

ASG-FEMA pre-registration begins today for Tafuna Village only.



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DON'T FORGET TO WATCH!

This morning, a Must See: The live broadcast of the 24th annual Samoa News Territorial Spelling Bee — major sponsor McDonald's American Samoa — and the Department of Education. It will be on KVZK TV Channel 2. There are 31 spellers this year from public and private schools vying for the chance to represent American Samoa at the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C. Good Luck To All.

UPDATE GITA: ASG-FEMA pre-registration begins today for Tafuna—all its subdivisions

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

To prepare local residents impacted by Tropical Storm Gita, for the implementation of federal assistance programs after the US Presidential major disaster declaration, the government is moving forward with pre-registration starting today, at Tafuna village for all its subdivisions.

Pre-registration of residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed is part of the joint action plan, between the America Samoa Government and its federal partners — led by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency — that was discussed during a weekend post-storm briefing at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Tafuna.

Among the general objectives of the action plan is conducting pre-registration in the affected areas, to be completed by Mar. 12th. Tafuna is one of the most affected areas, according to the action plan.

In its special bulletin issued Monday evening, EOC announced the locations in Tafuna for pre-registration

today, Wednesday, from 7:30am-6pm:

Fagaima at the Ave o le Fetuao Methodist Church Hall; Kokoland at the EFKAS Ierusalem Fou Hall;

Ottoville at the LDS Stakecenter;

Happy Valley at the Heart of Worship; and

Petesa will meet at Petesa Tai EFKAS Church Hall

During a joint Samoa News/ KSBS-FM interview on Monday afternoon, EOC public information officer, Tuimavave Tauapa'i Laupola explained that Tafuna is one of the areas that was “most affected” by the storm in “terms of the number of homes” that were either destroyed or damage.

The EOC post-storm briefing over the weekend included a map of specific areas with homes that were labeled destroyed or suffered major damage.

An incident status summary report from the briefing shows that a total of 206 individual home structures were destroyed — based on the more than 1,400 homes assessed during the first assessment, carried out two days after the storm.

After pre-registration for

Tafuna, the next village is Nu'uuli followed by other villages most impacted and have already been identified by the government, according to the EOC weekend post-storm briefing.

EOC will release soon the next area for pre-registration including the locations and time.

Tuimavave, who is also the director of the ASG Office of Public Information, noted that the joint preliminary assessment with the feds is already completed and a second ASG assessment carried out last week, was to be completed this week.

However, he said everyone whose homes were affected by the storm would have to register again in order to file a claim for federal assistance. And the process starts with pre-registration, where the person will be given a list of all the required documents needed when it comes time for the actual registration to file federal claims.

Also during pre-registration, the person is a given a ticket number. For example — Fagaima 001 — and the person needs to bring this number at

the actual time of registration.

EOC will announce the designated date, time and location, for these ticket numbers to register and file a FEMA claim.

And if the person misses the designated time and date of registration, there is still a chance to register at a later date.

“During pre-registration, we ask that you please use your name that’s on your identification card, don’t use a nickname, because it will be hard to trace you,” said Tuimavave, who also asked that people use a valid/correct telephone number.

IDs include driver’s licenses and passports.

Tuimavave, along with a FEMA official, gave a briefing of the pre-registration process and other information to village mayors during a meeting at the Office of Samoan Affairs’ conference room this past Monday.

Village mayors will be working closely with ASG task force teams assigned to each pre-registration location. They will also communicate out to villages information pertaining to pre-registration and when it’s actual registration time.

ASG officials are also making the rounds at broadcast

stations on island to keep the public updated on post-storm activities.

“The key to success for this whole operation, is communication and that the public understands the sequence of events and how the actual implementation of the registration moves forward,” said Tuimavave.

And “while the government and FEMA are collaborating to fine tune all the plans for rolling out the registration process for federal assistance, we ask the public to be patient as we roll out these plans,” he continued.

As for the private sector — local businesses and nonprofit organizations, which suffered losses due to the storm — Tuimavave said they would also be given the same opportunity to register for federal aid.

“Everyone will be afforded the same opportunity to register to be able to file a claim,” he explained.

FEMA is expected to announce in the coming days, the location of the Disaster Recovery Center, where people can begin the registration process to file their claims.

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Still no FCC decision on ATH's petition to buy local Bluesky licensees

MEANTIME, FCC GRANTS LICENSE FOR HAWAII CABLE TO LAND AND OPERATE IN AM SAMOA

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

Fiji-based Amalgamated Telecom Holdings Limited (ATH), has established a U.S holding company that will take over Bluesky Communications’ assets in American Samoa, according to the company’s latest filing with the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which has yet to rule on ATH’s petition to acquire Bluesky licensees.

On the other hand, FCC has granted the license for the Hawaii Submarine Cable LP to land and operate a new undersea fiber optic in US locations, including American Samoa.

ATH AND BLUESKY

Early last year, the FCC sought public comments on the “applications filed for the transfer of control” of AST Telecom LLC dba Bluesky, American Samoa Hawaii Cable LLC (ASH-Cable), and Samoa American Samoa Cable LLC, from Spain-based Amper S.A. to ATH and requested a declaratory rule on foreign ownership. FCC online records show no public comments received during the comment period.

The applications also state that once the acquisition is completed, and approved by federal authorities, a new US holding company or — ‘U.S. HoldCo’ — will be formed to take over Bluesky’s assets in American Samoa.

As of yesterday morning, FCC public records show that no decision has been made on the petition. However, a Washington D.C. based law firm representing the applicants, filed last month a supplemental letter to the original petition regarding the formation of a US holding company.

According to the Feb. 8, 2018 letter, ATH has formed a wholly owned U.S.-incorporated holding company that will purchase the entire issued and outstanding member interests of AST.

The company’s name is Amalgamated Bluesky Telecom Holdings Incorporated, and is organized under the laws of the state of Delaware. Its address is Level 2, Harbour Front Building, Rodwell Rd., G.P.O. Box 11643, Suva, Fiji Islands.

The letter also informs the FCC about a new foreign carrier affiliated with ATH, which last year acquired 100% of shares of Telecom Vanuatu Limited. Neither ATH nor Telecom Vanuatu owns or controls a cable landing station in Vanuatu.

“Upon consummation of the proposed transaction, the Bluesky Licensees also will become affiliated with Telecom Vanuatu,” the letter says.

In March 2017, the US Department of Justice and the US Department of Homeland Security requested, and the FCC complied, to defer action on the petition, pending completion of the two agencies’ national security and law enforcement review.

As of yesterday morning, there’s been no new update from the two federal agencies on whether or not their review is completed.

(Continued on page 9)

Jury trial for drug defendant Elijah Leasau continues today

GOV'T CASE HINGES ON SURVEILLANCE VIDEO
ALREADY INTRODUCED AS EVIDENCE

by Ausage Fausia
Samoa News Reporter

The jury trial for a man who was charged with one felony count of unlawful possession of a controlled substance, to wit; marijuana over two years ago began yesterday in the High Court.

The six-member jury — five females and one male — was selected on Monday.

During opening statements, prosecutor Christy Dunn told jurors that the “facts of the case are simple,” while defense attorney, Marcellus T. Uiagalelei urged them to be patient and not draw a quick conclusion until all evidence from both sides are heard.

Uiagalelei’s co-counsel is David Vargas.

PROSECUTOR’S OPENING STATEMENT

The government claims that on Dec. 31, 2015 around 3 a.m., Elijah Leasau was driving a white SUV in the Tafuna area when he was pulled over by a police officer who claims that both of Leasau’s headlights were off.

According to the government, Leasau slowed down and pulled over in front of a store in Iliili but before he came to a complete stop, he allegedly threw something — a highlighter — out of the vehicle.

The lead investigator in the case, Det. John Seumanutafa, is believed to have recovered the highlighter, which contained a pipe.

The substance inside the pipe was sent off island for testing by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and it tested positive as marijuana.

Dunn told jurors that after they hear all the evidence, they would come back to them and ask them to find the defendant guilty of unlawful possession of marijuana.

DEFENSE REMARKS

Uiagalelei asked the jury to do two things: “Be patient as we go along with the case, and keep an open mind.”

He said the government would present some evidence through expert witness testimonies, in addition to video clips to describe what they believe happened the night of the alleged incident.

“But in the end, they will never show you evidence to prove that my client possessed this illegal substance. After you hear all the evidence of the case, you will know why my client should not be guilty of this offense,” Uiagalelei concluded.

PROSECUTION’S FIRST WITNESS

The government called to the stand their first witness, police officer Latara Ah See, the cop who pulled Leasau over on the day in question.

According to Ah See’s testimony, she was working as part of the DPS holiday enforcement when she noticed Leasau’s vehicle heading west from the Tafuna area. She said the vehicle’s headlights were off.

She told jurors she used the loud speaker of her police unit to alert another police unit that was behind Leasau’s vehicle, to pull him over because his headlights were off.

Ah See said when she arrived at the parking lot where the defendant’s vehicle had stopped, she noticed something unusual — the passenger window of Leasau’s car was half way down, while all the other windows, including the driver’s side, were all up because it was raining that night.

She said one of the police officers, who was present during the traffic stop, found a highlighter a few feet away from where Leasau’s vehicle was parked.

Because the traffic stop took place in front of a store, Ah See said they were able to obtain video footage from the store’s surveillance camera.

The government attorney handed over to the witness an envelope with a CD inside, which is what the government claims to be the video footage of the defendant’s actions on the night of the alleged incident, including the time he threw the highlighter out.

The trial resumes at 9 a.m. today with more testimonies.

The case is being heard by Chief Justice Michael Kruse, assisted by Associate Judges Faamausili Pomele and Tunupopo Faleafaga.

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Science Says: Arctic not so chill this record warm winter

By SETH BORENSTEIN, AP
Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Winter at the top of the world wimped out this year.

The Arctic just finished its warmest winter on record. And sea ice hit record lows for this time of year, with plenty of open water where ocean water normally freezes into thick sheets of ice, new U.S. weather data show.

Scientists say what’s happening is unprecedented, part of a global warming-driven vicious cycle that likely plays a role in strong, icy storms in Europe and the U.S. Northeast.

“It’s just crazy, crazy stuff,” said Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center in Boulder, Colo-

rado, who has been studying the Arctic since 1982. “These heat waves, I’ve never seen anything like this.”

It’s been so unusually warm that the land weather station closest to the North Pole — at the tip of Greenland — spent more than 60 hours above freezing in February. Before this year, scientists had seen the temperature there rise above freezing in February only twice before, and only ever so briefly. Last month’s record-hot temperatures at Cape Morris Jesup have been more like those in May, said Ruth Mottram, a climate scientist at the Danish Meteorological Institute.

But it’s more than that one place. Across the Arctic Circle

(Continued on page 9)

HUNKIN FAMILY

Aiga Sā Mataiō

On behalf of Le Afioga i le Maluolefale, Faiivae Iuli A. Godinet & the Elders of Le Aiga Sā Mataiō, we extend this special invitation to the Youth, Young Adults, Couples, Elders & Children of our family to fellowship, reconnect & learn treasured information about our family tree & history direct from Cornwall, England dating back to 1400's.

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(Facebook: AIGA SĀ MATAIŌ Descendants of MATHEW & FATUMALALA HUNKIN)





COURT BRIEFS

by Ausage Fausia
Samoa News Reporter

AFA FUIMAONO

Afa Fuimaono, 48, will be sentenced May 4th for one count of second-degree assault — a felony — punishable by not more than 5 years imprisonment or a fine of not more than \$5,000 or both.

Fuimaono was initially charged with felony first-degree assault, which carries a punishment of life imprisonment or at least 30 years in jail.

But under a plea agreement with the government, Fuimaono pled guilty to the lesser felony.

With his guilty plea, Fuimaono admits that on Dec. 22, 2017 at his plantation in Mapusaga Fou, he struck Elisara Paselio multiple times with a machete, during an incident that was sparked by a land dispute.

The assault resulted in numerous lacerations to the victim's body that required several stitches.

Fuimaono has been unable to post bond and therefore remains in custody at the Territorial Correctional Facility.

HAPAKUKI FOTUAIKA

The case of a man accused of firing a gun into the air outside a nightclub on the night of Super Bowl LII was bound over to the High Court, after he waived his preliminary examination (PX) before District Court Judge Fiti Sunia last week.

Hapakuki Fotuaika, who is out on a \$10,000 surety bond, denied all the charges against him during his arraignment earlier this week. His pretrial conference is set for May 4.

Eyewitnesses told police

Fotuaika was at a nightclub on the night of the Super Bowl game and at some point, there was a confrontation between the defendant and a female — the alleged victim in this case — which caused the defendant to become angry, walk outside to his vehicle, grab a gun, and allegedly fire shots into the air.

Eyewitnesses further told police that the defendant allegedly kept firing the gun into the air from inside his vehicle as he drove off.

LAFAELE SEFO

A man who was arrested and taken into custody during the weekend after he failed to appear in court when his case was called has been given another chance by Chief Justice Michael Kruse to comply with other conditions of his release on bond.

Lafaele Sefo, who is charged with unlawful possession of a controlled substance, to wit; methamphetamine was scheduled to appear in court last Friday for a pretrial conference hearing. One of the conditions of his release on a \$5,000 surety bond was to appear in court every time his case is called.

Last Friday, Sefo failed to appear in court and Kruse then ordered a bench warrant to be issued for his arrest, and he was to be remanded to custody without bail, his bond forfeited.

At around 2:00 p.m., Sefo showed up at the High Court, where he was served with the bench warrant and transferred to the TCF. When his case was called on Monday, Sefo was present in handcuffs.

His attorney, Public Defender Douglas Fiaui asked the court to quash the warrant

and set aside the forfeiture of his bond. Fiaui explained that his office failed to communicate with Sefo about his hearing date, and it's unfair for Sefo to be punished for the PD office's mistake.

According to Fiaui, Deputy Public Defender, Michael White appeared on his behalf during Sefo's last hearing in December 2017, and that's how the miscommunication came about.

Prosecutor Woodrow Pengelly said the government has no objection to the defense's requests.

Kruse had a lot of questions for the defendant.

The Chief Justice wanted to know where Sefo lives, what he does for a living, who posted his bond, and who is the matai of his family.

Sefo told the court he's from Malaeloa, and he's a farmer.

"Who owns the plantation you're working for?" Kruse asked. Sefo answered, Fa'afetai Lefatia.

"The name rings a bell," said Kruse.

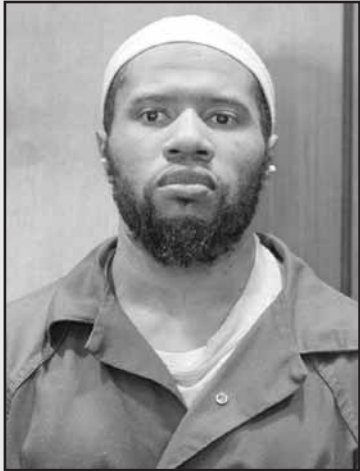
"Who put up the money for your bail?" Kruse continued. Sefo responded, Tumuatasi Lefatia, the wife of Fa'afetai Lefatia. When Kruse inquired about his family matai, Sefo said Talamoa Paulo is the sa'o of his family.

"Again, these names ring a bell to the court," Kruse said.

The Chief Justice accepted the defense's request to quash the warrant for Sefo, and to reinstate his posted bond.

The defendant is now ordered to sign in at the Public Defender's Office every Monday at 1:00 p.m. to make sure he is aware of all his court dates.

Man on 'jihad' admits to killing 4 in cross-country binge



File - In this Jan. 20, 2016, photo, Ali Muhammad Brown, of Seattle, appears before New Jersey Superior Court Judge Ronald Wigler in Newark, N.J. The prosecutor, A's office in Essex County, N.J., said Tuesday, March 6, 2018, that Brown, accused of killing four people in two states in revenge for U.S. policy in the Middle East, has admitted fatally shooting 19-year-old college student Brandon Tevlin of Livingston, N.J., in June 2014, as Tevlin sat in his car at a traffic light in West Orange, N.J. Brown, a former Seattle resident who was the first person charged with terrorism connected to a homicide under a New Jersey state law, pleaded guilty to multiple counts including murder, felony murder, robbery and terrorism.

(Patti Sapone/NJ Advance Media via

By DAVID PORTER, Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — A man who said he was on a "jihad" to avenge U.S. policy in the Middle East made a surprise guilty plea Tuesday to killing a college student in New Jersey and confessed to killing three other people in Washington state in a crime binge that took investigators weeks to connect.

Ali Muhammad Brown, a 34-year-old former Seattle resident, admitted shooting 19-year-old Brendan Tevlin in late June 2014 as Tevlin sat at a traffic light in West Orange, a few miles from Newark.

He also took responsibility for fatally shooting Dwone Anderson-Young, 23, and Ahmed Said, 27, earlier that month in Seattle after they left a gay nightclub, and for the deadly shooting of Leroy Henderson, 30, in the Seattle suburb of Skyway in April the same year. Brown said he killed the two in Seattle because he believed they were gay.

Brown pleaded guilty to multiple charges, including murder, robbery and terrorism. He was the first person charged with terrorism connected to a

homicide under a New Jersey law. He has yet to make a plea in the Washington cases.

In his statement to the court, Brown expressed remorse, telling the judge, "The mistake that I made is I thought I was fighting jihad," according to NJ.com. The plea came as jury selection was underway for his trial. No deal was offered to Brown, who is expected to be sentenced in May to life without parole, Assistant Essex County Prosecutor Jamel Semper said.

"It appeared he wanted to make himself something of a martyr," Semper said. "He is not. He is just an invented killer who destroyed lives and hurt families." "He was clearly radicalized online and took up arms against the country — his own country that gave him constitutional protections and allowed him to appear in court and throw himself at the mercy of the court." The killings "were part of an overarching plan to kill Americans" in retaliation for what Brown contended were "millions of lives" the U.S. had taken in the Middle East, Semper said.

In court papers filed in Seattle in 2014, authorities said Brown described himself to detectives after his New Jersey arrest as a strict Muslim who had become angry with the U.S. government's role in Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. He claimed the government's actions led to the deaths of innocent civilians and children. In a subsequent recorded interview in New Jersey, Washington authorities wrote, Brown described his idea of a "just kill," in which the target was men unaccompanied by women, children or elderly people. According to prosecutors, Tevlin, a sophomore at Virginia's University of Richmond, was driving through West Orange on his way to his family's home in nearby Livingston when Brown and two other men, following him in another car, jumped out and surrounded him.

Brown shot Tevlin through the passenger-side window, hitting him 10 times, prosecutors said at the time of Brown's arrest. Tevlin's car was then driven to an apartment complex in West Orange with Tevlin inside, and some of his belongings were stolen. Brown was found hiding in the woods in West Orange a few weeks after the shooting. After his arrest, prosecutors in New Jersey said results of ballistics tests from the Tevlin shooting were put into a national database and matched with the gun used in the Seattle killings.

West Virginia teachers cheer pay hike deal to end walkout

By JOHN RABY, Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — West Virginia's striking teachers cheered, sang and wept joyfully Tuesday as lawmakers voted to give them a 5 percent raise, ending a nine-day walkout that closed schools across the state.

A huge crowd of teachers packing the Capitol jumped up and down, chanted "We love our kids!" and sang John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads." The settlement came after a crippling strike had idled hundreds of thousands of students, forced parents to scramble for child care and cast a spotlight on government dysfunction in one of the poorest states in the nation.

State schools Superintendent Steve Paine said in a statement he was "pleased that our students, teachers and service personnel will return to school" Wednesday.

Dale Lee, president of the West Virginia Education Association, formally declared Tuesday evening that the "work action was over" after a consultation among local organizers. That group is the largest teacher organization in West Virginia and Lee said all 55 West Virginia counties had stood together, adding, "without them, today's agreement would not have happened."

Earlier, Lee had said of the teachers: "We know that they're going to be relieved to do what they love best, and that's taking

care of the kids and educating the kids of West Virginia."

The West Virginia teachers, some of the lowest-paid in the country, had gone without a salary increase for four years. They appeared to have strong public backing throughout their walkout.

"We overcame. We overcame!" teacher Danielle Harris exclaimed, calling it a victory for students as well. "It shows them how democracy is supposed to work, that you don't just bow down and lay down for anybody. They got the best lesson that they could ever have even though they were out of school."

Tuesday marked the ninth day of canceled classes for the

(Continued on page 8)

ASCC Phi Theta Kappa inducts new members for Spring 2018



ASCC student Monalisa Afoa (center) celebrates being inducted into the ASCC chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society last week. Afoa is pictured with ASCC faculty member Elisapeta Faalafi-Jones and Maria Perofeta.

[photo: J. Kneubuhl]

by James Kneubuhl
ASCC Press Officer

The Alpha Epsilon Mu Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) International Honor Society at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) held its spring 2018 induction ceremony on February 27th to induct 17 new members. In addition to family and friends of the new and current PTK members, ASCC administrators present included President Dr. Rosevonne Makaiwi Pato, Vice President Dr. Lina Galea'i Scanlan, Dean of Academic Affairs Letupu Moananu, Office of Institutional Effectiveness Director Sonny Leomiti,

and Dean of Student Services Dr. Emilia Le'i.

For each induction, the PTK invites a distinguished member of the community to give special remarks, and at this semester's ceremony, former PTK member and current ASCC mathematics instructor Amete Mulipola-Moefiainu provided the keynote speech. A fall 2007 graduate of ASCC, Mulipola-Moefiainu went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from Texas A&M University in 2009, followed by her Masters of Education in Teaching and Learning from Argosy University, Hawaii. She joined the ASCC faculty in January

2014, and now serves as Acting Chairperson of the Mathematics Department.

Mulipola-Moefiainu reminisced about her own experiences as a PTK member, shared a number of anecdotes on the importance of leadership, and offered a quote from Pastor John Hagee, "The measure of a man's greatness is not the number of servants he has, but the number of people he has served." Following the keynote speech, the new inductees performed the ceremonial lighting of candles representing the mythical Greek "flame of knowledge". Following their recitation of the oath to uphold the values of the

organization, PTK President Olivia Atisano'e congratulated them on becoming fully-fledged members.

Phi Theta Kappa recognizes and encourages excellence in scholarship among associate degree students. The Greek words Phi Theta Kappa mean wisdom (Phi), aspiration (Theta) and purity (Kappa). The society bases its programs on its four hallmarks: scholarship, leadership, service and fellowship. The society provides more than \$35 million worth of scholarships annually to students nationwide. Each member is automatically nominated for inclusion in the prestigious National Dean's List, and is also enrolled in the PTK Transfer Database, which links senior institutions across the nation offering scholarships to PTK members.

PTK recruiting at ASCC begins during registration week and continues into the second week of the semester, during which time applications are available to all students. Applicants who have a GPA of 3.5 or better move on to the interview process, where head advisor Kuki Tuiaosopo and advisor Ernie Seiuli then determine their eligibility. Once the advisors choose prospective members

from among the interviewees, a formal letter is issued to each successful applicant informing them of their acceptance into the society.

The spring 2018 Inductees are Afimuao Nimoa'i, Alexandra Letuli, Casidhe Mahuka, Celine Puletasi, Dougneilia Ah-Mai Letuli, Hillary Oliver, Jessie Verolene Faleafine, Lomialagi Chie Tauilili, Melesuati Lualua, Milise Lolesio, Monalisa Afoa, Osana Esekia, Puline Hardy, Precious C. Ameperosa, Quendolynn Eseroma, Taeaomataaga Voight and Utaifeau J. Tilo.

Current PTK Members include Olivia Atisano'e (President), Vaotupu Tufele (Vice President), Anasitasia Vaitele (Treasurer), Francine Iopu (Secretary), Louaivasa La'ulu (PR Secretary), Faamao Asafo, Faasiu Faalata, Genesis Lagai, Fevaea'i Mareko, Rianna Lafaele, Jingjing Jiang, Anastasia Magalo, Theresa Lafaele, Loreta Liu, Krystene Lin, Elysha Samatua, Magalita Johnson and Amy Thrun.

For more information about the nationwide activities of Phi Theta Kappa, visit their website at: www.ptk.org



ASCC student Utaifeau J. Tilo celebrates with his family after being inducted last week into the ASCC chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society.

[photo: J. Kneubuhl]



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Amata Chairs joint hearing examining broadband access



Chairman Amata during joint hearing on Broadband Access for Remote Areas.

[photo: courtesy]

Washington, D.C. – Tuesday, March 6, 2018 - Chairman Aumua Amata presided over a joint hearing of both the Small Business Subcommittee on Health and Technology, and the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy and Trade, which is led by Chairman Rod Blum

of Iowa, as Members examined broadband access in rural and remote locations. “American Samoa needs better telecommunications and internet connectivity, and Cyclone Gita showed the serious need for better infrastructure and services,” said Aumua

Amata. “Communities with smaller populations in remote areas often depend on area providers of internet services, where the major nationwide providers haven’t invested. It’s important that people have the affordable access they need to use these services. We need to

take every opportunity to reduce barriers, and take steps to sustain and improve these much-needed services.”

The hearing was titled, “Disconnected: Rural Broadband and the Business Case for Small Carriers.” Specifically, the hearing examined the digital divide between urban and rural carriers, and the disparities between the large carriers and the small carriers.

“Expanding broadband access in American Samoa and the insular territories is a priority,” continued Chairman Amata. “We know that deploying broadband in rural and higher-cost areas cannot be built solely on the shoulders of small carriers, but must be a functional and bilateral partnership with large carriers and responsible regulatory bodies. As plans evolve, it is our duty to ensure that all our people have access to robust, speedy wireless internet and telecommunications services at reasonable costs.”

The following witnesses testified: Ms. Erin Fitzgerald, Regulatory Counsel, for the Rural Wireless Association, Inc.; Mr. Tim Donovan, Senior Vice President, Legislative Affairs, for the Competitive Carriers Association; Mr. Paul Carliner, Co-Founder, Bloosurf, LLC; and Mr. Derrick Owens, Senior Vice President of Government & Industry Affairs, for WTA — Advocates for Rural Broadband.

(Below is the full text of Aumua Amata’s Opening Remarks)

Talofa, good morning. This hearing will come to order.

First, I’d like to thank our witnesses for taking the time to share their thoughts with us today, I look forward to your testimony. I’d also like to thank Chairman Blum for co-leading this important discussion.

Today’s joint hearing of the Subcommittee on Health and Technology, and the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy, and Trade will focus on challenges facing small internet service providers deploying broadband to rural, high-cost areas. This hearing expands upon past conversations started in Committee and recently continued in a hearing led by Chairman Blum a few short weeks ago.

This topic is of particular significance to the people of American Samoa as our telecommunications and internet connectivity is severely lacking, especially in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Gita. As our world becomes increasingly dependent on a robust telecommunications service and wireless internet, the lack of it in places like American Samoa and rural America becomes even more glaring. These high-cost areas depend upon the industriousness and commitment to deploying robust, accessible broadband by small, rural, and regional internet service providers. However, challenges facing these carriers in obtaining adequate financing and competing against large, nationwide carriers significantly impede forward progress, further exacerbating the disparities between urban and rural communities.

Having this connectivity is critical, not only to stimulate economic growth, but also to ensure a basic level of connectivity for our citizens, such as the ability to place a call to loved ones and first responders in the event of an emergency or disaster. As we begin to examine the current state of America’s infrastructure and take steps to improve our Nation’s highways and buildings, we need to ensure that broadband is at the front and center of all infrastructure discussions.



American Samoa Government DEPARTMENT of COMMERCE

Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
Tel: (684) 633-5155 • Fax: (684) 633-4195



PUBLIC NOTICE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM Substantial Amendment to the Program Years (PYs) 2014 to 2017 Annual Action Plans and Reprogramming of CDBG Funds From PYs 2014 to 2017

This Public Notice is posted to advise the community that a request will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development to reprogram funds listed below.

From:	Amount		Status
Fire Trucks for Manu’a & Aunu’u	\$6,580.00		Existing Project
Fagatogo Playground	\$27,109.13		Existing Project
Multipurpose Trades Building	\$1,283.66		Existing Project
Land Acquisition HOME Partnership	\$229,219.89		Existing Project
School Vans for Manu’a	\$13,402.00		Existing Project
Manu’a HS Greenhouse	\$10,000.00		Existing Project
Matatula Greenhouse	\$7,000.00		Existing Project
Pago Pago Harbor Boardwalk	\$205,405.32		Existing Project
TOTAL:	\$500,000.00		
To:		Amount	Status
Debris Removal & Gita Disaster Relief Efforts		\$500,000.00	New Project
	TOTAL:	\$500,000.00	

In accordance with the American Samoa Government citizen participation plan the public is invited to comment during normal business hours for 30-days following the date of publication at the Department of Commerce, located on the 2nd floor of the A.P. Lutali Executive Office Building in Utulei. Comments must be submitted in writing to Lina Petaia-Suisala, CDBG Manager.

As a result of damages caused by Cyclone Gita and President Trump’s disaster declaration, ASG has requested a waiver of the 30-day comment period noted above. Should HUD approve the waiver, the comment period for this notice will be 7 days from the date of this publication. If HUD does not approve the waiver, the comment period will be the 30-day comment period noted above.

For more information regarding this notice, please contact the Department of Commerce at 633-5155, Ext. 271

Keniseli F. Lafaele
Director of Commerce



Compiled by Samoa News staff
**PERMANENT RESIDENTS
FOR RSE WORKERS
TOUTED**

The proposal by the government for Samoan seasonal workers to be eligible for permanent residency under the New Zealand 1,100 annual quota for Samoans is now on the table for future bilateral talks.

The issue was raised by Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lupe-soliai Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi during bilateral talks with New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Deputy Prime Minister Vaovasamanaia Winston Peters in Apia this week.

And Prime Minister Tuilaepa today during his weekly media program with Taimi male Palemia and Talamua.com remains confident that Wellington will consider the merits of the request from Apia.

“The RSE employers are singing praises for our Samoan workers.

“Our workers are trustworthy, skillful, dependable and have proven themselves capable of performing up to the expectations of the RSE employers,” said the Tuilaepa.

“Samoa is also the first country from the 9 participating Pacific Islands in the RSE program to appoint a Resident RSE Coordinator to live in Auckland.

“This is to ensure that our workers do not compromise the program by misbehaving and to ensure that we follow the RSE guidelines and regulations to the letter.

“On that note, Government is also playing the hands on role by initiating a pre-departure program for our workers to be well equipped when they do take up their seasonal employment.”

The pre-departures include training in budgeting and wise spending of their hard earned wages.

There is also a health check requirement for all workers to undertake.

And the village councils are also playing a role through MOUs signed with government in a partnership to protect the integrity of Seasonal Workers program for their villagers to obey the RSE policies and regulations.

“The RSE as I have said time and again it’s a win win situation and has contributed millions into New Zealand’s economy. And it is providing a valuable source of income for local families to build new homes, start new businesses and even purchase vehicles and other home appliances for their families.

“Some have also invested their wages in providing education for their children.”

The Prime Minister also noted that the success of the NZ Seasonal Workers may have

also prompted the Australians for follow the Kiwis example.

“And I have been assured that there will be a pay raise for RSE workers including Samoans,” he added.

All in all, the Prime Minister is mindful that when it comes to the RSE employment, it’s a delicate and political issue but he remains optimistic that there is hope for Samoa’s request.

And Prime Minister Ardern agrees with Prime Minister Tuilaepa that it’s not a new issue when it comes to bilateral talks between the two countries.

“It’s not a new issue,” she told reporters.

“We are very mindful that there are two competing interests here and we are trying to balance them.

“There is the Seasonal Works scheme very much to ensure that there is a returning work force and with the quota that is about opportunities and making sure that there are decent jobs available.

“We’re keeping those separate because we are trying to balance the two programs,” said the New Zealand Government leader.

This is the 11th year for Samoa to be included in the New Zealand Recognized Seasonal Works Employment scheme.

It provides temporary employment for Samoans and 8 other Pacific Islanders to work in New Zealand to help with horticulture and viticulture industries.

Samoa started with a little over 600 workers in her first year.

That number has now skyrocketed to over 1,600.

(Source: Samoa Press Secretariat)

**VAILIMA BEER BOUND
FOR UNITED STATES
MARKET**

Samoa Breweries Limited has announced a major breakthrough in as far as exporting the taste of Samoa — Vailima — to the world.

Vailima Beer will soon be available in the United States.

This follows an agreement signed between the Samoa Breweries Limited and the United States based importation and distribution company, Fore Drinks L.L.C. today.

The “taste of Samoa” is the first of many export shipments on its way to the West Coast of the U.S.A. and will become available in Hawaii, California and Washington State.

National Sales Manager, Aumua George Avia, told Samoa Observer that it’s an exciting time for the company to enter the U.S. market. “It’s all about taking the brand that belongs to Samoa which is Vailima we are going to take this to our new market, U.S.A.”

Aumua said, “The strategy behind is to follow our people and we did this with humbleness and meekness as well.

“We know certainly that there’s a lot of Samoans who used to live here in Samoa and in American Samoa that have moved to the U.S, this is about taking a bit of home with you and keeping it there in the U.S. with yourself.

“In the biggest scheme, it’s been an honor and pleasure to be giving such a wonderful product to the U.S. and to indulge them as well.

“Another part of the strategy is to help grow Samoa as well.”

The initiative also prepares the local brewery for their 40th anniversary this year.

(Source: Samoa Observer)

**MINISTER OF SAMOA
AIRWAYS DENIES AIR-
LINE LOSS CLAIMS**

The Minister of Samoa Airways, Lautafi Fio Purcell, has strongly rejected claims the national airline is already running at a loss.

A few months after the Airline was launched last year, reliable sources told the Samoa Observer the Airline is accumulating a loss that could have huge implications on its future plans.

The sources could not put a figure to the loss but they claim that it is “substantial” and “growing every month.”

When the Samoa Observer contacted the Minister for a comment, he quickly rubbished the reports. “That is not true,” he said. “Where did you get your figures from? That’s not true.”

The Minister did not elaborate.

Asked for a proper interview, Lautafi said he was not immediately available as he was tied up with meetings in relation to Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern’s Samoa visit. It was not possible to get a comment from the Airline’s management.

But concerns about the profitability of the airline and its operational costs are not new.

Last year, the airline repeatedly refused to confirm or deny reports that it is paying US\$500,000 (ST\$1.25 million) a fortnight to lease the B767-300 aircraft from Icelandic Air.

After referring the Samoa Observer to the airline’s management for a comment, Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sa’ilele Malielegaoi later changed his tune.

“These are commercial secrets, it cannot be revealed,” he said. “These things are commercial contracts, and if you inquire with any airline companies, they will never allow that to be known.”

At that point, the Samoa Observer put it to the Prime (Continued on page 10)

Experts: Prosecutors get edge if accusers testify vs. Cosby



Bill Cosby arrives for a pretrial hearing in his sexual assault case at the Montgomery County Courthouse, Tuesday, March 6, 2018, in Norristown, Pa. (AP Photo/Matt Slocum)

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Letting jurors hear from Bill Cosby’s dozens of accusers would strengthen prosecutors’ he-said-she-said case by showing the one criminal case against him fits an alleged five-decade pattern of sexual misconduct, legal experts said Tuesday.

Prosecutors are eager to widen the scope of Cosby’s April 2 retrial as they attempt to portray the once-beloved entertainment icon as a serial predator who made a sadistic habit of drugging and molesting women.

At Cosby’s first trial last year, which ended in a hung jury, Judge Steven O’Neill barred prosecutors from mentioning Cosby’s past and allowed just one other accuser to testify.

O’Neill did not rule Tuesday on arguments made over two days by prosecutors and defense lawyers on how many, if any, of Cosby’s other accusers will be allowed to take the stand. He’s also yet to rule on whether the defense can mention details of a financial settlement Cosby paid in 2006 to the accuser in his criminal case, Andrea Constand.

Cosby’s lawyers said jurors should only get to hear testimony about the alleged 2004 assault that led to the criminal charges against Cosby, not “ancient allegations” that would confuse, distract and prejudice the jury against the 80-year-old comedian.

Prosecutors want as many as 19 women, including model Janice Dickinson, to testify about allegations dating as far back as 1965 and as recently as 1990 or 1996. That’s at least eight years before Constand says he assaulted her at his suburban Philadel- (Continued on page 10)



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Participants of the 2018 24th Samoa News Territorial Spelling Bee — major sponsor McDonald’s American Samoa — and the Department of Education at a practice session yesterday with Mrs. Evelyn Lili’o-Satele, who has helped prepare student-spellers for the event, since the first Bee in American Samoa. There are 31 students this year vying for the opportunity to represent American Samoa in the 2018 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

[Photo: Evelyn Lili’o Satele]

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LOCATIONS

Date	Time	Place
03/06	10am-3pm	Laufou Hallway
03/07	10am-3pm	Laufou Hallway
03/08	10am-3pm	Laufou Hallway
03/09	10am-3pm	Laufou Hallway
03/10	9am-12.30pm	Laufou Hallway

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West...

Continued from page 4

school system’s 277,000 students and 35,000 employees.

Teachers walked off the job Feb. 22, balking at an initial bill signed by Gov. Jim Justice to bump up their pay 2 percent in the first year as they also complained about rising health insurance costs.

Justice responded last week with an offer to raise teacher pay 5 percent — a proposal the state House approved swiftly but that senators weren’t so eager to sign off on. Instead the Senate countered with an offer of 4 percent on Saturday, prompting leaders of all three unions representing the state’s teachers to announce the walkout was being extended.

After a six-member conference committee agreed Tuesday to the new proposal, the House of Delegates subsequently passed 5 percent raises for teachers, school service personnel and state troopers on a 99-0 vote. The Senate followed, voting 34-0.

At a bill signing ceremony after Tuesday’s vote, Justice declared victory.

“Today is a new day for education in West Virginia. No more looking back!” he proclaimed, surrounded by jubilant education leaders. “We really have to move away from the idea that education is some necessary evil that’s just got to be funded ... toward ... looking at our children and our teachers and education process as an investment ... That’s all there is to it.”

Missed school days will be made up, either at the end of the school year or by shortening spring break, depending on decisions by individual counties. Justice said that would not mean families would go without their summer vacations, however.

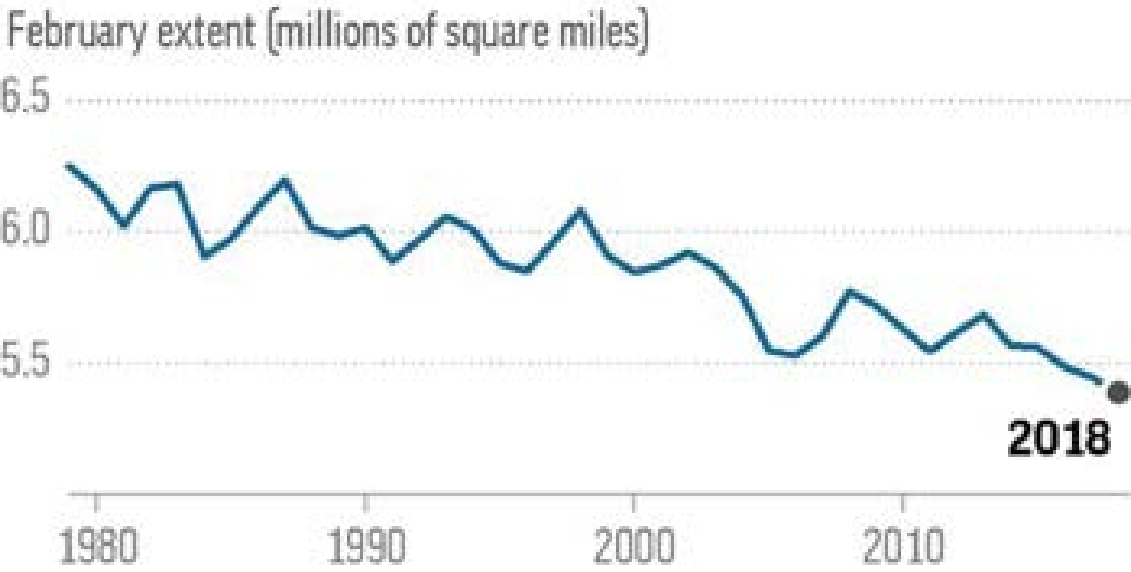
► Science says...

Continued from page 3

Shrinking sea ice

Arctic sea ice covered 5.4 million square miles in February, about 62,000 square miles smaller than last year's record low.

C
M
Y
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Source: National Snow and Ice Data Center

AP

Chart shows average February sea ice extent measures from 1979 to 2018.

in Barrow, Alaska, February was 18 degrees (10 degrees Celsius) warmer than normal and the entire winter averaged 14 degrees (7.8 degrees Celsius) above normal. Of nearly three dozen different Arctic weather stations, 15 of them were at least 10 degrees (5.6 degrees Celsius) above normal for the winter, according to data from climatologist Brian Brettschneider of the International

Arctic Research Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Meteorologists consider December, January and February to be winter, and Arctic weather stations averaged 8.8 degrees (4.9 degrees Celsius) warmer than normal for the season that just ended. The air above the Chukchi and Bering seas near Alaska averaged about 20 degrees (11 degrees Celsius) warmer than normal for Feb-

ruary, the data center reported. "The extended warmth really has kind of staggered all of us," Mottram said. In February, Arctic sea ice covered 5.4 million square miles (13.9 million square kilometers), about 62,000 square miles (160,000 square kilome-

ters) smaller than last year's record low, the ice data center said Tuesday. The difference is an area about the size of the state of Georgia. Sea ice coverage in February also was 521,000 square miles (1.4 million square kilometers) below the 30-year normal — an area nearly twice the size of Texas.

Sea ice is frozen ocean water that — in contrast to icebergs and glaciers — forms, grows and melts on the ocean. It is still growing, but "whatever we grow now is going to be thin stuff" that easily melts in the summer, Serreze said.

Near Greenland, warm air moved north up over a section of the Atlantic that usually has sea ice, Mottram said. Something similar was happening in the Pacific with open water on the normally iced up Bering Sea, said data center senior scientist Walt Meier. To be happening on opposite sides of the Arctic at the same time is unusual, Meier said.

While some natural weather fronts were involved, "climate change is the overriding thing," Meier said. "When you have warmer temperatures you are going to melt more ice and it's going to grow more slowly."

In the winter, sea ice "acts as a lid to keep the warmth of the water at bay" but when there is less sea ice, more heat goes into the air, Brettschneider said. "You end up with a vicious cycle of warm air preventing sea ice formation and lack of sea ice allowing warmth to escape into the air."

One scientific theory is that this is changing weather further south and plays a role with extreme events, especially in winter.

The theory is still debated but gaining acceptance. It suggests that reduced sea ice, especially in the winter, reduces the difference in atmospheric pressure between the Arctic and mid-latitudes, weakening the jet stream. The jet stream is the usually fast-moving west-east current of air that affects daily weather and moves storm fronts along. A weaker jet stream often means strange weather, leaving storms stuck in place for days on end, said one of the theory's leading proponents, Rutgers University's Jennifer Francis. She points to recent U.S. nor'easters and freak snowstorms in Europe.

"This is what we've been talking about; it couldn't be more classic," Francis said. "If you look at the whole picture, the whole jet stream around the northern hemisphere, it's had these very large excursions north and south and that's led to all of the wacky weather."

"The underlying disease that's causing this is getting worse," Francis said, referring to heat-trapping gases from the burning of coal, oil and gas. "These are just the symptoms."

This Associated Press series was produced in partnership with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

► Still no FCC...

Continued from page 2

HAWAII

As reported by Samoa News this past Monday, Hawaii cable is on schedule to be operational later this year in June, with the cable-laying vessel set to arrive in the territory next month.

Samoa News has received inquiries on whether Hawaii applied and received FCC approval for cable landing and operation in American Samoa.

FCC public records state that an application was filed in October 2016 by Hawaii Submarine Cable USA LLC (a wholly-owned subsidiary of New Zealand based Hawaii Submarine Cable Limited Partnership), Tillamook Lightwave IGA, ACS Cable Systems, LLC, DRFortress, LLC (DRFortress) and American Samoa Telecommunications Authority (ASTCA) (collectively, the Applicants) for a license to land and operate a non-common carrier fiber-optic submarine cable between the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand, to be called the Hawaii Cable System.

The FCC approved the application Dec. 19, 2017 and Hawaii itself announced the approval last December, but there were no specific details.

According to the applicants, Hawaii will have five segments and land in five locations. One of the segments — Segment 5 — will connect a branching unit (BU) on New Zealand to Hawai'i fiber pair to Tafuna, American Samoa, and will have 2 fiber pairs with a total capacity of 100- 200 gigabits per second (Gbps).

ASTCA will own, construct and operate the spur connecting American Samoa to the branching unit on Hawaii cable. ASCTA will also own, construct and operate the cable landing station in Tafuna, according to FCC records.

According to the applicants, Hawaii will increase competition on the U.S.-Australia-New Zealand routes and enhance the service quality, redundancy, and resilience of communications systems in the region.

Upon deployment, Hawaii will immediately and significantly increase regional and transpacific capacity, providing an alternative and diverse transmission route from the US mainland to Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, and American Samoa.

FCC records and filings can be accessed online at: www.fcc.gov

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IN THE COMMUNITY

(Photos: Leua)



Nashville mayor resigns after affair, pleads guilty to theft

By JONATHAN MATTISE,
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Mayor Megan Barry, a one-time rising star in the Democratic Party with big plans to remake Nashville, resigned Tuesday after pleading guilty to cheating the city out of thousands of dollars to carry on an affair with her bodyguard.

The resignation marked a swift fall for Barry, who stunned the city in late January when she confessed to an extramarital relationship with the former head of her security detail.

“While my time today as your mayor concludes, my unwavering love and sincere affection for this wonderful city and its great people will never come to an end,” the 54-year-old Barry said at a news con-

ference shortly after appearing before a judge. She did not take questions.

Barry and her former bodyguard, police Sgt. Robert Forrest, separately pleaded guilty to felony theft. Barry’s resignation was part of a plea bargain with prosecutors. She and Forrest were sentenced to three years’ probation.

Barry also agreed to reimburse the city \$11,000, while Forrest will return \$45,000 that authorities said was paid to him in salary or overtime when he was not actually performing his duties as security chief.

A state investigation into the matter was closed after the plea deal, essentially ending the case.

In court, Barry didn’t say how she stole money from the

city, but investigators have said they believe she engaged in the affair while she was on city-paid trips and Forrest was on the clock. The district attorney’s office later said the money Barry paid was for Forrest’s travel expenses while he was on personal time.

Authorities found two nude or partially nude photos of a woman that were taken by Forrest’s phone while he was on duty. The photos were shot last May and October, on days that Barry’s travel schedule shows she was on trips to Washington.

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation did not identify the woman in the pictures, and Barry has said that if the photos are of her, they were taken without her knowledge.

(Continued on page 14)

Experts...

Continued from page 7

phia home.

“It’s not about what happened 50 years ago. It’s not about what happened with other people,” Cosby lawyer Becky James told O’Neill. “The jury has to be focused on that one issue.”

For prosecutors, having several accusers tell similar stories about Cosby would give them a chance to smooth over issues with Constand’s credibility and insulate her from attacks from his lawyers, who are keen to portray her as a money-grubbing liar.

Dave Zuckerman, a former prosecutor who practices criminal defense in the Pittsburgh area, said that “might help put the case over the edge in favor of the prosecution.”

“Now it becomes more than just one accuser against Bill Cosby,” he said. “Now you have a pattern of multiple women.”

Cosby lawyer Tom Mesereau said he wants to make Cosby’s settlement with Constand a focal point of the retrial. He said jurors will learn “just how greedy” she was when they hear details about how much money she demanded from Cosby and what the star wound up paying

her.

Constand sued Cosby after prosecutors in 2005 declined to press charges. Cosby testified over a decade ago as part of that lawsuit, eventually settling for an undisclosed sum. His deposition was sealed for years until a judge released parts in 2015 at the request of The Associated Press, prompting a new set of prosecutors to take a fresh look at the case and charge him.

Mesereau argued the settlement ties directly to a claim from Constand’s former co-worker who said Constand spoke about fabricating sexual assault allegations against a celebrity so she could sue and get money.

Cosby’s old legal team agreed with prosecutors to keep the settlement out of his first trial.

Dennis McAndrews, who prosecuted chemical heir John E. duPont for murder in 1997, said the new strategy could backfire.

“That settlement cuts both ways,” said McAndrews. “If it was a large settlement, why did Cosby pay such a large settlement for something that he says didn’t happen?”

Cosby has pleaded not guilty to charges he assaulted Constand, a Temple University women’s basketball administrator, while he was a powerful alumnus and trustee. He has said the encounter was consensual. He remains free on bail.

Pennsylvania allows prosecutors to present evidence of alleged past misdeeds if they demonstrate the defendant engaged in a signature pattern of crime. Prosecutors argue Cosby used his power and appeal as a beloved entertainer to befriend younger women, then plied them with drugs or alcohol before assaulting them.

If additional accusers are allowed to testify, Zuckerman said, the jury would be instructed to consider the testimony only as possible evidence of Cosby’s pattern of behavior — not conduct that they should punish him for. But, he said, all that testimony is sure to carry an emotional wallop that could push jurors to convict.

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they grant permission, which Constand and Dickinson have done.

Pacific...

Continued from page 7

Minister that Samoa Airways is government-owned and that members of the public deserve to know.

But he disagreed.

“These are commercial secrets, it cannot be revealed,” he repeated. “It cannot be publicly announced, these are commercial based secrets.”

Samoa Observer pressed that this is a government-owned airline; Tuilaepa again intervened and said “when the accounts are available that’s the time you will know.”

He was asked to point out when that will happen and Tuilaepa said “the end of the every year.”

When the airline was launched last November, Minister Lautafi assured that they had learnt their

lessons from Polynesian Airline’s losses.

“I don’t even think about what happened in the past, that was before my time and if anything we have learnt lessons from that,” he said.

“That’s why Polynesian Airlines failed because they didn’t do the things they should have done. We should manage Samoa Airways as a business — effectively and efficiently to make money and at the same time we service our people, that’s what it’s all about.”

“We’ve got to balance our service for our people with profitability. We have to survive and number one, we have to look after ourselves first.”

(Source: Samoa Observer)



This photo released by the Syrian Red Crescent shows civilians gathering near a convoy of vehicles of the Syrian Red Crescent in Douma, eastern Ghouta, a suburb of Damascus, Syria, Monday, March. 5, 2018. Desperate for food and medicine, Syrian civilians in the war-ravaged eastern suburbs of Damascus hoped for relief Monday as a 46-truck aid convoy began entering the rebel stronghold, the first such shipment in months.
(Syrian Red Crescent via AP)

Promoter of failed Fyre Festival pleads guilty to fraud



Billy McFarland, the promoter of the failed Fyre Festival in the Bahamas, leaves federal court after pleading guilty to wire fraud charges, Tuesday, March 6, 2018, in New York. He faces a sentence of 8 to 10 years.
(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

By LARRY NEUMEISTER, Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — The promoter of the failed Fyre Festival in the Bahamas — once billed as the “cultural experience of the decade” — pleaded guilty to wire fraud charges Tuesday, agreeing to serve up to a decade in prison for lying to investors who lost over \$26 million.
Billy McFarland, 26, entered the plea in Manhattan federal court in a deal with prosecutors that suggested he serve between eight and 10 years in prison. He can request leniency.
“I deeply regret my actions, and I apologize to my investors, team, family and supporters who I let down,” a chastened McFarland told U.S. District

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald in Manhattan.
He said he planned to organize “a legitimate festival” when he planned the Fyre Festival as an outgrowth of a digital application he launched in May 2016 to help concert promoters and private individuals directly book musicians for concerts.
“I grossly underestimated the resources that would be necessary to hold an event of this magnitude,” he said. “In an attempt to raise what I thought were needed funds, I lied to investors about various aspects of Fyre Media and my personal finances. Those lies included false documents and information.”
The festival was promoted as “the cultural experience of

the decade,” an ultra-luxurious event on the Bahamian island of Exuma over two weekends last April and May. It was promoted on social media by Kendall Jenner, Bella Hadid, Emily Ratajkowski and other models and celebrities as the event organizers coaxed people into buying ticket packages ranging from \$1,200 to over \$100,000.
Customers hoping to see Blink-182 and the hip hop act Migos arrived to learn music acts were canceled. Their luxury accommodations and gourmet food consisted of leaky white tents and cheese sandwiches. Customers lashed out on social media with the hashtag #fyrefraud.
A lawsuit filed in Los Angeles called the festival “nothing more than a get-rich-quick scam.” It said the festival’s inadequate food, water, shelter and medical care left attendees stranded on a remote island in a “dangerous and panicked situation.”

As part of his plea, McFarland also admitted raising money for the festival by giving a ticket vendor false information about Fyre Media’s financial condition last April to induce the vendor to pay \$2 million for a block of advance tickets.
In all, prosecutors said in a release that McFarland bilked over 80 investors of more than \$26 million. As part of his plea, he agreed to a forfeiture order of \$26 million. “William McFarland tendered fake documents to induce investors and a ticket vendor to put more than \$26 million into his company and the disastrous Fyre Festival,” U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman said. “He now awaits sentencing for his admitted swindle.” McFarland and his attorney, Randall Jackson, declined comment outside court. McFarland has been free on \$300,000 bail since his June arrest. Sentencing was set for June 21.

Russian plane crash in Syria kills 39 servicemen

By ZEINA KARAM and NATALIYA VASILYEVA, Associated Press
BEIRUT (AP) — A Russian military cargo plane crashed near an air base in Syria on Tuesday, killing all 39 Russian servicemen on board in a blow to Russian operations in Syria. The Russian military quickly insisted the plane was not shot down and blamed the crash on a technical error.
Meanwhile, shelling near the rebel-held eastern suburbs of Damascus killed dozens of people over the past 24 hours as President Bashar Assad’s government, supported by the Russian military, pushed its assault on the capital’s rebel-held suburbs. International aid workers on a rare humanitarian mission inside the besieged area described dramatic scenes of rescuers trying to pull corpses from the rubble of buildings and children who hadn’t seen daylight in 15 days.

The mission on Monday to the area known as eastern Ghouta was cut short after the government shelling escalated while the aid workers were still inside, calling into question future aid shipments to the encircled region, the last major opposition stronghold near the capital.
Opposition activists and a war monitor said 80 people were killed Monday — the deadliest day since the U.N. Security Council demanded a 30-day cease-fire for Syria — and at least nine were killed Tuesday.
U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged all parties to implement a cease-fire demanded by the Security Council on Feb. 24 and allow “safe and unimpeded access” for convoys to deliver aid to hundreds of thousands of Syrians in desperate need.
Guterres descried that attacks on eastern Ghouta reportedly killed more than 100 people Monday and that 14 of 46 trucks in a convoy trying to deliver supplies to Douma in eastern Ghouta weren’t able to fully unload, U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.
Dujarric said nearly half of the food carried on the convoy could not be delivered.
“People were telling us very desperate stories. They are tired, they are angry. They don’t want aid, what they want is the shelling to stop,” Pawel Krzysiek, head of communications for the Syrian branch of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said Tuesday.
He said thousands of families were huddled in underground shelters, reluctant to eat in front of each other because of the pervasive hunger, and children who watched as aid workers tried to pull corpses from the rubble.
“No child should be witnessing this in their very early state of development. But the children of Douma and the children of
(Continued on page 13)



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South Korea's national security director Chung Eui-yong, front, walks to board an aircraft as he leaves for Pyongyang at a military airport in Seongnam, south of Seoul, Monday, March 5, 2018. A group of high-level South Korean officials has left for North Korea for talks on North Korea's nuclear program and ways to help resume talks between Pyongyang and Washington.

(Jung Yeon-je/Pool Photo via AP)

Kim Jong Un gets new image after S. Korea meeting: Statesman

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un grins, just on the verge of a belly laugh, as he grasps the hand of a visiting South Korean official. He sits at a wide conference table and beams as the envoys look on deferentially. He smiles broadly again at dinner, his wife at his side, the South Koreans seeming to hang on his every word.

Kim is used to being the center of gravity in a country that his family has ruled with unquestioned power since 1948, but the chance to play the senior statesman on the Korean Peninsula with a roomful of visiting South Koreans has afforded the autocratic leader a whole new raft of propaganda and political opportunities. He'll get another major chance to shine next month: Seoul says that Kim has agreed to hold a summit meeting — the rivals' third-ever — with South Korean President Moon Jae-in.

The photos released by North Korean state media on Tuesday showing Kim meeting with Moon's envoys on Monday evening are all the more remarkable coming just months after a barrage of North Korean weapons tests and threats against Seoul and Washington had many

fearing war.

Kim can be seen in a North Korean TV video smiling and laughing, proposing a toast at the dinner reception, and waving as two limousines carrying the South Korean delegates left the main building of the ruling Workers' Party.

The extraordinary images spread rapidly across the southern part of the peninsula a day after the North said Kim had an "openhearted talk" with 10 envoys for Moon. Kim reportedly expressed his desire to "write a new history of national reunification" during a dinner that the South Korean government said lasted about four hours.

The meeting marked the first time South Korean officials have met with the young North Korean leader in person since he took power after his dictator father's death in late 2011. It's the latest sign that the Koreas are trying to mend ties after one of the tensest years in a region that seems to be permanently on edge. The South Korean delegation led by presidential national security director Chung Eui-yong returned to the South on Tuesday and announced the Kim-Moon summit planned for next month. Chung's trip was the first known high-level visit by South Korean officials to the North in about a decade.

North Korea hasn't announced the summit agreement in its own media, more than a half-day after the South's announcement.

Given the robust history of bloodshed, threats and animosity on the Korean Peninsula, there is considerable skepticism over whether the Koreas' apparent warming relations will lead to lasting peace. North Korea, some believe, is trying to use improved ties with the South to weaken U.S.-led international sanctions and pressure, and to provide domestic propaganda fodder for Kim.

But each new development — and especially a summit — raises the possibility that the rivals can use the momentum from the good feelings created during North Korea's participation in the South's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics last month to ease a standoff over North Korea's nuclear ambitions and restart talks between the North and the United States. Seoul said the North also agreed during the talks to impose a moratorium on nuclear and missile tests if Pyongyang holds talks with Washington.

The role of a confident leader welcoming visiting, and lower-ranking, officials from the rival South is one Kim clearly relishes. Smiling for cameras, he posed during the meeting with the South Koreans and presided over what was described by the North's official Korean Central News Agency as a "co-patriotic and sincere atmosphere."

Many in Seoul and Washington will want to know if, the rhetoric and smiling images notwithstanding, there's any possibility Kim will negotiate over North Korea's breakneck pursuit of an arsenal of nuclear missiles that can viably target the U.S. mainland.

The North has repeatedly and bluntly declared it will not give up its nuclear bombs. It also hates the annual U.S.-South Korean military exercises that were postponed because of the Olympics but will likely happen later this spring. And achieving its nuclear aims rests on the North resuming tests of missiles and bombs that set the region on edge.

Kim was said to have expressed at the dinner his "firm will to vigorously advance the north-south relations and write a new history of national reunification by the concerted efforts of our nation to be proud of in the world."

There is speculation that better inter-Korean ties could pave the way for Washington and Pyongyang to talk about the North's nuclear weapons. The United States, however, has made clear that it doesn't want empty talks and that all options, including military measures, are on the table.

Previous warming ties between the Koreas have come to nothing amid North Korea's repeated weapons tests and the North's claims that the annual U.S.-South Korean war games are a rehearsal for an invasion.

Chung's delegation included intelligence chief Suh Hoon and Vice Unification Minister Chun Hae-sung. The South Korean presidential Blue House said the high-profile delegation was meant to reciprocate the Olympic trip by Kim Jong Un's sister, Kim Yo Jong, who became the first member of the North's ruling family to come to South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Kim Yo Jong, who also attended Monday's dinner, and other senior North Korean officials met with Moon during the Olympics, conveyed Kim Jong Un's invitation to visit Pyongyang and expressed their willingness to hold talks with the United States.

Having concluded their Pyongyang trip, Chung's delegation is scheduled to fly to the United States to brief officials about the outcome of the talks with North Korean officials.

President Donald Trump has said talks with North Korea will happen only "under the right conditions." He was still cautious, tweeting Tuesday's news was "possible progress."

A summit next month would be the Koreas' third. The past two summits, one in 2000 and the other in 2007, were held between Kim's late father, Kim Jong Il, and two liberal South Korean presidents.



American Samoa Government
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

RFP No: RFP 035-2018
Issuance Date: February 28, 2018

Date & Time Due: March 16, 2018
No later than 2:00 p.m. local time

The American Samoa Government (ASG) Issues & Request For Proposals (RFP) from qualified firms to provide:

"E-Rate Year 21 - Local Telephone Services for the Department of Education"

SUBMISSION

Original and five copies of the Proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked: **"E-Rate Year 21 - Local Telephone Services for the Department of Education."** Submissions are to be sent to the following address and will be received until 2:00 p.m. (local time), **March 16, 2018:**

Office of Procurement
American Samoa Government
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
attn: Dr. Oreta Mapu Crichton, CPO

Any proposal 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.

DOCUMENT

The RFP Scope of Work outlining the proposal requirements is available at the Office of Procurement, Tafuna, American Samoa during normal working hours.

REVIEW

Request for Proposal data will be thoroughly reviewed by an appointed Source Evaluation Board under the auspices of the Chief Procurement Officer, Office of Procurement, ASG.

RIGHT OF REJECTION

The American Samoa Government reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals and to waive any irregularities and/or informalities in the submitted proposals that are not in the best interests of the American Samoa Government or the public.

DR. ORETA MAPU CRICHTON
Chief Procurement Officer

Porn star sues Trump over nondisclosure agreement

By **MICHAEL BALSAMO**, *Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A porn star who has said she had sex with President Donald Trump filed a lawsuit Tuesday seeking to invalidate a non-disclosure agreement that she signed days before the 2016 presidential election, which prevented her from discussing the alleged sexual encounters.

The lawsuit, filed in Los Angeles County Superior Court, alleges that the agreement is “null and void and of no consequence” because Trump didn’t personally sign it.

Adult film actress Stormy Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, said she wanted to go public with the details of her alleged sexual relationship with Trump in the weeks leading up to the election, according to the lawsuit. Clifford and Trump’s attorney Michael Cohen signed the non-disclosure agreement on Oct. 28, 2016.

Clifford alleges that she began an “intimate relationship” with Trump in 2006 and that it continued “well into the year 2007,” according to the lawsuit. She said the relationship included encounters in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, and Beverly Hills, California.

Trump married his current wife, Melania Trump, in 2005.

Clifford has claimed she had sex with Trump once and then carried on a subsequent yearslong platonic relationship. She has also, through a lawyer, denied the two had an affair. Cohen has denied there was ever an affair.

Cohen has said he paid the porn actress \$130,000 out of his own pocket as part of the agreement. He has also said that “neither the Trump Organization nor the Trump campaign was a party to the transaction with Ms. Clifford, and neither reimbursed me for the payment, either directly or indirectly.”

The lawsuit charges that the “hush agreement” is legally invalid because it was only signed by Clifford and Cohen. The agreement refers to Trump as David Dennison and Clif-

ford as Peggy Peterson, but an attached exhibit details their true identities.

Clifford’s lawsuit also alleges that Trump and Cohen “aggressively sought to silence Ms. Clifford as part of an effort to avoid her telling the truth, thus helping to ensure he won the Presidential Election.”

“To be clear, the attempts to intimidate Ms. Clifford into silence and ‘shut her up’ in order to ‘protect Mr. Trump’ continue unabated,” the lawsuit said. Clifford alleges that as recently as last week, Trump’s attorney tried to initiate an arbitration proceeding against her.

Neither Cohen nor the White House immediately responded to requests for comment Tuesday evening.

NBC News first reported the existence of the lawsuit.



FILE - In this Feb. 11, 2007, file photo, adult film actress Stormy Daniels arrives for the 49th Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. Stormy Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, is suing President Donald Trump and wants a California judge to invalidate a nondisclosure agreement she signed days before the 2016 presidential election. (AP Photo/Matt Sayles, File)

► Russian...

Continued from page 11

eastern Ghouta unfortunately do, and that’s what makes the situation very, very dramatic,” he said.

Monday’s aid shipment was the first to enter eastern Ghouta amid weeks of a crippling siege and a government assault that has killed some 800 civilians since Feb. 18. Aid agencies said Syrian authorities removed basic health supplies, including trauma and surgical kits and insulin, from the convoys before they set off.

The U.N. said airstrikes and shelling in eastern Ghouta continued for hours while the convoy was unloading supplies.

“After nearly nine hours inside, the decision was made to leave for security reasons and to avoid jeopardizing the safety of humanitarian teams on the ground,” said Jens Laerke, deputy spokesperson for the U.N.’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. As a result, 14 of the 46 trucks in the convoy were not able to fully offload critical humanitarian supplies.

Laerke said the team found a desperate situation for people who have endured months without access to humanitarian aid. “Food for civilians was in short supply or prohibitively expensive and high rates of acute malnutrition were observed,” he said.



Tropical Cyclone Gita

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US greets talk of NK nuke concessions with hope, skepticism

By **ROBERT BURNS and HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press**
WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump greeted North Korea’s reported willingness to negotiate away its atomic weapons with both hope and skepticism Tuesday, insisting a potential diplomatic breakthrough be tested against the North’s long history of deception and threats to target U.S. cities with nuclear missiles.

“I really believe they are sincere,” Trump said at a White House news conference, sounding more optimistic than his intelligence chief, Dan Coats, who told a Senate hearing he has “very, very low confidence” that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un intends to give up his nuclear arms.

“Maybe this is a breakthrough. I seriously doubt it,” Coats said. A senior South Korean presidential adviser said Tuesday that Kim expressed a willingness to discuss nuclear disarmament and halt nuclear and missile tests during future talks with the United States. The North didn’t confirm those concessions, which would amount to a dramatic about-face for a nation that has frequently vowed to preserve its nuclear arsenal at any cost.

Chung Eui-yong, the South Korean official who spoke after participating in talks with Kim in Pyongyang, also said the North Korean dictator had agreed to meet with South Korea’s president at a border village in late April.

North Korea didn’t announce what South Korea on Tuesday described as agreements between the rivals. But the North’s state media earlier reported Kim had “openhearted” talks with South Korean envoys, expressed his willingness to “vigorously advance” North-South relations and made a “satisfactory” agreement on the inter-Korean summit talks.

Trump, who last fall told Secretary of State Rex Tillerson he was “wasting his time” trying to talk with the North, tweeted Tuesday that “possible progress” had been made in North Korea’s capital and that all sides were making serious efforts. He added: “May be false hope, but the U.S. is ready to go hard in either direction!”

Later, in an Oval Office photo session with Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, Trump said the North Koreans “seem to be acting positively,” but that the prospects will be clearer when diplomacy moves to the next stage.

“We have come certainly a long way, at least rhetorically, with North Korea,” Trump said. Of the possibility for peacefully resolving the nations’ deep differences, he said: “It’d be a great thing for the world, would be a great for North Korea, it would be a great thing for the peninsula. But we’ll see what happens.”

In Chung’s account, Kim indicated he would not need to keep nuclear weapons if military threats against North Korea were removed and his nation received a credible security guarantee. That suggests the possibility Kim will insist in any deal that the U.S. withdraw its nearly 28,000 troops from South Korea. The North sees those forces and their periodic exercises with South Korean troops as a threat to invade the North.

The White House issued a brief statement from Vice President Mike Pence suggesting nothing has changed in that area.

(Continued on page 15)



In this Monday, March 5, 2018 photo, provided by the North Korean government on March 6, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, front right, shakes hands with South Korean National Security Director Chung Eui-yong after Chung gave Kim the letter from South Korean President Moon Jae-in, in Pyongyang, North Korea. Independent journalists were not given access to cover the event depicted in this image distributed by the North Korean government. The content of this image is as provided and cannot be independently verified. Korean language watermark on image as provided by source reads: “KCNA” which is the abbreviation for Korean Central News Agency.

(Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service via AP)

► Nashville...

Continued from page 10



FILE-In this Monday, Aug. 7, 2017 file photo, Nashville Mayor Megan Barry speaks during a news conference in her office, in Nashville, Tenn. Barry has resigned after admitting she had an extramarital affair with her lead bodyguard and shortly after pleading guilty to a felony theft charge. Barry first admitted Jan. 31, 2018 to having an affair with Sgt. Robert Forrest, she said she planned to stay in office. But on Tuesday, March 6 she said her time in office has concluded.

(AP Photo/Mark Humphrey, File)



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Vice Mayor David Briley, a fellow Democrat, was sworn in Tuesday afternoon. His first words were: “I need some coffee.” He called Barry “a friend” and said he hoped she would be able to move past “a horrible moment” in her life.

A special election to choose a new mayor will be held Aug. 2.

Barry was riding high when news broke that she had been having an affair with Forrest, whose wife filed for divorce soon after the relationship became public.

At the time, Barry apologized, denied breaking the law, rebuffed calls for her resignation, and said her husband, Bruce, remained committed to their marriage.

Barry’s admission followed the painful loss of the Barrys’ only child, Max, in July after an

overdose on a combination of drugs, including opioids.

“This is a very bad day. And I’m going to have several more bad days. But this is not my worst day,” Barry said in January. “And I will tell you I know the difference between a mistake — I made a serious mistake — but this is not a tragedy.”

Elected in 2015, Barry maintained a high profile in the city, appearing routinely at concerts and other events and spearheading a successful effort to bring professional soccer to Nashville. She was the point person for a \$5.4 billion transit plan that Nashville voters will consider in a referendum in May.

Before becoming mayor, Barry earned an MBA from Vanderbilt University and was an ethics and compliance officer

in the telecommunications and health care industries.

Forrest, who had spent more than 31 years with Metro Nashville Police and supervised the mayor’s security detail over three administrations, has retired.

Police records show Forrest’s overtime more than doubled from 2014-15 to the 2016-17 budget year.

Barry said their affair began in the spring of 2016, according to court papers. She has said the relationship is over but has not disclosed when it ended.

The new mayor, in a statement, called it “a hard day for Nashville” but said Barry’s resignation “will enable us to regain focus on the important work of our city.”

Briley promised transparency and said he will work to restore the public trust.

What's fresh at McDonald's?

The beef in some burgers

By JOSEPH PISANI and TERESA CRAWFORD

NEW YORK (AP) — The Quarter Pounder is getting a fresh makeover.

McDonald's said Tuesday that it is serving Quarter Pounders with fresh beef rather than frozen patties at about a quarter of its U.S. restaurants, a switch it first announced about a year ago as it works to appeal to customers who want fresher foods. It will roll out fresh beef Quarter Pounders to most of its 14,000 U.S. restaurants by May.

The fast-food giant, which has relied on frozen patties since the 1970s, said workers will cook up the fresh beef on a grill when the burger is ordered.

"The result is a hotter, juicier, great tasting burger," said Chris Kempczinski, who oversees McDonald's Corp.'s restaurants in the U.S.

Its pricier "Signature Crafted" burgers, stuffed with guacamole or bacon, will also be made with fresh beef since they use the same sized patty as the Quarter Pounder. The Big Mac and its other burgers, however, will still be made with frozen beef.

Fresh beef has always been used by rival Wendy's, which aired a Super Bowl commercial last month criticizing the "flash frozen" beef at McDonald's. A Wendy's Co. representative gave a frosty response Tuesday, saying that "it's awesome" that McDonald's "is recommitting to using frozen beef on the majority of its hamburgers."

McDonald's, however, has signaled that it may use fresh beef in more burgers. Earlier this year, the Oak Brook, Illinois-based company confirmed that it was testing a fresh beef burger that used a patty that was slightly smaller than the one in the Quarter Pounder, but larger than the one its hamburgers and cheeseburgers.

The change at McDonald's is the latest as it seeks to shed its junk food image. It has removed artificial preservatives from Chicken McNuggets, and made other tweaks, including replacing the apple juice in Happy Meals with one with less sugar.

"Fresh in the mind of the consumer really has a better-for-you connotation," said David Henkes, a senior principal at Technomic, a food industry market research firm. "It certainly has a perception that it's better than frozen."

The company tested the fresh beef Quarter Pounder for about two years in Dallas and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Eight more cities are serving it now, including some restaurants in Atlanta, Miami and Salt Lake City. It'll come to Denver, Houston and other cities over the next month before the nationwide rollout.

McDonald's said the switch is a major change for the company, and has said the rollout takes time because employees need to be trained to safely handle fresh beef and to cook the patties only when ordered.

US greets...

Continued from page 14

A U.S. official said there were no plans to scrap the war games envisioned for next month. "All options are on the table, and our posture toward the regime will not change until we see credible, verifiable and concrete steps toward denuclearization," Pence said. Separately, highlighting a less-discussed dimension of the standoff with North Korea, the Pentagon's military intelligence chief told a Senate hearing that Kim has taken a "far different" approach to military preparedness than his father, Kim Jong Il, by imposing greater rigor and discipline in army training. Lt. Gen. Robert Ashley, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, called it a "big change" and implied the improvements should be taken into account in considering the prospect of war

on the Korean peninsula.

North Korea's willingness to hold a "candid dialogue" with the United States to discuss denuclearization and establish diplomatic relations follows a year of increased fears of war, with Kim and Trump exchanging fiery rhetoric and crude insults over Kim's barrage of weapons tests. The Trump administration also pushed through some of the harshest economic sanctions any country has ever faced.

Trump said Kim's apparent willingness to negotiate is likely due to the sanctions, and China's role in applying them.

Still, there is wide skepticism that Tuesday's developments will bring genuine peace between the Koreas, which have a long history of failing to follow through.



FILE- In this April 24, 2017, photo, corporate signage hangs at a McDonald's restaurant in downtown Pittsburgh. McDonald's announced Tuesday, March 6, 2018, that it is offering fresh beef rather than frozen patties in some burgers at thousands of restaurants, a switch it first announced about a year ago as it works to appeal to customers who want fresher foods.

(AP Photo/Keith Srakocic, File)



American Samoa Government OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB-031-2018

Issuance Date: March 7, 2018

Closing Date: April 4, 2018

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

1. INVITATION

Sealed bids are invited from qualified firms to provide "Route 104 Hospital Road Reconstruction (Rebid)" for the Department of Public Works.

2. RECEIPT & OPENING OF BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by the Chief Procurement Officer, American Samoa Government, Tafuna, American Samoa, 96799, until 2:00 p.m. (local time), **Wednesday, April 4, 2018** at which time and place the sealed bids will be publicly opened and read.

3. PRE-BID MEETING

A **MANDATORY** Pre-Bid Meeting for all contractors will be held on March 14, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. at the Department of Procurement-Conference Room. Bids will not be accepted from bidders who are not present at the pre-bid meeting.

4. CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

Electronic copies of contract documents, including Plans and Scope of Work can be examined or obtained from the Office of Procurement during regular business hours, free of charge.

5. The American Samoa Government reserves the right not to accept the lowest or my bid.

6. The American Samoa Government reserves the right to waive any informality in bidding as may be in the best interest of the American Samoa Government.

DR. ORETA MAPU CRICHTON
Chief Procurement Officer

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