

Marshall Islands Visitors Authority
Tourism Quarterly
Volume 1, Number, 2005

Iokwe and thank you for reading this first issue of MIVA newsletter for the year 2005. This newsletter will aim to inform the general public, friends, and visitors on significant happenings in the area of tourism. With MIVA's new website, it is our hope that this newsletter will be more "reader-friendly" than our progress reports for our friends and visitors. Anyhow, we thank you for your interest in our small-but-growing tourism industry and we look forward to hearing any comments or questions you may have for our office. Kommool tata .

Media and Fam Trips:

Fathom Media, Inc. send water photographer to RMI-

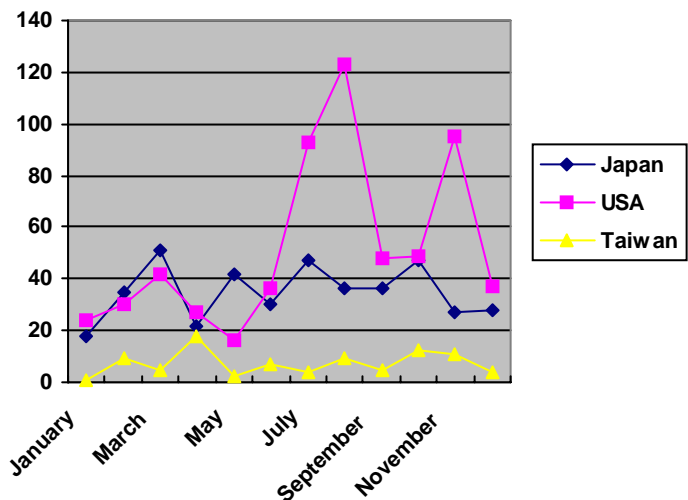
Fathom Media, Inc. out of England, sent water photographer Gavin Goodhart to visit Majuro, Arno, and Bikini. The quarterly issued DVD is sold via the Internet to various dive enthusiasts in Europe. His visit lasted one month (November 12-Dec.15) and was co-sponsored by College of the Marshall Islands, Marshalls Dive Adventures, Yokwe Divers/Rongelap Expeditions, BAKO Divers, and Air Marshall Islands.

More Promotions for Majuro & Arno-

On December 3-7, two media personnel from the Eastern Broadcasting, Co. in Taiwan, ROC, visited Majuro and Arno atolls to film a promotional video covering Taiwan's technical assistance to the islands, the ICDF Volunteer Program, and of course, tourism. The show was aired in Taiwan prior to RMI President Kessai H. Note's visit in mid-December. Co-sponsorship with the Taiwan Embassy in the RMI.

A Look at Our Numbers-

As of December 2004, 1,470 true holiday visitors arrived in Majuro via air (1380 in December 2003) with Japan leading the pack at 620 and the U.S. at 419. A decrease in the number of true holiday visitors was expected for 2004 while the number of total visitors was expected to rise. Both numbers are affected due to the increase in transit/stopover passengers into the RMI, mainly fishermen.



Cruising to Majuro

As a valuable niche market in our tourism industry, cruise ships are important to keep track of. MIVA started collecting statistics for cruise ship arrivals this year. With two cruise ships in 2004, total visitors for this year is 7, 206 with Business Travelers leading at 2, 510 and Holliday Travelers at 2, 235. Visitors from the United States dominate with a total (includes cruise ship arrivals) of 2, 726, Other Asia at 782 (606 being transit/stopover), Japan at 752 visitors, while the Philippines follow close behind at 534.

Working with History-

MIVA initiated the HPO (Historical Preservation Office) Leaflet Project in early January. The project is aimed at additional preservation and conservation efforts of the country's historical and traditional sites. It is MIVA's intention that such a project may bring about the resurgence of traditional "MO" sites (or traditional sites that were formally off-limits to all except the chief, his/her family, and whoever is authorized). The project starts in Majuro with the assistance of the RMI-HPO office and the Mayor of the Majuro Atoll Local Government.

Clean-Up Efforts -

Other than the management of solid waste in the islands, casual littering has since become a major problem and a total nuisance to the community of Majuro. In September, MIVA took the initiative to give the key political leaders of Majuro and members of the Solid Waste Task Force a first-hand look at the destruction of Majuro's lagoon and shoreline caused by trash and unhealthy waste. Unfortunately, not all who were anticipated to attend showed up, resulting in very minimal impact and a total waste of time, energy, and money for MIVA. MIVA plans to undertake major awareness programs with the local communities and school in the coming months in the hopes that it will gain more support from the political leaders of Majuro, RMI-EPA, and the Majuro Atoll Local Government.

Environmental Issues-

The Solid Waste Task Force, consisting of members from related organizations in Majuro-public and private, undertake the impossible task of notifying the general public and local business community of soon to be banned products such as Styrofoam and certain plastic products in the early part of 2005. MIVA has been lobbying to pass legislation on the ban of Styrofoam products with the local government in the past few years but to no avail. It is anticipated that now that it is a national government initiative, it just might have effect. Other measures being undertaken by the task force includes collection and recycling efforts, community based clean-up efforts, and more.

Awareness Programs for Schools-

One of the projects related to Tourism, Environmental and Educational Awareness that we have been long awaiting for has finally been initiated this month, February.

Specifically, the Majuro Bus Stop Murals Project has the following objectives:

- To repair the graffiti smeared over the bus stops.
- To create a learning experience for the youth of the Marshall Islands, so that they may accomplish greater responsibility and appreciation for the donated bus stops from the Japanese Government and thus not tarnish them in the future.
- To nurture a caring attitude among the community to keep the Marshall Islands clean and beautiful.
- To create a positive outlook among tourists to the Marshall Islands of our destination by offering a colorful atmosphere.

The MIVA wishes to again extend its appreciation and gratitude for all those families, both big and small businesses, government departments and agencies, churches, both men's and women's groups, fishing clubs and caring individuals who have generously made donations to further make the project possible.

Environmental Projects Continued..-

The 2nd FAD and Mooring Projects for Majuro and Arno were implemented in October 2004. The Marshalls Billfish Club assisted MIVA in the installation of FAD's in Majuro while Yokwe Divers, with the assistance of the Australian Government, installed ten mooring buoys in various dive sites provided proposals for tourism related developments and have since been selected.

Marketing and Promotions:

MIVA Media and Familiarization Trips:

November 8-11: Chubu-Nippon Broadcasting Company and Pacific Eagle Enterprises arrived in Majuro to film the last portion of the "Islands Hopping to the World" documentary for the Aichi World Expo 2005. The documentary features the different cultures, products, and lifestyles of the islands of Micronesia.

November 29-December 3: Ten dive operators out of Australia visit Majuro for three days of diving with Yokwe Divers/ Rongelap Expeditions. The trip was co-sponsored by Air Nauru and Marshall Islands Resort.