



Highlights

FROM THE PACIFIC REGION

CNMI Underwater Treasure Hunt



(left to right) AQUASMITH Spearfishing general manager Morito Asai and store manager Eunice O. Kikkushow with Council staff Floyd Masga. The Council supported the inaugural underwater event organized to encourage the younger generation to take part in ocean activities around the CNMI.



Treasure Hunt participants search for special gold and silver coins.



Jane and Jeremiah Ogumoro show their reward for practicing their underwater skills.

Photos: Floyd Masga.

AQUASMITH Spearfishing and Island Keepers CNMI kicked off the first ever Underwater Treasure Hunt Nov. 5, 2022, at Pau Pau Beach on Saipan. Approximately 70 people both young and young at heart joined the hunt, which was preceded by a brief presentation on reef safety, and the do's and don'ts when picking up marine life. Participants were limited to using masks, snorkels and dive socks to search for the 15 gold Egyptian coins and 100 silver Buffalo nickels scattered throughout the bay. Once found, treasure hunters could exchange the coins for items from sponsors that encouraged future water activities like certificates for kayak or stand up paddleboard rentals, coolers, portable fish scales and more.

Tinian Beef, Beer, & Bands Festival Fishing Derby



Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan (far right), CNMI Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and the crew of the *Lucky Harvest* and their 772.5-pound marlin.



(left to right) Derby winners JJ Sablan, Cecilio Raiukiulipiy, Mayor Edwin P. Aldan, Ray Delacruz, Jun Salik and Jeffery Hofschneider.

Photos: Tinian Mayor's Office.

The Tinian Beef, Beer, & Bands Festival's "Biggest Catch" Fishing Derby was held Aug, 13, 2022, at the Tinian Marina Dock. Cash prizes categories included \$2,000 for billfish (50 pounds and above), \$1,500 for yellowfin, \$1,500 for wahoo and \$500 for mahimahi.

Congratulations to Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council CNMI Advisory Panel members Cecilio Raiukiulipiy and Ray Delacruz Jr. who were part of the team on the *Lucky Harvest* that landed a whopping 772.5-pound marlin, breaking a Tinian record!

Raiukiulipiy shared that after a 3-hour battle, they finally landed the monster fish, however he and his crew, including Jun Salik, and JJ Sablan, could not bring the marlin on board due its size and height of their vessel. In the end, they decided to tie the marlin up and tow it back to port. After weighing their catch, the crew and community members cut up the fish and shared blocks of marlin amongst themselves, as well as donating some to the Old Age Community Center.

