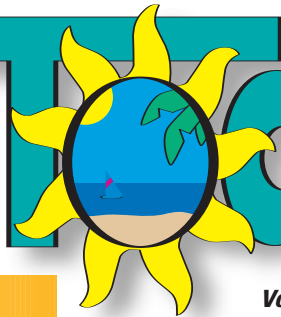


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Vol. 19 No. 5

THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE



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SUSPECT BOMBER

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U.S. issues final rule for travelers to the Caribbean

WASHINGTON – The United States has issued a June 1, 2009 deadline for all American travelers returning from the Caribbean by land or sea to have either a passport or other approved documents to enter the U.S.

U.S. citizens are already required to have a passport when returning home by air, but the rule will kick in for cruise passengers as well as those who re-enter the country at land crossings.

The U.S. departments of Homeland Security (DHS) and State (DOS) indicated in a joint statement late last month that the rule, which also encompasses travel to Canada and Bermuda, is final

for the land and sea portion of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), also known as the U.S. passport rule.

“We are on course to implement and enforce the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, which is an important step forward in securing the homeland,” said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff.

“Limiting and standardizing the types of documents presented will result in a more secure and efficient border,” he added.

“We will continue to encourage cross-border travel and trade while at the same time decreasing identity theft

and fraud.”

The DHS said it had decided to issue the WHTI land and sea final rule more than a year before its implementation in order “to give the public ample notice and time to obtain the WHTI-compliant documents they will need to enter or re-enter the United States on or after June 1, 2009.”

It said many cross-border travelers already have WHTI-compliant documents, such as a passport or a Trusted Traveler Card – NEXUS, SENTRI, and FAST.

The DOS added that it was already accepting applications for the new passport cards.



Jamaica P.M. calls for closer working relationship with diaspora in the U.S.

MIAMI – In his first official visit to southern Florida since winning last September's general elections, Jamaica Prime Minister Bruce Golding called on nationals here to work closely with his administration for the betterment of the island-nation.

“We need to make a greater effort,” he told a town hall meeting Mar. 28 at Nova Southeastern University in Davie. “Jamaica couldn't survive without you.

“Jamaicans abroad are our greatest ambassadors,” Golding continued. “Jamaica is too rich to be so poor.”

The Jamaican leader said about 350,000 of Jamaica's 2.5 million people live in poverty.

In addition to remittances that contribute significantly to Jamaica's economy, Golding called on his compatriots abroad to give of their time, talent and skills to help the island grow. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) said Jamaicans in the United States sent home an estimated \$2.1 billion last year.

Golding also touched on a wide range of issues, from escalating food prices, finding alternative energy sources, overhauling the educational system, to rampant crime. He said the incumbent Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) is determined to address “the causes of crime.

“We have to strengthen the capacity of the police force,” he said, pointing out, however, that “before you can strengthen that police force you are going to have to clean it out.”

HONOREES

Last month's town hall meeting was the first of a series of events that the Jamaica prime minister was scheduled to attend during his three-day visit to South Florida. The following day Golding was expected to attend church services at the Maranatha Seventh Day Adventist Church in Miami. He was also the featured speaker on Mar. 30 at the second annual Community Service Awards Ceremony and

Tea Party in Miami, hosted by the Jamaica Consulate. During that event, 12 Jamaican nationals were honored for their contributions to the community.

The honorees included poet Ivy Claudette Armstrong; Lauderdale Lakes Mayor Samuel Brown; Tampa community activist Elloreece B. Burrell; NASA mission manager Glenn Chin; media specialist Don Daly; former Houston, Texas Honorary Consul Beverly Ford; and record-breaking pilot Barrington Irving.

The others were Miami Anglican priest the Reverend Horace Ward; Michael and Jackie Shaw of Sunshine Theatre Company; founder of the Jamaica Nurses Association of Florida Joyce Wright; and educators Winston Whyte and Karl S. Wright.

Golding says all the right things in meeting with Jamaicans in South Florida, page 11.



New N.Y. governor has Caribbean roots

NELSON A. KING

NEW YORK – The son of two Caribbean nationals is the new governor of New York following the resignation of Governor Eliot Spitzer.

The parents of the former Lieutenant Governor David A. Paterson were born in Grenada and Jamaica. His Grenadian-born father is a former New York state senator.

Paterson became New York's 55th governor last month. He is the state's first black governor and replaces Spitzer, who announced his

resignation following revelations that he was involved in a prostitution ring.

“I am deeply sorry that I did not live up to what was expected of me,” Spitzer said. “To every New Yorker, and to all those who believed in what I tried to stand for, I sincerely apologize.”

UNTESTED

Paterson is said to be liked and respected by leading figures in both main United States political parties, but is also considered untested.

In 2006, he surprised the Democratic establishment in

Albany, the state's capital, by leaving the Senate - and the possibility of becoming majority leader if the Democrats captured a majority there - to run for the largely ceremonial post of lieutenant governor.

Born in Brooklyn on May 20, 1954, an early childhood infection left him with severely limited sight.

Paterson is a graduate of Columbia University and Hofstra Law School, both in New York, and is also an adjunct professor at Columbia University.



Guyanese-born U.S. immigration agent charged with demanding sex for issuing 'green card'

NEW YORK – New York police have arrested a Guyanese-born United States federal immigration official for demanding sex from a Colombian woman in exchange for a green card.

Prosecutors in Queens last month said that Isaac R. Baichu, 46, was recorded demanding sex from the unidentified young woman, and will be prosecuted on corruption charges.

Immigration officials said Baichu handled about 8,000 green card applications during his three years as an adjudicator in the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services - part of the federal Department of Homeland Security.

Prosecutors said he pleaded not guilty to felony and misdemeanor charges of coercing the young woman to perform oral sex and of promising to help her secure immigration papers in exchange for further sexual favors. If convicted, he will face up to seven years in prison.

An immigration spokesman said Baichu

has been suspended without pay, and the inspector general of Homeland Security is reviewing his other cases.

MORE VICTIMS

Prosecutors, who said they recorded a meeting between Baichu and the woman on Mar. 11, at which he made similar demands for sex, urged any other victims to come forward.

Money, not sex, is the more common currency of corruption in immigration, officials said.

The young woman in Queens, whose name is being withheld because the authorities consider her the victim of a sex crime, did not even tell her husband what had happened, officials said. They said she came to the U.S. on a tourist visa in 2004 and overstayed.

Authorities said when she married an American citizen a year ago, the law allowed her to apply to “adjust” her illegal status.

But unless her green card (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

U.S. remains firm on sending Caribbean criminals back home

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC – A U.S. State Department official said that Washington will continue to send back criminal deportees to the region, even though the George W. Bush administration was aware that deportation remained a key issue for countries in the Caribbean.

The Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere Thomas Shannon told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)** that Washington was bound by law to deport criminals.

“We are deporting citizens of the Caribbean who have committed crimes in the United States and we are under a legal requirement to do that,” Shannon said.

“This is something...we must do in compliance with our own law.”

CONCERNS

At the June 18-21, 2007 Conference on the Caribbean held in Washington D.C., leaders of the Caribbean community (CARICOM) raised the topic of deportation in their meetings with President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. One

of their consistent concerns was the need to receive more information on deportees, including more detailed criminal records. Shannon said the U.S. listened to the concerns and will act accordingly.

“What we can do is work more closely with out Caribbean partners to make sure that when Caribbean nationals are deported back to their home countries that their home countries know who is coming (and) what crimes they have committed,” he said.

“We've worked through international institutions like the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to help build capability in these nations to reintegrate these people in the Caribbean society.”

During the Washington conference, CARICOM leaders renewed their call for U.S. assistance with the settlement and reintegration of deportees. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) funds a \$1 million project in Haiti to provide deportee reintegration services including counseling, vocational training, skills development and micro-credit lending.



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Haitian activist arrested on theft, racketeering charges in Miami

MIAMI – Police last month arrested an influential Haitian American community activist here and charged him with more than 20 counts of racketeering, theft and money laundering.

Ringo Cayard, 55, director of the Miami-based Haitian American Foundation Inc. (HAFI), was arrested on the night of Mar. 20 on the charges, which include fake records which he used to give himself a significant bonus.

Police also charged Cayard with siphoning thousands of dollars from Miami-Dade County contracts related to staging festivals and providing meals to the elderly and that his arrest caps “sweeping investigation” of the foundation’s finances over

the past two and a half years.

HAFI, one of the best-known social services agencies in Miami-Dade’s Haitian community, received almost \$2.9 million in county contracts and grants between 2002 and 2006.

PROMINENT

Cayard has been one of the most prominent voices in local Haitian politics over the past 25 years. He’s been a political ally to Miami Mayor Manny Diaz and County Commissioner Dorrin Rolle. Diaz placed Cayard on a city



Cayard

bond-oversight board.

“To arrest him under cover of darkness on the eve of Holy Week is a disgrace,” said Milton Hirsch, Cayard’s lawyer.

The arrest report also said Cayard “orchestrated a scheme to bill the county for phantom meals” that HAFI was supposed to deliver to elderly Haitian residents under a contract with the county’s Alliance for Human Services.

The report charged that Cayard and a HAFI employee submitted fake monthly invoices six times between April 2003 and Jan. 2005 when his non-profit failed to deliver any meals.



Jamaican acquitted of shooting at N.Y. cops

NEW YORK – A jury in New York has acquitted a Jamaican man who was the first person charged under a new law in 2006 that increased prison sentences for the attempted murder of a police officer.

The jury in State Supreme Court in Brooklyn last month found Damien Henry not guilty in a case in which he was charged with firing an Uzi automatic machine gun at two police officers outside a Jamaican nightclub in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn in 2004.

Henry, 27, was shot 18 times by the officers but survived. The officers were uninjured.

Several jurors said they believed that the officers were

less than completely honest on the witness stand.

“There were a lot of holes in the case,” said one juror, a woman in her 20s.

“I felt like they weren’t always telling the whole truth,” she added.

IN PRISON

Henry is celebrating his acquittals in prison, where he is serving a 25-year sentence for shooting up a Brooklyn restaurant in 2005 after being told to smoke outside.

Henry, who had faced a possible life sentence for the attempted murder of two police officers and two bouncers in the current case, was convicted on Mar. 5 of second-

degree weapons possession, which carries a sentence of three to 15 years.

In 2002, Henry was charged with shooting an officer in the arm, but was acquitted.

In 2004, he intervened in an arrest and was charged with punching an officer, Andrew Rydlewski, in the face. He pleaded guilty to a low-level misdemeanor.

It was 10 days after his plea in the punching case that Henry got into another confrontation with Rydlewski outside the Ragtop Lounge in East Flatbush after being denied entry. Rydlewski and Sergeant Ajay Kapour said that Henry fired an Uzi at them, and they shot back, striking him 18 times without hitting any major organs.

NEW LAW

Henry was charged under a new law that increased the minimum sentence for attempted murder of a police officer to 20 years, from 15. Henry’s lawyer, Harold C. Baker, mounted a defense that his client was “set up” by the police and bouncers. The bouncers had summoned the officers with calls to their private cellular telephones, not to 911.

Several jurors said that while they did not believe the conspiracy theory, they were troubled by testimony by a police expert in gunshot residue that several of the shots that struck Henry were fired from less than eight inches away. The officers had testified that they shot him from about 10 feet away.

“Some of the jurors really had a bad perception of the cops, and they didn’t believe them,” said the jury forewoman, Khadijah Carter.



Canada says no to Caribbean immigration application cap

TORONTO, Canada - Citizenship and Immigration Minister Diane Finley has promised that the number of applicants seeking to enter Canada yearly from the Caribbean and the rest of the world will not be capped and family re-unification will be preserved in the legislative amendments to modernize the immigration system.

She addressed the concerns with CMC a week after the Conservative government tabled sweeping immigration legislation to clear up the huge backlog of applicants and bring in skilled workers more quickly. The backlog stands at about 800,000, and some applicants have been waiting for almost six years to have their applications looked at.

“That’s totally unacceptable,” declared Finley. “We are competing with other countries that have processing times of three to six months and we are six years. We are competing with other countries for talent that we very much need right across the country. We are losing out in the competitiveness race.”

“The changes that we are making are really about bringing common sense and good business and management practices to the immigration

system. Under the existing system, every application has to be processed, even if an applicant has made multiple applications, a person is dead or someone chooses to go to another country.

“The changes have nothing to do with the refugee system, there are no caps on the number of applications and the preservation of family re-unification is a priority for us because we care about family.”

SWAP

To expedite the process quickly and smoothly, Finley said consideration will be given to transferring applications from a country or region swamped with requests to enter to Canada to another country or area where the workload is not hectic.

Finley also said administrative changes will be made and the ministry’s computer system will be upgraded to fast-track the process in three to six months.

In its last budget, the government set aside \$22 million over the next two years and \$37 million a year after that for additional resources to shorten wait times and reduce the backlog.



Regional leaders hold ‘fruitful’ talks with Bush

WASHINGTON – Three Caribbean leaders emerged from talks with United States President George W. Bush last month, describing their consultations as fruitful.

Prime ministers Hubert Ingraham of The Bahamas, David Thompson of Barbados and Dean Barrow of Belize gave no indication of what their discussions would yield, but reported that issues of democracy, security, tourism and the Caribbean Basin Initiative were among the topics discussed with the American leader.

“We had a discussion like you would expect neighbors to have,” President Bush told members of the media after the meeting.

“We talked about trade and tourism. We talked about how to make sure that our security needs are met without interrupting the ability for our people to travel as freely as possible and for the ability of people to be able to make a good living as a result of tourism.”

ASSURANCE

The U.S. leader also gave

the Caribbean heads the assurance that their region was important to his country.

“We often times talk about dealing with the Middle East or dealing on the continent of Africa, but it was important for these leaders to know that we believe that a good, strong, healthy, vibrant neighborhood is in the interests of the United States,” Bush said. “So we had a good, friendly, important discussion, and I can’t thank the leaders enough for coming.”

Referring to the recent election victories of prime ministers Thompson and Barrow, Bush commended Barbados and Belize for their “good, fair, clean elections.”

Ingraham, who is also CARICOM’s chairman, thanked the president on behalf of the leaders for taking time out to discuss the matters.

“We’re very pleased and grateful that the U.S. president invited us to come,” he said.



Guyanese-born U.S...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

application was approved, she could not visit her parents or her brothers’ graves and then legally re-enter the U.S., they said. And if her application was denied, she would face deportation.

PATTERN

The charges against Baichu, who became a U.S. citizen in 1991 and earns roughly \$50,000 a year, appear to be part of a larger pattern, according to government records. A Miami agent of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, responsible for transporting a Haitian woman to detention, is awaiting trial on charges that he took her to his home and raped her.

“Despite our best efforts there are always people ready to use their position for personal gain or personal pleas-

ure,” said Chris Bentley, a spokesman for Citizenship and Immigration Services.

“Our responsibility is to ferret them out,” he added.

According to the criminal complaint, Baichu told the Colombian woman he expected her to do “just like the last time,” and offered to take her to a garage or the bathroom of a friend’s real estate business so she would be “more comfortable doing it” there.

Prosecutors said Baichu was arrested as he emerged from a Queens diner and headed to his car.

Later released on \$15,000 bail, Baichu referred calls for comment to his lawyer, Sally Attia.

She said Baichu “did not have authority to grant or deny green card petitions without his supervisor’s approval.”



NEWS

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Bomb parts found in luggage of Jamaican

A Jamaican national, reportedly troubled by past experiences including a stint in Iraq and the murder of his mother in the Caribbean, was detained on April 1 by officials of the United States Transport Security Administration (TSA)



Bomb expert searches Brown at the Orlando airport.

after "acting strangely" at the Orlando International Airport in Florida.

The TSA revealed that the man, Kevin Brown, a 32-year-old permanent resident of the U.S., had "suspicious items" in his luggage. Those items, according to a statement by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), included parts for a bomb, such as galvanized pipes, explosive and flammable liquids, end caps, a rocket igniter, BB gun pellets, batteries and literature containing bomb-making information.

Brown had attempted to take the items with him on an

afternoon Air Jamaica flight bound for the Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay. He told the FBI that he wanted to show friends in Jamaica how to build explosives like those he saw in Iraq.

He has been charged with attempting to place an incendiary or explosive device on an aircraft and made court appearances in Orlando in the days following the incident where he was not granted bail.

'CRAZY MAN'

According to reports of the incident, Brown, who some reports indicated had been taking anti-depressant medication and living on the streets for a while, had checked in luggage at the Air Jamaica ticket counter. Eyewitnesses said he then began rocking and walking back and forth.

Brown, who also had a laptop computer in his carry-on bag, was pulled aside by TSA officers, who searched his luggage and found the items. He was then made to sit down at the curb outside the airport terminal and searched.

Brown was carrying a Jamaican passport when he was apprehended. However, it was reported that he served in the U.S. Army, from which he received an honorary discharge and a commendation medal, and later worked as a contractor in Iraq. Up to press time it was still not clear if he did mili-

tary duties in Iraq.

NOT THE SAME

However, people who claim to know Brown said he was never the same after returning from Iraq and his medical records were being reviewed by investigators.

"He sees things, he hears things and he just doesn't act normal," one woman was quoted in Jamaica's **Gleaner** newspaper as saying after the airport incident.

Hotelier Sandra McLeod, Brown's mother, was found strangled at a resort in Negril, Jamaica in 2005. The murder, **The Gleaner** reported, "devastated" Brown.

The Jamaica Observer newspaper reported that Brown, who attended schools in Jamaica and was reportedly on his way to visit a cousin in Montego Bay, "told investigators that he planned to set the bomb off on a tree stump when he arrived in Jamaica".

Jamaica's Prime Minister Bruce Golding ordered the country's police force to investigate the matter. Investigators in the U.S. said Brown's act appeared to be an "isolated incident," but they were trying to determine if he belonged to any organized group.

Compiled from several news reports, including CMC.



Barbadian authorities aid in capturing int'l fugitive

MIAMI - United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials have confirmed that Barbadian law enforcement authorities had been helpful in intercepting an international fugitive last month.

Officials of the U.S. State Department said they were notified by Barbadian immigration officials that Amaro Rodrigues, 54, a fugitive of France, was heading to the U.S. after vacationing in Barbados.

The statement said CBP officers at the Miami

International Airport intercepted Rodrigues on Mar. 18 "as he attempted to transit through the United States en route to his home in Canada.

"The fugitive was returned to France in keeping with a 1996 Bilateral Extradition Treaty between the United States and France, to face rape and attempted rape charges", the statement said.

The U.S. said the Canadian citizen was "vacationing in Barbados when he was identified by Barbadian

authorities as a fugitive of France.

"Upon his arrival at Miami International Airport, Mr. Rodrigues was stopped by CBP officers for questioning", the statement said.

Harold Woodward, the CBP's director of field operations, said the case "exemplifies an extraordinary level of interagency and international cooperation, resulting in the arrest and extradition of a dangerous fugitive."



Caribbean American youth essay competition open through May 9

Entries are still being accepted for the fourth annual National Caribbean American Heritage Month Youth Essay Competition.

The 2008 contest, designed to commemorate the declaration of June as "National Caribbean American Heritage Month" by the United States Congress, is open to 11th and 12th grade students who live in South Florida's Miami-Dade and Broward counties and have a Caribbean heritage as defined by the competition's rules.

The competition is being

offered through a partnership between the Institute of Caribbean Studies, organizations such as Transforming America Through Interaction (TATI), the Greater Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce, University of the West Indies Alumni Association and area schools.

The winning entry for each regional/local competition will be judged in the national level competition and the grand winner will receive airline tickets for two to a Caribbean destination.

The title for this year's

competition is: "If you were running for president of the United States, what are the top three issues that you would put on your agenda?"

Winning entries in the local/regional competition will be announced on June 1.

Essays should be e-mailed in MS Word format to: Student Affairs Director, TATI, Inc.: studentaffairs@taticaribbean.com. Entries must be submitted no later than May 9. Contact student affairs director, TATI, Inc., at 954-802-4291 for more information about the competition.



Jamaican named best assistant principal in U.S.

MIAMI - Jamaican Hilca Thomas has been named the "2008 National Assistant Principal of the Year" by the National Association of Secondary School Principals in the United States.

Thomas, a former Ardenne High and University of the West Indies (UWI) student in the Caribbean island, is an assistant principal at Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) Howard A. Doolin Middle School.

Thomas has been honored with the national award for her work in motivating students and faculty members to be lifelong learners. As curriculum assistant principal at Doolin Middle School since 2000, she has shown leadership in collecting and analyzing student assessment data to identify students' weakness and assist teachers in tailoring instruction accordingly.

She has also made collaboration with the school's faculty, parents and students the core of her leadership. M-DCPS Region V Superintendent Janet Hupp said one of Thomas's "most outstanding capabilities is her ability to interact and motivate all stake-

holders." Doolin Middle School Principal Eduardo Tillet believes Thomas's hard work and leadership helped move the school grade designation of a "C" to "an "A" in 2006.

Thomas received a bachelor of science degree in zoology from UWI and a master of science in biology education from the University of Miami. She taught science at the middle and high school levels before moving into administration at Howard A Doolin Middle School. In Oct. 2007 Thomas was among a group of M-DCPS principals and assistant principals to win five of six "Outstanding Leadership Awards" from the Florida Department of Education.

She will be officially honored as this year's "National Assistant Principal of the Year" at a black-tie event in Washington, D.C. on April 19. The award includes a check for \$5,000.

Thomas



Vincentians in N.Y. want closure to P.M.'s sexual assault case

NEW YORK - Even as the Trinidad-based Coalition of Caribbean Rights says it will seek international assistance in getting sexual assault charges made against St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves heard in court, Vincentians in New York are calling for closure to the case.

Deeply concerned about what they consider to be the tarnishing of the country's international image, a number of Vincentians here have called for the charges leveled against Gonsalves to be put to rest once and for all. Though seemingly sympathetic to the Vincentian leader, most nationals told the **Caribbean Media Corporation** it is time to bring closure to an issue that has painted a bad image abroad.

"It's a sigh of relief that the court has found it appropriate to dismiss the action," said Arnold "Lydon" Charles, a former president of the Brooklyn-based Vincentian umbrella group, Council of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Organizations, U.S.A., Inc. (COSAGO), alluding to the recent high court ruling in upholding the decision of the Director of Public Prosecutions

to dismiss a private criminal complaint, filed against Dr. Gonsalves by four attorneys, on behalf of a 36-year-old female police officer.

NORMALCY

Greg Dublin, a director at the Friends of Crown Heights Educational Center in Brooklyn, said he hopes the judge's decision will "bring some semblance of normalcy" in the country.

Last month, High Court Judge Gertel Thom upheld DPP Colin Williams's decision to discontinue a charge of rape against Gonsalves, saying that she found "no arguable grounds for a review."

But Hazel Brown, a spokesperson for the Coalition of Caribbean Rights, told a news conference in Port of Spain recently that the decision not to proceed with the matter against Gonsalves is cause for serious concern in the Caribbean.



Gonsalves

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~ A Caribbean Today advertising feature

Tips for getting a late start on finding college money

STEVE ROSEN

It's the 11th hour - no, make that the 12th hour - and the clock is ticking closer to midnight in your scramble to find college money for your high school senior.

You're standing at the starting line. You have this feeling of guilt. Paralysis is setting in. You don't know where to start.

Unfortunately, experts say, this is an all-too-common situation. Not that finding chunks of money for college is a walk through the park, but many parents haven't really come to grips with what it may take to cover even a sliver of tuition, room and board, and books, said Kal Chany, a college consultant based in New York and author of *The Princeton Review's "Paying for College Without Going Broke"*.

If this sounds like your situation, don't roll over and give up. You still have time to take control. Here are some tips to help you - and your college-bound hopeful - quickly get focused:

- **Do some homework** - The lion's share of need-based financial aid (in the United States) comes from federal and state government, so you need to devote most of your time to becoming knowledgeable about the process, the deadlines and how eligibility is determined.

To qualify for federal financial aid, as well as state aid and grants from many colleges and universities, you must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov).

The Department of Education begins accepting FAFSA applications for the 2008-2009 school year in January. Between now and then, Chany says, parents should determine at least a ballpark number for their

expected family contribution, which is the amount the family will be expected to contribute to college costs in the aid formulas.

Why is this important? Because the cost of attendance - the sum of tuition and fees and room and board, plus allowances for supplies, books, transportation costs and other personal expenses - minus the expected family contribution

"Financing College".

- **Investigate free merit money** - If you're a top athlete, scholar or a talented musician, you may easily qualify for merit-based scholarships from a school.

But there seemingly are also scholarships for every extracurricular activity and hobby - from Scouting to the environmental club to duck calling. While merit money is avail-



Acting quickly may be the difference in getting a chance to study.

gives you an approximate number for need-based aid.

To crunch your numbers, check out financial aid calculators on web sites such as www.salliemae.com, www.collegeboard.com and www.savingforcollege.com. There also are many excellent guidebooks, including Chany's and Kiplinger's

able from thousands of employers, organizations and religious institutions, local awards may be less of a long shot than national contests. In addition to a multitude of available web-based search tools, your child's guidance counselor should have

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

Getting real about college

STEVE ROSEN

Scarcely a week goes by when I don't field at least one question from anxious parents preparing for the day when they'll send their offspring to college.

How many schools should we apply to? Is it worth the trouble to fill out the federal financial aid forms? Is hiring a college consultant to come up with a list of potential schools the way to go? And, of course, how much should we budget for textbooks and pizza money?

As the father of two college students, with a third one potentially a few years away, I am keenly aware of the financial pressures of higher education. While writing about kids and college costs has made me more conscious of the issues, I've had my share of financial successes, failures and surprises too.

From my time in the trenches, here are some warnings, tips and suggestions that may save you money and a little aggravation while navigating the twists and turns in the college-selection process:

TALK THE TALK

Before your teen gets too far down the college path, have an honest discussion with him about the costs and where the money will come from. How much are you willing and able to spend without draining your bank account? What will be your student's role in financing school, and how much might be needed from scholarships, loans and work-study programs to plug the gap?

Talk about what's a reasonable amount to borrow. Does it make sense, for example, to borrow heavily to attend a school and earn a degree in a field where post-graduate earnings potential is limited?

Would it be worthwhile to consider a private school where your student could likely graduate in four years rather than a public university where the limited availability of required classes could lead to a five-year commitment? In that vein, the financials might make

the private route a better buy.

Consider some creative solutions on how to manage college costs. Earning college credit on high school advanced-placement courses could shave a year or more off the tuition tab. Or maybe mom and dad agree to foot the bill and cover the loans for the undergrad years, while graduate school is on your son's or daughter's dime.

Finally, keep in mind that there can be quite a difference between the listed sticker price for a school and the actual price you pay, once scholarships, loans and other financial assistance flow to the bottom



Graduating from high school means that tough college choices remain ahead.

line.

Count your lucky stars if you end up with a high schooler who is really engaged in visiting campuses, staying on top of essay deadlines, hunting for scholarships, and weighing the pros and cons of each school on the radar screen. You can pretty much shift into cruise control from here on out.

More typical, I think, is the junior or senior who needs nudging every step of the way - right up to packing the family van and pointing it toward good old State U. It's perfectly normal for teens to be wary of life after high school graduation.

But if college is indeed in the cards, how can you deal with the denial mode? When our oldest son was a high school junior, for example, we jump-started the process by

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

'Brain Food' available to South Florida teachers

MIAMI - This month, South Florida teachers will get the opportunity to experience "Brain Food", a workshop of Project MIND that shows fun and creative learning strategies math and science teachers can use in the classroom.

Public and private school

teachers in Broward, Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties are eligible to attend.

Project MIND was originally developed by Dr. Hui Fang Huang "Angie" Su in 1988 to help academically at-risk students improve their

ability to solve math problems. It is a research-based Pre-K-12 math enhancement program.

The workshop will emphasize the use of games, story telling, and strategic methods based on logic and intuition. It includes lesson

plans, activities, free teacher resources, online assessment and learning. Participants are eligible to receive 30 in-service points!

"Brain Food" will be held from **8 a.m. to 4 p.m.** on three **Saturdays, April 12, 19, and 26** in the WLRN Conference

room. All mathematics and science educators K-12 are invited to register and attend.

Email Marry Kemp at mkemp@wlrn.org to secure registration.



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~ A Caribbean Today advertising feature

T&T plans to ban camera cellular phones in schools

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - Government is moving to ban mobile phones with cameras from all schools here.

Education Minister Esther Le Gendre said last month that principals have been given guidelines "to implement a ban on the use of camera phones in schools."

This latest development came after pornographic images were taken by students and put on the Internet recently. This caused outrage among several interest groups, including the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association and the National Parent Teacher Association.

Le Gendre said principals, who are effectively the front-

line managers of schools in this country, "are being asked to exercise their authority firmly, fairly and swiftly in matters of discipline." She said where it is warranted sanctions will be placed on students who breach this new arrangement.

Le Gendre said in the wake of recent incidents of violence and indiscipline in the nation's schools a security manager is to be hired on June 1 to "review the security policy of the ministry and develop a strategic plan for the management of safety for schools as well as the facilities occupied by non-teaching staff of the ministry."



Tips for getting a late start...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

scholarship lists.

Get right on this, because many application deadlines are coming up quickly. Also, Chany said, as your student bears down on applications and essays, keep in mind that "less than five percent of the money for college comes from outside private scholarship sources. So don't devote a huge amount of time to this."

• **Be wary of the hired gun** - If you feel like you're in over your head, professional help is available from college consultants and scholarship search services. But be careful when considering some of these national services, which often rely on direct mail or mass e-mail blitzes to attract families. Their promises, at the very least, can be of questionable value.

On the other hand, some professional consultants who walk you through every aspect of the application and financial aid process can be worth every penny. Decide how much time and money you want to devote to this project.

• **Look for deals** - As your student comes up with a final list of schools to apply to, it may pay to look for offers like this incentive from the University of Kansas: The university will lock in a guaranteed tuition rate for in-state students for four years. There's another parental benefit to the plan - students will have added incentive to graduate in four years.

It is risky, of course, to wait so late in the game to start eyeballing the tuition tab. But with a little bit of knowledge about the financial aid process, you can at least get going in the

right direction before the clock strikes 12.

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Haitian students to benefit from laptop project

WASHINGTON - The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the One Laptop Per Child Foundation (OLPC) will finance a pilot project to test whether one-to-one computing can improve teaching and learning in schools in Haiti.

OLPC makes the XO laptop, a low-cost computer designed for children in places with poor infrastructure. The rugged machine, which uses open-source software, can be powered with car batteries, solar panels or devices such as cranks, pedals and pull-cords.

The IDB said it would make a \$3 million grant for the pilot project, which will distribute XO laptops to some 13,200 students and 500 teachers in 60 Haitian primary schools. OLPC will contribute \$2 million to the project.

"As one of the poorest countries in the world, deployment in Haiti has always been an important goal for OLPC," said Nicholas Negroponce, founder and chairman of One Laptop per Child.

"Doing it with our long standing partner, the Inter-American Development Bank,

not only makes for the best team, but also a model for other countries in the Caribbean and Latin America."

Emma Näslund-Hadley, the IDB's project team leader, said while there were studies about the impact of computer labs and shared computers in the classroom, "there's never been a comprehensive evaluation of the learning model based on giving each child a laptop."

"This is crucial to determine the effectiveness of this model under conditions of extreme poverty and as a tool for accelerating learning."

ASSESSMENT

The pilot project will assess how a child-centered learning technology can be used to bridge problems such as the shortage of qualified teachers and educating children of different grades in the same classroom. Another major priority for the Haitian government is speeding up the learning process for students who enter school late or repeat grades.

Under the project, content including text books, movies,

audio files and electronic documents, will be translated into creole and applications will be



Children in Haiti will soon benefit from low cost laptop computers.

developed for subjects such as reading and writing, numerical literacy and problem solving, environmental studies and social skills.

Training will be provided for teachers and students to operate the laptops and carry out basic maintenance and trouble-shooting tasks.



The Jamaican Diaspora

Jamaica Youth Forum

"Shaping Our Future: One Aim, One Destiny"

"The upcoming Youth Forum is geared to identify problems, foster communication, and offer support and assistance through mentoring, dialogue, and networking among the youths of the Jamaican and Caribbean Diaspora," explained Dr. Lloyd Cohen, President of the Jamaican Association of Miami-Dade Educators.

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Getting real about college

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

taking a college campus road trip followed by a visit with admissions officers during a get-acquainted session at his high school.

Whatever you do, don't over-function for your under-functioning student. This is their thing, not yours.

THE PRESTIGE FACTOR

Several years ago I attended a parent meeting in which a high school guidance counselor asked for a show of hands among those who had attended college. Most

everyone raised a hand. Next, parents were asked if they attended an Ivy League school. This time, only a few hands went up. Finally, the counselor wanted to know how many people considered themselves happy and successful. Every hand in the auditorium went up.

The point of the exercise: Getting into a highly selective college is not the meal ticket to fame and fortune. There are lots of other factors involved, and the brand-name schools don't have a lock on the formula.

The thinking among some teens (and parents) is that the

more selective a college, the better the college must be. Not so. In fact, there are hundreds of fine schools - many you've probably never heard of - that could provide great educational experiences.

Look, I'm all for any student who has the smarts and the zeal to pursue a blue-chip dream school. But, better to choose a school after weighing its assets and drawbacks - rather than on its brand name.

I've always thought the college-selection process was like shopping for a car. Kick the tires, review the pros and cons, and wait for the salesman to make you a good offer. And yes, they do need to sell you on why their school is worth the sometimes outrageous sum of money they want you to spend on your child's future.

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Good advice, good data

- "The Princeton Review: Paying for College Without Going Broke", by Kalman Chany
- "Kiplinger's Financing College", from the editors of Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazine
- "Harvard Schmarvard: Getting Beyond the Ivy League to the College That Is Best for You", by Jay Mathews
- "Winning the Heart of the College Admissions Dean: An Expert's Advice for Getting into College", by Joyce Slayton Mitchell.



Grenadian medical student scores top grade in science

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada, CMC - A Grenadian medical student has emerged with the top grade in a science examination involving more than 400 students from around the world.

Roggie Reason, a second year scholarship student at the American-owned St. George's University (SGU), earned the top score in the Basic Science Comprehension Examination (BSCE) at the North Umbria University in the United Kingdom.

"It's nice to know that a Grenadian scholarship student who did all of his primary and secondary and undergraduate work in Grenada was number one out of 400 students taking the first year final exam," said Dr. Charles Mondica, chancellor at SGU.

"I was told that he was not number one by a point or so; he was number one by a lot

and we need to acknowledge."

Some 416 students from around the world sat the BSCE, climaxing a year of studies, part of the Keith B. Taylor Global Scholars program to train medical professionals in developing countries. The students in the program take the first year of the basic medical science phase of SGU's doctor of medicine degree at the U.K. university, which has a long record in teaching biomedical sciences.

Reason was among the first five Grenadian scholarship students in the program, which began in 2007.



PROMISE FULFILLED



Children from the Ecole St. Patrick primary school in Cite Soleil, Haiti, display photographs of primary schools built by the Digicel Haiti Foundation in its first year of existence. The Digicel Haiti Foundation last month delivered on a promise to build 20 schools in its first 12 months of operation, two in each district of Haiti. The schools, which are furnished and staffed with trained teachers, will provide more than 7,000 Haitian children with an education.

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Youth forum

A free, one-day Jamaica Youth Forum, aimed at South Florida high school and college students, will be held on April 12 at the University of Miami.

The forum, being presented by the Jamaican Diaspora Southern United States, will focus on the theme "Shaping Our Future: One Aim, One Destiny". It will be conducted from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

The forum will seek to enlighten and engage young leaders in discussion relevant to their success in the U.S. and abroad. Panel discussion topics will include "Making an Impact", "Building Relationships" and "Cultural Identity".

Scheduled panelists include Dr. Lloyd Cohen, president of the Jamaican Association of Miami-Dade Educators; David Mullings, co-chair of Jamaica Youth Forum and chief executive officer of Realvibe Media; and Kelliann McDonald, founder of the Jamaican-American Student Association (JAMSA) at the University of Florida.

"Our local Jamaican community and Jamaica's future is highly dependent on how well we nurture our future leadership," said Marlon Hill, Jamaican Diaspora Advisory Board member. "This forum is intended to be a catalyst for this community-building goal."

For more information, call **786-349-2584**.



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V I E W P O I N T

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CaribChat

'MAQ' targets Caribbean love for cricket in the U.S.



If there is one sport that brings Caribbean people together, whether in the region or overseas in countries like the United States, it's cricket. Yet, despite thousands of players involved with hundreds of teams the game has struggled for widespread acceptance in the U.S. **Mahammad A. Qureshi** is hoping to change that with "MAQ T20", which highlights the shorter 20 overs version of the game. The first tournament is slated for Memorial weekend in Lauderhill, Florida. **Qureshi** recently discussed his plans with **Caribbean Today's** Managing Editor **Gordon Williams**. The following is an edited version of that interview:

GORDON WILLIAMS: This is a big investment for you, in terms of this tournament and everything involved in 20/20. What was the chief motivation behind getting involved with such a big project?

MAHAMMAD A. QURESHI: I've been trying to promote the cricket in the U.S. The U.S. has never been promoting the cricket. As you look at it, organizations come and go. A lot of independent tournaments are only for one time. (No) organization has a two-year plan how we're going to promote the cricket in the U.S. We have 750 teams and they've never been promoted.

So, here, with this thing we have the chance to bring the fast version of the cricket, which is called 20/20. "MAQ T20"... We have a huge program, which will involve summer camps. We also have independent tournaments.

That's all these programs going for three years ahead of us. And (we're) trying to promote this cricket because the game is the world's second largest game after soccer and never got promoted.

The year I stepped in, I did 1999, first tournament, short version for Americans. Cricket, like baseball, two and a half hours, 20/20, in the city of Dania Beach (Florida). And you don't have the proper sta-

dium (there), but we did the tournament very well. I've been waiting since then.

G.W.: How much is your investment worth?

M.A.Q.: Since 1992 we've been trying to promote the cricket, I've spent a million or so dollars on my own to promote the cricket.

G.W.: How much is this (MAQ T20) tournament going to cost you?

M.A.Q.: This thing is costing over a million dollars to just put it together for a three-day tournament. Just for three days, Memorial Day weekend. It's costing over a million dollars to promote all these games coming up...because we have a concert after that...

G.W.: What would you use as a measuring stick to decide the success or non-success of this particular event coming up on Memorial Day?

M.A.Q.: Major thing, basically, this is the first (cricket) stadium in Broward County. First (cricket) stadium in the United States. There is no exposure worldwide. Everybody is looking at it. U.S., they think, didn't play cricket. So this (tournament) is the biggest exposure you're gonna get on this event. There's telecasting on T.V., radio and news media. So this is a big event, we have covered, for the future of cricket, coming up for us.

G.W.: You're old enough to have known cricket when Test cricket was the biggest game in town. Is it bittersweet for you, that the promotion of cricket in this country (U.S.) is not resting with your first love, which is the traditional type of cricket, but more with a faster game now, 20/20 cricket?

M.A.Q.: If you look at it like, you want to promote the cricket, you want to bring the best teams and fast in America, where Tests have never been promoted, we bring the short version. We had to bring the youngsters. If you look at the youngsters, they are ready to go...Here, nobody played cricket. Only baseball, soccer and all of that. I have the dream and goal to promote the cricket. When I became a successful businessman after finishing college in 1989, I opened

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

Seeking Adonis

In Greek mythology Adonis was a handsome young shepherd loved by Aphrodite.

His name has become synonymous with perfection in men, as in: "He was handsome like a Greek god, so near perfection, an Adonis."

That, it seems, is what women want. Apparently it appears that many women still want the knight in a suit of armor on a white horse, noble, honest, mannerly, although that came from the slightly older ladies.

But in spite of what the books may say, sex still ranks high on the list of priorities of many women as some have told me. "He must be well endowed, at least an impressive six inches flaccid," one wrote.

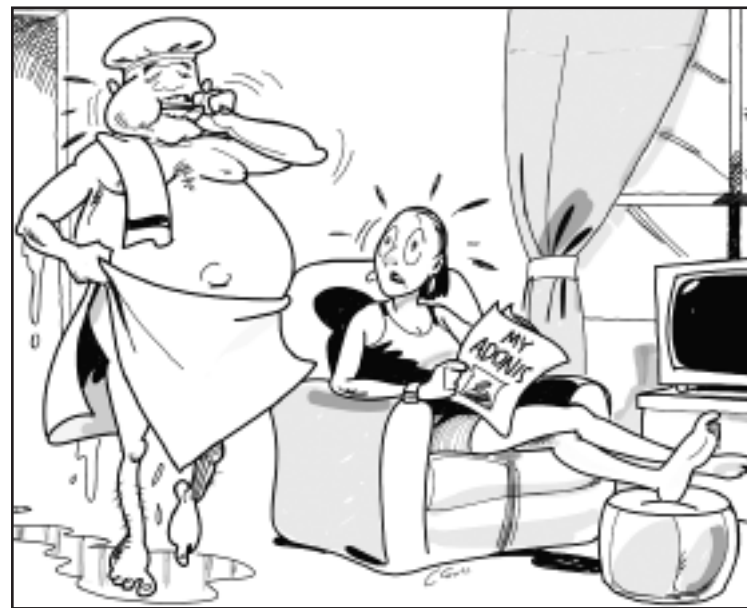
Oh my, and there you were buying into the notion that size doesn't matter. By now we all know that's bull, the same way they say that being poor is no crime, and that the meek shall inherit the Earth and all those nice sounding phrases. Maybe that would apply one time in the world's history, but certainly not now.

Size does matter, and, in spite of what you hear, it matters to women. If it didn't matter they wouldn't sing about, "We don't want no short men, no little teeny eenie weenie short short men."

Based on my research and findings, almost all the ladies expressed that whereas they didn't necessarily want a man to be hung like a horse, he should be amply endowed. "No cigarettes between the fingers for me," one lady said.

WORRY

No wonder men spend so much time fretting about their size and spend time and money on those penile size enhancers, some of which may cause serious harm. Women have been known to laugh at



men who come up short. They also said that Mr. Adonis must also be skillful in that department. "It's no use if he has the tool but can't use it," a lady emphatically said.



TONY ROBINSON

Not only that but he must be able to perform for at least an hour without falling asleep right after. No wonder men have high blood pressure and nervous breakdowns. But this 'falling asleep right after syndrome', seems to be a serious issue. It seems that when a man is finished all he wants to do is sleep, or maybe he has to, in order to recoup. But the woman still wants to talk, cuddle, touch, interact, kiss, needs affection. "I feel so used, as he's finished, him just roll over and start to snore."

Adonis would not only perform above and beyond the call of duty, but stay awake too and give post game commentary afterwards.

Adonis must not only look good, but be functional, according to this lady, for she says that the man must be able to cook dinner or breakfast, or, if he can't, should be willing to say, "Let's go get something to eat." He should also wash the dishes without the woman having to ask,

leave the toilet seat down and dry, give gifts for no apparent reason, and do little chores all the time...cheerfully.

OPTIONS

This other lady also expressed to me her version of Adonis, and curiously, sex was way down on the list for her. Her number one was respect. The man should give her the same respect that he desires from her. Sensitivity came second: "He must be sensitive to my feelings and if he does something to hurt me, he should apologize and try not to hurt me the same way again."

The trouble is most men don't even know when they're hurting a woman anyway. The fact is, sensitivity doesn't fall high on most men's list of priorities. The reality is, most men are afraid to show their sensitive side for fear of being deemed weak or soft. There's a popular song on the charts that says, "I showed you my sensitive side and you took me for a ride, I shoulda treated you like them other guys did. If I had followed my original plan, you would've been nothing but a one night stand."

That sentiment is echoed by many men and recently a young man e-mailed me, saying how he followed his parents advice and treated this girl with respect, was a gentleman, was honest and moral and she dished him dirt.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



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CARIB Comments

• **“We are not looking at a shallow piece pizza, but a deep dish pizza”** - Wendell Mottley, a former Trinidad and Tobago finance minister now head of Caribbean operations at a United States-based financial institution, on the economic problems of the Caribbean, particularly in light of a possible recession in the U.S.

• **“Countries that need resources turn to people who have resources. Our concern is about our relationship with the Caribbean and our interest is building a strong relationship between the United States and the Caribbean. We will never fault Caribbean countries for looking for help where they can find help”** - U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere Ambassador Thomas Shannon responding to decisions by some regional countries to seek assistance from other governments which do not have good relationships with Washington.

• **“Many women in Trinidad and Tobago have very little say over when they have sex and with whom”** - Angela Lee-Loy, chairman of the National AIDS Coordinating Committee last month explaining that fear of violence or abandonment often prevents women from discussing fidelity or negotiating condom use with their partner, increasing the possibility of being infected with HIV.

• **“The fact is, there are criminals in the force”** - Jamaica's Police Commissioner



Rear Admiral Hardley Lewin last month saying Jamaica's police force is riddled with criminals.

• **“We would hate that these violent attacks on innocent people by warring gangs would get out of hand, as it could trigger migration whether to neighboring territories or to islands of the eastern Caribbean”** - St. Lucia's Prime Minister Stephenson King last month expressing concern that continued unrest in Guyana, caused by the recent murders of



innocent people, may result in the mass migration of Guyanese to his and other neighboring Caribbean states.

• **“The people of Dominica cannot be held accountable for what everybody says”** - Minister for National Security Rayburn Blackmore dismissing a suggestion that Dominica may be joining forces with Venezuela to form a military alliance against the United States is laughable.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.



Seeking Adonis

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

There are women who abhor that type of behavior in men, which just adds more problems to men's dilemma, “Who do you treat how?” Many seek rogues. Every Joe Grind is a brute, yet women are still drawn to them. Look how many women leave their decent husbands and take up with sleaze balls. Go figure. In affairs of the heart, nice guys seem to finish last.

But back to the ladies seeking Adonis. “He must be honest and open with me, even if what he has to say will hurt. Gentlemen, don't fall for that one, it's a trick. What a tall order, as honesty and talking can be a deadly combina-

tion. That's why countries have diplomats who find ways to say unpleasant things in a nice way. Too much honesty can lead to crosses, so some things are best left unsaid.

Imagine being honest and saying, “I just saw your best friend, and my, she looks so good I'd love to sleep with her,” or “I'm going away for two months, and being a man, chances are I'll sleep with another woman if I get the chance.” Those were future possibilities, flirting with the laws of probability and wishful thinking. But honesty with matters of the past can be even more devastating. “So did you sleep with her?” “I cannot tell a lie, I must be honest, yes I

did, and keeping with my honesty, I would do it again if I got the chance.” Not even women are so honest with their men, yet they ask that of them.

FAITH AND TRUST

Still seeking Adonis, they say, “He should not give me a reason not to trust him.” That I'd love to see, as women will always find reasons not to trust their men. If he leaves the house, it must be woman house that he's gone to. If he departs from the norm and comes home later than usual, the same applies. If his cell phone is off, that's proof enough for mistrust. Women will always find reasons to mistrust a man, no matter

what they do, no matter what they say, and that's a fact.

He should remain faithful to her and her alone. That's a fair request, but ironically, women often lose respect for men who fall into this category. For some reason they're attracted to womanizers, then suddenly expect them to just settle with them. Very often if they do, they take them for granted, and also hold them to sexual ransom. But if she knows, or thinks that he has options, she realizes that if she slips, he'll get it outta street. That may keep her on her toes.

Hey, it's just my theory. Still seeking, they say that Adonis should, “Please me sexually, be intelligent and

have a good sense of humor.” Many guys who I spoke to said that they have a great sense of humor, for whenever they say anything to their women, the response always was, “Ha, you must be joking.”

So that's how some women expressed what their Adonis should be. Ironically I know some gay men who would fit the profile, sensitive, caring, thoughtful, does dishes, cooks, cleans, washes, irons. It's only in the sex department they'd fall short. Pity Mr. Adonis - when they do find him - for dog niam him supper.

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P.M. Golding says all the right things at meeting with Jamaicans in South Florida

PATRICK SMIKLE

Among the political personalities of who have emerged in Independent Jamaica, Orette Bruce Golding is second only to the late Michael Manley in his articulateness.

He is almost the equal of Manley in his ability to reduce complex political issues to crowd-pleasing sound-bites.

He surpasses Manley in the use of the vernacular to both get his point across and to elicit applause. And his turn-of-phrase reminds this reporter of retired academician and cultural icon Professor Rex Nettleford.

These verbal attributes were on full display when Prime Minister Golding addressed a town-hall meeting at the Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center on the Nova Southeastern University Campus in Davie, Florida on Mar. 28.

"Jamaica is too rich to be so poor," he said. "We are too bright to be struggling so hard."

There was the obligatory acknowledging of the "crucial role" remittances from overseas-based Jamaicans have played in keeping the island's economy afloat.

"Jamaica couldn't survive without you," he declared to resounding applause.

Neither bauxite nor tourism brings into the economy the kind of money Jamaicans send home every year...more than J\$2 billion last year, he noted.

"But it's more than just the money," he said.

More applause.

"Regardless of our numbers in any community, in any situation, we manage to make our presence felt," Golding added. "As good as our ambassadors have been they haven't had the same impact. Jamaicans abroad are the country's best ambassadors."

Even more applause.

DISSONANCE

The government must do more to utilize the talent, skills and expertise of Jamaicans abroad, the prime minister declared.

And this evokes a sense of dissonance for this reporter. Wasn't Golding a senior Cabinet minister in the 1980-89 government which was infamous for its preference for foreign consultants over both local and other Jamaican expertise?

The sense of dissonance set in when Prime Minister Golding mentioned "food security" as one of the priorities of his administration. "We need to modernize farming," he told his audience.

In this mission, he foresaw crucial roles for the College of Agriculture and the Scientific Research Council.

He posited the need for food security in the context of rising commodity prices over which Jamaica had no control. He prefaced this prioritizing of food security with the comment that "Dudley will probably crack a wry smile when I mention this." The reference was to retired Ambassador Dudley Thompson, sitting in the audience.

"Never mind the wry smile. Dudley should be forgiven if he laughed out loud," I commented to a colleague reporter.

Amb. Thompson was first foreign minister and later National Security Minister in 1972-80 People's National Party (PNP) government which made food security a major component of its development program. That was after the Arab countries imposed an oil boycott following their defeat in the Yom Kippur War. That boycott triggered massive increases in the price of oil and, as a consequence, most other imported commodities.

TURNAROUND

Remember the Production Plan? Remember the slogan "Eat what you grow. Grow what you eat"? Golding's Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), then in Opposition, pooh-poohed those policies. They slammed the slogans.

On education, the prime minister reiterated his party's promise that if elected to government the JLP would remove tuition fees for schools.

"This is not giving parents a free ride," he told the audience, noting that in 2005-06 school year, parents spent J\$19 billion on the non-tuition aspects of their children's education.

His administration would also strengthen early-childhood education, create a machinery to facilitate greater parental support and extend the school leaving age from 16 to 18.

Long-time political-watchers would probably recall JLP Education Spokesman Edwin Allen's unprecedented crossing of the floor of the House of Representatives to shake Michael Manley's hand when the then prime minister announced a policy of free tertiary education. Allen's party frowned on that gesture and proceeded to oppose the policy. They accused the government of promoting "a freeness mentality."

Dissonance aside, Golding said all the right things in this his first meeting with



Golding

Jamaicans residing overseas since becoming prime minister just seven months ago.

CRIME FIGHT

In response to the inevitable first question at gatherings such as these, he spoke of the need to "strengthen the capacity of the police force" in the fight against

crime and violence.

"But first we have to clean it out," he said to loud cheers.

He had told the commissioner of police that the top cop had the full support of the government in his efforts to clean up the force. Additionally, Golding said, the country had to address the causes of crime. A first step in doing this was to devise programs of upliftment, which focused on young men.

At the same time, he said, there was a need to enforce the law "without fear or favor or concern for status. Those of us in leadership, people of prominence, must set an example by obeying the law."

In response to another question from the audience, he reiterated another election platform promise...to remove

user-fees at public hospitals. The technocrats had told him that the country could not afford this. His response?

"We cannot afford not to afford it."

On poverty, Golding lamented that there were some 365,000 people living below the poverty line. To ameliorate their situation, the government had already spent some J\$500 million this year alone on subsidizing basic food items. These subsidies would be continued, but they would be targeted in ways designed to ensure that only the neediest benefited. The government would not allow people to buy subsidized cornmeal to "feed their Alsatians" he said.

And how would the gov- (CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

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U.S. paints bleak picture of human rights violations in the Caribbean

WASHINGTON – The United States Department of State has painted a bleak picture of human rights violations in the Caribbean.

In its “U.S. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2007”, released last month, the State Department accused the region of a number of violations, ranging from excessive use of force by police, to poor prison conditions, to discrimination and violence against women.

The report described prison conditions in Antigua and Barbuda as “poor”, attributing overcrowding in part to “a law that limited the ability of magistrates to grant bail to those accused of certain offences”.

The State Department

said though the constitution provides for freedom of speech and of the press, the Baldwin Spencer administration respects these rights on a “somewhat limited basis”.

PROBLEMS

In The Bahamas, the report stated that while the government generally respects the human rights of its citizens, there were problems in some areas, including complaints of abuse by police and prison and detention centre guards, lengthy pre-trial detention, poor detention conditions, delays in trials, violence against women and children, and discrimination against persons of Haitian descent.

The State Department identified alleged human rights problems in Barbados as excessive use of force by police, poor prison conditions, and societal violence against

women and children.

In Belize, the State Department said human rights problems included brutality and the use of excessive force by security forces.

The report stated that human rights problems in Dominica primarily involve violence against women and children and “adverse conditions” experienced by indigenous Kalinago or Carib Indians.

In Grenada, the State Department said human rights problems include allegations of corruption, violence against women, and instances of child abuse.

The State Department said despite some improvements, Haiti’s human rights record remains “poor”.

The report said while the Jamaica government generally respects the human rights of its citizens, there were “serious

problems” in some areas. It identified these as “unlawful killings committed by members of the security forces; mob violence against and vigilante killings of those suspected of breaking the law; abuse of detainees and prisoners by police and prison guards; and poor prison and jail conditions”.

In St. Kitts and Nevis, the State Department said problems include poor prison conditions, corruption, and violence against women.

The State Department said abuse of suspects and prisoners by the police, long delays in trials and sentencing, violence against women, and child abuse are the major allegations in St. Lucia.

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the State Department said problems primarily surround “impunity for police who used excessive force, poor prison conditions,

an overburdened court system, violence against women, and abuse of children”.

The report said problems in Suriname include police alleged mistreatment of detainees at the time of arrest; abuse of prisoners by guards; overcrowded detention facilities; an overwhelmed judiciary with a large case backlog; and lengthy pretrial detention.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the report highlighted police killings during apprehension or custody, inmate illness and injuries due to poor prison conditions, high-profile cases of alleged bribery, violence against women, inadequate services for vulnerable children, and unsafe working conditions as some of the alleged major human rights violations.

- CMC



P.M. Golding says all the right things in meeting with Jamaicans in South Florida

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

ernment pay for all this?

Here Prime Minister Golding returned to the issue of the more affluent members of society obeying the laws of the country. The government intended to close tax loopholes, he said. While wage and salary earners had their income taxes deducted at source under the country’s Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) system, self-employed people, many of whom were lawyers and doctors, were not paying their fare share. He said that at present just two percent of registered companies paid 70 percent of corporate taxes. That had to change.

Just prior to leaving Jamaica Golding said he met with the country’s energy chiefs to work out solutions in that area. While he was not in a position to make a specific

announcement at this time, Golding said, he expected the solution (or solutions) to be built around the use of natural gas, coal or both.

Another question from the audience elicited an announcement on foreign policy. The government would establish embassies in Haiti, Brazil, Spain and a Gulf State.

When moderator Winston Barnes called an end to the proceedings, some 40-minutes after the scheduled close, several people were standing in line to ask questions. Given that fact, and the sustained standing ovation he received, Golding can chalk up this first meeting with Jamaicans resident overseas as a resounding success.

Patrick Smikle is freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



‘MAQ’ targets Caribbean love for cricket in the U.S.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

my business up and I thought one day I was gonna put my teams together here to play cricket. The time’s now.

G.W.: The adaptation of cricket in the U.S. has always rested with the ex-pats. How important is it for you that the youngsters, the American-born, catch on to the game?

M.A.Q.: See, any game (from outside) America, they’re never gonna promote it...So you are a promoter and (if you) really want to promote the cricket you have to start with the youngsters. Bring them so the parents come in. When the parents come in and participate, county, city and state they’ll be watching the game and recognize it...

G.W.: Stanford 20/20 has shown to the Caribbean and a lot of the world that a tournament like that can be very successful. A shorter version of the game, properly promoted and the exposure. Have you

looked at the Stanford 20/20 tournament and taken any kind of lesson from it?

M.A.Q.: If you remember... back in 1999 I’m the first one who created the 20/20 tournament in Dania Beach park (Florida). After that the world started playing (that version of the game). So I had the vision prior to (Stanford 20/20 and) what anybody started in the world. So we are the ones who created this thing and people are learning from our creation. So we don’t have to go back to learn from others’ creation. Even the ICC (International Cricket Council) did a tournament after us. Any good thing we always want to learn. Anything. (But) our organization was there (at Stanford 20/20) to watch. We can be as successful to learn from other things.

G.W.: This (20/20) idea, you’ve been in it from the beginning. You say you’ll be in it for the long haul - this tournament on Memorial weekend and the others. How long do you think

you think you’ll be in it before you determine if this is a success or not a success?

M.A.Q.: It’s gonna be a yearly project...I was planning to put the stadium in Orlando. We own the land up there by Disney. So we’re gonna build a stadium similar like this (in Lauderhill)...So once we kick off from here we need more stadiums. We’re already ready for a next stadium. So it’ll take a year to promote the whole game so we’re gonna spend a lot of money during the year. Several million dollars just to promote these games until 2009...Then we will have a successful result...

Every country is playing, except America, which is not playing very much exposure-wise. They’ve been playing, nobody’s been promoting. So here we are. We’re trying to promote this game...One day we’re going to bring the (U.S.) team to World Cups and bring the cups to home in America.



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Rastafari makes it to top of U.S. capital hill

GORDON WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The roots of Rastafari, a religious faith which originated in the Caribbean island of Jamaica, can now be traced through an unprecedented exhibition at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in the United States capital.

The milestone exhibition here, titled "Discovering Rastafari!", began early last November and is scheduled to run for a year.

"Rastafarism has never been in any major museum," said Jake Homiak, curator of the exhibition.

Yet the exhibition in itself is not a validation of Rastafari's presence, which first sprung up in 1930s colonial Jamaica, but spread throughout the Caribbean and the globe. Reggae, now among the world's most potent musical forces, has long carried the banner for Rastafari, especially through the works of icons such as Bob Marley, Peter Tosh and the Burning Spear.

In his song "Black Man Redemption" Marley made it clear that Selassie, through his ancestry, and Rastafari ruled:

"Coming from the root of King David, through the line of Solomon, his imperial majesty is the power of authority."

The exhibition, housed in one room, is not the only one on show at the museum. Yet it is amongst the most intriguing. "Discovering Rastafari!" takes observers through the journey of the faith via a collection of photographs, signs and artifacts. It makes important note of Rastafari's strong ties to Africa and late Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I. The connection of the black man of the African diaspora is also shown through the focus on Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican who sought to return blacks to the continent.

MOVEMENT

The emphasis of Rastafari to seek peace, equality and harmony is summed up at the entrance to the exhibition, where a placard offers a quote from a Selassie speech, which eventually made up the lyrics

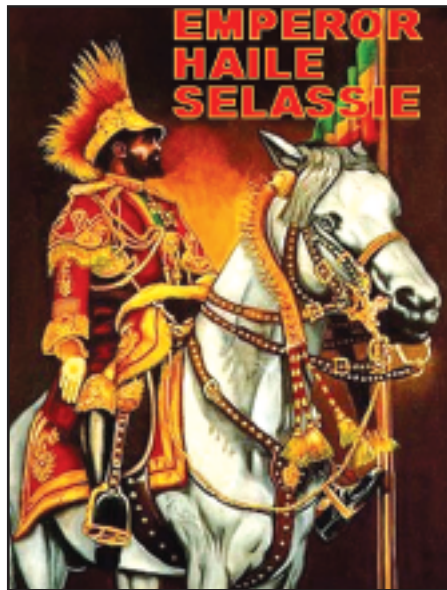
for Marley's famous song "War". The posting also explains that "Rastafari is a cultural, religious, and revolutionary movement that began

Rastafari, waited for the emperor in Jamaica, is on display. One elder described the visit as a fulfillment of prophecy.



A photograph of Rastafarian elder Tawny, left, and members of his family, are part of the exhibition.

in Jamaica in the 1930s. Inspired by Biblical prophecy and the teachings of Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, followers of Rastafari identify themselves as Africans seek-



Late Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I is the focal point of the Rastafari faith.

ing to return to the continent..."

The exhibition goes a long way in explaining many issues surrounding Rastafari, in an easy way that both attracts and enlightens visitors. The photographs show Rastafari in many moods - celebratory, prayer and reflection. Another postcard makes it clear that "Roots reggae artists continue to place Ethiopia and Emperor Selassie at the center of their music..."

Among the highlights are photographs and articles documenting Selassie's historic trip to Jamaica in 1966. The original of a huge placard carried by Ras Daniel Heartman as he, along with members of the Church Triumphant of Jah

However, the centerpiece of "Discovering Rastafari!" is the video presentation, which features members of the faith offering testimony. They talk about various aspects of Rastafari, including the sacred herb, food, language, locks, family, role of women and different factions of the faith, ranging from the Twelve Tribes to the Nyahbinghi.

The narrator offers that "the message of Rastafari has truly become an international movement." But although Rastafari is more readily embraced by widespread society these days, it was not always that way.

"There was so much discrimination," one elder said while explaining the earlier persecution experienced by Rastafari.

They also talk about returning to Ethiopia, where Selassie once pledged land for them to re-settle.

"For Rastafari, Africa is their sacred homeland," said the narrator.

For visitors to "Discover Rastafari!" the journey offers a type of spiritual connection with an often misunderstood faith. The many signatures in the reception book showed its impact on the variety of people - different nationalities and ages - who have caught a glimpse of the display. From "It's really cool" written by a child, to "It's about time!! Free for all to see and learn", the exhibition - which closes in early November - has struck an important chord.

Rasta has made it to the top of the hill.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



Bolton, Air Supply join St. Lucia Jazz

Grammy Award winning American balladeer Michael Bolton, as well as soft rock duo Air Supply, have joined the line-up for the 2008 St. Lucia Jazz festival, set to celebrate its 17th anniversary from May 2-11.

Also booked for the festival, which is produced by the St. Lucia Tourist Board in partnership with BET Event Productions, are Angie Stone, Anita Baker, Dianne Reeves, Dionne Warwick, Jonathan Butler, Najee and Wyclef Jean.

"We expect St. Lucia Jazz to be another spectacular event on the island's tourism calendar this year," Cybelle Brown, vice president of sales and business development for BET Digital Networks, was quoted as saying in a recent press release.

"This year we're continuing to improve the quality of the event," said Senator Allen Chastanet, St. Lucia's minister of tourism and civil aviation, who added major infrastructural improvements were being planned, including showcasing St. Lucia's premium restaurants on Pigeon Island.

"Our aim is to re-establish

St. Lucia as hosts of the premier jazz festival in the Caribbean. Having great artistes is not enough if we don't bolster the experience."

Other acts carded for the festival include the Juilliard Quintet, featuring saxophonist Ron Blake, trumpeter Eddie Henderson, drummer Carl Allen and bassist Ben Wolfe. Also performing at St. Lucia Jazz

will be saxophonist Jacques Schwartz-Bart; keyboardist Alex Bugnon, guitarist Nick Colionne and neo-soul singer Ledisi; along with local and Caribbean performers.

St. Lucia's 10-day jazz celebration focuses on the straight jazz category as well as acoustic, new age, jazz, soul, fusion, R&B and hip hop held in a variety of locations and venues around the island, including Jazz on the Square in Castries and Fond d'Or Jazz in Dennery.

For more information, visit the official St. Lucia Jazz website at www.stluciajazz.org, or contact the St. Lucia Tourist Board toll-free (888) 4-ST-LUCIA.



Wyclef Jean



Bolton

ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

• DJ Movado on shooting charges

Jamaican dancehall deejay Movado, who had been slapped with gun-related charges, was offered bail when he appeared in court late last month.

The 27-year-old performer, whose real name is David Brooks, was arrested on Mar. 26 by detectives assigned to the Major Investigations Task Force. He was held when he showed up for questioning in connection with a shooting incident on July 27 last year. Movado has been charged with two counts of shooting with intent and illegal possession of a firearm.

• Musician takes Digicel to court

A Dominican musician confirmed last month that he was taking Irish mobile giant Digicel to court over an alleged copyright infringement.

Daryl Bob, the former lead singer of the once popular Rough and Ready Band, has claimed that the company used one of his songs in the production of a commercial without first obtaining his permission. Up to press time Digicel had

declined to comment on the matter.

• St. Maarten celebrates carnival

Music, dancing in the streets, fun and pageantry will highlight two weeks of carnival celebrations in St. Maarten.

This year's version of the annual affair, which features festivities like jump-up parades, calypso competitions, beauty pageants and the annual "Jouvert" celebration, will be held between **April 17 and May 3**. For more information, visit www.stmaartencarnival.com

• Legend, Ocean headline St. Kitts Music Festival

American soul singer John Legend and Caribbean artiste Billy Ocean are among the headliners scheduled for this summer's three-night St. Kitts Music Festival, set for **June 21-23**.

The festival, now in its 12th year, will be staged at the Warner Park Football Field.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.



Supplements: Can they boost athletic performance?

DR. HOWARD LEWINE

There are over 100 compounds advertised to be supplemental "ergogenic aids", substances you eat that improve your use of energy, increase energy production, or shorten the time needed to recover from exercise.

Of these, only a few actually have any evidence to support their use as performance enhancers. But many are known to be dangerous or potentially harmful.

Previously, I discussed the ergogenic qualities of vitamins and minerals, amino acids and proteins, and caffeine. Used appropriately in moderate amounts, they are generally safe. And some of them can boost athletic performance, especially the vitamins and minerals when an athlete is not getting sufficient amounts from a balanced diet.

Most other supplements do not have a dietary origin, and in fact act like drugs. But unlike control over prescription medications, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not have the same regulatory control over supplements.

EPHEDRA (Ma Huang) - Ephedra and related compounds, such as phenylpropanolamine, ephedrine, epinephrine and phenylephrine don't enhance athletic performance nor do they provide any nutritional benefit.

Ephedra-like substances stimulate the nervous system, increase heart rate and blood pressure, and speed up the metabolism. They are consid-

ered illegal substances by the (International Olympic Committee) IOC and National Collegiate Athletic Committee. Ephedra was banned by the FDA in Dec. 2003. Athletes have died from taking amphetamine-like substances.

Drugs related to ephedra are used in asthma treatment, but even if prescribed can disqualify an athlete. Athletes with asthma competing at the highest levels need to inform the sports association of the



Supplements

medications they are taking. The athletes must be certain that none of their medications, including inhalers, is on the list of banned substances. Many of the over-the-counter asthma sprays contain banned substances.

If you have asthma but exercise non-competitively, good control of the condition with medications means more enjoyment of exercise and better performance.

ANDRO - Despite the claims, "andro" (short for androstenedione) doesn't build muscle mass or enhance athletic performance. It may boost testosterone levels a bit, but most of

the supplement is converted to the female hormone estrone, a form of estrogen.

As an estrogen booster, andro can increase breast size (called gynecomastia). In addition, the supplement increases heart-attack risk, lowers HDL (good) cholesterol, and promotes acne. Over the long term, it can increase the size of the prostate gland. The FDA recently sent letters to 23 companies requesting them to stop distributing supplements containing andro. Andro is a banned substance for competition at the amateur level and also for many professional sports.

DHEA (Dehydroepiandrosterone) - DHEA is a naturally occurring steroid made primarily in the adrenal glands. DHEA tends to fall as we age, and one study showed that DHEA given to older men improved strength in some.

This one piece of evidence has been wrongly applied to younger people, especially athletes. The reality is that DHEA isn't effective in improving athletic performance or strength training. Side effects of DHEA are unknown. Because DHEA can be converted to testosterone and estrogen, DHEA may result in problems similar to those of andro. In addition, researchers recently discovered that DHEA increases the

blood level of a substance associated with prostate enlargement.

COENZYME Q10 - Coenzyme Q10 (Co Q10) is one of the key enzymes that are essential to energy production inside the body's cells. Within each cell, Coenzyme Q10 resides in the mitochondria, the powerhouse of aerobic metabolism.

Since this is a natural energy booster inside all cells, it's easy to understand why people would be excited about a coenzyme Q10 supplement. But after many years of trying, scientists have been unable to show any performance-enhancing benefit when it is taken by mouth. Reports of side effects are rare.

Dr. Howard LeWine is a member of the Harvard Medical School faculty and practicing internist with Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates and Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts. He serves as chief medical editor of Internet publishing at Harvard Health Publications.

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HEALTH BRIEFS

• Grim HIV/AIDS news for Caribbean

Caribbean health officials claim that at least 31 people are dying daily in the Caribbean from the deadly HIV/AIDS virus.

UNAIDS Director Karen Sealey, speaking at the launch of an HIV Epidemic and Response Synthesis in the Caribbean last month, said that the statistics also show that 47 persons had become infected with the virus on a daily basis last year.

Figures show that at the end of 2007, an estimated 230,000 people were living with HIV and AIDS in the Caribbean. Some 17,000 people were newly infected during 2007, and there were 11,000 deaths due to AIDS. In The Bahamas, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago more than two percent of the adult population is living with HIV.

• New plan to tackle diabetes in youth

The Barbados government has unveiled a new plan to tackle the worrying trend of diabetes in young people here.

According to Health Minister Dr. David Estwick, there has been an increase in diabetes in children and adolescents in recent times. He said that surveillance systems will be implemented in the polyclinics across the country to report on the incidence of diabetes and other non-chronic diseases among young people.

• User fees removed from Jamaican hospitals

Health Minister Ruddy Spencer says all is in place for the removal of user fees at Jamaica's public hospitals and clinics starting this month.

Spencer told a news conference late last month that some J\$60 million (\$845,172) had already been disbursed to regional health authorities to carry out immediate upgrading of some public health facilities and to purchase additional chairs, filing cabinets and tents to accommodate the projected 30 percent increase in patients expected on April 1.

The minister said it would cost the government J\$3.85 billion (\$54,231,921) to support the new policy.

Compiled from CMC reports.



Estwick



Spencer

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Jamaican gets shot at world boxing title

GORDON WILLIAMS

Jamaican-born light heavy-weight Glen Johnson will get what could be his final chance at reclaiming a world boxing title when he fights American Chad Dawson in Tampa, Florida this month.

The April 12 showdown at the St. Pete's Times Forum offers the Miami-based Johnson a shot at Dawson's World Boxing Council (WBC) crown.

The 39-year-old Jamaican told *Caribbean Today* recently that he is fit and ready to battle for the full 12 rounds if necessary.

"All is a go," Johnson said. "Training is good. I can't complain."

He also promised not just to take the 25-year-old Dawson's title, but punish his opponent as well.

"Everything is sweet," Johnson said. "Pure lick the boy a go get."

Meanwhile, manager Henry Foster backed Johnson's claim that the fighter's preparations for the bout were going smoothly.

"Glen is doing great,"

Foster told *Caribbean Today* recently. "His training is in full swing."

According to Foster, Johnson was sparring up to three times a week in Miami



Johnson

leading into the championship bout, but was expected to "scale back" by the first week of April. Johnson's sparring partners were handpicked for their youth, power and especially speed to simulate the younger Dawson's style.

"Everything is a little more quicker," the man called the "Road Warrior" said.

LAST CHANCE?

Johnson, the 2004 "Fighter of the Year" who once held the International Boxing Federation (IBF) crown for the 175-pound weight division, believes time may be running out for him to reclaim a world title. For that reason he set aside a title bout

against Britain's Clinton Woods to take on Dawson.

"Anytime you get a shot at the world title can be realistically your last," Johnson said.

"We gave up our mandatory IBF shot to take this one because it came before the Woods bout. Now we have to go out and capture the title.

"This guy (Dawson) chose me," he added. "Now we'll just have to deal with him."

The Clarendon-born fighter said he had no predictions for the Dawson fight. He plans to seek an early knockout, but if that doesn't work he said he is ready to go the distance. The only object, he said, is to win, and for Johnson the title fight could not come soon enough.

"This is an urgency from two years now, since we last lost the title in 2005," said Johnson. "The time for me is now, definitely. We're not looking towards tomorrow. April 12 is it."

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



Caribbean clubs crash out of CONCACAF soccer

GORDON WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON D.C. - The gulf between professional soccer in the Caribbean and United States was again exposed last month during the quarterfinal round of the CONCACAF Champions Cup (CCC) between American club D.C. United and Harbour View of Jamaica.

The home and away tie, which featured four-time U.S. Major League Soccer (MLS) champion D.C. United and Caribbean

showing by D.C. United at home, conceded three goals within five minutes in the second half, and crashed out of the CCC. The second half swoon was indicative of the long road ahead for regional teams if they are to match their North American counterparts.

"There's a big gap between us and the MLS up here," admitted Harbour View's coach Lenworth Hyde.

SETBACKS

D.C. United was expected to give an improved showing at home. Coach Tom Soehn lamented his team's pre-season rust in Kingston - MLS began late last month - and also the unfavorable playing surface at the Harbour View mini-stadium. He looked forward to fan support at the RFK Stadium.

But neither D.C. United nor Harbour View was at full strength in front of the 12,394 fans who showed up at RFK. The home team was without top striker Bolivian Jaime Moreno, who was injured in Kingston. Harbour View fielded a team minus two starters, Rafiek Thomas and Kemeel Wolfe, from the first leg. Both were denied U.S. visas.

Harbour View still boasted several Jamaica senior national players. Yet that could not stop a talented D.C. United club featuring several players from soccer hotbed South America, including Luciano Emilio,

Franco Niell and Fred from Brazil, and Argentine Marcelo Gallardo. Emilio scored twice at RFK and Fred once. Devon McTavish, who got D.C. United's lone goal in Kingston, scored a double at home.

Harbour View reached the quarterfinal after eliminating Joe Public from Trinidad and Tobago to become Caribbean champions.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



Harbour View Football Club's Ronny Amaguana, right, tries to escape from D.C. United's Fred.

kings Harbour View ended in a lopsided 6-1 aggregate loss for the regional team, following a 1-1 draw in Kingston on Mar. 12 and a 5-0 drubbing at the RFK Stadium here on Mar. 18.

After a spirited showing from Harbour View in the first leg, and a creditable first half here, the Jamaican champions crumbled under a stepped-up

Jamaica dominates CARIFTA Games again

BASSETERRE, St. Kitts, CMC - Jamaica's junior athletes produced another colossal display and strode to an unchallenged 24th consecutive medal-topping performance as the 37th CARIFTA Games last month.

Propelled by championship records from distance runners Natoya Goule and Kemoy Campbell, the Jamaicans won 11 of the 22 gold medals during the last session of the three-day meet at the Jubilee Stadium.

They piled up 69 medals, comprising 29 gold, 25 silver

and 15 bronze to overwhelm the opposition again.

Trinidad and Tobago placed second with 30 medals, 10 gold, 10 silver and 10 bronze, and The Bahamas collected eight gold, three silver, and 12 bronze to finish third with 23 medals.

Barbados placed next on the medal grid in fourth place with 26 medals, seven gold, 10 silver and nine bronze, followed by Martinique with 14 medals (5-3-6), and Grenada with eight (3-2-3).



SPORT BRIEFS

• Caribbean bags four medals at World Indoors

Bahamian Chris Brown and Jamaica's 1600-metre men's relay team boosted the English-speaking Caribbean's medal haul to four as the 12th IAAF World Indoor track and field championship ended last month.

Brown took the bronze medal in the men's 400 meters in 46.26 seconds and Jamaica's men chased the United States to collect silver in the 4x400 meters relay. Their medal successes added to those of Kim Collins and Tahesia Harrigan, who had picked up silver and bronze medals, respectively, in the 60-meter sprint on the meet's opening day.

• Jamaican Cummings scores in MLS

Jamaican-born forward Omar Cummings scored a second-half goal to help the Colorado Rapids open the new Major League Soccer season with a 4-0 home victory over the Los Angeles Galaxy late last month.

The 25-year-old Cummings, playing his second season for Colorado, scored the third goal for

the Rapids.

• Caribbean athletes win U.S. junior college sprints

Caribbean athletes Ryan Brathwaite and Natasha Ruddock registered impressive wins in the sprint hurdles at the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Indoor Track and Field Championships in the United States last month.

Both athletes posted meet record victories in the semi-finals before collecting gold in the finals.

• Bahamas, Bermuda advance in World Cup soccer

The Bahamas and Bermuda chose contrasting routes but still booked their places in the next round of the World Cup qualifying campaign late last month.

While Bermuda trounced the Cayman Islands 3-1 to win 4-2 on aggregate, The Bahamas drew 2-2 with the British Virgin Islands to finish with a 3-3 tie on aggregate, advancing on the away goal rule.

Compiled from CMC reports.



CAN WE TALK?



Peter A. Webley,
Publisher

Most of us try to attract other people by the friends we keep and the way we carry ourselves. If you are going to a party or a formal function, don't you dress well? We all want to promote a favorable impression of ourselves to other people we meet and talk to.

If we agree on that, then think of this. Why should it be any different for your business? If you want to project a favorable image of your company, in order to win customers, you should keep your company with good friends and... dress your company well in...

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F Y I

FORECLOSURE CLINIC

Congressman Kendrick B. Meek (Democrat-Florida) will host a "Foreclosure Prevention Clinic" from **10 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 12** at the Miami-Dade College, North Campus, 11380 N.W. 27th Ave. in Miami, Florida.

The clinic will focus on various mortgage and foreclosure issues such as loan terms, foreclosure prevention, loss mitigation counseling, delinquency procedure, understanding various options, refinancing, reverse mortgage and legal assistance.

Those who attend will also have the opportunity to participate in a private session with their lender and receive personal, private advice on their particular housing concern.

Individuals planning to participate in the clinic should bring all relevant mortgage and financial information, as well as proof of income.

ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

A variety of attractions from the Caribbean and elsewhere will be featured at the Christ The King Catholic Church's two-day "International Arts & Craft Spring Festival" **April 26-27** in Miami, Florida.

The festival, which is free

and open to the public, will be held at the church grounds 16000 S.W. 112th Ave. The opening day will run from **9 a.m. to sunset**. The second day's program is from **noon to 5 p.m.**

DISCOVER BELIZE

The South Florida Chapter of the Caribbean Tourism Organization, Belize Tourism Board and The Belize Tourism Industry Association Members will hold a "Discover Belize" function on **April 8** at the Ten Palms Restaurant, Gulfstream Park in Hallandale, Florida.

The function begins at **6 p.m.** with a networking session for hoteliers and other travel industry interests. For more information, call **305-823-3939**.

MISS FLORIDA CARIBBEAN

Females of Caribbean origin, ages nine to 25, single, residing in Florida for over six months and who have never been married or given birth to a child, are being invited to enter in the 2008 "Miss Florida Caribbean" pageant. Selected delegates will undergo eight weeks training in a self-development workshop, which includes grooming,

stage presentation, speech and physical conditioning. "Miss Florida Caribbean" 2008 will make appearances events such as fundraisers, carnivals, talk shows and festivals.

The pageant finals will be staged on **Nov. 9** at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel.

For more information, call **954-882-2729**.

CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL

The fifth annual "Jerk & Caribbean Culture Festival" will be held on **May 26** at the Meyer Amphitheatre, downtown West Palm Beach, Florida.

For more information, call **561-236-2537**.

WHEELCHAIRS

Wishes on Wheels is making available power wheelchairs to non-ambulatory senior citizens, ages 65 and over, and the permanently disabled of any age, if they qualify.

Usually there is no charge or out-of-pocket expense or the power wheelchair, including shipping and delivery to the home by a technician.

For more information, call **1-800-823-5220** or visit www.threewishes2.com.



New Jamaican envoy presents credentials to OAS

WASHINGTON – In presenting his credentials to the Organization of American States (OAS) last month, new Jamaica Ambassador Anthony Johnson pledged the continuation of his country's "important role" in the hemispheric body.

An OAS statement said Johnson "underscored Jamaica's continued commitment to the principles of the OAS charter and to the organization's essential purposes — the promotion of democracy and human rights — in presenting his credentials to OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza.

Johnson also promised to uphold the charter's maintenance of peace and security, and the promotion of economic development to eradicate extreme poverty.

OVERVIEW

Johnson, who is also Jamaica's envoy to the United States, gave a brief overview of his government's emphasis on promoting economic development, based primarily on tourism, agriculture, mining and energy. He also thanked the OAS for its "engagement and collaboration with Jamaica over years, including

through the electoral observation team — led by Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin — that monitored the general elections on the island last September", the statement said.

Insulza lauded Jamaica for its "tradition of providing leadership at the regional and sub-regional levels, an element that is always important to the activities of the OAS", it added. The



Johnson

secretary general expressed confidence that Jamaica would "continue to lead the way in our organization for better understanding,

peace and cooperation among our countries".

The new Jamaican envoy replaces Professor Gordon Shirley, who demitted office last September.

Prior to his current assignment, Johnson was senior lecturer in the Department of Management Studies at the University of the West Indies; Opposition spokesman on agriculture; and minority leader of the Jamaica Senate.



Former Barbados minister wins U.N. award

UNITED NATIONS, New York - Former Barbados Senior Minister Dame Billie Miller has been awarded the 2008 United Nations Population Award.

The U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) said last month that Dame Billie, who was also a former foreign affairs minister and a gender advocate, is the recipient of the award along with a New York-based non-governmental organization that "helps to save the lives of women in developing countries".

Dame Billie and Family Care International (FCI) were

chosen from among 11 individual and seven institutional nominees from around the world, the UNFPA said.

The award is given each year to individuals and institutions for their "outstanding work in population and in improving the health and welfare of individuals", UNFPA said.

Dame Miller, an attorney



Miller

by profession, was first elected as a Member of Parliament in 1976 and was the first woman to be named minister in Barbados. In addition to holding a numerous ministerial portfolios, including health and education, UNFPA said Miller "has been promoting population and gender issues in several capacities".

The awards will be presented at U.N. headquarters in New York on **May 22**.



Does your information match up?

Tax time is here. You should have already received your W-2s from your employer(s) and tax information from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Carefully check your name, Social Security number and all of the data on your W-2s and on your Social Security card. A mismatch could delay your tax refund and cause problems with your Social Security benefits in the future. Such errors are easy to fix now.

This information includes name changes. If you've legally changed your name due to marriage, divorce, court order, or for any other reason, make sure you change your name with Social Security by applying for a new Social Security card. Make sure you change your name with your employer as well. If you change with one source but not the other, it could cause your earnings to be improperly recorded.

BABY'S NUMBER

If you are the parent of a newborn, you want to make sure that the newest family member has a Social Security


number too. Most people apply for their baby's Social Security card while they're still in the hospital at the same time they apply for the birth certificate. But if you didn't, you'll need to apply for your child's Social Security number in order to claim the child as a dependent on your tax return. You'll also need it if you ever need to apply for government benefits

on behalf of the child or your family. To apply for a Social Security card, all you need to do is complete a one-page application

and provide proof of identity, age, and citizenship. In the case of a child's first card, you'd also need to prove that you are the parent. For a name change, you'd need to provide documentation with your old and new names.

For more information about getting a Social Security card and number for your child, or to change your name and get a replacement card for yourself with your updated information, visit Social Security's website at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber.





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B U S I N E S S

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U.S. legislators table bill to close tax loopholes in the Caribbean

WASHINGTON – United States presidential hopeful Barack Obama has joined three Democratic colleagues in tabling a bill in the U.S. Senate that would close a loophole which now allows rich Americans to avoid paying taxes through offshore havens in the Caribbean.

Obama, an Illinois senator, and senators John Kerry of Massachusetts, Brad Ellsworth of Indiana and Rahm Emanuel of Illinois introduced the Fair Share Act of 2008 in the wake of the “fleecing of the American taxpayer by almost US\$100 million a year” by U.S. defense contractor KBR, Inc.

“It was discovered that KBR has avoided paying its fair share of Social Security and Medicare taxes by creating shell companies in the Cayman Islands,” the senators said in a joint statement.

“The Fair Share Act of 2008 will end the practice of U.S. government contractors setting up sham companies in foreign jurisdictions to avoid

payroll taxes,” it added.

RESPONSIBILITY

Obama said American companies have a responsibility to pay taxes, and “guarantee that their employees will



Obama

receive the Medicare and Social Security benefits they are entitled to through their employment.

“It’s unacceptable for federal contractors to use foreign affiliates or tax shelters in order to avoid paying their share of payroll taxes and to shirk on their basic obligations to American workers”, the

statement said.

The Fair Share Act of 2008 legislation will, among other things, amend the Internal Revenue Code and the Social Security Act to treat foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies, performing services under contract with the government, as American employers for the purpose of Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes.

PROBE

In the wake of the U.S. Department of State’s release of a scathing report on alleged money laundering in the Caribbean, the U.S. Congress recently dispatched a team of investigators to the Cayman Islands.

The Cayman Islands government said the U.S. investigative team met with officials to address “any misperceptions about the role of Cayman’s financial services sector relative to U.S. business interests.”



Weakening U.S. dollar will affect region ~ minister

ST. GEORGE’S, Grenada, CMC – A former finance minister in Grenada has said the weakening United States dollar would have an adverse effect on visitor arrivals to the Caribbean, as well as the region’s ability to repay national debt.

Anthony Boatswain, the current minister of economic development, made his projection as the U.S. economy grapples with an escalating credit crunch sparked by a mortgage crisis.

As the U.S. dollar declined against currencies such as the Japanese yen and the Euro, Boatswain said Caribbean countries would have to dig deeper to pay for imports from outside the U.S.

“It means that we would have to pay more for the goods that we import from countries outside of the U.S. with which we trade, for example Japan, Canada Europe...because the U.S.

dollar is floating vis-à-vis these currencies and the U.S. dollar is moving downwards it means that we have to pay more,” Boatswain explained.

FALLOUT

Boatswain’s comments echoed similar sentiments by Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Dr. Ralph Gonsalves and former Central Bank Governor of Trinidad Dr. Terrence Farrell.

While Gonsalves was concerned about countries’ ability to service their national debts, Dr. Farrell said the region’s tourism sector would begin to feel the effects of the crisis as U.S. consumers cut spending.

Boatswain is suggesting two key counter measures to combat the effects of the U.S. credit crunch and the falling currency – an increase in local production and a reduction of the country’s dependence on foreign goods.



Getting financing first can clear path to dream homeownership

JOSE H. CARABALLO

It’s most homebuyers’ worst nightmare. They’ve finally found the perfect house. They sign the purchase agreement and begin planning for life in their new dream home - only to find out that they can’t qualify for the loan.

Fortunately, that scenario frequently can be avoided thanks to the growing popularity of pre-approved loan programs.

Today, most lenders encourage prospective homebuyers to secure financing before they start shopping for a home. Pre-approval saves time for everyone and makes the closing process more efficient. It also lowers costs, since buyers do not pay upfront fees for credit checks and appraisals only to find that they didn’t qualify.

Before discussing how pre-approval can take the uncertainty out of shopping for the home of your dreams, it is important to understand the difference between pre-qualifying and pre-approval. Prequalification is simply a verbal exchange in which lenders tell prospective buyers the maximum mortgage amount they are able to borrow based on their financial status. Pre-approval goes a step further by verifying credit information at the time of loan application. It is a commitment to lend subject to receipt of satisfactory property appraisal, and no changes

or omissions in the information on which the pre-approval was granted.

ADVANTAGES

There are several important advantages of pre-approval:

- Because sellers and real estate agents view consumers who are pre-approved as serious buyers, you can increase your purchasing power and, therefore, may be able to negotiate a better deal.

- Once you know how much you can afford, real estate agents can guide you toward properties in the right price range.

- Since verification of financial information can take place up front while you are shopping, the total underwriting time, and the eventual closing of the loan, is faster and more efficient, meaning you enjoy the tax benefits of homeownership sooner.

- Credit problems caught early, such as late payments on a credit card, can frequently be resolved so that the loan process can move forward.

Getting pre-approved for a home loan is a smart step. When you find that perfect home, you can plan your future with a smile.

Jose H. Caraballo is a home loan consultant with the Pembroke Pines, Florida office of Countrywide Home Loans, Inc.



What’s the secret to successful investing? Start with discipline

HUMBERTO CRUZ

QUESTION: I would like to know all about the stock market, what you look for in stocks and how you go about picking winners and why you feel you have been successful.

QUESTION: I was always taught that your money should work for you. I’m looking for an investment to grow dramatically over the coming years. Any advice would be great.

ANSWER: I don’t know of any investments that will grow “dramatically” over the coming years. Nobody does, least of all the self-anointed gurus and investment newsletter publishers who promise huge, huge profits in bold-faced letters if you subscribe. If they really knew, why would they tell? Could it be their real profits come from the money their clients and subscribers pay them rather than from the investments they so loudly tout?

My success as an investor - yes, I have been successful - has come not from picking “hot” stocks but from having the discipline to adhere to basic and time-tested principles.

I’ve always had a clear goal, including the amount of money I wanted to have accumulated at different stages in

life. To achieve that goal, depending on how much money I would save every month, I calculated the rate of return my investments needed to achieve. I then picked an asset allocation likely to give me such a return with the least amount of risk.

Asset allocation in its broadest sense means how you divide your money among different “asset classes”, such as stocks, bonds and cash. I believe that low-cost, broadly diversified mutual funds and exchange-traded funds are the most efficient and effective building blocks that investors can use for their asset allocation, particularly their allocation to stocks.

OPTIONS

Many people I respect disagree and argue that investors willing to put in the time and effort can build a diversified portfolio of stocks on their own without the management fees, other costs and potential tax drawbacks of mutual funds.

Those who want to learn more about picking stocks - and investing in general - should consider joining the American Association of Individual Investors (www.aaii.com), a not-for-profit investor education group founded in 1978 with about

150,000 members.

At \$29 a year, its basic membership is one of the best bargains I’ve found, providing a wealth of investment education and guidance, including an ad-free magazine 10 times a year, annual mutual fund and tax guides, model stock and mutual fund portfolios and free stock reports. The magazine never touts “Must Buy” lists or “hot” tips but rather stresses investment education and understanding. The web site, while offering special content to members, also has extensive free educational materials for everyone.

Another not-for-profit investor education organization worth considering is BetterInvesting (www.betterinvesting.org), formerly the National Association of Investors Corporation. BetterInvesting, an umbrella group for nearly 12,000 local investment clubs, offers a free one-month trial membership. After that, it costs \$6.95 a month or \$79 a year.

For my money, I prefer AAI. But BetterInvesting may appeal to those interesting in forming investment clubs, and several people I know belong to both organizations.

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FOOD

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Island style: chicken calypso with rice and peas

Calypso is the exuberant spirit of the Caribbean. Upbeat, spicy and sweet. This month's **Caribbean Today** dish, courtesy of **Publix Apron's Simple Meals**, fits the bill precisely.

Cooking sequence

- Preheat grill
- Prepare rice through step three to five minutes
- While rice cooks, prepare and grill chicken - 15 minutes
- Complete rice and chicken; serve - 10 minutes

Meal time – 30 minutes.

Serves four.

Suggested items – sweet plantains, bakery Cuban bread, apple pie.

Wine suggestion – A smooth, medium-bodied wine such as Clos Du Bois Chardonnay, which has fruity flavors of pear, green apple, butter, and toasty oak.

CHICKEN CALYPSO**Ingredients**

- 1 3/4 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Complete seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- olive oil cooking spray
- 1/4 cup molasses
- 1/4 cup pre-sliced green onions
- 3 tablespoons Asian sweet chili sauce
- 1 tablespoon cilantro herb paste
- 1 lime (for juice; rinsed)

Steps

1. Preheat grill. Sprinkle both sides of chicken with seasoning and pepper; coat with cooking spray. Place on grill (wash hands); close lid (or cover loosely with foil). Cook five to six minutes on each side or until internal temperature reaches 165°F. Use a

meat thermometer to accurately ensure doneness.

2. Combine remaining ingredients, including juice of one-half lime (one tablespoon), in medium bowl. Add chicken, turning to coat evenly; cover (with foil) and let stand five minutes, turning occasionally, until flavors have blended. Serve chicken with sauce for dipping.

ISLAND RICE AND PEAS**Ingredients**

- 1 (13.5-ounce) can coconut milk
- 1 1/2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 cup raisins (optional)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons jerk seasoning
- 1 (10-ounce) package yellow rice mix
- 1 cup frozen green peas

**Steps**

1. Combine coconut milk, chicken broth, raisins, and jerk seasoning in medium saucepan. Cover and bring to boil on high.
2. Stir rice mix into boiling mixture. Cover and reduce heat to low; cook 22 to

25 minutes (covered), without stirring, or until most of liquid is absorbed and rice is tender.

3. Stir in peas; cover and cook four to five more minutes or until peas are heated. Fluff rice with fork and serve.



An easy pan roast chicken you all will crave

WOLFGANG PUCK

You know a recipe you've cooked is a classic when people remember it and crave it years, or even decades, after they first ate it.

What makes a chicken recipe a classic? First, it's the way the chicken is cooked. For roasting, I always like to butterfly a whole chicken, cutting out its backbone and flattening it. Then, I brown the chicken skin-down in an ovenproof skillet before finishing the cooking in the oven.

The result is a beautiful, evenly cooked bird with crispy, golden-brown skin.

Then there's the sauce. It's really simple to make, a quick reduction of port wine and chicken broth. Next, the sauce



is enriched with a little cream and, finally, the whole-grain mustard (in the style of Meaux, France, available in most food stores) and some Dijon mustard are stirred in at the last minute, naturally thickening the sauce. Just be sure to reduce the heat to low before you add the mustard, so it will blend smoothly and

won't form clumps.

That's all there is to it. And the result is a roast chicken that will linger in the memories of the people who eat, and give you the reputation of a wonderful cook capable of creating a kitchen classic.

PAN-ROASTED CHICKEN WITH WHOLE-GRAIN MUSTARD AND PORT**Ingredients**

- 1 whole frying chicken, about four pounds
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup port wine
- 1/2 cup store-bought organic chicken broth
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon Meaux (whole-grain) mustard
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley leaves
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh tarragon leaves

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. (200 degrees C).

Meanwhile, butterfly the chicken. With poultry shears or a sharp knife, carefully cut along the ribs on both sides of the backbone to remove it. Spread out the chicken, skin up, on a clean work surface and press down firmly with the heel of your hand to flatten the chicken.

Over high heat, preheat a heavy ovenproof skillet large enough to hold the flattened chicken. Add the olive oil and swirl it in the skillet. As soon as you begin to see slight wisps

of smoke, carefully place the chicken skin side down in the skillet. Sear the chicken, undisturbed, while reducing the heat little by little to medium, until its skin has turned golden brown and crisp, five to seven minutes. With tongs or a large fork, carefully turn the chicken skin side up.

Transfer the skillet to the oven and roast until the chicken is deep golden brown and the juices run clear when the thickest part of the thigh is pierced with a skewer, 10 to 15 minutes. When the chicken is done, transfer it to a carving

board, and cover with aluminum foil to keep it warm.

Pour off all but a thin layer of fat from the skillet. Add the port, put the skillet over high heat, and boil until the port has reduced by half, about five minutes, stirring and scraping with a wooden spoon to deglaze the pan deposits. Add the broth and continue boiling until the liquid has reduced by half again, about seven minutes.

Stir in the cream, bring the liquid back to a boil, and cook for about three minutes. Reduce the heat to low, stir in

the Dijon and Meaux mustards, and adjust the seasonings to taste with salt and pepper.

With a heavy knife, cut the chicken into serving pieces. Return the chicken pieces to the skillet, spoon some of the sauce over them, and sprinkle with parsley and tarragon before serving.

Serves four.

Edited for space.

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**EASTER FEAST**

Miami-Dade Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle and some of the crowd at Arcola Lakes Park get some food during a fun afternoon at his fifth annual "Easter Egg Bash" last month. Hundreds of children, their parents and guardians were entertained with games, music and a performance by the dance group Royalty.

U.S. official promises to review CARICOM's crime fighting needs

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC – A high-ranking United States official has urged Caribbean governments to identify what they need to deal with the growing crime problem in the region.

Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere Ambassador Thomas Shannon told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)** that as Caribbean community (CARICOM) leaders prepared for their special Crime and Security Summit in Port-of-Spain, they should compile a list of their pressing needs.

"We're going to be looking to Caribbean countries to help us understand that (crime problem) better. We hope to

be able to have a conversation with our Caribbean partners to get their understanding of how we can better help them," he told

CMC after meeting with Barbadian Prime Minister David Thompson in Bridgetown.

AID

The U.S. has pumped \$170 million into initiatives in the Eastern Caribbean over the past three years and this year the U.S. State Department said it had budgeted an estimated \$1.6 mil-



Shannon

lion to help those countries boost technical and material capacity in maritime security and law enforcement.

However, Shannon acknowledged there was still more to be done.

"We need to put more resources into the region and that's the bottom line. A lot of Caribbean countries are expending a lot of their budget on security issues...and we need to recognize that and help out," he said.

"So we'll be working with our Congress to make sure that as our budgets go forward we have the resources we need to help our Caribbean partners."



Fraud case against Jamaica ex-minister delayed in Cuban light bulb scandal

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC – Attorneys for embattled Jamaican parliamentarian Kern Spencer, who is charged in connection with the Cuban light bulb scandal, have expressed concern about the delay in the start of the former minister's trial.

Spencer who is facing fraud charges related to the controversial project appeared in court late last month, but the prosecution made a successful submission for more time to present its case.

The Director of Public

Prosecutions (DPP) Paula Llewelyn told the court that the Crown was not yet in a position to hand over the relevant documents to the defense and an adjournment until May 16 was granted in the high-profile matter.

"We have to get our case together. We have to deal with certain matters and it's usually



Spencer

a courtesy that is given on many occasions in many cases and the Crown regards this as it would any other case," she said after emerging from court.

The decision did not sit well with Spencer's legal team, which argued that the delay was too long.

"There is nothing for us to do. We can't prepare a defense because we don't know what the charges are," contended attorney Deborah Martin.



Caribbean American voters' alert

DR. MARCIA MAGNUS

For immigrants, one of the disadvantages of moving to a new country that has a different political system is that we often automatically transfer expectations from our native country to the host country.

Many Caribbean American immigrants who were ready to cast their ballot for their presidential candidate on Jan. 29, 2008 got a surprise - they could not vote for their presidential candidate because they were registered as independents! They had no party affiliation.

To vote on all ballot questions, including the presidential question, in any primary election, you need to have a party affiliation. You need to be either a declared Democrat or a Republican.

If you are registered to vote as an "independent" with no party affiliation, if you do

not declare a party affiliation, you will not be able to vote on the presidential ballot question in future primary elections (usually in January), you need to declare a party affiliation by July 25, 2008.

There are two ways to declare your party affiliation. First, you can pick up and fill out a new voters' registration application, indicate a party change, and mail the completed form to the Supervisor of Elections office. Or you can download the form and mail it to the Supervisor of Elections office in your county. (The following are contacts for offices in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties in Florida):
www.miamidade.gov/elections 305-499-8683
www.browardsoe.org 954-357-7050
www.pbcelections.org 561-656-6200

As an independent registered voter, you will still be

able to vote for a presidential candidate in the November presidential election. But don't be caught unaware in the next primary presidential election. Declare your party affiliation now so that you won't have another surprise. Do it now and get it over with! See you at the polls!

Dr. Marcia Magnus is chairperson of Caribbean-American Politically Active Citizens, a group of Caribbean Americans who are committed to increasing voter turnout. Members are non-partisan and, based on the recommendations of a panel of advisors, make recommendations on which candidates and issues would be most beneficial to Caribbean Americans in South Florida. For more information, call 954-454-7473.



CARICOM leaders announce plans for June confab in N.Y.

NASSAU, The Bahamas, CMC – Caribbean community (CARICOM) leaders have announced that they will hold a conference in the United States in the next three months, which will coincide with the Conference of the Caribbean which was held in Washington on June 20, 2007.

At the closing press conference of the 19th Inter-sessional Summit of the Conference of Heads of Government here last month, chairman and host Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said leaders took the decision to accept an invitation from the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Charles Rangel to have the meeting in New York.

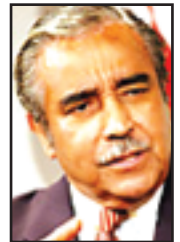
"It's called the New York Conference of the Caribbean Community - 2020 Vision Continued", Ingraham said.

"We expect to meet with the mayor of New York, the governor of New York state and business leaders to discuss trade and investment,

culture, education and other issues of interest and concern to the region."

Congressman Rangel, who is regarded as a friend of the Caribbean, was instrumental in organizing the 2007 conference at which the leaders of Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago met with U.S. President George W. Bush. At that meeting the leaders reaffirmed their unequivocal commitment to a secure and prosperous region and future for the benefit of all Caribbean and U.S. citizens.

The New York meeting will be held over two days from June 19 to 20.



Rangel

Deciding U.S. presidential elections

Presidential elections are held every four years in the United States. This process was set up in the U.S. Constitution. The constitution requires a candidate for the presidency to be:

- At least 35 years old
- A natural born citizen of the U.S.
- A resident of the U.S. for 14 years

So how does one become president of the United States? The following steps outline the general process for presidential elections.

Step 1: Primaries and caucuses

There are many people who would like to become president. Each of these people have their own ideas about how our government should work. Some of these people can belong to the same political party. That's where primaries and caucuses come in. In these elections, party members get to vote for the candidate that will represent their party in the upcoming general elections.

Step 2: National conventions

At the end of the primaries and caucuses, each party holds a national convention to finalize the selection of one presidential nominee. During this time, each presidential candidate chooses a running-mate (or vice-presidential candidate).

Step 3: The general (or popu-

lar) election

Now that each party is represented by one candidate, the general elections process begins. Candidates campaign throughout the country in an attempt to win the support of voters. Finally in November, the people vote for one candidate.

When a person casts a vote in the general elections, they are not voting directly for an individual presidential candidate. Instead, voters in each state actually cast their vote for a group of people, known as electors. These electors are part of the Electoral College and are supposed to vote for their state's preferred candidate.

Step 4: The Electoral College

In the Electoral College system, each state gets a certain number of electors, based on its population. Each elector gets one electoral vote. For example, a large state like California gets 54 electoral votes, while Rhode Island gets only four. All together, there are 538 electoral votes.

In December (following the general elections), the electors cast their votes. When the votes are counted in January, the presidential candidate that gets more than half (270) wins the elections.

- *Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids.*



U.S. travel alert for Guyana expires May 1

WASHINGTON - The United States Department of State says its travel alert for Guyana expires on May 1.

It said the alert, first issued on Feb. 26, is issued to "inform U.S. citizens of safety and security concerns throughout Guyana following recent events in Lusignan and Bartica by armed criminal elements."

"U.S. citizens should carefully consider the risks of travel to Guyana in light of recent attacks in the Georgetown suburb of Lusignan and the Essequibo River town of Bartica", it said, noting that in

both places, attacks were conducted by "heavily armed gangs".

The Jan. 26 and Feb. 17 attacks resulted in the deaths of more than 23 people, including five children and three police officers, it said.

"Due to the seemingly random nature of these crimes, the disparate locations in which they occurred, and the fact that the perpetrators have not all yet been apprehended, additional attacks in other parts of the country cannot be ruled out", the statement said.

"The U.S. Embassy urges

U.S. citizens traveling in Guyana to maintain a high level of vigilance, consider security issues when planning activities throughout Guyana, minimize movement when possible while avoiding large crowds, and not to travel at night.

"Guyanese authorities are conducting an investigation in response to the recent incidents and may institute further actions or precautions, including roadblocks or other measures", it added.



Montserrat volcano still dangerous ~ scientists

BRADES, Montserrat, CMC - Scientists monitoring the Soufrière Hills volcano have reported that while lava extrusion has stopped, the dome is still capable of either collapsing or exploding.

"During heavy downpours, lahars, activity in drainages around the volcano remain a potential hazard," said Director of the Montserrat Volcano Observatory Dr. Vicky Hards in a statement issued on Mar. 31.

She, however, noted that the likelihood of an explosion or collapse of the dome which still consists of a large mass of hot lava, was decreasing with time as the dome slowly cooled.

The statement also noted that measurable activity at the Soufrière Hills Volcano, which began erupting in July 1995, showed no significant change.

"Recorded seismic activity remained low and the seismic network recorded just a

single rock fall signal," the statement added.

The release also indicated that the alert level on the island remained at four. Access to all areas on the southern flanks of the Belham Valley, except Isles Bay Hill and to the east of the Belham Bridge, has been prohibited, as well as the area south of Jack Boy Hill to Bramble airport and beyond.



Anguilla upgrading disaster warning system

THE VALLEY, Anguilla, CMC - Anguilla has taken the lead among Caribbean islands in rolling out its National Disaster Warning System.

Disaster management officials here said the system was designed to provide emergency alerts and notification and will "take advantage of multiple communications means to get the message out".

The first phase of the national system was tested here late last month, following a successful pilot project last year.

Officials said the second phase of the project will be the establishment of a website through which the public can register to receive emergency and tourism information messages. Information on purchasing a warning system FM

radio receiver will also be included on the website.

Partners in the project include the Anguilla Tourist Board and the Anguilla Hotel and Tourism Association, Radio Anguilla, Royal Anguilla Police Force, the DDM, and the Media Coordination Group of the National Disaster Management Committee.



Region urged to focus on health, wellness tourism

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - The Caribbean region has been encouraged to market itself to the United States, Canada and Europe as a mecca for health and wellness tourism.

Tourism Minister Richard Sealy said since many Caribbean economies rely on tourism as a major foreign exchange earner, it was time for the region to create a new niche for itself.

"I think that it is a necessity for us given that tourism is our main industry, and given our limited resources and the fact that a hardworking and well educated work force is about all we have going for us," he told regional participants at a recent Caribbean Export Development Agency three-day seminar.

"My understanding where

trade and health tourism is concerned is that there have been several approaches adopted worldwide and governments can get involved in the sector as part of their national policies in many different ways."

ON THE CARDS

Commenting directly on how Barbados planned to assist investors in health and wellness tourism ventures, Minister Sealy noted that legislative amendments were on the cards.

"There is already enabling legislation (the Tourism Development Act) and all that is required is for the sponsor of the project to prove to the minister of tourism that it is a tourism-related project and that there

are some concessions available," Sealy explained.

Executive Director of Caribbean Export Phillip Williams, who also addressed the conference, added that the Caribbean was ideally suited to service the North American market given its geographic proximity, direct flights, common language and its sun, sands and sea, which all contribute to the region's attractiveness as a primary destination for health tourism. He said the time was ripe for service firms to explore concrete business opportunities and for business support organizations to develop service sector strategies to facilitate two-way trade between Canada and the region.



New 'one stop' Caribbean travel website launched

NEW YORK - The Caribbean Tourism Development Company (CTDC), the marketing and business development unit owned equally by the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) and the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), has launched its official website.

www.CaribbeanTravel.com is designed as the first central portal for all things related to Caribbean travel.

"Our goal with CaribbeanTravel.com is to create a one-stop shop for travelers and travel agents with all necessary information, images and vacation offers at their fingertips," said Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace, co-chief executive officer of the CTDC. "In today's web-oriented world, it's all about the rich content and our site provides visitors with a complete virtual experience that will both whet their appetites and provide all the tools they need to plan and book their trip."

The website was designed to offer travelers the most current destination information

including weather reports, upcoming festivals and events, news from the Caribbean, travel deals and promotions. Travelers can also utilize the site to book a Caribbean trip with Travelocity, the website's official travel booking engine, or to be connected to a Caribbean specialist travel agent to plan or book their vacation.

Other distinctive features of the site include: a "Hot Deals" section with special travel values; maps of the region; and detailed descriptions of places to stay, things to do and special events throughout the year.

"Our goal since day one of the creation of the CTDC has been to create buzz and business for the Caribbean," said Alec Sanguinetti, co-CEO of the CTDC. "We are achieving both of these goals on this new site. Never before have travelers had the opportunity to find so much dedicated information in one place as they now have available on CaribbeanTravel.com."



Vanderpool-Wallace



Sanguinetti

Guyana rejects lowering standards for investors

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC - The Guyana government says it has no intention of lowering its environmental standards to attract foreign investment in the mining sector.

Prime Minister Sam Hinds, speaking at a one-day Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) workshop organized by the Canadian High Commission last month, said that there would be no adulteration of the global environmental guidelines.

Hinds, a Canadian-trained mining expert, said the local standards would not be "an iota lower" than the international benchmarks because of heightened searches for mineral resources in Guyana by overseas-based companies. But he praised the historic role foreign companies have played in the country's economic development adding that they bring "connection and integration in the world market."

Hinds said with international nervousness created by



Hinds

global warming "there have been renewed attention to finding uranium resources here as an alternative energy source to the popular, but expensive, fossil fuel."

The prime minister, who is also the minister of mining in the Bharrat Jagdeo administration, said there were three foreign companies that have been exploring alternative energy resources in the country.

