

OPINION PAGE

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‘Rube im kaleke Hacker im kab KHS ko rekaal’

Ebwe an lon jorreean im aban ko rej walok jen an bin itotak ilo iaal eo ikotaan Ebeye im kab Gugeegue ilo Kwajalein, innem nan komman bwe jen jino bar lem-nake lok kilen kommani jorreean im aban kein, “jen jonan ko jebed ie kio”, enin ej juon lemnak

Nan waan jonak, ej einwot ne ej make “kelontak bukien neem” ikijien kejekjek in (eo im jonan jorreean ko ilo iaal eo, rej komman bwe wa ko ren jorreean, im en bojrak jikuul iumin jet raan) jorreean in, innem nan komman juon bebe ekaal, bwe iaal eo en wor kejebarok ko nane, ren kemtale im biji eon, im ren kautieje lonlok bwe en jab jorreean im rum lal lok bareinwot.

Jerata eo in, mene lemnak in emaron in kajimwe jorreean eo ikijien an jab bojrak an rum lal lok wot iaal eo, im jab bojrak jen walok ejja jorreean im aban in jen ien nan ien, ekoba bwe wonen kommane enaaj kanuij in lap im bin kamole bareinwot, ikijien jonan aurok in, lemnake mok, iaal eo ej jiljino mile ko jonan aetokkan.

“Innem jej aikuij in “lemnak itulik in box eo” nan ad lukkun maron kejetdrikdrik bwe enaaj driklok wonen kajimwe jorreean in ewalok, im enaaj bareinwot komman bwe jen kejebarok elaplok jaan, ilo ien eo im elmakwot jab io, eo im ejimwe im ekkar ilo kalmenlokijen, renaaj erra kake in naaj kommane.

Ta mejlan? Eniio. Kemakit Kwajalein High im kab Fr. Hacker High nan iturin Ebeye, ilo mottan eo inabojen wot iaal in jiljino mile jonan aetokkan nan Gugeegue. Ejake bwe en wor jet ri letok jaan ro jen (US, ROC, Japan, Australia?) nan aer maron jiban tok brojaak jab in kin jaan, innem ien eo wot enaaj dre-drelok, enaaj melele in bwe jikuul ko im raar emakit, renaaj kanuij in kejebarok jaan kajojo raan otemjej, ilo wawein in ke remaron jab bar aikuiji waan jikuul ko, nan bokto boktak ri jikuul ro, ilo iaal in ekauwatata im ej jiljino mile jonan aetokkan, nan aer maron bed ilo jikuul. Jabdrewot ri jikuul ro im rejmour, remaron in bidodo aer etal nan jikin jikuul, ilo an ri jikuul ro jet im rej aikuij jiban, maron in iuwe wot ion juon van jidrikdrik im emoj kappeiki nan ektak ri jikuul.

Jonan jaan eo jemaron in kejebaroke, itok wot jen ad jab kalek juon iaal eo emman lok im emweoeo lok eon, im kojale lok jaan kein nan kajutak imon jikuul kein ruo, bwe ren bed jabon Ebeye en, enaaj kanuij in alikkar kejekjekin. Elane kwoj loe bwe eban wawein jab io juon, innem kwon kommane wawein ne lok juon. Lemnak jab in ebidodo loe.



Tourism: ‘We can be successful’

The show delivered Thursday at Marshall Islands Resort was a good example of the reservoir of talent that exists in our community. The show entertained locals and visitors alike, putting the RMI’s best foot forward during the meeting of Tourism Ministers from around the Pacific.

In view of the fact that the tourism “industry” in the Marshall Islands has virtually collapsed since the late 2000s — visitor numbers, never high to

begin with, have dropped from 7,000 to 4,000 a year — we need to see Thursday’s show in the broader context of the simple question: What can be done to develop the visitor industry for the long-term?

One observation often made to us at the newspaper is the lack of activities for a tourist who comes to Majuro. What does a person do while in Majuro if they are not connected to friends or family locally? What do visitors want to see? Marshallese-style

(as opposed to Hawaiian, etc.) dancing and music, interactive craft or cultural activities (how to weave a hat or basket, etc.) and so on. These are a staple product for visitors going to Fiji, Cook Islands, Tonga, etc. And some are available here — the jaki-ed weaving is ongoing at the UPS Campus, as is canoe building at the Waan Aelon in Majel complex.

The second observation is how to sustain these cultural activities for presentation in the face of an uncertain visitor market. A lot of people say it is a chicken or egg situation, and feel we need to see the visitors materialize before the activities. Still, what Thursday’s show demonstrates is the depth of talent in the RMI. Marshall Islanders, it seems, often view their skills as second to others. But we wish to emphatically say this “modest” view is not in keeping with reality. Marshallese weavers, for example, are routinely praised for being among the best in the Pacific.

We have a unique style of outrigger canoes and canoe building. Our dances, from the renown jebwa to the jep-ta, are very different from Polynesian and Melanesian dances, providing another unique aspect of island culture. All of the above — and more — define the Marshall Islands as, well, the Marshall Islands. And it isn’t only visitors who enjoy lively cultural programs. And therein, at least for now, may lie part of the solution to the lack of visitor numbers: regular cultural programs for both visitors and locals can generate a modest level of revenue for those presenting

Marshall Islands has many attractions that are of interest to visitors. But there is no question our tourism program needs collaboration from the many businesses, people and government agencies who have an interest in its development. More can and must be done to expand our tourism base in the coming months and years.

The Marshall Islands Journal

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