ASTCA workers being forced by Interim CEO to retire or resign

by Rhonda Annesley, editor

“This is official notification to inform you that our records indicate that you have reached the years of service to qualify for retirement as per our local statues,” begins one of the letters, signed by the Chairman/Interim CEO of the American Samoa Tele Communications Authority, Hon. Palelei’ite Li’a Tutuiki Jr., in what more than 10 ASTCA employees say are letters notifying them to hand over their duties to appointed successors and start the process of retirement.

Samoa News was able to get a copy of one of the letters on the condition of anonymity, as many ASTCA employees have obtained counsel upon receiving similar notifications.

According to several ASTCA employees, the letters vary in content, but are common in their push to remove the individuals from their current positions — either forcing retirement or in other cases re-assigning the worker to another area — whether they want it or not. In some cases, this is forcing them to consider resignation.

Ironically, the letter Samoa News obtained, tells the employee that ASTCA “is interested in learning about your experience with ASTCA, in order to obtain information, which may help in our efforts to improve the work environment. The department of Human Resources conducts an exit interview with departing employees for this purpose.”

The letter notes, “Contact the HR office in regards to final pay-ment process.”

Samoa News has been told by several ASTCA employees, Congressional online records show that the legislation has been referred to the US House Committee on Education and the Workforce. While the actual language of the bill is not yet available online, it does provide the heading of the legislation, which seeks to amend the 2007 act to stop a scheduled increase in minimum wage applicable to American Samoa and to provide that any future increases in such minimum wage shall be determined by the Secretary of Labor. (See yesterday’s edition for details on the news release.)

Another federally mandated minimum wage hike following last year’s closure of Samoa Tuna Processors (STP) Inc., would be a devastating blow to American Samoa’s economy and a “final nail in the coffin,” says Commerce Department director Keniseli Lafaele.

Congresswoman Aumua Amata introduced Tuesday in the US House federal legislation, “Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007”, which Aumua explained in a news release would restore the system in place prior to 2007, when minimum wages were set by a Special Industry Committee, appointed by the US Secretary of Labor. (See yesterday’s edition for details on the news release.)

Mandated minimum wage hike will be final nail in coffin for local economy, says DOC

by Fili Sagapolutele

The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 hiked

By Fili Sagapolutele

Aspiring wrestlers from around the territory were at the DYWA Pago Pago Community Youth Center yesterday morning to take advantage of the free wrestling clinics being conducted by Alex Ramirez (back row far left), an educator and high school wrestling coach from southern California. Read story in sports section for more details.

[photo: Blue Chen-Fruen]
Employment Opportunity

News Reporter

Samoa News is looking to add to our newsroom staff. The ideal candidate must have a broad-based knowledge of and interest in local sports and community events.

Qualifications:
• Fluency in spoken English and Samoan
• Ability to write in English and Samoan
• Organizational Skills
• Ability to meet deadlines, a must.
• Must be able to work weekends.
• Access to a laptop, digital camera and vehicle, a definite plus.

For an appointment to interview, call Samoa News, at 633-5599

Pigs for Sale

All sizes. Size 2 and big ones for Fa'alavelave.

Contact 252-5005 or 699-2652

Boy killed by log in surf as tropical storm churns in Gulf

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A boy on an Alabama beach was struck and killed Wednesday by a log washed ashore by storm surge from Tropical Storm Cindy, which spun bands of severe weather ashore from the Florida panhandle to east Texas as it churned ever closer to the Gulf coast.

Baldwin County Sheriff’s Capt. Stephen Arthur said witnesses reported the 10-year-old boy from Missouri was standing outside a condominium in Fort Morgan when the log, carried in by a large wave, struck him. Arthur said the youth was vacationing with his family from the St. Louis area and that relatives and emergency workers tried to revive him. He wasn’t immediately identified.

It was the first known fatality from Cindy. The storm formed Tuesday and was expected to make landfall some time late Wednesday or early Thursday.

Rough seas also led to the rescue of a shrimp trawler in danger of sinking off the coast Wednesday. A log took on water faster than onboard pumps could clear it. A helicopter crew lowered an extra pump that enabled the shrimp boat to survive.

The U.S. Coast Guard said the trawler Footprint was about 80 miles (130 kilometers) of sinking off the coast of Texas. The U.S. Coast Guard said crewman was rescued off the coast of Texas.

Louisiana, said more moisture was heading in from the Gulf panhandle as of Wednesday. And more rain was on the way. National Weather Service forecasters estimated it had dumped anywhere from 2 to 10 inches (50 to 250 millimeters) of rain on various parts along the Gulf Coast from south Louisiana to the Florida panhandle as of Wednesday. And more rain was on the way.

Sydney Schultz takes photos of waves crashing next to Rollover Pass as Tropical Storm Cindy approaches the coast Wednesday, June 21, 2017 on the Bolivar Peninsula. (Michael Ciaglo/Houston Chronicle via AP)

NOAA Cautious in its motion for reconsideration of LVPA lawsuit decision

Says it focused on standing and approximate remedy to longline fleet problem

by Fili Sagapolutele

Samoa News Correspondent

A legal counsel with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says the federal defendants in the large Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA) lawsuit, are „cautious‟ in their motion for reconsideration now before the federal court in Honolulu.

Frederick W. Tucker, chief of the Pacific Islands Section of the NOAA Office of General Counsel, briefed, on Tuesday, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council on the status of the Territory of American Samoa’s federal lawsuit against the defendants, which include the National Marine Fisheries Service that last year issued a ruling reducing the LVPA from 50 to 12 in territorial waters. The 2016 LVPA Rule resulted in the lawsuit by the plaintiff — through the Governor’s Office and AG.

As previously reported by Samoa News, US District Court Judge Leslie Kobayashi issued a decision earlier this year in March, in favor of ASG. Last month, the federal defendants filed a motion of reconsideration, and AG has since asked the court to reject the motion, arguing that the court’s decision was proper.

In his briefing, Tucker told the Council meeting, which ends today, that the federal court found that NMFS, arbitrarily approved the 2016 LVPA rule and disregards its obligations under the Deeds of Cession to “protect and preserve cultural fishing rights in American Samoa.” (The Deeds for Tutuila and Aunu‘u were signed in 1900, and 1904 for Manu‘a. Both are Deeds with the United States.)

“We looked at that case decision and decided to file a motion for reconsideration on two particular issues,” he explained, saying that the first one is “of standing — legal standing for American Samoan to bring this claim.”

“The second issue concerned the proper remedy. What was the appropriate remedy for the court to apply upon concluding that NMFS acted arbitrarily and capriciously,” Tucker further explained.

He said the defense also argued that the “court should have... asked us to file supplemental briefings on the... impact of the rule”, specifically the disruptive impact on the longliners and the ability of the NMFS “to address the deficiency identified by the court during the period of remand.”

“So we’ve asked for the court to do that balancing on remedy and basically conclude that the [2016 LVPA] exemption rule was a good thing for American Samoa, [based US] longliners that are currently struggling, operating in a serious loss and have been operating at a loss since about 2002,” he said. “We presented information from a one-year operation since the 2016 LVPA rule [was implemented] that shows no adverse impact of that rule on other fisheries sectors including alb moi boats.”

Additionally, the defense team has presented evidence to the court showing the impact of the relief that this rule has provided to American Samoa longliners during that one year of implementation of the 2016 LVPA rule.

“So we are cautious. Reconsideration is a difficult motion to prevail on," he revealed publication for the first known time.

“We’re realistic, but we think we have some solid arguments,” he added. Tucker stressed that the defense „did not seek reconsideration on the merits of the court’s decision” but focused on the two issues.

“We are looking for a responsibly prompt decision for obvious reasons,” he said. “We feel that the action was taken [by NMFS] to address serious economic distress on the longline fishery and we’re looking for the best as possible remedy solution at this time.”

NMFS rule reducing the LVPA from 50 to 12 followed a request in 2014 by the US longline fleet based in American Samoa, as they were facing various challenges resulting in vessels being tied up in port.

The Council staff report prepared ahead of this week’s meeting notes that the longline fishery also must contend with limited fishing grounds while also having the local government demand that they be forced out of the area from 12 to 50 nautical miles, which they were allowed under the 2016 LVPA rule.

Additionally, NMFS presented data showing improved catch rate and efficiency for albacore, and notes that catch rates for yellowfin tuna were higher not only for longline vessels, but also for other pelagic troll vessels.

The data is consistent with the federal government’s position that there is no competition between small and large boats.

Tucker told the Council there is no set date as to when the court will rule.

The ideal candidate must have a broad-based knowledge of and interest in local sports and community events.
Illegal Dumping Task Force continues its work under the motto — Villages helping Villages

(BASED ON A PRESS RELEASE) — National Park of American Samoa — Villages helping Villages. That is the motto of the American Samoa Illegal Dumping Task Force, a group established last year by the government of using a “sharp object” to assault another person, is being held without bail due to the seriousness of the crime, which caused injuries to the victim.

Fa’anenefu Hall made her initial appearance in District Court on Tuesday. She is charged with felony first degree assault and misdemeanor public peace disturbance. However, Assistant Attorney General Gerald Murphy informed the court the government plans to file additional charges against the defendant.

According to court information, the charges against the defendant stem from an incident that occurred earlier this week in Leone, whereby the Leone police substation was contacted for help. The government alleges that the defendant used a sharp object — a broken piece of glass — to stab the left hand and face of the victim, who suffered injuries and had to be taken to the hospital. No specific details were available at press time as to the extent of the injuries.

Samoa News understands that the victim was still hospitalized as of Tuesday morning. The alleged stabbing occurred inside a home. A witness told police about hearing a noise coming from inside the house, a sound of glass being broken, a piece of which was allegedly used in the stabbing.

During Tuesday’s initial appearance, District Court Judge Fiti Sunia ordered the defendant to be detained with a surety bond in the amount of $500, pending a hearing on the matter.

More and more surveillance cameras are being installed by villages with the hope to stop the few that are ruining our island for us all.

“I want to thank the Illegal Dumping Task force, the National Park and the Office of Samoan Affairs for working together to try and tackle the problem of illegal dumping,” said Atuatasi Talosaga from Fagasa. “I really would like to let my village know and be aware of mosquito borne diseases that stem from these roadside dumps. Not only that, but all of this contamination from the trash will go into our streams and our coral reefs, and this can greatly affect our children in the village.” The village of Fagasa plans to put up more cameras and get tough on enforcement to put an end to the dumping problem in their village. That enforcement includes a village fine of $500 for littering.

With villages helping villages, the Illegal Dumping Task Force of American Samoa hopes to solve this problem one step at a time. There’s a simple solution to this problem: Fa’amolemole, use a dumpster.

Transcribed by Samoa News staff FA’ANENEFU HALL

*FAGASA, the slopes along the road in Fagasa have long been a site where households, contractors and others dump everything from construction debris, auto parts, and kitchen trash. Yes, everything including the kitchen sink. All this garbage is very harmful to our environment and can threaten human health. People that are illegally dumping might think that if their garbage is out of site, it will disappear forever. But that is not the case. The increase in illegal dumping seems to be growing worse by the day, and villages are working together to put a stop to it.

The members of the Task Force stand together to defeat those that might ruin the land and water for us all. It is truly villages helping villages. Ecclesiastes 4:12 “And if a [man] overpowers the one, the two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Last Friday during the cleanup in Fagasa, National Park crew used safety ropes to access the steep hazardous slopes containing the trash. “Since we first got this group together, I have been continuously inspired by the passion and the persistence of the members of the Task Force,” said Scott Burch, National Park Superintendent and co-chair of the Task Force. “They are determined to stop people from dumping trash on their lands, and the worse the problem gets, the harder they work.”

More and more surveillance cameras are being installed by villages with the hope to stop the few that are ruining our islands for us all.

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(Continued on page 5)
Father’s Day service brings together AS soldiers on Oahu

Fort Shafter, HAWAII — Sons of Samoa serving the United States of America, a service that comes with many sacrifices, is even more telling on days like Father’s Day. As thousands of fathers celebrate their special day in the comfort of their homes, there are also men or fathers who have been on missions day and night walking tirelessly for miles whether in the burning heat or the dark of night carrying 50-70 lbs. of necessities on their backs slowing down only to get a sip of water and continuing with their mission.

When time permits, they feast only on the infamous MREs or Meals Ready to Eat which tastes nothing like mother’s home cooking. Despite all their sacrifices, they long to be reunited with their families, wives, children and friends who await their safe return. These are the men or soldiers of the 100th Infantry Battalion. Only a few of them were able to attend, while the majority were still on missions.

Barracks, Oahu, Hawai’i.

Fort Shafter was blessed near Fort Shafter was blessed coming them with open arms. SGT Fea was the spokesperson this church was established. MAJ Tuliloa, Aigafealo- fant Tuliloa was instrumental in arranging the gathering fulfilling one of the reasons why this church was established. SGFT Faa was the spokesperson for the 100th Infantry Battalion sharing their gratitude for welcoming them, open arms.

The Father’s Day Service included the lighting of the candle by Faletua Mesepa Panagua who is also a vet, and remembering all the fathers who are no longer with us. A short performance from the youth and words of encouragement from Joshua’s words emphasizing the responsibility of a father. Customarily, ulas were presented to all the fathers followed by a pot-luck prepared by the Mafutaga Tina.

The day concluded with a group photo and good-byes as we parted ways. The Samoan Protestant AMR Church is under the leadership of Lay Pastor Mario Leiiti and his wife Taotafa.

TOKYO (AP) — The site of a fatal collision between a U.S. Navy destroyer and a container ship off Japan’s coast is notorious for congested sea traffic, particularly during the night when merchant ships are trying to reach Tokyo’s port by daybreak.

The USS Fitzgerald and the ACX Crystal collided about 12 nautical miles (14 miles, 22 kilometers) off the southern tip of the Izu Peninsula in the early hours of Saturday just as the two ships were to merge into heavy traffic.

Maritime officials and ship operators call the area a convergence zone, where ships coming from the east and west converge with others leaving Tokyo. On average, about 400 ships pass through the waters each day.

The area, also known for strong tides, is the most accident-prone in Japanese waters. The Japanese Transport Ministry has proposed to the International Maritime Organization a virtual exclusion zone, Ando said. He said route decisions are up to the captains.

Because many ships unload their cargo in Tokyo during the day, they want to be there early in the morning. Many of them pass through the area during the night, said Hiroshi Ando, an official in the Japanese coast guard’s navigation safety department. “It’s known as one of the busiest waters, where ships from different routes merge.”

The nighttime rush lasts from about 1 a.m. to 3 a.m. A second rush hour goes from about 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. as ships that reloaded in Tokyo leave through the area, he said.

The ACX Crystal was a typical example. The 19,060-ton ship, carrying about 1,000 containers from Nagoya, was eastbound scheduled to arrive in Tokyo at 8 a.m., according to its operator, NYK Line. The coast guard says the container ship and destroyer collided about 1:30 a.m.

How the collision occurred is still under investigation, but experts generally agree the Philippine-flagged container ship was likely trying to pass the destroyer from behind when the two collided. The Navy ship had severe damage to its starboard side. An underwater water washed flooded two sleeping compartments, killing seven trapped sailors.

Ships heading to Tokyo have to decide whether to take a shortcut between the Izu Peninsula and Izu Oshima island, or make a bigger circle around the island, partly to avoid traffic. Most ships take the shorter route. Ando said. He said route decisions are up to the captains.

Because of the frequent accidents, the transport ministry has proposed to the International Maritime Organization a virtual median line between the peninsula and the island, with Tokyo-bound ships traveling on the east side and those from Tokyo on the west side. The proposal, adopted by the IMO earlier this month, is to take effect next year.

A senior official at Shinshinken Co., a passenger ferry operator, said it assigns three crew members to monitor surrounding traffic when its ferries pass through the area, even though they only operate during the day. He spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the topic.

But after following all the rules and carefully monitoring other vessels, ships that make it through the congested area then reach Tokyo Bay, which is even more crowded, he said.

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Please visit samoanews.com for weekend updates.

KING TIDES EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN TERRITORY ON FRIDAY

This is a special bulletin from the American Samoa Department of Homeland Security – TEMCO. The National Weather Service is advising the KING TIDES expected arrival for all of American Samoa this Friday, June 23 and Saturday, June 24, 2017 around 06:00 a.m. and 07:30 a.m. respectively.

The American Samoa Department of Homeland Security – TEMCO will continue to monitor the situation and will issue further bulletins if necessary. Report any weather related incidents to the EOC at 699-3800/699-0411 or the Police at 633-1111.
to breastfeed her infant child at TCF.

The officer said they will look into this issue immediately, and work on a schedule. Hall was due back in court yesterday during which the government was to file additional charges; but the hearing was canceled and continued to today.

**GRANDMOTHER CHARGED WITH ALLEGED ASSAULT OF GRANDDAUGHTER**

A 66-year-old grandmother from the east side has been arrested for allegedly assaulting her 11-year-old granddaughter. The grandmother made her initial appearance in District Court on Tuesday and was charged with misdemeanor third-degree assault, although the government is looking at filing additional charges at a later time, once the investigation is completed.

According to court information, police had received a report about an 11-year-old who suffered injuries resulting from an alleged assault by her grandmother. It wasn’t immediately clear who reported the incident to the police and when it occurred.

However, the report prompted a police investigation, which revealed that the grandmother allegedly used various types of PVC pipes to hit the child on different parts of her body, causing injuries to the little girl, according to court information.

Bail for the defendant was set at $2,000, but the defense argued for a reduction. District Court Judge Fiti Sunia granted the motion and lowered the bail amount to $1,000.

If the grandmother is able to post bail, Sunia has ordered her not to make any direct or indirect contact with her granddaughter, who can no longer reside at the grandmother’s home.

Assistant Attorney General Gerald Murphy confirmed to the court that the 11-year-old is now in the care of the government.

**ROY PITOLAU**

For violating conditions of his probation from a previous case, Roy Pitolau was sentenced by the District Court earlier this week to serve 45 days at the Territorial Correctional Facility.

The Family, Drug and Alcohol (FDA) Division of the High Court had sentenced Pitolau to 24 months probation after being convicted last year of misdemeanor third-degree assault. The court also set at the time, several conditions of probation the defendant must abide by, which included being a law abiding citizen.

However, last month Pitolau was convicted in District Court for misdemeanor public peace disturbance, prompting the Probation Office to file a motion to revoke probation. The motion was granted by the court.

District Court Judge Fiti Sunia informed the defendant that when he was placed on probation by the FDA, a jail term of 45 days was suspended under several conditions. However, Sunia said, the District Court has revoked probation and the 45-day jail term has been imposed.

Upon his release from jail, Pitolau has been ordered by Sunia to continue complying with all the conditions handed down in the FDA case, because failure to do so, means the defendant will receive a more harsh jail sentence.

(Original Samoan stories published in Lali section of yesterday’s Samoa News edition.)

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**DEVELOPMENT BANK OF AMERICAN SAMOA**

P.O. Box 9, Pago Pago A.S. 96799
Office: (684) 633-4031  •  Fax: (684) 633-1163  •  Website: www.dbas.as

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**EMLOYMENT OPPORTUUNITY**

**POSITION: GRANT WRITER**

**Responsibilities:**
- Research and explore US Federal grants and funding sources available to the bank either directly or through the American Samoa Government.
- Develop and prepare proposals and grant applications and perform professional and administrative work in researching, identifying, developing and comply with all follow up grants reporting as required by the funding agencies.
- Develop and monitor procedures for complying with grant requirements, guidelines, and regulations of funding programs.
- Work closely with the staff in developing and transforming ideas into grant proposals.
- Assist with the management of grant programs and submit required monthly, quarterly or annual financial reports as mandated by the funding agencies.
- Maintain a calendar to ensure timely submission of letters of inquiry, proposal deadlines and reports.
- Prioritize projects to keep multiple proposals moving in a timely manner, meet deadlines and manage material required for proposals.
- Establish and maintain relationships with the funding agencies and program officers.
- Function as a point of contact for DBAS with the funding agencies and establish working relationship with their designated officials.
- Develop and monitor budget for grants and funded programs.
- Prepare quarterly and annual reports and submit to the President and Board of Directors summarizing the evaluation of all grants and funded programs.
- Organize training programs for DBAS staff prior to implementation of new grant or funded programs.
- Liaison with agencies or departments of ASG to implement and administer “pass through” funding programs.
- Maintain a database of various funding agencies and grant programs for the bank.
- Assume any other duties as assigned by the President.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

**EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE:** Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration, Finance, Management or related field with a minimum of 2 years grant writing experience.

**SKILLS/ABILITIES:**
- Professional appearance and attitude.
- Excellent writing, analytical and research skills are essential.
- Highly level computer literacy required with excellent Microsoft office application use.
- Must be self motivated, detail oriented, highly organized, and have experience using online Database.
- Be proficient in research, interpreting and analyzing diverse data and possess the ability to work collaboratively and independently to achieve stated goals.
- Must have solid knowledge of creating budgets as they relate to the proposals and grants.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality.

Please submit your Resume & Application to the Development Bank of American Samoa located in Pago Pago - 2nd floor. This job posting will expire Friday – June 23, 2017.
In this day in age, basic computer skills is a must, especially for youngsters who will grown up in a world where advancement in technology continues to play a role in their everyday lives.

From searching for information online, to sending and receiving emails, knowing how to use a computer is a skill that will benefit anyone in the long run.

That is why the Department of Youth and Women’s Affairs (DYWA) continues to offer free computer courses for not only the territory’s young people, but also adults.

Yesterday, Samoa News visited the computer lab at the DYWA Pago Pago Community Youth Center where the summer classes are being held.

DYWA Academy Division Youth Coordinator Zena Iese - who is also a local filmmaker - was in the midst of explaining to the students the importance of visual aids.

The students in attendance sat quietly, grasping the information while Iese continued his lecture.

“In addition to teaching them how to use computers, this class also serves to steer them towards learning how to play a role in effective teamwork and professional presentation,” Iese told Samoa News, adding that life lessons are also taught and incorporated into the daily agenda.

The course is a three-week program that is held for one hour per day, four days a week.

At the conclusion of the program, each participant will receive a certificate of completion, indicating their successful passage of the 12-hour course.

The program is made possible, thanks to the Orphaned Starfish Foundation, which, according to DYWA Deputy Director Pa’u Roy Ausage, has provided monetary assistance to fund the computer lab and the free courses since 2015.

Andy Stein, founder and executive director of the Orphaned Starfish Foundation, is an associate of famed Samoan NFL superstar Troy Polamalu, Pa’u explained.

“When Polamalu came down during one of his visits, we approached him for help on equipping a computer lab that can be used to provide courses for the kids and adults of American Samoa. It was Polamalu who connected us with Andy Stein and his wife Dilia,” Pa’u continued.

According to Iese, the courses are for kids who are 10-18 years old. “But don’t be mistaken,” he said. “The young ones are definitely keeping up with the older kids.”

Iese said the 10-year-olds in the program are pushed to soak up more information and “they are like sponges.”

Iese and two other computer technicians are charged with teaching the classes that have a total enrollment of 42 kids. “We don’t just teach the basics here,” he said.

“We want these kids to leave the program with knowledge on how to conduct research online, among other things.”

The computer course is one of many that are offered free of charge throughout the year by DYWA.

ABOUT ORPHANED STARFISH FOUNDATION

According to their website, the Orphaned Starfish Foundation “is dedicated to helping orphans, victims of abuse, victims of trafficking and at-risk youth break their cycles of abuse and poverty through computer based education, job training and job placement assistance. We commit to every program for life.”

Since their beginning in 2001, Orphaned Starfish programs have addressed the challenges "facing orphans, victims of abuse and at-risk youth by providing them with technology training. OSF funds the construction and operation of vocational training facilities, including funding for furnishings, purchasing required equipment, teacher salaries, job placement services and scholarships for higher education." In addition, “OSF also provides English language software and classes, a Life-Skills Program, Scholarship and helps with job placement, whenever possible.”

The organization makes a difference in the lives of over 10,000 children in 52 programs in 25 countries, and growing.
Compiled by Samoa News staff

SAMOA POLICE INVESTIGATE CASE OF 13-YEAR-OLD WIFE

Police in Samoa are investigating the circumstances surrounding a report of a 13-year-old girl who is married to an older man.

The matter came to light when the girl sought police assistance after she claimed that she was assaulted by her husband.

The alleged assault took place in a village on Savaii last week and police upon investigation discovered the victim is underage.

Police spokesperson Superintendent Sala’a Moananu Sale told local media the investigation would cover the girl’s parent as well as the accused who is between the ages of 40 and 45.

Marriage to 13-year-old girls is legally prohibited in Samoa.

[SOURCE: LOOP Samoa]

CORAL SURVIVAL DEPENDENT ON CLIMATE AGREEMENT

Scientists say most of the world’s coral reefs could die if countries do not honor their commitments to the Paris climate agreement.

The most significant global coral bleaching event on record has just ended leaving a trail of dead coral in its wake with some reefs in the Pacific losing more than 90 percent of their living coral.

A US coral reef expert Mark Eakin said if countries fail to reduce global warming such rare events would become the norm which would be disastrous for the coral reefs and the billions of people whose livelihoods depend on the marine ecosystems that corals support.

"The first is for countries to do everything they can to live up to the Paris Agreement keeping climate change well under two degrees of warming and in the long term try to keep within 1.5 degrees but at the same time because that is going to take a while we need to do everything we can to reduce local stresses," Mr. Eakin said.

He said local stresses include the over-harvesting of marine resources, pollution and the destruction of marine habitats.

[SOURCE: SAMOA NEWS]

GOV’T FINANcialLY DESPERATE, PARLIAMENT SESSION TOLD

Samoa Observer reports Member of Parliament, Olo Fiti Vai, has claimed that the government is “financially desperate” with their decision to tax the Head of State and Church Ministers.

He has also questioned the factuality of figures provided by the Ministry of Finance on the budget for 2017/2018 where the surplus is in millions and yet the government intends to tax church ministers.

His concerns were raised when Parliament convened this week to debate the budget tabled by the Minister of Finance, Sili Epa Tuioi, last month.

“Unfortunately figures are accurate in terms of surplus, it increases year after year,” Olo said.

“Mr. Speaker, I believe the V.A.G.S.T. [Value Added Goods and Services Tax] should not be increased until the end of the week.

“Secondly why are we levying taxes against the church ministers, if the figures are accurate that the surplus is in millions? Then why do we need to add anymore burden on the public?”

Olo pointed out that it’s members of the public who end up suffering.

“This word faifeau is just a cover when the reality is that it’s the public that is paying for the taxes. It’s not their money, so they don’t care about their salary being taxed because it’s the public that is being taxed again.”

Outside Parliament, Olo told the Samoa Observer the government is desperate for money.

[SOURCE: Samoa Observer]

CHILDREN DROWN AFTER RESCUE DELAYED

At least 17 people including 13 children from a village church group in the Solomon Islands have drowned after a rescue mission was reportedly delayed for lack of funds when their boat sank between islands, Stuff New Zealand reported this week.

The group, which was travelling from the island of Malaita to the nation’s main island, Guadalcanal, set off in an open “banana” boat powered by outboard engines when it was swamped while changing petrol tanks and sank shortly before midday last Wednesday.

The boat’s victims’ ages are unknown, though the children were all between 11 and 16.

The premier of Malaita, Peter Ramohia, said that after he first heard reports of the tragedy on Wednesday afternoon he immediately contacted the national rescue center to check on their progress, only to be told that the authority had no money to mount a rescue operation.

“I started calling the rescue center to arrange for a rescue, what they told me was that they had no funds to support a rescue. [They said] they actually had bills with the helicopter company,” he said.

The first rescues were not made until late the following morning by private vessels that had set off from Malaita and Guadalcanal. Of the 24 people who set off to raise funds for their church 17 are thought to be dead, though so far only five bodies have been recovered.

[SOURCE: Stuff New Zealand]

CORAL BLEACHING OF REEFS EASES

A mass bleaching of coral reefs worldwide is finally easing after three years, U.S. scientists announced Monday.

About three-quarters of the world’s delicate coral reefs were damaged or killed by hot water in what scientists say was the largest coral catastrophe.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced a global bleaching event in May 2014. It was worse than previous global bleaching events in 1998 and 2010.

The forecast damage doesn’t look widespread in the Indian Ocean, so the event loses its global scope. Bleaching will still be bad in the Caribbean and Pacific, but it’ll be less severe than recent years, said NOAA coral reef watch coordinator C. Mark Eakin.

Places like Australia’s Great Barrier Reef, northwest Hawaii, and parts of the Caribbean have been hit with back-to-back-to-back destruction, Eakin said.

He added that coral have difficulty surviving water already getting warmer by man-made climate change. Extra heating of the water from a natural El Nino nudges coral conditions over the edge.

About one billion people use coral reefs for fisheries or tourism. Scientists have said that coral reefs are one of the first and most prominent indicators of global warming.

“I don’t see how they can take one more hit at this point,” Baum said. “They need a reprieve.”

[SOURCE: Associated Press]
Celebrating the life
Beloved Sister, Niece, Aunty, Cousin, Teacher & Dearest Friend
TUI PEREKINA ENESI

Sunrise: May 1, 1960
Sunset: June 7, 2017

Romans 8:16-17
"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him."

PROGRAM OF FUNERAL SERVICE

8:00 am  - Molimoli mai le Falema‘i, Fagaalu mo Leone  (Transport from LBJ Hospital Chapel to Leone)
8:30 am  - Sauniga Aloaia o lona Maliu, ‘Siona le Mauga Paia’ Leone (Funeral Service, CCCAS Leone Mount Zion)
10:00 am  - Molimoli lona tino i Fāasau, Leone, i lona aiga  (Lay in Wake at her family home in Fāasau, Leone)
2:00 pm  - Toe sauniga paia o lona tino maliu i Fāasau, Leone (Final Service before Burial)
3:00 pm  - Falelauasiga fanuatanu lona aiga Fāasau, Leone (Interment/Burial Service)

Ma le faaaloalo lava.
Mata‘utia Vailu‘u Lang ma le aiga potopoto
SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Some folks in Oregon might not want to ask, when served an elk burger or a venison steak, where the meat came from. Under a roadkill bill passed overwhelmingly by the Legislature and signed by the governor, motorists who crash into the animals can now harvest the meat to eat.

And it’s not as unusual as people might think. About 20 other states also allow people to take meat from animals killed by vehicles. Aficionados say roadkill can be high-quality, grass-fed grub.

“Eating roadkill is healthier for the consumer than meat laden with antibiotics, hormones and growth stimulants, as most meat is today,” noted People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or PETA.

Washington state began allowing the salvaging of deer and elk carcasses a year ago. Pennsylvania might top the country in road kills, with Oregon wildlife officials telling lawmakers that the eastern state had over 126,000 vehicle-wildlife accidents in 2015.

“We are at or near the top of the list. We have a lot of roads and a lot of deer,” said Travis Lau, spokesman for the Pennsylvania Game Commission, though he added the total number was uncertain.

Pennsylvanians can take deer or turkeys that are killed on the road if they report the incidents to the commission within 24 hours, Lau said in a telephone interview.

Gov. Kate Brown signed Oregon’s bill last week after the Senate and House passed it without a single “nay” vote.

But a few Oregonians voiced opposition. Vivian Kirkpatrick-Pilger, a Republican Party official in mountainous, forested Josephine County, told legislators that people have been salvaging roadkill meat in Oregon for years — since vehicles and animals have been colliding — and they never needed a law or permit to do it.

The rules were aimed at discouraging people from hitting a game animal with their vehicle to take the meat or antlers. “It’s not a legal method of hunting,” the department’s website says.

Les Helgeson, of the community of Beaver, near the northwest coast, told legislators that roadkill “would not be palatable, much less pass any sense of health standards for human consumption.”

But those who have sampled it say otherwise. Todd Toven of Castle Rock, Colorado, posted a video on YouTube showing himself carving up a deer that had been hit by a vehicle on a highway and finished off by a deputy sheriff’s bullet. Toven made it into venison sausage.

“A lot of who people don’t hunt hear the word ‘roadkill’ and they get turned off,” Toven said. “We’re talking perfectly clean, cold meat.” Oregon’s new law calls for the state Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules for the issuance of permits for the purpose of salvaging meat for human consumption from deer or elk that have been accidentally killed in a vehicle collision.

Roadkill: It’s what’s for dinner under new Oregon law
TOKYO (AP) — The site of a fatal collision between a U.S. Navy destroyer and a container ship off Japan’s coast is notorious for congested sea traffic, particularly during the night when merchant ships are trying to reach Tokyo’s port by daybreak.

The USS Fitzgerald and the ACX Crystal collided about 12 nautical miles (14 miles, 22 kilometers) off the southern tip of the Izu Peninsula in the early hours of Saturday just as the two ships were to merge into heavy traffic.

Maritime officials and ship operators call the area a convergence zone, where ships coming from the east and west converge with others leaving Tokyo. On average, about 400 ships pass through the waters each day.

The area, also known for strong tides, is the most accident-prone in Japanese waters. The Japan Transport Safety Board investigated 28 serious collisions between 2008 and 2014, including one between a Japanese navy submarine and a fishing boat in 1988 in which 30 people died.

“Because many ships unload their cargo in Tokyo during the day, they want to be there early in the morning. Many of them pass through the area during the night,” said Hiroshi Ando, an official in the Japanese coast guard’s navigation safety department. “It’s known as one of the busiest waters, where ships from different routes merge.”

The nighttime rush lasts from about 1 a.m. to 3 a.m. A second rush hour goes from about 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. as ships that reloaded in Tokyo leave through the area, he said.

The ACX Crystal was a typical example. The 19,060-ton ship, carrying about 1,000 containers from Nagoya, was eastbound scheduled to arrive in Tokyo at 8 a.m., according to its operator, NYK Line. The coast guard says the container ship and destroyer collided about 1:30 a.m. How the collision occurred is still under investigation, but experts generally agree the Philippine-flagged container ship was likely trying to pass the destroyer from behind when the two collided. The Navy ship had severe damage to its starboard side. An underwater gash flooded two sleeping compartments, killing seven trapped sailors.

Ships heading to Tokyo have to decide whether to take a shortcut between the Izu Peninsula and Izu Oshima island, or make a bigger circle around the island, partly to avoid traffic. Most ships take the shorter route, Ando said. He said route decisions are up to the captains.

Because of the frequent accidents, the transport ministry has proposed to the International Maritime Organization a virtual median line between the peninsula and the island, with Tokyo-bound ships traveling on the east side and those from Tokyo on the west side. The proposal, adopted by the IOM earlier this month, is to take effect next year.

A senior official at Shinshinkisen Co., a passenger ferry operator, said it assigns three crew members to monitor surrounding traffic when its ferries pass through the area, even though they only operate during the day. He spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the topic.

But after following all the rules and carefully monitoring other vessels, ships that make it through the congested area then reach Tokyo Bay, which is even more crowded, he said.
the minimum wage by 50-cents per hour every year, until the federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour is reached, but there were later amend-
ments that delayed the mandatory wage increase for a certain period time following the 2009 clo-
sure of the Chicken of the Sea cannery.

In 2015, another amendment, through federal legis-
lation, increased the minimum wage but by 40-cents instead of 50-cents. That measure, which went into effect on Sept. 30, 2015, calls for the 40-cent hike every three years and there-
fore the next minimum wage increase would be on Sept. 30, 2018.

Samoa News notes that the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 also included the US terri-
tory of the Northern Mariana Islands, while Cong-
gresswoman Aumua’s bill targets only American Samoa.

Responding to Samoa News inquiries and request for comments on Aumua’s legislation, La'ufale said that this is one issue ASG leaders and Aumua “all agreed on — no automatic increase in the minimum wage without careful review of local conditions — our economy.”

He explained that American Samoa’s economy is being sustained — and has been for many years — by the two pillars — the government and the fishing industry, “thus it’s extremely vulnerable.”

“An increase in the minimum wage now, after the closure of STP in December 2016, would be a devastating blow — perhaps the proverbial final nail in the coffin,” La'ufale told Samoa News on Tuesday evening.

“Our fishing industry lost significant fishing grounds to marine monuments and sanctuaries, faces federal restrictions in fishing on the high seas and use of fishing aggregating devices (FADs), increasing operating costs, and heavy price competition especially from imports,” he said. “We simply cannot afford an increase in the minimum wage.”

Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga has publicly advo-
cated over the past four years for local minimum wages to be set by the special industry com-
mittee, whose membership — both local and off island — is appointed by the US Secretary of Labor. The committee’s decisions would be based on local economic conditions; and is basi-
cally a return to the old way of determining local minimum wages, prior to the current method, which is by federal statute.

In a Nov. 4, 2016 letter to the US Govern-
ment Accountability Office (GAO), the governor recommended the creation of a US Department of Labor-constituted committee to set minimum wages appropriate for American Samoa, based on prevailing economic conditions, which also takes into account local cultural practices.

The governor’s letter was included in the GAO required report to the US Congress regarding the impact of the federally mandated wages on American Samoa. The GAO report, released last December, suggested to the US Congress “two basic approaches” for increasing American Samoa’s minimum wages to keep pace with the cost of living in the territory and eventually equal the federal minimum wage.

According to the GAO, the first approach relies on adjustments indexed to changes in the cost of living, and the second relies on a schedule of adjustments within a specified timeframe. (See Samoa News edition Dec. 6 and 7, 2016 for more information on GAO report.)

The GAO report is expected to be part of the Congressional review, when discussing Aumua’s legislation.

American Samoa has 17 different minimum wages, depending on the industry — with the lowest at $4.58 for garment manufacturing and the highest at $5.99 for stevedoring, and maritime shipping agency activities. For the canneries, which includes the can manufacturing plant at Satala, the current minimum wage is $5.16 per hour, while for government employees it’s $4.81
College closes due to threats made after professor’s posts

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — In the aftermath of a Minnesota police officer fatally shot Philando Castile, his handcuffed girlfriend began screaming in the back of a patrol car as her 4-year-old daughter begged her to stop.

Squad car video from the July 2016 shooting shows Diamond Reynolds and her daughter in the cruiser, the Star Tribune reported Wednesday. In the video, the young girl repeatedly told her mother to keep quiet.

"Mom, please stop cussing and screaming cause I don’t want you to get shot," the girl said. Reynolds responded by asking for a kiss.

"I can keep you safe," the girl told Reynolds at one point.

"It’s OK," Reynolds said before the girl begins to cry.

The video was among thousands of files released Wednesday by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. St. Anthony police officer Jeronimo Yanez, 29, was acquitted Friday of manslaughter in Castile’s death.

Castile, 32, was shot following a traffic stop in the St. Paul suburb of Falcon Heights after informing Yanez he had a gun. Reynolds and the girl were both in the car at the time of the shooting.

The incident gained widespread attention because Reynolds livestreamed the gruesome aftermath of the shooting on Facebook.

Yanez testified that Castile ignored his commands not to pull out his gun and he feared for his life.

Reynolds told authorities that Castile was reaching for his wallet, not the gun.

Castile had a permit to carry the weapon.

At another point in the video, the child asks her mother not to remove her handcuffs. Reynolds assures her that nothing else will happen that night.

"I wish this town was safer ... I don’t want it to be like this anymore," the girl said.

"Tell that to the police, OK?" Reynolds asked. "When they come and get me, tell them you wish that they didn’t have to kill people."
Milwaukee jury on Wednesday acquitted a former police officer in the on-duty shooting of a black man last year that ignited riots on the city’s north side.

Jurors found that Domique Heaggan-Brown, who is also black, was not guilty of first-degree reckless homicide when he shot 23-year-old Sylville Smith after a brief foot chase following a traffic stop Aug. 13. Smith had a gun when he ran, but the case hinged on whether he was a threat when Heaggan-Brown fired the shot that killed him. Body-camera video showed Heaggan-Brown shooting Smith once in the arm as he appeared to be throwing the gun over a fence. The video showed the second shot — 1.69 seconds later — hit Smith in the chest as he lay on the ground.

Prosecutors argued Smith was defenseless at the time of the second shot because he had thrown the gun over the fence. Defense attorneys argued Heaggan-Brown had to act quickly to defend himself.

Smith’s family members reacted angrily to the verdict, swearing and storming from the courtroom. Outside, one man shouted obscenities at a sheriff’s deputy as he was held back by other family members.

Smith’s family filed a civil lawsuit against Heaggan-Brown and the city, family attorney David Owens announced after the verdict. He said it had become clear since the shooting that Heaggan-Brown never should have been on the force.

Heaggan-Brown’s attorney, Jonathan Smith, said the former officer was thankful for the acquittal and believed he was justified in using deadly force.
Dunellen High School senior Destiny Lightfoot wears a graduation cap dedicated to her friend Jessica Williams during Dunellen High School graduation ceremonies Wednesday, June 21, 2017, in Dunellen, N.J. Both Lightfoot and Williams were injured in Times Square when Richard Rojas drove through a crowd of pedestrians last month. Lightfoot was able to attend the graduation in a wheelchair and crutches while Williams, who suffered more serious injuries, watched a live stream of the ceremony from Bellevue Hospital in New York.

(AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)

**AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**Department of Academic Affairs**

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**Position Title:** HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INSTRUCTOR

**Employment Status:** 10 Months Full Time/Career Service

**General Description:**
The Health and Human Services Department supports and prepares students who are interested in pursuing a career and majoring in the fields of allied health or human services. The department offers Associate degree in Health, Human Services, and a Certificate of Proficiency in Guidance and Counseling, and Certificate of Proficiency in Public Health for students who plan to transfer to a four year institution off island or seek local employment in the related professions. The Health and Human Services Department is directly under Academic Affairs Division and supervised by the Chairperson.

**Job Duties and Responsibilities:**
- Collect, prepare, and present instructional materials for all classes to be taught
- Prepare and distribute a comprehensive syllabus / outlines for all courses taught in a timely manner, as requested by the Academic Affairs.
- Teach a full instructional load of 15 credit hours or 225 instructional contact hours per semester. However, loads may vary between 14 and 16 credit hours per semester.
- Teach each class as scheduled and supervise examinations, field trips, internships, service learning activities, and practicum
- Maintain attendance and scholastic records, and submit the required records to the Admissions and Records Office at the assigned date every semester/session.
- Develop, implement, and assess Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for each course taught.
- Use data collected from taught on SLOs to share with department and other college stakeholders, and provide recommendations for improvement of student learning.
- Participate as an active member in the Student Learning Outcome (SLO) review process
- Participate in the different levels of student learning outcome review, program review, and student assessment.
- Academically advise assigned students regarding their chosen program of study
- Assist and provide students with information on career, academic referrals, and transfer opportunities
- Assist with the registration process; participate in faculty orientation, commencement exercises, and professional development activities
- Post and maintain class schedules and office hours to student assistance
- Provide safety measures and fully exercise the enforcement of these measures in the classrooms
- Actively participate and contribute to any college committee and extra-curricular functions
- Assist and enforce all college rules and regulations
- Perform other duties assigned by the Department Chairperson, respective Directors, the Dean of Academic Affairs, and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

**Minimum Qualifications:**
- Master’s Degree in Health related disciplines (Medicine, Nursing, or Public Health). All credentials must be from a U.S accredited institution.
- Three (3) years of teaching experience at a two or four year university/college.
- Must be computer literate.

**Salary:** Salary to commensurate with experiences, qualifications and credentials.

**Application Deadline:** Deadline: June 23, 2017

Applications are available from American Samoa Community College, Human Resources Office 699-9155 Ext. 428/441/429, http://www.amsamoanews.com/employmentopportunities.html or by emailing ascchumanresources@amsamoanews.edu.

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**Canadian charged in US airport attack investigated as terror**

FLINT, Mich. (AP) — A Canadian man shouted in Arabic before stabbing a police officer in the neck Wednesday at a Michigan airport, and refer- enced people being killed overseas during the attack that’s now being investigated as an act of terrorism, federal officials said.

Amor Ftouhi, 49, of Quebec, was immediately taken into custody. A criminal complaint charging him with commit- ting violence at an airport says Ftouhi asked an officer who subdued him why the officer didn’t kill him.

The attack at Bishop Interna- tional Airport in Flint, Michi- gan, is being investigated as an act of terrorism, but authorities have no indication at this time that the suspect was involved in a “wider plot,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge David Gelios.

“At this time we view him as a lone-wolf attacker,” Gelios said. “We have no information to suggest any training.”

The criminal complaint says Ftouhi, stabbed airport police Lt. Jeff Neville with a large knife after yelling “Allahu akbar,” the Arabic phrase for “God is great.” According to the FBI, Ftouhi said something similar to “you have killed people in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and we are all going to die.”

More charges against Ftouhi could be filed as prosecutors take the case to a grand jury seeking an indictment, Gelios said.

Neville was in satisfactory condition after initially being in critical condition, airport police Chief Chris Miller said at a late afternoon news conference where the charge against Ftouhi was announced.

Ftouhi appeared in federal court in Flint to hear the charge and will get a court-appointed attorney. A court spokesperson says Ftouhi will remain in cus- tody until a bond hearing next Wednesday.

The attack occurred just before 10 a.m., prompting offici- als to evacuate and shut down the airport and add security elsewhere in the Michigan city about 50 miles (80.46 kilome- ters) northwest of Detroit.

“White House press secre- tary Sean Spicer said President Donald Trump was briefed on the stabbing, and U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions said he was “proud of the swift response” by authorities from both the U.S. and Canada.

Police in Canada were searching a Montreal apartment. Montreal police spokesman Benoît Bousil said officers with their department were assisting the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the search on behalf of an FBI request.

A number of police stood guard outside the apartment building in the east end of Mon- treal located on Belair St. in St- Michel borough.

Canadian TV footage showed police escorting at least one person from the building where Ftouhi is believed to have lived.

Gelios said Ftouhi legally entered the U.S. at Chaplaim, New York, on June 16 and made his way to the Flint air- port on Wednesday morning.

Ftouhi spent some time in public, unsecured areas of the airport before going to a rest- room where he dropped two bags before attacking the officer with a 12-inch knife that had an 8-inch serrated blade, Gelios said.

Ftouhi never went through any security screening, Gelios said. He described Ftouhi as “cooperative” and talking to investigators.

Witnesses described seeing the suspect being led away as Neville was bleeding, a knife on the ground.

“The cop was on his hands and knees bleeding from his neck,” Ken Brown told The Flint Journal.

“I said they need to get him a towel.” Cherie Carpenter, who was awaiting a flight to Texas to see her new grandchild, told Flint TV station WJRT she saw the attacker being led away in handcuffs. She described the man in custody as appearing “blank, just totally blank.”

Miller, the airport chief, said Neville “fought him to the end,” managing to stop the stabbing and bring Ftouhi to the ground as Miller and other officers arrived to help.
Chief: Police testing for sex assault of slain Virginia teen

STERLING, Va. (AP) — About 5,000 mourners attended Wednesday’s funeral of a Muslim girl whose beating to death, blamed by police on a motorist’s road rage, has some prompted the community fearing for their safety.

Some wearing Islamic robes, others in street clothes, they left their cars and bicycled along a road. Police said the driver became enraged after exchanging words with a boy in the group. A Hassanen family spokesman said the girls in the group were wearing Muslim headscarves and robes.

Magid noted the diversity of the crowd and expressed gratitude “to see we are part of the community’s concerns.”

He said the teen’s death has prompted the entire community to rally and that the Muslim community is not alone in its grief.

Darwin Martinez Torres, 22, is currently being held on a second-degree murder charge. Police said he beat her with a baseball bat early Sunday, drove off with her in his car and assaulted her again — they haven’t said how — before dumping her body in a pond more than a mile away to reach her mosque.

Nagla Hassanen, 17, was remembered as a shining example of kindness and openness during the services.

“There is nothing like losing a child, especially in the way that we lost Nabra,” said Imam Mohamed Magid, the religious leader of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society. He stood before Hassanen’s closed coffin, covered by a black shroud decorated with quotes from the Quran.

Police said Hassanen was bludgeoned with a baseball bat by a motorist who drove up to about 15 Muslim teenagers as they walked or bicycled along a road. Police said the driver became enraged after exchanging words with a boy in the group.

Virginia law defines that it must have been a hate crime. But he acknowledged that “absolutely no evidence” that the community’s concerns.

“Pray at home,” “I tell her,” she said.

In the evening, a crowd of several thousand gathered for a vigil organized by the Muslim Student Association at Hassanen’s high school.

Magid said the tragedy hits home because she has a daughter Nabra’s age. She’s worried her not to attend late-night Ramadan prayers and services with friends, so she won’t be a target.

“We’re doing a thorough investigation and that’s some thing of concern to us,” he said. At her funeral Wednesday, an overflow area outside overflowed with people and cars jammed into neighbor hoods streets more than a mile away to park. Most mourners were Muslim, but Christians and Jews accoimrod as well. The ADAMS Center, one of the largest mosques in the country, has a long history of interfath outreach and activism. Magid said he sought to “port” from people of all faiths.

“By the time the funerals and burials were over, the community was believing that they could look forward and move forward.”

In a statement, a top police official said he sought to “port” from people of all faiths.

A Hassanen family spokesman said the girls in the group were wearing Muslim headscarves and robes.

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He said the teen’s death has prompted the entire community to rally and that the Muslim community is not alone in its grief.

Darwin Martinez Torres, 22, is currently being held on a second-degree murder charge. Police said he beat her with a baseball bat early Sunday, drove off with her in his car and assaulted her again — they haven’t said how — before dumping her body in a pond near her home. Her public defender’s office has declined to comment.

Lena Masri, national litigation director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said in a statement that CAIR is representing Hassanen’s family and “will monitor the development of the investigation to ensure a thorough examination of any possible bias aspects of the case.”

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — From the mayor on down, a court-appointed investigator said Wednesday that Oakland city officials mishandled and downplayed sexual misconduct allegations about the city’s police department that turned into a far-reaching scandal.

In a court filing, investigator Ed Swanson put oner police chief Sean Whent, who resigned under pressure last year. Swanson said Whent’s disinterest in the case set the tone for the department.

But Swanson also singled out Mayor Libby Schaaf for failing to monitor the case after she vowed dramatic reforms in the police department.

Schaaf said in December and January. “We agree that tone comes from the top,” said Schaaf, who recently said she’ll seek a 4-year term as mayor in 2018. “That’s why we set out to find a new chief.” Schaaf swore in Anne Kirkpatrick as chief on March 1 out of 30 candidates. Kirkpatrick was the second-in-command and in charge of reforming the Chicago Police Department when hired in Oakland.

“It is all repairable,” Kirk- park said of the report’s conclusions. City adminis- trator Sabrina Landreth said she agreed the investigation took too long to conclude, but she said city officials didn’t want to interfere with the criminal prosecutions of the officers.

Four officers were fired and face criminal charges and eight others disciplined. Swanson was appointed by a federal judge who oversees the troubled department as part of a 2002 settlement of a civil rights lawsuit. Swanson has no authority to order changes in the department, but the judge does. Swanson recommended a number of training reforms and policy changes, including involving the district attorney in internal investigations of offi cers under criminal suspicion and consulting the city attorney.

The department implemen­ted many court-ordered reforms during Whent’s three years as chief and was close to shedding the court oversight when officer Brendan O’Brien was fired in 2015. O’Brien in his suicide note denied having sex with the victim despite her claims that he did. O’Brien also implicated several officers who he said had sex with the girl.

“Jt’s a pretty devastating report,” said lawyer John Burris, who represents the victim and is the lead attorney on the 2002 civil rights case that led to court oversight. “I thought the depart ment was making real progress.”

Swanson said Whent appeared disin­terested in the case from the start and his atti­tude set the tone for the rest of the department.

Whent told investigators that he “misread” O’Brien’s suicide note and a lieutenant’s email message that the case was being sent to internal affairs. Whent said he read the note and the lieutenant’s email but did not grasp their importance, an excuse Swanson called “not credible” in his report.
CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australia said Thursday it had lifted a suspension of its airstrikes against Islamic State targets in Syria that was imposed amid tensions with Russia after a U.S. fighter jet shot down a Syrian warplane this week.

The Defense Department revealed on Tuesday that the six Australian F/A-18F Super Hornets based in the United Arab Emirates had been suspended from Syrian operations after Russia warned the U.S.-led coalition not to fly over Syrian army positions west of the Euphrates River.

“This was a precautionary measure to allow the coalition to assess the operational risk,” a department statement said on Thursday. “The suspension has since been lifted.”

The department has not specified how long the suspension lasted. It did not say if Australian airstrikes had resumed or when or if they would.

Australian Defense Force Chief Mark Binskin said on Wednesday the operations were halted while the Australians examined what was happening in what he had described as a “complex piece of airspace” over Syria.

Defense Minister Marise Payne said on Wednesday Australian “force protection is uppermost in our minds” in deciding when to resume missions over Syria.

Binskin said the jet fighters had been occupied recently supporting Iraqi security forces in retaking the city of Mosul, so the suspension had little effect on their operations.

The U.S. on Sunday shot down a Syrian jet for the first time during the conflict near the city of Raqqa after it dropped bombs near the U.S.-allied Syrian Democratic Forces, which are battling IS. Russia condemned the U.S. action and in retaliation suspended a hotline intended to prevent such incidents.

In this image made from July 6, 2016, video captured by a camera in the squad car of St. Anthony Police officer Jeronimo Yanez, the Minnesota police officer is shown after shooting into the vehicle at Philando Castile during a traffic stop in Falcon Heights, Minn., as the 4-year-old daughter of Castile’s girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, starts to get out of the car and is grabbed by an officer. The video was made public by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office, Tuesday, June 20, 2017, just days after the officer was acquitted on all counts in the case. (St. Anthony Police Department via AP)

FILE - In this Saturday, June 17, 2017, file photo, the damaged USS Fitzgerald is seen off Shimoda in Izu Peninsula, southwest of Tokyo, after the U.S. Navy destroyer collided with a merchant ship in nearby waters earlier in the day, killing seven U.S. sailors. The site of a fatal collision between the two vessels off Japan’s coast is notorious for congested sea traffic, particularly during the night when merchant ships are trying to reach Tokyo’s port by daybreak.

(Iori Sagisawa/Kyodo News via AP, File)