

Chair's Report:

Welcome, and thank you for attending the 2011 MINA Annual General Membership Meeting. MINA has accepted stewardship responsibilities for our natural resources and along with the hard work and effort that we put forth in recycling, cleaning our beaches and planting trees, we are also due a celebration.

Tonight, we're celebrating our environment and the ecological beauty which is our natural heritage, and remembering that our actions today determine the environment we all live in tomorrow. This includes the Marianas as part of a global ecosystem. Therefore, as stewards of earth and our island resources, our involvement – as businesses, schools, families and individual citizens does not cease today. I believe that everyone here tonight can continue to take those small steps every day which are so important in preserving our natural resources and environment. As we celebrate tonight, let's not forget that our job as stewards never ends.

MINA's 3-year goal to reduce solid waste management and promote the Micronesia Challenge (MC) has been accomplished. Let's take a look:

MARINE DEBRIS

The Marine Debris Project has come to a close. Our Adopters are:

1. Wing Beach - Marianas Trekking and the Visitor's Channel	2. Garapan Fishing Basin - The Rotary Club of Saipan
3. 13 Fishermen Monument - Brabu Pharmacy & Wellness Center	4. 13 Fishermen Monument - Docomo Pacific
5. Kilili Park - US Rep. Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan & Susupe Hi-5	6. Ada Gym North entrance - IT&E
7. Ada Gym South entrance - IT&E and Shell Marianas	8. Susupe Park - CTSI & Tan Holdings
9. Sugar Dock - Ideal Signs & Saipan Computer Services	10. Obyan Beach - Ericco Enterprises
11. Laolao Dive site - Marianas Visitor Authority	12. Laolao Picnic area - Ericco Enterprises
13. Marine Beach - Docomo Pacific & Kagman Marine Biology Club	14. Mt. Tapachao - Fiesta Resort, Saipan Grand, and Century Hotels
15. PauPau Beach – Coastal Resources Management	16. San Isidro Beach - Coastal Resources Management
17. Coral Ocean Point - Coastal Resources Management	

The goal of this program was to reduce litter by 70% - We exceeded this goal by 9%, with litter reduced from 240 lbs in April to just 50 lbs in September, a 79% reduction.

In terms of trash removed from Adopt-a-Bin (17) sites, our cleanups have yielded over 30,581 lbs of trash or 13.8 metric tons removed since the bins were installed March 2010. Our goal of 3500 lbs or 1.6 metric tons in 6 months was exceeded, with a total of 1.7 metric tons removed. To accomplish this task, 380 volunteers provided 778.50 man hours.

Outreach presentations were conducted at schools, the Thursday night market and other venues throughout the year, all over the island of Saipan. 64 volunteers provided 275.5 man hours

MINA has also deputized over 500 students as Litter Patrol Officers to assist MINA; so litterbugs beware!

This project officially concludes in June 30th.

FIRST FRIDAY FILMS

The Mariana Islands Nature Alliance together with the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) continues to sponsor the First Friday Films, which launched July 2, 2010 at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center. The first feature film was Black Wave, a film about the 20-year legacy of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska. MINA also sponsored the "End of the Line" - The world's first major documentary about the devastating effects of overfishing.

RECEPTION FOR CORAL REEF TASK FORCE

MINA hosted a reception for the Coral Reef Task Force members at the NMI museum and conducted presentations along with the Pacific Marine Resources Institute.

TURTLE WATCH OUTREACH

MINA assisted the Pacific Marine Resources Institute in conducting presentations in schools about the life history, behavior and importance of our green sea turtle. We taught the students that when they encounter a sea turtle of any kind, to show them respect and avoid disturbing them, allowing some distance, giving them space to rest and feed. We reminded students that Disposing of trash properly helps prevent possible ingestion by sea turtles, and explained that Sea turtles can become entangled in unmonitored nets and discarded fishing line.

INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP.

MINA partnered with Coastal Resources Management for the International Coastal Cleanup Day and received an outpouring of support - 19 groups of individuals from three islands, totaling over 1000 volunteers participated for one to four hours, averaging 2,000 man hours. CNMI's Most Littered Items Top Five - 1.) Cigarettes 2.) Aluminum Cans 3.) Plastic Food Wrappers 4.) Plastic Bags 5.) Plastic Bottles. MINA also provided recyclable bags as a means of promoting an Island Culture of Recycling via B.Y.O.B.--Bring Your Own Bag.

MICRONESIA CHALLENGE

MINA continues its efforts to promote the goals of the Micronesia Challenge by bringing awareness to the CNMI's endangered species in both marine and terrestrial ecosystems. Through the Challenge, Five different jurisdictions - the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the U.S. Territory of Guam are progressing to effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by year 2020.

Every month, the Micronesia Challenge section of MINA's website features an endangered species of the month. Through this program, we hope to raise awareness of the plight of these vulnerable creatures of our islands.

350.org

Answering the call to climate change activism, MINA took part with 350.org's 10/10/10 Global Work Party event and gave away 350 free plants and vouchers to the local community. Why 350 plants? It's symbolic: Estimates calculate that 350 parts per million CO2 in the atmosphere is the safe limit for humanity. As trees grow, they help stop global warming by removing carbon dioxide from the air, storing carbon in the trees and soil, and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere.

TEACHER CAMP.

In 2011, MINA will sponsor the 4th annual Teacher's Camp. In 2010, a total of 20 teachers participated in short discussions, presentations, and field trips to Saipan's wetland, watershed communities, and marine protected areas. MINA is sincerely grateful for our Teacher Camp volunteers - Brooke Nevitt, Rachel Zuercher, Lisa Eller, Jon Igitol of MINA and of course, MINA Executive Director, Sam Sablan and all the participants for their willingness to bring environmental awareness to their class, as well as promoting the Micronesia Challenge and raising awareness of our limited island resources.

Nature Conservancy Institutional Assessment and 2011 Strategic Action Plan .

With the assistance of the Nature Conservancy, MINA completed an Institutional Assessment in 2010 to help develop policies to better the organization. In August, 2011, we will be conducting a strategic action planning meeting to develop our 5-year action plan. Your feedback is important to help us improve MINA, so please plan on attending this important meeting if you're able; times and venue will be announced prior to the event.

Projects initiated in 2011:

No need bag campaign was officially launched in February 2011, inspired by the alarming results from the Coastal Cleanup day, where plastic (plastic bags #4 and plastic bottles were #5) were the most collected debris. In the CNMI, 1 vendor brings in 1 container (20 ft) full of plastic shopping bags every six months. The campaign aims to raise awareness to the next level - Begin with yourself - don't use plastic bags. Encourage others to do the same; Start small by saying "no" to plastic bags when purchasing 2-3 small items only or carry what you can without bags.

Upcoming Projects:

TASI WATCH.

MINA believes that by fostering Community Guardianship, we can continue to expand our collective efforts to heighten public awareness on environmental issues impacting Laolao Bay. Impacts include storm water pollution, solid waste management problems, and other Non-Point Source (NPS) pollution issues. MINA hopes that this project will highlight its outreach strategies through collaborations with government agencies, businesses, NGO's, the Laolao Bay Community, and other Stakeholders. MINA aims to provide a top-notch education and outreach campaign and has received a small grant from the Coastal Resources Management Office. MINA will soon start volunteer recruitment, and develop campaign strategies including On-Site Visits, Presentations and publicity activities.

Enough about MINA. Let us hear from our Champions – our young Micronesia Champions...

Every year throughout the islands, the Micronesia Challenge selects conservation champions between the ages of 17 and 25. Meet our young champions and follow them as they spend a year taking the challenge.

Kid Brel Cabrera is pursuing an AA and AS Liberal Arts and Natural Resource Management at the Northern Marianas College. In his family, he's known as the "Quiet yet funny guy with musical skills."

Also a student at Northern Marianas College, Natural Resource Management program is **David Sablan, Jr.** He says he likes to make everyone laugh by doing silly things. And boasts he's really good at playing the guitar and ukelele.

We're going to have both David and Kid provide us with entertainment tonight! But before the music begins, Let us welcome Kid Cabrera and David Sablan, Jr.