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A COMMUNITY MAGAZINE
La Voz de las Islas de la Bahía
MARCH 2013

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Dear Editor,

Concerning the revenue from cruise ship passengers visiting Roatan, please keep Guanaja, Utila and Santos Guardiola in mind. There are particular natural beauties and lots of tourism, basic infrastructure, social services and community awareness to be developed. With the projected passenger arrivals on cruise ships this year, there is an important economic income: $4 per tourist (ZOLITUR visitors fee) times 484,000 projected passengers in 2013 would come to $1,936,000 (Lps. 38.7 million) just from Mahogany Bay. Add to that the Coxen Hole Port of Roatan collection, the planes and ferry collections!

By law this income should be evenly allocated to each of the four Bay Islands municipalities. But guess what? Our Honduran government takes 50 percent, and the rest is used to pay the bureaucratic and political payroll for the ZOLITUR staff. So what stays for the real purpose of economic growth, safety, health, education and proper development?

There must be a way to have the other 50 percent, or at least 30 percent, come back to the islands. I don't see why it should be any less. Otherwise, there is no real sense of all this outfit, because it generates opportunities for only a few. We need the majority of the income the Bay Islands generate to stay and be equally used here.

Mack Yovanne Baca Bennett
Guanaja
(via Facebook)

More than one reader commented via *Facebook* on the February 8-9 visit to Roatan of Honduran National Police Chief Bonilla. A couple of the more pungent comments:

Too much blah blah blah!!

Felipe Aguilar
Roatan

Our own cops are killers and criminals. A few days ago La Prensa *published an article stating that the cops were involved in at least 66 homicides (on the mainland).*

Brescia Ebanks
Roatan

Richard Warren (left), general manager of the Roatan Electric Company (RECO), receives a long-awaited environmental permit from Jonathan Lainez, Honduran vice minister for environment and natural resources, to erect a 3.9-megawatt windfarm above Loma Linda at a ceremony on the project site February 15. Warren said the facility, with 26 wind turbines, should be operational within a year and should "meaningfully" reduce electricity costs for RECO customers, although he could not say by how much. (See article beginning on page 12)

Hello,

Our friends who were recent visitors to Roatan just passed on to us the December 2012 issue of The Bay Islands Voice. My husband, Ken, and I lived on Roatan island for several years back in the '90s, when we were on staff at Inspirational Radio HRGS in Gravel Bay. Though we now live in the US, we still return to Roatan on occasion, whenever we can lend help at the radio station, and, because of this, our friends knew we'd be interested to see your magazine.

We were! It was like a newspaper from home…only better quality, of course (smile). The content is up-to-date, written interestingly, and filled with great photos…like the one of Ms. Norma Brooks in this December issue. She happens to be our very dear friend and, for sure, a fixture on the island. We also appreciated especially the article on the island churches and the one giving your thoughts about island crime.

Thanks for making The Bay Island Voice something islanders, and we "ex-islanders," can read and enjoy with pride.

Karen Anderson

The Bay Islands Voice welcomes letters on any subject of interest to readers. We reserve the right to edit for length and to remove offensive language or potentially libelous statements. Please keep letters to no more than 250 words and include your name and where you live. Tambien aceptamos cartas en español.

Cover Photo: An elite triathlete embarks on the 40-km cycling portion of the eighth Bay Islands Triathlon February 17 at Parrot Tree Resort.

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Education, Education Education!

It Can't Solve Everything, but We Can't Solve Anything Without It

Call this the education issue.

Students on the Bay Islands and throughout Honduras returned to classes for another public school year in February. I say "students" and not "children" because many if not most of those here who would be considered of school age in other countries are not students. They do not attend school.

A teacher confirmed to us in this issue what we had heard unofficially - more than 70 percent of Roatan's children drop out after sixth grade, when they are no longer required by Honduran law to attend. More than a third drop out even earlier.

As a guest columnist pointed out last month, trying to make it in today's high-tech world with a sixth-grade education is like planting a garden with your arms tied behind your back. Even completing high school is not enough in the 21st century. In the US, wages of those with only a high-school education have stagnated for decades.

The evidence from around the world is clear. Those countries that have made serious inroads against poverty and achieved higher standards of living have invested heavily in education.

When I was studying economics in the 1980s, development economists were trying to draw the right lessons from the experiences of the so-called "miracle" economies of East Asia in the previous two decades. One seminal paper found that, after accounting for increases in average education levels of their workforces - what economists call "human capital" - the rest of the "miracle" disappeared. Education was everything!

Education is the key to productivity growth, which is key to rising wages and living standards. Beyond that, it is crucial to creating healthy, stable societies and functioning democracies.

What Honduras in general and the Bay Islands in particular are doing to their youth by depriving them of a decent education is therefore nothing short of criminal. We've written a lot about crime here in recent months; perhaps too much (for some people's taste anyway). The state of the islands' education system has to be the crime of the century (so far).

"Depriving our children of a decent education is nothing short of criminal."

In this month's *Interview* (page 14), Juan Simpson, rector of the Methodist Bilingual School, says the education system here is "a shambles." We are not giving young people what they need to be successful and stay out of trouble.

Of course, education does not occur only in the schools. Alfonso Ebanks comments this month on declining moral standards, both public and private (page 8). Simpson strikes a similar theme, commenting that as a result of "family disintegration" young people are not being exposed to positive values and are consequently "running wild." He urges people on the islands to take a "holistic" approach to "engage" these youth constructively.

Robert Armstrong,
Publisher

In this month's *Culture* section (page 31), we learn that one tactic for motivating young people on the islands to stay in school is to respect their native language and culture. In earlier generations, the children of English-speaking Bay Islanders who wanted to preserve their heritage had to gather in private homes to study from the *Royal Reader*. At least they were learning something useful.

What useful lessons are we imparting to the islands' youth today?

All this reminds me of when I was a young man living on my own for the first time, in New York in the 1980s, and First Lady Nancy Reagan was popularizing her "Just Say No" campaign against drugs and other vices. This was at the height of the crack wars in New York, with illegal drugs being sold openly on the streets, much as they are now in parts of Roatan. Almost every night when I returned to my apartment building in the East Village there was a crackhead hanging out on my front stoop trying to sell me drugs. I always said "no," heeding Nancy's advice and trying my best to be polite. At times I wanted to shake her and say, "Remember this face! I'm *never* going to buy crack from you. So you can stop asking me every day." But then I realized this young woman's brain was probably so fried from drug abuse that she had no short-term memory and didn't realize she was solicting the same person every day.

At that time I was also writing a column in my spare time for a monthly East Village tabloid - one of those publications you find on top of cigarette machines in bars and restaurants (come to think of it, it was a lot like the *Voice*). I wrote a column once about the drug problem in the neighborhood. The catch-line was, it's not enough to tell our young people to "just say 'no.'" You have to give them something to say "yes" to, like an opportunity, like a job, like a possibility for a better life.

Rev. Simpson seems to be about giving youth something they can say "yes" to. Other people have caught onto this as well. We published a list of them last month. But they can't do it alone. It has to be a whole-community effort. And it starts with teaching our children well; teaching them to do right, to do good.

There's been a lot of senseless violence on the islands in recent months. This has understandably given rise to calls for drastic measures, to "string them up" or "lock them away."

Obviously, there are people among us who are committing these acts whom society has already failed, they are beyond redemption, and for the safety of the law-abiding they must be removed from the community and locked away. But how many people can we lock away?

We have to stop producing such people. It starts with education.

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OUR NEW MORALITY
ANYTHING GOES

The only way we can come to any conclusions about anything is to compare it to something that is known. We must have a point of reference. Whenever I'm asked to give an opinion on something, I always search my memory for a previous experience to use as a reference point. When I think about the way we live now, the first thing that comes to my mind is the way we lived in the past.

When we talk of change, we usually think of technology. But one important change that is noticeable in our times has nothing to do with technology. It is the new morality we have adopted for ourselves. Things that in the past were considered unethical, illegal and immoral are now accepted as part of the normal procedures, whether it is a business deal, a governmental transaction or a love affair. We no longer care how a man got his money, as long as he has it.

Words like "fidelity," "honesty," "loyalty," "dignity" and "sincerity" have all become obsolete, their meanings lost in the annals of time. We have no compunction about taking or offering money under the table to complete a transaction, no matter at what level of business or government we are dealing.

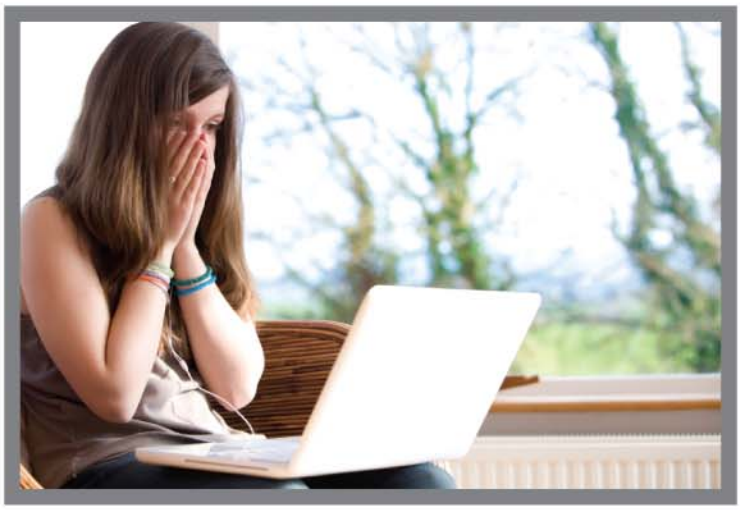
The minute we stoop to accept or pay a bribe we are tarnishing our dignity and throwing ethics out the window.

Not all things that are unethical and/or immoral are illegal, but most of them should be.

Corruption in Honduras has reached an all-time high and now infects all strata of business and government. This is not to say that corruption is a new malady of the human species; it has been around for millennia. Francis Beaumont said corruption was a tree whose branches are of an immeasurable length. They spread everywhere; and the dew that drops from them has infected some chairs and stools of authority.

This is undoubtedly true, and none of us can exculpate ourselves from this crime. Just like a cop who takes money to look the other way for a traffic infraction, we too look the other way whenever it behooves us. With our indifference to the corruption going on in government we have become accomplices to that corruption.

Governmental corruption is not the only kind that plagues the human race in these modern times; we have become so complascent about both our own comportment and that of others that we no longer complain about vulgar or corrupt incidents.



Do you know what your children are viewing online? *(photo courtesy Bay Area Christian Church, Palo Alto, California)*

We accept everything, and we are passing this attitude on to our children. Girls as young as 10 are asking permission to have a boyfriend. Girls of 14 are having boyfriends of 24.

Mothers, at 24 there's no "boy" left in that "friend." That relationship is unhealthy!

Gone are the times when going on a date for a young girl meant going to the movies, holding hands and eating popcorn - popcorn that had to be shared with her little brother, who always managed to sit right behind her.

We put television sets and computers in our children's bedrooms and never bother to check on what they're viewing. We are corrupting our children. Behaviorally, kids are now stepping out of their baby booties straight into the shoes of an adult. All this we have permitted, especially with our little girls, whom we have sexualized from a very young age by dressing them like adults in short skirts, high heels and make-up. For all this we will have to pay, and if we don't, then our children will.

"With our indifference to corruption, we have become accomplices."

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A VERY SLIPPERY SLOPE
GUNS WON'T MAKE US SAFE

For more than a decade I have been preaching Bay Islands autonomy. I must sound like a broken record to some. Many of you agree with me; others do not.

Whether you agree with me or not, I have tried to adhere to a principled model of civic discourse, in keeping with the values we share as a people. I believe it's better to debate an important matter without settling it than to settle it without debating it. As the English poet John Milton wrote more than three centuries ago, "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties."

Some may consider the goal of Bay Islands autonomy to be an overreach? But as American clergyman Harry Emerson Fosdick once put it, "One who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it." Or as rocket engineer Robert Goddard said, "It is difficult to say what is impossible, for the dream of yesterday is the hope of today and the reality of tomorrow."

It all comes down to *will*. Do we have the will to pursue our dreams?

Which brings me to the current security situation on the islands. As the chaos and violence of the mainland slowly engulf us, many people I would consider pacifists are suddenly in the market for firearms. This is understandable but also lamentable. Guns do not keep us safe; they exacerbate our flaws. Adopting a "*Dirty Harry*" mentality will only increase the carnage.

The insecurity we now confront is the result of lax law enforcement, and it did not happen overnight. In the words of French writer Ernest Dimnet, "Most people are not ruined by great catastrophes or fatal errors but by repetition of slowly destructive little things."

Respect for the law should be taught in homes and churches, reinforced in schools and enforced, when necessary by the courts. The courts must follow through with prosecution and punish those found guilty. Deterrence depends upon swift and sure justice, something sorely lacking in our community.

When there is no respect for the rule of law, everything breaks down. When private citizens decide to take the law into their own hands, very bad things happen.

When people feel threatened it is only natural to want protection. But after watching what's taking place in the US with its gun culture, we do not need to import that American disease. Guns do not increase our safety, they increase our risk.

To those who argue that "guns do not kill people; people kill people," New York sportswriter Mike Lupica once retorted, "How many home runs could Babe Ruth hit without a bat?"

Let's take a look at some of the data concerning guns and violence. The US had 3.2 firearm homicides per 100,000 people in 2009, according to a UN report. That compared with 0.5 in Canada; 0.2 in Spain and Germany; and 0.1 in the UK and Australia. There are an estimated 250-300 million guns in the US, a nation of 310 million people. The US has 5 percent of the world's population but 50 percent of its guns. The data show that when there is a gun in the home, it is more likely to be used against a member of that family than against an intruder.

"Guns do not increase our safety, they increase our risk."

Let's not go down that path on the Bay Islands. It is a very slippery slope. We have a better option - autonomy.

Autonomy would allow us to design and implement our own system of justice, starting with the selection of judges and the recruitment and training of peace officers.

One final thought: a number of US states apply the death penalty. In other words, they legally kill people. As Elbert Hubbard said, "So long as governments set the example of killing their enemies, private individuals will occasionally kill theirs."

Bay Islands VOICE

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TOP HONDURAS COP VISITS ROATAN

PROMISES SUPPORT TO FIGHT CRIME AND CORRUPTION ON BAY ISLANDS

Juan Carlos Bonilla, head of the Honduran National Police, mixes with the people after a meeting with concerned citizens in Punta Gorda, where he promised to add eight police.

Honduran National Police Chief Juan Carlos Bonilla (aka *El Tigre*) promised increased support to fight rising crime on the Bay Islands during a two-day visit to Roatan in February. He also gave out his personal cell phone number (9758-1730) and encouraged citizens to report police malfeasance directly to him.

Bonilla, while acknowledging corruption in the police, asked people not to "throw us all into the same sack." He said the "culture" in which police seek handouts from the community needed to be changed. But he said, "Our institutions are good. We need to change the people. We need to change attitudes."

Concretely, Bonilla broke through the bureaucratic logjam and ordered on the spot that 12 tourist police be assigned to the newly restored station house in West End that police vacated last April (see December *Voice*). Sources confirmed police were back on duty there the next day. Later, at a meeting in Punta Gorda, Bonilla promised eight additional police, including two detectives, for Roatan's East End. He told the community to keep a close eye on them to assure they produced results were not corrupted by the drug trade.

The Punta Gorda community committed to build a station house for the new police.

Bonilla began his visit, accompanied by Vice Minister of Security Marcela Castañeda, with a meeting at Plaza Mar with Roatan business and community leaders. Roatan Mayor Julio Galindo and Bay Islands Governor Shawn Hyde urged participants to "tell it like it is" to the visitors, who said they were there to listen.

Rosa Danelia Hendrix, president of the Federation of Bay Islands Village Councils (*Patronatos*), told them the islands were "inundated" with crime and corruption and "spiritually lost." She called for better pay for police, judges and prosecutors and for police who are committed to and understand the community and who fear and love God.

Raul Mendoza, president of the *patronato* for Monte Placentero (Los Fuertes), said that his community needed a larger police presence and that the cost of paying for the electricity at the existing station was becoming "impossible to sustain."

Castañeda said the Ministry of Security was evaluating the needs of the Bay Islands and other tourist areas of the country in an integrated manner, with support from international donors.

Zoila Yolanda Villeda, a city councilwoman from *Colonia Policarpo Galindo*, asked what needed to be done to get a police station for the *La Colonia* neighborhood, where a man had been murdered the night before the meeting.

Samir Galindo of the Tourism Chamber (Canatur) said the islands needed more English-speaking police.

Russ Summerell said Roatan Rotary Club had acquired equipment to implement a 911 emergency line on Roatan but needed cooperation from Hondutel.

A judge assigned to Roatan called for better police infrastructure and specifically to construct decent holding facilities on the island for women and for minors.

Judges and prosecutors also said the public needed to collaborate by reporting crimes to the police and noted recent success against some armed robbers that had been terrorizing the East End.

At an evening meeting with the community in Punta Gorda, where people were still mourning the December murder of a popular school teacher, several speakers said crime in the area had grown out of control due to a conspiracy of fear and silence that they vowed to redress. Speakers asserted the community had been peaceful before 2009, when they said eight people were killed in a drug war. Since then the death toll had risen to 15 as the area became engulfed in *narcomenudeo* (drug dealing).

One woman asked pointedly why police couldn't stop drug dealing that was happening out in the open for all to see. Bonilla instructed Raul Martinez, commissioner of the National Police on the Bay Islands, who was attending the meeting, to get him an answer to that question.

Other speakers, however, including a cousin of the murdered teacher, applauded Martinez and the police on Roatan for their recent support.

Vice Minister of Security Marcela Castañeda said the ministry was assessing the Bay Islands security needs as part of its "Safe Tourist Municipalities" initiative.

El Tigre Bonilla Visita a Roatán

Promete Mas Apoyo a la Lucha Contra el Crimen y la Corrupción

Juan Carlos (*El Tigre*) Bonilla, jefe de la Policía Nacional de Honduras, prometió brindar mas apoyo a la lucha contra el crimen en Islas de la Bahía durante una visita a Roatán en febrero. Además, les dió a los ciudadanos de la isla su número de celular personal (9758-1730) para que denuncien directamente a él cualquier acto corrupto que cometa un policía aquí.

Bonilla reconoció que existía corrupción dentro de la Policía Nacional, pero le pidió a la gente no colocar a todos los policías "en el mismo saco." Dijo que fue necesario cambiar la "cultura" en que los policías piden combustible y otras limosnas de las comunidades y que las instituciones eran buenas pero hay que cambiar las personas y las actitudes.

Concretamente, Bonilla ordenó que 12 policías de turismo ocuparan la posta recién renovada en West End que la policía había abandonado en abril. Fuentes confirmaron que hubo policías laborando allá el día siguiente. Luego, en una reunión con la comunidad de Punta Gorda, Bonilla prometió a enviar ocho policías adicionales, incluyendo dos de la DNIC, a esa zona. Dijo que la comunidad les supervisara bien para asegurar que dieran resultados y no se involucraran en la corrupción.

La comunidad de Punta Gorda se comprometió a construir una posta para los nuevos policías.

Bonilla empezó su visita, junto con la Vice Ministra de Seguridad Marcela Castañeda, con una reunión en Plaza Mar con empresarios y líderes cívicos. El Alcalde de Roatán, Julio Galindo, y el Gobernador de Islas de la Bahía, Shawn Hyde, instaron a los participantes decir las cosas como son. Bonilla y Castañeda dijeron que habían venido a escuchar.

Rosa Danelia Hendrix, presidenta de la Federación de los Patronatos de Islas de la Bahía, dijo que los habitantes de las islas estaban "inundados" de crimen y corrupción y "perdidos espiritualmente." Pidió conceder un "sueldo digno" a los policías, tambien para los jueces y fiscales. Dijo que hacía falta una policía "comprometida con la comunidad" y "que nos entienda" y policías que "teman a Diós y amen a Diós."

Raúl Mendoza, presidente del patronato de Monte Placentero (Los Fuertes), le dijo al *Tigre* Bonilla que su comunidad ya no pudo sostener el costo de pagar la luz para la posta policial allá, pero que se necesitaban aún más policías.

Raúl Mendoza, presidente del patronato de Monte Placentero, pidió una posta más grande para esa comunidad y dijo que el costo de pagar la luz para la posta actual le fue "imposible sostener."

Castañeda dijo que el Ministerio de Seguridad estaba realizando un "diagnóstico preliminar" de las necesidades de las islas, y los demás sitios turísticos.

Zoila Yolanda Villeda, miembra de la Corporación Municipal de la Colonia Policarpo Galindo, preguntó que había que hacer para traer una posta policial a La Colonia, donde un hombre fue asesinado el día anterior.

Samir Galindo de la Cámara de Turismo pidió policías que hablaran inglés.

Russ Summerell dijo que el Club Rotary de Roatán había conseguido equipo para establecer un número 911 para emergencias pero se necesitaba la colaboración de Hondutel para ponerlo.

Una jueza dijo que hay que mejorar la infraestructura policial en las islas y construir retenes para los menores y para las mujeres. Los jueces y fiscales tambien dijeron que el público necesitaba colaborar mejor y denunciar los delitos.

Durante la reunión en Punta Gorda, miembros de esa comunidad admitieron que ellos mismos habían dejado aumentar el crimen en la zona porque se habían quedado callados por miedo. Dijeron que la zona era tranquila hasta el 2009, cuando se murieron ocho personas en una guerra de droga. Ahora dijeron que el saldo de muertes había llegado a 15 y que se estaban ahogando en el *narcomenudeo*.

Una mujer le preguntó a Bonilla cómo era que la venta de drogas occurría en plena vista y la policía no hacía nada. Bonilla le ordenó a Raúl Martínez, comisionado de la Policía Nacional para Islas de la Bahía, que investigara y le respondiera.

Otros participantes le agradecieron a Martinez y los policías por su apoyo durante los últimos meses, en los que han desarticulado unas bandas de ladrones.

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REDUCING ISLAND ENERGY COSTS

COULD THE ANSWER, MY FRIENDS, BE BLOWING IN THE WIND?

BY ROBERT ARMSTRONG

AN ENERGY COST ANALYST LIVING ON ROATAN LIKENS BAY ISLANDS ENERGY TO A BIG EQUATION WHOSE ANSWER MAY BE OBVIOUS BUT WHOSE VARIABLES ARE SO NUMEROUS AND CONFUSING AS TO CAUSE ONE TO QUESTION THE OBVIOUS. FURTHERMORE, HE SAYS, IN CONTRAST TO A HIGH-SCHOOL ALGEBRA EQUATION WITH JUST ONE CORRECT ANSWER, THE ISLAND ENERGY EQUATION HAS MANY POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS. IMPLEMENTING THOSE SOLUTIONS, HOWEVER, REQUIRES MORE EVOLVED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS TO ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION OF SUSTAINABLE ENERGY, BASED ON THE RESOURCES THE ISLANDS POSSESS IN ABUNDANCE - SUNSHINE AND SEA BREEZES.

This 5-kilowatt wind generator at a residence in Sandy Bay, Roatan, is part of a hybrid wind/solar system that, when fully operational, is expected to save the home owner $800-1,000 a month in electricity costs, paying for the system within 3.5 years.

Ask most any Bay Islander and they'll probably tell you they pay too much for electricity. Ask what should be done about it, though, and the consensus probably breaks down.

A quick perusal of recent utility bills of *Voice* staff shows a residential customer on Roatan using 210 kilowatt-hours a month paid 39 US cents a kilowatt-hour (kwh). That's more than three times the average US rate, according to the US Energy Information Administration, and the cost on Roatan rises to 45 cents for those consuming more than 500 kwh, according to the Roatan Electric Company (RECO) Facebook page.

On Utila, an UPCO customer using 247 kwh paid a rate of 40 cents. And on Guanaja, the Boyacca Electric Company (BELCO) published residential rate is more than 50 cents.

With such high costs for service that is frequently unreliable and unstable, it's no wonder people on all three islands complain about their electric utilities. However, a review of data from other small islands in the Caribbean reveals this problem is hardly unique to the Bay Islands. Except for a few places where energy is heavily subsidized, residential rates typically range between 30 and 50 cents per kwh (see table on page 13).

The core problem is that these islands are too small to take advantage of economies of scale in conventional power generation. According to Ron Griffith, a

Electricity rates on the Bay Islands, while high, are not far out of line with those charged by public utilities on other small Caribbean islands with total energy demand of 100 megawatts or less. Except for a few places, such as some French colonies, where energy is heavily subsidized, rates on small islands typically range from 30-50 US cents a kilowatt-hour for a typical residential customer consuming 200-400 kwh a month.

Comparing Caribbean Island Energy Costs

(Residential rates in US cents per kilowatt-hour)

Location	Max Demand (MW)	Rate
Roatan	13	38
Utila	1.4	40
Guanaja	1.2	52
Grand Cayman	103	47
St. Lucia	59	27
St. Maarten	58	41
Antigua	51	38
Grenada*	29	34
Dominica*	16	39
Anguila*	15	34
Bonaire*	12	34
Nevis*	8	31

*: Dec 2010

Sources: For Roatan and Utila, personal utility bills; for Guanaja, BELCO published rates averaged for 2012; for other locations, CARILEC tariff survey; data from June 2011 unless indicated.

This small gasoline-powered generator and two car batteries are all the backup that is needed for a small wind/solar system for a hilltop house above Gravel Bay. The system, comprising a 1.5-kilowatt wind generator and four 125-watt solar panels mounted together on a 12-meter free-standing tower, is not connected to the public grid and for the past eight months has provided all the electricity needs for a Canadian-style cottage that consumes 450-500 kwh a month.

US/Canadian citizen who has lived on Roatan many years and analyzes energy costs for *Fuentes de Energía*, a renewable energy company, the Caribbean islands, with slight variations, built their electric grids based on small diesel generators. These generators were added to and tied together as energy demand grew, resulting in "very unstable" and "very unpredictable" systems that in recent years have become "very expensive" as well with the rise in international oil prices. In addition, virtually all used the prevailing regulated monopoly model to build their grids.

That model, and the sunk cost in fossil generation, now stands in the way of developing more sustainable and cost-effective energy based on the resources the islands possess in abundance - sunshine and wind - said Griffith, who, it must be said, markets off-grid solar/wind hybrid systems on the Bay Islands. The islands enjoy "extraordinary solar hours per year," he said, and "rich wind resources" that are "negatively correlated" with the sun (trade winds blow harder at night).

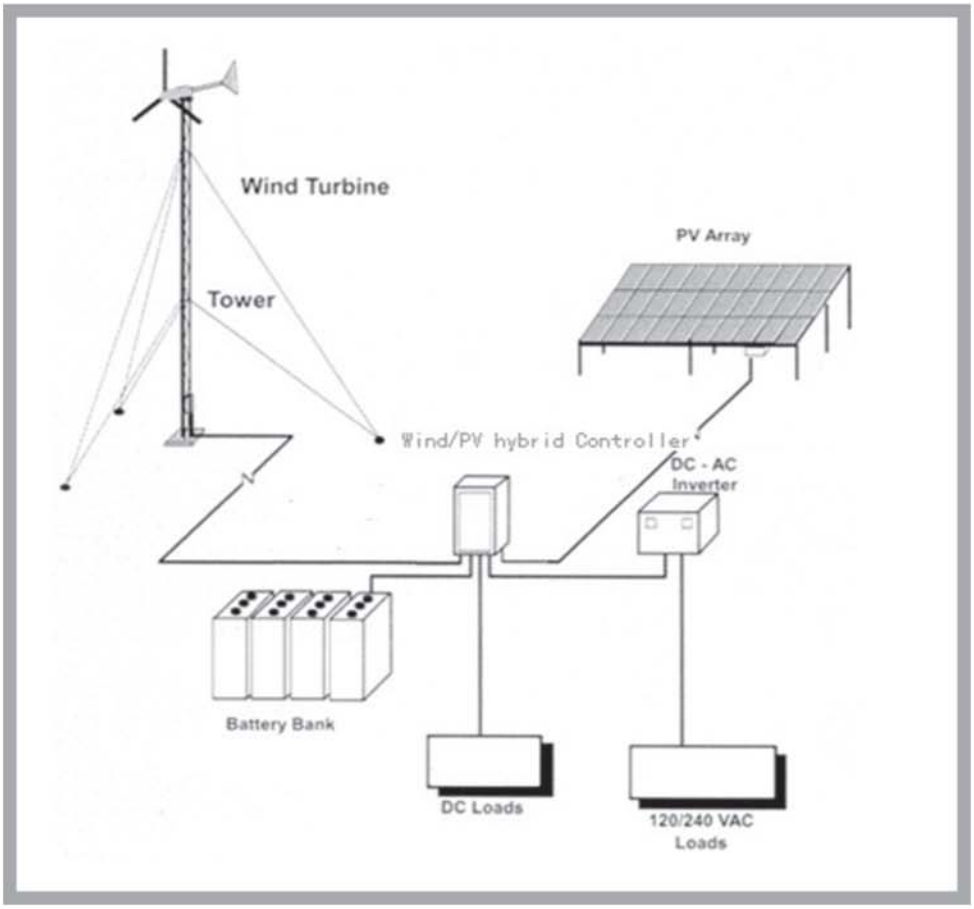
Griffith's own house, which sits high on a windy hill above Gravel Bay and uses 450-500 kwh a month, is powered entirely by a 1.5-kw wind generator and four photovoltaic (PV) panels, with only a small gasoline-powered generator and two car batteries to keep the lights on in the event there is neither adequate sun nor wind, or if he needs to use his power tools.

However, RECO's general manager, Richard Warren, said Roatan as a whole was only "average" for wind-energy potential. Furthermore, he said, wind in general can provide only "supplemental" power, because it requires a backup in case the wind doesn't blow.

"If you have 100 MW of wind, you have to have at least 100 MW of something else," said Warren. "That gets expensive."

RECO received an environmental permit from the Honduran Central Government in February, for which it had waited two years, to begin constructing a 3.9-megawatt wind farm above Loma Linda, near the airport. Warren said the project, which still requires a municipal permit, should become operational within a year and would "meaningfully" reduce electricity costs for RECO customers.

"It will lower the cost of energy enough that you would notice," Warren



Schematic of a typical wind/solar hybrid system for a Bay Islands residence or small business. This system uses a battery bank to store power in the event there is neither adequate wind nor sun. Other systems use diesel generators for back up power or are tied to the public electrical grid so that they can either provide power to or draw power from the grid. Advocates claim the equipment and installation costs for a system such as this can be recovered in 3-5 years through reduced monthly electricity costs. *(diagram courtesy Kevin Schmidt, Fuentes de Energia)*

said in response to a reporter's question at a February 15 ceremony marking the receipt of the permit. But he said he could not be more specific.

The 3.9 MW capacity of the 26 wind turbines would represent about a fifth of RECO's total generating capacity and about a quarter of the Roatan grid's peak power demand, during *Semana Santa*. However, RECO expects the wind generators on average will operate at only about a third of their potential, so the wind farm will probably produce only 10-12 percent of RECO's total output. Thus, assuming the wind power costs about half what the current diesel power costs to generate, the effect on what customers pay for a kilowatt-hour would probably be only about 2-3 cents.

RECO's main strategy for reducing electricity costs on Roatan appears to be a 22-MW coal-fired plant for which it is still seeking permission and which it claims will reduce costs by a "two-digit percent." Of course the coal, like the current diesel fuel, would all have to be imported. But RECO claims the price would fluctuate less than diesel.

Griffith, however, thinks RECO is underestimating the potential of wind power on the Bay Islands. He claims small hybrid wind/solar systems like he has at his own house, and that his company has installed for other residential customers on Roatan, can pay for themselves in reduced utility costs in 3-5 years. But there are two major impediments.

The first impediment is financial. Even if the costs for the equipment and installation can be paid back in 3-5 years through reduced RECO bills, the cost of financing the initial investment can be prohibitive. Honduran banks are currently loath to lend money for more than three years, and interest rates on unsecured loans top 30 percent.

The second major impediment is regulatory. Honduras currently has no policy or mechanism to allow independent power producers to sell their surplus energy back to the public utility grid (so-called *net metering*). This is particularly problematic for solar, as the *Voice* reported last April. Unless a user's power consumption coincides perfectly with the strength of the sun, a solar energy system is going to produce excess power that will be wasted unless it can be efficiently stored or sold to the grid.

Sarah Klinetob of Penn State University, who will lead a team to Roatan in March to install a solar PV system, donated by Vegas Electric, at the Roatan Day Care and Learning Center in Coxen Hole, said that if the equipment and labor had not been provided for free, the system would take 13 years to pay for itself with net metering (it would take 60 years in Pennsylvania). Without net metering, she said, the cost-recovery period could be considerably longer.

In addition to making independent renewable energy projects easier to finance, net metering has the potential to reduce rates for conventional consumers as well, as the price the utility would pay for the energy would likely be less than what its diesel energy costs, and regulations would require it to pass those savings along to customers.

Griffith also suggests Bay Islands municipal governments require new construction on the islands to incorporate solar collectors in the roofs, noting that some Caribbean islands have greatly expanded their solar energy usage in recent years and that solar can be particularly effective for water heating.

"There is no science to lower the cost (of energy) on Roatan," said Elsia Paz, an associate at Energy Solutions Partners and former president of the Honduran Association of Small Renewable Energy Producers. "You just need intensive political will." Paz, who has executed renewable energy projects all over the region and whose former business partner, Ron Turner, has been tapped to build the wind farm on Roatan, says she has found such will to be "non-existing" on the island.

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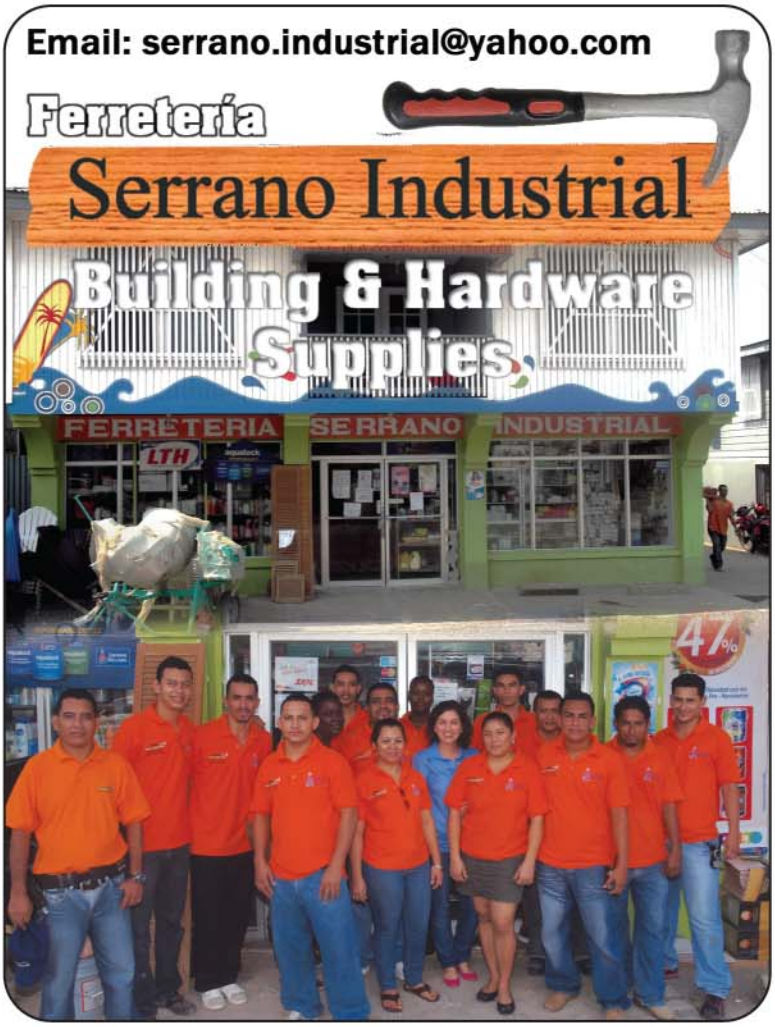

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GETTING 'TOUGH' IS NOT ENOUGH

METHODIST LEADER SAYS BETTER OPTIONS MAKE FOR BETTER CHOICES

The Reverend Juan Simpson, superintendent of the Roatan circuit of the Methodist Church, pictured here with his wife, Gina, says island youth need mentoring, education and stability. *(Facebook photo)*

The Reverend Juan Simpson, superintendent of the Roatan Circuit of the Methodist Church of Honduras and Belize, first came to Roatan in 1992 when he was a seminary student at the United Theological College of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica. Born and raised in Panama, the grandson of Jamaicans who migrated there to work on the Canal, he has lived and worked on Roatan for the last seven years. We spoke with him on Valentine's Day at his home next to the Methodist Bilingual School in Coxen Hole, where he is rector.

BIV: At a recent public meeting on the crime situation on Roatan, you criticized what you referred to as the "law-and-order mentality." Can you explain what you mean by that?

Rev. Simpson: I'm not saying there's no need for law and order. But the question is, law and order under what principles? That is, are we all subject to the law in terms of whether you make a mistake or I make a mistake, we are going to go before the law and be meted out the adequate punishment? Because that's not the reality of Honduras. If you have the resources, you escape punishment. That's what people see. That's what people react to. We definitely need a better deployment of the security forces, and all of those things are important. But don't set that up as this is going to solve *everything. The incubator of greater violence is the fact that the education system is a shambles. There is no mentorship. There is no systemic development of sports activities.*

"The incubator of greater violence is that the education system is a shambles."

One of the other things that islands that have developed to an extent have tried to do is to have an infrastructure for young people to do things that are positive. We could have world-class swimmers. We have students on this island that could become world-class all kinds of things. Because we've got people with not only the physique but with the mental fortitude to do it. But who's working on that?

Look at Jamaica. Jamaica has one of the best developed athletics programs in the Caribbean. Throughout the year, if a child is in the right area, they have access to sports the whole year. Now do you have crime and violence in Jamaica? Of course you do. But they have one of the top service industries. People go there still for their vacation.

We don't have a service culture (on Roatan). Why? Because the underemphasis on education. We have an educational deficit that affects the whole development of a service culture. We are supposed to be in a more technical age. But we are not preparing our young people to deal with the changes.

So the point is, what do you put in place to develop the better things, because you're not going to fully eradicate the crime and the violence. You can ameliorate, you can limit it to what islanders enjoyed 50 years ago, when it used to be a once in a while occurrence. We need to buttress and strengthen and develop the things that will make our social environment for living with each other more healthy. If we could pull that off, which is possible, because some of this stuff is already around us, and we would focus our attention on doing it, and get it done, we would see an amelioration.

BIV: Why do you think the crime on Roatan has gotten worse compared to, as you mentioned, 50 years ago?

Rev. Simpson: What happened? Family disintegration. Even though men were much at sea in those days, you had close-knit families. People were going to church. Everything was working and functioning in the church.

Something I've been reflecting on for some time and trying to work on is the whole process of mentoring. *Not all men now are on ships. But they're still not with their kids. We* do *have a not significant but growing class of professionals on the island. These are people who have gone off to study and have returned. How do we encourage them to mentor?*

One of our ministers some years ago started the Boy Scouts. But that wasn't followed up. They actually have permission to establish a troop. But you have to find a leader; get the leader trained ... I'm a Boy Scout person, because that's the organization I was in as a young boy and teenager in Panama. I went to high school with a classmate who became an Eagle Scout. The point is, those things shape you. Those things make a difference in your life. The essential purpose of these service-oriented, discipline-oriented organizations is to teach you certain basic human values, which we all share, regardless of whether you are religious, in terms of committed to faith in Christ, or you just want to do the right thing.

What do our young men, young boys do? If they're not athletically inclined to play volleyball, basketball or football, or those who have access to the baseball, what are you doing? You're "hanging out." And the problem with hanging out, especially on an island, is that there's not much room for doing anything necessarily healthy.

BIV: Your school appears to be doing a much better job than most on the island at retaining students and seeing them finish high school and go on to pursue higher education. What's the secret to keeping kids in school?

Rev. Simpson: We treat them as individuals. We have smaller class sizes, so we can give students more personal attention. We treat them as a name instead of a number. It comes from the philosophy of education in the tradition of the (Methodist) church. In 1866, the Rev. Edward

Daniel Webb, his first act at arriving here (on Roatan) as a missionary, the first letter he writes to England said, "Lovely people, good hearts, hard workers … can't write their name." So he sends to the mission office and says, "Please dispatch, as soon as it is possible, two teachers and a nurse."

The majority of the children that we receive are what we call "the workers' kids." You can talk to any of our students: "My dad's working on a ship. My mom does tours for cruise ships .... my sister works at Gumbalimba ... my grandmother use to clean." That is the basic story. We try and aim our education program to recruiting students whose parents are laborers and who if they didn't come to our school, in some cases, they wouldn't get an education. I wish the public schools in Honduras were like Panama or Costa Rica, where the public schools and the private schools are on equal competing level in terms of commitment and days of classes, equipment and things like that. But that's not really the reality. Unless you study in certain areas of this country, you're not going to get into a very good public school.

You have some excellent teachers (in public schools), but they are working with their fingernails. The ideal would be that everyone is able to go to public school and get what they need. But that is not the reality.

BIV: You mentioned family disintegration. As a minister, what do you see happening to the institution of marriage on the island? What can be done to keep families together?

Rev. Simpson: The institution of marriage, there are some people saying that it is "under siege." It isn't under siege. I believe that, as an island, we have always valued marriage. All of the biggest celebrations on this island are connected to marriage. What I believe is happening is that, because we have a generation of issues that is fostered by poverty, low education … we're having a group of people who are growing up into the island who are not being engaged with positive values. And so, it's like everything is running wild.

I give seminars on relationships from time to time, and I say, "Cut the lip-lock down and discuss more about life." I say, "If he's interested in discussing about life, that he's probably going to end up being a suitable partner. But if he only wants to lip-lock and feel you, guess what? You are due for a pregnancy without a father."

What you are mentioning is fathers are home but they are absent from home, or one guy in the community has four or five different women pregnant. That's the underbelly of something that we have wanted to ignore for the longest time in Latin America as a whole - the macho culture. The women are in service of the men. They are vying between each other to hold onto this one guy. But he is so immature and unable to hold a firm relationship with a commitment that he quite happily goes around like the rooster in the chicken coop. If they allow themselves to be used that way, it will persist.

When I meet a couple that has been together for 20, 25 years ... they have raised good children, they are working hard, they're trying to do their best, but the only thing they have not done is have the blessing of their marriage in church and officialize it before the state, I take a somewhat different approach. You have to start with them by saying, "Okay, you already have one of the fundamental elements, which is a commitment. Now, what is holding you back?" So, you could get up on the pulpit and fulminate and cast everybody into a firey Hell, because they are not living according to the ideal. Or you can begin to say, "Listen: Commitment, love, stability ... where are you at? If you're married and you don't have these three things, you're still in trouble. If you are living together and you have these three things, you're already on a good track. So what's keeping you from reaching to where you should be?"

What saddens me is that those who know *better are not* doing *better. If I am a grown man, why would I go and engage in a relationship with a 15 or 16 year old girl? Why am I going to cut off a life? Because that's what you're doing; you're cutting off a* life. *Because when she becomes a mother, that part of her emotional, physical and mental development comes to a* halt. *Fifteen years later when she's supposed to be a mother to a 15-year-old, she herself is beginning to be 15 again. There's no sense of the generational. There's a reason why, even if you don't go to church, even if you don't believe in God, there's a need for structure in society. There's a reason why there are generations. I see people walking down the street and have to ask, "Who's the child and who's the mother?" They are dressed the same, same mannerisms, same attitudes, same behavior. There's no adult and no child. If your parents are only 10 or 15 years older than you, you're close in age. What are you going to teach me?*

I've done a lot of remarriages. I always tell people when they are coming into a remarriage or when they are coming into a marriage where there are children from another relationship, I always remind them, "Those are your children too. … You are the ones that are going to create the stable family unit. And those children who you say are not your problem, they are going to have to depend on you for some stability in their life. If you all live in the same community, what do you think is going to happen?"

"We've got to get out there and engage ... make a difference ... That is what it is about."

BIV: So what's the bottom line Reverend?

Rev. Simpson: There is hope. But we've got to get out there and engage. You've got to give us (churches and social organizations) the facilities and the room and the space to positively engage. We don't have the kind of resources our counterparts have in the US ... no youth centers, not enough places to play, no service organizations, no real work with the schools. What is that a recipe for? We could have the street like now, I've seen Cobras, we have so many of these armed policemen on the street now, armed to their teeth. But that is security based on strength of arms, and as anyone can tell you, that doesn't last forever.

We are trying to work with our leaders, our young people and others to take hold of their lives, and make a difference. That is what it is about.

You can easily reach the desperation because you start focusing on all the bad news and don't realize that we live on a beautiful, wonderful place. It's just that we're not managing it the best way we could.

BAY ISLANDS TRIATHLON

COMPETITION DRAWS ELITE ATHLETES TO ROATAN FROM THROUGHOUT THE HEMISPHERE

ABOVE: Men's *elite* competitors battle for position at the beginning of the 1,500-meter swim leg.

ABOVE: Men's elite gold medalist Leo Chacon of Costa Rica receives congratulations from third-place finisher Greg Billington of the USA after crossing the finish line. William Huffman of the USA (left) won silver.

ABOVE: Athletes transition from water to land to retrieve their bicycles for the second leg of the race.

RIGHT: A Costa Rican woman races down the final stretch of the 40-km cycling leg.

LEFT: A Guatemalan man heads toward the finish line after completing the 5-km *sprint* distance of the running leg.

RIGHT: Daniela Schoenfeld of Guatemala begins the 40-km cycling leg after completing the 1,500-meter swim. Schoenfeld won the gold medal in the women's elite dvision.

For just the second time in five years, athletes from throughout the region descended on Roatan for the Bay Islands Triathlon, the premier event on the island's sports calendar, with the possible exception of the September fishing tournament.

Organizers said 125 athletes participated in this eighth running of the ITU-sanctioned event, held at Parrot Tree resort. Trouble lining up sponsors and conflicts with athletes' training schedules in an Olympic year prevented the event from taking place in 2009, 2010 and 2012.

Competition was organized into Olympic and "sprint" distances and into "elite," junior and age-based categories. The Olympic competition included a 1,500-meter swim followed by 40 kilometers of cycling and a 10-kilometer run. Sprint distances were 750 meters for the swim, 25 kilometers for the cycle portion and a 5-kilometer run.

Leonardo Chacon of Costa Rica repeated as gold medalist in the men's elite category, successfully defending his title from 2011. William Huffman of the USA won the silver, and Gregory Billington, also of the USA, took the bronze.

In the women's elite category, Daniela Schoenfeld of Guatemala won gold, her compatriot Anahi Amado won the silver and Alia Cardinale of Costa Rica took bronze.

Jennifer Roberts, former *Voice* copyeditor, formerly of Sandy Bay, finished second overall in the women's Olympic age-based competition and was the top finisher in her age group (undisclosed).

Alternatives to Chemotherapy

BY MARY IRIAS SCHMITT

The other day I ran into some important information on cancer we should all be aware of.

After so many years of telling us cancer could only be treated with chemotherapy, Johns Hopkins University finally recognized there are other alternatives.

First some facts:

Every one of us has cancerous cells in our bodies. These cancerous cells do not appear in standard tests until they have multiplied into the billions. When doctors tell their patients they can no longer detect cancerous cells after the exams, it's because these smaller quantities are not detectable, they have not multiplied into the billions.

Cancer cells appear between six and sometimes more than 10 times in a person's lifetime.

When a person's immune system is strong, it destroys cancerous cells and prevents these cells from multiplying and prevents the formation of tumors.

When a person has cancer it means that person has multiple nutritional deficiencies. These may be genetic, environmental, or related to poor eating habits or other lifestyle factors.

One way of combating this multiple nutritional deficit is by improving one's diet to include nutritional supplements that strengthen the immune system.

Chemotherapy consists of poisoning rapid growing cancer cells. However, this procedure also poisons healthy, rapidly producing cells in the medulla, intestinal tract, etc., and can damage important organs like kidneys, liver, heart and lungs.

Radiotherapy, while it destroys cancerous cells, also burns, leaves scars and damages healthy cells, tissue and organs.

Initially, although chemotherapy and radiotherapy frequently reduce the size of tumors, prolonged use ceases to be effective and prevent their growth.

When the body receives too much toxicity from chemo and radiation, its immune system becomes compromised or is destroyed, allowing disease and infections to take over.

Chemotherapy and Radiation can cause cancer cells to mutate and become more resistant, which makes destroying them even more difficult. Surgery can cause cancer cells to spread to other areas.

One way to fight cancer is to starve cancer cells to death. We do this by not feeding them what they need to multiply.

What cancerous cells feed on

Sugar is a cancer feeder! Cutting back on sugar will improve your chances of not getting cancer. Do not use artificial sugar supplements as they contain *aspartame*, which is dangerous to your health. The best sugar substitute is honey in small quantities. Tabel salt contains chemicals that bleach salt to make it white, which is dangerous to your health. Use sea salt.

Milk causes the body to produce mucous, especially in the gastro-intestinal tract. Cancer feeds on mucous. Removing milk from your diet and replacing it with soy or almond milk without sugar will starve cancer cells.

Cancerous cells prosper in acidic places. A diet based on red meats is acidic. It's best to eat fish or organic chicken. Beef and pork contain antibiotics, hormones and parasites that are dangerous, especially to people with cancer. Some chickens do, too. If you sense a funny taste and consistency to your chicken, it's probably because it's full of hormones! Buy the skinnier, smaller chickens.

A diet made up of 80 percent fresh vegetables and juices, granola, seeds, nuts and some fruit helps to alkalize the body. The other 20 percent can be foods such as cooked vegetable, like beans.

Fresh vegetable juices, especially carrot juice, boost the immune system as the live enzymes are rapidly absorbed and can reach cellular levels in 15 minutes, which help grow healthy cells. Try eating fresh vegetables two to three times daily to keep healthy cells reproducing rapidly.

Avoid coffee, tea and chocolate, which are all high in caffeine. Try green tea as it contains cancer-fighting properties. Drink filtered water. Faucet water is full of toxins and heavy metals. Distilled water is acidic; avoid drinking it.

Protein in meats is hard to digest and uses lots of digestive enzymes. The non-digested meat stays in your intestines for several days and rots, producing more residual toxins and bad body odors. The cell walls of cancerous cells are covered with extremely resistant protein. By eating less meat you allow more enzymes to attack the walls of the cancerous cells and destroy them. Some supplements help rebuild the immune system such as IP, Essiac, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, EFA, Chia, berries, coconut oil, etc. Add these to your diet!

Lifestyle Factors

Cancerous cells cannot prosper in a well oxygenated environment. Exercising daily and deep-breathing techniques help take oxygen to the cellular level. Oxygen therapy, such as spending time in a hyperbaric chamber, is another way to fight off cancer.

I know you've heard this before, however it's always good to remind ourselves that we should heeed the advice from Johns Hopkins, which recommends the following:

Don't use plastic containers in the microwave.

Don't put plastic bottles in the freezer.

Don't put containers covered with plastic wrap in the microwave.

When plastic is put in the microwave or freezer it frees a chemical called *dioxin*, which produces cancer, especially breast cancer. .

Let's start tweaking our lifestyles this year. If we remove the sugar, meats, milk products and plastics from our daily habits, we stand a greater chance of living a longer and healthier life.

Don't forget to exercise and breathe!!! Keeping our bodies full of clean air oxygenates our bodies, giving an added burst of energy and keeping those deadly cancerous cells from reproducing.

Namaste!

Mary Irias Schmitt is a Master Neuro Linguistic Practitioner and specialist in weight-control, nutrition, personal training and emotional disorders.

Cal's Marks a Year on Valentine's Day

Carl Husbands, proprietor of Cal's Cantina, outside Juticalpa, greets guests at a special Valentine's Day buffet laid out to commemorate the first anniversary of the establishment. In just a year Cal's has already become an institution on Roatan's East End, offering tacos, seafood and live music in a comfortable atmosphere with a gorgeous view overlooking the ocean. Bobby Rieman and friends provided musical entertainment for the anniversary bash.

Parrot Tree Celebrates *Día de la Mujer*

Hilda Sanchez, Norma Allen and Leidy Dionicia Mejia compete in the beer-guzzling contest for Honduran Women's Day at Parrot Tree January 25. Mejia (right, with the empty *Barena*) downed her bottle fastest and won a dinner for two at *Gio's*.

Lindell Bodden, manager of the Parrot Tree resort, raises Monica Collins's arm in victory after the crowd judged her the sexiest dancer at the Honduran Women's Day celebration at Parrot Tree's Palapa Bar & Grill January 25. Monica won a free resort stay. There was also a singing contest won by Stefani Derer, who was awarded a dinner for two at Parrot Tree.

ERIN GO BRAGH: IRELAND FOREVER!

BY JACK MITCHELL

For as long as I can remember, I have sold food in one way or another, from street fairs to state fairs and festivals. This is where the quickest money was made; or lost, depending on the weather. I sold everything from corn dogs to *shish kabobs*. Whatever the event was lacking, I stepped up to get into the action and fill that void.

With *Mardi Gras* behind us and *Semana Santa* just down the road, we in the southern latitudes can turn our attention briefly to St. Patrick's Day March 17.

St. Patrick's Day, celebrating the patron saint of Ireland, creates a vibe all its own. Some wait all year just to party that day. Folks consume a lot of libation on St. Patrick's Day. In 1997, I sold 200 kegs of micro-brewed beer in the parking lot of Cobblestone Brewery & Pub in Richmond, Virginia, and a truckload of food sponsoring a two-day affair with Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN). It was the hardest, yet most successful, 48-hour period of my career.

There are certain traditions that must be kept on St. Patrick's Day, including eating favorite Irish dishes. The most popular is corned beef and cabbage, but my favorite is Irish leg of lamb stewed in Guiness and served with colcannon. I trust once you try the following recipe, you too will agree and will most likely elect to eat it more often than once a year.

Irish Lamb Stew

Ingredients:

3 lbs. leg of lamb, cut in 1 ½-inch cubes
¼ cup olive oil
1 Tbs. vegetable oil
6 stalks celery, chopped
2 large leeks, chopped
2 cups carrots in ½-inch slices
½ tsp. ground coriander
½ tsp. ground thyme
1 8-oz. can diced tomatoes with juice
1 can beef broth
1 can Guiness or other dark stout beer
½ cup flour
Salt and ground pepper to taste

Set oven at 350° F. Salt and pepper lamb cubes. Dredge in flour. In a large oven-proof Dutch oven, sauté meat in the oils until browned on all sides. Remove meat and set aside. In same oven, sauté celery and leeks until translucent. Add carrots, season with coriander and thyme, adding tomatoes. Fold in meat, add broth and beer. Cover and bake until meat is just tender, about two hours.

Irish Colcannon

Ingredients:

2 ½ lbs. potatoes, peeled and cubed
4 slices bacon
½ head of cabbage, finely shredded
½ cup whole milk
¼ cup butter
Salt and pepper to taste

Boil potatoes 15-20 minutes until tender. Cook and crumble bacon bits, reserving oil. Saute onions and cabbage in bacon bits until tender. Drain potatoes, mash with milk and season with salt and pepper. Fold in bacon, cabbage and onions and transfer mixture to serving bowl. Add butter and serve.

VEGETARIAN DIET MAY CUT HEART RISK A THIRD

BY CORY COUILLARD

A vegetarian diet can have a dramatic effect on one's heart and overall health, new research suggests.

An Oxford University study found vegetarians had a 32 percent less chance of dying or needing hospital treatment as a result of heart disease. The key life-saving effects were thought to be associated with lower cholesterol, blood pressure and body weight.

The study analyzed data on 15,000 vegetarians and 29,000 meat-eaters over 11 years, of whom 169 died of heart disease and 1,066 needed hospital treatment during the course of the study.

The study revealed that the foods that are frequently consumed in vegetarian diets (fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes) can also reduce a person's risk for diseases such as cancer and type-2 diabetes and control body mass index and waist size.

On average, vegetarians were 13.6 kg (30 pounds) lighter than meat-eaters in the study. Vegetarians were also found to be more physically active and less likely to use tobacco products.

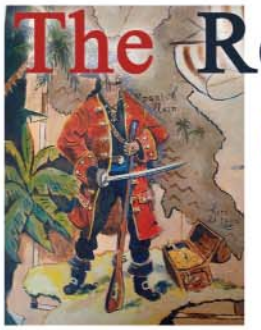
The largest study of vegetarians and vegans to date found that those eating plant-based diets appear to have a significantly longer life expectancy as well. Vegetarians have been found to live on average nearly eight years longer than meat-eaters, which is similar to the gap between smokers and nonsmokers.

Being vegetarian does not automatically constitute a healthy heart. Many vegetarian foods have high amounts of fat, salt, sugar and artificial preservatives. Vegetarians need to replace vitamins and minerals, such as iron and Vitamin B-12, that are found in meat. Many new vegetarians do no eat a variety of food or they do not consume enough calories to meet energy needs. Soy proteins, historically used by vegentarians as a meat substitute, have been found to be neurotoxic if consumed in large quantities.

However, with careful planning a vegetarian diet can be clearly healthy and nutritionally sound.

Cory Couillard is a chiropracter, international healthcare speaker and columnist and CEO of Health Solutions LLC in Lakeville, Minnesota.

The Rogue Caterer



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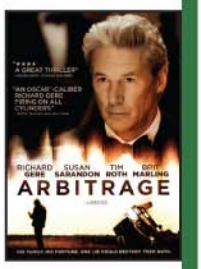
MURR'S DVD CORNER

A Monthly Review Focusing on a Recent DVD Movie that Murray Found to be Exceptional.

MOVIE: ARBITRAGE
PLOT OUTLINE: A SUCCESSFUL HEDGE FUND MANAGER IS TRYING TO SELL HIS COMPANY WHEN A DEADLY MISTAKE FORCES HIM TO TAKE DESPERATE STEPS TO SAVE HIS OWN LIFE AND HIS FAMILY'S.
KEY CAST: RICHARD GERE, SUSAN SARANDON, TIM ROTH, BRIT MARLING, LAETITIA CASTA.



This is another movie with impeccable timing, with America's financial woes and greedy Wall Street tycoons providing the setting and premise. But it is the star figure that makes it great.

Richard Gere is excellent. It is probably his best role in a decade. His blank stare and perfect hair go well with his character, Robert Miller, the derivative manager whose wealth and luxurious life are as pronounced as is his lack of morality and ethics. "Greed" is a word that was likely invented in America. The sheer arrogance to take an investor's money, to lose that money, and to lie and cheat to continue the rich lifestyle, all while your company is crumbling, is something that is not rare on Wall Street.

Robert Miller has another problem. He is in trouble with the law, which further complicates the sale of his company, leading him to further desperation.

This white collar "scumbag" has us riveted to the screen as each chilling scene unfolds. It truly is a great performance.

First-time director Nicholas Jarecki keeps us engaged with an excellent script. From the moment we discover Miller's morally and financially bankrupt situation, he keeps us guessing about the end. And even though we know a lot of people are going to lose everything they have, we find ourselves cheering for Robert to survive.

Enjoy the movie!

CONSERVATION NOTES

Throughout the Caribbean, large numbers of ecologically and commercially important fish species congregate a few days a year in specific locations for mass spawning. Unfortunately, this reproduction strategy renders them extremely vulnerable to overexploitation. Removing the reproductively active members of certain species has resulted in regional population decline and consequent collapse of fisheries industries worldwide. In many cases, whole regional populations have been wiped out with no recovery in sight.

Roatan is fortunate to have three locations where spawning occurs for numerous species of grouper and snapper: the western tip, just south of the airport and at the eastern tip of Barbareta. The Nassau grouper is one species that relies on mass spawning events to reproduce. Research shows groupers can migrate hundreds of miles to spawn. The decline in grouper numbers in Belize and other parts of the Caribbean may have contributed to declines here.

In the past month we learned that fishermen from Guanaja were traveling to the spawning area near Barbareta and spearing the fish. Several concerned individuals and organizations are trying to protect these vulnerable species. But without support from governing bodies, it's an uphill struggle. RMP protects only a relatively small expanse of water. Our capacity to protect species that migrate on a regional scale, such as the Nassau Grouper, is therefore limited. We must cooperate with larger organisations, such as Nature Conservancy, to promote regional protection.

Fisheries conservation is complex. You can contribute by choosing not to eat grouper and eating an alternative like lionfish. Next time you wonder why you didn't see certain species on the reef, think about what you ate last night!

www.roatanmarinepark.com | info@roatanmarinepark.org

CRIME WATCH

Incidents recorded by National Police for the Bay Islands:

	Dec 20-Jan 20	Jan 20- Feb 20
Homicide	4	2
Assault and battery	3	3
Rape/sexual assault	0	2
Attempted rape	2	0
Child abduction	1	0
Breaking/Entering	1	1
Robbery of a person	0	2
Theft from a person	7	6
Robbery of a residence	0	6
Robbery of a business	8	3
Auto theft	2	0
Auto burned	1	0
Attermpted robbery	0	3
Traffic accidents	1	1
injuries	1	1
Drowning	0	2

Notes: A 49-year-old man was shot and killed in the *La Colonia* neighborhood above Sandy Bay February 7. A 21-year-old native of La Ceiba was arrested and charged with murder and was in lock-up in Coxen Hole at press time. Police said it was a personal grudge.

At least three women reported being assaulted in the vicinity of West End in mid February, according to an unofficial source. A 23-year-old Yoro man was arrested February 20 and charged with rape for one of the incidents. He was in lock-up in Coxen Hole at press time.

ROATAN HUMANE SOCIETY

Why doesn't the Roatan Humane Society support the funding and building of a shelter? Not a day goes by that we are not asked this question. We agree that shelters have their place. But we think a shelter at this time on Roatan would be extremely detrimental to the dog and cat population. Even with vast funding and support, the majority of shelters become nothing but a home for society's unwanted animal population. As it stands, finding homes for the abandoned animals we find is difficult, and we have more animals in need than homes to care for them. If we were to operate a shelter, we fear we would be greeted every morning with boxes of unwanted kittens and puppies on our doorstep. Add to this the adult dogs and cats that are considered a nuisance and untrainable that would invariably be abandoned and you have a huge problem.

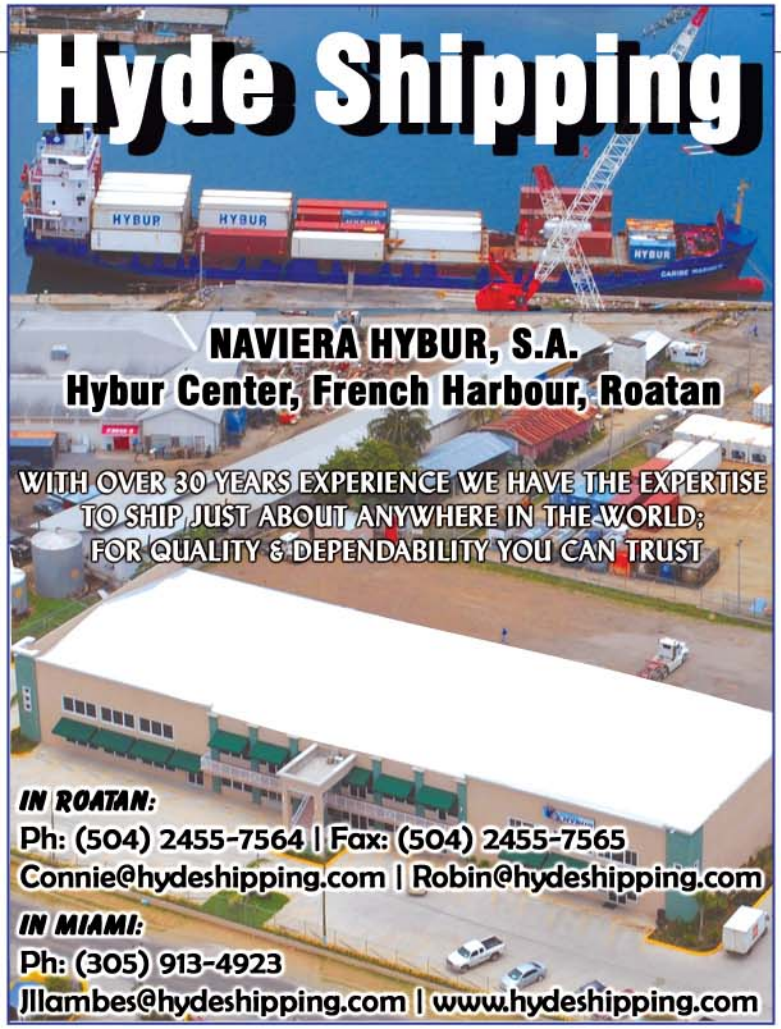
We prefer to focus on the root of the homeless animal problem by working to encourage spaying and neutering. We also educating pet owners to deal with behavior problems and other issues so they can keep their pets for life. Through these efforts, along with medical and vaccination programs, we hope to reduce the animal population to a manageable number. Most of the people we encounter care deeply for their animals and just need the tools, education and access to medical care to be responsible and loving pet guardians.

For more information or to volunteer, contact us on Facebook.

Roatan Humane Society

Changing "Hungry and Hurting" to "Healthy and Happy"

Hyde Shipping



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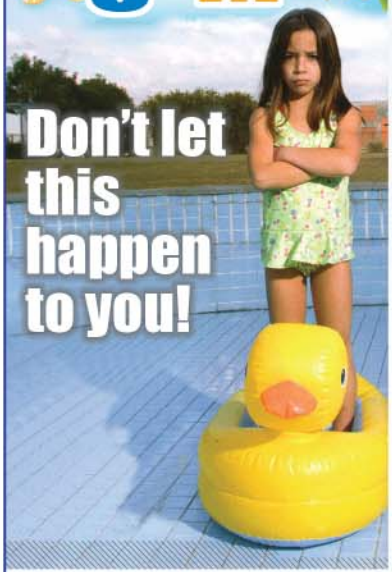

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BLIND FAITH VS. TESTING GOD

By Pastor Rudolph Abbott
Oak Ridge Baptist Church

God has never asked anyone to believe anything that does not rest upon a foundation. Faith does not mean to move into some area and say, "Oh, I am trusting God." That is very foolish. God never asks us to do that.

For example, in our salvation, we do not bring a little lamb to offer as a sacrifice; our faith rests upon the historical facts of the death, the burial and resurrection of the Son of God.

God never asks us to leap in the dark. He asks us to believe and trust something which rests upon a firm foundation, and it is the *only* foundation.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
(1 Cor 3:11)

If any person is an honest unbeliever and sincerely wants to know God, he or she will come to a saving faith. People with whom I have dealt who say that they cannot believe are not honest. The fact of the matter is that no man's eyes are blindfolded unless he himself chooses to be blindfolded. If a person really wants to know God and will give up their sin and turn to Christ, God will make Himself real to them. In our day the problem is that a great many people do not really mean business with God.

That was the problem with King Ahaz - he didn't mean business with God. God knew Ahaz didn't have faith, and He was willing to give the king faith. But Ahaz was nothing but a pious fraud - and there are a lot of those around today.

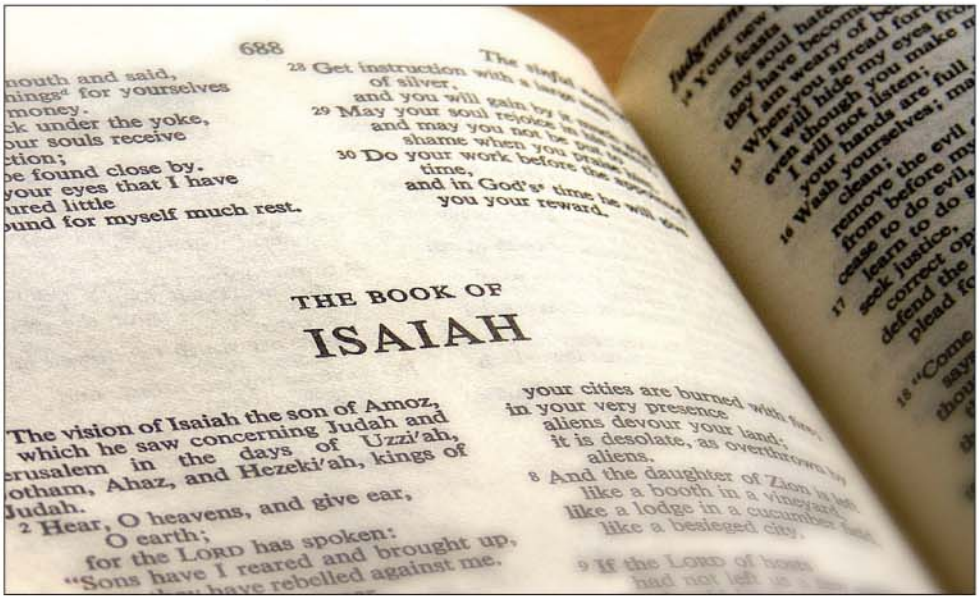
Listen to his false piety: "But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I test the Lord." (Isaiah 7:12)

Isn't that sweet of him? He sounds so nice, but he is one of the biggest hypocrites you will find in scripture. This sort of thing is sickening, and I believe God feels that way about it.

And he said, Hear ye now, O House of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?
(Isaiah 7:13)

Folks , don't think you are being pious when you say, "Oh, I won't test God." God says, "Test Me, try Me , and see if I am not good."

I hear people say, "I am going to step out on *faith*." Don't do that! Wait until God puts a rock underneath you. Wait until God gives you a definite leading before you make a fool of yourself and bring criticism upon the cause of Christ.



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(See Article in November VOICE)

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Concert for the Angels

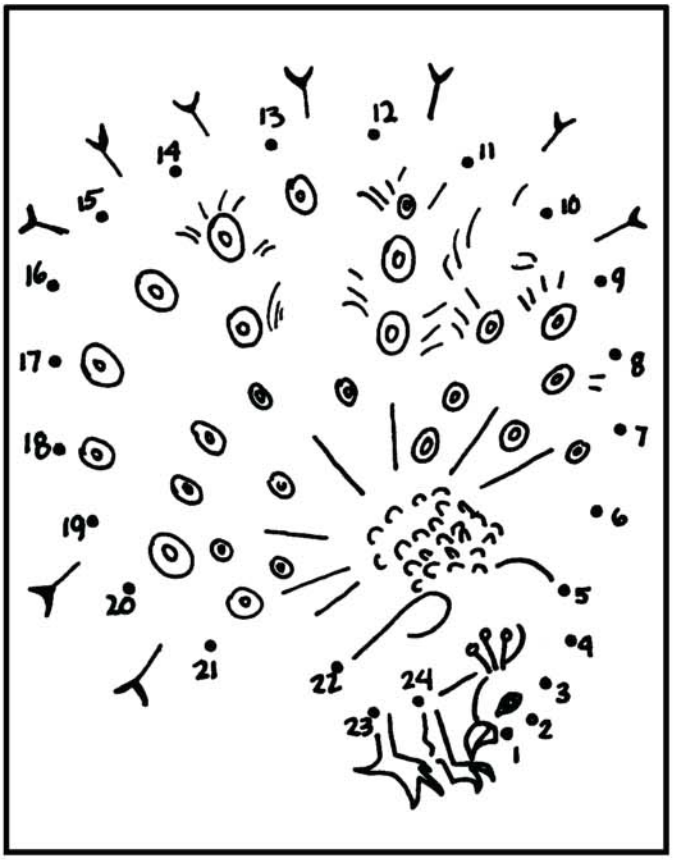
Pasionato, a jazz ensemble from Tegucigalpa, performed at the Concert for the Angels at Roatan airport February 15 to benefit *Clínica Esperanza*. The concert, normally held annually but skipped last year, also featured local artists and debut singing performances by Roatan teenagers Cherish Parker and Shayla Crimmin.

Mardi Gras Fundraiser at Monkey Island

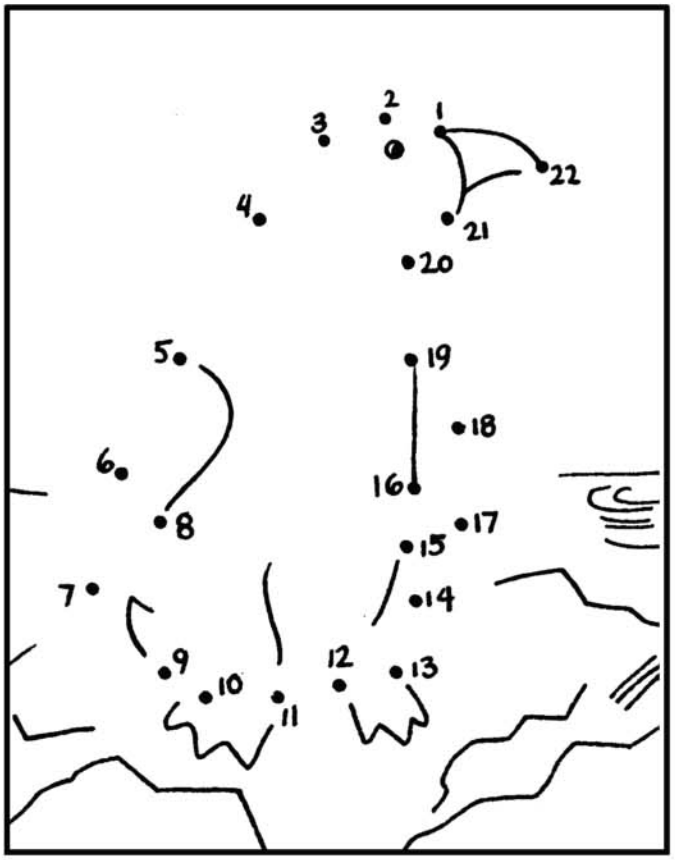
Ron Pulliam (Capt. Ron), flanked by Nidia Hernandez (right) and her daughter Christa (Cookie) Falkenroth, raffle off donated prizes at a Mardi Gras party and fundraiser at the Monkey Island Beach Cafe in West End February 12. Proceeds from the sale of raffle tickets, Mardi Gras beads, masks, hats and other party favors went to benefit Because We Care, an island-based non-profit that assists needy families on Roatan.

Rotary Collects Cash for Police on Roatan

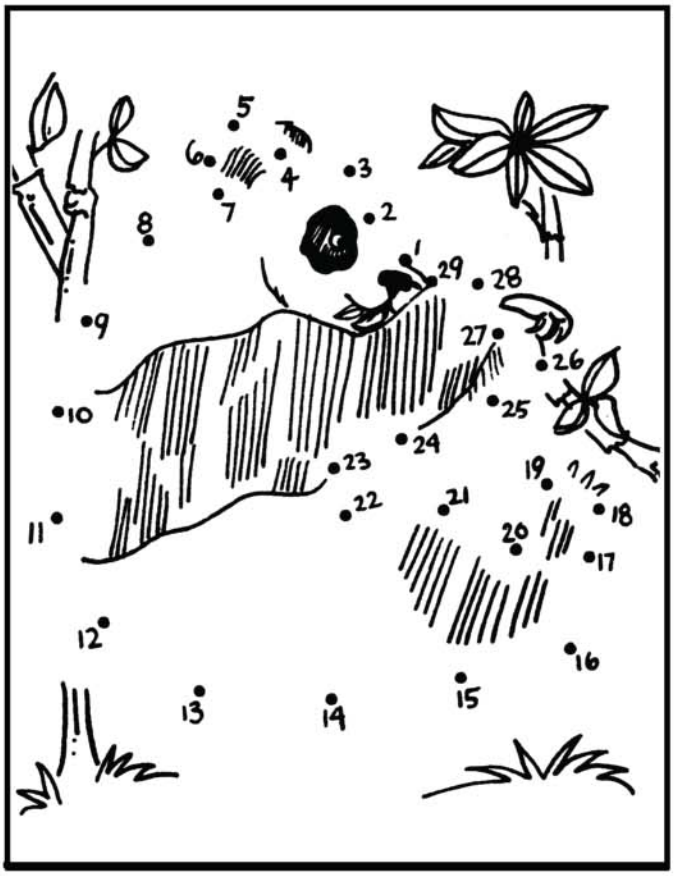
Mike Wittry (right, with jug) and Judita Berndorff solicit contributions from motorists entering West End February 1 to support the National Police on Roatan. People were asked to purchase stickers for Lps. 500 or to contribute whatever spare cash they felt like chipping in. In addition to West End, Roatan Rotary Club organized collection points at the *Petrosun* in French Harbour, outside the Port of Roatan and in front of the airport. The February 1-2 collection drive raised $5,674, according to Club Treasurer Edward Ake. Funds will be used to maintain police vehicles, provide and maintain computers and communications equipment and update databases used to check people for criminal warrants.



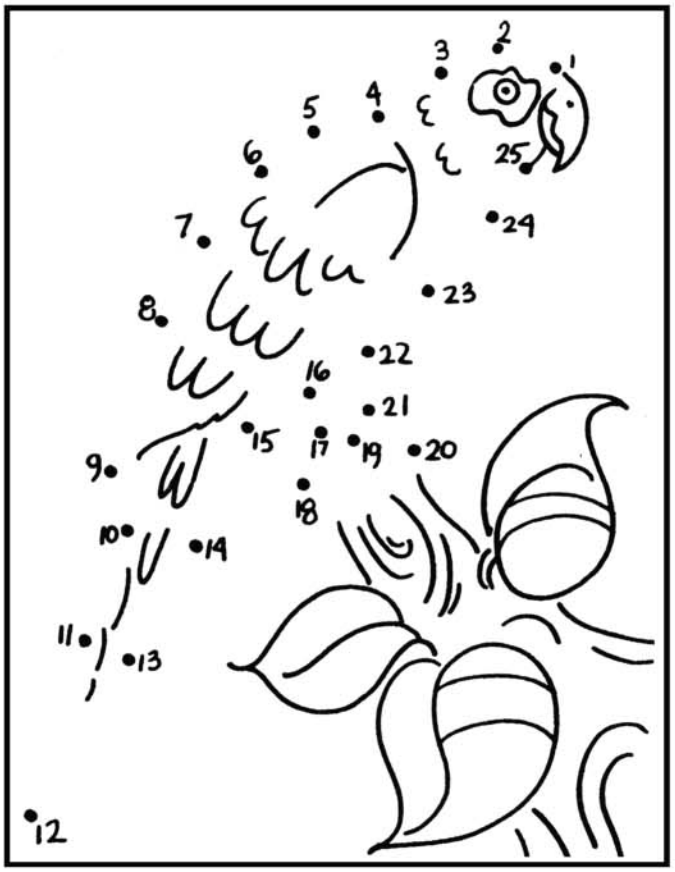
Native to Asia and India, the male bird is known for the display of its colorful feathers.



This black-and-white bird is a common sight in the South Pole and parts of South America.



This large black-and-white creature is known for chewing on bamboo for much of the day.



This bird is found in tropical regions, where its bright colors make it easy to spot.

Capricorn (12/22 – 1/19)

Uranus advances in Aires until 2018. Just get used to the word "change," especially on the domestic scene. Thinking of relocating? You probably will, maybe many times. You'll feel like a turtle with a house on your back. Strengthen those family relationships, even if it means going into the past. Mercury turns direct March 17. Keep organizing (your favorite thing). Then jump into action. The March 11 new moon connects you with people, and learning is a high point. The full moon (March 27) sees you trying to be all things to all people. Stay balanced and beware of ladders. Cheers.

Aquarius (1/20 – 2/18)

Uranus, the planet of the unexpected, advances until 2018. News of relatives and neighbors, and events surrounding them, are the focus. Flashes of insight and intuition may seem common, too. These could put you in the right place at the right time! Learning and curiosity circle you like a humming bird around a flower. March has you feeling spring in the air, so make some memories. Mercury turns direct March 17. Clear up any mix-ups. The March 11 new moon could bring extra money, which can help buy those new spring flip-flops. Go wandering and enjoy the journey.

Pisces (2/19 – 3/20)

Uranus continues on its seven-year transit (until 2018). Personal resources are highlighted, and this planet of the unexpected could shake things up. Fortunately, that could be for the positive, with fun and money windfalls. But you'll also be analyzing your budget, where to cut back, and realize that material things don't seem as important anyway. The March 11 new moon is all about you! Sit on the dock and think about where you'd like to be in 12 months. Relationships and creativity are strong themes until March 2014. For now, put on that sun hat and enjoy the warming spring sun.

Aries (3/21 – 4/19)

Uranus, the planet of the unexpected, continues to have you on a self-searching and personal-change journey. Health, diet and regular exercise will help calm some of the nervous tension that goes with this transit. Subconsciously you'll explore what motivates you, as well as what holds you back. All this will enhance your self-confidence. Be your own best friend! Mars dashes into your sign March 12. Get ready for extra energy and vitality. Go after what you want. At month's end, watch what you say, though. Don't enter into spring with regret. Now go hug yourself!

Taurus (4/20 – 5/20)

Uranus, until 2018 will actively trigger your sixth sense. Are you getting flashes of insights? This is a time of reflection and enjoying alone time as well as reaching out and helping. Join that homeless hermit crab charity. Maybe you can go shell hunting for them. Mercury turns direct March 17, so clear up any misunderstandings. The March 11 new moon benefits your social life and networking. Go join a parade and toot your horn. Take it easy at work, since power struggles are abundant at month's end. Watch your diet and health. spring is around the corner. Yeah!

Gemini (5/21 – 6/21)

Uranus, until 2018, is all about you, Gemini. You will become great at networking, connecting yourself and others. Many new people will enter your life, many with specific reasons. Others will be key to unlocking your potential and insights into yourself and your world. Stay alert! With Mercury going direct March 17, things will flow your way, especially with your career. Your social life is active, too, but monitor your expenses. Lots of good news on the money horizon, though, with lots of possibilities. Nothing wrong with this awesome month. Yeppeee!

Cancer (6/22 – 7/22)

Uranus, the planet of change, is in your career house until 2018. At times you'll feel stretched to snapping with domestic responsibilities and trying to balance it all. Things are ever-changing! Some years are quiet and others jam-packed. Go with the flow! In March you're going to feel adventurous, but Mercury, until the March 17, is retrograde, so plan and then jump after that. Mars and Venus benefit your career, and a change is likely. The domestic scene is testing you, too, so pull out that patience. spring is near and the sun will shine on you, you lovely Cancer.

Leo (7/23 – 8/22)

Uranus until 2018 encourages you to step outside the box. Open your mind to the wider world. Read, ask questions and research. That mind is going to expand like the horizon. Travel is inviting, too. With Mercury going direct March 17, get busy fixing any mix-ups and iron out relationship issues. Mars, the sun and Venus will have people at a distance in touch with you. Even though finances are on the upswing with the March 11 new moon, beware of over-extending yourself or taking on debit. Take the back seat at work and just groove.

Virgo (8/23 – 9/22)

Uranus until 2018 keeps your vision on joint resources. Continue to review your budget and do lots of planning. This transit is all about being conservative, so stay on that path. This planet of the unexpected can have unforeseen cash coming your way, too, so be sure to use the law of attraction. In March, Jupiter's energy is on your side. It will bring you luck in the career arena. The new moon (March 11) in Pisces is brightening relationships, and with Mercury direct (March 17), communication is blooming, so yak it up. Be cautious at month's end around money, but other than that look forward to a beautiful spring.

Libra (9/23 – 10/22)

Uranus in your seventh house is all about relationships, partnerships and commitment. Until 2018, you'll be experiencing one or all of these. Some relationships will change, end or pop into your life. Expect changes with this serious planet. March is all about work, but Venus at least brings in some fun around March 20. The full moon (March 27) is in your sign and shines on you. Your strong freedom urge is making you restless. But don't act it out right now. Go climb a tree and watch the birds fly. You'll get some release and cherish the moment.

Scorpio (10/23 – 11/21)

Workplace changes continue as Uranus transits your sixth house through 2018. It can be disruptive but also bring an opportunity or reposition you for potential gains in 2014-15. Watch for things coming your way. In March things seem to get back to normal, whatever that is. Mercury resumes direct motion March 17, and things fall into place. The March 11 new moon is prime for romance and social outings. If work is hectic, it is on the positive note. Think calmly that last week; no hasty decisions. At the full moon, pamper yourself, sleep and be happy.

Sagittarius (11/22 – 12/21)

Uranus in your fifth house until 2018 is just sweet. Lots of socializing, networking and romance. You may be zipping off at the last moment wherever your heart desires. Children influence you, so pay attention to them and spend time with your creativity. March also has you buzzing around your domestic scene. Enjoy your space. Mercury returns direct and benefits communication. Watch expenses, be thrifty, especially around the full moon. Avoid snap decisions and comments. Go shoot your arrow into the sky and give a shout of happiness!

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FEBRUARY ISSUE SOLUTION

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Everybody digs their own hole.
Fame is a game not for the sane.
What good is a bag without a zipper?
Moist is a good choice.
Philosophy is for the lost.
Move it or close it.
Creation is the road to death.
Big questions need big answers.
Pen and paper dont replace a brain.
Creativity is the territory of the free.
Leave before you request.
Anybody can lay an egg, but it takes a man to make one.
Success is about making mistakes, not avoiding them.
Follow life and lead death.
One too many is one too few.
One more is two less.
Look before you ask.
Life is the process of elimination.
Ignorance is the master of control.
Life needs to get a life.
Only a leader can tie off a bleeder.
It's all been said, but nobody read.
Genes roll downhill.
Memories die with the dead.
Adios, Sue!

(Editor's note: Dr. John's longtime canine companion, Sue, passed away in November.)

Dr. John McVay's
DOCTOR JOHN UTILA

No.01

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WELL

SPECIALISTS TRAIN TO PRESERVE ISLAND HERITAGE

Bilingual intercultural education specialists work on kindergarten lesson plans at a February 6-8 workshop to prepare for the start of the public school year.

Specialists in teaching Bay Islands language and culture attended a three-day workshop in Coxen Hole February 6-8 to prepare for the beginning of the public school year.

The workshops have been held every year since the mid 1990s, when Honduras began to move away from its Spanish-only approach to public education and to appreciate the cultural and linguistic heritage of its indigenous and afro-descended minorities. The shift was in large part driven by the 1989 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO 169), which Honduras ratified in 1995.

Previously, teaching English in Honduran public schools was forbidden under the policy of *castellanización* (compelling minorities to assimilate into the Spanish-speaking mainstream), explained Natelee Forbes, bilingual intercultural education promoter for the Native Bay Islanders Professionals and Labourers Association (NABIPLA). She said English-speaking Bay Islanders who wanted to preserve their heritage were forced to organize instruction in private homes outside regular school hours. Those who could afford to sent their children to private schools to be taught in English.

A 1997 decree passed by the Honduran Congress institutionalized bilingual intercultural education (EIB by the Spanish acronym) in areas with ethnic and linguistic minorities. Roatan then began placing EIB instructors, paid by the Municipal Government, in its public schools. However, with normally only one such specialist per school, students in each grade typically receive only 45 minutes of EIB instruction a day.

Diane Bennett, who teaches at Arnaldo Auld Public School in Gravel Bay and is also director of the Lanford Johnson School in Pensacola, has been with the EIB program from the beginning and judged it to be "a success so far" at encouraging children to learn English and maintain their culture.

"We want parents to know their children can get a good bilingual education in the public schools," she said.

Forbes added that the EIB curriculum goes well beyond language instruction.

"It's an inclusive curriculum," said Forbes. "It's about what we can do to have a better life for ourselves."

Hector Nolasco, the Ministry of Education's district director for Roatan, said the EIB program also aimed to "keep students more motivated." Motivation is key to reducing Roatan's high drop-out rate.

Bennett estimated 30-40 percent of elementary school-aged children on Roatan are not attending classes. She said many students show up for the first day of classes in February, but if you come back in June many of them are no longer there. After sixth grade, when Honduran children are no longer legally required to attend school, she said, 70-80 percent drop out.

"We look around today and we see parents not involving our kids in education," said Bennett. As a result, she said, many islanders feel "left out" of things and excluded from the best jobs. But she said that was "because we don't prepare ourselves."

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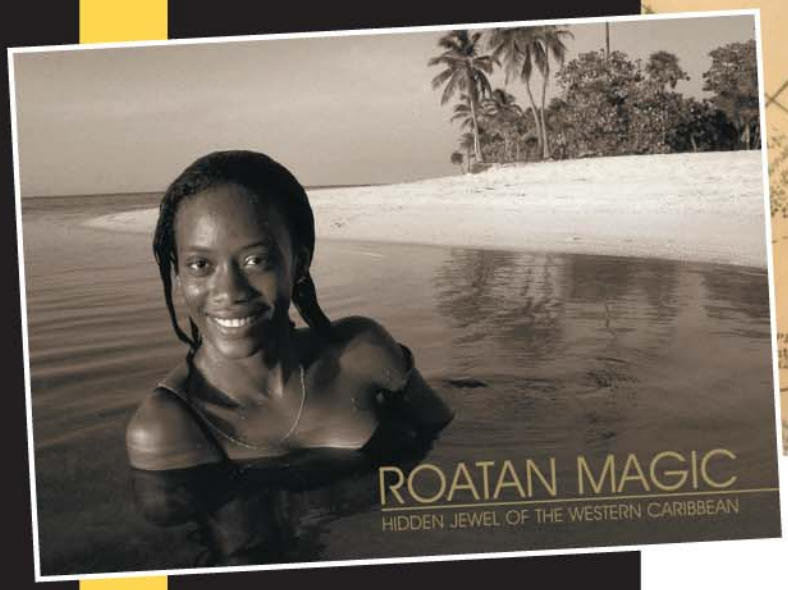

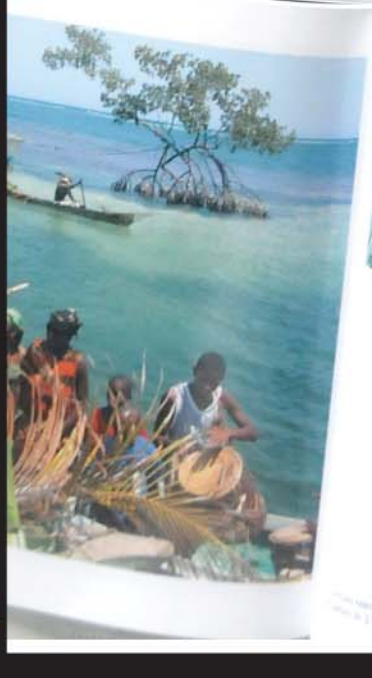

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