

Marshall Islands Visitors Authority  
*Tourism Quarterly*

*Volume 6, Number, 2006  
March 2006-May 2006*

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**Pacific Hotel and Restaurant Expo (PHARE)/Anderson Air Force Base visit (AAFB)**

Bill Weza and Hirobo Obeketang participated in these two events representing both the Marshall Islands Resort and MIVA. There were 47 exhibitors at the PHARE with an estimated 3,000 visitors while at the AAFB Summer Happenings, there were 32 participants with an unknown number of visitors. The MIVA has decided to further marketing and promotional efforts towards the military market and will be working more closely with the PATA Micronesia Chapter in establishing partnerships with various tour and travel operators for the U.S. military.

**Marine Diving Fair**

Satoshi Yoshii and the MIVA Japan Office participated at this event. The staff manning MIVA's booth conducted a survey where approximately 250 participated. Out of the 250 participants, approximately 88% were divers but what was most interesting was that 84% knew where the Marshall Islands are located. The Japanese being conscious about finances and vacation time, when asked, "If JAL was to conduct a direct flight to the Marshall Islands, would you go?" Out of 144, 99 said that they were

willing to visit the RMI on JAL within this year, while 42 said that they would come in the next 1-2 years. There were approximately 48,000 visitors to the 3-day show.

**Marine Diver Media Visit**

Mr. Harada Masaaki, photographer for Travel Diver and Marine Diver magazines visited Majuro for a week back in April. Based on 2006 proposal from the Marine Art Center in Japan, photographs and excerpts from this trip will be featured in the June edition of the Travel Diver magazine and the July edition of the Marine Diving magazine.

**Japan Airlines**

Japan Airlines continues to be optimistic despite delays with the resurfacing of the airport runway and the acquisition of the equipment needed to service the airline. Estimates have shown that based on one flight consisting of 200 passengers on a 4-day trip in the RMI approximately \$240,000 will be injected into the RMI economy, with \$17,000 in taxes. If JAL was to fly into the RMI once a month for one year, we are looking at approximately \$3.9 million a year. This would encourage locals to start-up and/or expand their businesses to cater towards tourism eventually leading to

the creation of more jobs resulting in an improved and sustainable livelihood for many of the residents here in the RMI. Communications continue between JAL, the MIVA Japan Office, SR Associates and RMIPA. On a more positive note, MIVA was pleased to learn of President Note's apparent support of JAL when he discussed the possibility of this flight with the new Japanese Ambassador for the region. MIVA will also be working more closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Majuro Atoll Local Government in gaining more support towards this project. JAL is now looking at August for the first flight (July schedule has been cancelled).

### 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Marshall Islands National Cup Race

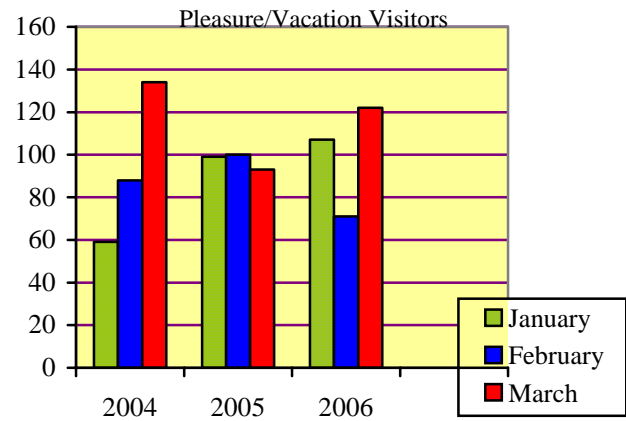
The Marshall Islands National Cup Race celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> year during the weekend of May 6 with over 20 canoes (tipnol and korkor) participating. The event was presided over by Cup organizers, Hirobo Obeketang and Alson Kelen, along with Iroj/Senator Jurelang Zedkeia and Reverend Enja Enos. The "Konne Jubar" race will be held this weekend.

### Celebrating our "Earth"

On April 22-28, 2006, several entities were brought together to plan and coordinate activities to help commemorate one of the most important day worldwide= Earth Day. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, there was an island-wide cleanup on Majuro. Later on that week, a fair was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April in the community college's campus (CMI). Among the activities, were recycling demonstrations along with presentations on "composting", and Tobolar's coconut processing demonstrations on using coconut oil as fuel.

### Representation in our Local College

On April 7, 2006, the College of the Marshall Islands celebrated its 13th Foundation Day. Among the activities brought forth this year was a cooperative presentation by our MIMRA office (Marine Resources Authority) and MIVA. Pictured below is a display of MIVA's posters of our beautiful islands that attracted most of the students who visited the college's celebration. Our main message for the day was geared towards vital environmental issues and the need for conservation and protection of our marine life.



### A Look at Our Vacationers

The first three months of 2006 are showing positive numbers of pleasure visitors in comparison to last year's initial numbers. In comparing the months of January and March, there was an increase of 8% and 31%, respectively. Despite the termination of Air Nauru's routes, the number of holiday visitors from that region has not greatly impacted the number of holiday visitors to RMI in the months observed, but MIVA is still in high hopes that an alternative access to this growing market is made in the near future since it may negatively affect our numbers in the coming months.

## **Urban Waste Management**

There is currently a TA by the Asian Development Bank for “Increasing Ownership of and Effective Demand for Improved Urban Waste Management” in the RMI conducted by Tim O’Meara, Ben Chutaro, and Daniel Cramer. One of the main recommendations by the consultants is the establishment of an office/utility, which will be the solely responsible and accountable agency for waste management here in the islands. MIVA will fully support this need and will recommend this as to the Solid Waste Task Force.

## **Air Nauru**

In late May, Air Nauru informed the RMI that it will not resume its service to the islands. MIVA will do its share of seeking other possibilities to keep this route intact especially in consideration to our growing Australian market.

## **Whaling in the RMI**

MIVA received a number of emails from concerned people on and off island regarding the RMI joining the International Whaling Commission and the possibility of supporting Japan in their quest to lift the ban on commercial whaling, which was established by the IWC as a moratorium back in 1986. MIVA’s Minister, the Honorable John Silk, will be attending the meeting in St.Kitts, Caribbean Islands. In full consideration to the future of tourism in the RMI and especially our oceans, MIVA wrote to the RMI Government to request for the RMI to discourage the lift as requested by Japan and support the global community in conserving the whales. Although no response has been received as of today, MIVA still requests the support of members of the community in this endeavor.

## **Upcoming Events:**

- June 7-14 - Photographer/Media Trip to Bikini- Eric Hanuaer
- June 12-18 – Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) in Majuro (Bikini and affects of the nuclear age on the people and islands.)
- June 23-24 – PATA Micronesia Chapter June Meeting in Rota.
- June 23-July 2 – Micronesian Games in Saipan.
- July 6-7 Micronesian President’s Summit in Majuro
- July 7-8- Marshalls Billfish Club Annual Billfish Tournament