

Caribbean Today

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Vol. 28 No. 1

THE MULTI AWARD WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE WITH THE LARGEST PROVEN CIRCULATION IN FLORIDA GUARANTEED

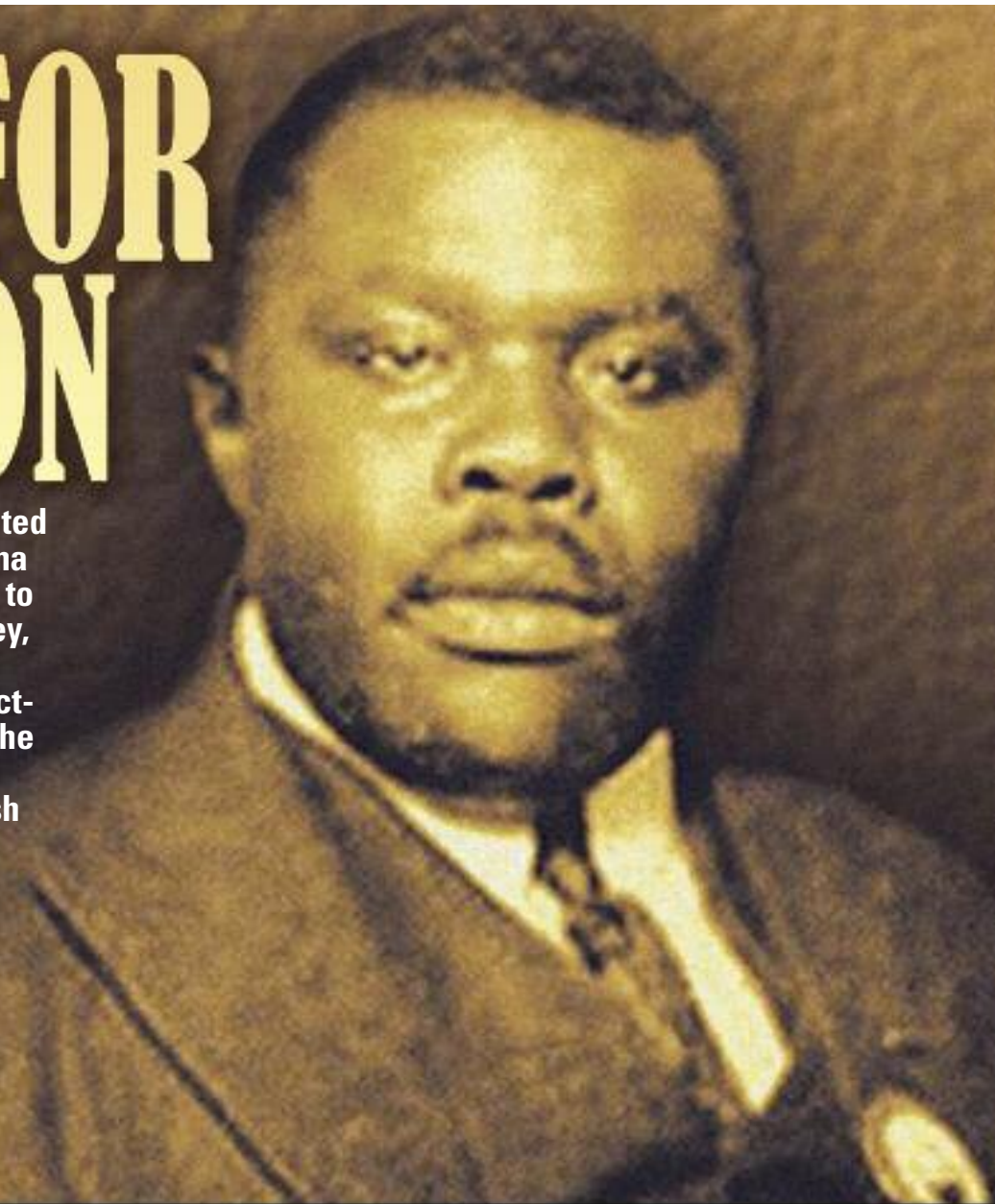
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PLEA FOR PARDON

~ Pressure is mounting on United States President Barack Obama to grant a presidential pardon to the late Marcus Mosiah Garvey, a Jamaica National Hero who supporters believe was convicted on trumped up charges in the U.S. aimed at silencing his massive movement to establish respect and independence for black people, page 5A



Finally, it appears Haiti has elected a new president. Plantation owner Jovenel Moise, a member of the PHTK ("the Bald Heads

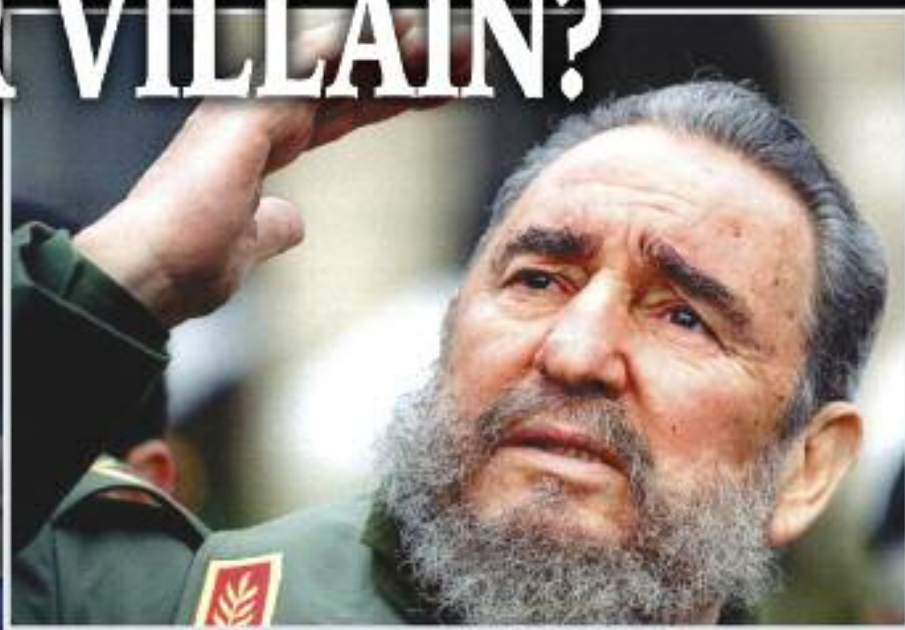
Party"), has been declared winner, according to an announcement by the Provisional Electoral Council on Nov. 28. Moise will succeed President Michel Martelly and Interim President Jocelerme Privert. His margin of victory means there will be no runoff, page 2A.



Barbados marked its 50th anniversary of Independence from Britain on Nov. 30. To salute the historic occasion, Caribbean Today highlights those who have helped make the island nation a shining jewel in a special supplement this month, pages 1B-12B.

HERO OR VILLAIN?

~ Fidel Castro, the Cuban communist leader who cast a massive political shadow that was warmly embraced by some and bitterly rejected by others, is dead. Debate about his legacy has risen to fever pitch. Many Caribbean and world leaders praise the revolutionary. Others, particularly in the United States, condemn him, pages 3A and 4A.



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FINALLY: Haiti elects new president after setbacks

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti – Jovenel Moïse, a member of the PHTK (the Bald Heads Party), has been declared winner of Haiti's presidential election, according to the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP).

Moïse, a plantation owner, received 595,430 votes or 55.6 percent of the votes cast on Nov. 20, defeating Jude Célestin of the LAPEH Party of former President Michel Martelly, who received 208,837 votes or 19.52 percent of the popular votes.

The margin of victory for Moïse means there will not be a runoff.

Of the other presidential candidates, Jean-Charles Moïse of the Pitit Dessalines received 118,142 votes or 11.04 percent, while Maryse Narcisse, of the Fanmi Lavalas and a spokeswoman for former President Jean Bertrand Aristide, received 96,121 votes or 8.99 percent of the popular votes.

The announcement by the CEP came as protestors took to the streets breaking windshields of motor vehicles, throwing rocks and, in some



Moïse

areas, gunshots being heard. The protestors were enraged that the CEP, which had promised to make the announcement early Nov. 28, had not done so until late into the night.

'DEMOCRATIC WORK'

CEP President Léopold Berlangier said the reason for the late announcement of the results was due to the "democratic work" and that he was anxious to respect the date of Nov. 28.

"We want to salute the maturity of the Haitian people," said Berlangier.

However, at least three of the CEP advisers did not sign

the results.

According to the electoral calendar, the next step will be the "Filing of challenges", which was scheduled for Dec. 3-5, followed by the "Treatment of challenges at BCED", from Dec. 6-17.

The "Display of the BCED Decision" is scheduled for Dec. 18, followed by the "Filing of challenges BCEN", from Dec. 19-21.

The "Preparation of final results after litigation" is scheduled for Dec. 28, with the publication of the final results for both the presidential and legislative polls scheduled for Dec. 29.

Under the current timetable, the new president will not take office until Feb. 7, but the elections cycle wouldn't end until April 2017 — more than two years after elections began.

- Edited from CMC.



Ruling party wins big in Jamaica's local gov't polls

KINGSTON, Jamaica – The governing Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) emerged victorious following long overdue Local Government elections held on the Caribbean island Nov. 28.

According to preliminary results from the Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ), the JLP won in eight municipal corporations – Kingston and St. Andrew, Portland, St. Mary, St. Ann, Trelawny, St. James, Clarendon and St. Elizabeth.

The Opposition People's National Party (PNP), which

previously controlled the councils, won in the parishes of Hanover, Manchester, Westmoreland, St. Catherine and the Portmore Municipal Council. However, in the eastern parish of St. Thomas, the vote was tied up to press time.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness told supporters Local Government results were an endorsement of the JLP government's performance since winning the February general elections.

- Edited from CMC.



PNM, UNC claim win in T&T

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – Both the ruling People's National Movement and the main Opposition United National Congress (UNC) claimed victory in last month's Local Government elections.

Preliminary figures showed that the PNM, which had controlled eight of the 14 municipal regions from the 2013 elections, won seven and tied with the UNC for another. The UNC improved on the last outing, holding on to its six corporations, while tying with the PNM for the Sangre

Grande Regional Corporation.

The PNM has won 83 electoral districts and the UNC 54.

"We are very pleased with the results," Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley, head of the PNM, told reporters.

But UNC and Opposition Leader Kamla Persad Bissessar said that the results showed the population was not pleased with the Rowley-led administration that won the general elections in Sept. 2015.



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HERO OR VILLAIN?: Fidel Castro's death ignites mixed emotions of ex-Cuba president

GORDON WILLIAMS

Fidel Castro, a Caribbean leader who cast a massive political shadow that was warmly embraced by some and bitterly rejected by others, is dead. He was 90.

Castro, who died on Nov. 25, steered Cuba into the path of communism by helping to lead a revolution, which overthrew an American-supported capitalistic regime in 1959. He became a hero to many in the



Castro

Caribbean while being despised as a tyrant by nations such as the United States.

Castro's burial in Santiago de Cuba, following his cremation, a farewell tour across Cuba and nine days of mourning, was scheduled for Dec. 4.

His death, the precise cause of which was unknown up to press time, immediately ignited polarized reactions across the globe. Some leaders openly praised him as an anti-imperialist and champion of the working class, while emotions elsewhere ranged from respectful salute, compassion for Cuba's people, to wild celebration and fresh outrage over the passing of a man who had relentlessly opposed the U.S., even as relationships between the two nations thawed considerably in recent times.

"Fidel to my mind was one of the better leaders we have had in the world. A most generous individual, helpful and every country in this world has benefitted from the benevolence of Fidel Castro," Dominica's Prime Minister Roosevelt declared on state-owned radio after Castro's death was announced. "The footprints of the Cuban revolution and the Cuban people and that of Fidel Castro are there for all of us to see."

What opponents saw, despite general backing for Cuba by Caribbean nations, which received huge support from Castro, was threatening influence of a zealot who appeared determined to sway the region towards his Marxist-Leninist ideology with the aid communist Soviet Union. In the 1970s, when Jamaica's Prime Minister Michael Manley, for example, embraced what he called "democratic socialism", many

interpreted it leaning left towards communism and fled the country in fear.

COMPASSION

However, U.S. President Barack Obama has led America's most intense recent efforts to normalize U.S. relations with Cuba. This has included re-opening regular travel channels and an

embassy on the island and lifting certain sanctions. Obama chose to comfort the island's people after Castro's death, even as he acknowledged the late leader's combustible image.

"At this time of Fidel Castro's passing, we extend a hand of friendship to the Cuban people," Obama noted in a statement. "We know that

this moment fills Cubans – in Cuba and in the United States – with powerful emotions, recalling the countless ways in which Fidel Castro altered the course of individual lives, families and of the Cuban nation."

Obama explained history would judge the "enormous impact of this singular figure on the people and world around him." He admitted ties

between Cuba and the U.S. had been characterized by "discord and profound political disagreements," but that his U.S. administration had sought to bury the hatchet.

"(We) worked hard to put the past behind us, pursuing a future in which the relationship between our two coun-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4A)

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'REAL REVOLUTIONARY': Caribbean leaders praise Castro's life, work



Holness

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – Caribbean politicians are praising the life of Fidel Castro, the former Cuban leader who died on Nov. 25 and who sought to improve relations between his communist island and the region.

"The real Revolutionary. Indelibly etched in history. I pay my respects to the life and work of Fidel Castro and express the profound condo-

lences and sympathies of the Jamaican people to the people of Cuba," Prime Minister Andrew Holness noted in a message on his Facebook page.

Holness later indicated that he had written to President Raul Castro extending deep sympathies on behalf of Jamaica.

"(Fidel Castro) will go down in the annals of history as one of the leaders who, though coming from a Caribbean island developing State, has had the greatest impact on world history," Holness noted.

President David Granger said Guyana was "deeply saddened by the passing of President Castro," saying "his life was of significance not only to Guyana and the friendship that he had with Guyanese leaders, but also to the entire Western



Granger

Hemisphere and to the world.

"He certainly transformed politics in the Western Hemisphere and we would like to express our solidarity with the Cuban people in that regard," he added.

ERA'S END

Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley, in extending condo-

lences to Cuba, said the "passing of Fidel Castro marks an end of an iconic period of history not only for the Caribbean ..."

The Antigua and Barbuda government said Castro would be remembered for his generous assistance to the Caribbean, making reference to the opportunity Havana provided for young people to study medicine, engineering, computer science among other fields of study.

"The world has lost a great man; the Caribbean has lost a fertile mind and a very worthy leader who was deeply loved by his own people," Prime Minister Gaston Browne said.



Rowley

CARICOM Secretary General Irwin La Rocque tweeted: "RIP Fidel Castro, a true friend of the Caribbean Community", noting later in an official statement that "Castro's commitment to assist developing countries through the sharing of his country's skills and expertise, made him a treasured friend of the Caribbean Community".

"It's a sad day for the world," said former Guyana President Bharrat Jagdeo. "Fidel Castro was a statesman."

- Edited from CMC.



HERO OR VILLAIN?: Fidel Castro's death ignites mixed emotions of ex-Cuba president

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3A)

tries is defined not by our differences but by the many things that we share as neighbors and friends – bonds of family, culture, commerce, and common humanity," Obama noted, while extending condolences to Castro's family and assuring Cubans that the U.S. is willing to be a friend to the Caribbean nation.

Obama was the first incumbent president to visit Cuba in almost 90 years. He spent a couple days in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean

nation in March, where he met Raul Castro, who took over as the country's president after his older brother had governed for 47 years.

BRUTAL

The tone after Castro's death was decidedly harsher elsewhere. President-elect Donald Trump, who had promised during his campaign to re-visit and possibly undo Obama's recent agreements with Cuba, at first tweeted that "Fidel Castro is dead!" Later, Trump issued a statement calling him "a brutal dictator who oppressed his own people for nearly six decades."

"Fidel Castro's legacy is one of firing squads, theft, unimaginable suffering, poverty and the denial of fundamental human rights," Trump's statement noted.

He did, however, praise Cubans, claiming they deserved a better future.

"While Cuba remains a totalitarian island, it is my hope that (Nov. 25) marks a move away from the horrors endured for too long, and toward a future in which the wonderful Cuban people finally live in the freedom they so richly deserve," Trump noted, as many of his Republican Party colleagues also lashed out at Castro.

In South Florida, particularly Miami, a city with a massive Cuban American community, there were widespread celebrations when news of Castro's death became public. Many had fled Cuba after



Trump, left, Obama

Castro took charge of the nation following the revolution. Some were actively behind a decades-long campaign, including multiple assassination attempts, to oust him.

Elsewhere in the world, reviews were also mixed, but many favorable. In a telegram he sent to Raul Castro, Russian President Vladimir Putin called the late leader an "inspiring example for many countries" and a "symbol of an era". Castro received praise from China's President Xi Jinping for his contribution to developing communism, adding that China had lost "a close comrade and a sincere friend." In South Africa, President Jacob Zuma expressed appreciation to Castro for helping to end the oppressive apartheid regime there.

"President Castro identified with our struggle against apartheid," Zuma noted a statement. "He inspired the Cuban people to join us in our own struggle against apartheid."

Several sources contributed to this story, including CMC.



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Pressure mounts on Obama to pardon Jamaica National Hero Marcus Garvey

GORDON WILLIAMS

A son of one Caribbean country's National Hero has again made a strong plea for the United States to pardon his father for criminal convictions supporters believe were trumped up to silence a massive movement to establish respect and independence for black people.

Dr. Julius W. Garvey is appealing to outgoing President Barack Obama to grant a presidential pardon to the late Marcus Mosiah Garvey, the late Jamaican civil rights leader viewed as a champion for people of African descent in the U.S. and around the world starting in the first half of the 20th century.

The New York-based surgeon wants the first African American president in U.S. history to clear the name of a man who many – including leaders in Jamaica and the U.S. – are convinced was victimized by a nasty political conspiracy led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and its then boss J. Edgar Hoover.

The late hero was report-



Marcus Garvey

edly targeted by the FBI for his links to “radical elements in New York City in agitating the negro movement”, according to a letter written by Hoover and quoted in an article by Dr. Garvey published last month on the website of news network CNN.

The “West-Indian Negro”, according to Hoover’s letter, was placed under suspicion for “his activities in endeavoring to establish the Black Star Line Steamship Corporation”. The company, according to Dr. Garvey’s article, was his father’s “project for the eco-

nomie development and unity of Africans worldwide”. Its aim was to transport people and goods between Africa and the Americas, including the Caribbean.

CONSPIRACY

According to Dr. Garvey’s article, although Hoover and the FBI had no evidence to convict his father, they eventually charged him “with conspiracy to use the mails to defraud” in connection with the shipping company. He was “convicted by an all-white jury on charges that were widely considered politically motivated and in a trial tainted by misconduct”, Dr. Garvey wrote.

Marcus Garvey was in prison for three years when, in 1927, U.S. President Calvin Coolidge “commuted his sentence and deported him from this country to Jamaica”, the article explained. “He could never return to the United States, and the momentum he had built on issues of racial justice stalled. He died in London in 1940”.

According to Dr. Garvey, who is at the forefront of the Justice4Garvey campaign,



Dr. Garvey

Obama can correct his father’s record before he leaves the White House in January.

“The president of all the people can use his executive privilege to right this wrong against some of the people,” he wrote. “Because ultimately, it involves all the people.

Dr. Garvey’s call for a posthumous presidential pardon also linked recent accusations against the FBI for interference in politics. The bureau was designed as an independent investigative arm of the U.S. government. However, current Director James Comey was accused of tipping the scale of the recent U.S. presidential election, won by Donald Trump. Comey

released information relating to a case involving Trump’s main opponent Hillary Clinton.

PRAISE

Obama has pardoned hundreds of convicted criminals during his eight years in office, most who admitted guilt to the crimes for which they were incarcerated. Meanwhile, Marcus Garvey has received universal praise for his fight to improve the lives of black people.

In his article, Dr. Garvey cited a 1965 speech given by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during a visit to Jamaica. According to King, Garvey was the “first man of color in the history of the United States to lead and develop a mass movement. He was the first man, on a mass scale and level, to give millions of Negroes a sense of dignity and destiny and make the Negro feel that he was somebody.

“You gave Marcus Garvey to the United States of America and he gave to the millions of Negroes in the United States a sense of per-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6A)

Barbados celebrates 50th Independence anniversary

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – Barbados celebrated the 50th anniversary of its political Independence from Britain on Nov. 30, despite inclement weather that forced the postponement or cancellation of some activities to mark the occasion.

Britain’s Prince Harry was the highest profile guest for the celebrations that included the “Reveal of the 50th Anniversary of Independence National Monument” at the famous Garrison Savannah. A Golden Anniversary Spectacular Mega Concert at the Kensington Oval was also among activities scheduled.

But the 50th Anniversary Independence Day Parade, scheduled for the Garrison Savannah had to be postponed.

Heavy rains were blamed for the setbacks.

In his Independence Day message, Prime Minister Freundel Stuart said Barbados had made significant socio-economic and political strides during the past 50 years and that the pursuit and achievement of nationhood was never intended to be an end in itself.

“It was not just a search for psychic satisfaction,” Stuart said. “We pursued nationhood in order that we might take our destiny into our own hands and mould that

destiny in such a way as would develop to the fullest extent possible the hidden potential of our people.

“Today as we look back over the past 50 years, we have every reason to feel satisfied with and proud about what we have been able to achieve despite sometimes daunting odds.”



Stuart

PROGRESS

Stuart told the nation that any objective evaluation of the progress made over the past 50 years would show “that our decision to proceed to nationhood was wholly justified.

“The vast majority in our population, left behind then by the fact that we were a colony, was brought along over the past 50 years by the interventions of an enlightened and forward-looking state,” said the prime minister.

In his wide ranging message, Stuart told Barbadians that celebrating 50 years of political Independence must be an occasion to drive home the importance of being independent.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6A)

Spring Health

The April issue of Caribbean Today will feature a comprehensive examination of how the healthcare industry serves the Caribbean community.

With a proven track record now in our 28th year of service to readers in the United States and the Caribbean Basin, Caribbean Today reaches an audience of over 112,000 highly qualified readers. They have median household income of \$63,000 and enjoy a higher disposable income. 18% have a college degree, 32% have some college. In today's economy, our readers are highly esteemed. 59.6% own their own homes. 76% are between 25-54 years of age (readership study conducted by Circulation Verification Council).

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NEWS



St. Kitts and Nevis P.M. receives international peace prize

MANILA, PHILIPPINES – St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Dr. Timothy Harris was last month awarded the Gusi Peace Prize here. The Awards Committee of Gusi Peace Prize International bestows Asia's foremost accolade to politicians and other leaders from around the world who, in its opinion, excel in respective fields while ensur-

ing the advancement of human dignity.

In his acceptance letter to the committee, Harris wrote: "I humbly accept this prestigious award



Harris

and dedicate it to the wonderful people of St. Kitts and Nevis, who elected me and gave me the opportunity some 21 months ago to serve them as their Prime Minister.

"The Gusi Peace Prize embodies a powerful edict for peace, as it champions the

hopes and dreams and human dignity of not only its humbled recipients, but also the huddled masses for whose hopes and dreams and human dignity we strive to advance in the name of justice and equality through academe, cinematic excellence, economics, jour-

nalism, philanthropy, politics, poverty alleviation, religion, scientific research and discovery, statesmanship and other important endeavors."

-- Edited from CMC. ✨

Turks and Caicos general elections on Dec. 15

DENCIALES, Turks and Caicos Islands – The governor of Turks and Caicos Islands said the British Overseas Territory will hold general elections on Dec. 15.

Governor Dr. John Freeman's announcement followed Premier Dr. Rufus Ewing's announcement that voters would be choosing a new government on Dec. 5. The governor then explained

that the earlier date would not allow for the electoral officials to prepare for the elections.

Premier Ewing announced that the Parliament would be dissolved on Oct. 28, paving the way for the elections, which are expected to be a straight contest between the Ewing's Progressive National Party (PNP) the main Opposition People's Democratic

Movement (PDM) and a new party, the Progressive Democratic Association (PDA), led by former PDM Leader Oswald Skipings.

In the last general elections, held Nov. 2012, the PNP won eight of the 15 seats in Parliament. The PDM won seven.

- Edited from CMC. ✨

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Barbados celebrates 50th Independence anniversary

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5A)

"Independence is not the responsibility of someone else somewhere else, it is the responsibility of each man and woman, boy and girl, in Barbados," he explained. "As Barbadians we must prepare ourselves to meet this challenge. No miracles or miracle workers are available for our use – only faith in the

Almighty and good works!"

Prominent businessman Sir Ronald Geoffrey Cave and attorney Sir John Andrew Connell received Barbados's top honor of Knight of St. Andrew, while the newest Dame of St Andrew is Selma Udine Jackman.

The Companion of Honor was awarded to Anthony Theophilus Bryan, former

publisher of the Barbados Advocate newspaper, and Dr. Henrick O.C. Ellis, a leading light in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

- Edited from CMC. For Caribbean Today's special Barbados supplement, turn to pages 1B-12B. ✨

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Pressure mounts on Obama to pardon Jamaica National Hero Marcus Garvey

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5A)

sonhood, a sense of manhood, and a sense of somebodiness," King told Jamaicans.

A petition seeking the presidential pardon was recently circulated, but it failed to generate enough signatures to ensure Obama would directly address the issue. Meanwhile, leaders in and outside of the U.S. have pursued the cause of a pardon for Garvey. During last year's visit to Jamaica, then Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller also asked Obama to pardon Garvey.

According to Dr. Garvey's article, his father's "rise to prominence came 80 years

after the end of slavery and 30 years after the beginning of colonialism worldwide. African Americans lacked full benefits of citizenship and were being subjected to the black codes, sharecropping, lynching, the Ku Klux Klan and the Southern backlash against Reconstruction. African American soldiers returning home after fighting in Europe in the 1914-18 war for democracy were asking themselves how to obtain real freedom, true democracy and an ability to shape their own destinies.

"Marcus Garvey's answer was through unity, a knowledge of your history and cul-

ture, self-sufficiency and self-determination. This found a ready response in the hearts and minds of African Americans who had been brutalized, dehumanized and depersonalized by legalized white supremacy for 300 years".

Garvey's organization, the New York-headquartered Universal Negro Improvement Association, once had a "membership of 6 million spread among 1,000 divisions in 40 countries around the world. Seven hundred divisions were in the U.S., most of them in the South", according to his son's article. ✨

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CRESTFALLEN: Trump's triumph in U.S. presidential election stuns Caribbean Americans

NEW YORK – As the American political establishment begins coming to grips with the reality of four years of Donald J. Trump's presidency, Caribbean American legislators are still stunned, like many others across the country and globally, over his unexpected triumph in the United States election last month.

"I realized that now, adding salt to the deep wound, are those trying to downplay the importance racism, xenophobia, jingoism and misogyny played in this election – the very things that so many of us were consistently told weren't a part of America. And too many deny the impact it has on continually disenfranchising communities," New York City Councilman Jumaane Williams, the son of Grenadian immigrants, told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)**.

"Yet, all the ideas we are consistently told aren't a part of America propelled a man to the presidency of the country of my birth," added Williams, the Democratic deputy leader of New York

City Council, who presents the largely Caribbean 45th Council District in Brooklyn.

"He did so stripping out all the usual code words and phrases, leaving and encouraging unabashed bigotry, using patriotism as an accelerant. And the party (Republican) that so often said they didn't believe in these things, while pushing policies that said different, was rewarded with increased power for creating this candidate."

Williams expressed dismay that America is headed for the presidency of Trump, "a billionaire, who said the most vile and bigoted things during the campaign."

TENSION

Throughout the campaign, tension had run high among a broad group of people, including Caribbean Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, Muslims, immigrants and women, who had felt ostracized by Trump's racially-charged rhetoric. But Williams said he took "solace in history, showing us that 'this, too, shall pass'. This is the expected



Williams

backlash for progress being made.

"...Unfortunately," he added, "it will not happen without tremendous damage to real human beings, families and communities. How much damage depends on how quickly we are honest with what happened on November 8, and why it happened."

New York State Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte, daughter of Haitian immigrants, said "many of us did not expect the outcome that we received" on Nov. 8.

"Many of us thought that we would be making history by voting in the first female president of the United States (in Hillary Clinton), and that

we would be moving forward – stronger together," said Bichotte, the first Haitian American in New York City to be elected to the New York State Assembly.

In reiterating President Barack Obama's views, when he addressed the U.S. on Nov. 10 about the country's peaceful transition of power, Bichotte said: "Regardless of our political preference, we are all Americans, and we need to come together as a country."



Bichotte

"There are competing visions for what will make America great, and one aspect of our democracy is that we can voice our discontentment and fight for what our vision is," she said.

Bichotte's State Assembly colleague, Jamaican-born Nick Perry, who represents the 58th Assembly District in Brooklyn, while expressing disappointment over the outcome of the presidential election, said "it was the Democratic Party's race to win."

"In some parts of the country, we failed to get out the votes in the African American communities," Perry told CMC, adding

Hurricane Matthew exposes worry over U.N.'s Haiti role

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Half way through the four-hour drive between Port-au-Prince and Haiti's hurricane-ravaged southern peninsula, the traffic suddenly begins to back up.



Rebu

"It's a U.N. convoy," says the driver, a Haitian civil servant ferrying regional disaster responders to Les Caye, one of the communities in the island's south affected by Hurricane Matthew.

As he attempts to overtake the convoy, the vehicle at the rear, a pick-up truck, with heavily armed United Nations-employed Haitian police officers in the back, swings out into the open lane, cutting off the access.

Many Haitians are undecided about the role of the U.N. and its role in their country. They seem to like the security and stability that the U.N. brings to the Western hemisphere's poorest country, but loathes the privileges that some employees of the New York-based international body enjoy.

The police officers and other members of the U.N.

convoy are members of the 5,000-strong U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The mission was established on June 1, 2004, after the passage of a U.N. Security Council resolution that came after the departure to South Africa of then President Bertrand Aristide into exile in the aftermath of the armed conflict, which spread to several cities across the country.

BLOW

But six years later, the shaky Haitian economy would suffer another severe blow, with the devastating earthquake of Jan. 12, 2010, which resulted in more than 220,000 deaths, including 96 U.N. peacekeepers.

The U.N. said that since the presidential elections in 2011, MINUSTAH has been working to fulfill its original mandate to restore a secure and stable environment, to promote the political process, to strengthen Haiti's government institutions and rule-of-law-structures, as well as to promote and to protect human rights. Also during that time, there has been an outbreak of cholera, which the U.N. reluctantly admitted in

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8A)

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FRIEND OR FOE?: Caribbean hopeful, uneasy as Trump is elected United States president

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – Caribbean politicians and academics last month reacted to the election of billionaire Donald Trump as the 45th president of the United States, expressing hope for continued good relations with Washington even as they acknowledged the region should be prepared for an influx of nationals returning home.

Sir Hilary Beckles, chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), warned the Caribbean to be prepared for returning nationals and other migrants from North America. Sir Hilary said Trump's philosophies and policies could lead to a demographic change in the Caribbean overtime.

Speaking on a post U.S. presidential analysis on the implications for the Caribbean at the Mona campus of the UWI, the Barbadian-born academic said: "You will also witness, I am sure, a migration of Hispanics out of North America.

"You will witness the return of many Caribbean citi-

zens out of North America and we have to prepare ourselves for return migration. Understand that these are going to be the forces that will be unleashed," he said, telling the symposium "this is not the first time this has happened."

Sir Hilary said there was a similar situation when Margaret Thatcher won the elections in Great Britain and became prime minister in 1979, saying she came to power "with very similar philosophical constructs and that was the beginning of the net migration of Caribbean peoples out of Britain."

He said Trump's victory will also affect recession, predicting it will "have an adverse impact on the global economy."

RELATIONSHIPS

Trump, who ran as a Republican, defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton, who was seeking to become the first woman to elected U.S. president. Trump, who led a controversial campaign, in which he spoke about building a wall to



Beckles

prevent illegal migration, deport Muslims and vowed to make America stronger again, has since said he would be president for the whole the U.S. He is scheduled to be sworn into office Jan. 20.

Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness, in extending congratulations to the 70-year-old president-elect, said Jamaica has always welcomed "the longstanding friendship and cooperation, which has shaped our bilateral relationship with the United States for more than 50 years." Holness, who won the general elections in his country in February,

spoke of a shared commitment to achieving and maintaining economic growth and development for the benefit of the peoples of both countries and the hemisphere. He also called for exploring new opportunities, as well as the desire to strengthen U.S./Caribbean and Jamaican relations.

Guyana President David Granger told reporters he was looking forward to working with the new U.S. administration and Guyana will respect its citizens.

"America is a democratic country and the elections were conducted in a transparent manner," Granger said.

KEY

He noted the United States plays a key role in hemispheric security and the U.S. government has provided billions of dollars to Guyana and other Caribbean governments.

Grenada's Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell congratulated the people of the U.S. "for their robust participation in a democratic process that

has been the beacon of the world for many years.

"It is indeed noteworthy that there was a record engagement of the people of the United States, and that Mr. Donald J. Trump has earned a sweeping mandate," he said, adding that St. George's was looking "forward to continued strong relations with Washington under the new administration."

Dr. Timothy Harris, Mitchell's St. Kitts and Nevis counterpart, said he was looking forward to building on the longstanding relationship with the U.S.

"My government and I are looking forward to seeing you govern as the 45th president of the United States of America, as you work to execute your mandate of bringing jobs and prosperity to your country and protecting its interests around the world," Harris stated in a message to Trump.

- Edited from CMC.



CRESTFALLEN: Trump's triumph in U.S. presidential election stuns Caribbean Americans

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A)

"even in New York, we did not go out (to vote) as we should."

CONSEQUENCES

Perry said the consequences of Trump's victory are "immeasurable," adding that his triumph is "unbelievable, but that's it.

"The fact that Donald Trump is the president-elect, we have to live with that. Let's hope for a surprise – that Donald Trump can actually be a very good person.

"Whether or not you like Donald Trump, you have to accept him, even as

deplorable as he was in the campaign," Perry said, adding "but you cannot hope for a failing president, because all of us will be affected."

Like many New Yorkers, New York City Mayor Bill deBlasio, whose wife Chirlane McCray traces her roots to Barbados and St. Lucia, said he was "deeply disappointed to learn of Donald Trump's victory." However, in an e-mail message to supporters,



Perry

the mayor noted: "The work of democracy and building a more just and equitable society must continue long after Election Day."

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, whose borough is dubbed "the Caribbean capital of America", applauded everyone who exercised their valued right to vote in the election and asked all "to get engaged in the weeks and months ahead in the continued work that goes beyond campaign seasons — work to make all of our communities safer places, where every one of us is able to raise healthy

children and families.

"That is a shared mission around which every Brooklynite, New Yorker and American can unite," Adams said.

Democrats, who will be out of power in both the White House and U.S. Congress for the first time since 2006, were particularly crestfallen that Clinton had a slender lead in the popular vote but lost in the Electoral College, a fate similar to Al Gore's in 2000.

- Edited from CMC.



Hurricane Matthew exposes worry over U.N.'s Haiti role

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A)

August was brought to the country by Nepalese members of its peacekeeping force.

The epidemic has claimed 10,000 Haitian lives and infected 800,000 more. But no sooner had the U.N. made the admission than it retreated behind the veil of diplomatic immunity, a position that has drawn the ire of some leaders of the 15-member Caribbean community (CARICOM), of which Haiti is a member.

RELIEF?

In mid-October, after Hurricane Matthew hit, amidst complaints that the aid that was flowing into the country was not reaching those most severely affected, then Interim President

Jocelerme Privert dispatched a personal emissary, former Lieutenant-Colonel Himmler Rebu, now secretary of state for public security, to meet with representatives of all aid groups operating in Les Cayes, one of the communities in southern Haiti most severely affected.

Rebu was concerned that relief supplies intended for storm victims were being sold in markets, even as in 85 percent of the residents of a town of 23,000 persons were sleeping outside. He said Port-au-Prince was prepared to provide the security needed to ensure that aid got to the worst affected, but made it clear that Haiti has one government, and that all aid must be distributed through the departmental emergency

operations centers (COUDs) so that officials could keep track of communities which were yet to receive aid.

On Oct. 13, the U.N. Security Council accepted Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's recommendation and extended the mandate of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti for six months at the current force and police strength. Through the adoption of a resolution, the 15-member council decided that MINUSTAH — consisting of up to 2,370 troops and up to 2,601 police component personnel — will stay in Haiti until April 15, 2017.

In Port-au-Prince, a senior public servant said Haitians must run their own country, but the U.N. should remain and "take some time

again to make sure that the situation is pretty stable."

The presence of the U.N. in the country has had an impact on the Haitian economy. For example, the U.N. pays for housing in United States currency and Haitians now want accommodation to be paid for in U.S.

dollars. That's a challenge for many Haitians.

"The good thing is that the United Nations brings some stability in the country," the public servant said.

"You need the stability. But we have to manage our country by ourselves in the end. So this has to be a temporary and then gradually."

- Edited from CMC.



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Time for leadership, Trump

For those, including United States President-elect Donald Trump, who believe the fear rising in black and brown America is unjustified – think again!

On Nov. 18, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) issued a second report that said 701 incidents of hateful harassments have been reported to them in just one week – between Nov. 9 and Nov. 16!

That number had originally been reported at over 200. Of the new number, the SPLC, which is dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry, said 206 of those incidents reported were anti-immigrant.

The anti-immigrant incidents reported are varied. In Spokane, Washington for instance, police were called in to investigate a swastika and message referencing Trump that was spray-painted on a Mexican family's garage in the Logan neighborhood. The graffiti read: "Can't stump the Trump, Mexicans." The family said they had never before been targeted for being Mexican or experienced racism in Spokane.

In Denver, Colorado, an immigration law firm got a voice mail from a white woman who stated: "Get your s..t together and get out of our country you f....ing Spick."

In Tennessee, two Asian Hispanic children born in America were told by some white kids that they will be getting a ticket out of the United States soon.

In Massachusetts, a Muslim woman wearing a scarf on her head was told at a subway stop that Trump is going to kick her out of the country.

In New York City, an immigrant woman who works for a largely white real estate office, shared with me how some of her co-workers sent her an e-mail with photo-shopped images showing President Barack Obama and his wife, in a trash can. While another colleague shared how a black Jamaican attorney entered an elevator filled with whites with an armful of files. He politely asked someone to press the button for his floor, but he was ignored and then they laughed out loud when he had to scurry out before the door closed on him.

HARASSMENT

The SPLC says, so far, anti-immigrant incidents remain the top type of harass-

ment reported to them. Nearly 40 percent of all incidents occurred in an educational (K-12 schools and university/college) setting.

Meanwhile, the president-elect, who spent his campaign spewing anti-immigrant vitriol and was endorsed by the KKK, has failed to address this fear and the rising incidents of hate. Not even a tweet to his millions of followers! He indicated in a "60 Minutes" interview that he had no idea of these incidents and when asked what his message to the haters would be, offered up a weak: "Stop it."

To make matters worse, Trump insists he will be deporting as many as three million immigrants out of the U.S. and turning back President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order that will leave some 800,000 young undocumented immigrants exposed to deportation.

Trump's Cabinet picks to date have done little to assuage the rising fear. When David Duke, former imperial wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, expressed his approval of Trump's recent Cabinet appointments, you know we are in big trouble.

Trump has so far named all alt-right white men with a history of racism in his new Cabinet. Diversity be damned!

Jeff Sessions, his attorney general pick, could not become a district court judge because of accusations of racism in the 1980s. Michael Flynn, his choice for assistant for national security affairs, has re-tweeted anti-Semitic content and has said that fear of Muslims is rational. Steve Bannon, his pick as senior counselor to the president, is the executive chairman of Breitbart News, a hub of the fringe alt-right movement known for its racism and anti-Semitism. Mike Pompeo, his pick for director of the CIA, is a conservative fourth-term Kansas senator and member of the Tea Party, who has been accused of being anti-Muslim and having participated in a racist political campaign.

NO LEADER

This is far from the election victory speech in which Trump promised: "I pledge to every citizen of our land that I will be president for all Americans."

Yet Trump, who has yet to show any real leadership and speak out against the rising incidents of hate, chose to attack the cast of "Hamilton" on Twitter for their statement to the vice president who attended the show on Nov. 18.

"We, sir — we — are the diverse America who are

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10A)

CONDITIONAL: Insanity or bliss, love comes in curious shapes

So much has been written about love that it has filled volumes of books with poetry, prose, sonnets and even jumbled verse.

Combine this with the countless movies, plays, serials, reality shows, speeches, soliloquies, monologues, dialogues and debates and you have a never ending litany of literary emotion.

Scientists, priests, psychologists, physicians, philosophers and charlatans have all tried to fathom what this thing called love really is. So far none came up with anything that's definitive or decisive.

Everyone has his or her own views about love, but because it is intangible, invisible and, of course, personal and subjective, no one can really be sure. One definition is: "Love is the feeling you feel when you feel the feeling that you never felt before."

Well, if you put it that way, then it's quite clear. I think not. What the consensus reveals is that there are different types of love and indeed different degrees of that feeling. But this love thing is always a topic of spirited if not emotional discussion regarding what it is, who feels it and if it really exists.

PREMIUM

Women love to hear it and place a great premium on those words, while men only say it to please women. If a man is suspected of cheating, the first thing that his wife will ask him is: "Do you love her?" If a woman is suspected of cheating, the first thing that the man will ask her is: "Did you have sex with him?"

Sex is tangible. Love is not. Someone once said that people say "I love you" only when they want something.

Some folks liken it to insanity, for people in love often tend to do crazy things. No wonder Shakespeare penned: "Love is merely a madness, and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do." He also opined: "Lovers and madmen have such seething brains, such shaping fantasies, that apprehend more than cool reason ever comprehend." In other words, "They crazy."

But are the writers and poets wrong about equating love to insanity? Does it not make otherwise stable people do crazy things, taking great risks that no daredevil or thrill seeker would attempt? Fools and lovers rush in where angels fear to tread.

BAD RECIPE

Combine love with pas-



sion and you have a combustible recipe for disaster. No wonder the French have a specially designated crime category to cover that insanity - crime of passion.

The courts there understand that crimes committed in the name of love and passion, have some sort of logic, if not justification.

"So he chopped her up into little pieces after finding her in bed with his best friend ... passion ... it's understandable ... two years probation."

That's the romantic love though, which most people write about. There are other types, some of which, just like the fine print on some contracts and purchases say, "conditions apply". Oh yes, that type of love comes with a caveat, a slew of conditions.

"I will love you as long as you support me, pay my rent, buy me nice things and set me up in a nice place."

I contend that the only earthly being that's proven to truly love unconditionally without question or doubt is a dog. Yes a dog. That loyal animal will love you in spite of your faults, whether you are rich or poor. It does not care where you live, what vehicle you drive or how you look.

I challenge any human being to match that unconditional love. Do a test. Lock your wife and your dog in separate car trunks for two hours then see who greets you better when you let them out.

BLOODLINES

Then there is the love of family, which varies from culture to culture. True, the saying is: "Blood is thicker than water." But nowadays, in certain countries, people no longer put a premium on family life, and will not only throw out the baby with the bathwater, but will drown the parents

in it as well.

Happily, most parents still love their children, and that bond is still a great feature in our society. Some take it to the extreme and are blinded by this love. So remember the affiliation between love and insanity: "My child can do no wrong and I will kill anybody who says otherwise."

The love of friends is another type of love, and even though men won't say it openly to each other, there is often a deep love between male friends who will refer to themselves as "brother". It's usually an unspoken love, and is often stronger than the love that women have for each other. Have you noticed how quickly female friends "fall out" and malice, stop talking to each other, even after many years of friendship? You rarely find that among men.

Now a dangerous love is the love of material things. That, I can never truly comprehend. Of course we must be responsible and respect property and acquisitions. After all, buying that house was a serious challenge that bends most people in all directions. And purchasing that car can also take its toll.

But they are merely things, articles that we can't take with us and possessions that families fight over after we've gone. Despite this, some persons love material things more than they love people. Recently, a friend of mine told me how his neighbor stole some jewelry from his houseguest and he could not believe how the woman carried on.

"She flung herself on the ground, rolling around with her arms and legs flailing in the air and wailed like a cat in heat," he said.

That type of love surpasses obsession and approaches idolatry. Remember that guy who lost his arm in a car crash? When he looked at the remaining stump, he screamed: "Oh no, my Rolex gone."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10A)



FELICIA J. PERSAUD



TONY ROBINSON

ACTIONS TO DECIDE: Will Trump heal divisions in America?

ROGER CALDWELL

The 2016 election is over, and Donald J. Trump is the 45th president-elect of the United States.

He will be the first president who is an unknown quantity because he has no political record or experience in a political office or capacity.

As an enigma, Trump is a riddle who mobilized a movement in America that spoke to a forgotten segment of the country (white people).

President-elect Trump is the voice of frustration from a white paradigm of voters who believe minorities are taking over the country. It starts with a black president and ends with too many undocumented immigrants populating the country.

After winning the election, Trump stated that he wants to be the president for all Americans, and it is time to heal the country. There is a divide in America, and Trump has an obligation to connect to those who believe he is a racist, a bigot, a misogynist and a crook. As thousands of people have begun demonstrations around the country, America can't pretend that it is not happening. It indicates that more lies will not bring peace to a fractured America.

FLAWED

Both candidates for president were flawed. The most flawed presidential candidate won the election. But, this



Trump

does not mean that our collective faith and our sense of unity cannot calm the nation after a contentious and bruising campaign. The nature of politics is bloody, and during the 2016 political war many negative and disrespectful things were repeated.

History dictates that once the political war is fought, there is a winner based on the Electoral College votes, and the loser concedes. President Barack Obama said standing next to Vice President Joe Biden: "Sometimes you lose an argument. Sometimes you lose an election. The path that this country has taken has

never been a straight line."

The test of any great nation is how people react after defeat. It is too late to demonstrate once your candidate has lost because you decided not to vote.

The Republicans now will control the U.S. Congress - the Senate, House and executive branch. This is an indictment on the Democrats who were too lazy to show up at the polling places and cast their ballot.

CHANGE

Trump has run on a platform of change, and during his campaign, he argued that

Obama was one of the worst presidents in the history of the country. As Trump prepares to ascend to the highest and most powerful office in America, and around the globe, he should no longer be allowed to say the first thing that comes to his mind.

In the national media, the question is being asked: "Will the president-elect get a Twitter do-over?" Trump has his twitter account open again, and one of the first things he tweeted at 9:19 p.m., 10 Nov. 2016 was: "Just finished a very open and successful presiden-

tial election. Now professional protesters, incited by the media, are protesting. Very unfair!"

At 6:14 a.m., 11 Nov. 2016, Trump tweeted: "Love the fact that the small groups of protesters last night have passion for our great country. We will all come together and be proud."

Obviously, the second tweet is more positive and inclusive, and this time he gets a do-over. But as president, Trump needs to get it right the first time.

After winning the election, Trump praised Hillary Clinton and at the White House meeting, he acknowledged Obama's accomplishments and exemplar record. In order for Trump to heal America, he must stop and learn to control his tendencies. It's easy to say you are the president for all Americans, but the execution is hard.

Even though the president and president-elect have extended to each other an olive branch, America is extremely divided. A photo-op and a handshake will not change anything because it is not what you say, but it is what you do.

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of this publication.



CONDITIONAL: Insanity or bliss, love comes in curious shapes

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9A)

Then there's the love that turns to obsession; when someone loves you so much that it's smothering. They cannot eat, sleep, work, as they are consumed by love. Those

people will kill you or kill themselves. Love akin to insanity again? So, choose your love carefully.

seido1@hotmail.com



Time for leadership, Trump

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9A)

alarmed and anxious that your new administration will not protect us, our planet, our children, our parents, or defend us and uphold our inalienable rights," said Brandon Victor Dixon, the actor who played Aaron Burr, stated after acknowledging Mike Pence was in the audience and thanking him for attending the show.

"We truly hope that this show has inspired you to uphold our American values and to work on behalf of all of us."

Trump, in dictatorial fashion, took to Twitter the next morning to say that the "Hamilton" cast had "harassed" Pence by making

the statement and had been "very rude." "Apologize!" Trump wrote at the end of one of two tweets on the matter.

Nice going president-elect! Slam our constitutional right to free speech, but ignore the racists committing crimes in your name all across the country.

President for all of America my foot! It's time to show real leadership and deliver on your victory promise and heal the divide now. That's the only way America will stay great.

Edited from News Americas. Felicia J. Persaud is CMO of Hard Beat Communications, Inc.



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*Happy Birthday
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~ Barbados marked its 50th anniversary of Independence from Britain on Nov. 30. To salute the historic occasion, Caribbean Today highlights those who have helped make the island nation a shining jewel in a special supplement this month, pages 1B-12B, featuring a variety of articles by freelance writer Dawn A. Davis, who visited Barbados recently.



~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

SAFE HAVEN: Barbados cements its place in global business arena

DAWN A. DAVIS

Donville Inniss, minister of industry, international business, commerce and small business development, is a proud Barbadian. He credits the Caribbean island's reputation as being a domicile of choice for international investors for making his job easier. He also noted that Barbados's attractiveness to international investors has a historical base.

"Barbados has always been in the global arena going back to the days of slavery, perhaps better known in the rum industry days of 300 years ago," Inniss explained.

"Barbadians were very instrumental in helping the U.S. (United States) ... providing the first set of governors to the Carolinas, who came from Barbados. Our model for government was also used by the U.S. in the early days.

"As well, there were countries in Africa that at the turn of the last century would have most of their governors in key public offices originate from Barbados and the Caribbean."

Based on this foundation, today Barbados has a clearly defined international business



Inniss

sector, said Inniss. The island also boasts a judicial system

having signed about 36 treaties with other countries. For

"Barbadians were very instrumental in helping the U.S. ... providing the first set of governors to the Carolinas, who came from Barbados. Our model for government was also used by the U.S. in the early days. As well, there were countries in Africa that at the turn of the last century would have most of their governors in key public offices originate from Barbados and the Caribbean" - Inniss

that works, a transparent political system and leaders that are willing to engage with the rest of the world on international trade matters.

Barbados is recognized as a treaty-based jurisdiction,

example, the island has a double taxation treaty with Canada. Through that treaty, and the accompanying policies, Barbados is the third largest recipient of foreign investment out of Canada,

according to Inniss.

"Last year we managed about 77 billion Canadian dollars of Canadian-owned assets," he explained. "That's the value of Canadian-owned enterprise business services that are controlled by Barbados-based companies. That is global, not money in Barbados. We are second to the U.S. and the U.K. (United Kingdom) as the place that Canadian companies use globally.

"Likewise, we are busy attracting businesses out of Mexico, Columbia, Venezuela because investors going into those countries like to come to a safe haven like Barbados."

INCENTIVE

Another incentive for foreign investment is the 2.5 percent maximum tax rate on licensed entities in the international business sector. Inniss correlates the attractive tax rate with the 5,000 licensed foreign companies employing a considerable number of people and contributing almost a billion Barbados dollars to the economy annually, second only to tourism.

Part of Inniss's portfolio is also enabling the right environment for the micro, small

and medium enterprise sector.

"We recognize that it is a sector that plays a meaningful role in economic development in any economy anywhere in the world," he said. "... We also recognize that this is the sector that is most likely to drive creativity and innovation here in Barbados."

RESPECT

Inniss said the government recently rolled out a Bds\$50 million round of finance targeted at the micro, small and medium enterprise sector. He said one of the major challenges of the sector is access to affordable financing as commercial banks generally view this sector as a high risk.

"My ministry is on the cusp of revolutionizing the micro, small and medium enterprise sector by clearly identifying who they are, rolling out a new suite of policies and incentives and ensuring that the sector gets the level of respect that it rightly deserves," Inniss explained.

Demonstrating that respect, the ministry took a number of micro and small businesses on promotional trade missions across the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4B)

Focus on education develops nation's best resource - its people

Barbados is well known for its high standard of education and near 100 percent literacy rate, the highest in the English-speaking Caribbean.

According to the island's Minister of Education Ronald Jones those accomplishments are linked to historical factors.

"We have no naturally formed resources," Jones emphasized recently. "The only thing that we had was people, and that was the primary resource we had to develop, the mind.

"So Barbados, from a national perspective, took that on as a mantra: We must develop our people. That became embedded, so much so that any leader or political organization that trifles with education and training suffers at the polls, because the Barbadian psyche is one that says that is my right, it's not a privilege."

COMPULSORY

Barbados has a compulsory education system up to 16 years. If a child drops out of school before that age, the parents can be taken before the courts. It's built into the

Education Act.

Each child is guaranteed 11 to 12 years of education, paid for by the state. Even if a child is in a private institution, that child is still guaranteed free education.

The minister explained that the history of Barbados is like the history of many other Caribbean countries — plantation economies, slave societies. Barbados's small size made it impossible for slaves to disappear into forests, woodlands or mountain peaks. So, Barbadians historically endured the excesses of slavery, unlike Trinidad, Jamaica or even Grenada where the landscape was different. Slaves in Barbados internalized more, thinking all the time about the day when they could truly reach the level of their ability.

The year 1838 brought an end to that in a formal way, but not institutionally, Jones explained. Between 1838 and 1937 Barbados was still locked into a plantation economy. But the churches — particularly Anglican — started to play a more dynamic role, moving from religious to secular edu-



Jones

cation.

CHANGE

Jones explained that "in 1937 when Barbados went through a social and economic meltdown, what we call the 1937 Riots, the British started to pay more attention and provided a few more resources. But, you had a population already hungry to change the pattern of their lives. That pattern of change was bred, and continued, even now.

"Then the full blast of the state tied to the consciousness of a people declared our chil-

dren must never go through what we have gone through. Therefore, this whole thing became not only an individual project or family project, but a national project," the minister added.

That right to education means the state must gather enough resources to pay for it, from nursery school to tertiary institutions. Yet, after the 2008 global financial meltdown, the government requested citizens contribute 20 percent of the cost of university education, resulting in significant backlash, according to Jones.

INVESTMENT

"Government has invested about six percent of the gross domestic product of Barbados in education every year, and out of its budget, between 18 to 20 percent every year," he said. "That is at the same level as countries such the United States and Canada ... If we had to count the resources of families into education, it would move to maybe seven percent."

With a population of about 282,000 - roughly 60,000 students - the presence of a

University of the West Indies (UWI) campus in Barbados has helped boost the numbers of those who have achieved tertiary degrees. With the availability of National Development Scholarships for study both at home and abroad, many Barbadians have gone on to the highest levels of education. Although some don't return home, they are still counted as proud Barbadians in the diaspora.

"Because of size, we know that we can't absorb all of our people," said Jones. "We know that some will not return home. All of that is factored into the process, but they are still Bajans.

"We are training Bajans to be global citizens because the work is in a global context. Rihanna would not have been in Barbados. Rihanna is now a global citizen representing Barbados extremely well."

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.





~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

Once 'Little England', Barbados now among jewels of Caribbean crown

DAWN A. DAVIS

What makes Barbados so different from other islands? "Barbados, because of its historical traditions, its very close connection with England, has always earned the distinction as being one of the jewels in the English crown in the Caribbean," declared Minister of Culture, Sports, and Youth Stephen Lashley.

"In fact, Barbados was once called 'Little England' and it is still seen like that in the eyes of our visitors, particularly coming from England and Europe."

Lashley explained how Barbadians embrace their culture.

"The history and heritage of Barbados is something that we recognize from a bitter-sweet perspective," he said recently. "Barbados would have been occupied by the English. The English were also responsible for introducing slavery into Barbados. That's

all part of our ancestry, and we see it as that. But, we look at that and it helps us to understand our present, and what we need to project in terms of our future."

Barbados is the most easterly of the Caribbean islands, the closest part in the chain to the African continent. Because of its proximity, it was one of the closely guarded islands. In the early 16th to 17th centuries Barbados developed the reputation as being one of the most important. It assumed the same importance to the British as New York is to the United States of America, Lashley explained.

UNCONQUERED

The minister explained that Barbados was part of the triangular trade, and much of the commerce took place between England, Barbados and Africa. Barbados was a critical point of defense. Barbados had a permanent infantry on the island at all



Lashley

times, able to defend the territories from invasion. Because of that presence, Barbados was never conquered by a foreign force. It remained under English occupation until Independence in 1966.

"We have never been conquered by the Spanish, the French, the Dutch," said

Lashley. "That makes it distinctive in terms of the Caribbean islands, because several islands would have changed hands.

"... You will recognize that some of the parishes, like some other Caribbean islands, are named after saints: St. John, St. Michael, St. Phillip.

There is a very heavy Anglican presence on the island. In every parish you will find an Anglican church. The streets are named after English places, English monarchs. So, Barbados became populated with the influence of the English."

Barbados's unique cultural practices have made it a popular destination. Among them is its annual "Crop Over" festival, which first celebrated the end of the sugar crop. It has mushroomed into what is now the modern Crop Over carnival festivities. Out of this, kettie and drum musicians emerged, as well as stilt walkers, and the famous Mother Sally with the pronounced posterior. The tradition of stick lickin', where men used sticks somewhat like swords, also became an art. The development of Land Ship enactments, symbolizing the movement of British ships on the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4B)

B'dos welcomes debate on de-risking

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – Barbados has welcomed the decision of the London-based Financial Stability Board (FSB) to involve small open economies in the decision making process on de-risking of banks.

A statement issued by the Central Bank of Barbados (CBB) last month noted that the issue was discussed at the FSB meeting in London and that the CBB Governor Dr. DeLisle Worrell commended the FSB for its position.

"We must compliment the FSB for having opened an avenue for small international financial centers like Barbados to participate in the process of decision making on this matter of vital importance to the growth of our international business and financial services sector," said Worrell, who attended the plenary meeting of the FSB in his capacity as co-chair of the Regional Consultative Group for the Americas (RCG_A) for the period 2015-17.

CUT TIES

Correspondent banks, which are mainly large, interna-

tional banks domiciled in the United States, Europe and Canada, provide Caribbean states with vital access to the international financial system, by offering services to smaller, domestic banks and financial institutions to complete international payments and settlements.

However, many banks, which provide correspondent banking services, have been seeking to manage their risks by severing ties with institutions in the region.

The issue of corresponding banking was a major item at the annual summit of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders in Guyana in July.

Worrell said that international business in Barbados has been hampered by a complex web of international regulations and strictures, even though Barbados has an enviable reputation as a competitive, well-regulated, transparent country, which provides financial services of high quality.

He said de-risking strategies adopted by banks operating in Barbados have been introduced reluctantly and only because they see no other way to ensure that they are not the victims of some sensational news item.

- Edited from CMC.



Successful Women in Business



In March Caribbean Today will spotlight Successful Women In Business. Join Caribbean Today as we showcase these hard working women who have left their mark on the business community in South Florida. If you would like to nominate someone please send your nominees to Editor@caribbeantoday.com or Peter.Webley@caribbeantoday.com

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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

EDUCATION BOOST: Prince's Trust helps youth acquire skills, on-the-job training

Prince's Trust International (PTI) is a youth charity established in Barbados.

It aims to help disadvantaged young people on the Caribbean island gain skills to advance education, training or employment.

The trust, formally launched in Nov. 2015 in Malta by its president, Charles, the prince of Wales, has partnered with the Royal Barbados Police to deliver a "Team" international development program and, with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, for the first pilots of the "Get Into" employability program on the island.

"Team" is a 12-week personal development program which helps 16 to 25 year olds - the majority unemployed - to build confidence, motivation and skills through a series of outdoor activities, community challenges and classroom-based learning.

The team of 13 Barbadians has already taken part in a week-long residential program and is working on a community project to create a kitchen garden at Thelma Vaughn Memorial Hospital.

ASSISTANCE

The Royal Barbados Police has also identified a space for the program's delivery at its Boys and Girls Club in Bridgetown. This first pilot started Sept. 19 and runs through Dec. 9. The results



Participants in Prince's Trust hospitality program.

will be used to plan ongoing delivery to grow the impact of the program across the island.

"Get Into Hospitality" includes two weeks training at the workplace delivered by the Barbados Vocational Training Board. There young people can gain work experience in different areas of the hospitality industry, such as housekeeping, office management, bar and restaurant services and international cuisine.

The first "Get Into Hospitality" program was held between September and October. It benefitted more than 20 participants, who worked at the following places: Marriott Hotel, Elegant Hotels (Daphne's Restaurant, Waves Hotel, The House, Tamarind, Crystal Cove, Colony Club, Turtle Beach Hotel), Ocean Hotels, Burger King, Tapas Restaurant, The Dining Club,

through placements at the following employers: Kestrel Liners, Windward Agencies, Goddard's Tropical Shipping, Calvin Alkins, The Port, Massey Distribution, Robulk Agencies, and Caribbean International Freight & Logistics Ltd. International.

FRAMEWORK

Once these pilots are complete, PTI will work with partners to create a sustainable framework for future delivery and expansion across the island. PTI is also looking to expand its reach deeper into the Caribbean and the United States. The delivery of

Kennedy said: "We are very grateful to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Royal Barbados Police and to all our partners in Barbados for the excellent work they have been doing with us to reach out to disadvantaged young people in Barbados and give them new hope. The pilot projects are already showing extremely encouraging results and we hope that with the help of our existing partners and new partners we can expand the work of Prince's Trust International in Barbados and beyond in the Caribbean."

For more information



"Get Into Logistics" participants show off their certificates.

and Jenny Blanc.

"Get Into Logistics", which ran between October and November, has a particular focus on The Port of Bridgetown. Some 19 participants received training

these programs, which are currently supporting 55 young Barbadians, coincides with the 50th anniversary of Barbados's Independence.

PTI Chief Executive Alan

about Prince's Trust International, visit www.princestrustinternational.org.



Once 'Little England', Barbados now among jewels of Caribbean crown

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3B)

waters also materialized out of the slave society.

BOOT CAMP

Barbados keeps the island's unique culture alive through the government's Youth Development Program.

"Built into it is a Barbados Youth Service Program, a para-military style program in which young people are allowed to leave the 'safety'

of their homes to be in a kind of boot camp environment, which reinforces certain values, principles," Lashley explained. "There is a job placement component in which young people go into various businesses to get job experience."

In addition, the ministry has a cadre of youth commissioners responsible for developmental projects, which may deal with issues such as sexual identity and HIV aware-

ness. A Young Entrepreneurship Scheme teaches young people the rudiments of entrepreneurship and helps them develop businesses. Meanwhile, the Endless Possibilities program partners young people with established companies in a pseudo apprenticeship environment.

Lashley also stressed sports as an important element of youth development, including training young people in to

play cricket and the increasingly popular road tennis sport, developed in Barbados after Emancipation.

The new modern Barbados, Lashley believes, rests in the hands of the young. The country's National Youth Policy, for example, was crafted by young people who sit in Parliament, exposed to how the government is run.

"The reality of what has happened since 1966 has been a total modernization of

Barbados," said Lashley.

"... Barbados can boast of being almost a developed country, where any type of professional that you have in the world you can also find in Barbados. And therefore, the investment of education is a manifestation of the Independence vision."

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2B)

region, including stops in St. Lucia, Grenada, Guyana, Cuba and Panama. Inniss said focusing on the Caribbean and the Barbadian diaspora overseas is significant, especially in light of the country's 50th

anniversary of Independence.

"We've actually seen a major transformation in the economy and society in the 50-year period," he said. "... We have actually grown from a small village to a major and complex state.

"I've watched this island slip out of the clutches and control of a colonial master called Great Britain to one where we really stand on our own ... When my colleague ministers or prime minister speak at the United Nations or

any international agency or organization, there is a sense of pride.

"And people listen because Barbados, like so many other Caribbean islands, have really pulled ourselves up and is now a voice to be reck-

oned with where it matters most."

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.





~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

PIVOTAL PAST: George Washington House reveals memories of a president, tales of slavery

DAWN A. DAVIS

Did you know that George Washington, the first president of the United States, once lived in Barbados?

Just 19 years old, he visited the eastern Caribbean island in 1751 and lived there for about two months. He accompanied his older half-brother Lawrence, who had contracted tuberculosis and was hoping for a cure from the sun and sea air. Lawrence would die a year later of his ailment upon his return home to Virginia. For George, the Barbados visit was the only trip outside the U.S. for the future president.



A Shackled People

Traveling valises, water pitchers and wine glasses, and writing implements reveal a certain luxury. So, did the decorative chamber pot under the bed.

artifacts were unearthed on the island and restored by historian Dr. Karl Watson. Pointing to a leg manacle he restored, Watson admitted

that he tried the restraint, that was meant for habitual run-aways on himself. "And it actually fit," he said.

Watson also explained the contents of a display case that held tobacco, cowrie shells,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B)

Now a UNESCO protected property and World Heritage Site, George Washington House in Bridgetown, Barbados stands as a legacy and reminder of the deep connection between the island and the U.S.

A tour of the two-storey structure, under the authority of the Barbados National Trust (BNT), gives visitors a peek inside the early life of one of the crafters of the U.S. Constitution who became known as the "Father of the Nation". The house was built in the 1720s. Washington and his brother rented it for 15 pounds per month. It was a spacious great house with a view of the sea and sat adjacent to one of the island's military forts, the Garrison.

RESTORATION

The outbuildings included a latrine and free-standing kitchen with brick oven and working hearth. Rainwater was filtered through large porous limestone jars to be used for drinking. The implement on the property is original to the house.

The BNT has painstakingly restored the inside of the house to resemble what it might have looked like in 1751. The bedrooms, with four-poster beds and mosquito netting, is a symbol of how the elite lived in those days.

The main meeting/living room featured a long wooden table and chairs for dinner guests. It is said that the Washington brothers often entertained friends here. A look at the ceiling revealed some portions of the original beams and the tongue and groove construction method used in the era.

SLAVERY

The second floor is perhaps the most significant because of the artifacts of slavery and the slave trade displayed there. The most gruesomely moving pieces in this museum are the neck brace and leg irons displayed on a mannequin figure of Olaudah Equiano, an African slave kidnapped from Guinea about 1755. A rope-tethered child hangs on to him.

Equiano was sold to a British Royal Navy officer, then to a sea captain, who took him to Barbados. He eventually purchased his freedom in 1766, went to London and became involved in the anti-slavery movement. He wrote an autobiography, titled "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa", which provided him with wealth. But his shackles remind visitors of the horrors of human bondage.

Some of the authentic



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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

GETTING TO KNOW YOU: 'Fun Facts' takes Caribbean journey through past, present

DAWN A. DAVIS

The brainchild of Barbadian Ravi Shankar, "The Big Little Fun Facts Book" takes readers on a journey of authentic Bajan oral cultural traditions.

It shares and defines local proverbs and modern slang, as well as educates readers on the island's cuisine, history, sports and National Anthem.

"A lot of people are

happy when they see something like this because it brings back good

memories," explained Shankar, who started his company Facts Barbados in 2012. "Then there is the generation under me who have no idea what these sayings are about. So, it's fusing the past with the present.

"I've always been fasci-

nated by how things were then and how they are now. But, I feel especially excited about Caribbean history. I think there is an untapped potential for our history to spread...

I want the products to speak to our brothers and sisters around us," he added.

Shankar said the books project goes deeper than making money. It's about reaching people's hearts, he insisted. Perhaps one of the most rewarding, he said, was the bible word search booklet,

which he distributed to hospital patients.

"When I saw how much they loved it, it truly moved me," he said.

VISION

Shankar said he has another vision.

"As I grow and my company grows, I want other people to grow with me as well," he explained. "So, I have a

very few select friends that I always encourage to think outside the comfort

zone, because people need a chance."

Shankar has had chances to remake himself. He was a member of the Barbados Defence Force before joining the business world, but was later laid off. That's when he saw the opportunity to

"I've always been fascinated by how things were then and how they are now. But, I feel especially excited about Caribbean history. I think there is an untapped potential for our history to spread ... I want the products to speak to our brothers and sisters around us"

become an entrepreneur, but without the requisite skills in business he knew he couldn't get far. He took courses and earned diplomas and certificates in marketing, accounting, finance and human resource management. The idea for the first Facts



Shankar



Barbados product emerged.

Shankar said he was inspired by his then four-year old daughter as he watched

stand what the other is going through); "Dead man can't run from 'e coffin" (It is impossible to run from your responsibilities); "Cut pumpkin can' keep" (Once virginity is lost it is impossible to abstain thereafter).

The next step was to create similar cards for other Caribbean countries with their proverbs and history. Shankar and his team created cards for St. Lucia, and for Guyana's 50th anniversary of Independence. But, the entrepreneur wanted to do more. That's when the Facts Barbados book idea came about.

"I believe that we all have something to share, something to give," said Shankar.

"People focus too much on themselves and what they can get. If I met someone that was on their way up the suc-

cessful ladder, I would hope that that person would want to take me along. So, I see it like that. That's how I live"

"I believe that we all have something to share, something to give. People focus too much on themselves and what they can get. If I met someone that was on their way up the successful ladder, I would hope that that person would want to take me along. So, I see it like that. That's how I live"

her playing with storytelling cards. He walked around Barbados observing its people for inspiration. Then it hit him. "I went to the airport and the seaport. When people travel they travel light, but they want information to take back home. So, something affordable and something portable is key. That's how the Facts Barbados playing cards idea was born, printed with local proverbs and their meanings. It took off," Shankar explained.

SAMPLE

For example: "Loose goat don't know wha' tie goat sih" (One has to be in someone else's shoes in order to under-

stand what the other is going through); "Dead man can't run from 'e coffin" (It is impossible to run from your responsibilities); "Cut pumpkin can' keep" (Once virginity is lost it is impossible to abstain thereafter).

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"People focus too much on themselves and what they can get. If I met someone that was on their way up the suc-

PIVOTAL PAST: George Washington House reveals memories of a president, tales of slavery

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5B)

and a smoking pipe. During excavation of a slave holding area, he and his team found what they believed to be a mass burial site. They studied the remains of a young female of West African origin, probably between age 20 and

23. She wore a pendant and within her individual space was a long white clay tobacco pipe, a large door key and shark's teeth. He explained that these were grave goods, often buried with someone of great stature. But it was what Watson's said next that shocked.

"In excavating, my trowel touched her skull and it rolled. And as it rolled, puffs of green smoke

"In excavating, my trowel touched her skull and it rolled. And as it rolled, puffs of green smoke came out of her eyes and her nostrils. It was a terrifying moment. I screamed and all of us ran. We went and bought a bottle of white rum, came back and poured libation around it and asked the ancestors to forgive us for disturbing the grave" – Dr. Watson



Watson

came out of her eyes and her nostrils," he explained. "It was a terrifying moment. I screamed and all of us ran. We went and bought a bottle of white rum, came back and poured libation around it and asked the ancestors to forgive us for disturbing the grave."

George Washington House is not just a place where the first U.S. president lived, it holds memories of those who slaved and died for freedom.

Story and photographs by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

MASTER BLENDER: Mount Gay offers the best of rum, Barbados style

DAWN A. DAVIS

Rum aficionados can thank Barbados for the derivative of sugar that brings to mind pirates, plunder and the Caribbean.

According to historical documents, rum was born in Barbados in 1703. The island's famous rum Mount Gay is named after Sir John Gay Alleyne, the man that first produced the hay-colored spirited liquid.

The company was actually owned by John Sober, who asked Sir John to manage it. Under his direction the rum was developed. The company was renamed Mount Gay after its manager. It wasn't until the mid 20th Century that the brand earned international recognition, when Aubrey Ward and his business partner John Hutson, a marketing genius, took over the distillery.

Located in the northern part of the island in the parish of St. Lucy, Mount Gay rum is

considered the best because of the superior molasses derived from Barbados cane sugar and its distillation and fermentation process.

"Originally when they planted sugar cane, it was to get the sugar," explained Darrio Prescod, Mount Gay's brand ambassador. "But, in the process of extracting the sugar there was an unwanted byproduct, a very thick syrupy substance, molasses. But, when they realized the fermentation of this molasses could be distilled into rum it offset the cost of running the refinery and essentially doubled the profits. So, molasses then became 'black gold'."

WATER

Perhaps one of the most important ingredients is water. Barbados is a landform of coral limestone. Most of its abundant water is trapped beneath the earth. Tapping into it for drinking, islanders realized the water was filtered



Caribbean Today's publisher Peter Webley examines the distillation process.

through the porous coral limestone, making it one of the purest drinking waters available. This is the liquid source for Mount Gay rum. So, starting with pristine water makes all the difference.

To demonstrate the cleanliness and the source of the water, the distillery has been using the same well for over 300 years, the original well used by its original owners. It is said to be more than 300 feet

deep.

"The fact that we are taking water from the same well and you can actually see it for yourself, you know it's not a fabricated story," said Prescod. "So, when you think about it, because this is coral filtered water, we think the island of Barbados was made for making rum."

Then, the mixture of water and molasses is allowed to ferment with the addition of yeast, and timing of course. The fermentation of this mixture, called a wash, is what gives the rum its personality, explained Prescod, who said the distillery uses two fermentation processes — open air and controlled - resulting in different types of characteristics.

DISTILLING

The unique distillation process of the combined ingredients then takes place before

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8B)

Farm to table, Slow Food focuses on healthy eating

Slow Food is a grassroots non-profit organization that started in Italy in 1986 and became international in 1989. It was created to "counteract fast food and fast life".

Now in 150 countries, Slow Food is an association of worldwide members who advocate a food culture that is good, clean and fair, three important tenets of the movement.

"Food culture is very important. It's not just about food security, it's about food sovereignty as well," explained Julie Hopper-McNeel of Slow Food Barbados.

"Food is good meaning that it is pleasing to all the senses. It's also sensitive to the environment. Our third principle is that food should be fair, meaning that there is access into the market so that the average person can afford to eat that way, also that farmers get a fair price for their produce."

The Slow Food Barbados chapter was co-founded by John Hunte, a member of the Organic Growers and Consumers Association, along with eco-entrepreneur Ian McNeel and his wife Julie, a health and wellness coach, environmental planner Lani Edghill and environmental builder Fraser Young.



Hopper-McNeel

CHANGE

The local group started in 2012 with a series of farm-to-table dinners and a mission to show local chefs the important role they play in good, clean, and fair food culture. Changing the mindset of Barbadians and how they access food was, and still is, at the top of the list.

"In Barbados we tend to be committed to whatever comes in on a shipping container because we can't grow enough food to take care of ourselves," Hopper-McNeel explained.

"A lot of times external pressures put a lot of pressures on the farmers here. And that, coupled with the other factors that make it difficult to farm here, makes this movement very important. I think that education is the way to do it so

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8B)



Spring Cargo & Shipping

March is the start of the Spring shipping season. More than 500,000 Floridians identify their primary ancestry as West Indians, that is over 117% increase from 1990. Florida's black household income for 2000 was a whopping \$32 Billion, that has continued to increase healthily over the subsequent 16 years. C.T will spotlight the various shipping services available to them, via Land Air and Sea to get their goods safely home in time for the season.

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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

FOOD FAVE: Chef Creig Greenidge serves up Bajan tradition with love

DAWN A. DAVIS

At just 35, chef Creig Greenidge, also known as “Chef Creig”, has won multiple awards for his Bajan-inspired culinary creations.

As a member of the Barbados National Culinary Team, Greenidge has represented the country in some of the most prestigious food events across the Caribbean, Europe, United States and Canada. He runs his own catering company, conducts private cooking classes and recently opened a restaurant.

It’s all part of a lifelong plan.

“It was my goal to become a chef before I even left secondary school,” explained Greenidge with a warm smile.

“I used to watch my mom in the kitchen, my dad, grandmother and uncle as well. Also, on Sundays we used to watch a cooking program on T.V. called ‘The European Chef’. I just always liked how clean it was, the stainless steel equipment, everything about it. So I said to myself, this is the direction I want to go.”

In school he did home economics. Greenidge said he sacrificed leisure time, choosing to spend it in the home economics room doing extra work while his friends were on the basketball court.

“But then they would want to try my food, and they loved it,” he quipped. “So, I was a chef before I knew I was a chef.”

JOURNEY

His journey as a chef fell in step, along with his philosophy.

“The most important thing about being a chef is to have people enjoy your food and staying true to your cul-

ture,” Greenidge explained.

With a desire to reach a higher level, he entered the Barbados Community College Hospitality Program and received a culinary arts degree. He was “baptized” as a professional chef at DC

Caterers, where he worked for several years. It was in his role as sous chef at the South Beach Hotel in Christ Church that Greenidge entered his first competition in 2005. He won “Chef of the Year”. Opportunities started taking shape and Greenidge joined the national team, traveling and making a name for himself and his country through international competitions.

This year, Greenidge opened his own restaurant, CM Catering, a popular spot, is located in Christ Church, where Greenidge grew up.

“I always wanted my first spot to be close to home,” he explained. “I always say, ‘it is harder to please those you are always around than strangers’. So, if you can please the majority of people around you, then you have accomplished a lot.”

LOVE

Greenidge is always in demand. So, what makes him so special?

“I always cook with love,” he said. “There are a lot of accomplished chefs in Barbados, but I do it out of love. I stick close to culture, the green peas and rice,



Greenidge

chicken stew, breadfruit chips, our own coleslaw infused with rum-soaked raisins. Our food is as international as any other cuisine.”

The majority of Greenidge’s foods are sourced locally. His menu changes everyday, depending on the availability of produce. Most of what is cooked daily is sold out by the evening, which keeps his food costs low and waste to a minimum.

So, does he eat his own food? What’s his favorite dish? Does he cook at home? The typical questions asked of chefs brought warm and easy answers. Greenidge loves rice and peas, baked chicken, coleslaw. Fishcakes are his favorite snacks. His go-to dessert reads like an exotic selection — pumpkin fritter done light like a donut, served with a rum cream sauce.

And yes, Greenidge enjoys cooking at home. He also enjoys eating his own culinary creations right from his restaurant.

“I sit in that chair right there,” he said pointing to a corner of the restaurant, “and eat my lunch. And if there is

any left over, I take it home for dinner. On my day off I cook at home for me and my family. I always enjoy cooking on a Sunday. It’s a tradition.”

Greenidge said he doesn’t emulate any cooking styles. He has his own. However, he is inspired by others, among them Gordon Ramsey, because of his passion, and Bobby Flay, for “getting his hands into the food.” He also admires local chefs Michael

Hinds, Michael Harrison, John Hazzard and his mentor Anthony Ford.

“I don’t want to be like them,” said Greenidge, “but I like what they are doing wherever they are. I stay true to me.”

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Farm to table, Slow Food focuses on healthy eating

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7B)

the average person will understand why they should shop at a farmers market and the questions to ask the farmers. In other words, become more a part of the food process. In Slow Food we call the consumer a co-producer.”

LINK

Responsible for community outreach and education Hopper-McNeel said the group has created 12 school gardens in its bid to teach youngsters about responsible food and farming techniques. Workshops and small grants to the schools for garden/farm installations have raised awareness about the link between health and clean food.

“One of the things we would like to see is less sugar in schools because there is a huge problem with diabetes here,” Hopper-McNeel noted, adding “a recipe contest using the foods grown in the garden will be used as a teaching tool to reach young people. We’re trying to work together to create something really sustainable.”

Slow Food Barbados survives through donors and

increasingly popular farm-to-table dinners. The group also holds fundraisers for the schools garden program. Coming up is the “Lionfish Derby” that involves spear fishing the invasive species of fish that is destroying local reefs. The local movement is also creating a special chef alliance element to broaden the Slow Food Barbados reach.

“We’re still very young as an organization, but we have had such an overwhelming wave of support,” said Hopper-McNeel.

“There are so many different directions that we can take the organization, but we need to just concentrate on the ones that get the most traction.

“We’ve also put together a buyers’ guide with all of the local and organic producers we could find. But, even with commercial farms, we try to encourage everyone to adopt organic practices. Try to use less chemicals, try to do something better for the earth.”

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



MASTER BLENDER: Mount Gay offers the best of rum, Barbados style

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7B)

the process of maturation in specially charred American white oak barrels begins.

There are two distinct ways of distilling. Single distillation is done in a 50-foot tall column that produces an alcohol content of about 95 percent by volume. The rum gets its unique flavor from the second type - double distillation - which is done through a copper pot producing an alcohol content of 85 percent, but with a more aromatic character. The shape of the copper pot has a



The double copper pot still.

“Originally when they planted sugar cane, it was to get the sugar. But, in the process of extracting the sugar there was an unwanted byproduct, a very thick syrupy substance, molasses. But, when they realized the fermentation of this molasses could be distilled into rum it offset the cost of running the refinery and essentially doubled the profits. So, molasses then became ‘black gold’” - Prescod

lot to do with the rum’s signature.

according to Prescod.

“Using similar double cop-

Managing these processes is key to the rum’s taste. That’s controlled by the refinery’s Blues, the master distiller, who has been at the plant since 1965,

per pot stills as Sir Alleyne used in the 1700s creates a unique flavor characteristic only to Mount Gay rum,” he said.

The last step involves the creativity of Allen Smith, Mount Gay’s master blender. Varying degrees of aged rums are blended, filtered, and chilled to perfection.

Story and photographs by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.





~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

'A quality place to live in, quality place to visit' ~ tourism minister

DAWN A. DAVIS

Barbados prides itself on independence and the will of its people, which form the backbone of the Caribbean nation.

Yet it willingly admits that visitors to the island make a massive contribution as well.

"By a considerable margin, tourism is the number one foreign exchange earner," declared Minister of Tourism Richard Sealy.

"In terms of contribution to GDP (gross domestic product), the direct contribution of tourism, when you look at it with the indirect and induced benefits, it's certainly way over 50 percent."

Barbados's economy is largely tourism dependent. The island has 380 restaurants and close to 6,000 hotel rooms. Tourism is closely tied to other sectors, such as financial services and agriculture.

"How we are perceived as a jurisdiction for business is closely linked to how we are perceived as a destination for tourism," said Sealy.

UNUSUAL

Since the late 1980s, most tourists to Barbados have come

from the United Kingdom. However, Sealy revealed there was a time when Americans and Canadians made up the majority of visitors. He explained that the historical connection, the airlift, and the perception of Barbados in the U.K. as being a quality brand, have worked well. That's unusual for a Caribbean destination. All other nations in the region count the United States as their number one source market.

"When I first started in this job ... the Brits were spending more money in Barbados than all other markets combined," said Sealy.

The Barbados Ministry of Tourism works with U.K. tour operators, who put together packages for visitors. Effort is also spent on the U.S., Canadian, and other CARICOM markets. But, the lion's share of the market is definitely from the U.K.

Sealy offered an anecdote to demonstrate the peculiarity: "Someone hits the sweepstakes in the U.K. and of course they ask the person what are you going to do now that you have won the lottery? The first thing they say is I'm gonna go to



Sealy

Barbados, or I'm going to buy a house in Barbados. That is the perception of the brand, something aspirational, something to be desired, something you want to do. We've basically held that ground for a number of years now, without much of a challenge."

SAFETY

The feeling of safety is also a big selling point for Barbados, which is noted for its low crime rate. Unlike places like Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, with specific tourist areas, Barbados doesn't have that luxury.

"The destination and the nation state are one in the

same," explained Sealy. "So, safety and security as a critical brand element has to be protected at all costs."

The Barbados diaspora market is also being tapped. The largest numbers reside in the U.K., U.S. and Canada, hence the creation of the Barbados Family & Friends (BFF) Program. The idea is to reach out to the diaspora, not only as a source for visitors and business, but also as an extended sales force through programs to help attract their co-workers, fellow church worshippers, classmates and family members. The year 2016 offers a unique attraction.

"This year being the 50th anniversary of Independence, it's a good time to encourage people to come back," said Sealy. "Our bookings suggest that we will get a lot of people here for the celebrations. It's very encouraging."

ACTIVITIES

Activities planned included a late November parade featuring a reenactment of the raising of the flag that occurred in 1966, as well as the unveiling of the national monument. Amongst the most anticipated

events will be a reunion concert featuring well-known Barbadian bands Crossfire, Square One and Coalition. Also on tap is the rebranded Barbados Food and Rum Festival.

As Barbados focuses on its 50th anniversary, investment in the tourism sector has also taken center stage. Sealy outlined that, through the Barbados Tourist Investment Inc. (BTI), the island has attracted hotels such as Sandals, Wyndham, and Hilton, as well as investment into refurbishing existing properties.

"There are just under 6,000 rooms, and we can add maybe another 3,000," Sealy said. "The island is small and there is a carrier capacity, but at the same time we do think we can handle a few more rooms ... By doing it in a sensible way we can still ensure the quality of life for our citizens."

"If it's a quality place to live in, it will be a quality place to visit."

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Accommodations, attractions, draw repeat visitors to Southern Palms

Located in Christ Church, on the famous St. Lawrence Gap strip, Southern Palms Beach Club was founded in the mid 1950s. The original owner was a French Canadian. Then, in the 1970s, its current owners expanded the site to its present day six expansive colonial-style buildings, featuring 92 units and spacious suites.

Idyllically hugged by 1,000 feet of white sand beach, Southern Palms has become a favorite destination hotel for the many British visitors who come to the island.

"Our guests are primarily British, about 70 percent," said Managing Director Britta Pollard. "We used to get a lot more Canadians than we do now, but things changed in 2001 with September 11. Prior to that there was an even split between Canadians and British visitors."

Pollard said the hotel markets the property through British tour operators who offer packages to United Kingdom travelers to Barbados.

CLIMB

Pollard began working at Southern Palms in 1985 in guest relations, moving up

through the ranks to a marketing focus, and eventually as manager in 1998.

"I guess I did some things right and was rewarded for my hard work," she said.

Being on St. Lawrence Gap is a positive for the hotel, Pollard noted. It's an active strip that has always been quite a hub, with a few hotels, lots of bars and restaurants, and a great deal of pedestrian movement, which guests seem to like. The stunning beach is also an attraction for guests.

But, it's not just the beach, comfortable rooms, restaurant, pools or bars that make the hotel attractive. According to Pollard, it has a history and character that makes it unique.

"History and character you cannot build, you cannot buy," she explained. "You can only get it with time, and that's what we have."

"We have guests that have been coming for 30 to 40 years, every year. They know each other, they know the staff. All of these things create such a unique atmosphere, a family."

"People have a tendency to come every year ... So when they come they see the same people, and create long



One of the buildings at Southern Palms.

lasting friendships.

"With the staff as well, some of them have been here for a long time," she added. "So, they also create relationships and bonds with some of the guests. In fact, some of the staff travel, and are invited by some of our guests to visit them in their home countries."

CHALLENGES

There are always challenges in running a business and Southern Palms is no different. One of those is how to keep guests at the hotel for dinner. Pollard admitted it is difficult, especially because of the many offerings on St.

Lawrence Gap.

"There is a mindset that you go out of the hotel for dinner," she said. "In the winter, we get a lot more traffic in the restaurant than we do in the summer. Years ago you had to go to a hotel to get a good meal, that's where the restaurants were. But, over the years a lot of standalone restaurants, and brilliant ones, have been developed."

The infrastructure of Barbados lends itself to people going out and experiencing the island's diversity. Because it's easy and safe to get around, with many options within walking distance, guests are

not locked into their hotels. Southern Palms features themed nights and entertainment to keep visitors and attract locals to the Garden Terrace Restaurant.

One of the most attractive features of the hotel are the Hawksbill turtles. Between April and October the official nesting season begins, and the Southern Palms stretch of beach becomes active.

"We have a lot of nests and subsequently a lot of hatchlings," Pollard explained. "The activity happens at nighttime. In fact, we have a 'Turtle List' that guests can put themselves on and we notify them when there is activity."

Imagine coming to Barbados on vacation and experiencing hundreds of baby turtles bubbling up out of the sand at 1 a.m. on a moonlit night. It's an experience many repeat guests count as the highlight of their stay at Southern Palms Beach Club.

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, freelance writer for Caribbean Today.





~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

'FEEL DI RIDDIM': Versatile Syndikyt finds its groove on island's hotel circuit

DAWN A. DAVIS

Syndikyt of Barbados has been in existence for more than 20 years. Like long running bands, it has changed members over the years, but the current group has been together for five years.

Band members include Maurice Lovence on bass guitar, Ian Belgrave on keyboards, vocalists Kathy-Ann Charles and Troy Harper, and leader Jerry Garvey on drums. Garvey and Lovence are founding members.

Syndikyt primarily played original music when it started. Then, as the group entered the hotel scene, it developed a cross-section of music, which has since evolved to include many genres. However, as a Caribbean band, Syndikyt leaned more towards music from the region.

"Any Caribbean group should want to be associated with Caribbean music," Garvey explained. "But, we add a little of a modern feel to it, a little bit of groove. We even add a spice of hip-hop to our Caribbean music sometimes to make it sound fresh



Syndikyt of Barbados

and energized."

MIX

The band's make-up offers a mix of cultures. Charles has St. Lucian and Barbadian heritage, Lovence hails from St. Vincent and Belgrave is originally from England. The other members are Barbadians.

Syndikyt is quite successful on the hotel circuit, playing five to six nights per week consistently. Garvey credited the band's success to its quality and versatility. He said guests would ask for music ranging from Bob Dylan to Bob Marley, so this forced the band to build its repertoire. Now, Syndikyt has more than

400 songs in its collection.

"The thing is we have to be prepared for both local and foreign tastes," said Garvey. "So, it makes you constantly have to look at your repertoire."

"But you know, it's something we love doing. I would never complain about rehearsing and working hard because

it's what I decided to do and all the members of the band pretty much feel the same way. The one common goal is to make sure we please the people. Keeping that mindset makes it a lot easier for you.

"We are thankful because there are periods when some groups don't have work because of the seasonal changes. We've been lucky enough to be consistently working. We are very busy," added Garvey, who said he made music a full-time endeavor years ago and has never looked back.

"I think a lot of people don't realize that music is a business. It is employment for a lot of people. If you take it seriously it can be rewarding. People see the end result when you're playing, but believe me it's a lot of work."

FUN

The band leader said Syndikyt works eight to nine hours on practice days, learning new songs and perfecting what's already in stock. Planning also takes up a lot of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11B)

'Soup Bowl' surfing catches a wave of enthusiasm in Barbados

The Barbados Surfing Association (BSA) was founded in 1983. President and surfer Christopher Clarke explained that the sport has been a large part of Barbados beach scene for more than 30 years.

Whether it's body surfing, body boarding, kite boarding, normal standup surfing or the newest introduction to the sport - paddle surfing - it has become a passion for many.

"The BSA hosts one of the longest running professional events in the world, considered among the top 10 surfing events in the world, and has been running for 33 years," said Clarke.

Dubbed the Independence Surf Pro and Soup Bowl Junior Pro surfing competitions, both showcase the surfing skills of local and international competitors in November. It's staged in partnership with The World Surf League, an international body of professional surfing.

The competitions take place at the famous Soup Bowl surf spot in Bathsheba, St. Joseph on the Atlantic Ocean side of Barbados that generates huge swells ideal for surfing.



Clarke

Surfing season starts when the hurricane season ends - October to June. Barbados gets its most consistent waves or swells with the winter weather that comes from the United States or Canada. The island is lucky enough to have two bodies of water surrounding it - the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. But one side is preferable over the other for surfing. According to Clarke, the most consistent waves form on the Atlantic

side, while the Caribbean side is characterized by smoother waves.

TALENT

Yet, top surfers take advantage of the swells no matter where they are. Among Barbados's best junior surfers are Chelsea Tuach, who recently qualified for the Women's Elite World Tour and is in the top 16 for women, and Chelsea Roett, ranked in the top 70. On the

men's side are Joshua Burke, Che Allan, Zander Venezia, Bruce Mackie, Josh Mackie and Dane Mackie. Adult surfers who represent Barbados on the world stage include Mark Holder, Anderson Mayers and Alan Burke.

Based on sea surfing's popularity in Barbados and its draw from international surf athletes worldwide, the BSA is disappointed at the meager level of sponsorship it gets from the government.

"They do help, but I do believe there is a lot more room for the government to help in terms of any water activity," said Clarke. "As the president of the BSA, I really feel that they do not spend enough money on the ocean or beach culture. And I think it's very important for Barbados and tourism."

CHALLENGES

Clarke added that surfing is an expensive sport because of the traveling involved. However, there are skilled young surfers in Barbados who are encouraged and trained toward Olympic level. The BSA offers training to junior surfers to gain elite sta-

tus. Private schools also teach beginners.

Clarke bemoaned the challenges of Barbados's world class athletes.

"I've always envisioned Barbados having paid athletes," he explained. "But, for some reason we have just neglected that entire spectrum of sports."

"We have world class athletes, but they tend to just get there on their own. There are no steps for them to take. It's happened in surfing too, so that's why we tried to create a Caribbean tour, which faltered a little bit too."

"So, we're still missing a very critical step to get surfers competing in Barbados against their peers to going on the international stage."

Still hopeful, Clarke thinks surfing can become just as important as cricket is to Barbados, with education, awareness and the growing achievements of the island's young surfers in international surfing competitions.

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.





~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

BARBADOS: Small nation, big voice, forging global partnerships

DAWN A. DAVIS

As Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Maxine McClean has been an integral player in navigating international agreements beneficial to the island nation of Barbados.

“As part of CARICOM, and what is also described as CARIFORUM, we are part of the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union ... a major free trade agreement,” McClean explained. “We were the first group of the ACP (African, Caribbean, and Pacific) countries to sign that agreement, and that is very critical for us. Within the context of CARICOM itself as a single market, that creates a body of countries that have common external tariffs.”

The minister added that some CARICOM countries have also signed agreements with Canada and the United States.

Barbados is also part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and, within that context, the minister explained, it sets the framework for the kind of trade policies that the nation must pursue in liberalizing global trade. Barbados, and CARICOM in general, is

also taking steps to enhance trade and investment with Cuba.

“At interest at this time is the situation where the Cuban government and the Cuban economy is going through a transition,” said McClean. “And I can say that Barbados, for example, has had a double taxation agreement with Cuba for over 20 years. So, that allows us a clear opportunity to facilitate investment in Cuba by third counties.”

ONE VOICE

CARICOM has had influence on bilateral trade policies based on the strength of speaking with one voice.

“Notwithstanding our small size, because we have collaborated as a group we have been able to influence negotiations as recently as last year at WTO meetings in Kenya,” said McClean.

“Barbados, along with other member states of CARICOM, negotiated to maintain our dialogue, ensur-



McClean

ing that our interests continue to be served. The whole issue of special and differential treatment for small states like ours has to be an issue which cannot be abandoned.”

The minister also confirmed that the Caribbean has been a major advocate in stemming climate change. She spoke about the Paris Agreement that was concluded last year, having global impact.

“We are happy to see China and the U.S. sign on,” McClean said. “For the duration of those negotiations, CARICOM has been very involved. In fact, one of our officers from Barbados ended

up being appointed by the secretary general of the United Nations to head his advisory team on climate change. It really was a signal of the impact that we in CARICOM have had.”

ACTION

McClean noted that that advocacy has to be converted into action across CARICOM. As an example, she applauded Barbados for the use of solar energy for water heating, but added the next step should be to use that same energy for electricity generation.

Dominica and Nevis, she added, are exploring the possibility of geothermal generated electricity.

“I think there is a lot of room for what I call the translation of that interest and that activism into concrete programs and projects to get these things implemented,” said McClean.

Barbados and the Caribbean are playing a major role in bringing the issue of climate change to the fore. But, some argue, economic health should be the focus, especially since some countries are still fighting their way out of the effects of the 2008 global economic meltdown.

Admittedly, Barbados has been challenged in terms of growth rates, which are not where the country wants them to be, according to McClean.

She said Barbados weathered the storm by taking tough decisions at a time when there was little fiscal space. Tourism took a hit during the initial stages as Barbados's main source had always been the United Kingdom, U.S. and Canada - countries severely affected economically by the meltdown.

“However, we've seen a significant improvement in our tourism arrivals because we've invested heavily in our promotion as well as product development activities,” said McClean.

Another major strategy to keep Barbados on a growth path is investment. There is evidence of this activity across the island in the construction of new hotels and other tourism products. McClean also stressed the need to focus on a new kind of agriculture that is, in part, technology driven, which she envisions will be realized through domestic and CARICOM-wide solutions.

“We're small singularly, we are still small collectively, but we still have a strong voice when we work together,” said McClean.

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Rising star Jason Holder leads West Indies' cricket revival from the front

Barbadian-born captain Jason Holder is starting to deliver impressive performances on the field as he attempts to lead the West Indies back to the pinnacle of cricket and solidify his claim for a place in the side.

Holder gained significantly in the international rankings coming out of the Tri-Nations Series of one-day internationals (ODI) in Zimbabwe last month, despite his side's failure to reach the final. The 25-year-old jumped nine spots to 15th in the ODI bowlers' rankings, following his nine-wicket haul in four matches during the tournament.

West Indies won its opening game of the series against Sri Lanka, but then tied with Zimbabwe, lost to the Sri Lankans by a single run, before going down to the hosts by five runs in a rain-affected encounter in its last game. Holder was disappointed in his team's slump.

“It's tough to be in this position after starting the tour-



Holder

name so well,” a dejected Holder told a media conference afterwards.

“At the beginning of the tournament, we all thought we could have won the tournament and to be in this position now, we're absolutely gutted.”

Sri Lanka beat Zimbabwe by nine wickets in the final.

Holder has called on his team to reflect on its performances with the hope of bouncing back in 2017.

“It's just a situation where we need to look at ourselves in the mirror, see where we fell

short, bring that forward into the New Year and see how we can come together again and perform better,” he said.

Holder acknowledged that varying circumstances affected his team's performances, but did not spare the Caribbean squad, blaming it for its own downfall.

“Luck really wasn't in our favor in some instances,” Holder added. “... We were a bit scrappy at times.”

Holder, who was unbeaten in three of his four innings in Zimbabwe, with a best of 45 not out among his scores, has also risen seven places to 80th in the ODI batting rankings. He is now at a career-best sixth place in the rankings for all-rounders.

Overall, the Barbadian has taken 68 wickets in 49 ODIs at an average of 31 and scored just over 600 runs at an average of 24 per inning.

- Edited from CMC.



'FEEL DI RIDDIM': Versatile Syndikyt finds its groove on island's hotel circuit

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10B)

time.

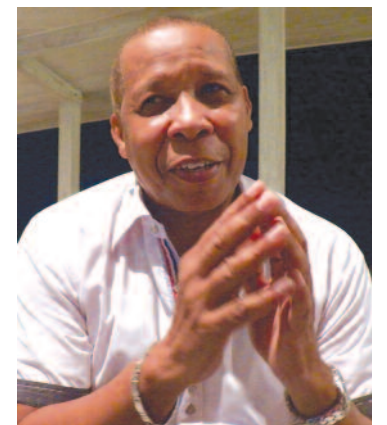
“But, it's fun,” Garvey said laughing.

Syndikyt has not created original music in the past few years because of its busy schedule. However, it has produced an album of Christmas songs which should be available this festive season, with plans of releasing two new songs early next year.

Garvey handles arrangements and contracts with hotels and private companies. Charles focuses on the band's look, its image and uniformity, while Belgrave is in charge of structuring the music, sound quality and equipment. Lovence and Harper help with sound checks and equipment maintenance.

Syndikyt has performed in New York twice. The band is hungry for more.

“It's something we would like to do again, see other cul-



Garvey

tures, see how other groups do things, learn from others and bring some of those vibes back to the Caribbean,” said Garvey. “But for now, our schedule here in Barbados keeps us on the road.”

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Barbados 50

PRIDE & INDUSTRY
1966 - 2016

~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY 50TH INDEPENDENCE SPECIAL FEATURE

FOOD TALK: Chef Kirton's unusual combos make dishes speak Bajan

DAWN A. DAVIS

Appointed executive chef at Fairmont Royal Pavilion resort in St. James last year, Barbadian Kirk Kirton has reached a milestone in his culinary arts career. After 18 years of climbing the creative food management ladder, Kirton continues to use his culinary creativity as a guiding principle.

"My style is really taking local produce and trying to translate that into a form that guests will enjoy," he explained. "Rather than just using only our indigenous ingredients and spices and overwhelm their palates, it's presented in different ways, and modifying classic dishes in such a way that it incorporates some of our stuff. Is it fusion? Not necessarily."

According to Kirton, fusion started with transforming Asian into classic French, especially since most chefs are trained in the French classical cooking style. His "fusion" comes from classic French,

modern English and European, and, of course, Barbadian styles combined.

"I was taking all these things and figuring out how do we translate that into a unique taste," Kirton explained. "I've worked with local suppliers here to help come up with different and surprising ingredients for our guests."

SPICE UP

For example, a breakfast of pancakes usually comes with classic maple syrup. However, Kirton wanted to create a different taste, so he partnered with a local company called Caribbean Treats to introduce mango, guava and cherry jams to the breakfast table. Instead of maple syrup he came up with a thick sweet liquid made of sweet molasses, tamarind and ginger.

Always on the hunt for out-of-the-ordinary tastes,



Kirton

Kirton experiments with local produce to spice up his table.

"We wanted to make a new version of our fish cakes," he said. "So, instead of using the usual flour we decided to use breadfruit instead. It went really well for the first function, so we decided to put it on the breakfast menu and it's still a favorite - Bajan breadfruit and salt fish cake with homemade pepper sauce - which we make our-

selves."

The traditional Barbadian pepper sauce is hot and spicy, a problem for the majority United Kingdom visitors. So, Kirton wondered how to use available ingredients to cross that bridge. Pureeing something like breadfruit and adding to the sauce makes a huge difference, he said.

Foreign visitors do have preferences. Among the most asked for dish at the resort are scallops, which is not native to the Caribbean.

CLASSIC

"Scallops and leeks are a classic combination," said Kirton. "So, I asked myself how do you take that and infuse some form of Bajan into it? Scallops wrapped with bacon are also a classic dish. So, instead of using bacon, we used pork belly. Barbadians eat pork quite a bit. When the settlers first came here we were overrun with wild pigs, that's why Bajans eat pork."

Kirton explained that the team use a pork belly, cured

for 16 hours then slow-cooked for 18 hours at a low temperature. Then it is sliced thick, seared and finished with molasses, tamarind, ginger sauce and a little rum. All this placed between the classic scallops and leeks creates a stunning Barbadian-infused spin on an otherwise ordinary seafood dish.

What inspires Kirton's creativity? It comes down to the ingredients. He uses only the best and most wholesome produce. He also partners with a farm called Archers Organics, where he gets his greens and herbs.

Sticking to his roots with a bit of creativity thrown in, Kirton can produce a British, European, American or Asian dish peppered with local environmentally friendly produce to make it speak Bajan.

Story and photograph by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



ROYAL INDEPENDENCE



Britain's Prince Harry, left, was a special guest at Barbados's 50th Independence anniversary celebrations on the Caribbean island Nov. 30, where he was joined on stage at one of the events by Bajan pop star Rihanna and Prime Minister Freundel Stuart.

Celebrate Barbados, recommit to secure future ~ *consul general*



Mayers

The following is a message from Colin Mayers, consul general of Barbados at Miami, on the occasion of his nation's 50th anniversary of Independence.

The Consulate General of Barbados at Miami is pleased to be among the hundreds and thousands of well-wishers everywhere who have united their voices in wishing Barbados a blessed 50th anniversary of Independence.

I am happy to have you in this august company.

Barbadians emerged from colonialism as an ambitious people seeking to make their own mark in the world. With education as a foundation and vision as motivation "our brave forefathers sowed the seed from which our pride is

sprung". They took our country through its early phases of development and established our reputation as a stable and ambitious nation. We who now comprise the contemporary citizenry have taken our responsibility seriously and have acted to ensure that the many flags of Barbados keep flying high.

STRIVING

Today, Barbados is a striving society in constant pursuit of its developmental goals. In this regard, I want to extend full appreciation to all Barbadians in the diaspora whose love for and interest in our beloved country never waivers. I thank you for the many ways you continue to support our country either through in-kind donations, investments and remittances.

It is because of your contribution that Barbados has remained strong. I also take this opportunity to assure you of the accompaniment and support of the consulate in all your noble efforts.

The government has demonstrated its commitment to include Barbadians in the diaspora as an integral part of our country's development. As such, it has provided both facilitation and opportunity for you

to do so.

The convening of the biennial Barbados Network Consultation (BNC) is another way that government seek to nurture the connection between Barbadians at home with those in the diaspora and its growth over the years speak to the successes we have achieved.

PRIDE

So, as we celebrate 50th years of nationhood, we do so with a sense of pride and achievement.

Even though we are not yet all that we aspire to be, we have certainly come a long way since 1966. Let us, therefore, use this opportunity not only to celebrate but to recommit ourselves to work towards achieving a peaceful and secure future for our country and its future generations.

May God continue to guide us in this quest.

As the song encourages us to do, "let's join hands and show how much we love Barbados" on this her 50th anniversary of Independence and always.

Happy Independence everyone!



JUMP START: Stars, fans flock to premiere of Usain Bolt's documentary



Bolt hits the red carpet at premiere.

LONDON, England – “I Am Bolt”, a documentary on Usain Bolt’s quest for iconic status, premiered here late last month attracting several of the world’s leading athletes and entertainers.

Stars from track and field, soccer and dancehall music braved freezing conditions at the West End’s Odeon Leicester Square cinema for a pre-movie set that ran for nearly two hours.

Hundreds of fans turned up, including movie-making heavyweight Leo Pearlman, soccer stars Raheem Sterling,

Cesc Fabregas, Santi Cazorla, Olivier Giroud and Robert Pires, plus pop star Geri Horner from the Spice Girls.

“I am extremely proud of him,” said dancehall star Sean Paul, who like Bolt is Jamaican. “He has given the country so much of a lift in terms of unity, positives and gives a lot for the kids to look up to.

“To me, he is a national hero. People are sad that he might be moving out of track and field soon, but whatever he puts his mind to, he will do well.”

Co-directed by brothers Gabe and Benjamin Turner, “I Am Bolt, takes viewers behind the scenes on Bolt’s journey to nine Olympic gold medals.

SPOTLIGHT

Clad in a navy blue Brioni suit, blue tie and matching Gucci shoes, Bolt was the first on the red carpet, where he

was joined by carnival costume-clad dancing girls.

Also in the spotlight were popular Jamaican entertainers Alkaline, Popcaan and Chronixx.

“He is an icon,” declared tennis great Boris Becker. “People use that word so often sometimes, but in his (Bolt’s) case, he absolutely embodies

the meaning of the word, and not just where track and field or the Olympics is concerned. He goes beyond all that.”

Track standouts present included Mo Farah, Jonathan Edwards, Linford Christie and Merlene Ottey, the former Jamaican sprinting great.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12A)

Daughter of Caribbean immigrants gets Presidential Medal of Freedom

A 91-year-old actress and daughter of immigrants from the Caribbean island of Nevis has been awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States.

Cicely Tyson was among the 21 other Americans who received the honor from President Barack Obama in a White House ceremony on Nov. 22.

Tyson was born and raised in Harlem, New York. She is the daughter of Frederica, a former domestic helper, and William Tyson, who worked as a carpenter and painter. Her father arrived in New York City at age 21 and was processed at Ellis Island on Aug. 4, 1919.

Tyson’s career began as a fashion model after she was discovered by a photographer for Ebony magazine. She then moved on to acting. Her first role was on the NBC series “Frontiers of Faith” in 1951. Her first feature film role was in “Carib Gold” in 1956, then starred on television in the series “East Side/West Side” and the soap opera “Guiding Light”.

In 1961, Tyson appeared in the original cast of French play-



Tyson

wright Jean Genet’s “The Blacks”, the longest running off-Broadway non-musical of the decade. In 1966, she appeared with Sammy Davis, Jr. in the film “A Man Called Adam” and starred in the film version of Graham Greene’s “The Comedians” in 1967.

Tyson had a featured role in “The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter” in 1968, and appeared in a segment of “Roots”.

HONORS

In 1972, she was nominated for the Academy Award for best actress for her role in the critically acclaimed “Sounder”. In 1974, she won two Emmy (CONTINUED ON PAGE 12A)



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Rihanna shines with multiple American Music Award wins

Barbadian star Rihanna emerged the most successful artiste from the Caribbean following the announcement of winners at the American Music Awards (AMA) last month.



- File photograph

Rihanna was nominated in seven categories and eventually captured three awards.

She was named "Favorite Female Artiste – Soul/R&B" ahead of Beyoncé and Janet Jackson.

Rihanna also earned an AMA for her "Work", featuring Drake, in the "Favorite Song – Soul/R&B" category. Drake with "One Dance", featuring Wizkid & Kyla, and Bryson Tiller's "Don't" were also nominated in that group.

The Bajan's "Anti" was chosen "Favorite Album –

Soul/R&B" over Beyoncé's "Lemonade" and Tiller's "Trapsoul".

Rihanna lost in the following categories: "Artiste of the Year", won by Ariana Grande; "Collaboration of the Year" for "Work" to Fifth Harmony featuring Ty Dolla \$ign with "Work From Home"; "Video of the Year" for "Work" to Justin Bieber's "Sorry"; and "Favorite Female Artist – Pop/Rock" to Selena Gomez.



CREATING 'JAMMYWOOD'



- Photograph submitted by Derrick Scott

Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States Audrey Marks, second right, is joined by, from left, Jamaica's Honorary Consul to Los Angeles Lorraine Johnson and Jamaica Awareness Association of California 2016 awardees Stephfon Glenn and Dr. Barnett Grier Jr. at the JAAC's 30th anniversary fund raising banquet in Los Angeles. During the event, Marks called on Jamaicans in California to leverage Jamaica's creative industry by establishing "Jammywood", meaning the diaspora should "begin to monetize the Jamaican culture" by making it the seat of Jamaica's creative industry.

Daughter of Caribbean immigrants gets Presidential Medal of Freedom

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11A)

Awards for "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman". For her role in "The Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All", Tyson received her third Emmy.

In 1982, Tyson was awarded the Women in Film Crystal

Award. In 1988, she received a Candace Award for Distinguished Service from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women. In 1991 she appeared in "Fried Green Tomatoes" as Sipsey. In the 1994-95 television series "Sweet Justice", Tyson portrayed a civil rights activist and attorney named Carrie Grace Battle.

In 2005, Tyson co-starred in "Because of Winn-Dixie" and "Diary of a Mad Black Woman". That year she was honored at Oprah Winfrey's Legends Ball. The Cicely Tyson School of Performing and Fine Arts, a magnet school in East Orange, New Jersey, was renamed in her honor.

In 2010, Tyson appeared in "Why Did I Get Married Too?" and in 2011 she appeared in her first music video, Willow Smith's "21st Century Girl". In 2013, Tyson was greeted after her performance in the Broadway production of "Trip to Bountiful" by Mark Brantley, deputy premier of Nevis, the birthplace of her parents.

At the 67th Tony Awards on June 9, 2013, Tyson won Best Actress in a Play for her performance as Miss Carrie Watts in "The Trip to Bountiful".

- Edited from News Americas.

JUMP START: Stars, fans flock to premiere of Usain Bolt's documentary

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11A)

"It's a pity he has to retire soon, but I am very thankful and very grateful to Usain," said Ottey, the legendary Jamaican sprinter. "He is a legend."

The documentary also pre-

miered in the United States late last month.

Bolt, the triple world-record holder, is aiming to end his sprinting career here at next year's World Championships.

- Edited from CMC.



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FLAVORFUL: Haitian BBQ goat meat on the grill

MINNA LA FORTUNE

I was recently introduced to Haitian barbequed goat. Under the Haitian barbeque method, the flavor of the goat meat is enhanced through the grilling process that other method of cooking does not compare.

Here's my version of Haitian barbequed goat meat.

Ingredients

- 1 pound bone-in goat meat, cut into large chunks
- 1/4 cup vinegar
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp. vegetable oil
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 red bell peppers, cut in one-inch squares
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 2 cups beef stock
- 1 Irish potato, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 4 small carrots, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 2 large choyotes cut in squares
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. Scotch Bonnet pepper
- 2 sprigs thyme
- Wooden skewers

Method

Mix goat meat with vinegar, soy sauce, and garlic in a large bowl. Cover and refrigerate from one to eight hours. For best flavor, marinate at least six



Haitian BBQ goat

hours. Remove meat from marinade and pat dry with paper towels; reserve marinade and garlic cloves.

Soak skewers overnight in plain water.

Heat vegetable oil in a large pot over medium-high heat.

Brown the goat meat, working in batches if necessary - 10 to 15 minutes. Set goat meat aside.

Saute and stir onion, red bell peppers and garlic cloves from the marinade over medium heat until onion is translucent - about five minutes. Then pour in tomato sauce and bring mixture to a simmer.

Allow to cook slightly - about five minutes.

Return goat meat to the sauce and pour in reserved marinade and beef stock.

Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer covered until goat meat is partially tender - 30 to 40 minutes.

Stir in potato, carrots and choyote season with salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper.

Simmer until goat meat is very tender and potato and carrots are cooked through - 20 to 30 more minutes.

Light charcoal barbeque grill and allow coals to start burning.

Remove the vegetables from the stewed goat meat and put in a bowl to serve as a side dish.

Remove stewed goat meat and put in a bowl. Remove the meat from the bones. Put goat meat on wooden skewers.

Pack the cooked goat meat tightly. Put the skewers with cooked goat meat over burning coals.

Allow 10 minutes on each side for each skewer. Do not burn.

Brush with original barbeque sauce - on each side. Serve with Haitian black rice and stewed vegetables, fresh vegetables or grilled vegetables.

Edited from News Americas. Minna LaFortune is a Caribbean caterer and also president of the Society for the Advancement of the Caribbean Diaspora.



Serve up 'to-to' as dessert

In the Caribbean and in the diaspora, Sunday dinner is one of the most important meals of the week.

Everyone looks forward to the main course, but most of the dessert or desserts are served with the meal. After the main course, dessert is the treat.

Dessert, may consist of one or two of the following: Sweet potato pudding, blue draws, homemade ice cream, pineapple upside down cake, fruit cake, jello, cowfoot jelly, flan, plain cake, lemon meringue pie, cornmeal pudding, cornmeal pone, cassava pone, banana pudding or "to-to".

I will share the recipe for one of my favorites - to-to.

As far as I know, "to-to" is a Jamaican creation that is usually served after the Sunday meal with homemade ice cream. It's a delicious dessert.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 cups grated coconut
- 2 tsp vanilla



To-To

- 1/4 lb. margarine or butter
- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 1 egg
- Grated rind of 1/2 a lime
- 1 tbsp. liquid burnt sugar or browning.

Method

Cream butter and sugar. Add lime rind and grated coconut and mix thoroughly.

Sift in all the dry ingredients together (flour, baking powder, cinnamon salt and nutmeg).

Mix in a beaten egg, vanilla and browning. Add coconut milk in slowly. Mix until the batter becomes slightly stiff.

Bake in a greased pan at 350F for half hour. Cut into squares or slices and serve with homemade ice cream.

Recipe by Minna LaFortune. Edited from News Americas.



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U.S. introduces Caribbean Initiative to boost region's airport safety

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has introduced its new Caribbean Initiative with an aim to increase airport safety and certification in the region.

Under the new initiative the FAA, along with its Caribbean partners and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), will also work to improve the region's air traffic flow management activities and collaborative decision-making process.

In addition, the initiative

will help implement ICAO's guidelines across the Caribbean, which is expected to witness five percent to six percent more air traffic over the next 20 years

The FAA said more than 17 percent of international flights currently departing from the U.S. are headed for destinations in the Caribbean, while



Huerta

various other flights transit Caribbean airspace between North America and South America.

"The Caribbean region is of critical importance to the U.S.," said FAA Administrator Michael Huerta. "By working together, we are building a foundation of increased cooperation that will allow us to enhance safety and efficiency throughout a region that serves as a destination for so many travelers."

- Edited from CMC.



The Bahamas looks to 'Bird Tourism' to boost arrivals

NASSAU – The Bahamas says it will launch "Bird Tourism" next month as the country seeks to take advantage of the multi-billion dollar market.

The Ministry of Tourism has been meeting with various stakeholders in a bid to introduce the "People to People" program and Deputy Director General in the Ministry Ellison "Tommy" Thompson said it is to ensure that when visitors come to Inagua they have a seamless vacation.

"It is absolutely fantastic for those people who are interested in seeing the birds in The Bahamas," said Thompson.

The bird guide training initiative is a collaborative effort by The Bahamas National Trust (BNT), Ministry of Tourism and the National Audubon Society, with funding by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

He said \$41 billion is spent

on bird watching in the United States and \$500 million in the United Kingdom. Around three million people travel internationally for bird watching experiences, he added. Between 2005 and 2009, at least 20 million Americans took trips within the U.S. for birding experiences.

- Edited from CMC.



JetBlue partners U.S. to stop illegal Caribbean wildlife trade

NEW YORK – United States-based carrier JetBlue has partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Wildlife Trafficking Alliance in an effort to help protect Caribbean wildlife and preserve the beauty of the region.

JetBlue is playing its role by airing a short film on flights informing customers how they can help in the process. The video, featuring local Caribbean conservation heroes, is aimed at arming travelers with the right questions to ask when purchasing wildlife and plant-related products.

"An increased interest in Caribbean wildlife is fueling trafficking of the area's plants,

animals and other natural resources," JetBlue stated in a press release issued last month.

"This is contributing to the decline and potential extinction of animal species such as sea turtles, blue and gold macaws and coral reefs – natural treasures that draw travelers to the Caribbean. In many cases, visitors may unwittingly be contributing to the decline of the very things they want to experience."

Service Director Dan Ashe said JetBlue hopes to reach the 35 million people each year.

- Edited from CMC.



U.S. adds SVG to nations eligible for special visas

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has added St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the list of countries whose nationals are eligible to participate in the H-2A and H-2B visa programs for the coming year.

On Nov. 9, USCIS said the notice listing the eligible countries was published on Oct. 26 in the U.S. Federal Register.

According to the USCIS, the DHS reserves the right to add countries to the eligible countries list at any time and to remove any country at any

time if a country fails to meet the requirements for continued designation.

The H-2A and H-2B visa programs allow U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the U.S. to fill temporary agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, respectively.

Other Caribbean countries eligible to participate in the H-2A and H-2B visas programs as of Jan. 18 are Barbados, Belize, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti and Jamaica. Each country's designation is valid for a year.

- Edited from CMC.



Jamaica achieves high ranking

KINGSTON, Jamaica – Jamaica has achieved the highest ranking for implementing international civil aviation standards in the English-speaking Caribbean.

The result from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Validation Mission in June 2016 indicated an effective implementation of international standards at 82.38 percent.

This was disclosed by Nari Williams-Singh, director general of the Jamaica Civil Aviation Authority (JCAA), at the official opening of the new air traffic control tower at the Norman Manley International Airport (NMIA) last month.

"The significance of this achievement is even more evident, considering that the global average is currently at 63 percent and that of the

North American, Central American and Caribbean region is 69 percent," he explained.

IMPROVEMENT

According to Williams-Singh, Jamaica's compliance through the JCAA has been on an upward trajectory, having achieved 54 percent in a 2007 ICAO audit and 67 percent in a 2012 follow-up validation mission.

He said that further confirms Jamaica's status as a leader in civil aviation administration, adding that the JCAA is committed to maintaining its status as a leader in the region and to be on the cutting edge at all times.

The NMIA Air Traffic Control Tower was commissioned following the transfer of operations to the new tower in Oct. 2016, after a period of parallel operations with the old tower to facilitate a smooth transition.

- Edited from CMC.



Jamaica at 55

On August 6, 2017, the island of Jamaica marks the 55th Anniversary of its independence as a sovereign nation. Caribbean Today invites the business community in Jamaica and the United States to celebrate this significant milestone.

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WEED WORTH: Jamaica's ambassador urges diaspora investment in medical marijuana

Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States Audrey Marks is urging members of the diaspora to take advantage of investment opportunities in Jamaica.

"It is now time to formalize an investment pipeline with you, our own diaspora, especially as we seek to empower Jamaicans at home and abroad as a part of the commonwealth of Jamaica," Marks said while delivering the keynote address at the Help Jamaica Medical Mission's 6th Annual Black Tie affair last month in New Jersey.

Marks pointed to opportunities in medical tourism, the nutraceutical industry, in particular medical marijuana,

as well as investing in tourism agriculture. She told the audience of more than 500 that in 2014 medical tourism was estimated to value about \$59 billion, with an estimated 10 million people traveling for medical treatment. Of that amount, 1.2 million are U.S. citizens.

"Jamaica is ideally situated to serve both insured and uninsured markets," said Marks. "Tourists and outpatients prefer to be in more temperate climate as they recuperate."

BOOST

Marks said the medical marijuana industry would boost Jamaica's economy. In 2013, she explained, the med-



- Photograph by Derrick Scott

Ambassador Audrey Marks, left, is welcomed by Otis Story, chief executive officer of East Orange General Hospital, as she arrives at the Help Jamaica Medical Mission's event last month.

ical marijuana market was valued at \$2.5 billion, with an expectation that by 2019 it will reach \$11 billion.

The ambassador said for the industry to develop properly in Jamaica, with the appropriate infrastructure and

mechanism to meet national and international standards, the government has established the Cannabis Licensing Authority, which is working with ministries and legal departments to meet required standards.

She said there is are great opportunities in the nutraceutical industry, with a global herbal supply market expected to reach \$107 billion by 2017.

Marks said Jamaica nutraceutical industry has the

potential of not only increasing export for the diversification and foreign exchange earnings, but will result in increased employment and social economic conditions, leading to a more prosperous Jamaica.

She lauded the Help Jamaica Medical Mission for its contribution to Jamaica health sector. Three persons were awarded for outstanding service during the event. The late Dr. Charles Anderson and Dr. Berman Saunders were honored for outstanding contribution to the organization's annual health mission to the Jamaica. The Community Service Award was presented to Dr. Darrell K. Terry, Sr., chief executive officer of Robert Wood Johnson Newark Beth Israel Medical Center.

- Edited from JIS.



U.S. deports 20,000 Jamaicans in 10 years

Some 20,000 Jamaicans have been deported from the United States over the past 10 years, according to Jamaica's Ambassador to the U.S. Audrey Marks.

She said most Jamaicans deported from around the world, however, were not sent back because of violent criminal activities.

"Nearly 90 percent of Jamaicans returned from all countries, namely the United Kingdom and Canada, during this period were deported for reasons unrelated with violent crimes, the most common offenses being immigration

and drug related offenses," Marks explained while delivering the keynote address at the inaugural Jamaica Diaspora Northeast Trailblazer Awards in New York recently.

The ambassador said it is time for Jamaicans to use the talent and resources in the diaspora to address this problem.

"We must stop the deportation of young members of the diaspora that have spent most of their lives right here and currently are more American than Jamaican," she said.



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HOLIDAY GIFT

Trinidad and Tobago native and United States Army veteran Hazel Bethel, left, joins First Lady Michelle Obama in greeting guests at a White House holiday reception for military families last month. Bethel, a South Florida resident, introduced Obama in commemoration of the closure of official holiday decorating activities at The White House. In late summer 2016, Bethel applied to be a holiday decorating volunteer at The White House and received notice of her acceptance in early November. As a member of the volunteer team, she helped to realize this year's holiday theme, "The Gift of the Holidays", and was assigned to the decorating duties of the East Colonnade of the White House. She spent five days (Nov 24-29) with over 120 other volunteers from around the nation to complete decoration of the "People's House".

Social Security commits to fair treatment for all

Social Security in the United States said it is committed to

treating all Americans fairly. This extends to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people covered by Social Security programs.

The U.S. recognizes same-sex couples' marriages in all states, and some non-marital legal relationships, for purposes of determining entitlement to Social Security benefits, Medicare entitlement, and eligibility and payment amount for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Same-sex marriages and some non-marital legal relationships established in foreign jurisdictions for purposes of determining entitlement to Social Security benefits,

Medicare entitlement, and SSI eligibility, are also recognized.

The Social Security Administration encourages anyone who is unsure whether they are entitled or eligible for Social Security to apply for benefits.

For information about how to apply, call toll-free **1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.**

Visit www.socialsecurity.gov/people/same-sex-couples to apply for benefits.

- Submitted by Social Security Administration.



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HEMORRHOIDS: How to manage a common, but embarrassing problem

If you have experienced hemorrhoids, you know just how uncomfortable this condition can be.

On top of the pain, you may have experienced feelings of embarrassment when discussing or addressing the

symptoms with your doctor.

An estimated 10 to 23 million individuals in the United States suffer from the same condition, and it is particularly common among pregnant women.

Hemorrhoids, which may

be caused by constipation, diarrhea, straining while going to the bathroom and increased pressure on veins, or hormone changes during pregnancy, are enlarged blood vessels around the anus, located either externally or internally.

There are a few key habits you can adopt to help you alleviate the associated pain, itching and discomfort, as well as treatment solutions that offer quick relief.

Healthy living - Proper nutrition is key. Diets low in fiber may be a contributing factor to hemorrhoids. Incorporate fiber-rich foods like flax seeds, beans, avocados and brown rice in your daily diet.

Keep your body properly hydrated. That helps your metabolism operate at peak performance and avoid hemorrhoids caused by constipation. Prioritize hydration. It's not only helpful for avoiding constipation and in turn hemorrhoids, but it's essential to



- Photograph © Africa Studio - Fotolia.com

overall good health. Exercise regularly. That not only aids the digestive system, it can help you maintain a healthy weight - an important consideration as excess weight in your abdomen can increase your chances of developing hemorrhoids. This is especially important if you have a sedentary job and sit most of the day.

rhoids at bay. When symptoms flare up, be prepared to treat them. If you are prone to the condition, be sure to keep a portable kit that contains everything you need to manage the condition effectively and hygienically.

A convenient option found at most major pharmacy retailers is the RectiCare Complete Hemorrhoid Care System. It contains a cream and eight individually packaged wipes. Both are formulated with over-the-counter ingredients available without a prescription. Lidocaine 5%, a local anesthetic, allows for pain relief, and phenylephrine HCl helps shrink swollen hemorrhoidal tissue. The cream is ideal for use at home and a supply of 10 "finger cots" promote hygienic application. More information can be found at RectiCare.com.

- Edited from StatePoint.



Treat the problem - Following every wellness tip won't always keep hemor-

Experts present findings to detect Zika abnormalities

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) says experts from the Americas, including the Caribbean, have been discussing the crucial role of obstetric ultrasound in the screening and monitoring of abnormalities associated in pregnant women who have contracted the mosquito borne Zika virus.

Symptoms of Zika include fever, skin rash, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise or headache.

According to the experts, obstetric sonography is the primary tool recommended for screening and monitoring of fetal/neonatal brain abnormalities associated with the Zika virus.

Structural brain anomalies, such as microcephaly,



Scientists find new ways to track virus.

and use of ultrasonography in the screening and monitoring of abnormalities associated with the Zika virus, and the appropriateness of the use of other neuroimaging techniques, such as magnetic resonance imaging and computed tomography.

In some cases, PAHO said other technologies, such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), have been used in addition to obstetric sonography. PAHO said MRI provides more detailed information about the brain anatomy than ultrasonography and can clarify unclear ultrasonography findings and when more details about the fetal/neonatal brain anatomy are needed.

The panelists focused on the spectrum of neuroimaging findings that may be seen in children with congenital Zika virus infection, the crucial role

- Edited from CMC.



T&T warns against home kits to test for HIV/AIDS

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad - The Ministry of Health here has urged people not to use HIV home testing kits to determine whether or not they are suffering from the HIV/AIDS virus.

In a statement issued Nov. 28, the ministry said it has become aware of the kits are available locally, but advised "members of the public who have concerns about their HIV status to get tested at a quality assured Ministry of Health testing site.

"Persons using home kits not reviewed and approved by

the ministry may lead to self-diagnosis outside of a supportive environment where they can be linked to clinical services for follow up care for themselves or those that they care about," the statement noted.

TARGET

Last month, Health Minister Terrence Deyalsingh said there are about 11,500 people living with the disease here. He said he was encouraged by the increase in people going for testing. The global target for eradicating

HIV/AIDS is by 2030.


"More and more people have been testing themselves especially as we ramp up the number of testing sites," Deyalsingh said. "We are doing that across the country and we are working very closely with the NGOs."

He said previously there was stigma and discrimination meted out to people with the disease, but that response seemed to have dwindled.

- Edited from CMC.



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SPORTS



U.S. businessman buys Caribbean professional cricket team

United States-based real estate businessman Jignesh “Jay” Pandya has bought the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) cricket franchise St. Lucia Zouks, according to tournament principals.

Pandya is the founder of the Rohan Group of companies, and also serves as chairman of Global Sports Ventures, LLC and Royal Sports Club, LLC.

Damien O’Donohoe, chief executive of the CPL, said the partnership had been the result of extended discussions with Pandya’s representatives.

“Discussions have been ongoing with Mr. Pandya and his representatives for many months and they have a clear vision for the Zouks to elevate them even higher for the seasons to come in terms of recruitment and in building all aspects of the franchise, from

root to branch,” O’Donohoe said.

“Their passion for the Hero CPL is obvious, with their values being closely aligned to our own to strive to be an innovative market-leader, and I have no doubt that these are exciting times to be a Zouks fan.”

‘BIGGEST PARTY’

Zouks is one of six franchises that comprise the four-year-old CPL, branded by organizers as the “biggest party in sport”. Reigning champion Jamaica Tallawahs, Barbados Tridents, Trinidad and Tobago Red Steel, Guyana Amazon Warriors and



Pandya

St Kitts and Nevis Patriots are the other five franchises involved in the Twenty20 venture.

Zouks, however, have been one of the worse-performing sides in the tournament but Pandya said he hoped his investment would turn around the franchise’s fortunes.

“Our aim is to help drive the Zouks forward to become the dominant team in the CPL by producing consistent results that will enable us to be title contenders in every edition of CPL going forward,” the Philadelphia businessman said.

Zouks enjoyed its best-ever season in this year’s campaign, finishing third following the preliminaries before being knocked out on the playoffs.

- Edited from CMC.



Jamaicans Bolt, Thompson are finalists for world athlete award

Two Caribbean stars are among the finalists in the male and female categories for the IAAF World Athlete of the Year awards. The winners will be announced this month.

Jamaicans Usain Bolt and Elaine Thompson, who were both crowned sprint champions at this year’s Olympic Games, made the final cut.



Thompson

Bolt, who completed the phenomenal “triple triple” in Brazil by winning gold in the 100, 200 and 4x100 meters for the third consecutive Olympics, is joined in the male category by

South Africa’s Wayde van Niekerk and Britain’s Mo Farah. Thompson, winner of the 100 and 200 meters at the Games and a silver medalist in the 4x100, will compete for the award with Ethiopia’s distance runner Alma Ayana, who broke the 10,000 world record at the Olympics, and Polish hammer thrower Anita Wlodarczyk.

For Thompson, it will be her first time as a finalist for the award. Bolt has won on five previous occasions – 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012 and 2013. Van Niekerk broke the world record winning gold in the Olympic 400 meters by clocking 43.03 seconds. Farah won gold in the 5,000 and 10,000 meters in Brazil.



GOALKEEPER OF THE YEAR



Jamaica international Andre Blake has been named Major League Soccer’s (MLS) “Goalkeeper of the Year” for the 2016 season. Blake, 25, plays for the Philadelphia Union in MLS. He earned an average of 24 percent of the vote to win the award ahead of Luis Robles of New York Red Bulls (14 percent) and the Colorado Rapids’ Tim Howard (13 percent). Blake was made the number one overall pick by Philadelphia in the 2014 MLS SuperDraft. After battling injuries his first two seasons, he started 32 games this year, earning six shutouts as his club reached the MLS playoffs.

‘Axe Man’ Walters loses world boxing title fight

Jamaican Nicholas “The Axe Man” Walters lost his bid to claim the World Boxing Organization (WBO) super featherweight title late last month in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Walters failed to answer the bell for the start of the eight round in his fight with Vasyil Lomachenko to suffer his only loss as a professional, dropping his record to 26-1-1.

It was a disappointing night for the 30-year-old Walters, who failed to mount a serious threat to 28-year-old Lomachenko and was constantly frustrated by the Ukrainian’s speed and boxing skills. The Jamaican was booed loudly when it became apparent he would not continue the fight, but he



Walters

brushed aside suggestions that he simply gave up. “It wasn’t about quitting,” Walters, a former world champion, said in a post-fight interview.



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T&T off to rocky start in World Cup soccer qualifiers, fires coach

GORDON WILLIAMS

Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean's lone chance of reaching soccer's top tournament, the 2018 World Cup, made a losing start to its final round of qualifiers last month and it cost the team's head coach his job.

The Soca Warriors first fell 2-0 at home to Costa Rica on Nov. 11 in the opening match of the hexagonal, which includes the top six teams in the Caribbean, North America and Central America. On Nov. 15, T&T again lost - 3-1 away to Honduras.

Coach Stephen Hart, who was in charge of the national team for more than three years, was later in the month fired by the T&T Football Association following a meeting between the parties.

The other three teams in the "hex" are the United States, Mexico and Panama. T&T and the U.S. are now tied with no points from two losses at the bottom of the group, which is led by Costa Rica on six points from two wins. Mexico and Panama have four points each.

Honduras, with one win and three points, follow in fourth.

Each nation will play the



- Photograph courtesy of CONCACAF

T&T's Willis Plaza, left, battles Emilio Izaguirre of Honduras for the ball.

others in the group twice – home and away – a total of 10 games. The top three finishers at the end of the round get an automatic place at the World Cup. The fourth finisher will play-off with a country from another confederation for the right to advance to Russia.

In other results last month, all the home teams lost on Nov. 11. Mexico beat the U.S. 2-1, while Panama clipped Honduras 1-0. Then, on Nov. 15, Mexico and Panama played to a 0-0 draw, while the U.S. was beaten 4-0

by Costa Rica.

NO BOUNCE

Hopes of a quick T&T bounce-back after the loss to Costa Rica in Port of Spain were dashed early in San Pedro Sula. In the fifth minute, goalkeeper Jan-Michael Williams suffered a head injury in a collision and was substituted. By half time, the Warriors were down 0-2. In the 52nd minute Carlyle Mitchell's header pulled one back for the Caribbean team, but Honduras scored again in

the 81st minute to seal the win.

Hart was not happy with the effort of T&T's players.

"We gave up two early goals and allowed them to get on top of us," he told reporters after the game. "I thought both goals were preventable."

But the T&TFA wasn't pleased with the Trinidadian-born Hart either, despite a solid record by the coach. He led T&T to the CONCACAF Gold Cup quarterfinals twice and was runner-up to Jamaica in the 2014 Caribbean Cup. But T&T also failed to qualify for the finals of the 2017 Caribbean Cup, depriving the twin island republic of an automatic place in the Gold Cup. Hart previously coached Canada.

The Caribbean's World Cup hopes will still be alive when hexagonal play resumes Mar. 24 with T&T hosting Panama.

T&T was the last Caribbean nation to play in a World Cup after qualifying for the 2006 tournament in Germany.

- CMC reports contributed to this story.



Caribbean teams head to Gold Cup

Four Caribbean nations have qualified for next year's CONCACAF Gold Cup, while a fifth will join that group following upcoming playoffs.

Last month Jamaica joined Curacao, French Guiana and Martinique for the July 2017 tournament, which will feature the top soccer teams in the Caribbean North America and Central America.

Haiti, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago will battle in a round robin playoff for a place in the Gold Cup to staged in the United States.

Jamaica celebrated its 10th entry into the prestigious tournament after a 1-0 win over Suriname in Kingston during the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) Men's Caribbean Cup. The win also gave the Reggae Boyz the Group 1 title and earned them a place in the semi-final stage of the competition.

"This is a delight for us," said Jamaica's captain Andre Blake, who plays for U.S. team Philadelphia Union in Major League Soccer.



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