

vicinity of \$2000 plus shipping. The original cast *moai* has an inset rebar loop at the top of the head so that a large front-end loader or a sturdy forklift can move it. The next one will have a plate flush with the top of the head with a socket for a stud bolt that can screw into the top for moving purposes. Now anyone can have their very own *moai* and have their own crack at moving them!

RAPANUIPHILE MARILYN STEARNS described the highlight of a recent trip to the Bridgewater Commons Mall in New Jersey: at the top of an escalator in Macy's, she spotted a three to four foot tall plastic *moai*, in a light mottled greyish color, nestled into the edge of a Hawaiian Luau promotion. Although this borderline kitsch and its significance were probably beyond many of the customers, it made Marilyn's day!

What's New in Polynesia

Pitcairn

A NEW AND REVISED *Guide to Pitcairn* is now available. This colorful publication takes into account the latest historical research and theories and reflects changes on the island. The guide has colorful photographs. It is available from Pitcairn Island Museum, PO Box 105 696, Auckland NZ for US\$12 plus postage (the postage to the US is quoted as \$9.20).

Tahiti

THREE YOUNG RAPANUI ARTISTS, Andres (Panda) Pakarati, Luis (Tito) Araki, and Christian Silva, represented Rapa Nui at Tatau Taputapuata, a Tahitian Tattoo Festival that took place this spring on Raiatea. The event drew nearly 5000 people and attracted artists from Samoa, the Marquesas, Tahiti, Aotearoa, as well as the US, Canada, Switzerland, Germany and France.

Juan Fernández Islands

SIXTEEN PERSONS from the Juan Fernández archipelago are being treated in the clinic at the El Salvador Hospital in Valparaíso for depression, said to be caused by lack of opportunities for women to work, and the isolated living conditions of those islands. A Valparaíso councilman, Manuel Millones, stated that he will propose to the Regional Council (CORE) of the Vth Region that they assign a permanent post to assist the islanders, helping them to combat the problems caused by their remote situation.

The Pacific

THE PLAN TO STORE up to 200,000 tons of weapons-grade plutonium on Wake Island has been abandoned due to negative reaction among Pacific Island countries, but the businessman who had proposed the storage, Alex Copson, complained that an environmental campaign by Greenpeace killed the project. Copson tried to reduce opposition to the plutonium storage plan by announcing that one billion dollars would be put aside for an environmental and educational trust for the Pacific region.

Pacific Islands Report, 4 April 2000

PALMYRA ATOLL is being purchased by The Nature Conser-

vancy in order to guarantee the preservation of its pristine marine wilderness. The uninhabited network of 52 small islands and adjacent corals reefs was bought from the former owners for an undisclosed price, said to be in the range of \$30 million. Palmyra is considered a territory of the United States and The Nature Conservancy hopes that the US Fish and Wildlife Service will administer it as a wildlife refuge. The Energy Department wanted to use Palmyra as a nuclear waste dump in the 1970s, and more recently some entrepreneurs wanted it for storing chemical and nuclear waste.

What's New in Hangaroa

THE FRAGILE REED BOAT, *La Viracocha*, that set sail from Arica on the 25th of February (see RNJ: Vol. 14:1) reached Rapa Nui in April. For a time it was in risk of being left incomunicado in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Iridium, the company that connected *La Viracocha's* on-board telephone to their satellite, declared itself bankrupt. However, before that happened, *La Viracocha* arrived to its destination. Their closest call happened when, during one night, the lights of a huge merchant ship—a Korean freighter—were seen; it was heading straight for them. After some problems trying to communicate with the ship, it finally changed course, missing the raft by only 200 meters.

After its arrival to Easter Island and because the reeds had rotted, *La Viracocha* was hoisted out of the bay at Hanga Piko and burned. Phil Buck, the leader of the project, plans to build another one, on Rapa Nui, and sail it to Australia. Kitin Muñoz, the adventurer who built the ill-fated *Mata Rangi* (which deteriorated and sank a short while after leaving Rapa Nui—[see RNJ 11(1):43; 11(2):96; and 13(2):58] retorted that this was not a 'real' test of a reed boat because they had used some nylon ropes instead of native materials.

El Mercurio de Santiago 2 April 2000

AN INCIDENT INVOLVING AN ATTACK and a spectacular chase on the island occurred when a 36 year old islander assaulted Judge Bernardo Toro Villarroel with a blunt weapon in Kai Nene supermarket. A policeman was also attacked when he intervened to protect the judge. After the attack, the islander ran over the policeman with a motor vehicle. The judge called for help and two *carabineros* promptly arrived, but the aggressor fled in a jeep. Police quickly stopped the jeep but, upon being asked for documents, the islander drove off, knocking down one of the policemen. The chase ended when the suspect took refuge in the backyard of his own home. In trying to capture him, First Corporal Aquiles Gomez Villalobos was struck on the arm and received a severe wound to his clavicle. The islander was subdued and detained, and will now have to appear before the very same judge whom he attacked. Apparently this incident was connected to an on-going judicial proceeding that involved the Judge.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, March 27

THE NEWS FROM THE ISLAND has been difficult to sort out lately. Various conflicting reports, delicious rumors, misinformation in