



Minister Kedi

# Battle over order from Finance

GIFF JOHNSON

For more than one month, some RMI government agencies have battled with the Ministry of Finance over a new requirement that the agencies sign an agreement to bring their pay scales into line with those of the Public Service Commission — or no government subsidy. The problem threatened to shut down shipping services to the outer islands until it was resolved this week. The Marshall Islands Shipping Corporation refused to sign the agreement, bringing the matter to a head earlier this week because funding for ships has been withheld by Finance since the new fiscal year started on October 1.

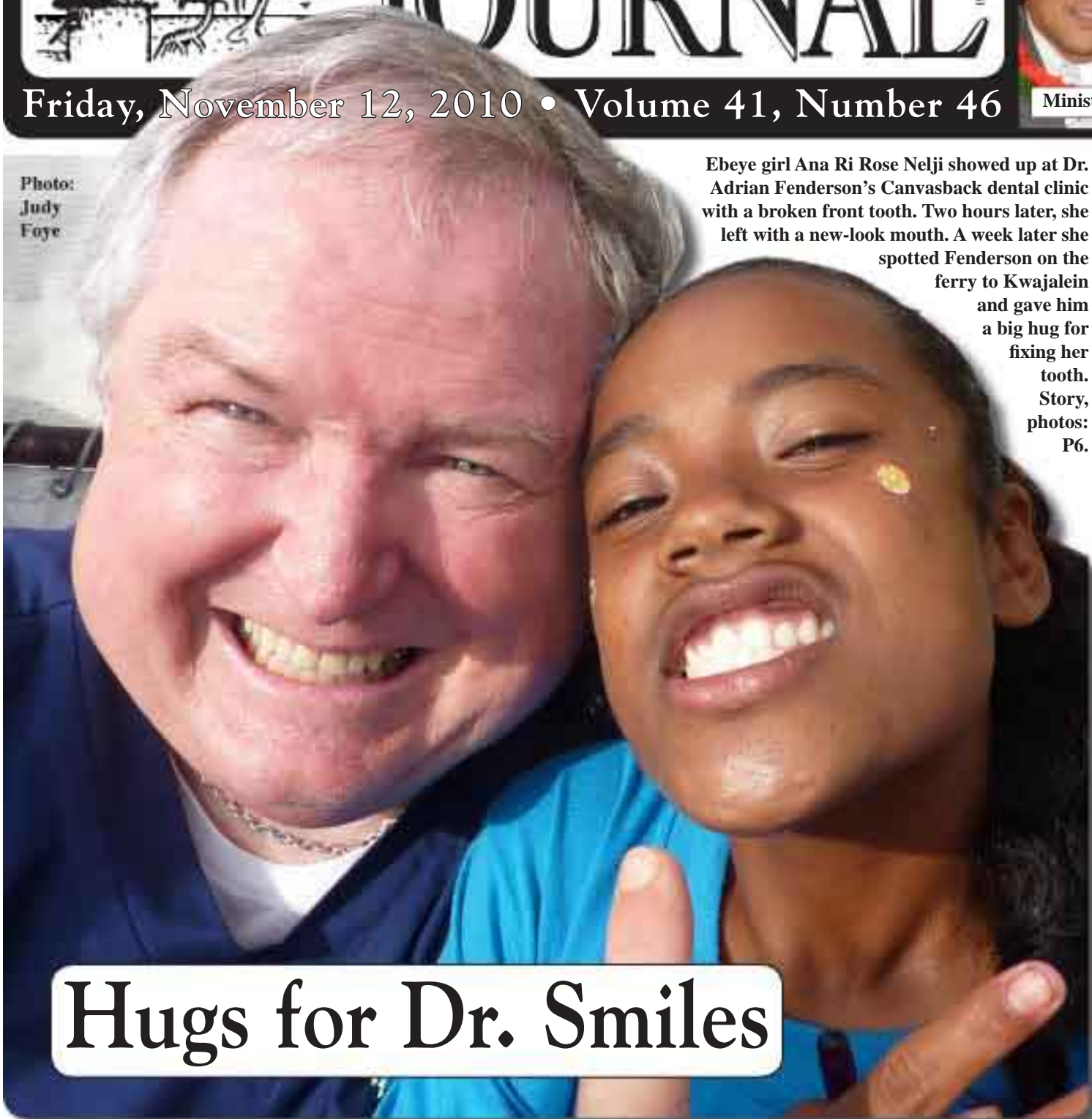
Earlier this week, Transportation and Communications Minister Kenneth Kedi contacted the Attorney General's office, and Acting AG Tubosoye Brown weighed in on the side of the agencies. Brown told the Journal Tuesday that the Ministry of Finance was in error, the problem has been corrected and money should be flowing.

But until the AG stepped in this week, both Majuro Atoll Waste Company and the College of the Marshall Islands signed agreements that Finance required in

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Ebeye girl Ana Ri Rose Nelji showed up at Dr. Adrian Fenderson's Canvasback dental clinic with a broken front tooth. Two hours later, she left with a new-look mouth. A week later she spotted Fenderson on the ferry to Kwajalein and gave him a big hug for fixing her tooth. Story, photos: P6.

Photo: Judy Foye



## Hugs for Dr. Smiles

# No more US \$ Warning for 2024

The United States and the Marshall Islands urgently need to address problems with the Compact Trust Fund to avoid an economic shock in the RMI in 2024, said a US government economic report on the RMI released this week.

The US government has stated repeatedly that the Compact makes no promises that the Trust Fund will provide for similar levels of funding as US grants in 2023. But, said the USDA Graduate School's FY2009 Economic Report on the RMI issued this week, the Trust Fund agreement specifies a withdrawal rule that is precisely based upon the FY2023 annual grant assistance level.

"If the returns (from the Trust Fund) in a post-2024 year are insufficient and if the 'C' account, established as a buffer, is empty,

## Trust Fund created to provide ongoing revenue

The Trust Fund was created "to contribute to the long-term budgetary self-reliance of the RMI (and) to provide the Government of the RMI with an ongoing source of revenue after FY2023," according to Compact documents.

US government officials have stated that

the RMI would suffer a severe fiscal shock,' the report said. "Zero funds would be made available for budgetary or investment support in such an event."

The report said that the RMI government could go from receiving \$37.4 million from US grants in 2023 to receiving no US grants

the Compact does not promise that the Trust Fund will replace US grant funding after 2023. "The amended Compacts and their subsidiary agreements contain no commitments, either express or implied, regarding the level of revenue that will be generated by the Trust Fund, nor is there any commitment

and no Trust Fund money in 2024.

The report said that "for this and several other compelling reasons, it makes sense for the RMI and the US to consider modifications to the Trust Fund agreement to correct the poorly specified buffer account and withdrawal rules embedded in

regarding the degree to which the revenue will 'contribute' to the long-term budgetary self-reliance of the...RMI," is the stated US position. US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Eric Watnik told the Journal Tuesday that "the US viewpoint has been stated and there is no change in status."

the Trust Fund agreement so as to reduce the risk of a fiscal shock of such immense proportions."

Points raised by this report are also echoed in an RMI government report issued last week in response to the US government's

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# More smiles on Ebeye after Canvasback visit

A volunteer dental team from Canvasback was busy last month helping to improve the oral health of Ebeye's children. "In just nine days, Canvasback's dental team did more than two month's worth of work," said Ebeye Hospital dentist Frolian M. Hermes Dequito.

The team of 10 examined 525 patients and performed 1,114 procedures that included x-rays, cleaning, extractions, and restorations. They saw nearly all of the third to seventh grade students from the six schools on Ebeye and 14 students who attend Kwajalein schools. "The amount of work that was accomplished was only possible because of the excellent job that the Ebeye dental staff did," said Canvasback co-founder Jacque Spence. "They arranged for the students to come in, and worked side-by-side with the team."

With the help of Jimmy Matsunaga, KRS Transportation Manager, and Mike Garvin, Matson Lines

donated a 20-foot container to ship necessary dental supplies and equipment. During the visit, Canvasback presented Ebeye Hospital with donated supplies and equipment, which included two dental chairs, assistant chairs, an x-ray developer unit and hand pieces.

Ebeye Seventh-Day Adventist School was presented with \$30,000 worth of new math, science, and

English textbooks, workbooks, and teachers' edition books, all donated by Canvasback.

Earlier this year, the group's ophthalmology, orthopedic, cardiology, and dental teams provided \$1.2 million worth of medical services at Ebeye. Canvasback has been providing services in the Marshall Islands since 1986 and helps operate the Kumit Wellness Center in Majuro.



A young girl practices brushing teeth during a Canvasback clinic on Ebeye last month, while the photos below show the before and after work of the dental clinic.



## WHO wants to help MOH

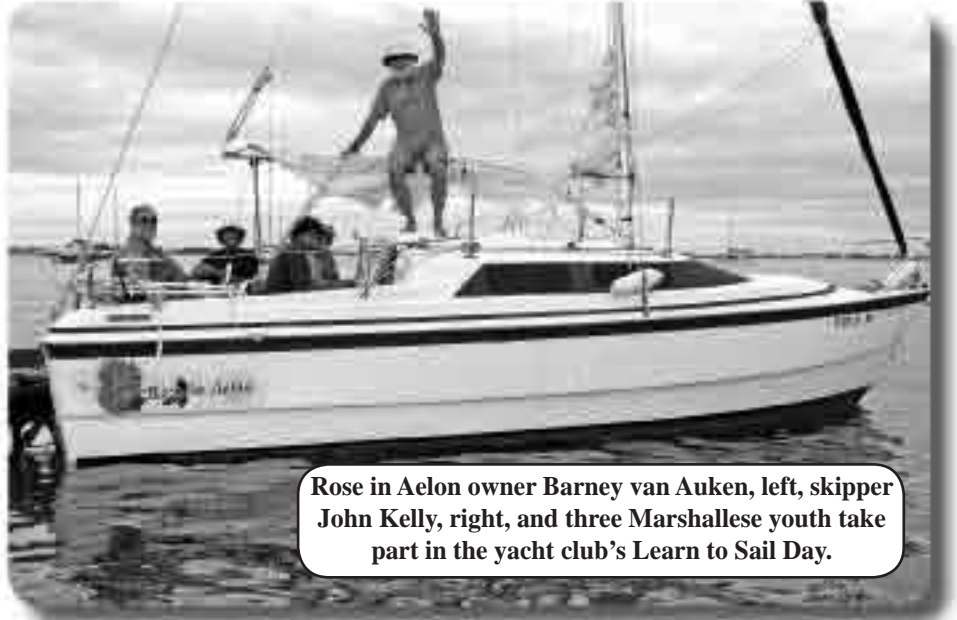
Health officials from the World Health Organization, Pacific Island Health Officers Association, and US-affiliated Pacific islands are in town this week meeting with Ministry of Health representatives on human resource needs in the RMI.

The visit follows up a 2006 decision by the WHO to focus on "the crisis in human resources in health care" in the region, said Dr. Greg Dever, who is with the team representing PIHOA.

The group, which includes medical officials from Pohnpei and Saipan, is discussing the possibility of setting up human resource committees to support ongoing education and training opportunities, and to encourage more islanders to choose health careers.



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Kate, Matt, Max, Esme & your entire Minnesota family



Rose in Aelon owner Barney van Auken, left, skipper John Kelly, right, and three Marshallese youth take part in the yacht club's Learn to Sail Day.

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## Marshallese youth take part in sail day

More than half of the participants in last Sunday's Mieco Beach Yacht Club's 'Learn to Sail Day' were Marshallese, a first for the club, which has been trying to attract locals on board the fleet's vessels for a number of years.

The club gave out a number of scholarships to Marshallese youth for the day, meaning that the \$20 fee was waived. Four cruising yachts took part in the day

-- Happy Monster, Rose In Aelon, Radiance II, and Six String -- which kicked off with a classroom session at RRE Hotel's Boknake and ended with the trainees heading out to the boats for a sail around the lagoon.

The 'Learn to Sail Day' is in preparation for the club's race season, which starts on Sunday, December 5, with the skippers' meeting at the Marshall Islands Resort at 6pm on Friday, December 3.

# Aussies offer new funding for development



Australian Ambassador Susan Cox.

New funding of about US\$96,500 is available from the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei for the 2010-11 financial year as part of the Direct Aid Program (DAP). This funding is available to individuals, non-government organizations, and community groups engaged in development activities in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau.

The DAP is a flexible small grants program funded by the Australian Agency for International Development to respond to developmental and humanitarian needs. Grants are usually given for amounts of \$5,000 up to \$30,000.

The DAP focuses on small-grants that benefit grassroots, community-based organizations that might otherwise be overlooked by larger aid programs. DAP

is intended to help communities to help themselves through one-off funding and is not a continuing funding stream for ongoing projects.

Applications for DAP can be found on the Australian Embassy's website at <http://www.fsm.embassy.gov.au/phpi/cooperation.html>, or by contacting the Embassy's Public Diplomacy Officer in Pohnpei at 691-320-5448.

## 'This is only the beginning' Ione deBrum

# Turning around DIABETES



Ione deBrum

Another 25 healthy graduates joined the ranks of successful lifestyle change by completing the intervention program at the Diabetes Wellness Center late last month.

A graduation ceremony was held to recognize program participants. US Ambassador Martha L. Campbell, Health Promotion Director Ione deBrum, and Canvasback Missions founder Jacque Spence joined in recognizing the group.

"The US is pleased that we could help support this program," and "is really proud to be working with the Wellness Center," said Campbell. "Each of you is an ambassador for a healthy lifestyle," she told them.

The ambassador shared that she is personally a big fan of the Wellness Center and that she frequently dines at the program's restaurant with visiting dignitaries.

DeBrum encouraged the graduates to continue the healthy lifestyle they have learned.

"This is not the end — this is only the beginning," she said. She challenged each of them to continue walking every day for at least 30 minutes.

DeBrum then spontaneously invited each participant to become members of the first Diabetes advisory panel to address and discuss diabetes issues during national diabetes month in November.

As each participant was called forward to be personally recognized, they were presented with a framed picture of their graduating



Canvasback Missions founder Jacquie Spence, left. The graduates from the most recent intervention program at the Diabetes Wellness Center.



class to help them remember their individual and collective success and achievements.

Five participants received special achievement award trophies to celebrate their stellar individual progress: Cathlina deBrum, Sentina Jack, Clara Milne, Hain Mojilong, and Lankoj Rosa.

Four were recognized with perfect attendance awards: Emplain

Lain, Clara Milne, Kenbin Roja, and Lankoj Rosa.

After the awards, the graduates were invited to personally address their fellow participants with a few words about their own stories and experiences with the Wellness Center program.

The ensuing heartfelt testimonies expressed sincere appreciation for the Wellness Center staff

and the lifestyle change they helped instill. The program's required exercise regimen was the most noted component introduced as key to the personal success achieved.

Wellness Center Director Denis Yates then took time to acknowledge the importance of funders and staff to the program's continued success.

"It takes all of us, a whole team, to make this happen. The Ministry of Health, the US Embassy, Canvasback, and the Wellness Center" each played an important role, Yates said. "We are so grateful for the support."

Because the US Department of Defense provided the initial funding necessary to start up the program in July 2005, the Wellness Center recognized the support of the US Embassy by presenting a certificate of appreciation to Ambassador Campbell.

Canvasback Missions, represented at the ceremony by committed co-founder Jacquie Spence, is the parent charity organization behind the initial program. Canvas-

back has been working to improve the health of RMI citizens for 30 years.

Yates also recognized Intervention Director Tanner Smith and Kristin Smith, volunteers who are both professional nurses, and Athletic Director Harry Yotama, as essential to the program's success.

A rousing highlight of the evening occurred unexpectedly, as a short demonstration of the aerobic dance regimen the participants had learned over the last few months turned into a roomful of laughter and impromptu exercise. As the group performed, led by the energetic calls of Yotama, all audience members were cajoled into standing up to join in the dance, which resulted in a roomful of elevated heart rates and smiling faces.

The evening wrapped up on an upbeat note with the performance of a few original songs the participants developed to mark their group's accomplishments and wellness.

A new group of Marshallese has already started the next Wellness Center training program.

*Health Is A Shared Responsibility*

*Ajmuur Ej Adwōj Jimor Eddo*

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

**Ministry of Health**



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# JITDAM – BŌBRAE NAÑINMEJ IN TŌÑAL

The Wellness Center program saved me from losing my foot!



Sione @tuafi

I came to the Marshall Islands in 1983 and moved into the Laura area in 1986. I found out that I am diabetic and my blood sugar was 321 and blood pressure was up to 140/90. I soon noticed a cut on my foot that started small and got larger and then I realized that I couldn't feel anything on my foot!

Then one day I went for a checkup and met Denis Yates of the Diabetes Wellness Center and was put into a program on February, 2010. When I started the program I was overweight,

but by April I had lost over 20 pounds. My blood sugar came down to 146 and to this day it is still dropping and I am still walking every day and workout in the gym whenever I get a chance. Thank you Denis, Tanner, and all the others at the Wellness Center for making a new and healthy person out of me.

Me & my family are benefiting by the healthy choices I've learned



Cathlina deBrum

My name is Cathlina and I joined the Wellness Center in May, 2010. I tried the conventional medications to treat my diabetes but nothing worked so I decided to try the Wellness Center program. At first I wasn't sure if I would like the Wellness program, but after only one week I was feeling better. In just six weeks my triglycerides went from 886 to 274! I almost had given up on myself, but today I am healthier

than ever and so is my family. All my kids are now eating a healthy diet! For all those who need help with diabetes, the Wellness Center is the place.



Clara Milne

My blood sugar is now in the low 70s!

My name is Clara, I had very bad diabetes and my blood sugar was over 300. I was also very overweight. Now, thanks to the Wellness Center, I have a new life!

My blood sugar is down to the low 70s which is normal for people without diabetes and I have lost a lot of weight! Now I want everyone to know that if you have diabetes you need to come to the Wellness Center. First you learn how to exercise and then they feed you healthy food. Today I'm really healing from diabetes and am very thankful to our heavenly Father for life and for the people at the Diabetes Wellness Center.

I no longer have diabetes, my blood sugar and cholesterol are both within normal range

Before doing the Wellness Center program I felt fatigued and sleepy during the day. I was overweight and had high cholesterol. My blood sugar level was in the upper one hundreds. Three weeks into the program I knew I was in the right place and heading in the right direction. The fatigue and sleepiness was gone and I was losing weight and had more energy. With all the exercise and encouragement from



Paul Tonyokwe

my fellow classmates and staff at the Center, I knew I was going to make it, and I did! My lab results came back and my cholesterol levels are within normal ranges, my diabetes is gone and I lost 33 pounds. I am very thankful for all the wonderful help I received. Now I am trying to maintain what I have accomplished through the Wellness Center program.

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