The third of the four Public Safety officers accused of illegal activities and misconduct at the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC), is facing 35 counts including several charges of alleged rape involving a minor of 16 yrs. or younger and several charges in connection with illegal drugs, according to charging documents.

Okesene Alo, who remains in custody under a $200,000 bond, appeared in District Court last (Continued on page 2)
to Onenon. So we wanted to do this to represent that side of the island. Each one of these kids are from those villages so we are representing the ‘itumalo Sua’ or in other words the Sua County.

But it’s still about school first — education. According to the principal of FHS, the team has been training for the last three weeks after school. Those who were selected to row were able to get waivers from their parents to participate. “Even though we decided to put this in last minute, but we still wanted to make sure these kids put school first, so we only do training after school.”

Taomaga noted “I think the teams train every morning and evenings but for us we want the children to put school first and then come to our training. It is definitely a good sport for the boys too because now a lot is happening, kids are getting into drugs and we do not want our kids to end up into drugs.”

He added, “All of these boys are new at this so they are not as experienced like the other respective fautasi teams. Our main goal for them is to always have a good spirit to play happy, work together and be in unity with all the other teams no matter what.”

Leotio said he will be steering the Sinapioa in this year’s race. Known for his boat building skills — he holds the faultasi as the Fuao, PaepaeUfo’o, Sinapioa, God is Great, and Le Rina, he has been helping the team for the last three weeks training them twice a day to row and also advising the skipper about team unity.

“This is the most important thing in a race is for the captain and the rowers to work together, to be in unity. These boys have only been training for 3 weeks and they certainly do not know how to row once they get used to this they will be able to row for their own respective villages when they have their own boats. But the only thing I have to say to these young boys is don’t row too fast or you will have no more energy and when you all finish up know what some of the other fautasi teams failed in,” he said.

“I am glad they have this opportunity to experience this, all thanks to Governor Lemanu for approving it, and also the help of Gioteote because we do want all our kids of American Samoa to participate in their own respective fautasi boats to keep them occupied or else they might end up doing drugs.”

Captain Taomaga concluded, “I would like to thank the principal of Fagaitua High School — who will also be on the boat for being a great support. But the only thing I have to say to the boys is just to row and finish and not to try to do the faultasi as the Fuao, PaepaeUfo’o, Sinapioa, God is Great, and Le Rina.”

The Manu’a lawmaker found the ‘BugBling’ mosquito repellent band, which comes in different colors, is worn on the person’s wrist or ankle or clipped on to a backpack or clothes. The product comes in a clear- plastic-type bag, which is sealable, to put the BugBling inside when not in use. Vesi is working on making a presentation to local government agencies, such as the Health Department and the American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency (ASEPA), about this new mosquito repellent product and its importance to local residents to protect themselves against Dengue fever and other mosquito borne diseases. Vesi also hopes that a local distributor or agent will be able to bring the product to American Samoa, once endorsed by ASG officials.

“It’s very important for me to make an official presentation to our local officials about this new product. I’m not the agent for this great product, I’m just trying to get it introduced first to local ASG officials (showing) that there is an alternative to mosquito repellent products such as spray and mosquito coils,” Vesi told Samoa News.

He said he came across “BugBling” while conducting research several weeks ago on what other types of mosquito repellent products are available in the US for import to the territory and this was during the time that there appeared to be a shortage of mosquito coils on island.

And at the same time, “we are faced with various types of mosquito borne diseases, such as Zika virus, dengue fever and other mosquito borne diseases.” Vesi said, adding that he also made sure during the research that he knows the family who is involved with the BugBling product and contacted them.

He met with the family during a recent visit to the US to gather more information, and brought back from the US mainland the BugBling products, brochures and other information that he will use as part of his presentation to local ASG officials.

Friday afternoon for his preliminary examination hearing, but it was continued to later this week, based on a request from his defense attorney, Sharron Rancourt.

“Responding to District Court Judge Fiti A. Sunia’s question, assistant attorney general Jedediah Bigelow said the government would again call one witness for Alo’s preliminary examination hearing.

However, “this one will take a little bit longer,” he said referring to the preliminary examination hearing but did not elaborate further.

During last week’s separate preliminary examination hearings for two other accused officers, Aloafia Letuli and Olafia Wilson, the government called only one witness, police Det. Filemoni Amuitu’u, who investigated allegations of misconduct at JDC.

ALO’S CHARGES

During Alo’s initial appearance hearing two weeks ago, it was mentioned in open court that he faces serious charges.”

According to charging documents, Alo is faced with a total of 35 counts in connection with alleged illegal activities he was involved in at the JDC between April and November of last year. Of the total counts, 28 of them are felonies including 10 counts of rape involving a minor of 16 years old or younger; 4 counts of unlawful possession of methamphetamine; 4 counts of unlawful distribution of methamphetamine; three counts of aiding the escape of a prisoner; and three counts of permitting the escape of a prisoner.

He also faces 7 misdemeanor charges, including one count of stealing and four counts of endangering the welfare of a child.

In the Nov. 14, 2016 Drug Incidents in Juvenile Detention Center by On-Duty Officers’ report, prepared by the JDC supervisor and submitted to then Police Commissioner Save Liuto Tuitele, there are many allegations pointing fingers at Alo and the role he played with drug use by the four charged officers as well as certain juvenile detainees at JDC. (See Samoa News edition Apr. 3.)

ARRAIGNMENT HEARING

Meanwhile, Letuli and Wilson were arraigned in High Court last Friday morning and both officers, through their attorney, entered not guilty pleas. As of last week Thursday, both defendants are represented by the Public Defender’s Office.

The government’s cases against Letuli and Wilson were bound over from District Court late last week and the charges against the defendants stem from a police investigation into alleged illegal activities and misconduct at the JDC.

Letuli is faced with nine felony charges, including three counts involving crystal methamphetamine. She remains in custody unable to post a $60,000 bail.

For Wilson, who is also unable to post bail set at $75,000, is facing 15 counts, including 12 felonies — four of them involve crystal methamphetamine.

Both defendants have their pre trial conference hearings set for June, while trials have been set by court for September 2018. (See Samoa News editions Apr. 6 and 7 for details.)
Political Status and Constitutional Review Student Forum convenes today

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

More than 100 students from both public and private high schools convene today for a two-day forum, where five main issues, such as political status, constitutional protection of land and cultural and US citizenship will be discussed and debated.

The “Political Status and Constitutional Review Student Forum” under the theme “O Lou Faavae ma Lou Malo (Your constitution and your government)”, is a collaboration between the local Education Department, all high schools and the ASG Office of Political Status, Constitutional Review, and Federal Relations. Piu Tialavea and John Maiava of DOE Office of Curriculum and Instruction are co-organizers.

Headed by Tapa’au Dr. Dan Aga, the political status office has conducted public awareness presentations at all public high schools on Tutuila following a call by Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga to have a full understanding of “our political status”, as well as the territory’s Constitution.

According to the draft forum agenda, made available last Friday, today’s session will commence around 8a.m. with opening remarks from Dr. Dan Aga, Samoa’s Constitution would be replaced with another title “Constitutional Rights & Freedoms”. Among the three questions of discussion, “Is the constitutional right separating church and government properly protected and practiced in American Samoa?”

Another question, “Should the American Samoa Constitution be amended to declare American Samoa a Christian nation?” For background information, the draft program agenda, points to a story in January this year by Apia-based Samoa Observer newspaper, which cites a bill before the Samoa Parliament proposing to declare Samoa a “Christian nation”.

The newspaper quotes Samoa Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi saying that the phrase; ‘Samoa is founded on God’ under Samoa’s Constitution would be replaced with ‘Samoa is a Christian nation founded on God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’. Another panel discussion issue today focuses on ‘Constitutional Protection of Samoan Lands & Culture’, with the main question, “Does the protection of Samoan lands and culture remain relevant and essential to the all the people of American Samoa?”

A “subsidiary topic” for the panel, looks at the “present manner of electing Senators is essential and necessary for the protection of Samoan lands and culture.” A provision of the Constitution states in part that Senators shall be elected in accordance with Samoa custom by the county councils of the counties they are to represent.

Also suggested as a subsidiary topic for the panel, looks at “Making Samoan an official language alongside English will help to protect the Samoan way of life for generations to come.” According to the forum’s draft agenda, Secretary of Samoan Affairs Mauga Tasi Assega will deliver opening remarks at the start of tomorrow’s session, to be followed with a panel discussion “United States Citizenship”, focusing on the topic “American Samoa should request that Congress grant people born in American Samoa birthright citizenship.”

Also tomorrow is the panel discussion on “Political Status Options” — which is another important issue for American Samoa, whose current status is an “unincorporated and unorganized” territory.

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April 6, 2017
Honororable Governor
Lolo M. Moliga
Governor of American Samoa

Subject: Please Do Not Cut 10 Hours of Working Time for Government Employees Who Make Less Than $20,000 Per Year

Dear Governor,

Is it really morally ethical, justified, fair, and honorable to cut the 10 hours from the minimum wage earner, who make below $20,000 per year? I am nobody to tell you what to do, I am voicing the concerns and frustrations of all my employees who fall under that category that I stated above.

I am writing this letter to humbly ask you and your administration to reconsider the decision that’s been put out in the public about the reduction of the working time for all government employees which includes the Low Income Earners who make $15,000 and $10,000 per year. Please.

Governor with all due respect, I ask you on behalf of minimum wage earners who make less than $20,000 a year, this 10 hours reduction in their working time is a huge cut to the low income earners who make below $20,000 per year and I truly believe the majority of the government workforce makes minimum wage.

Majority of leaders/employees who are currently employed by the government are already receiving high salaries, and also are receiving government compensation checks that do not touch their minimum income, and no one can touch their disability pay, and social security check.

Besides receiving huge government checks which government employees have, they also have free government vehicles with free gas, free cell phone, free cell phone, free car, free health care, free education, free telephone, free travel with per diem.

They won’t feel the burden that will be felt greatly by low income earners.

Both high income and low income earners have cultural family commitments like family contributions (fa’atupu’a), church fund raisings, and expenses for buses, gas to travel back and forth to the mainland, and rent, utilities, car insurance, gas for their water heater and stoves, pay water, electric, waste utility expenses, and clothing.

Who will bite the dust? Not the high income earner, but the employees with 3 or more children, who make the <min wage pay check of $200 or $300 per pay period. Even if the employee is single and has no children, he/ she has parents and siblings to care for.

We are approaching Easter and the Flag Day Annual Celebration, and I again appeal to you Governor Lolo, please cancel or reduce the disaster relieve the holiday gift giving activity to those participating in Group Dance & Songs and Fusi-a-Tutu Race and have the full writing that our government is really broke. Let’s all enjoy the old fashioned style Flag Day Celebration of dancing, singing, watching and cheering for our favorite fusi-a-tutu for free.

I also appeal to you Congresswoman Aumatu to please introduce a Resolution in Congress for Financial Aid to help teritory workers with low income who were affected by the raised USA minimum wage law that should not have applied in the territory of American Samoa. The minimum wage that was forced upon American Samoa caused the 2 Tuna Can Processing Plants, StarKist and Samoan Tuna Processors to close down, which caused a major reduction problem of the people and our economy.

What is the Congress of the United States of America doing for the U.S Territory and its people — the supplier of the most military recruits compared to other territories and states on the United States of America? Congresswoman Aumatu, please tell your Republican friends in Congress, the Senate and the President Trump and his cabinet that we, the constituents of American Samoa demand abundant Financial Aid to help reduce the unprecedented financial crisis in American Samoa with our current financial crisis.

I know for a fact that our current financial crises was not caused by the low income earners who are severely affected. I truly believe that in all fairness, the higher paid empl ees are sucking up most of the government funds, especially those ghost employees who are getting paid in their paychecks, but not performing any duties. I understand that our leaders have to make do with the resources that we have and my suggestion is do your decision making in a fair and righteous way.

I pray that God will bless our leaders with a heart of love for the poor and the less fortunate, and to lead, rule and govern with fairness and honesty. Please forger the writer for bringing up this matter and offering advice.

Thank you and God Bless.

Signed By: Stu’i Lucia Bartley

Logistics Manager- Department of Health
Cc: Congresswoman Aumatu
Cc: President Donald J. Trump

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by Rhonda Annesley, Editor

Some quick answers to some quick questions from a reader about the One-Hour Reduction that starts today with the American Samoa Government.

Quick questions I wanted to ask since this one hour cut in working hours per day got me thinking things.

1. Is it okay from the cut in working hours? (if they are what’s the justification there?)

Ans: According to the Fono leaders, the law-makers are exempt from the cut, because their salaries are from their statute, hence they’re paid according to “law.” Fono employees are not a part of this law, so they are included in the reduction.

2. When did everyone find out about the cut? (It’s important to know that last week, some senators suggested participating voluntarily to show support for the government’s plight, and senators approved a verbal motion, for the Senate president to discuss the issue with the House Speaker. At the time, the Senate president did make it clear that the approved verbal motion does not involve anything relating to cutting hours for lawmakers.)

Gov. Lolo M. Moliga has also said that the executive branch cannot mandate other branches of government to cut their working hours — so it’s up to them to participate or not.

3. When did everyone find out about the cut? (Were you supposed to be given 30 days notice or something like that, and so did I miss the notice?)

Ans: An emergency cabinet meeting was called last week, where the Governor announced ASG’s move to reduce the hours, effective Monday, April 10, 2017 — that’s 3-days notice, 3-days if you count the weekend.

4. Will we be paying less than $20,000 a year, this 10 hours reduction in working hours before reduction doing it?

Samoa News also wondered about contract workers being affected, as their contract would dictate their compensation and employment terms, and would be subject to contractual law — it’s probably a matter for the lawyers.

5. Why are these cuts being done again? (I understand Governor’s desire to cut hours to help reduce the shortfall.)

ANS: Gov. Lolo M. Moliga said in his announcement, “Our financial situation mandates that we cut back the hours in order to ensure we are able to continue the effective delivery of government services to the public for the remainder of the year, while at the same time sustaining employment at its current level rather than taking paychecks away from households.”

Two weeks ago during the governor’s usual cabinet meeting, Lolo told directors that based on financial information from Treasury and the Budget Office the government will face a $16 million deficit, if spending is not curbed. Lolo then ordered that no director should travel off island paid for by the government and no over-time work will be approved.

Also remember, the last time hours were reduced for government workers — 6 years ago — then Governor Togiola Tulafono implemented a reduction in work hours for all American Samoa Government (ASG) employees paid for by local revenue, hoping to close some of the deficit and stop the reduction a few months later, returning to regular working hours. In 2016, the government is estimating it will be saving per payroll — there are 8 left in the 3rd quarter, and “if Fono and Judiciary join in,” about $239,688, which would amount to around $700,000 per year.

6. What’s our Representative in Congress’s answer on these cuts and will we be seeing any help from Washington in keeping them short or even lifted?” Let’s also keep in mind that Washington is the whole reason we are making these cuts, so what now?

ANS: There has been no word yet from the Congresswoman Aumatu’s office on the issue. And yes, Lolo said one of the “two principle difficulties” impacting the government’s current lack of flow is the slow down of grant funded rev- enue streams as a result of the change of administration in Washington D.C.

It should also be noted that ASG has problems reporting in a timely manner in order to get federal funds to be drawn down and the local government reimbursed. For example, TAOA is months behind on their reports.

At this point, it looks like it’s a matter of waiting for Washington D.C. to ‘act’.

If we are looking for ways to generate revenue, we are so conservative as to not look at other quick solutions such as legalization of cannab- isms and hemp products as a revenue generator since it appears our leaders are desperate enough to cut working hours and money out of our checks? (I’m not saying it’s the best answer, I’m just saying from my end it’s a better long term alternative then having my earnings shortened?)

Tell me what I can do or who can I call to keep these cuts short and to get American Samoa’s money up seeing as though the whole issue is GENERALLY SOLVED.

I’m looking for solutions that I can apply on my end… anyone up to talk business and move things.

ANS: What about a Lotto for our education department and hospital (not casino)? Become a Duty-Free port once again? Taxing ‘alofa’ to fish and faafa’au… become a duty free? Also remember, our remaining cannery: Don’t charge canneries to our remaining cannery — Don’t charge canneries to StarKist a fair land rent for their new freezer? Keep our fisheries industry healthy… help our faalave/fealave and fishers, like an industry, a dock… fishing grounds? Make it that faalavele donations cannot be more than $20- $50 per person or matafale, if cash is required?

There’s no one solution, just a lot of ingredi- ents to be put together for a healthy economy.
"I just wanted to help our people protect themselves from all these diseases caused by mosquitoes," the faipule said, adding that he isn’t interested in being a local distributor or agent for the product because of his many other responsibilities, such as being a lawmaker, not only representing his constituency of Manu’a District No. 1 but all residents of American Samoa.

Of interest, said Vesi, is that he was informed recently by health officials that Manu’a is still free of the Zika virus. Health officials in American Samoa and the US, as well as the World Health Organization have all strongly recommended that people use mosquito repellent containing DEET during the fight against diseases such as Zika and dengue.

“We have discovered a synergistic combination of scents with DEET that are more effective than DEET alone and are able to deliver them at a steady effective rate for 800 hours in a wearable device called BugBling," the maker of the product claims on its website (www.bugbling.net).

According to the New Mexico publication, Albuquerque Journal, the inventor of BugBling is Robert Hockaday from Tucumcari, New Mexico.

On Aug. 15, 2016, a story published by the newspaper says Hockaday is a physicist, mechanical engineer and all-round inventor. And the patented device, BugBling, uses a combination of chemical and botanical repellents, can be worn as a wrist or ankle band, or can be clipped onto clothes, providing up to 800 hours of continuous protection against mosquitoes.

These students volunteered to model, the BugBling, a new “mosquito repellent band” product not yet available in the territory. The mosquito repellant band can be worn on the wrist - as a wrist watch, a person’s ankle (see student model, second from far right) and clipped on a student’s backpack strap (see student model, first from far right.)

Manu’a…
Continued from page 2

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You can pick up and turn in, an application at the McDonald’s Head Office in Nu’uuli, beginning Monday, March 6, 2017 at 2:30pm. **Deadline for all applications: Friday, April 28, 2017 at 4pm.**

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5. Analyzes financial data and provides recommended input to achieve organizational goals
6. Provides tax advice and prepares all necessary financial schedules required
7. Oversees and coordinates finance operations of several companies, recommending and implementing strategies to maximize profitability for the companies as a group
8. Candidate reports directly to the Board of Directors

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3. Strong knowledge of U.S. GAAP, internal control policies and procedures
4. Extensive experience working with various accounting software
5. 5 years experience in accounting related field
6. 7 years management or supervisory experience
7. Corporate finance and operations experience, a plus
8. Strong analytical and communication skills, written and verbal
9. Demonstrated leadership skills and ability to interact well with all levels of various organizations
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By James Kneubuhl, ASCC Press Officer

For the third Faculty Convocation of the spring 2017 semester, Department of Education (DOE) Director Dr. Ruth Matagi-Tofiga spoke before an audience of faculty members at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) on Thursday, March 30.

Known for her many years of public service, including a tenure as the principal of Tafuna High School, Dr. Matagi-Tofiga has also maintained friendships with many in the local educational community, and could be found immediately prior to her talk exchanging greetings with many in the audience whom she has come to know over the years.

Dr. Matagi-Tofiga explained that she would share the same presentation she has lately given to many of the DOE elementary and high school teachers and administrators on some of the basic leadership skills a teacher must have.

“We should teach to make an impact, not just make an income,” she said. “Not only should we strive to make a positive impact on our students, but also to make our own learning a lifelong process.” The DOE Director shared that even with the important positions she has held, people in the community most frequently remember as their former science instructor and principal at Tafuna High School. “We can make the biggest difference in the lives of students during our times of one-on-one interaction with them,” she reflected.

The DOE director’s talk included her thoughts on the importance of working collaboratively with other faculty, taking advantage of professional development opportunities, keeping a positive attitude, and the crucial importance of staying healthy.

“She reminded the audience that college education begins from kindergarten, emphasizing the relationship between DOE and ASCC,” said the College’s Faculty Senate President Poe Mageo. “She also talked about having a passion to teach students, and claimed she’s better known in the community as a chemistry teacher than as the DOE Director. She reminded the ASCC faculty that in any workplace, teachers need to work as a team and build-up another. Working in isolation would defeat the purpose of team spirit and networking.”

Following the conclusion of her talk, the DOE Director once again took the opportunity to personally greet many of the ASCC faculty in attendance.

“We’re grateful Dr. Matagi-Tofiga could spend this time with us and give us an insight into her own philosophy on education,” said Mageo. “Whether we teach toddlers or young adults, all teachers in American Samoa, as Dr. Matagi-Tofiga pointed out, have the responsibility of making the best impact they can on the lives of their students.”
Youth who are lonely and feel that there is nowhere to turn during times of crisis now have an option available to them 24 hours a day, seven days a week, thanks to a project funded through the US Department of Health and Human Services’ (DHHS) Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB).

The program is made available to local youth through the Pacific Youth and Community Development, American Samoa Pasefika Youth Project — Runaway and Homeless Youth Basic Center Program. A temporary shelter for youth is “A service for at-risk and troubled, runaway, homeless youth in American Samoa.”

According to project manager Salima Eucharist Reupena, the Pacific Youth and Community Development is “a community based, non-profit organization specializing in positive youth development, with certified staff in Best Practice programs such as Botvin’s Life Skills Training and Tackling Tough Skills for English Language Learners.”

For the Pasefika Youth Project, Salima said they have partnered with Catholic Social Services and Alofa Tunoa Ministry to provide access to counseling and shelter services the program provides.

According to Salima, the purpose of the Basic Center Program is to provide temporary shelter for up to 21 days for youth younger than 18 years of age, at-risk of experiencing unstable housing and various psycho/social challenges,” according to the project information pamphlet.

The project is funded to provide temporary shelter for up to 21 days for youth younger than 18 years of age, at-risk of experiencing unstable housing and various psycho/social challenges,” according to the project information pamphlet.

Under the program, the parent or legal guardian of the youth MUST be contacted, and they are required to provide formal consent within 24 to 72 hours of client intake.

Basic services provided include food, clothing, medical care, trauma-informed counseling, positive youth development strategies, crisis intervention, life skills training, recreational programs, and six months of aftercare support.

Those who participated in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training [ASIST] held last month included ASCC students, and staff members and volunteers of Catholic Social Services and Alofa Tunoa Ministry. The program is a part of the Pasefika Youth Project. [Courtesy photo]
Attorney General Talauega Eleasalo V. Ale (left) swearing in Commissioner of Public Safety, Le‘i Sonny Thompson, during a brief ceremony over the weekend at the DPS conference room in Fagatogo. This is the first known time this type of ceremony has been carried out in which the Attorney General presided over the swearing in of a Police Commissioner — Le‘i, who was confirmed by the Fono in February this year.

In brief remarks to reporters, after the swearing-in ceremony, Le‘i explained that following his confirmation by the Fono as Police Commissioner, the administration took it that this “was sufficient enough to perform duties just like a police officer, out there day and night” in accordance with Title 46 of the statute - (Criminal Justice - which has 49 Chapters - under the American Samoa Code Annotated).

However, District Court Judge [Fiti A.] Sunia “had cautioned my involvement with police officers, men and women, out there doing their job. So we... researched this matter with the Attorney General’s Office and therefore have agreed” to carrying out the swearing-in ceremony, Le‘i explained, but didn’t elaborate further on why Sunia had cautioned his involvement.

Although... it’s already in the statute, [which] gives me authority as a commissioner of Public Safety to conduct business just like any other law enforcement officer,” Talauega was called for the swearing-in “to make sure that at this point forward all applicable laws and the Constitution of American Samoa as well as those directly affecting the job of a police officer is taken care of.”

The police commissioner said, “It is our intention and my intention, that I’m out there at any time, every day, with the police officers to assist them, in what they’re doing — preserving peace, law and order, to make sure you are safe, in our community.”

Last month, Le‘i was seen along with several police officers conducting highway check of vehicles, along the stretch of the main high road between Fatu‘a and Lepe‘uga following complaints that drivers were using this main highway as a speedway. [Photo AF]
porary shelter and counseling services, not only to youth who have left home without the permission of their parents or guardians, but also to other homeless youth who might oth-
erwise end up in trouble with
the law or in the child welfare,
mental health, or juvenile jus-
tice systems.

“FYSB’s intent is to increase young people’s safety, social
and emotional well-being, and self-sufficiency, and to help
them build permanent connec-
tions with families, communi-
ties, schools, and other positive
social networks.”

Often times, according to
the program manager, youth in
crisis think they have nowhere
to turn when they are most
vulnerable.

“This project provides free 24-hour crisis intervention hot-
line services; individual, group and family counseling for youth
and family members; a safe alternative to an increasingly
dangerous environment through temporary shelter, prevention
education, outreach, substance
abuse treatment (if applicable);
access to clinical behavioral health services; aftercare ser-
dices for six months after dis-
charge from the shelter; diver-
sion from the juvenile justice
system; and an opportunity for
safe, permanent placement, and
family re-unification.”

The overall goal of the
project is to:
• reduce incidences of vio-
lence within the home, as well
as crimes committed against
youth on the streets;
• reduce the number of youth
involved in drug abuse, delin-
quency, prostitution, violence,
and crime;
• reduce health problems
related to runaway and home-
less youth; and
• reduce the suicide rate
amongst teens.

Those seeking help are not
charged for the aforementioned
services, and the program is
strictly for those under 18 years
old. The location of the tempo-
rary shelter is confidential, as
those utilizing the facilities are
minors and protected by law.

The shelter program was
launched earlier this year in Jan-
uary and since then, according
to Salima, they have been able
to serve a handful of clients.

In addition to their various
services, the program is also
trying to use local youth as a
tool to reach out to their peers.

Last month, nine members
of the You Are Not Alone (YANA) Club and Student
Government Association
(SGA) at the American Samoa
Community College (ASCCC),
along with advisor Bernie
Tavai, staff and volunteers from Alofa Tunoa Ministry
and Catholic Social Services
took part in a two-day Applied
Suicide Intervention Skills
Training (ASIST), conducted
by Amy Pierce.

Salima said the goal is to get
other teens involved so they can
serve as their eyes and ears in
the community, helping to refer
troubled youth to the program.

The PYCD is overseen by
board members that include:
Chairman Toetasi Tuilele-
apapa, Vice-Chairman Larry
Sanitoa, Secretary/Treasurer
Ray Talalelei Tualafono, Jr.,
Executive Director Tupua Roy
Piao, Project Director Toleafoa
Kathryn Tupua, and members
Leilua Stevenson and Dr. Jueta
McCutchan.

More information on the
Runaway and Homeless Youth
Basic Center Program can be
obtained by calling the Shelter
and Youth Crisis Intervention
Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a
week at 684-699-4357(HELP).

To make a referral, one
needs to complete the Referral
Form and email it to pasefikay-
outh@gmail.com.

Project management and
staff can be reached at their
Malaenimi Fa’atamali’i Center
office at 684-699-7923(PYCD);
email <pasefikayouth@gmail.
com> or log on to <www.pycd.
net>
Kruse twins Jewel and Jade, with classmate Temisi Palemea of Manumalo Academy were all smiles after their National His-
territorial competition held at Kanana Fou on Wednesday.

"He has however forgiven the accused although he never personally apologized," said Justice Tuatagaloa.

According to the Justice, the 16 passengers injured were mostly students and the injuries ranged from lacerations, fractures, swellings, deep cuts and broken ribs.

He pointed out the defendant’s previous convictions for traffic offenses suggest a negligent person.

The Justice opined that too many lives have been lost and many people have been injured because of the negligence of bus drivers. The Land Transport Authority should look at stringent measures to be imposed upon bus owners and bus drivers when issuing driving licenses and warrants of fitness for buses. Justice Tuatagaloa noted that the only mitigating factors were the ifoga and the accused’s early guilty pleas.

"The accused will not get full credit for the ifoga as he did not personally attend but his employer carried out the ifoga to include him. 'Ifoaga' means a lot to the Samoan culture where much harm or wrong has been done. The person who had done wrong in carrying out an ifoga shows humility for what they had done and asks for forgiveness. It is also a sign of accept-
ance or taking responsibility for their actions. In that sense the accused should have personally done an 'ifoaga' to the deceased family."

The Justice then sentenced the defendant to four years and three months imprisonment.

Justice Tuatagaloa noted the defendant is 57 years old, married with three children. According to the pre-sentence report the defendant started working as a bus driver for Queen Patsy’s Transportation in 2014 where he earned $350 weekly.

Justice Tuatagaloa pointed out the probation report said the defendant along with his employer owner of Queen Patsy did an 'ifoaga' to the deceased passenger’s family and the employer paid for and contrib-
uted a lot to the victim’s funeral. However, the deceased’s father, in the victim impact report said that the accused employer did the ‘ifoaga’ for them and the defendant did not attend or partic-
ipate in the ifoga.

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PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A top national security adviser to President Donald Trump is the latest official heading out in an ongoing shuffle within the National Security Council.

K.T. McFarland, who is in line to be U.S. ambassador to Singapore, came into the White House as a deputy to Trump’s first national security adviser, Michael Flynn. Flynn was asked to resign in February amid revelations that he misled senior administration officials about his contacts with Russian government officials.

McFarland’s impending move was confirmed Sunday by a senior administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the official announcement hasn’t been made. The administration is still awaiting approval from Singapore and the post requires Senate confirmation.

Flynn’s replacement, Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster, has freely made changes to the national security structure since assuming the role. McMaster immediately expressed a desire to run a less hierarchical organization and be more accessible to his staff.

Another White House official, Dina Powell, was recently named deputy national security adviser for strategy and has been present in the recent high level meetings with delegations from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and China. Powell joined the White House to work with Trump daughter Ivanka on women’s empowerment issues. She had previously served as assistant secretary of state for educational and cultural affairs under President George W. Bush before joining Goldman Sachs.

But Powell soon began attending senior-level staff meetings with the president himself. Her promotion to deputy national security adviser last month triggered early speculation that McFarland’s days on the National Security Council were numbered.

On Thursday, as the president huddled with top national security and Cabinet officials to trigger U.S. missile strikes on Syrian government installations from a newly built situation room at Trump’s Florida resort, Powell was among the attendees. McFarland was not.

McFarland had been working as a Fox News analyst before joining Trump’s national security team. She previously worked for three Republican presidents — Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan.

Among the most notable changes to take place under McMaster was the removal of Trump’s chief strategist, Steve Bannon, from the National Security Council, reversing an ear-

A new memorandum about the council’s composition, published Wednesday in the Federal Register, also reflected that the director of national intelligence and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as the energy secretary, had been restored as members of the principal committee.

The changes come as Trump’s White House faces allegations that it funneled secret intelligence reports to a Republican congressman leading an investigation into his campaign’s possible ties to Russian officials as well as Moscow’s interference in the 2016 election. The New York Times last month identified two NSC officials as having helped House intelligence committee Chairman Devin Nunes view secret reports that showed Trump and his associates were incidentally swept up in foreign surveillance by U.S. intelligence agencies.

FILE - In this Wednesday, March 29, 2017, file photo, Deputy National Security Adviser K.T. McFarland speaks at the Women’s Empowerment Panel, at the White House in Washington. McFarland, top national security adviser to President Donald Trump, is in line to be U.S. ambassador to Singapore. McFarland’s impending move was confirmed Sunday, April 9, 2017, by a senior administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the announcement hasn’t been made public. The post requires Senate confirmation.

(AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais, File)
The American Samoa Power Authority issues a Request for Quotes (RFQ) to invite qualified firms to submit quotes for the:

**RFQ NO: ASPA.17.028.ESD-WTR Closing Date & Time: April 26, 2017**

Issuance Date: April 7, 2017

No later than 2:00 p.m. local time

The American Samoa Power Authority issues a Request for Quotes (RFQ) to invite qualified firms to submit quotes for the:

**“Supply of Materials for the Upper Pago Pago Improvements Project”**

Closing Date & Time: April 26, 2017

No later than 2:00 p.m. local time

Materials Management Office
American Samoa Power Authority
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
Attn: Ioana S. Uli, Procurement Manager

Any quotation received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances. Late submissions will not be opened or considered and will be determined as being non-responsive.

**Position requirements / skill set**

1. Ability to multitask and work independently
2. Proficient in computer software such as Microsoft Word and Excel
3. Good PR, communication and organization skills
4. Must have own transportation to work (Tafuna Industrial Park) and current, valid drivers license
5. Previous contractor type office work experience beneficial

Salary to commensurate with experience and knowledge

Send resumes to: Itanaka@intelec.com

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**Companies in the News**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump’s national security adviser on Sunday left open the possibility of additional U.S. military action against Syria following last week’s missile strike but indicated that the United States was not seeking to act unilaterally or to oust Syrian President Bashar Assad.

In his first televised interview, H.R. McMaster pointed to dual U.S. goals of defeating the Islamic State group and removing Assad. But he suggested that Trump was seeking a global political response for regime change from U.S. allies as well as Russia, which he said needed to re-evaluate its support of Syria.

“It’s very difficult to understand how a political solution could result from the continuation of the Assad regime,” McMaster said. “Now, we are not saying that we are going to effect that change. What we are saying is, other countries have to ask themselves some hard questions. Russia should ask themselves... Why are we supporting this murderous regime that is committing mass murder of its own population?”

After last Tuesday’s chemical attack in Syria, Trump said his attitude toward Assad “has changed very much” and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said “steps are underway” to organize a coalition to remove him from power.

But as lawmakers called on Trump to consult with Congress on any future military strikes and a longer-term strategy on Syria, Trump administration officials sent mixed signals on the scope of U.S. involvement. While Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, described regime change in Syria as a U.S. priority and inevitable, Tillerson suggested that last week’s American airstrikes in retaliation for the chemical attack hadn’t really changed the U.S. priorities toward ousting Assad.

Pressed to clarify, McMaster said the goals of fighting IS and ousting Syria’s president were somewhat “simultaneous” and that the objective of the missile strike was to send a “strong political message to Assad.” He did not rule out additional strikes if Assad continued to engage in atrocities against rebel forces with either chemical or conventional weapons.

“We are prepared to do more,” he said. “The president will make whatever decision he thinks is in the best interest of the American people.”

Reluctant to put significant troops on the ground in Syria, the U.S. for years has struggled to directly to stabilize the situation in Syria, he said.

“We’re hopeful that we can prevent a continuation of the civil war and that we can bring the parties to the table to begin the process of political discussions between the Assad government and various rebel groups.”

The hope, he said, is that “we can navigate a political outcome in which the Syrian people, in fact, will determine Bashar al-Assad’s fate and his legitimacy.”

Haley said “getting Assad out is not the only priority” and that ousting Iran’s influence in Syria was another. Still, Haley said the U.S. didn’t think there was a peaceful future Syria with Assad in power.

McMaster also appeared on CNN’s “State of the Union.” Tillerson appeared on ABC’s “This Week” and CBS’ “Face the Nation.” Haley and Graham were on NBC’s “Meet the Press” and Haley also appeared on CNN’s “State of the Union.”
WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's national security adviser on Sunday left open the possibility of additional U.S. military action against Syria following last week's missile strike but indicated that the United States was not seeking to act unilaterally to oust Syrian President Bashar Assad.

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"It's very difficult to understand how a political solution could result from the continuation of the Assad regime," McMaster said. "Now, we are not saying that we are the ones who are going to effect that change. What we are saying is, other countries have to ask themselves some hard questions. Russia should ask themselves ... Why are we supporting this murderous regime that is committing mass murder of its own population?"

After last Tuesday's chemical attack in Syria, Trump said his attitude toward Assad "has changed very much" and "Assad has changed very much" and "committing mass murder of its own population?"

The chemical attack — has raised optimism among U.S.-backed rebels groups that Trump will more directly support rebels that Trump will move directly confront Assad.

Several lawmakers said Sunday that Trump's decision shouldn't entirely be up to Trump.

Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, the no. 2 Republican in the Senate, praised Trump's initial missile strike for sending a message to Assad, Russia, Iran and North Korea that "there's a new administration in charge." But he said Trump now needed to work with Congress to set a future course.

"Congress needs to work with the president to try and deal with this long-term strategy, lack of strategy, really, in Syria," he said. "We've hadn't had one for six years during the Obama administration, and 400,000 civilians have died and millions of people have been displaced internally and externally in Europe and elsewhere."

Still, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said he believed that Trump didn't need to consult with Congress. "I think the president has authorization to use force," he said. "Assad signed the chemical weapons treaty ban. There's an agreement with him not to use chemical weapons."

Their comments came as Tillerson was making the Trump administration's first official trip this week to Russia, a staunch Assad ally. In interviews broadcast Sunday, Tillerson said defeating the Islamic State group remains the top focus. Once that threat "has been reduced or eliminated, I think we can turn our attention directly to stabilizing the situation in Syria," he said.

"We're hopeful that we can prevent a continuation of the civil war and that we can bring the parties to the table to begin the process of political discussions" between the Assad government and various rebel groups.

The hope, he said, is that "we can navigate a political outcome in which the Syrian people, in fact, will determine Bashir al-Assad's fate and his legitimacy."

Haley said "getting Assad out is not the only priority" and that countering Iran's influence in Syria was another. Still, Haley said the U.S. didn't see a peaceful future Syria with Assad in power.

McMaster, Cornyn and Cardin spoke on "Fox News Sunday." Tillerson appeared on ABC's "This Week" and CBS' "Face the Nation," Haley also appeared on CNN's "State of the Union."
Recent developments surrounding the South China Sea

BEIJING (AP) — A look at recent developments in the South China Sea, where China is pitted against smaller neighbors in multiple disputes over islands, coral reefs and lagoons in waters crucial for global commerce and rich in fish and potential oil and gas reserves.

The Pentagon says a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier strike group is departing the South China Sea to provide a physical presence near the Korean Peninsula.

The U.S. Pacific Command directed the carrier group to sail north to the western Pacific after departing Singapore on Saturday, according to a Navy news release. The strike group includes the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson, with support from several missile destroyers and missile cruisers.

Deployed from San Diego to the western Pacific since Jan. 5, the strike group has participated in numerous exercises with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Republic of Korea Navy, various maritime security initiatives, and routine patrol operations in the South China Sea. Its activities in the South China Sea were considered a message to Beijing about Washington’s determination to maintain its presence in the disputed waters.

Beijing said it was well aware of the strike group’s activities and reiterated its stance that the U.S. presence in the area would only increase tensions at a time when claimants are working toward a long-awaited code of conduct aimed to reduce the potential for conflicts.

China’s sole aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, also held exercises in the South China Sea from late 2016 to the beginning of this year, concluding them by sailing through the Taiwan Strait that divides China from Taiwan as it claims as its own territory. China is also believed to be close to launching its first entirely-home built aircraft carrier.

DUTERTE ORDERS MILITARY TO OCCUPY AND FORTIFY ALL PHILIPPINE-HELD ISLANDS

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered the military to occupy and fortify all Philippine-held islands in the South China Sea to assert the country’s claims in an apparent response to China’s moves to cement its control over its claims.

“We tried to be friends with everybody but we have to maintain our jurisdiction now, at least the areas under our control,” Duterte said during a visit to a military camp in western Palawan province.

Duterte said he has ordered the armed forces to occupy and place Philippine flags on all islands, reefs and shoals controlled by the Philippines. Bunkers and other infrastructure for habitation must be built on nine or 10 islands, he said.

It was unclear how Duterte’s order can be executed. Some of the tiny reefs and outcrops would need expensive and logistically difficult reclamations before structures could be built on them.

Duterte said he may visit one of the islands, Pag-asa, to raise the Philippine flag on Independence Day. He said money has been budgeted to repair the runway on Pag-asa, home to a small fishing community and Filipino troops.

Duterte has worked to mend ties with China that were strained under his predecessor over the territorial disputes. He paired that approach by attacking the U.S. for its policies in Asia and insulting former president Barack Obama for having criticized his bloody anti-drugs campaign.

However, his administration now appears to be avoiding frictions with the U.S. while taking a more wary approach to Beijing.

STUDY SAYS CHINESE COAST GUARD MAINTAINS NEAR-CONSTANT PRESENCE OFF BORNEO

Vessels from China’s coast guard are nearly constantly on station at the Luconia Shoals off the coast of Malaysia’s Sarawak State on the island of Borneo, according to the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative under the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The presence of the vessels “speaks to Beijing’s determination to establish administrative control throughout the nine-dash line,” which refer to China’s roughly drawn outline of its South China Sea territorial claim.

The reeds between the Spratly chain, where China has been building islands out of reefs and equipping them with weapons and military installations, and James Shoal, which Beijing considers the southernmost extent of its territory. The James and Luconia shoals are underwater at high-tide and so cannot be claimed as territory.

The center recorded the presence of coast guard vessels at the shoal beginning from September 2013. Malaysia sent one of its coast guard ships to monitor the presence of the Chinese vessels, but they were outclassed by the much larger Chinese vessels. Despite operating within 4 nautical miles (7 kilometers) of each other, there have been no reports of confrontations between the vessels, it said.

During a visit to Beijing by Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak to Beijing in November, the two countries said their navies would cooperate more in the South China Sea, in what was seen as a new attempt by Beijing to dilute U.S. influence in the area.

That included the purchase by Malaysia of four Chinese littoral patrol boats.

INDONESIA DESTROYS FOREIGN VESSELS CAUGHT FISHING ILLEGALLY IN ITS WATERS.

Indonesian authorities destroyed 81 foreign ships at the start of April after seizing the vessels for fishing illegally in the country’s waters.

The world’s largest archipelago nation has taken a tough stance against illegal fishing since President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo took office in 2014. Authorities have sunk 317 foreign vessels since then, including the most recent.

Most of the vessels were from Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand.

Indonesia is doubling its sovereignty and combating illegal fishing, said Susi Pudjiastuti, the minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries who witnessed the sinking of two ships in the port of Ambon in Maluku province.

“We hope Sino (the name of one of the ships) is the symbol of our victory against poaching,” she said. “It proves that Indonesia is the most powerful nation in eastern Indonesia,” Pudjias- tuti said. She expressed hope that the action would deter poachers.

File: In this March 15, 2017 file photo, U.S. Navy aircraft carrier, the USS Carl Vinson approaches the Island of Singapore (Jo Jung-ho/Yonhap via AP, File)
Mexican drug lord gets his own miniseries made in Colombia

TABIO, Colombia (AP) — While the real Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is locked up in a cold, tiny cell in New York, his career as a drug lord appears to be far from over in Colombia, where the Univision network and Netflix are filming a television series about his life.

Ironically, Guzman’s re-arrest in 2016 — after two dramatic prison escapes — has created such a bloody power struggle for his Sinaloa cartel in Mexico that the series’ producers thought it would be safer to film in Colombia, the country that used to be the epicenter of the hemisphere’s drug violence.

Guzman was extradited to the United States in January, and his lawyers complain the conditions in a Manhattan jail while awaiting trial are so restrictive they violate his rights.

The filming in Colombia was so cloaked in secrecy that the crew told locals they were filming a mythical TV soap opera, "Durazno de Amor," roughly "The Pains of Love." The Associated Press attended one filming session in the town of Tabio, where a half-dozen extras said they didn’t know what the series was about.

It’s real title is fairly self-explanatory: “El Chapo.”

At the time filming started, Guzman was still in Mexico and the series’ location was shifted for security reasons, said producer Daniel Posada. "Colombia was a good option, because we have well-trained crews and it is very similar in the mood of the story of one of the world’s most notorious criminals."

Another Guzman lawyer, Andres Granados, told The Associated Press at the time that the two networks would have to pay for the right to use Guzman’s name and nickname, which can be translated as "Shorty."

"If they air this, they are immediately going to be sued," Granados said. "They, by necessity, need the authorization of Mr. Guzman, because he is not dead."

Guzman earlier gave rights to his life story to Mexican actress Kate del Castillo, who arranged a secret 2015 meeting with the then-fugitive drug boss and actor Sean Penn, De la O said: "It was a challenge to play Chapo, because of his complexity." Guzman, the son of impoverished farmers, rose to the top of the list of the world’s richest people.

Asked if he plays Guzman as a hero or a villain, De la O said: "I can’t judge him. From an artistic point of view, he is a冷, tiny cell in New York, his career as a drug lord appears to be far from over in Colombia, where the Univision network and Netflix are filming a television series about his life.

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DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) — The next time the cops chase you down for speeding, they could be driving a fuel-efficient gas-electric hybrid.

Ford Motor Co., which sells more police cars in the U.S. than any other automaker, says it will offer a police pursuit version of the hybrid Fusion midsize sedan, in response to requests from cities nationwide. The new car, with its 2-Liter four-cylinder engine and 1.4 kilowatt lithium-ion battery, is expected to get 38 miles per gallon of gas in combined city-highway driving. That’s 20 mpg more than Ford’s current police car, the Taurus police interceptor.

The hybrids won’t be as fast as the Taurus with a 3.7-Liter turbocharged V6, but Ford expects it to be quick enough to earn a pursuit rating when tested later this year by the Michigan State Police and Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, the first hybrid to earn that honor. To get a pursuit rating, cars have to perform well in acceleration, handling, braking, top speed and ergonomics and make the list of cars that the Michigan and Los Angeles agencies would buy.

When the throttle is held down for five seconds, the car will go into pursuit mode, using both the electric motor and the gas engine for maximum performance, Ford said. The company also says the car will be durable for tough police duties.

Police cars spend much of their days idling by the side of a road, and that’s where the hybrid has a true advantage, Ford said. The gas engine will shut off at idle with the battery handling the electrical load for flashers, radios and other items. It will restart to recharge the battery.

Ford said at $2.50 per gallon for gas, the hybrid would save a police department $3,877 per year in fuel costs per vehicle.

The price of the hybrid, available in the fall of 2018, isn’t being released just yet.

Ford was to unveil the police car Monday with press conferences in New York and Los Angeles. One already has been outfitted to look like a Los Angeles police cruiser.

While big-city departments might be most interested in the fuel savings, the cars might also be appealing to small departments.

Thomas Korabik, chief of the 10-officer North Muskegon, Michigan, Police Department, said his city spends about $22,000 per year on gasoline for four cruisers and would be interested in cutting that in half.