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REBUILDING THE ECONOMY
AT A SUSTAINABLE PACE

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT
8 SEPTEMBER 2020

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

For your convenience, Joeten launches 'Easy Grocery'

Four years ago, soon after having a health issue that made walking and carrying heavy loads very difficult, Rick suggested to the grocery store where he regularly shops to create an online portal where customers can buy grocery items using an app on their phone, pay for the items using their debit or credit card, and have someone at the store deliver the items to his home. And he was willing to pay a premium for that convenience. Who would have thought that a global pandemic would accelerate that idea into reality?

Last week, Joeten launched its "Easy Grocery," a unique service that will make grocery shopping convenient and an enjoyable experience. You don't have to stress going out of the house to get food and household items you need because, with Joeten Easy Grocery, it would seem like you have partner or assistant in meeting your family's grocery needs.

According to Gederryn R. Domingo, marketing manager/buyer at J.C. Tenorio Enterprises, Joeten "Easy Grocery" is a collaboration with Eats Easy, an app that manages fast and efficient food delivery on Saipan. "Now they also



Joeten teams up with Eats Easy to create the "Easy Grocery," a unique service that makes grocery shopping convenient and an enjoyable experience. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

have grocery delivery from Joeten. ... [The] Eats Easy app has existed since February this year and, being the first GPS mobile app on Saipan, Joeten recognized how beneficial this could be for shopping centers/supermarkets," she said.

"The idea was inspired by Eats Easy's purpose to serve our island hassle-free food that's delivered right to your door. ... We approached the Eats Easy team in March and, after numerous meetings, discussions, trial runs here and there, a couple months later we launched Easy Grocery," she added.

Domingo said that grocery delivery has been popular and successful in the U.S. mainland for many years now. She said the concept was already in the works even before COVID-19 but the impetus to create online shopping became more urgent due to the pandemic. "We all are familiar with Walmart, a retail corporation that offers grocery delivery in the U.S. mainland. We thought that it would be better to present and expand grocery delivery service to our community," she said. "Trying to find time, especially on a busy schedule, to make dinner is one thing, but to find time to go to the grocery store is

See JOETEN on Page 16

Surviving the COVID-19 pandemic as a business



SAIPAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT VELMA PALACIOS SPEAKS AT THE TOWN HALL MEETING HELD LAST MONTH THAT PROVIDED A PLATFORM FOR BUSINESS LEADERS AND OWNERS TO VENT OUT CHALLENGES, FEARS AND HOPE.

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

When news broke that the CNMI's COVID-19 Emergency Directives would be amended, many restaurant businesses were fearful that the new directives may include taking away dine-in services that could shut businesses down. It was, therefore, with a sigh of relief for many businesses when the amendments involved only new curfew and business hours, remote learning for schools, limited gathering for people, and restricted building occupancy. With this, local businesses pressed ahead with providing services to their employees, while encouraging the continued practice of health and safety protocols.

According to Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Velma Palacios, the Chamber has not heard any negative feedback from businesses regarding the new COVID-19 requirements. "The main change was the curfew and in general businesses are complying with the COVID-19 Task Force requirements to reopen and to ensure the safety of their employees and customers," she said.

Many restaurants and customers are happy that the new regulations did not take away dine-in operations. "We agree this a good thing, as many restaurants have been working on complying with the COVID-19 requirements to offer dine-in services. The more businesses open, it will be good for our economy," Palacios said.

"This is also a start to provide some level of confidence to our community

members that businesses are following safety protocols and, if businesses do not follow the safety protocols, their operations will be shut down by the enforcement agencies," Palacios added.

Although the future still remains uncertain, CNMI businesses have welcomed the move to reopen after several months of zero business activity. "No one knows what next week or even next month will bring. In our small business forum, some businesses mentioned they were thriving; others are still struggling. Businesses are taking

See COVID-19 on Page 16

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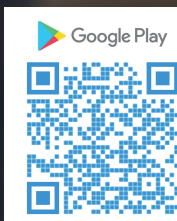
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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Miss Earth NMI 2020 candidates are ready for the virtual pageant that's going to be held on Sept. 19, 2020, at the Hyatt Regency Saipan from 4pm to 6pm.

Miss Earth

Exquisite Productions Presents

MISS EARTH NORTHERN MARIANAS 2020

NORTHERN MARIANA'S FIRST VIRTUAL PAGEANT

L to R: Kaitlin Borja, Maria Lael Terlaje, Julia Biton, Zoe Stephanson & Arianne Cabrera

Leisha Deleon Guerrero
Miss Northern Marianas Earth 2019

| FACEBOOK STREAMING SCHEDULES | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 09.07 INTRODUCTION | 09.15 NATIONAL COSTUME |
| 09.09 SWIMSUIT | 09.17 QUESTION & ANSWER |
| 09.12 EVENING GOWN | 7:00 PM (Saipan Time) |

Miss Northern Marianas Earth 2020 Coronation
September 19, 2020 | Hyatt Regency Hotel
4:00PM to 6:00PM

missnmiearth

missnorthernmarianasearth

Northern Marianas pageant goes virtual

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The much-awaited Miss Earth Northern Marianas Pageant 2020 will push through this year, with organizers breaking norms and traditions in this new normal by proceeding with the pageant virtually.

The Miss Earth 2020 Northern Marianas pageant will be on Sept. 19, 2020, at the Hyatt Regency Saipan from 4pm to 6pm. The international pageant itself will start on Sept. 21, 2020, and the finals will be on Nov. 29, 2020—all done virtually.

Dee Clayton, president of Exquisite Productions that organizes the Miss Earth Northern Marianas, said the pursuit of strong environmental programs in the CNMI and around world remains important despite the pandemic. "It is important to address climate change as well as the pandemic. This is the time where we take responsibility to bring awareness to the environment and to also advocate and spread the word to have a safe community and be aware of our health," she added.

According to Clayton, the pandemic makes it difficult to organize a pageant even virtually. "This is due to the protocols that we have to follow but, as long as we take precautions, commit to the directives and restriction orders from our government leaders, I think we can still move forward with the pageant," she said.

Organizer will be using Facebook Livestream that will also capture the activities of each contestant and include the swimwear, evening

wear, native costume and the question-and-answer portion. They will be prejudged and the finals will be at the coronation itself.

The current titleholder, 2019 Miss Earth Northern Marianas Leisha Deleon Guerrero, is a student at the Northern Marianas College. Among the projects that she has undertaken for environmental awareness and sustainability as Miss Earth Northern Marianas promotes the 5R Campaign, which intends to spread the idea of "Reduce. Reuse. Refuse. Respect. Rethink" as a lifestyle in the Marianas.

In an earlier interview, she said that it is her responsibility as Miss Earth NMI to lead the community and the youth to be part of this beneficial change within the islands. "The 5R campaign is a call for members of the community to reduce the amount of waste they generate, to reuse materials, to refuse excessive packaging, to respect the environment, and to rethink lifestyle choices."

"The Miss Earth NMI pageant and mission is one of the most relevant to date, considering we are in a global climate crisis. Miss Earth is also known for our motto, 'Beauties for a Cause,' and that's exactly what being Miss Earth NMI is all about," Deleon Guerrero added.

This year, seven young women will vie for the chance to represent the Marianas at the Miss Earth international pageant in December. They are Arianne Cabrera, Zoe Stephanson, Jessme Jones, Maria Terlaje, Jaybriana

See MS. EARTH on Page 16



FHB introduces 'Tap & Go' technology

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

First Hawaiian Bank has made using your FHB debit and credit cards easier, faster, and safer.

FHB is the first financial institution in Hawaii to unveil its "Tap & Go" contactless debit and credit technology, which means you can settle your bill, check, or account without the card leaving your hand or touching the terminal, which is a huge plus during the pandemic.

According to FHB senior vice president and Card Services Division manager Gregg Hirano, this Tap & Go technology happened at a right time when people are starting to get comfortable with resuming their daily lives after confinement, quarantine, or lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic and when economic flow is on the move again. "With consumers returning to their daily activities of shopping and dining, our new contactless payment cards offer our customers the ability to make their purchases quickly with their card never leaving

their hand," he said. "Using the latest advances in digital, chip-enhanced technology, we're able to quickly respond to changing consumer preferences with cards that enhance convenience, speed, security and safety."

The new cards use near-field communication wireless connectivity and customers simply "tap" by hovering any FHB debit or credit card over the contactless symbol on merchant terminals to make a payment. Customers may need to enter a PIN number for transactions over \$50. Hirano describes the process as another tool for customers' need for frictionless banking and shopping.

"These new contactless cards provide both customers and businesses a convenient, fast, and secure way to make everyday purchases at many point-of-sale terminals statewide. As Hawaii's local economy continues its reopening and small businesses look for ways to ensure success, contactless cards allow for a speedier checkout experience and increased customer loyalty," Hirano said. "For businesses like coffee shops, fast casual restau-

rants, and grocery stores, the elimination of hand-to-hand transactions enables faster transactions and a safer environment for employees. ... Contactless cards can process transactions nearly 10 times faster than a regular chip-enabled card. Businesses can complete transactions more quickly, reducing the amount of time customers must wait in line to make a purchase."

Where security is concerned, FHB debit and credit card holders are assured of safe and secure transactions every time as FHB cards are embedded with multiple layers of security to protect FHB cardholders against fraud. "Transactions are secure since the card never leaves the hand of the customer and the built-in chip technology generates a unique code for each transaction, as it does with regular chip-enabled cards. For added security, Mastercard's Zero Liability still protects users from unauthorized transactions," Hirano said.

"Contactless Tap & Go technology is a convenient alternative to cash and is already available for use anywhere that Apple Pay, Samsung Pay or Google Pay is

accepted," Hirano added. Contactless debit and credit cards distribution started on June 29, 2020. Other FHB digital alternatives such as Digital Home Loan portal for mortgages allows customers to go online, have easy access to details and manage their mortgage; and FHB Mobile Banking, which allows account holders to manage their account, deposit checks using their mobile device, pay bills and more. For more information, visit fhb.com/contactless.



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Moving forward together



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BEA CABRERA

Shirley's Coffee shop have allotted one to two curbside pick-up slots in all of their branches to cater to customers who don't want to get out of their cars.

Novel ways of doing business

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Since March, CNMI businesses and establishments have been squeezing their creative juices to find viable alternatives to meet their customers' needs in ways that are safe for both customers and employees and the good news is it is working.

Curbside pick-up
Curbside pick-up allows a

customer to phone in an order and pick it up without having to get out the car because the order is brought to one's car by a server.

At the reopening of Bubba Gump last July, Robert H. Jones, chairman and CEO of Triple J Enterprises, Inc. said that the new trend now is not dine-in but drive-thru and pick-up services. "This is something that is being

See **NOVEL** on Page 16

Let your imagination soar at Aqua Resort Club Saipan

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The pandemic may have put a stop to many things in your life, delayed some plans, and maybe made you change your priorities but it should not mean a life monotonous, black-and-white life. Despite the challenges, many refreshing and enjoyable breaks awaits you at Aqua Resort Club.



Romantic staycation

Treat your special someone to a one-night stay at Aqua's Resort Club with a deluxe garden view room, paired with a romantic dinner for two at Kevin's Prime Rib and Seafood where you can choose from their four-course menus and enjoy a glass of sparkling wine as a welcome drink.

Other treats include early check-in at 10am, late check-out at 5pm and a 10% discount on Couple's Massages at the ARC Spa. Get this special package for only \$180 (exclusive of tax).

Call (670) 322-1234 for more information.

For only \$290 (exclusive of tax) relax in the lullaby that ocean waves sing to you and your special someone at their oceanfront suite that also includes a romantic dinner for two at Kevin's Prime Rib and Seafood. You are also allowed early check-in at 10am, late check-out at 5pm and a 10% discount off on Couple's Massages at ARC Spa. Call (670) 322-1234 for more information.

Get a pool pass

Avail of pool passes for only \$15 for adults, which includes a \$5 gift voucher at

the ARC Café and only \$10 for children 2 to 11 years old from Friday to Sunday 10am to 7pm. Reservations are required. Call (670) 322-1234 for more information.

Sweet cravings

Enjoy delicious and freshly baked desserts from ARC Café like Cookie Cream Puffs and Mochi Donuts to enjoy right away or take home. Cookie Cream puffs cost only \$3 each or two for \$5. These delectable treats are also available in boxes: a box of six is only \$15 and a box of 12 is only \$30. Advance order is required.

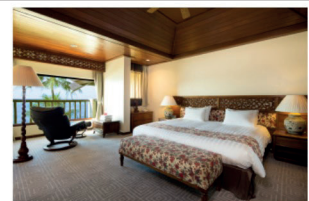
Crisp on the outside and mochi mushy on the inside, Mochi Donuts go for only \$2 apiece. An assorted box of six that includes chocolate, strawberry, matcha, sugar, coffee caramel and honey lemon goes for only \$9 and assorted box of 12 that includes ube (purple yam), cookies & cream, mint chocolate, Earl Gray tTea, chocolate, strawberry, matcha, honey lemon, coffee caramel, powdered sugar and cinnamon sugar goes for only \$18. Available from Friday to Sunday and ad-
See **AQUA** on Page 17



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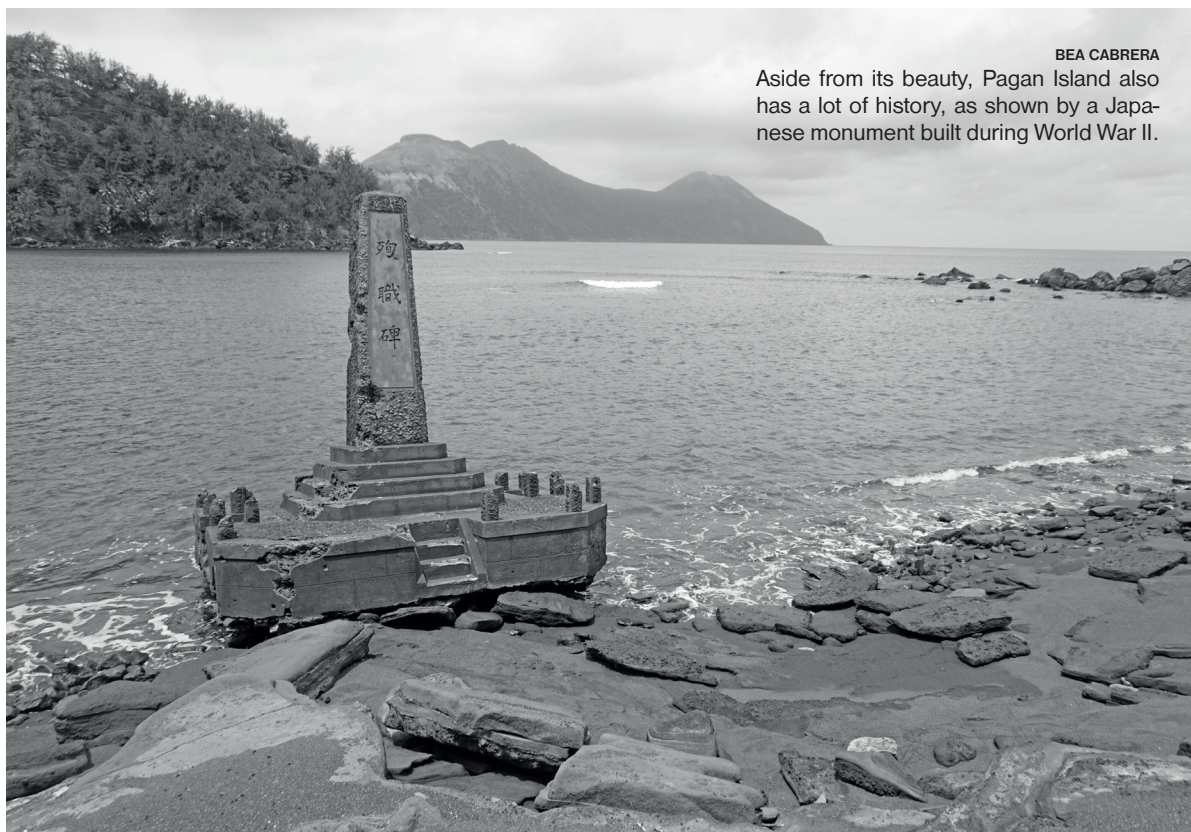
Pagan is one of the Northern Islands and its beauty can only be appreciated if one is ready to take on mountain trails and rugged foot paths.

By **BEA CABRERA**
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Plans to open up the Northern Islands to the world has been in the pipeline for quite a while now even before COVID-19 but that mostly just sat on a shelf somewhere, gathering dust. Yet now that the CNMI's entire tourism industry has come to a screeching halt, the Marianas Visitor's Authority is dusting off that plan and is working on shifting the interest of the world to lure adventure-type tourists to see and experience the wild and unspoiled beauty of the isolated Northern Islands.

First off was an online media campaign via the YouTube channel "Deer Meat for Dinner" that is hosted by Robert Arrington. MVA noted that the recent exposure of the Northern Islands via Arrington's channel showed that 19 videos about the Marianas generated 10 million views and has generated many inquiries.

MVA board member Gloria Cavanagh said that many of the inquiries came from people in the U.S. mainland. "We have people calling and most of them are from the mainland. These people have expressed interest and some people are even calling the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. to find out what the protocols are, as far as quarantine is concerned," said Cavanagh. "We have had feedback from people who are actually serious about it and we are pleasantly surprised. In the event these people come here, MVA will not hesitate to assist these



BEA CABRERA

Aside from its beauty, Pagan Island also has a lot of history, as shown by a Japanese monument built during World War II.

'MVA has no grand illusion that there is going to be millions of dollars coming in. What matters now is serious interest and, if it's going to be just few people every year, that is fantastic because it puts us on the map that the CNMI is also that type of destination.'

tourists in trying to help them to get services out there as the would have to charter to go to the Northern Islands."

A couple wrote the MVA directly about plans to visit. "My wife...and I started planning our trip to the Marianas after Robert's first videos

of his first visit to your wonderful paradise. I do not plan to hunt, but I intend to camp (away from the wild cows), go fishing, crabbing, and

play some music for some of you on my guitar."

A viewer left a comment under the "Dear Meat for Dinner" YouTube video, saying: "This second visit of Arrington to your islands is only strengthening my resolve to come visit your wonderful island paradise."

According to Cavanagh, the tourists that they want are seasoned adventure-type travelers who would stay in a tent, are into discovering new landscapes, cultures, and don't mind minor inconveniences. "MVA has no grand illusion that there is going to be millions of dollars coming in. What matters now is serious interest and, if it's going to be just few people every year, that is fantastic because it puts us on the map that the CNMI is also that type of destination," she said.

"That is going to be a small market but it's going to be a market like [what] Palau has. ...There are no plans to suddenly build a hotel [on] Pagan because these adventure-type tourists don't want to stay in a hotel. If they do, then it would be best for them to just stay on Saipan but if it's adventure, then the Northern Islands will be the perfect fit," she added.

MVA managing director Priscilla Maratita *Iakopo* said in a press statement that her office has been contacted by a group interested in filming an educational documentary in the Northern Islands next year. "...We hope their plans will solidify. We are excited that despite the special logistical needs, the Northern Islands are starting to generate visitor demand..."