

LEBANON BOMBING

ANOTHER ANTI-SYRIA LAWMAKER ASSASSINATED

PAGE 3A



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PUNALUU NEGOTIATIONS

With doubts, council favors resolution 5-4

BY BOBBY COMMAND
WEST HAWAII TODAY
bcommand@westhawaii.com

The decision came after eight and a half hours of discussion capping eight months of community-dividing debate.

But when the vote was finally taken, a majority of the Hawaii County Council still doubted the

measure would do anything to begin the healing in Ka'u.

Lawmakers on Wednesday voted 5-4 to support a resolution by Ka'u Councilman Bob Jacobson to see if the owners of the old Sea Mountain resort at Punaluu are interested in selling shoreline property for preservation.

Council Chairman Pete

Hoffmann, Kohala, who cast the deciding vote, said he did so reluctantly in the "vain hope" that the owners, Sea Mountain Five, would reverse their assertion that they are not interested in selling a portion of the property on which they hope to build about 1,100 homes and a 350-room hotel.

► SEE COUNCIL PAGE 4A



Pam Taylor, of Ka'u, is one of 88 people present at the County Council meeting Wednesday at the Keauhou Sheraton who oppose development of Punaluu.

BRAD BALLESTEROS
SPECIAL TO WHT

County hopes for Burial Council approval

BY JIM QUIRK
WEST HAWAII TODAY
jquirk@westhawaii.com

HILO — This is the day.

It's been three years since the Big Island's Burial Council rejected a proposal from Hawaii County to build the Alii Parkway in Kona, but Mayor Harry Kim is hopeful a revised plan now meets with the council approval Thursday.

The Burial Council was set to decide on the latest proposal in August but held off at county request so members had time to review the massive amount of documentation, mostly archaeological studies, that have compiled throughout the years on the subject.

Several thick reports, full of maps, charts, historical data and complex scales, are what members of the Burial Council were asked to review, along with the county's latest proposal that calls for building a small bridge over a burial site that was "rediscovered" in 2004 as the county was about to move forward with the project.

The location caused the Burial Council to disapprove the plans and the county to take the matter back to the drawing board.

The documentation, which Bob Yanabu, a civil engineer with the Public Works Department, said contains more than 1,000 pages, is a compilation of numerous studies conducted over the years

► SEE BURIAL PAGE 4A

INSIDE

SPORTS | SECTION B



LEGAL DEJA VU O.J. Simpson in handcuffs and before a judge

PAGE 1B

COMING UP



INDEX

- Annie's Mailbox 5B
- Business 9A
- Comics 6B
- Government notices 2D
- Movies 5B
- Obituaries 2A
- Opinion 6A
- Sports 1B

WEATHER



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HI 87 LO 75
► PAGE 2A



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Outsourcing the war



MOHAMMED IBRAHIM | THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A private security guard, paid for by the Shiite community, guards a demonstration in March 2005 in Mosul, Iraq. Iraq's decision to temporarily ban Blackwater USA after a fatal shooting of civilians in Baghdad reveals a growing web of rules governing weapons-bearing contractors but few signs U.S. agencies are enforcing them.

At more than 180,000, private contractors outnumber U.S. troops in Iraq to handle many jobs

BY RICHARD LARDNER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The United States has assembled an imposing industrial army in Iraq larger than its uniformed fighting force and responsible for a such a broad swath of responsibilities the military might not be able to operate without its private-sector partners.

More than 180,000 Americans, Iraqis, and nationals from other countries work under a slew of federal contracts to provide security, gather intelligence, build roads, forge a financial system, and transport needed supplies in a country the size of California.

That figure contrasts with the 163,100 U.S. military



HUSSEIN MALLA | THE AP FILE PHOTO

A private security guard keeps watch in Sept. 2004 outside the French Embassy in Baghdad.

personnel, according to U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Fla., the organization responsible for military operations in the Middle East. The Pentagon puts the military figure at 169,000. There are another 12,400 coalition forces in Iraq.

But it has its dangers. Employees for Blackwater USA were involved in a weekend shooting that left 11 Iraqis dead.

The heavy reliance on contractors in a war zone is partly the result of a post-Cold War shrinking of the armed forces and the Bush administration's preference for contracting out government functions to the corporate world.

► SEE CONTRACTORS PAGE 4A

County chooses waste-to-energy firm

BY JIM QUIRK
WEST HAWAII TODAY
jquirk@westhawaii.com

HILO — The field of firms Hawaii County may enlist to build and operate a waste-to-energy refuse incinerator in Hilo has been narrowed from two to one.

County Environmental Management Director Bobby Jean Leithead-Todd, however, said Wednesday that she can't reveal the name of the firm, how much it would cost the county to build a waste-to-energy facility or how much such a facility would cost to operate.

She said the county is still in negotiations with the firm, thus making much of the information related to it proprietary.

"We have a preferred vendor, but we're still in negotiations," Leithead-Todd said. "I can't say which one it is."

Meanwhile, Environmental Management is still seeking a company to revise the county's integrated solid waste management plan that will include a proposal to create a new landfill beside the existing one in Hilo, Leithead-Todd said.

► SEE WASTE PAGE 4A