheduled dates and times, received from Reef Shipping on Friday November, when the Forum Pacific will call next:

**Please note due to adverse weather conditions in Niue (Too rough to work).
The Forum Pacific Voy 08 is proceeding to Rarotonga and will return to Niue.**

Schedule :-

Rarotonga 28-29/11
Niue 02-03/12
Auckland 10-11/12

TTN received many emails regarding this matter but only one person wanted to know what will happen to the talo consignment that were packed and stored on Thursday this week. We too would like to know this.

There are already shortages in the shops of basic groceries until MV *Forum Pacific* returns on Thursday this week and hopefully the weather will be more cooperative in allowing the vessel to discharge and pick up our cargo. Fingers crossed!

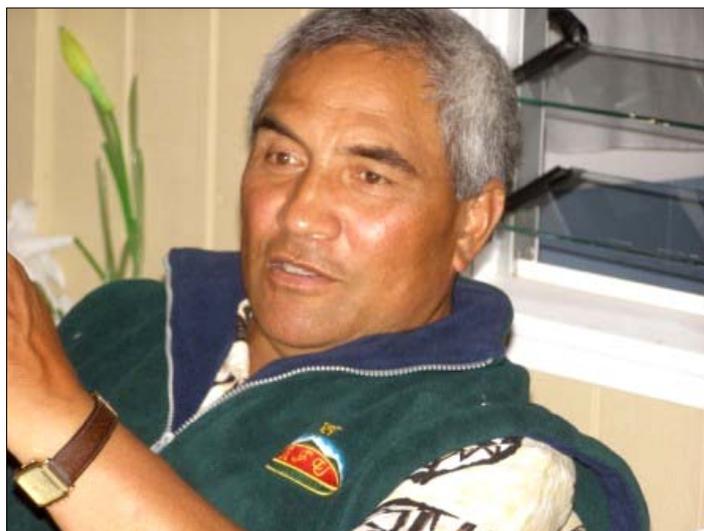
Latest as at November: DAFF assured TTN that the talo sacks which were to be sent on the ship last week was cool stored using a container from Swan & Sons but the sacks of coconuts were returned to the owners. When the Pacific Forum returns this week there may be opportunities for more talo and coconuts accepted for shipping, but stay tuned to the radio for further updates. *Ed*

TAU TALANOA

- It is not often that we come across a person of a Niuean descent who can shear a sheep let alone one who is skilled enough to become a judge in the Golden Shears competition of international standard.

Misimale Tutavaha has done this and he owns a sheep and cattle farm in Riversdale in the Wairarapa. What is more, he loves what he does.

As a young migrant New Zealand he combed the country looking for work eventually after four years ended up in a



Misimale Tutavaha - sheep and cattle farmer, shearer and regular annual traveller to Niue

woolshed in the Wairarapa-Bush province where he learned how to shear sheep a skill he honed until he decided to become a sheep farmer.

“I only wanted 50 acre block,” he told TTN but being married and soon to be a farmer, “I needed more to make a good living,” they eventually bought more land, 250 acres in the ‘middle of nowhere. They raised a family yet the return to Niue had never left his mind.

He returned finally in 2004 with his wife and daughter just after the cyclone, and since then he has been a regular visitor but each time he brought someone else with him. He has been building his former family home in Malakava, Hakupu, doing a bit more each time he comes and is proud to be a Niuean that he is.



As we all know many of our people made promises to return but very few are dedicated to follow their dreams. Misimale will return to live here one day but for now his 'his country home in Malakava' is being prepared for its owner. There won't be any sheep for him to shear but his parting words at Talo's restaurant on the eve of his

departure 'man cannot live on sheep alone' he said, while he meticulously picked the meat from his uga, not with the end of a teaspoon like we do today, but with a *kaniu* stick an implement that we have long discarded and forgotten.

Misimale's three children all attended Wairarapa College, an institution where some of our scholars went to in the 1960's and the 1970s: Uhotau Pasisi [the first to be enrolled there and our big brother] Moapi Siakimotu, Ieremia Tongalea, Togialele Liufalani, Frank Rex, Loseligipepe Talagi Siakimotu, Archie Meni Moana Heka, Emani Fakaotimanava Lui and *moi*. All but one have returned and served Niue faithfully, some longer than others.

Ms Tammy Kingi scoops one of three Pacific Youth Awards



Ms Tammy Kingi

Of the three Pacific Island people who were honoured last week as the inaugural winners of the Prime Minister's Pacific Youth Awards, Ms Tammy Kingi, daughter of Pefi Kingi and the late Tomoeli Falakoa, granddaughter of Mr Limaono Kingi Liukingi and Ataleo Kingi, was the recipient of the 'Cogita Award for Inspiration,' sponsored by Cogita Business Systems. According to the information from the Ministry of Island Affairs the three recipients made it through a rigorous selection process to convince a judging panel of their outstanding qualities as leaders, advocates, community members and, more generally, contributors to the sort of nation New Zealand aspires to be.

Tammy Kingi has been an important support person for other Niuean students as president of the university's Niuean student association for the past three years. That support and mentoring is also extended to Pacific students at Auckland's secondary schools.

The profile below [from the MPIA website] will tell you more about this extraordinary young woman:

Tammy Kingi (22) from Mangere Bridge, Auckland has played an integral part in the Niuean students association at the University of Auckland for several years now. She has shown passion and commitment to her culture, cultural practice and maintenance of language. She is fluent in Niuean and has a working knowledge of Tongan, Maori and Samoan. Tammy is a Youth advisor on the Le Va advisory board, an executive member of the Auckland University Pacific Islands Association and a DREAM fono mentor for high school students.

Tammy has completed a Bachelor of Arts majoring in linguistics and Pacific Island studies. Presently, she continues with post-graduate studies in linguistics.

Tammy was selected and shortlisted because she has extensive involvement within the Pacific community and has advocated the Pacific youth voice in many fono. She is a strong Pacific youth representative, secure in her identity, and committed to encouraging and inspiring others to achieve their potential.



TTN caught up with Ms Kingi at her grandmother's home this week and found

Tammy working up a sweat before breakfast...

her 'working up a bit of sweat' removing stumps of banana trees that were growing too closely to the house. Far from being uncomfortable in the intense heat building up every ten minutes Tammy looked quite at home, practically in the bush with her wheel barrow and a rake.

The last time she was here was when she was 6 years old. For this trip Tammy will be here for 'a while' she told us.

If you wish to meet Tammy in person, she arrived last Friday for some well deserved R & R for Xmas and New Year.

Congratulations Tammy!

- One hundred and twenty-five passengers departed Niue on Friday afternoon, 19 November, but less than half of that number arrived on the incoming flight. Most of the departed were former Niuean residents who came for the court cases over disputes. All passengers were entertained by a dance troupe from St Joseph's Catholic Youth from Alofi north, delighted the



Ms Goretti Poumale [left] and Ms Pelelini Hipa

outgoing group who missed out when they came in last week because of the funeral service held in the Alofi Ekalesia Church and welcomed the incoming passengers.

- We would like to question an assessment regarding MDG Goal 2 that ‘Although there are some data gaps, Niue is on track to achieve universal primary education by 2015.’

But what does this mean? We know that we have always had universal Primary Education – have been for years, and Niue must be one of the few nations in the world that offers free, compulsory education for all its children from ECE to Year 13. Do the data gaps mean that our Education Department Head Office has not been keeping proper records of our student numbers or what? We on the island all know that all our school age children must and do attend school during the entire school year.

- There is a proposal in the pipeline for a new shipping company vessel to service Niue on a fortnightly basis. Mr Wayne Harris-Daws, formerly CEO for Reef Shipping, told BCN last week that his company is willing to initiate a shipping service that promises cheaper freight costs and coming to and from Auckland once a fortnight. The cheaper freight costs Mr Harris-Daws told BCN is possible because they will not be using containers. “We intend to pallet the cargo and to use nets to transfer cargo from ship to shore in order to save money and time, and since everyone is going to save money if this venture goes through we will all be winners!” Niue decision makers, and private sector businesses that are said to be pleased with the proposal, will consider the new shipping proposal and will inform Mr Harris Daws in due course.

But on Television Niue last night Premier Talagi is not willing to commit anything until the government officials and the private sector people to evaluate and determine thoroughly into this proposal and the implications discussed in where we go from here. Issues such as back up plans, sustainable service and the capacity to handle cargo are important and must be factored into the new shipping service.

“But we need to remember that Niue still have an on-going agreement with Reef Shipping,” Premier Talagi explained. “Reef has done a lot for Niue and has invested a lot of money in our country – Books for our schools, sponsorships for our National Rugby Team, prizes for the end of year Prize Giving Ceremonies to name but a few. For now it is an option for us but we must not forget our agreement with Reef Shipping.”

- TTN received an advanced notice this week from the Telecom Director, Tutuli Heka, to say ‘that the installation of the new Govt mail and file server system is currently underway.’ The notice also warns that there will be disruptions throughout the week for Internet and email access in order to allow installation and testing of the Government server and storage network. Departmental visits by IT staff will be expected to explain how the new Mail and storage network will function.

The equipment intends to be part of the Government’s infrastructure development to improve services, security and monitoring processes in the way information is received, used, shared and stored.

Unfortunately the visit was premature – we did see the new equipment but it was still in the process of instalment. More about this in the next TTN.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK END?

Niue Athletics Association President TaniRose Fakaotimanava-Lui invites your participation in the Matua Manaia Mini Athletics Meeting at the Paliati Sports grounds this Saturday, December. The day promises to be fun filled and it will test your mettle in how fit and healthy you are. Make sure that you are registered to participate but bring your supporters, families, friends and countrymen [and country women] and enjoy the day.

TaniRose would also like to enlist the assistance of officials, particularly those of you who have been certificated to be part of these events.

Bring something to eat, lots to drink, something to sit on in comfort and to shelter from the sun.

See you there!!!

It is fishing time again in Namukulu this week end – if you are not the sporty type to take part in the Matua Manaia Meet this week end then perhaps a more sedentary activity of fishing relaxing in your canoe or on the reef might just be what you need. You can join your fishing friends, share a BBQ afterwards and tell a few fishy stories about the ones that ‘GOT AWAY.’ Be early and be yourself on the reef at Namukulu!

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