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**THE PEOPLE'S PAPER
BIGGEST AND BEST**



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FEATURES

The Hansard building demolition

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INSIDE

CARS FOR SALE, HELP WANTED AND REAL ESTATE

BAHAMAS BIGGEST

SPORTS

Diplomats fly over Falcons

SEE SECTION E

Harrowing ordeal of baby Michelo

POLICE SUSPECT ATTORNEY KILLED IN 'ATTEMPTED ROBBERY GONE WRONG'

By **TANEKA THOMPSON**
Tribune Staff Reporter
tthompson@tribunemedia.net

POLICE suspect attorney Dennis Gomez was murdered during an attempted robbery gone wrong. Assistant Commissioner of Police Glenn Miller told *The Tribune* that Mr Gomez was shot after one of two assailants, who approached him outside his law office early Saturday morning, silently ordered him into his car at gunpoint. Mr Gomez, 57, resisted and struggled with the gunman, who then shot him several times.

"It seemed to be an attempted robbery, there is nothing to suggest anything other than that at this point. They ordered him in the car, but he refused and he struggled with the men and then shots were fired," Mr Miller said yesterday.

The two assailants fled the area on foot, said Mr Miller. Mr Gomez, brother of Comptroller of Customs Glenn Gomez, and husband

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ANDRE BIRBAL SEX TRIAL COULD SEE VERDICT TODAY

By **DENISE MAYCOCK**
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT: A verdict in the Andre Birbal sex trial could be expected today after Justice Hartman Longley gives his summation to the jury.

After hearing final arguments from the Crown and the defence yesterday, Justice Longley decided he would address the jury this morning. The former art teacher is charged with eight counts of unnatural sexual intercourse with two minors.

It is alleged that Birbal had sex with a male student at the Eight Mile Rock High School between January 2002 and June 2007. It is also alleged he had sex with a second male student between September 2002 and December 2005.

The young men testified that their art teacher had sex with them in his classroom during school hours, at his apartment, and other places. They also testified that Birbal took nude photographs of them.

Birbal, a Trinidadian, taught art design and computer aid design at the Eight

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Family seeks fundraiser for mounting medical expenses

By **AVA TURNQUEST**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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A GRAND BAHAMA family is desperately seeking support for vital rehabilitative treatment for their baby who, before the age of two, has survived crippling medical challenges. In the last eight months, 21-month-old Michelo 'Mj' McKenzie Jr has battled pneumococcal meningitis, shunted hydrocephalus, cortical blindness, partial paralysis and hearing loss – all of which doctors attribute to a previously undetected blood disorder.

Buckling under the weight of mounting medical expenses, Michelo McKenzie Sr, 34, told *The Tribune* of his son's harrowing ordeal which has retarded his development to that of a three-month-old infant.

Mr McKenzie Sr said: "It was a situation where no one knew he was sick, no one knew he had sickle cell

anemia, everything just came after he had his vaccination shot. Everything just went haywire from there."

Born a thriving and healthy baby boy, Mj first began exhibiting signs of illness last May after he received his first year vaccinations. Due to an unrelenting fever – which lasted five days – he was admitted to the Rand Memorial Hospital where they ran a series of tests, including a spinal tap. Results uncovered that little Mj had contracted a bacterial form of meningitis, a disease for which treatment time was typically 14 days.

Mr McKenzie said: "We were dumbfounded. He was hospitalized for 25 days and during that time he had four seizures and three blood transfusions. He lost his sight, his hearing, and was paralysed on the left side of his body. Meningitis is an infection to the brain so

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HARROWING ORDEAL: 21-month-old Michelo 'Mj' McKenzie Jr with his father Michel McKenzie Sr.



ASSISTING CONTRACTORS: Robert Sands

UP TO 800 JOB APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY BAHAMAR

By **NOELLE NICOLLS**
Tribune Staff Reporter
nnicolls@tribunemedia.net

BAHAMAR has received up to 800 job applications on behalf of general contractors working on the new Commercial Village and the re-routing of West Bay Street. Although Baha Mar Resorts Ltd is not the general contractor on the \$2.6 billion project, Robert Sands, vice-president of external affairs, said the company is assisting con-

tractors by "providing a bank of potential candidates for screening for hire."

Mr Sands confirmed receipt of 300 applications from Grand Bahama tradesmen, and a list of about 1,500 names from the Ministry of Labour's skills bank.

Dion Foulkes, Minister of Labour, told *The Tribune* yesterday, the government is "very excited about the developments at Baha Mar" and

SEE page nine

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LOCAL NEWS

OPERATION RAPID STRIKE

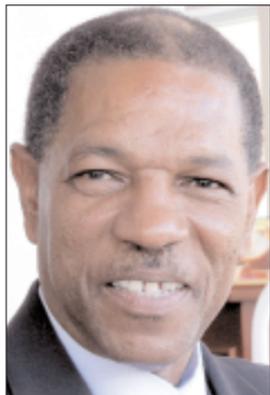
PAUL BOWER DIES AFTER LONG ILLNESS

ROBERT Paul Bower died after a long illness, peacefully at his home on Cable Beach in the early hours of Monday, January 24.

Mr Bower was born in Kent, England, on November 2, 1924, the only son of Commander Robert Tatton Bower, RN, MP, and the Hon Henrietta Bower.

Paul is survived by his wife Ericka; sons Bobby Bower and Nigel Bower; daughter Victoria Blackman-Aumonier; son-in-law Alcy Aumonier, daughters-in-law Kay Bower and Lora Bower, grandsons Dominic Bower, Axiom Blackman and Nicholas Bower; granddaughters Daniella Bower, Aimee Blackman and Morgan Bower; sisters Anne Doyne-Ditmus, Margaret Kelly, Marianna Viscountess Monckton of Brenchley, Elizabeth Wainwright, Veronica Slocock, Mary Cox, Monica de Salis; brothers-in-law Ian Cox, Bernard de Salis and Michael Wainwright; many nephews and nieces and faithful friends here and abroad.

A funeral service is to be announced.



PHILIP HILTON, ATTORNEY

“The Rapid Strike was long overdue. The crime rate is out of hand and the only way that we can clear crime is for the police force to take charge.”



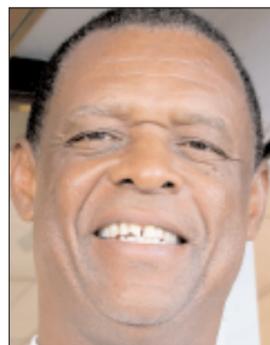
TALLS, CONTRACTOR

“The police only judging books by cover. They must look on the inside of a man. They are only interested in racial profiling.”

What do you think about it?

STREET TALK

LAST week Wednesday, the Royal Bahamas Police Force initiated Operation Rapid Strike in several high crime areas. Their efforts netted 14 suspects on the first night. The Tribune's student interns from Bahamas Academy hit the streets of Nassau yesterday to find out how Bahamians felt about the RBPF's latest crime-fighting strategy.



CARSON HEPBURN, SECURITY

“Something like the Rapid Strike was long overdue and needed to be done from the beginning. We need to enforce groups such as the strike force. On this note, I give the police force credit for the Rapid Strike.”

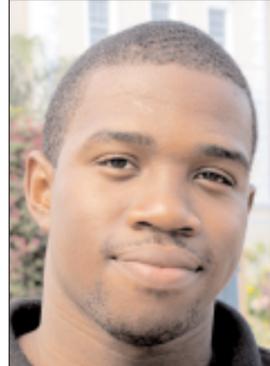
MARGARET SMALL, POLICE DEPARTMENT



“The commissioner is doing an excellent job; we will see progress. Why should we be unsafe? I look forward to not having to lock my car and carry my empty purse.”

PEDRO JOHNSON, STORE MANAGER

“It's about time they started to take control on the country, we shouldn't have to wait until the country deteriorates in order to see improvement. They do a good job but they could do better.”



ASTON BRAYNEN, BANKER

“The Rapid Strike is good; it is better to do something than nothing. It is never too late for progress.”

“The police force must keep it up and be consistent.”

STEPHEN PLAKARIS, FISHERMAN



“They need to capture more criminals.”

CAROLYN PEDICAN, BARTENDER, ABACO



INSIGHT

For the stories behind the news, read *Insight* on Mondays



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BIMCATS 2011



BIMCATS 2011 AGENDA

Wednesday, 02 February 2011	
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Registration
7:00 PM	Welcome Reception/Bahamian Night on the Great Lawn
Thursday, 03 February 2011	
9:00 AM - 10:15 AM	Opening ceremony
Chairman's opening remarks: Mr. Harcourt Brown, Director, Bahamas Department of Labour	
10:30 AM - 11:45 AM	Bahamas local efforts to address the manning shortage Dudley Martinborough, Manager, Bahamas Maritime Cadet Corp Jurnal Smith, Assistant Manager, Manning, Campbell Shipping Other Initiatives in Shore-based Training Guy Gilbert, Senior Vice President, Hutchinson Wharfedale Holdings Raymond Jones, Managing Director, BORCO/VOPAK Terminal Bahamas
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	The MLC 2006: Is the common standards sufficient to address the crew's welfare? Douglas Stevenson, Director, Seaman's Church Institute Peter McEwen, Secretary and Senior Special Advisor, Welfare Fund, Nautical International, Seaman's Union Professor Mike Barnett, Associate Director (Research) Warsaw Maritime Academy
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	LUNCH TIME SPEAKER: Mr. Eric Carey, Executive Director, Bahamas National Trust
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Implementing and complying with the MLC requirements: Challenges to the industry Cruise Line Industry Association (CLIA): Michael Crye, Executive Vice President International Association of Dry Bulk Shipowners (Intercargo): David Jones, Manager
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	MLC 2006: The certification process Class Society round table discussion: American Bureau of Shipping: Dinesh Tharja, Head, Management Systems Certification Bureau Veritas: Fred Handy, Classification Surveyor Det Norske Veritas (DNV): Gordon Hensley Lloyd's Register: Chris Desmond, Manager, External Affairs
7:00 PM - 10 PM	"Fun at the Fish Fry"
Friday, 04 February 2011	
Chairman's opening remarks: Captain Dwain Hutchinson, Deputy Director, Bahamas Maritime Authority	
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM	The regulatory framework: STCW and the Manila amendments Captain Dwain Hutchinson, Deputy Director, Bahamas Maritime Authority United States Coast Guard: Jeff Lantz, Director, Commercial Regulations & Standards Peter Hinchliff OBE, Secretary General, International Chamber of Shipping & International Shipping Federation
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	An industry led development to training and competence standards Jens Bugler, Technical Director, International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA) Philip Wake, Chief Executive, Nautical Institute Rick Harper, Manager, Safety &, Training and Development, Norwegian Cruise Line
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	LUNCH
2:30 PM - 2:50 PM	Maritime Education and Training: Preparation for the new STCW requirements Dr Joseph Hoffman, State University of New York Maritime College
2:50 PM - 3:10 PM	Marine casualty and the human elements Commodore David Squire, Secretary, Marine Accident Investigation International Forum (MAIFF)
3:10 PM - 3:40 PM	Training and development: Regional efforts Dwight Gardner, Chairman, Caribbean Port State Control Committee (CPSCC)
3:40 PM - 4:00 PM	BMA Report and Wrap Up Mr. Ian Fair, Chairman, Bahamas Maritime Authority Mr. Peter John Goussardis, Deputy Chairman, Bahamas Maritime Authority Commodore Davy Rolfe, Managing Director and CEO, Bahamas Maritime Authority
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM	Cocktail Party
7:30 PM - 10:00 PM	EVENING BANQUET KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Ms Clopeta Dombay-Hardy, Director, International Standards Department, International Labour Office

“The Mariner:
Building on the Year
of the Seafarer”



LOCAL NEWS

Family Islands 'safe and secure' despite eight murders in 2010

By NOELLE NICOLLS
Tribune Staff Reporter
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EIGHT murders rocked the Family Islands last year, with the greatest concentration in Abaco and Bimini, according to statistics released Monday as part of the police's "2010 year in review."

Despite the existence of violent crime, the Family Islands are "very safe and secure", said Willard Cunningham, assistant commissioner of police for the Family Islands.

"I wish to say that the Family Islands are very safe and secure and this is due in large part to the excellent police and community relationships throughout the Commonwealth of the Bahamas," said Mr Cunningham.

ningham.

"The community continues to assist the Royal Bahamas Police Force with regards to all offences by giving tips and information, which has led to solving a significant number of these crimes," he said.

Only one of the eight murders recorded in the Family Islands remains unsolved, according to the police.

There were two murders in Abaco and two in Bimini; there was one murder in Andros, Exuma, Long Island and Inagua. In each instance, the Family Island commands received assistance from Central Detective Unit (CDU) officers, who travelled from New Providence.

Extra manpower from New Providence was also called in

last year for major regattas, homecomings and festivals. As a result, Mr Cunningham said, there were no "serious incidents" at any of these events. He highlighted the support from residents and "their good citizenship during these events."

Despite some crime problems, like the spate of burglaries late last year in Harbour Island, there was a reduction in house and shop break-ins, burglaries and armed robberies in the Family Islands last year, said Mr Cunningham.

In the case of Harbour Island, a crime-fighting initiative between local police and CDU helped to clamp down on the problem. Local police arrested five people in connection with the holiday break-ins,

including a juvenile, who was charged with eight counts of burglary and stealing.

"In an effort to increase awareness among residents, police officers participated in numerous walk-about, community meetings, church visitations and school visits. These were all in an effort to reduce the fear of crime and at the same time provide safety tips for the community at large," said Mr Cunningham.

This year, Family Island residents can expect "aggressive stop-and-search initiatives" to continue, as the police seek to

crack down on road traffic infractions.

"The objectives of the Royal Bahamas Police Force is to reduce the fear of crime within the communities, ensure that crime is minimised and strengthen relationships with other government agencies and community partners. We the members of the Royal Bahamas Police Force in the Family Islands will redouble our efforts in 2011 in the fight against crime; as together we strive to make the Bahamas a safer place to live, work, visit and play," he said.

POLICE HUNT FOR ARMED CARJACKER

POLICE are hunting for an armed carjacker who escaped capture in the area of East Street South on Monday night.

Press liaison officer Sergeant Chrislyn Skipplings said police were called to the scene of an armed robbery at Gibbs Corner around 9.15 pm.

Officers were told that during the robbery a victim's car was stolen.

Police issued an all-points bulletin and officers on mobile patrol were able to intercept the stolen vehicle in the area of East Street South.

Sgt Skipplings said police recovered one 9mm pistol and 18 live rounds of ammunition.

However, the suspect jumped out of the stolen vehicle and escaped.

"An intense search is underway to locate the suspect in this matter," said Sgt Skipplings.

Meanwhile, police arrested a Carmichael Road man after officers found a .40 Glock pistol and 12 live rounds of ammunition in his home.

Police executed a search warrant at the home around 7.30pm on Monday.

The man is expected to be charged in the Magistrate's Court sometime this week.

Man gets extension to appeal 20-year sentence, conviction

A MAN sentenced to 20 years imprisonment on an attempted armed robbery charge was granted an extension of time yesterday to appeal his sentence and conviction.

Bradley Saunders, 24, was convicted and sentenced last November for the attempted armed robbery of Joan Algios.

Saunders was in the Court of Appeal yesterday, where his request for an extension was granted.

His appeal is expected to be heard on March 14. He is represented by attorney Donna Major.

Saunders stood trial with 20-year-old Ebenezer Sherman, who was convicted and sentenced to 25 years in prison for the attempted murder of

Algios' friend, New Jersey police officer John Casper on May 14, 2008.

Sergeant Casper was shot in the chest while walking with friends on the Cable Beach strip in the area of Ruby Avenue, not far from the residence of former prime minister Perry Christie.

Mr Casper was vacationing in Nassau at the time, and was attempting to prevent an assailant from snatching Mrs Algios' handbag when he was shot.

MAN CHARGED WITH BODY IN BARREL MURDER

By NATARIO McKENZIE
Tribune Staff Reporter
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A 24-YEAR-OLD man was arraigned in Magistrate's Court yesterday, charged in the murder of an Eleuthera man whose body was found inside a barrel.

John Deieur, alias File YFodra, of Hatchet Bay, Eleuthera, stands accused of killing Alice Saintilam, 65.

It is alleged that Deieur intentionally caused Saintilam's death between January 15 and 19.

The body of Saintilam, of Cambridge Street, Hatchet Bay, was found in a barrel on a track road.

Deieur was not represented by an attorney yesterday during his arraignment before Magistrate Ancella Williams in Court 6, Parliament Street.

When asked whether he understood the charge against



CHARGED: 24-year-old John Deieur appeared in court yesterday. Tim Clarke/Tribune staff

him Deieur told the magistrate, "I didn't kill him."

He was told that he was not required to enter a plea to the murder charge but stated, "I am not guilty."

Deieur was ordered to be remanded to Her Majesty's Prison. The case was adjourned to Court 10, Nassau Street.

Deieur is expected back in court on January 31.

'Actual work imminent' on the Baha Mar project

By CELESTE NIXON
Tribune Staff Reporter
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"ACTUAL work is imminent" on the Baha Mar project, according to the VP of external affairs for the highly anticipated development.

Robert "Sandy" Sands said construction of the single-phase \$2.6 billion project should begin the second or third week of February.

"We have just about completed all legal work for ground breaking," said Mr Sands.

He said they are currently in the process of co-ordinating schedules for special guests to make sure they can all arrive at the same time.

Mr Sands added: "It is very likely that work will start prior to the ground breaking date. Actual work will be imminent."

Hopes are high that the mega-project will provide tremendous economic benefits for the Bahamas, creating thousands of permanent jobs and numerous opportunities for contractors and construction workers.

It is thought that the project will create 4,000 jobs during the construction phase. Some \$400 million in work packages has been designated for Bahamian contractors.

In a previous interview with *The Tribune*, Mr Sands said the development will contribute \$14.8 billion to the Bahamas' Gross Domestic Product over 20 years, and generate \$500 billion in incremental government taxes over 25 years.

Tribune sources say clearing work near the site of the old Nassau Beach Hotel on the Cable Beach strip has already begun. It is thought this may be the site of the ground breaking ceremony.

Documentary focuses on the human impact of murder toll

By MEGAN REYNOLDS
Tribune Staff Reporter
mreynolds@tribunemedia.net

A DOCUMENTARY about the human impact of a devastatingly high murder toll made by Abaco filmmakers Loggerhead Productions has been released on their new video website Conch Salad TV this week.

The seven minute piece "Marching for Justice" by Matthew and Lindsey McCoy, of Hope Town, Elbow Cay, breaks down the brutalising record of 96 murders last year, that is 30 per 100,000 residents, and focuses on the relatives of those who were killed and marched through the streets of Nassau crying out for justice.

Workers Party leader and activist Rodney Moncur has been organising marches to call for murderers to be hanged and the murder accused denied bail since his cousin Khodee Davis was fatally stabbed in May 2008 near Cabbage Beach on Paradise Island.

Mr and Mrs McCoy followed two of these marches, at which hundreds of Bahamians lent their support, but also spoke to relatives of the murdered in depth.

The film features emotional interviews with family members, including a brother of Leonard Johnson, 21, who was stabbed at the Evangelistic Church Temple construction site in Collins Avenue, and Ragged Island church minister



BEREAVED FAMILIES marching for justice.

Marjorie Wallace, whose granddaughter She'Anda Newton, 17, was slain and dumped in an overgrown area off the Charles Saunders Highway.

"Everyone understands that the murder rate is high," Mr McCoy said.

"But the human element of the story seems to be lost in the bigger picture of anarchy."

"We just want to put the real human element out there, and maybe start a conversation about what's going on and what the solutions are."

As well as posting the video, the couple created a website where grieving families can post words and pictures in tribute to the murdered.

"People said they didn't want their brother or their son to be forgotten," Mrs McCoy said.

"So we created the website separately because we wanted

some place to preserve their memory and their story."

Mr and Mrs McCoy hope bereaved families and friends will embrace the website Bahamas Remembers, as they continue their work to build a diverse range of videos for Conch Salad TV.

Since launching the video website with a lively conch-cracking contest on December 1, Loggerhead Productions have posted their Bahamas International Film Festival featured documentary "The Lionfish Invasion," funded by Friends of the Environment, and now Marching for Justice.

Future film plans include an archaeological exploration in Abaco, and a political satire.

To see Marching for Justice and other films log on to www.conchsaladtv.com, and pay tribute to the murdered at www.bahamasremembers.com.

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EDITORIAL/LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Being Bound to Swear to The Dogmas of No Master

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150 years of dieting fads and still no quick fix

WASHINGTON — Before modern weight loss fads, there was William Banting. He invented the low-carb diet of 1863. Even then Americans were trying out advice that urged fish, mutton or "any meat except pork" for breakfast, lunch and dinner — hold the potatoes, please.

It turns out our obsession with weight and how to lose it dates back at least 150 years. And while now we say "overweight" instead of "corpulent" — and obesity has become epidemic — a look back at dieting history shows what hasn't changed is the quest for an easy fix.

"We grossly, grossly underestimate" the difficulty of changing behaviours that fuel obesity, says Clemson University sociologist Ellen Granberg, who examined archives at the Library of Congress. She believes it's important to show "we're not dealing with some brand new, scary phenomenon we've never dealt with before."

Indeed, the aging documents are eerily familiar.

Consider Englishman William Banting's account of losing almost 50 pounds in a year. He did it by shunning "bread, butter, milk, sugar, beer and potatoes, which had been the main (and I thought innocent) elements of my existence" in favour of loads of meat.

His pamphlet, "Letter on Corpulence, Addressed to the Public," quickly crossed the Atlantic and became so popular here that "banting" became slang for dieting, Granberg says.

While obesity has rapidly surged in the last few decades, we first changed from a nation where being plump was desirable into a nation of on-again, off-again dieters around the end of the 19th century, Granberg says.

Before then, people figured a little extra weight might help withstand infectious diseases that vaccines and antibiotics later would tame. It also was a sign of prosperity. But just as doctors today bemoan a high-tech, immobile society, the emergence of trolleys, cars and other machinery in the late 19th century scaled back the sheer number of calories people once burned, Granberg explains. Increasing prosperity meant easier access to food.

"An excess of flesh is to be looked upon as one of the most objectionable forms of disease," the Philadelphia Cookbook declared in 1900. Low-cal cookbooks hadn't arrived yet; the calorie wasn't quite in vogue.

By 1903, La Parle obesity soap that "nev-

er fails to reduce flesh" was selling at a pricey \$1 a bar. The Louisenbad Reduction Salt pledged to "wash away your fat." Soon came an exercise machine, the Graybar Stimulator to jiggle the pounds. Bile Beans promoted a laxative approach. As the U.S. government prepares to update U.S. dietary guidelines next week, the Library of Congress culled its archives and, with Weight Watchers International, gathered experts recently to discuss this country's history of weight loss.

Granberg recounted how real nutrition science was born.

The government's first advice to balance proteins, carbohydrates and fat came in 1894. A few years later, life insurance companies reported that being overweight raised the risk of death. In 1916, the Department of Agriculture came up with the five food groups. Around World War II, charts showing ideal weight-for-height emerged, surprisingly close to what today is considered a healthy body mass index.

Diet foods quickly followed, as did weight loss support groups like Overeaters Anonymous and Weight Watchers — putting today's diet infrastructure in place by 1970, Granberg says. Yet fast-forward and two-thirds of Americans today are either overweight or obese, and childhood obesity has tripled in the past three decades. Weight-loss surgery is skyrocketing. Diet pills have been pulled from the market for deadly side effects, with only a few possible new ones in the pipeline.

More and more, specialists question how our society and culture fuel overeating.

"Should it be socially desirable to walk down the street with a 30-ounce Big Gulp" drink? asks Patrick O'Neill, president-elect of The Obesity Society and weight-management director at the Medical University of South Carolina.

Negotiating a weight-loss menu for a family with different food preferences is a minefield that affects how people feel about themselves and their relationships with loved ones, adds Clemson's Granberg, who began studying the sociology of obesity after losing 120 pounds herself.

"If what you need is a nutritionally sound, healthful weight-loss plan, you can get 100 of them," she says. "That, we have figured out in the last 100 years. It's how to do all this other stuff that I think is the real challenge."

(This article was written by Lauran Neergaard, AP Medical Writer).

Politics – a contest for government favours?

EDITOR, The Tribune.

The Bahamas Parliament recently debated amendments to the Business Licence Act in an effort to increase revenue as a result of the governments precarious financial position. In the process, some businesses were granted lower tax rates than others.

Mr. Ryan Pinder, MP for Elizabeth, wondering why government chose to lower the tax for certain businesses, claimed they were "generally supporters of the FNM" and this was public policy for special interest groups. (*The Tribune*, Thursday, January 20, 2011).

Of course special interest politics, if that's what we're seeing here, is nothing new.

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

As Dr. Steve Horwitz points out recently in *The Freeman* "...all political officials gain from providing benefits to the private sector, hoping different politicians and bureaucrats will do better is just rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic."

Mr. Pinder confirms this when he is quoted as saying: "Enough with the catering to special interests. An alternative would be for a reduced business license fee for small, growing companies..." etc, etc.

In other words, the special interest group that

should get the benefits using the power of Government should be chosen by Mr. Pinder and not the current Minister of Finance.

If it is all special interest policymaking, they're both wrong. This then begs the question if any government has the right to dig into taxpayer wallets whenever they've borrowed and spent the country into a difficult spot like the world recession has highlighted.

If only for future generations, politics should be more than a fight to determine who gets the privilege to grant government favours at taxpayer expense?

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Gambling laws must not be changed because someone is having problem with bottom line

EDITOR, The Tribune.

It took a while to digest what was being put forth in the interview of Atlantis CEO, Mr George Markantonis.

He had a lot to say about what he expected from the Government of the Bahamas, but the context of his demands had more to do with the impact those demands would have on the Bahamian people.

He uses the word reform very loosely but what he is talking about is a radical liberalisation of the gambling laws in the Bahamas.

The tone of the interview suggested that this was a decision the Government could make on its own, and there was a kind of immediacy that gave me the impression that the CEO was more concerned about ongoing profitability, but this is a matter that will be decided by the Government and the people of the

Bahamas. The interpretation of what was said, required a word study.

Reform means one thing and liberalisation means something else and we usually take our cues from the theologians and religionists as we try to make sense of these words in every day life, but one rule is supreme, you have to find the context.

I have not seen the report that the Minister of Tourism is presenting next month, but knowing what was discussed in the past and the boundaries of the current legislation, I can take a wild guess and speculate that those recommendations in that report will focus on the issue of Bahamians being able to gamble anywhere in the Bahamas.

Personally, I have a problem with gambling in the Bahamas, but the decision on the issue of liberalisation should not be driven by the fact that Atlantis is fearful of the competition that will come from Jamaica.

The bottom line is that anticipated losses of Atlantis will be made up for by the government affecting legislation that will allow Bahamians to gamble over the bridge and if this is what the deal is, it is no deal at all.

We will be "paying" with some money that we cannot afford to spend. If the gam-

bling laws are amended in this regard, then Atlantis will truly be the largest "employer" in the Bahamas.

As a precaution, the Government has to regulate what is going on with gambling, locally, if just to avoid the hypocritical backlash that is sure to follow if "liberalisation" happens. It will be much easier to "reform" or "liberalise" since both sides of the gambling spectrum are regulated and then at that point the citizens of the nation decide.

The sticking point being that the Bridge allows for two way traffic, since gambling over the hill is just as lucrative as gambling on Paradise Island or Cable Beach can be just as lucrative as gambling in Nassau.

Every time the Prime Minister has a chance to take a breather, it seems like something comes up, and this issue has referendum written all over it.

Our laws on gambling may need change, adjustment or liberalisation, but it must not be done because someone is having a problem with their bottom line.

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LOCAL NEWS

**STATISTICS
'LIKELY TO
SHOW 2010
HAD MOST
VISITORS'**

A FINAL tally of last year's tourism statistics will likely show that 2010 was the year the Bahamas received its highest number of visitors.

Tourism Permanent Secretary Hyacinth Pratt made this statement at the Cacique Awards mass at St Barnabas Anglican Church last Sunday.

Addressing the congregation, Ms Pratt said it is only the second time in history that the Bahamas received more than five million visitors.

Spending

Most of the visitors were cruise passengers, and the ministry is now looking to attract more stopover visitors, who traditionally are higher spending visitors, she said.

The church service served as a national call for personal and professional improvement in the tourism sector.

As industry representatives attended the service before the Cacique Awards are held on Friday, Canon Basil L Tynes focused on the need for positive change in the country. He said Bahamians must look for divine assistance as they seek to better themselves and their competitive position. "I want to challenge you all in tourism like the rest of us, stop looking at the challenges of the situation. Stop looking at the darkness of the hour," he said.

Development

Canon Tynes said the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation cannot continue to do the same things if it is to remain on the cutting edge of developments.

"Some of you have to change," he said.

Ms Pratt said the ministry is moving to improve business by reorganising and making several positive changes.

At the moment, she said, teams have been assembled within the ministry to make steps toward reinvigorating the visitor's experience and many other areas.

While the high visitor numbers are something to be celebrated, Ms Pratt said "we still must improve on many aspects of our product and service to keep our visitors satisfied."

"While we are busy attracting millions of visitors, we must also be busy giving them the type of service and experiences that will sustain our business."

The Cacique Awards will be held at the Rainforest Theatre, Wyndham Nassau Beach on Friday at 8pm.

The awards, which are designed to honour and encourage top performers in tourism and related areas, will bestow Duho trophies on winners in 18 categories.

**Bahamas signs agreement to see
firearms tagged and tracked**

By **KHYLE QUINCY PARKER**
Press Attaché
Embassy of the
Bahamas

WASHINGTON, DC – The Bahamas signed an anti-gun co-operation agreement with hemispheric partners on Tuesday which will make it possible for firearms to be marked and tracked.

The agreement, "Promoting Firearms Marking in Latin America and the Caribbean" will give local law enforcement agencies access to the training and equipment needed to make gun tracking possible.

Ambassador Cornelius Smith, permanent representative of the Bahamas to the Organisation of American States (OAS), called the project "very important for [The Bahamas] because we have become a transit point for drugs and small arms."

"The marking of firearms helps us identify the weapons that have been used in criminal activity, and therefore helps to combat crime in the region," he said.

Other parties to the co-operation agreement are: the General Secretariat of the OAS (GS/OAS) and the governments of Costa Rica, Paraguay and Uruguay.

These are the first countries to sign such an agreement in the framework of the Inter-American Con-

REPRESENTATIVES from the Bahamas, Costa Rica, Paraguay, Uruguay, the US and the OAS General Secretariat signed a joint co-operation agreement aimed at increasing the ability of law enforcement to track light arms to their point of origin. Photo/OAS



vention against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Related Materials (CIFTA).

CIFTA posits that marking firearms helps combat illicit gun trafficking as it allows authorities to identify seized weapons to determine their origin.

Through this agreement, the OAS aims to strengthen national capacities in illicit firearms trafficking and provide marking

equipment and training to beneficiary countries.

In accordance with the pact, the OAS agreed to provide a marking machine and accessories to the Ministry of National Security and provide training in the use of this equipment.

These assets, once delivered, will become the property of the government of the Bahamas.

The Bahamas, in turn, is obligated to provide the GS/OAS with information

on the country's capacity and needs with respect to firearms marking, recording and tracing.

The Bahamas also agreed – among other things – to co-operate with the GS/OAS on follow-up missions and to mark an average of 100 firearms per month for the first 12 months after receiving the machine.

During the signing ceremony, OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza affirmed the organisation's intent to develop and strengthen national capacities of the co-operating countries to combat illicit-arms trafficking through: advice on the development of model legislation, exchange of best practices, gathering and analysing statistical information, and offering technical assistance.

Representatives of the

governments of Costa Rica, Paraguay and Uruguay also called for gun crime to be considered a major scourge that must be faced by every nation.

The project is being funded by the United States. US permanent representative, Ambassador Carmen Lomellin, encouraged OAS member states to continue implementing measures to combat this scourge.

"Concrete steps by individual countries and collective steps by regional and international organisations can go a long way through combating arms trafficking," she said.

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Egypt offers scholarships to Bahamians

By BETTY VEDRINE

TWO scholarships and possibly a third will be available to Bahamians wishing to pursue an education in Egypt.

The scholarships – one in agriculture and the other in the Arabic language – are being offered by the Egyptian government. The third scholarship, which is currently not yet confirmed, would be in tourism.

The announcement was made on Monday during a courtesy call on Education Minister Desmond Bannister by Assistant Foreign Minister for the Americas El Hussein Abdelwahab and Egyptian Ambassador to the Bahamas (stationed in the Republic of Cuba) Tarek Elwassimy.

The Egyptian delegates hope to form partnerships with the various government sectors in order to facilitate the scholarships. The meeting was held at the Ministry of Education on East Street South.

Mr Bannister welcomed the Egyptian delegates and thanked them for their “generous” gift.

“We are very pleased to have you here in the Bahamas and pleased to hear that there are possibly some opportunity available for Bahamians wishing to pursue higher education in your country,” the minister said.

Mr Abdelwahab said he was delighted to be in the Bahamas for the second time.

“It gives us great pleasure to be in the Bahamas – our second time for both of us,” he said. “The first time as a tourist and now



PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Deputy Director of Education Patricia Collins; Director of Education for Higher Learning Dr Leon Higgs; Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education Elma Garraway; Assistant Foreign Minister for the Americas El Hussein Abdelwahab; Education Minister Desmond Bannister; Egyptian Ambassador to the Bahamas, Tarek Elwassimy and Director of Education Lionel Sands.

as an official trying to promote our relationship with your country.”

Mr Bannister added that the scholarships would give Bahamians the opportunity to be exposed to another culture.

“As you know, education bridges gaps we sometimes don’t perceive to be there. We are grateful for these opportunities and hopefully students from your country would also wish to pursue education and other cultural exchanges available in our country,” he said.

The delegates also paid visits to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Brent Symonette; Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Charles Maynard and the Minister of Tourism and Aviation Senator Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace.



ASSISTANT FOREIGN MINISTER for the Americas El Hussein Abdelwahab and Egyptian Ambassador to the Bahamas Tarek Elwassimy pay a courtesy call on Minister of Education Desmond Bannister at the Ministry of Education. Pictured left to right: Minister Bannister, Mr Abdelwahab and Mr. Elwassimy.

Bahamas to host International Society of Family Law regional conference

MORE than 40 distinguished presenters from around the world are set to deliver papers at the International Society of Family Law regional conference in March.

Presenters will be jurists, legal scholars, psychologists, social workers and educators from the Caribbean, Canada, the UK, the US, Germany, Sweden and Serbia.

Among them will be Lord Justice Matthew Thorpe from the Court of Appeal of England and Wales; Justice Nancy Flatters from the Calgary Family and Youth Court in Alberta, Canada; Professor Dr Jane Adolphe of Ave Maria Law School, an expert in family law, international law, criminal law and canon law, who has acted as the delegate for the Holy See at various regional and international conferences; and Professor Dr Bill Doherty of the University of Minnesota, an educator, researcher, writer, therapist and media personality.

The theme of the conference is the legal and social consequences of the disintegration and reintegration of families.

Matters to be discussed include: marriage and divorce, cohabitation, property distribution, mediation, paternity and inheritance; transracial, inter-country and same-sex adoption; assisted reproduction and ethical issues, child development, international child abduction, juvenile delin-

quency, domestic violence, human rights and the family and same sex marriages.

Participants have been urged to take advantage of the discount for early registration.

The planning committee announced that “early bird registration” will save participants \$50, as from February 1, the cost will increase from \$350 to \$400.

The statement said the registration fee includes conference materials, breakfast, lunch and snacks.

The conference will take place from March 17 to 19 at the British Colonial Hilton Hotel. It is being hosted by the Eugene Dupuch Law School.

Registration forms are available on the conference’s website:

<http://www.law2.byu.edu/isfl/2011bahamasconf>.

On the morning of March 17, there will be a pre-conference Judges’ Forum on Judicial Dispute Resolution conducted by Justice Flatters and a simultaneous Students’ Forum conducted by Dr Leighton Jackson of UWI Faculty of Law in Jamaica, Tracy Robinson of UWI Faculty of Law at Cave Hill and Lord Justice Thorpe.

“Participants will benefit from an attractive rate from the conference hotel and a discounted airfare from American Airlines. Attractive tours to scenic tourist sites, including Atlantis on Paradise Island have been planned,” the planning committee said.

STUDENTS WELCOMED TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE



GOVERNOR-General Sir Arthur Foulkes welcomed to Government House on Monday students of Henderson College who completed the Heritage Site Certification Course for the Bahamas in Partnership with the United States National Park Programme.

Pictured left to right seated: Dr Ann Higgins; Dr Rita Pratt, president of Henderson College; Sir Arthur; Gladys Johnson-Sands, former Consul General. Standing: Alecca Ramsey, Clifton Heritage National Park; Craig Mortimer, special projects, Ministry of Tourism;

Asa Thompson, Clifton Heritage National Park; Vernita Pratt, Clifton Heritage National Park; Eden Zonicle, Cat Island; and Madelyn Turnquest, grounds supervisor, Clifton Heritage National Park.

Derek Smith/BIS

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Sponsors asked to help keep depression hotline open



SHAWN FEASTER

MAN WANTED FOR QUESTIONING

POLICE are on the lookout for Shawn Feaster who is wanted for questioning in connection with stolen vehicles.

The Central Detective Unit has issued an all-points bulletin for the 38-year-old whose last known address is Buttonwood Avenue in Pinewood Gardens.

He has a brown complexion, is 5'9" tall and weighs approximately 170lbs with a slim build.

Police caution that he is considered armed and dangerous.

Anyone with information on Feaster's whereabouts should call police at 919/911, the Central Detective Unit at 502-9930/9991, the Police Control Room 322-3333, Crime Stoppers 328-8477 or the nearest police station.

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Suicides prompt Dept of Social Services to seek help

Mavis Darling Hill, deputy director of Department of Social Services during an interview at her office last Friday.

The hotline is a joint initiative between the Government and the accounting firm Grant Thornton Bahamas; it was officially launched by Minister of Labour and Social Development Senator Dion Foulkes.

The deputy director said she was approached in August or September 2010 by Andy Paul Gomez, managing partner of Grant

Thornton Bahamas, after he became concerned over the number of persons committing or attempting to commit suicide; persons having difficulties handling their problems or struggling with being unemployed.

The accounting firm has handled all the expenses that have been incurred since the initiative began, she said.

"Grant Thornton started the initiative and we are very grateful to them," Mrs Darling Hill said.

"However, it can be

expensive just for one corporation to take this service on; it really is an unselfish deed."

Although, Mr Gomez has been in talks with another firm to take over the expenses starting in February, the ministry is also asking other corporate sponsors to come onboard.

Mrs Darling Hill said persons believe that once things are going well for them, the problems or dilemmas affecting others are not their concern.

"However, our lives are intertwined and we ought to realise that if an individual is having a difficult time, his or her children might be affected as well, and that is where the problem comes into play. That is where we get lots of problems with crime.

"Parents are upset and not able to cope properly or adequately, and so it is transferred to their children who feel that the system is not being very kind to them. So they get to the point where they are constantly angry, not understanding why there they angry and they strike out at society," she said.

"So we are asking business houses throughout the Bahamas to come forward and assist."

Mrs Darling Hill also reminded the public that all calls to the hotline are confidential.

She noted that some persons have been very forthcoming, while others have been very hesitant to give information that could lead to further assistance.

She said family, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances of persons having problems should encourage them to utilise the service, but if they keep meeting resistance, and the situation seems dire, then the concerned persons should call the hotline to receive help on how else to proceed.

Dr Kirk Christie, a psychiatrist at the Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre, is conducting sessions with the counsellors to keep their skills sharp, she said.

Mrs Darling Hill thanked the other partners of the programme including the Bahamas Telecommunications Department, which has been supplying the cell phones, and the police who lend their assistance when callers need immediate attention as the counsellors cannot go to a scene for themselves.

"We do not want to lose a life because someone is having a difficulty. There is always a solution and that is what we are trying to preach here," she said.

Anyone experiencing difficulties, stress, depression or suicidal thoughts is asked to call the hotline at 322-2763.

Immigration Dept 'does not have handle on citizenship applications backlog'

By SIMON LEWIS

THE Department of Immigration still does not have a handle on the backlog of citizenship applications, but is working through them as quickly as possible, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Brent Symonette said during his visit to Freeport last week.

Mr Symonette was in Grand Bahama to welcome 16 new Bahamian citizens, one of whom was born in the Turks and Caicos Islands and has been living in the Bahamas for some 56 years.

The Foreign Affairs Minister said that they are trying to clear up the back log of persons applying for citizenship and that he tries to come to Grand Bahama on a regular basis to take part in the swearing-in ceremonies.

He said there are a number of persons born in the Bahamas who have lived here all their lives, went through the school system, and "they obviously have a sense of frustration that they don't have citizenship."

"They feel they are Bahamian, they know our symbols, they are a part of our community.

"So for those persons who have been here for a long time and meet the requirements, we are trying to swear them in so they become citizens," he said.

With respect to the Immigration Board, the Deputy Prime Minister said it meets every Monday in Nassau and that he tries to meet with the board in Grand Bahama once a month.

Agenda

He noted, however, that occasionally the board in Grand Bahama would fax an agenda down to Nassau for approval, particularly the urgent ones.

He said part of the problem regarding timely granting of work permits is largely the Immigration Department is still manual but once it comes fully into the electronic system, there should be a turnaround.

Mr Symonette said he recently toured the new government complex under construction on the Mall in Freeport, and that the contractor, Fletcher McIntosh, is "on time" with his work.

The Department of Immigration is looking forward to relocating from its current location.

"If any of you have toured the back offices of Immigration, I really admire those persons who work under those conditions, so we hope in August/September to be in the new offices and that should give them a new environment to work in," he said.

Focusing on unemployment, the minister brought up the mindset of some Bahamians with respect to certain jobs. He noted the number of foreign persons working at Sanitation Services and the few Bahamians taking advantage of the opportunities to be maid and gardeners.

Mr Symonette also advised that his ministry has started a new electronic work permit, a companion project with the Passport Office.

He said the card will be computer generated with all the information regarding the holder, eliminating much of the questioning process when it's time for renewal.



DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER: Brent Symonette in Freeport

He said this will apply for work visas, permanent residents and more.

This process has already started in Nassau.

The Foreign Affairs Minister added that he also took a look at the Passport Office, which will be re-located to the new building when completed.

Passports

He said that during 2010, the Department in Grand Bahama issued some 8,800 passports. He feels that they are doing well and have "ironed out most of the kinks."

During his two-day visit to Grand Bahama, Mr Symonette met with 13 executives from several major companies, including Grand Bahama Power, Grand Bahama Ship Yard, Pharmachem and Our Lucaya Resort during his two-day visit to the island.

He also met with two top executives from the Professional Engineers Board as well as addressing participants attending the International Business and Finance Summit held at the Our Lucaya Resort January 21 - 23.



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'Greatest single threat' to Bahamas seafood resources

By LARRY SMITH

A RECENT report by a leading University of Miami marine scientist has confirmed that poaching by commercial fishermen from the Dominican Republic is the greatest single threat to Bahamian seafood resources.

The report on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing was produced for the Bahamas Lobster Fisheries Improvement Project. This initiative is sponsored by local seafood processors in a bid to win endorsement for Bahamian crawfish exports under the European Union's new Catch Certification programme.

Without this endorsement, which is aimed at reducing the over-exploitation of global fishery resources, Bahamian lobsters will be banned from the EU. And this lucrative market takes about 40 per cent of the 12.5 million lobsters we legally export every year (based on a four-year average), a catch valued at more than \$87 million.

EU certification requires that lobsters are received only from licensed vessels using legal methods – meaning that only crawfish of legal size and condition are harvested. All fishery products must be properly documented upon landing, with guarantees that exports are not derived from IUU fishing.

Ironically, this is one of the main difficulties in dealing with illegal fishing in Bahamian waters. The Dominican Republic has a population of 9.6 million (compared to only 353,000 Bahamians), and it receives more than four mil-



TOUGH CALL
LARRY SMITH

lion air/hotel visitors annually. So that country does not need to export seafood products and is immune to pressures from EU regulations.

Along the northern Dominican Republic coast are three major ports and several huge resort centres, one of which – Punta Cana – has more hotel rooms than the entire Bahamas. The size of the Dominican tourism industry presents an almost unlimited demand for luxury seafood. And Punta Cana hotels have lobster on the menu for US\$16, about half the price of a typical lobster tail dinner in Nassau.

As well, American statistics show that 89,000 pounds of lobster tails were legally imported from the Dominican Republic in the past year, but according to international conservation organizations, there are no commercially viable stocks of spiny lobsters in Dominican Republic waters. In these circumstances, it is obvious where the lobsters for Dominican resorts and exporters are coming from.

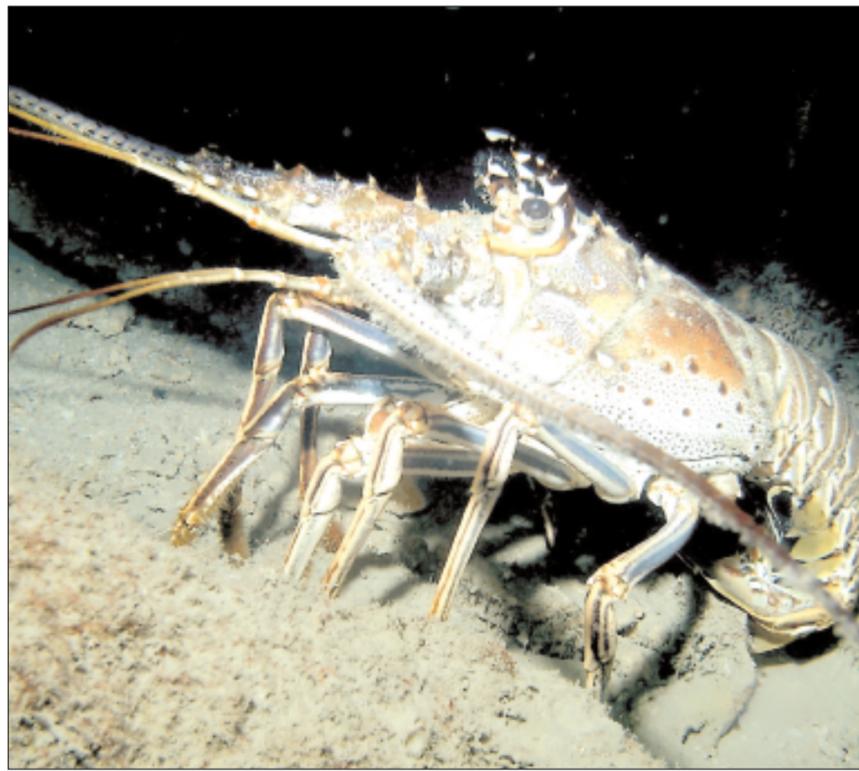
From the Dominican Republic's northern coast, it takes less than three days to reach the Great Bahama Bank in a fishing vessel making 10-12 knots. These vessels are typically 65 feet long, and each is attended by a number of smaller skiffs. Fishermen operate

from the skiffs using hookahs and spears, at depths well below 60 feet. And divers fish to depths of over 200 feet, reaching deep reef resources not legally fished by Bahamians, according to the IUU report.

"The potential for large illegal lobster landings in the Dominican Republic is huge. The implications in terms of lost jobs, lost revenue to the government, and lost fisheries resources is in the tens of millions of dollars," the IUU report warned. "This is a serious threat to national security and economic growth."

The report was produced by Dr Kathleen Sullivan Sealey, of the University of Miami's highly respected Rosenstiel School of Marine Science. She has decades of experience working in marine conservation in the Bahamas and was formerly Dean of the College of the Bahamas science division.

Crawfish are the most important marine resource we have, so we need to take care of it. In addition to export earnings, this fishery provides jobs, economic diversity and is an important tourist attraction. Aside from recreational fishing by visitors, lobster meals are one of the highlights of visiting The Bahamas, and interviews confirm that diners



CRAWFISH are the most important marine resource we have.

would like to enjoy a guilt-free meal. Bahamians also eat lobster, and expect this seafood to remain affordable for the general population.

But in order to protect this resource, we need accurate information, and little or none has been available on the scale or intensity of illegal fishing or for legal, non-commercial fishing in the Bahamas. This undermines fishery management efforts and places the resource at greater risk of over-exploitation. The IUU report is an attempt to address this deficiency by looking at consumption by restaurants, recreational fishers and commercial fishers, including poachers.

Illegal fishing is the harvesting of lobster by any means in violation of the existing laws and regulations, including poaching, taking undersized lobsters, taking lobsters out of season or using destructive methods such as bleach. Unreported fishing includes lobsters that are caught, sold and consumed locally by Bahamians and visitors, or legally exported under the sportfishing regulations.

Sullivan Sealey surveyed restaurants and resorts; interviewed yachters, tourists, Defence Force officers and local fishermen; examined data from seafood processors, and looked at the lobster market in the Dominican Republic. The main conclusions from this research are that restaurants may account for 570,000 illegal lobsters a year – about 5 per cent of the current export quantity; while the unreported catch could be some 1.5 million lobsters – about 12 per cent of known export landings.

By far the biggest drain on the resource is illegal fishing by foreign vessels, mostly from the Dominican Republic. US law prohibits the import of fishery products that have been illegally taken, possessed, transported or sold. This includes the shipment of lobster from The Bahamas without export permits, or taken by foreign nationals in excess of the sportfishing limits (currently six lobsters per person). The Cuban fishing industry is state controlled, and since the 1980 sinking of HMBS Flamingo by the Cuban Air Force, there have been few reports of poaching by Cuban vessels.

Nevertheless, "Foreign fishing vessels operate across the southern Bahamas, venturing further north and across the Great Bahama Banks during the summer when the lobster fishery is closed to Bahamians," Sullivan Sealey said. "There are no accessible records of sightings of foreign fishing vessels, but anecdotal information puts the number at about six per month. Reports of illegal immigrants from Honduras and the Dominican Republic working on Bahamian fishing vessels have also been verified."

Her report says it could be concluded from the interviews with Defence Force officers that the interdiction of poachers is not a priority for the patrol vessels. "The RBDF is itself a significant fishing entity, with both shipboard and island-based personnel engaging in recreational fishing as a way to supplement incomes."

Sullivan Sealey estimated the number of lobsters taken out of Bahamian waters by poachers based on 30 vessels making six trips a year, with a catch of 10,000 pounds per trip. "This conservative estimate of illegal landings is a staggering 35 per cent (or 4.3 million) of the known export of 12.5 million lobsters from the Bahamas."

However, she pointed out that as many as 65 fishing vessels could be operating from northern Dominican Republic ports, and lobsters are not their only target. Conch, grouper and other finfish are also taken, as all are highly marketable in the Dominican Republic. And each vessel could land over 70,000 pounds of catch per trip. "The key to reducing the illegal fishing loss is to prevent illegal fishers from entering Bahamian waters," the report said. "The process of seizures and prosecutions, along with the cost associated with holding the vessels, crew and catch is largely ineffective. There are charges of corruption, and clearly a strong motivation with the amount of money involved in the sale of lobsters."

Diplomatic efforts to address the problem are likely to be more effective, the report said, along with identifying the vessels involved and pursuing their financiers. National Security Minister Tommy Turnquest told me that the government was already pursuing this option and a spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said a Bahamian ambassador to the Dominican Republic would soon be appointed to take matters further.

"The government is also providing increased resources to the RBDF to better equip them to deal with this problem," Turnquest said. "This includes the decentralization of the Defence Force with boats stationed to respond quickly. A base is being developed at Gun Point, Ragged Island, which is close to the Great Bahama Bank, our main fishing grounds."

According to Dr Patricia Rodgers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one of the problems is that poachers have been receiving fairly light penalties and are then released. "It is my understanding that the relevant Ministries are now seeking to ensure that persons or entities who poach in our waters are charged to the full extent of the law and the resultant sentences are also to be published."

Director of Marine Resources Michael Braynen told me his department was "extremely concerned about IUU fishing in terms of its impact on fishermen, on government revenues, and even more significantly on our fishery resources themselves." He said British fisheries consultant Paul Medley has been working on a stock assessment for the seafood processors, which won't be released until after a series of peer reviews by other scientists later this year.

Meanwhile, Sullivan Sealey reports that anecdotal evidence of migrating lobsters, the abundance of lobsters in nearshore habitats, and the success rate of lobster condos in fisheries landings, all suggest that crawfish numbers are declining. Although Medley's preliminary appraisal indicates that the fishery is still in fairly good shape, a staggering number of lobsters are being removed from Bahamian waters each year – more than 18 million, according to Sullivan Sealey's estimates.

She also pointed to the historical damage to lobster habitat throughout the Bahamas. Even on islands with relatively small human populations, she has documented damage at more than 60 per cent of coastal survey sites she has worked on due to the use of bleach and explosives, and through destruction of coastal wetlands and mangrove creeks that provide juvenile lobster habitat.

Braynen also acknowledged that poaching appears to be increasing year on year, although it is difficult to say by how much.

The only indicator he could offer was that the standard of the Dominican boats being apprehended in Bahamian waters is much improved lately, a sign that greater investments are being justified by the illicit returns.

"The greatest number of lobsters caught and removed from the ecosystem is likely through illegal foreign fishing in Bahamian waters," Sullivan Sealey concluded. And she confirmed the existence of a large domestic market for lobster in the Dominican Republic, with a fishing fleet capable of accessing Bahamian waters.

"Clearly, the most effort should be put into the documentation and monitoring of illegal fisheries landings in the Dominican Republic," she told me. "It is important for the Bahamas to make formal complaints to the Dominican Republic, and ultimately, you have to deal with who is funding this – better boats, more fuel, travelling further – there has to be a lot of money involved."

What do you think?
Send comments to
larry@tribunemedia.net
Or visit www.bahamapundit.com

Tribune Trivia

Yesterday's Question

Name one of the three gyms where Jan Johnson trains for competition.

Yesterday's Answer

BodyZone, Club One Bahamas or Mystical Gym.

Yesterday's Winners

Senemae Kelly

3pts

Barbara Smith

2pts

Lee McCoy

1pt

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Egyptians denounce Mubarak and clash with riot police

HAMZA HENDAWI,
Associated Press
CAIRO

Egyptian police fired tear gas and rubber bullets and beat protesters to clear thousands of people from a central Cairo square Wednesday after the biggest demonstrations in years against President Hosni Mubarak's authoritarian rule.

Two protesters and a police officer were killed in the nationwide demonstrations inspired by Tunisia's uprising, which also demanded a solution to Egypt's grinding poverty and were likely to fuel growing dissent in a presidential election year.

Mobilized largely on the Internet, the waves of protesters filled Cairo's central Tahrir — or Liberation — Square on Tuesday, some hurling rocks and climbing atop armored police trucks.

"Down with Hosni Mubarak, down with the tyrant," chanted the crowds. "We don't want you!" they screamed as thousands of riot police deployed in a massive security operation that failed to quell the protests.

As night fell, thousands of demonstrators stood their ground for what they vowed would be an all-night sit-in in Tahrir Square just steps away from parliament and other government buildings — blocking the streets and setting the stage for even more dramatic confrontations.

A large security force moved in around 1 a.m. Wednesday, arresting people, chasing others into side streets and filling the square with clouds of tear gas. Protesters collapsed on the ground with breathing problems amid the heavy volleys of tear gas.

The sound of what appeared to be automatic weapons fire could be heard as riot police and plainclothes officers chased several hundred protesters who scrambled onto the main road along the Nile in downtown Cairo. Some 20 officers were seen brutally beating one protester with truncheons.

"It got broken up ugly with everything, shooting, water cannon and (police) running with the sticks," said Gigi Ibrahim, who was among the last protesters to leave the square. "It was a field of tear gas. The square emptied out so fast."

Ibrahim said she was hit in her back with something that felt like a rock. "Some people were hit in their faces."

Some protesters turned violent amid the crackdown. They knocked down an empty white police booth and dragged it for several yards before setting it on fire, chanting that they want to oust the regime. A police pickup truck was overturned and set ablaze behind the famed Egyptian Museum. Protesters also set fire to a metal barricade and blocked traffic on a major bridge over the Nile.

Police at the bridge fired tear gas and protesters mounted a charge, forcing officers to retreat, though they quickly regrouped. Two protesters with bleeding head wounds were carried off in ambulances.

Well after midnight, the smell of tear gas drifted throughout central Cairo and riot police remained deployed in large numbers. Tahrir Square looked like a battlefield covered with rocks and debris. The gates of the ruling party headquarters near the square were smashed.

Scattered groups of protesters were holding



PROTESTS: Police are engulfed by their own tear gas at a demonstration in Cairo, Egypt Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2011. Thousands of anti-government protesters, some hurling rocks and climbing atop an armored police truck, clashed with riot police Tuesday in the center of Cairo in a Tunisia-inspired demonstration to demand the end of Hosni Mubarak's nearly 30 years in power. (AP Photo/Nasser Nasser)

out in several areas. Many were chased by police vehicles into the Shubra neighborhood, where the streets were strewn with rocks in a sign of a heavy confrontation.

Discontent with life in Egypt's authoritarian police state has simmered under the surface for years. However, it is Tunisia's popular uprising, which forced that nation's autocratic ruler from power, that appears to have pushed young Egyptians into the streets, many for the first time.

"This is the first time I am protesting, but we have been a cowardly nation. We have to finally say no," said Ismail Syed, a hotel worker who struggles to live on a salary of \$50 a month.

"We want to see change, just like in Tunisia," said 24-year-old Lamia Rayan.

Revolution

Dubbed a "day of revolution against torture, poverty, corruption and unemployment," Tuesday's protests in cities across Egypt began peacefully, with police at first showing unusual restraint in what appeared to be a calculated strategy to avoid further sully the image of a security apparatus widely criticized as corrupt and violent.

With discontent growing over economic woes and the toppling of Tunisia's president resonating in the region, it was an acknowledgment of the need to tread softly by an Egyptian government that normally responds with swift retribution to any dissent.

But as crowds filled Tahrir Square — waving Egyptian and Tunisian flags and adopting the same protest chants that rang out in the streets of Tunis — security personnel changed tactics and the protest turned violent.

At one point, demonstrators attacked a water cannon truck, opening the driver's door and forcing the man out of the vehicle. As protesters

hurling rocks and dragged metal barricades, officers beat them back with batons.

Protesters emerged stumbling amid clouds of acrid tear gas, coughing and covering their faces with scarves. Some had blood streaming down their faces. One man fainted. Police dragged some away and clubbed a journalist, smashing her glasses and seizing her camera.

The sight of officers beating demonstrators had particular resonance because Tuesday was a national holiday honoring the much-feared police.

Like the Tunisian protests, the calls to rally in Egypt went out on Facebook and Twitter, with 90,000 people voicing their support. Throughout the day organizers used Twitter to give minute-by-minute instructions about where to gather in an attempt to outmaneuver the police, until the government blocked it in the late afternoon. Twitter announced that its service had been blocked in Egypt at about 11 a.m. EST (1600 GMT), and said that Twitter and its applications had been affected.

After remaining silent throughout the day, Egypt's government called Tuesday night for an end to the protests. The Interior Ministry, which controls the security forces, said authorities wanted to let the protesters express their opinions and accused the crowds of "insisting on provocation."

"Some threw rocks at police ... and others carried out acts of rioting and damage to state institutions," it said. The ruling party said some 30,000 protesters had turned out across the country.

"Egyptians have the right to express themselves," said Egypt's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hosam Zaki. In Washington, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Egypt's government, a key U.S. ally in the Middle East, was stable and Egyptians have the right to protest, though she urged all parties to avoid violence.

The dead in Tuesday's violence included a policeman who was hit in the head with a rock in

Cairo, and two protesters who died in the city of Suez east of Cairo, an Interior Ministry official said.

Nearly half of Egypt's 80 million people live under or just above the poverty line, set by the U.N. at \$2 a day. The widespread poverty, high unemployment and rising food prices pose a threat to Mubarak's regime at a time when tensions between Muslims and Christians are adding to the nation's woes.

"I support change," said Sami Imam, a 53-year-old retired teacher who took part in Tuesday's protests. "The police cannot kill us because we, to all practical purposes, are already dead," said the father of four, clutching Egypt's red, white and black flag.

"I have not visited the butcher in six months," he said, in a reference to Egypt's rising meat prices. Adding to the uncertainty is that Mubarak, 82 and ailing, has yet to say whether he plans to run for another six-year term in office. Mubarak has not appointed a deputy since he became president in 1981 and is widely thought to be grooming his son Gamal to succeed him.

The protests also follow a parliamentary election marred by allegations of widespread fraud that saw Mubarak's ruling National Democratic Party win all but a small number of the chamber's 518 seats. In recent weeks, Mubarak and his son have repeatedly vowed to ensure that ambitious economic reforms engineered by the younger Mubarak over the past decade filter down to the poor. But that has not happened and there has been a marked increase in the frequency of street protests over the economy.

In another parallel with Tunisia, the protests drew energy from the death of a single young man: a young Egyptian named Khaled Said whose family and witnesses say was beaten to death by two policemen in Alexandria last year. His slaying has become a rallying point for Egypt's opposition. Tunisia's protests were also sparked by a single death, that of a poor Tunisian vegetable vendor who set himself on fire to protest corruption. That act has been copied by at least six people in Egypt. On Tuesday, mothers carrying babies joined protesters who chanted, "Revolution until Victory!" and waved signs reading "OUT!" inspired by the Tunisian slogan "DEGAGE!" Men sprayed graffiti reading "Down with Hosni Mubarak."

Some passers-by dismissed the protests, saying a few thousand of Cairo's 18 million people coming out on the streets was not nearly enough to force change. "This is all just a waste of time," said Ali Mustafa Ibrahim, who works at a cigarette stand. "These are a bunch of kids playing cat and mouse. ... It's just going to create more problems and more traffic in the city."

Among the protesters in Cairo was Alaa al-Aswany, author of the best-selling "Yacoubian Building," which portrays corrupt politicians, police brutality and terrorism in Egypt.

A keen observer of Egyptian society, al-Aswany said the demonstrations were an important opening for the government's opponents.

"They broke the barrier of fear," he said. "The writers of the regime were saying Egypt is not Tunisia and Egyptians are less educated than Tunisians. But here is the thing: these young people proved they can take their rights forcefully."

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

HAITI'S RULING PARTY DEBATES CANDIDATE'S FUTURE

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti
Associated Press

HAITI'S ruling party held closed-door meetings Tuesday to decide whether to fight for their presidential candidate to remain in the race despite U.S. and international pressure to drop him.

The quake-torn country's political future hinges on how the Inite, or Unity, party handles an Organization of American States recommendation that would push outgoing President Rene Preval's chosen successor, government construction official Jude Celestin, out of the race.

Doing so would open the door for carnival singer Michel "Sweet Micky" Martelly, a pro-military populist, to face former first lady Mirlande Manigat in a runoff.

The OAS says Martelly, whose partisans rioted when it looked like he would not advance, should have finished second in the fraud-marred vote and go to the runoff. Its recommendation, based on a sample of the vote, was made over the objections of other candidates and observers who said the entire vote should be thrown out.

"There's no final decision yet," the coordinator of Preval's Unity party, former Sen. Joseph Lambert, told The Associated Press in the evening.

Earlier in the day, Lambert told Radio Metropole that "a significant number of candidates for deputies and senate would favor" dropping Celestin to avoid international sanctions.

The newspaper Le Nouvelliste reported that Celestin would concede, citing an anonymous government official — but that report has not been confirmed, and a predicted party statement has not been made.

The debate centers on the OAS election observers' recommendation that fraudulent tally sheets from the Nov. 28 ballot be excluded.

Based on a review of about 17 percent of the vote, the team said that Celestin and Martelly, separated by a few hundred ballots in the preliminary results, should switch places.

Now the United States — currently holding nearly \$1 billion in reconstruction aid originally promised for last year — is insisting that the OAS report be implemented.

"Sustained support from the international community, including the United States, requires a credible (electoral) process" including "conducting second-round elections in a manner consistent with the recommendations and findings of the OAS technical review," the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, told the U.N. Security Council last week.

President Obama calls for unity with the Republicans

WASHINGTON
Associated Press

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA called for unity with newly empowered Republicans in a State of the Union policy speech that laid the foundation for the second half of his presidential term and next year's fight for re-election.

Obama staked out territory in America's political center. He defended programs dear to his Democratic base, including the federal Social Security pension program and his health care overhaul. He promised investments in clean energy technology and biomedical research and criticized tax cuts for wealthy Americans.

But he also backed some top priorities of Republicans, who took control of the House of Representatives this month. He called for cutting the corporate tax rate, freezing some federal spending, shaking up the federal bureaucracy and eliminating lawmakers' pet projects.

He made a direct appeal for bipartisan lawmaking: "We will move forward together or not at all." The White House released Obama's prepared speech about an hour before he delivered it.

The nationally televised address before both chambers of Congress is always one of America's most closely watched political events, but this year's speech had extra drama.

For the first time in his two-year presidency, Obama was appearing before a divided Congress. After November elections that Obama has described as a "shellacking," Republicans narrowed the Democratic advantage in the Senate as well as taking control of the House of Representatives.

Obama, who has rebounded in opinion polls in recent weeks, was looking to position himself above politics, even as both parties maneuver for advantage ahead of the 2012 presidential vote.

Obama said the American people are counting on their leaders to create jobs in the United States.

"At stake right now is not who wins the next election," Obama said. "After all, we just had an election."

Obama focused on federal spending for education, innovation and infrastructure as ways the government can support America's foundation and help businesses create jobs for a generation. He was pairing that with a



STATE OF THE UNION: President Barack Obama delivers his address on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday. (AP)

call to reduce the federal debt and to make the government leaner.

The speech comes less than three weeks after Democratic Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was seriously wounded in a shooting rampage in Tucson, Arizona, that killed six people.

A seat was to remain empty in honor of Giffords. Many in both parties were to wear black-and-white lapel pins, signifying the deaths in Tucson and the hopes for the survivors. Family members of some victims were to sit with first lady Michelle Obama.

The shooting, though its motives remain unclear, prompted a debate about overheated political rhetoric and the need to tone down Washington's fierce partisanship. In an attempt at unity following the attack, many Democratic and Republican lawmakers decided to break with tradition and sit together.

But those gestures did not obscure the sharp political differences between the parties.

One of the most divisive issues is federal spending. Public concern about the growing federal deficit, now topping \$14 trillion, was a



defining force in the 2010 elections. Spending has become the central issue for Republicans.

Obama was looking for the upper hand with a call for a five-year freeze on all discretionary government spending outside of national security, the White House said. That would be almost identical to the freeze Obama called for in his address last year. Ultimately it may have little effect, as Congress decides the budget on its own terms.

Indeed, the Republican-dominated House voted on Tuesday to return most domestic spending to 2008, pre-recession levels. The

256-165 vote came on a symbolic measure that put Republican lawmakers on record in favor of cutting \$100 billion from Obama's budget for the current year.

Republicans also chose one of their leading voices on spending cuts, House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, to deliver the party's televised response to Obama.

"We are at a moment, where if government's growth is left unchecked and unchallenged, America's best century will be considered our past century," Ryan said.

While Obama's speech included little on foreign

affairs, he did announce he will visit Brazil, Chile and El Salvador in March. Obama also called on Congress to approve a recently negotiated free-trade agreement with South Korea as soon as possible.

Obama also said the U.S. stands with the people of Tunisia and all people striving for democracy. The president said the will of the people in the North African country proved more powerful than the rule of a dictator.

Tunisia's autocratic leader, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fled the country Jan. 14 after 23 years in power.

Putin vows revenge for Moscow airport bombing

MOSCOW
Associated Press

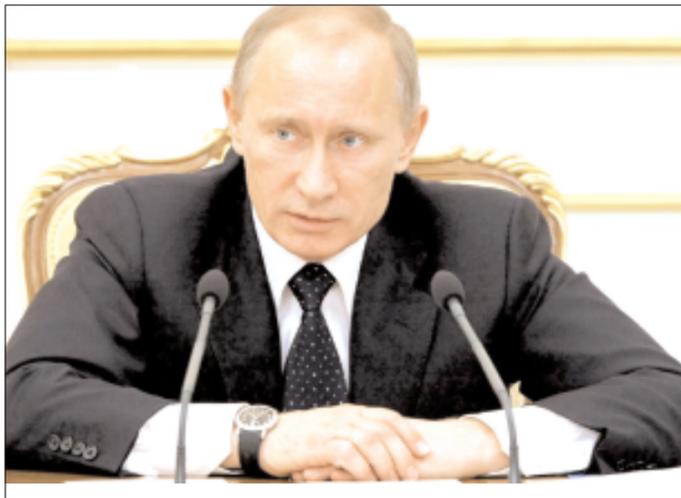
PRIME MINISTER Vladimir Putin has vowed revenge for the suicide bombing that killed 35 people at a Moscow airport — a familiar tough-on-terrorism stance that has underpinned his power but also led to a rising number of deadly attacks in Russia.

Lax security also was blamed for Monday's explosion in the international arrivals area of Domodedovo Airport that also injured 180 people, with President Dmitry Medvedev on Tuesday criticizing police and managers at the airport, the largest of three that serve the capital.

NTV television showed a photograph of what it said was the detached head of the suspected bomber. Investigators have said that DNA testing will be necessary before the man, who appears to be in his 30s, can be identified.

A two-second video of the blast itself, broadcast on state television and said to be from a closed-circuit TV camera, showed a burst of flames and passengers falling and fleeing as smoke filled the hall.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attack, but suspicion has fallen on Islamist separatists from



RUSSIAN PRIME MINISTER Vladimir Putin (AP)

Chechnya or elsewhere in the restive Caucasus region who have been battling Russian authority for over 15 years.

Chechen insurgents have claimed responsibility for an array of attacks, including a double suicide bombing at Moscow's subway system last year that killed 40 people. They also have

used Domodedovo Airport before, with two suicide bombers slipping through its security in 2004 to kill 90 people aboard flights that took off from there.

Putin rose to power in 2000 on a now-famous vow that Chechen rebels would be hunted down and killed "in the outhouse." But despite a second

devastating war that brought Chechnya back under Moscow's control and sanctioning the violent rule of his chosen Chechen leader, Putin has been unable to wipe out the Islamic insurgency that has spread across much of the Caucasus.

A brutal crackdown on the insurgency has produced a backlash that has led to almost daily attacks on police and security forces in the Caucasus and brought the terror to Moscow.

Muscovites have also seen a sharp rise in ethnic tensions between Slavic Russians and Muslims from the Caucasus, many of whom come to the capital in search of work.

In an effort to address the poverty and high unemployment that feed the insurgency, the government has made ambitious plans to promote economic development in the Caucasus, including the building of five ski resorts across the mountainous region.

Putin said last week the government would allocate 60 billion rubles (\$2 billion) this year toward the construction, but the bulk of the \$15 billion needed is to come from private investors.

Medvedev has been given the task of attracting badly needed foreign investment to Russia, a mission he

will take Wednesday to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where he is to be the main speaker at the opening session.

The airport bombing undermined his mission and delayed his departure for a day. Instead of schmoozing with CEOs of major global corporations, Medvedev on Tuesday gave a tough speech to officials at the Federal Security Service, the main KGB successor. He suggested that some of them could have been at fault and told them to do everything possible to find those responsible.

"The nest of these bandits, however they are called, should be eliminated," he said.

Medvedev also blamed the transport police, ordering the interior minister to identify officials who should be dismissed or face other sanctions. Airport officials also did not escape blame.

"What happened shows that obviously there were violations in guaranteeing security. And it should be answered for by those who make decisions there and by the management of the airport," he said.

Medvedev demanded robust checks of passengers and baggage at all major transportation hubs. "This will make it longer for passengers, but it's the only way," he said.

LOCAL NEWS

Gambier Primary School Literacy Fest

Gambier Primary School celebrated its third annual Literacy Fest yesterday.

Third annual event features career fair

The theme of the exhibition held at the Mall at Marathon for the occasion was "Navigating the archipelago through literacy expressions". The activities of the day included an opening ceremony at 10am and a career fair which was held from 11.30 am to 1pm at the mall. During the opening ceremony, students were entertained by Bahamian artists, authors and poets, including Tyrone Sawyer. The students also heard from Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education Elma Garraway and other educators. Musical entertainment was provided by the Royal Bahamas Defence Force Band. School officials said the objective of the event is to educate the parents and students about the importance of literacy while helping them to develop a deeper appreciation for their country.

PHOTOS/TIM CLARKE



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BUSINESS

GB facility as 'logistics hub' for Baha Mar

FROM page 1B

China State Construction, which has gained a \$1.95 billion construction contract from Baha Mar for the Cable Beach redevelopment, was said by multiple sources to be in talks with Ken Hutton, the former Freeport Concrete and John S George chief executive, about using the Sea Air Business Centre facility - valued at \$12 million by its Florida-based owner - for this purpose.

When contacted by Tribune Business for comment yesterday, Mr Hutton said he could neither confirm nor deny that China State Construction was the entity he was talking to, and that it was over the possibility of using the Associated Grocers facility as a clearance/storage depot relating to the Baha Mar project.

However, he did tell this newspaper: "Negotiations are ongoing."

Multiple sources familiar with developments, though, told Tribune Business that if Mr Hutton was able to seal the deal with China State Construction, it would ensure the direct benefits from

the \$2.6 billion Cable Beach redevelopment benefited more islands that just New Providence/Nassau.

They added that such an arrangement could involve "upwards of 30,000 containers over three-and-a-half years" being shipped to, and cleared, in Freeport, before they were forwarded to Nassau for use on the Baha Mar project.

Jobs

Such a deal, the sources added, could "easily" create 30-50 jobs almost immediately for the Freeport economy, which is badly in need of economic stimulus, and ensure that some Grand Bahama residents benefit directly from Baha Mar without having to leave their homes and island.

"It would be nice to have a \$2.6 billion investment benefit more than Nassau," one source said. Describing the potential impact from the Associated Grocers warehouse proposal as "really, really significant", the source added that potentially "millions of dollars of construction

materials and equipment" could be involved. Mr Hutton took over management of the Freeport warehouse, and Universal Distributors, last year via what was described as a 'mutual arrangement' between PLP politicians, Pleasant Bridgewater and Obie Wilchcombe, and a Bahamian bank, said to be Bank of the Bahamas International.

Ms Bridgewater and Mr Wilchcombe had rented the warehouse facility from Associated Grocers, intending to run their own distribution business, Universal Distributors, from it, yet the venture was plagued with problems that resulted in the landlord twice moving to lock them out for unpaid rent.

Mr Hutton was said to have been appointed to devise a new direction and business plan that could make Universal Distributors viable, plus generate rental income for Associated Grocers from a facility it no longer had any use for, previous attempts to sell it having proven fruitless. This move seems to have led to the talks with China State Construction.

70% PROFIT RETENTION AIDS ROYALSTAR RATING

FROM page 1B

strength rating, said that since the current owners acquired the general insurance carrier in late 2002, the company had grown its capital base from an initial \$10 million to its current \$40 million.

Describing 2010 as a "good, not great year" for RoyalStar, as gross written premium income continued to be impacted by the economy, especially in the motor vehicle segment, Mr Watson said the top-line had also been impacted by the company's conservative risk management stance.

He explained that it did not pay to be "overly aggressive" in seeking to take on new insurance business, given the frequency with which hurricanes hit the Bahamas, especially if premium income did not match the associated risk.

Describing A. M. Best's action, which also reaffirmed RoyalStar's 'a-' issuer credit rating and 'Stable' outlook, as "expected", Mr Watson said of the agency's actions: "I think it reflects our high levels of liquidity and solvency."

"We have over \$40 million in capital, are highly liquid and manage expenses well. It's good to have an independent, external third party organisation confirm we're in good shape."

Profits

And he told Tribune Business: "We've made over \$30 million in profits in the past eight years, and although we've paid some dividends, more than 70 per cent has been kept as retained earnings."

"We've built the capital base from \$10 million, mostly with retained earnings, although there's been some preference share issues, too."

"But the shareholders have not been diluted, and we've not had to borrow any money. We've grown the capital base from earnings, and you can only do that with good operating performances."

Mr Watson said that between 2002-2010, Royal Star's underwriting business in the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands had to cope with five hurricanes, namely Frances, Jeanne, Ivan, Michelle and Wilma.

He added: "The performance has been strong, and that's where you get strong operating results from. Most of our profits do not come from investment income; they're underwriting profits."

"Roughly \$22 million of the \$30 million has come from underwriting profits."

"Investment income has been a very much smaller part of the operating results."

The RoyalStar managing director said the smaller investment income contribution was "the price we pay for being very liquid. We have lots of cash on the balance sheet, which does not pay a great return."

"We choose to be conservative with investments so we have access to large amounts of cash when we need to, such as in the aftermath of a hurricane."

Mr Watson explained that unlike life insurance companies, which were able to match long-term assets to long-term liabilities, general insurers such as RoyalStar were dealing with liabilities and risks of a short-term nature, given that property and casualty policies normally covered a 12-18 month period.

As a result, and given the catastrophic nature of the perils they insured, Bahamian general insurers had to keep plentiful reserves of cash on hand.

As for RoyalStar's 2010 financial performance, Mr Watson said that while final figures were awaited, the absence of any hurricane claims yet again meant that it was "a reasonable year".

"Gross written premiums were under pressure, and motor premiums were under pressure because of the economy."

"We also had slightly higher claims than the year before," he told Tribune Business, indicating that while RoyalStar had finished 2010 well in the black with net income worth several million dollars, the performance was not as good as the \$6.816 million achieved the year before.

"It's likely to be a good, not great year," Mr Watson added of 2010.

"Our gross written premium figures have continued to decline as we slowly lose business, because we're not prepared to be overly aggressive [in writing new business] due to the very risky environment."

"A big hurricane would cause a lot of damage, and we want to have control over our exposure and know where the risks are, so that after a large event we can deal with claims and customers as they deserve to be dealt with."

In its assessment of RoyalStar, A. M. Best said: "The ratings reflect RoyalStar's solid capitalisation, favourable operating performance and established presence within the Caribbean market."

Positive

"RoyalStar continues to produce positive operating results, which are derived from the company's strong underwriting performance in conjunction with a steady stream of investment income."

"Since RoyalStar writes all of its business in the Caribbean, it is exposed to frequent and severe weather-related events. Although this makes RoyalStar somewhat dependent on reinsurance as part of its overall risk management program, the company's solid reinsurance program reduces its net probable maximum loss to a manageable level."

On the negative side, RoyalStar said these factors were offset by the concentration of the company's risks in the Bahamas and Cayman Islands, hurricane exposure, "dependency on reinsurance", and "an increasingly competitive pricing environment".

Interestingly, A. M. Best added: "Local regulatory risk is somewhat elevated as the Bahamian government increases its supervision over insurance companies operating in the country, and seeks to tighten regulatory requirements. Furthermore, the Caribbean insurance market has become increasingly competitive as indigenous and outside insurers seek to gain market share in the region."

Mr Watson told Tribune Business he was unsure where A. M. Best was "coming from" in its comments about increased government regulation of the insurance industry.

He added that enhanced levels of regulatory supervision could aid an insurance industry by reducing risk, ensuring market players "toe the line" when it comes to solvency margins, liquidity and capital reserve requirements.

"We're very happy with an increased regulatory environment, and the tighter the regulatory environment, the happier we are," Mr Watson said. "That supports serious players, not the less serious players."

FIRSTCARIBBEAN IMPAIRED LOANS 5% POINTS ABOVE SECTOR AVERAGE

FROM page 1B

performance for the 12 months to October 31, 2011, stood in start contrast to that of Commonwealth Bank, which amid the severest recession in modern history saw net income for its 2010 financial year soar to a new record of \$53 million, a 26.1 per cent increase on the previous year's \$42 million according to unaudited financials.

RoyalFidelity Capital Markets, in its assessment of FirstCaribbean's 2010 performance and 2011 prospects, noted that the bank - BISX's largest stock by market capi-

talisation, although under 5 per cent is in public hands - had seen both interest margins and net yields drop during the previous financial year.

The investment bank added that FirstCaribbean's impaired loans, as a percentage of its total \$2 billion-plus loan book, stood at 12.4 per cent at the October year-end, compared to the sector's 7.4 per cent average.

"FirstCaribbean continues to have a high level of loan loss provisions in comparison to historical trends, as well as in comparison to other banks," RoyalFidelity said.

"Impaired loans as a per-

centage of its total loan book at the end of the previous fiscal year was 12.4 per cent, compared to industry average of 7.4 per cent, while its provisioning coverage was at the lower end of the spectrum at 23 per cent versus the industry average of 32 per cent."

Net yields at FirstCaribbean, RoyalFidelity said, had been impacted by the large increase in non-performing loans, while lower average loans had impacted interest margins.

The end result was that FirstCaribbean's trailing 12-month EPS had hit a "low" of \$0.49, compared to the \$0.90 it reached in 2007 just

prior to the recession. Even adjusted for loan losses, the trailing 12-month EPS stood at \$0.69 due chiefly to reduced net interest income and non-interest income.

Still, the expected improvement in the wider Bahamian economy during 2011, which should translate into improved interest margins and reduced non-performing loans, was set to benefit FirstCaribbean's Bahamian shareholders through improved net income and dividend payouts.

"Assuming FirstCaribbean maintains its dividend payout ratio at around 60 per cent, the increase in net income should be reflected in dividends paid," RoyalFidelity said.

"While the current trailing 12-month price earnings multiple of the bank is 19, with the anticipated improvement in net income over the next year, we expect this ratio to reduce to more normal levels over the next 12 months."

RoyalFidelity noted that FirstCaribbean's EPS for the 2010 fourth quarter fell by 61 per cent, from \$0.24 to \$0.09, as net income dropped from \$18.1 million to \$11.4 million.

Net interest income fell by \$3.6 million or 10 per cent to \$33.3 million during the quarter, while non-interest income fell by \$2.7 million or 27 per cent to hit \$7.2 million.

Non-interest expenses, though, rose by \$4.1 million or 21 per cent to \$23.2 million, while total loan loss expense of \$5.9 million grew "significantly" by \$7.7 million, in comparison to a recovery of \$1.7 million in the comparative quarter. With income streams dropping and expenses rising, RoyalFidelity said FirstCaribbean continued to be impacted by the "ongoing adverse economic conditions".

Not so Commonwealth Bank, which yesterday credited enhanced credit risk management with keeping non-performing loans below 3 per cent of its total loan portfolio, well below the industry average. This, in turn, reduced associated impairment allowances.

Adding that return on assets (RoA), return on equity (RoE), earnings per share and productivity levels all exceeded target for 2010, Commonwealth Bank said total assets rose to a new record of \$1.408 billion, a 2.3 per cent increase on the \$1.376 billion recorded at year-end 2009.

Regular quarterly dividends during 2010, plus the two extraordinary dividends in February and November of last year, had returned some \$25.5 million to its 6,500 shareholders, Commonwealth Bank added.

Net income available to common shareholders stood at \$48 million, a 33.3 per cent rise over the \$36 million generated in 2009, while earnings per share hit \$0.48, compared to \$0.37 the year before. Commonwealth Bank's return on equity stood at 30 per cent, compared to 27 per cent in 2009.

THE NATIONAL INSURANCE BOARD VACANCY NOTICE



The National Insurance Board (NIB) invites applications from suitably qualified persons to fill the position of **SENIOR ASSISTANT MANAGER** in the Board's Legal Department.

JOB SUMMARY

To provide assistance to the Legal Department in the preparation and revision of all lease agreements and contracts as well as provide assistance in the timely preparation of legal matters for criminal and civil prosecution.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To develop and provide assistance with facilitating programs on the National Insurance Act and Regulations and other Statutes and Laws of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas for the benefit of NIB staff members and stakeholders.
- Prepare lease agreements for the various health clinics and local offices.
- Review and prepare contract agreements.
- Assist in the preparation of matters for criminal and civil prosecution.
- Prosecute in the magistrates' criminal and civil courts in New Providence, Freeport and the Family Islands.
- Update prosecution status report.
- Prepare board papers for criminal prosecution.
- Conduct searches at the Supreme Court and Companies Registries.
- Assist external counsel with the conduct of matters for the Board.
- Manage outstanding warrants of arrest issued by the Magistrates Court.
- Perform any other duties that may be assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree from an accredited college or university plus a minimum of two (2) years experience in an administrative and supervisory capacity.
- Admission to the Bahamas Bar with at least two (2) years practicing experience.
- Represent the National Insurance Board in legal matters outside of compliance (as required).
- Be familiar with the National Insurance Act and Regulations and other Statutes and Laws of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.
- Good judgment and sound reasoning ability.
- High proficiency in legal writing.
- Excellent verbal and written skills required.
- Strong organizational skills.

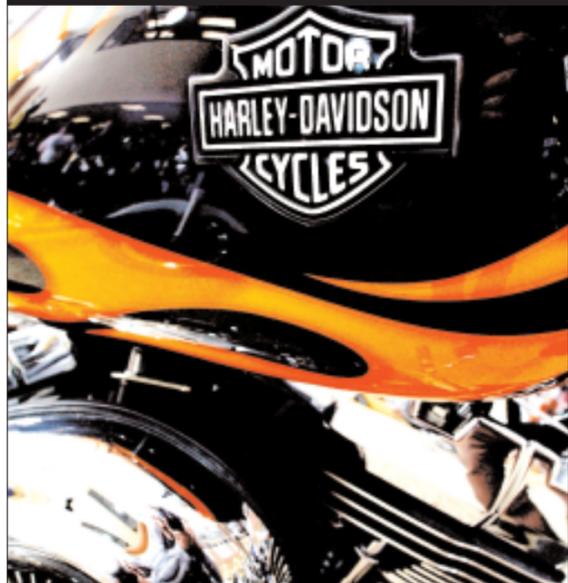
APPLICATION

Interested persons may apply by submitting a completed application form, along with the necessary proof of qualifications on or before **Friday, February 4, 2011**, to the:

Senior Manager, Administration
Human Resources
The National Insurance Board
Clifford Darling Complex
Nassau, Bahamas

EARNINGS REPORTS

Restructuring helps cut Harley-Davidson 4Q loss



(AP Photo/Seth Perlman)

LOSS CUT: In this Jan. 21, 2011 photo, the Harley-Davidson Logo is seen at the Hall's Harley Davidson dealership in Springfield, Ill. Harley-Davidson Inc. cut its fourth-quarter loss Tuesday, Jan. 25, getting a ride from a restructuring and a strong performance from its financial services unit even as motorcycle sales slumped.

MILWAUKEE

Harley-Davidson Inc. cut its fourth-quarter loss, getting a ride from a restructuring and a strong performance from its financial services unit even as motorcycle sales slumped.

Harley's stock surged \$3.45 per share, or 9.45 percent, in midday trading after company executives appeared to be more upbeat about the company's performance this year.

The Milwaukee company on Tuesday reported a net loss of \$46.8 million, or 20 cents per share, a vast improvement over the \$218.7 million, or 94 cents per share, that it lost in the same period a year ago.

The company would have made money for the quarter without an \$85 million charge from buying back senior notes.

Harley said it lost \$42.1 million, or 18 cents per share, from continuing operations. Harley-Davidson Financial Services contributed \$43.5 million in operating income.

Revenue for the quarter rose nearly 20 percent to \$917 million, though motorcycle sales for the quarter were down 1 percent worldwide and 0.2 percent in the U.S.

Still, the performance beat Wall Street estimates. Analysts polled by FactSet expected a loss of 24 cents per share on revenue of \$853.8 million.

And the company reversed its 2009 full-year loss, posting a profit of \$146.5 million, to 62 cents per share. Harley lost \$55.1 million, or 24 cents per share, in 2009.

Harley CEO Keith Wandell said in a statement that the company feels good about its full-year results. "We have made strong progress at transforming our business to be leaner, more agile and even more effective at delivering great products and customer experiences," he said.

Company executives would not estimate sales for the coming year, but on a conference call with industry analysts they seemed optimistic because they plan to increase shipments.

A key factor could be whether Harley's main demographic will let their hair down a bit more in 2011. The company's U.S. sales fell slightly last year even as consumers returned to car and truck dealers, helping auto sales rebound 11 percent over 2009.

J&J reports lower fourth quarter profit, revenue

LINDA A. JOHNSON, AP Business Writer

Johnson & Johnson's revenue has slumped for a second straight year, prompting its CEO to make an extraordinary pitch to soothe investors and defend the company's handling of 17 costly product recalls.

The health care giant, hammered by the weak global economy, growing pricing pressures and recalls that have kept many popular nonprescription medicines off store shelves, reported Tuesday a 12 percent profit decline and a 5.5 percent drop in sales for the fourth quarter.

Revenue fell 0.5 percent in 2010, after dropping 3 percent in 2009 — its first annual decline since the Depression.

Chairman and Chief Executive William C. Weldon tried to reassure analysts and investors that J&J has its manufacturing and other problems under control, in an unusually lengthy, sometimes repetitive conference call. Wall Street wasn't buying it, though, with J&J shares dropping \$1.23, or 2 percent, to \$60.99 in afternoon trading after initially dropping 2.4 percent — a big



(AP Photo/Tony Dejak)

LOWER PROFIT: Johnson & Johnson products rest on a shelf at a grocery store Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2011, in Cleveland.

drop for a huge, diversified company that rarely sees stock volatility.

J&J's stock has lagged the benchmark S&P 500 Index over the past year and is below the \$62 level where it traded five years ago.

"The Teflon has come off J&J ... with a vengeance," said analyst Steve Brozak of

WBB Securities. The adjusted earnings from the maker of Tylenol, medical devices and biologic drugs matched Wall Street estimates but revenue fell short and its earnings estimate for this year was well below analysts' current forecasts.

Because of the weak forecast, institutional investors "voted with their feet today," said Erik Gordon, a professor and analyst at University of Michigan's Ross School of Business.

The New Brunswick, N.J.-based company reported net income of \$1.94 billion, or 70 cents per share, down from \$2.21 billion, or 79 cents per share, in 2009's fourth quarter.

Excluding one-time items, earnings would have been \$1.03 per share, matching analysts' expectations. J&J took an after-tax charge of \$922 million for litigation settlements, a recall of poorly fitting DePuy hip implants and increasing J&J's product liability reserve.

The company's revenue fell to \$15.64 billion from \$16.6 billion a year ago. It was also below the \$16 billion expected by analysts polled by FactSet.

Strong holiday boosts Coach 2Q net income, revenue

MAE ANDERSON, AP Retail Writer NEW YORK

Luxury handbag maker Coach says a strong holiday season, particularly in North America, helped its fiscal second-quarter net income rise 26 percent.

The increase shows the luxury sector is rebounding faster than other retail segments.

To serve consumers cutting spending at the beginning of the recession, Coach began offering more bags for less than \$300. But CEO Lew Frankfort said Tuesday, when the company released its earnings report, that Americans are spending more on handbags again. The average retail selling price of its handbags rose 9 percent for the quarter, more than the low-single-digit percentage increase Coach had predicted.

A \$498 satchel sold particularly well, Frankfort said, adding that \$400-plus bags made up 18 percent of all handbag sales during the quarter, as opposed to 13 percent a year ago.

Fewer shoppers visited North American stores, but the average amount they spent rose slightly, and the company said its North American revenue overall rose 17 percent for the quarter. Higher conversion —

or the number of people in stores who make a purchase — boosted the results, Frankfort said.

"Consumers who actually went into stores had a more serious intention to purchase than they did last year," Frankfort said. "In our world of accessories, the consumer is back."

Coach's net income rose to \$303.4 million, or \$1 per share, from \$240.1 million, or 75 cents per share, a year earlier. Revenue increased 19 percent to \$1.26 billion.

Analyst expected earnings of 97 cents per share on revenue of \$1.21 billion, according to FactSet.

Revenue at stores open at least a year rose 12.6 percent in North America. That figure is a key gauge of retailers' performance because it excludes stores that recently opened or closed.

Sales in China were also strong, the company said, while revenue in Japan rose 8 percent in dollars, helped by a stronger yen. Department stores are also ordering more than they did in the depths of the recession. International wholesale shipments also increased.

The company said it expects revenue and earnings to continue to increase by double-dig-

it percentages. Jefferies & Co. analyst Randal J. Konik said Coach did a "great job" realigning its business during the downturn; he expects net income to continue to rise as Coach capitalizes on its "accessible luxury" market position.

But Konik said rising leather and labor costs could cut into Coach's margins in the future.

Coach shares fell 28 cents Tuesday to close at \$53.09.

Coach also said it will buy back up to \$1.5 billion of its outstanding shares by June 30, 2013.

Other stores that cater to the affluent have reported strong holiday sales as well, including Tiffany & Co. and Signet Jewelers.

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BUSINESS

EUROZONE BAILOUT BOND SEES 'RECORD' DEMAND



EUROPE IN CRISIS: Tourists walk at 1200 BC ancient cemetery of Keramikos as at the background is seen the ancient Acropolis hill in central Athens, on Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2011.

AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris

BRUSSELS

The eurozone's euro440 billion (\$599 billion) bailout fund says its first bond auction to finance a rescue loan for Ireland saw "record-breaking" demand.

The European Financial Stability Facility said Tuesday its euro5 billion (\$6.83 billion) bond sale was almost nine times oversubscribed, getting orders worth euro44.5 billion from more than 500 investors. The EFSF says that the

interest rate for the 5-year bond is 2.89 percent.

That compares with a yield of 2.32 percent on comparable German bonds.

Strong demand for the fund's first contribution to Ireland's 76.5 billion bailout was expected, after Japan said it would buy 20 percent of the issue.

Ireland will only receive euro3.3 billion of the euro5 billion since a cash buffer is needed for the fund's triple-A rating.

COMMONWEALTH 2010
IN THE SUPREME COURT No.01391
Common Law & Equ

IN THE MATTER of the Quieting Titles Act, 1959

AND IN THE MATTER OF ALL THAT piece parcel or lot of land being Lot Number Twelve (12) in Highland Park Subdivision of The Grove Estate situate in the Western District of the Island of New Providence in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas

AND ALSO ALL THAT piece parcel or tract of land comprising an area of Twelve and Two Hundred and Seventy-nine Thousandths acres (12.279) situate on Edmond Street in The Grove Estate in the Western District of the Island of New Providence

AND

IN THE MATTER OF the Petition of SELTEC COMPANY LIMITED

NOTICE

THE PETITION of Seltec Company Limited in respect of:

"ALL THAT piece parcel or tract of land being a portion of the Sub-division called and known as Highland Park situate in the Western District of the Island of New Providence aforesaid and situate about Twenty (20) feet West of Marlin Drive and immediately South of Sanford Drive and bounded on the NORTH by the said Sanford Drive on the EAST by Highland Park Sub-division aforesaid on the SOUTH by a Road Reservation Forty (40) feet wide and on the WEST by another Road Reservation Fifty (50) feet wide AND ALSO ALL THAT piece parcel or tract of land being another portion of the Highland Park Sub-division situate about Six hundred and Eighty and Ninety-six hundredths (680.96) feet South of Sanford Drive in the Western District of the Island of New Providence aforesaid and bounded on the NORTH partly by a Road Reservation Forty (40) feet wide on the EAST by land the property of The Bahamas Government on the SOUTH by land also the property of The Bahamas Government and on the West by land said to be the property of Joseph Tomlinson"

Seltec Company Limited claims to be the owner of the unencumbered fee simple estate in possession of the said land and has made application to the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas under Section Three (3) of the Quieting Titles Act, 1959 to have his title to the said land investigated and the nature and extent thereof determined and declared in a Certificate of Title to be granted by the Court in accordance with the provisions of the said Act.

Copies of the Petition and the Plan of the said land may be inspected during normal office hours in the following places:

1. The Registry of the Supreme Court, East Street North in the City of Nassau, Bahamas; and
2. The Chambers of Lockhart & Co., # 35 Buen Retiro Road, off Shirley Street, Nassau, Bahamas.

NOTICE is hereby given that any person having dower or right to dower or an Adverse Claim or a claim not recognized in the Petition shall on or before the expiration of Thirty (30) days after the final publication of these presents, file in the Supreme Court and serve on the Petitioner or the undersigned a Statement of his claim in the prescribed form verified by an affidavit to be filed therewith.

Failure of any such person to file and serve a Statement of his Claim on or before the expiration of Thirty (30) days after the final publication of these presents will operate as a bar to such claim.

Dated the 17th day of January, A.D., 2011

LOCKHART & CO.
Chambers
#35 Buen Retiro Road
off Shirley Street
Nassau, The Bahamas

Attorneys for the Petitioner

UK economy shrinks and pound plunges

PAN PYLAS, Associated Press LONDON

An unexpected downturn in the British economy shocked investors on Tuesday, prompting a sharp drop in the pound and reigniting debate about the government's plans to slash spending and raise taxes to reduce public debt.

The figures showing a 0.5 percent GDP drop in the last three months of 2010 fueled speculation that the British economy was heading back into recession — defined as two quarters of negative growth — and reined in expectations that the Bank of England would start raising interest rates soon in response to stubbornly high inflation levels.

The figures are preliminary, leaving them open to revision, and followed four quarters of growth — including 0.7 percent in the third quarter — as Britain climbed out of a deep recession.

In the text of a speech in Newcastle, Bank of England governor Mervyn King appeared to indicate that he wasn't in a rush to start raising borrowing costs, a move that could dampen growth. He argued that the drop in living standards for millions of Britons was an "inevitable price" to pay for the financial crisis and subsequent rebalanc-



INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

ing of the world and U.K. economies.

"At some point Bank Rate will have to return to a more normal level ... but a return to economic stability from our fragile conditions will require careful and well-judged steps looking beyond the next few months," King said.

King conceded that inflation would likely rise to between 4 and 5 percent in the coming months from the 3.7 percent in December as the recent spike in energy and commodity costs combine with higher sales taxes. But he said price pressures would start to fall next year as the economic downturn continues to rein in wage increases.

In any case, King insisted there's very little monetary pol-

icy can do to keep a lid on the prices of imports, such as food and oil.

Policy

"Monetary policy cannot be based on wishful thinking," King said. "So unpleasant though it is, the Monetary Policy Committee neither can, nor should try to, prevent the squeeze in living standards, half of which is coming in the form of higher prices and half in earnings rising at a rate lower than normal."

King noted that real wages — the difference between pay rises and inflation — would likely fall again this year to levels no higher than in 2005.

"One has to go back to the 1920s to find a time when real wages fell over a period of six years," King said.

The governor's comments come in the wake of figures from the Office for National Statistics showing that Britain's economy shrank again in the fourth quarter of 2010, largely because of the heavy snow that gripped the country during December, snarling roads, crippling Heathrow and other airports and keeping people away from shops before Christmas.

But statisticians said the economy would have flatlined even without the snow, stunning markets that had been

expecting a 0.5 percent increase in GDP. Within a minute or two of the data's release, the pound had dropped over a cent against the U.S. dollar, falling to a low of \$1.5753 before settling around the \$1.58 mark before King took to the stage. Stocks suffered too, with the FTSE 100 index of leading British shares underperforming its peers, closing down 0.4 percent at 5,917.71.

Analysts said the grim economic figures will make it difficult for the Bank of England to hike any time soon especially as the Conservative-led coalition government is at the beginning of a sharp fiscal retrenchment. The raft of spending cuts and tax increases the government announced last autumn have not yet even come into force during the fourth quarter.

"Questions will be raised about whether this reflects the onset of the double-dip that had been feared, and no doubt the impact of the coalition's fiscal plans will be under even more intense scrutiny in an environment where the recovery looks to be faltering," said George Buckley, chief U.K. economist at Deutsche Bank.

Britain plans sharper spending cuts than any of the other major global economies and how it fares is being closely monitored around the world, particularly in Europe.

JOHANNESBURG

Europe and the United States have failed to strengthen the institutions responsible for the global economic crisis, the IMF said in a report suggesting the U.S. privatize mortgage giants Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae.

The International Monetary Fund pointed to "weak balance sheets" of eurozone governments and banks and said the European bailout fund needs to be increased from its headline 440 billion euros.

LONDON — An unexpected contraction in the British economy shocked investors, prompting a sharp drop in the pound and reigniting debate about the government's plans to slash spending and raise taxes to reduce public debt.

The economy shrank 0.5 percent in the last three months of 2010.

The decline reined in expectations that the Bank of England would start raising interest rates soon in response to stubbornly high inflation levels.

Stocks were also hurt by the news. The FTSE 100 index of leading British shares fell 0.3 percent, while Germany's main DAX index and France's CAC-40 both slipped 0.1 percent.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC NEWS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A look at economic developments and activity in major stock markets around the world Tuesday:

BRUSSELS — The eurozone's billion euro (\$599 billion) bailout fund says its first bond auction to finance a rescue loan for Ireland saw "record-breaking" demand.

TOKYO — Japan's central bank kept a key interest rate unchanged at virtually zero, hoping to protect a still-fragile economy from veering off track.

Japan's Nikkei 225 stock average added 1.2 percent.

Elsewhere in Asian trading, South Korea's Kospi rose 0.2 percent and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.5 percent.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index dropped less than 0.1 percent while the Shanghai Composite Index fell 0.7 percent.

MADRID

Spain's borrowing costs dropped significantly in a heavily oversubscribed auction of 2.2 billion euros (\$3 billion) in short-term debt, a day after the govern-

ment announced reforms for its ailing savings bank sector.

NEW DELHI — India's central bank raised key interest rates for the seventh time in little over a year in an attempt to contain inflation.

DAVOS, Switzerland — Trust in business and government worldwide has been remarkably resilient through the economic crisis, except in the U.S., where it has steeply declined, according to a survey released on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum.

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — DP World said business jumped 14 percent last year, reflecting the expansion of the Dubai port operator's global network and a resurgence in trade as the world economy picked up steam.

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Alain Kunz (Liquidator)

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Alain Kunz (Liquidator)

BUSINESS

GOLD DROPS AS OPTIMISM GROWS ABOUT THE ECONOMY

NEW YORK

Prices for gold and other metals are falling as investors raise their expectations for economic growth.

Gold hit its lowest level since November, when a year-end rally took it above \$1,400 an ounce. Investors have been pouring into gold futures based on fears of weak economic growth and global inflation. Gold is often used as a hedge against falling currency prices and slow growth.

Interest in gold waned on Tuesday. Gold for February delivery fell \$12.20 to settle at \$1,332.30.

One factor pushing gold down is the expectation that the Federal Reserve could move toward raising interest rates, said George Gero, senior vice president for RBC Wealth Management in New York. The central bank's central policy making committee is meeting this week.

"The market, with the selling, is betting that we're going to have continued recovery in the economy, and higher interest rates," Gero said. "Higher interest rates make it more expensive to hold gold, and the recovery signals that you may not need the haven in gold."

Other precious metals followed gold lower.

In March contracts, silver lost 51.6 cents to settle at \$26.805 an ounce, copper fell 12.25 cents to \$4.2260 a pound and palladium fell \$31.80 to \$784.75 an ounce. April platinum fell \$32.30 to \$1,787.30 an ounce.

Crude oil fell on mixed economic news and the possibility that OPEC countries will step up production.

Comments Monday by the Saudi Arabian oil minister stoked speculation of a production increase. He seemed to imply that the Saudis and other members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries could raise production to bring down the price of oil.

Goldman Sachs analysts think it's possible that OPEC has already stepped up production.

They say global demand increased in December, but oil supplies did not appear to decline at the same pace.

"It would suggest that OPEC has started to bring its spare capacity back to the market earlier than we anticipated," Goldman Sachs analysts wrote in a note to investors.

How presidential fortunes turn on economic twists

PAUL WISEMAN,
AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON

Facing high unemployment and lukewarm public approval, President Barack Obama can take heart from history: At the same point in his presidency 28 years ago, Ronald Reagan was saddled with an approval rating much lower than Obama's is now. And the unemployment rate then was a full percentage point higher.

For Reagan, the economy recovered quickly and strongly, carrying him to re-election in 1984, one of the biggest land-slides in U.S. history. It's possible Obama could benefit from an equally robust economic revival before Election Day 2012. But expectations are lower this time, because the government has already used up most of its tools to boost the economy.

Recent history suggests a president's fortunes can turn dramatically, for better or worse, on economic swings from the halfway mark of his first term to the next Election Day. Here are some examples:

— PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN:

Midway through his first term, Reagan's approval rating was 37 percent. No wonder. When Reagan delivered his State of the Union address in January 1983, the unemployment rate was at 10.4 percent — nearly 3 percentage points higher than when he took office.

Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker had pushed interest rates as high as 20 percent to slow the economy and snuff out inflation. He succeeded. But the result was the deepest recession since the Great Depression. Political pundits wrote Reagan off as a one-term president.

Yet once he whipped inflation, Volcker reversed course and lowered interest rates. Reagan's tax cuts also jolted the economy. By Election Day 1984, the unemployment rate had fallen to 7.2 percent and was still dropping. Proclaiming the arrival of "Morning in America," Reagan won another four years in the White House, defeating Walter Mondale.

— PRESIDENT GEORGE H.W. BUSH:

A little more than two years into his presidency, George



MEET AND GREET: President Barack Obama greets invited guests at Albany International Airport in Colonie, N.Y. on Friday, Jan. 21, 2011. (AP Photo/Tim Roske)

H.W. Bush looked invincible. His approval rating had hit 89 percent after the U.S. military drove Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces from Kuwait in February 1991.

But a weak economy extinguished Bush's hopes for re-election. The military triumph in the Persian Gulf temporarily lifted Bush's popularity after the United States slid into recession. Rising unemployment, though, gradually took a toll. So did the perception that Bush had lost touch with voters who were struggling financially. His opponent in the 1992 election, Bill Clinton, famously built his campaign around the phrase, "It's the economy, stupid."

By November, the unemployment rate was 2 percentage points higher than when Bush took office. Bush lost his re-election bid in a three-way race with Clinton and independent candidate Ross Perot. The next month, a panel of economists decreed that the recession had officially ended in March 1992, eight months before Election Day.

— PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON

Bill Clinton was floundering after two years in the White House. His health care reform plan had failed. In the 1994 midterm election, Republicans had seized back control of both the House and Senate. Clinton's approval rating was 47 percent.

But over the next two years, a strengthening economy and a successful budget standoff against congressional Republicans reversed Clinton's fortunes. From his inauguration through Election Day 1996, the unemployment rate fell from 7.3 percent to 5.4 percent. The Dow Jones industrial average

shot up 88 percent. In November, Clinton scored an easy victory over Sen. Bob Dole and Perot.

— PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

Attention to terrorism and war overshadowed George W. Bush's first term, despite an eight-month recession in 2001 and a slow recovery that produced few jobs. After the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington, the nation rallied around Bush as he prepared for the March 2003 invasion of

Iraq.

Two years into his presidency, Bush's approval rating was 58 percent, even though unemployment was higher and the stock market lower than when he took office. His approval rating would top 70 percent after U.S. troops occupied Baghdad in April 2003.

From there, Bush's approval rating would fall steadily. The unemployment rate rose from 4.2 percent, when Bush entered the White House, to 5.4 percent on Election Day 2004. By then, the economy had lost jobs

since the president had taken office. Even so, Bush managed a solid victory over Sen. John Kerry in November 2004.

— PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

President Barack Obama's popularity could be worse considering the unemployment rate remains 9.4 percent more than a year after the recession ended. An Associated Press-GfK poll found that 53 percent of Americans approve of how Obama is governing, a middle-of-the-pack ranking for presidents in their second year.

More than half of Americans disapprove of his handling of the economy. Only 35 percent say it's improved on his watch. That's down from 40 percent a year earlier.

Yet "he's clearly ahead of Reagan" at similar points in their presidencies, says Andrew Kohut, president of the Pew Research Center.

Obama also shares one of Reagan's enduring strengths: People like him. In the AP-GfK poll, 83 percent of Americans call Obama likable, 62 percent label him a strong leader and 61 percent say he's in touch with ordinary people.

GN -1171



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC NOTICE

VOTER REGISTRATION
FOR THE WEEK OF 24TH – 28TH JANUARY, 2010

The Parliamentary Commissioner wishes to remind the general public that Voter Registration continues on a daily basis in New Providence and in the Family Islands. Persons applying for registration must be **BAHAMIAN CITIZENS, 18 years and older** and must have resided in a particular constituency for three months or more.

Voter Registration Centres are opened in **New Providence** between the hours of 10:00am – 4:00pm at the following locations:

- (1) The Parliamentary Registration Department, Farrington Road
- (2) The Town Centre and Marathon Malls
- (3) The General Post Office, East Hill Street
- (4) The Sub-Post Office Carmichael Road
- (5) The Sub-Post Office Elizabeth Estates
- (6) The National Insurance Board – Baillou Hill Road
- (7) Commonwealth Banks Mackey Street

In Grand Bahama, Centres are opened between the hours of 9:30am – 4:30pm at the following locations:

1. Parliamentary Registration Department, Freeport
2. Administrator's Office, Eight Mile Rock
3. Administrator's Office, High Rock (Tuesdays and Thursdays)

In the Family Islands, registration takes place at the Administrators' Offices in the various Family Islands between the hours of 9:30am – 4:30pm.

The Parliamentary Commissioner also wishes to advise that the Department has commenced its mobile services with effect from 10th January 2011.

Businesses and organizations with at least twenty (20) eligible employees or members may contact the Department at telephone numbers 325-2888/9 or 397-2000 to schedule an appointment.



Ministry of National
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Parliamentary Registration Department will be conducting Evening Registration on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, during the period January 25th – 27th, from 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm at the following locations:

- (1) Parliamentary Registration Department
- (2) Mall at Marathon
- (2) Town Centre Mall
- (3) Elizabeth Estates Post Office – Prince Charles Drive
- (4) Carmichael Road Post Office – Carmichael Road

The public is reminded that only Bahamian Citizens are eligible to register to vote and applicants are required to produce proof of citizenship.

Signed
Errol W. Bethel
PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER



GOVERNMENT NOTICE

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORT

PRE-QUALIFICATION FOR TENDERING
FOR REPAIRS AT THE CENTRAL DETECTIVE UNIT BUILDING

The Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas intends to pre-qualify Bahamian contractors for repairs to the Central Detective Unit Building at Thompson Boulevard, Nassau Bahamas.

The Ministry of Works & Transport invites Bahamian contractors wishing to pre-qualify for this work to submit sealed proposals documenting of their legal status, technical and financial capacity to provide the services required.

Interested parties may obtain pre-qualification documents as of 17th January 2011 from the office of the Director of Public Works, Ministry of Works & Transport, between 9am to 5pm on the 3rd Floor West Wing, Ministry of Public Works & Transport Building, J F K Drive, Nassau, Bahamas.

Completed pre-qualification applications must be placed in the self addressed envelope provided and deposited in the Tenders Box in the office of the Director of Public Works no later than 12:00 noon on or before 28th January 2011.

The Director of Public Works
Ministry of Works & Transport
P.O. Box N-8156
John F. Kennedy Drive
New Providence
Bahamas

Applicants will be notified of the results after the evaluation process has been completed.

Signed
Colin Higgs
Permanent Secretary

BUSINESS

Consumer Confidence Index hits 8-month high

Holiday shopping boom carries over to new year

MARTIN CRUTSINGER, AP Economics Writer WASHINGTON

Consumer confidence hit an eight-month high in January. The increase suggests the rising spirits that fueled a holiday shopping boom are carrying over into the new year as people feel better about the job market.

The Conference Board said Tuesday its Consumer Confidence Index climbed to 60.6 this month from 53.3 in December.

While confidence is still far from the 90 that signals a healthy consumer mindset, the January improvement was better than expected. Some economists said the big tax relief package Congress passed in late December may have helped.

"So much for a ho-hum January," said Jennifer Lee, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets. "The signing of the stimulus bill and all that it is intended to bring is buoying sentiment."

The \$858 billion package extended the Bush-era tax relief at all income levels for two years, provided tax breaks for businesses and reduced Social Security payroll taxes by 2 percentage points this year.

The Social Security reduction means an estimated \$1,000 in additional after-tax income for the average family, according to White House estimates.

Other analysts suggested that the recent gains in the stock market and improving labor market conditions were trumping higher gasoline prices and falling home prices.

The Standard & Poor's/Cas-



INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Shiller 20-city index showed home prices falling in most of America's largest cities and hitting their lowest point since the housing bust in nine markets.

The January rise in confidence is a good sign for consumer spending, said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York.

"A confident consumer buys a new car," he said. "A cautious consumer repairs the old one."

The January confidence figure was the highest last May's 62.7. At that time, consumer attitudes were improving as economic growth seemed to be taking off. However, the economy stalled in the summer, and so did confidence.

Confidence has been depressed by unemployment that surged during the country's worst recession since the 1930s and has stayed stubbornly high even though the downturn ended in June 2009. Confidence has not been above 90 since the recession began in



(AP Photo/Seth Perlman) **GROWING CONFIDENCE:** In this photo taken Dec. 6, 2010, visitors at shopping mall in Springfield, Ill. The Consumer Confidence Index rose in January to its highest point in eight months but remains well below the levels indicating a healthy economy

December 2007. In the Conference Board survey, the percentage of people surveyed who felt jobs were hard to get fell slightly to 43.4 percent from 46 percent in December.

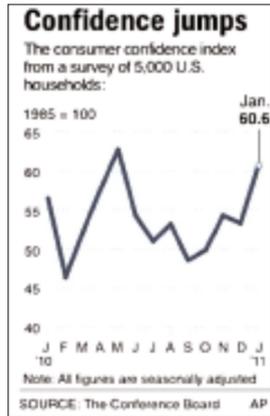
The share who expected to see more jobs six months from now rose to 16 percent from 14.2 percent.

That finding supported a separate report Monday from the National Association for Business Economics that showed the number of firms expressing

positive views on hiring had climbed to the highest level in 12 years.

While confidence has stayed weak since the recession ended in summer 2009, consumer spending has been picking up. During the 2010 holiday shopping season, sales increased at the fastest rate in six years.

Economists are hoping that consumer confidence will keep rising in 2011 as the economy improves and unemployment declines.



HOPES FOR SPENDING CURBS SEND TREASURY PRICES HIGHER

NEW YORK

Treasury prices rose Tuesday on hopes that President Barack Obama might talk about a partial freeze on government spending in his State of the Union speech.

"The market is preparing for a fiscally responsible speech from the President tonight," said John Spinello, bond strategist at Jefferies & Co.

The price of the 10-year Treasury note rose 56 cents per \$100 invested Tuesday. Its yield, which moves in the opposite direction, fell to 3.34 percent from 3.39 percent late Monday.

Recently, some European nations like Portugal and Ireland have had their credit ratings downgraded by agencies who cited increased government spending. The downgrades sent borrowing costs higher for those countries, a cause of worry for bond traders.

On Tuesday, the government also sold \$35 billion two-year notes, which were 3.5 times oversubscribed. That was slightly lower than the average rate of 3.7 in the last four auctions. However the Treasury was able to sell the notes at 0.65 percent, a better rate than the 0.74 percent the government paid at last month's two-year note sale. The 30-year bond is up \$1.03 to yield 4.50 percent, down from 4.56 late Monday.

The yield on the two-year Treasury note fell to 0.58 percent from 0.62 percent.

(AP Photo/Seth Perlman)

Employers added 1.1 million jobs for all of 2010, but the nation still has 7.2 million fewer jobs than it did in December 2007, when the recession began.

Many economists expect the nation will create twice as many jobs this year as it did last year as economic growth picks up.

The Conference Board confidence index was based on answers to questions from a survey of 5,000 U.S. households taken through Jan. 18.

US airlines make money again by flying less



(AP Photo/Stephan Savoia) **CUTTING COSTS:** In this Thursday, Jan. 20, 2011 photo a Jet Blue jet taxis near an American Airlines jet parked at its gate at Boston's Logan International Airport.

DAVID KOENIG, AP Airlines Writer DALLAS

After a decade of multibillion-dollar losses, U.S. airlines appear likely to profit for years for a simple reason: They are flying less.

By grounding planes and eliminating flights, airlines have cut costs and pushed fares higher. As the global economy rebounds, travel demand is rising and planes are as full as they've been in decades.

Profit margins at big airlines are the highest in at least a decade, according to the government. The eight largest U.S. airlines are forecast to earn more than \$5 billion this year and \$5.6 billion in 2012.

U.S. airlines are in the midst of reporting fourth-quarter results that should cap the industry's first moneymaking year since 2007.

"The industry is in the best position — certainly in a decade — to post profitability," says Southwest Airlines CEO Gary Kelly. "The industry is much better prepared today than it was a decade ago."

The airlines' turnaround has benefited investors — the Arca airlines stock index has nearly quadrupled since March 2009 — but it's been tough on travelers.

Fares in the U.S. have risen 14 percent from a year ago, according to travel consultant Bob Harrell. Flights are more crowded than they've been in decades. On domestic flights, fewer than one in five seats are empty. Space is even tighter over the summer and holidays. That's why it took a week to rebook all the travelers who were stranded by a snowstorm that hit the Northeast over Christmas weekend.

Travelers also face fees these days for services that used to be part of the ticket price, such as checking luggage (usually \$25 to \$35 per bag) and rebooking on a different flight (usually \$150 for a domestic flight, more when flying overseas).

"I'm not averse to anyone making money — that's great — but (to) take things away and then charge for them, that's not right," said Rick Jellow, an executive who travels in his job for a lighting-systems company in Virginia.

From 2000 through 2009, U.S. airlines lost about \$60 billion and eliminated 160,000 jobs, according to an industry trade group, the Air Transport Association.

During that tumultuous decade, airlines were hit with a series of events beyond their control: two recessions; the Sept. 11 attacks; an avian flu outbreak that scared away many travelers, and rising fuel costs.

The industry was profitable in 2000, 2006 and 2007, when the economy was roaring. But those boom years masked the industry's underlying problems, including high costs and too many empty seats. During 2008 and 2009, airlines lost a combined \$23 billion, but they were also attacking their problems, setting the stage for a comeback in 2010.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that YVES LAFONTANT a.k.a. YVES FRANCOIS OF BURIAL GROUND CORNER, P.O. BOX N-805, NASSAU, BAHAMAS is applying to the Minister responsible for Nationality and Citizenship, for registration/naturalization as a citizen of The Bahamas, and that any person who knows any reason why registration/naturalization should not be granted, should send a written and signed statement of the facts within twenty-eight days from the 26th day of January, 2011 to the Minister responsible for nationality and Citizenship, P.O. Box N-7147, Nassau, Bahamas.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that ELMINA ETIENNE of Marshall Road is applying to the Minister responsible for Nationality and Citizenship, for registration/naturalization as a citizen of The Bahamas, and that any person who knows any reason why registration/naturalization should not be granted, should send a written and signed statement of the facts within twenty-eight days from the 19th day of January, 2011 to the Minister responsible for nationality and Citizenship, P.O. Box N-7147, Nassau, Bahamas.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that MYRLAND VICTOR of CARMICHAEL ROAD, NASSAU, BAHAMAS is applying to the Minister responsible for Nationality and Citizenship, for registration/naturalization as a citizen of The Bahamas, and that any person who knows any reason why registration/naturalization should not be granted, should send a written and signed statement of the facts within twenty-eight days from the 26th day of January, 2011 to the Minister responsible for nationality and Citizenship, P.O. Box N-7147, Nassau, Bahamas.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that MUNA EL-FITURI of 561 Broadway #9A New York 10012, United States of America is applying to the Minister responsible for Nationality and Citizenship, for registration/naturalization as a citizen of The Bahamas, and that any person who knows any reason why registration/naturalization should not be granted, should send a written and signed statement of the facts within twenty-eight days from the 19th day of January, 2011 to the Minister responsible for nationality and Citizenship, P.O. Box N-7147, Nassau, Bahamas.

BISX LISTED & TRADED SECURITIES AS OF:											
TUESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2011											
BISX ALL SHARE INDEX: CLOSE 1,480.19 CHG -0.05 %CHG 0.00 YTD -19.32 YTD % -1.29											
FINDEX: CLOSE 000.00 YTD 00.00% 2009 -12.31%											
WWW.BISXBAHAMAS.COM TELEPHONE: 242-323-2330 FACSIMILE: 242-323-2320											
52wk-Hi	52wk-Low	Security	Symbol	Previous Close	Today's Close	Change	Daily Vol.	EPS \$	Div \$	P/E	Yield
1.26	0.97	AML Foods Limited		10.02	10.02	0.00		0.150	0.040	6.8	3.92%
10.75	9.67	Bahamas Property Fund		10.63	10.63	0.00		0.013	0.200	817.7	1.88%
6.18	4.50	Bank of Bahamas		4.90	4.90	0.00		0.153	0.100	32.0	2.04%
0.58	0.18	Benchmark		0.18	0.18	0.00		-0.877	0.000	N/M	0.00%
3.49	2.70	Bahamas Waste		2.70	2.70	0.00		0.168	0.090	16.1	3.33%
2.16	2.14	Fidelity Bank		2.17	2.17	0.00		0.016	0.040	135.6	1.84%
12.50	9.62	Cable Bahamas		10.21	10.21	0.00		1.050	0.310	9.7	3.04%
2.84	2.36	Colina Holdings		2.40	2.40	0.00		0.781	0.040	3.1	1.67%
7.00	5.40	Commonwealth Bank (S1)		6.85	6.85	0.00		0.422	0.260	16.2	3.80%
3.65	1.63	Consolidated Water BDRs		2.04	2.00	-0.04		0.111	0.045	18.0	2.25%
2.55	1.90	Doctor's Hospital		1.60	1.60	0.00		0.107	0.110	15.0	6.88%
6.99	5.64	Famguard		6.07	6.07	0.00		0.357	0.240	17.0	3.95%
10.20	7.23	Finco		8.51	8.51	0.00		0.287	0.520	22.7	7.99%
11.40	8.77	FirstCaribbean Bank		9.39	9.39	0.00		0.494	0.350	19.0	3.73%
5.51	3.75	Focol (S)		5.48	5.48	0.00		0.366	0.160	15.0	2.92%
1.00	1.00	Focal Class B Preference		1.00	1.00	0.00		0.000	0.000	N/M	0.00%
7.40	5.00	ICD Utilities		7.40	7.40	0.00		0.012	0.240	616.7	3.24%
10.50	9.82	J. S. Johnson		9.82	9.82	0.00		0.859	0.640	11.4	6.52%
10.00	10.00	Premier Real Estate		10.00	10.00	0.00		0.991	0.800	10.1	8.00%
52wk-Hi	52wk-Low	Security	Symbol	Last Sale	Change	Daily Vol.	Interest	Maturity			
99.46	99.46	Bahamas Note 6.95 (2029)	BAH29	99.46	0.00		6.95%	20 November 2029			
100.00	100.00	Fidelity Bank Note 17 (Series A) +	FBB17	100.00	0.00		7%	19 October 2017			
100.00	100.00	Fidelity Bank Note 22 (Series B) +	FBB22	100.00	0.00		Prime + 1.75%	19 October 2022			
100.00	100.00	Fidelity Bank Note 13 (Series C) +	FBB13	100.00	0.00		7%	30 May 2013			
100.00	100.00	Fidelity Bank Note 15 (Series D) +	FBB15	100.00	0.00		Prime + 1.75%	29 May 2015			
RoyalFidelity Merchant Bank & Trust Ltd. (Over-The-Counter Securities)											
52wk-Hi	52wk-Low	Symbol	Bid \$	Ask \$	Last Price	Daily Vol.	EPS \$	Div \$	P/E	Yield	
10.06	5.01	Bahamas Supermarkets	5.01	6.01	14.00		-2.945	0.000	N/M	0.00%	
0.55	0.40	RND Holdings	0.35	0.40	0.55		0.001	0.000	256.6	0.00%	
CFAL Securities Ltd. (Over-The-Counter Securities)											
41.00	29.00	ABDAB	30.13	31.59	29.00		4.540	0.000	9.03	0.00%	
0.55	0.40	RND Holdings	0.45	0.55	0.55		0.002	0.000	261.90	0.00%	
BISX Listed Mutual Funds											
52wk-Hi	52wk-Low	Fund Name	NAV	YTD%	Last 12 Months %	NAV 3MTH	NAV 6MTH	NAV Date			
1.5122	1.4076	CFAL Bond Fund	1.5179	5.51%	6.90%	1.498004	1.475244	30-Nov-10			
2.9474	2.8300	CFAL MSI Preferred Fund	2.9474	2.10%	2.09%	2.918697	2.919946	31-Dec-10			
1.5743	1.4954	CFAL Money Market Fund	1.5740	4.44%	4.44%	1.555464	1.538692	31-Dec-10			
3.2025	2.8522	Royal Fidelity Bahamas G & I Fund	2.7202	12.72%	4.63%			31-Dec-10			
13.6388	13.0484	Royal Fidelity Prime Income Fund	13.2825	-0.63%	-0.14%			30-Nov-10			
114.3684	101.6693	CFAL Global Bond Fund	114.3684	9.98%	12.49%	109.392860	107.570619	30-Jun-10			
106.5528	99.4177	CFAL Global Equity Fund	106.5528	4.75%	7.18%	100.779540	105.776543	30-Sep-10			
1.1415	1.0000	FG Financial Preferred Income Fund	1.1415	4.74%	5.21%			30-Nov-10			
1.1101	1.0000	FG Financial Growth Fund	1.1101	3.94%	7.60%			30-Nov-10			
1.1428	1.0000	FG Financial Diversified Fund	1.1428	4.78%	5.90%			30-Nov-10			
9.7485	9.1005	Royal Fidelity Bah Int Investment Fund Principal Protected TIGRS, Series 1	9.7950	4.85%	5.45%			30-Nov-10			
11.2361	10.0000	Royal Fidelity Bah Int Investment Fund Principal Protected TIGRS, Series 2	10.6417	-1.20%	0.50%			30-Nov-10			
10.0000	9.1708	Royal Fidelity Bah Int Investment Fund Principal Protected TIGRS, Series 3	9.6635	-3.37%	-3.37%			30-Nov-10			
8.1643	4.8105	Royal Fidelity Int'l Fund - Equities Sub Fund	8.3979	8.82%	8.82%			31-Dec-10			
MARKET TERMS											
BISX ALL SHARE INDEX - 19 Dec 02 = 1,000.00											
52wk-Hi - Highest closing price in last 52 weeks											
52wk-Low - Lowest closing price in last 52 weeks											
Previous Close - Previous day's weighted price for daily volume											
Today's Close - Current day's weighted price for daily volume											
Change - Change in closing price from day to day											
Daily Vol. - Number of total shares traded today											
Div \$ - Dividends per share paid in the last 12 months											
P/E - Closing price divided by the last 12 month earnings											
N/M - Not Meaningful											
FINDEX - The Fidelity Bahamas Stock Index, January 1, 1994 = 100											
TO TRADE CALL: CFAL 242-502-7010 ROYALFIDELITY 242-356-7764 FG CAPITAL MARKETS 242-396-4000 COLONIAL 242-502-7525											

Golf clubs or musical notes?

In late January and through February a rather sedate but handsome shrub goes crazy and bursts out suddenly in spectacular spiky blossoms. The *Clerodendrum grandifolium* or Shooting Stars or Winter Starburst is so different that it draws the eye away from bougainvillea and other showy plants and dominates all plants around it.

Throughout the year, Shooting Stars are a little more subdued, shrubs with large, long green leaves. Whenever a passing breeze ruffles those leaves, you can see the purple undersides that lend an air of ribbon and crown royalty.

When the Shooting Stars appear, the whole aspect of the shrub turns almost gaudy. The flowers are long and pinkish and are produced in vivid clusters. The whole effect makes you want to reach for your camera. The flowering season is brief, however, yet in very brief makes the experience even more precious.

Shooting Stars are propagated mostly from suckers that develop readily from near the base of an adult plant. If these suckers are not pruned away a single specimen shrub can turn into an unruly clump of foliage that leads towards becoming a colourful coppice.

We workers of the soil tend to think of changing gardens rather than houses when we build a new home. In my last garden I had masses of *C. speciosum* vines (Red Bleeding Heart) growing through the trees and shrubs near to my isolated patio. The pink and mature flowers seemed to be both tropical and old world and decorated their host trees with abundance. Freddy Gattlab in Marsh Harbour has property where old growth trees thrive magnificently and the vines there are rampant, climbing to 30 or 40 feet.

Another *Clerodendrum* vine that is popular in The Bahamas is *C. thompsonii* or Bleeding Heart Glory Bower. The growth is vigorous and the color of the flower is white or cream and heart shaped. The bright red interior of the flower gives the popular name. The plant can be propagated by seeds, cuttings or air layering.

GREEN SCENE

By JACQUELINE JONES

The Java *Clerodendrum* (*C. speciosissimum*) has similar growth to Bleeding Heart but bears masses of bright red flowers.

One *Clerodendrum* I have not seen in The Bahamas is *C. stricklandii* or the elegant Glory Bower. It is a shrub or tree from China that grows to ten feet and produces white flowers with red sepals. Once the white petals have dropped the calyx remains with a conspicuous blue seed embedded. This is a very attractive tree that I would love to have in my yard.

Perhaps equally as pretty is the *C. speciosum* or Butterfly Glory Bower. It also grows to about ten feet and produces light blue flowers that are shaped like butterflies. Available in The Bahamas is *C. pulchrum* or Musical Notes Plant. This is a very impressive small shrub while it is not flowering but, like Shooting Stars, changes its aspect greatly once blossoms appear.

The flowers are white with bright red stamens that only appear when the flower is fully open. Before opening the flowers look like elongated white crochets, hence the name Musical Notes Plant. Men have looked at the flowers and decided the flowers look more like a driver, perhaps a drive-wood. Musical notes or golf clubs? Perhaps the answer depends on your gender.

Native to Nigeria the Musical Notes Plant bears on and off throughout the year but is very susceptible to wind. I had one in a container on an front porch steps, facing north. The first blizzard from the north-east decided the flowers and left the leaves in tatters. On the south side of the house it is doing much better.

Clerodendrum belong to the Verbenaceae family and are mostly referred to as glory flowers. They are all beautiful yet have strikingly different qualities.

• gardenerjones@cox.net



YOUNG BEAUTY: Young Shooting Star flowers before the white petal appear.



PRIME: Do you see musical notes or golf clubs? A few hours after this photo was taken the petals opened out.

Flash Back

Just a few images of what we the Bahamas looked like 40...50...60... years in the past

BY ISLAND ROSE



The old folks among us will remember Tony Rocks, this cannon is in the same position as the four cannons along the Western Esplanade. Tony Rocks was covered when they made Arawak Cay.

ENTERTAINMENT

The Tribune

entertainment



MELODIOUS VOICES:

The distinguished performers Alexander Dubson, Ewen McArthur, Simona Corbisiero and Keith Klassen perform for the audience. Piano accompanist Professor Michael McMahon of the Schulich School of Music at McGill University in Montreal is pictured in the background.

BIZET

Broadway at Old Fort Bay a resounding success

By ANITA L. MACDONALD
MBA, MS, MBA, GPCIMS

The "Bizet - Broadway Night at the Opera" was presented in association with the Nassau Music Society under the distinguished patronage of His Excellency Sir Arthur D Foulkes, Governor General of the Bahamas, at the Old Fort Bay Club on Saturday night.

The concert, the proceeds from which will go to inaugurate a voice scholarship fund, was generously and expertly arranged by Corneila and Alberta Nelson in conjunction with Sandra Wilson, who had originated the event in Montreal in 2005.

Much appreciated assistance was provided by Liz Covington, Melissa Means, Rosemarie Alvinson, Patrick Thomson and Julia Watkins-Jar. In addition, the room decorations and dinner table settings by Floral Arts looked absolutely lovely, and beautifully set the scene for the evening.

The performers for the evening were four young Canadian opera singers and their professional piano accompanist. While so progressive of their selection was revealed, it soon became apparent that none was needed, since every song was readily identifiable to this audience, which doted on every definable note.

In a fine bit of showmanship, the quartet opened with It's a Grand Night for Singing from Rodgers and Hammerstein's State Fair. This set the tone for all the following selections, which were joyful, amusing, inspirational, and romantic in nature.

Simona's delightful Chère à son

poet from Die Fledermaus was offered next by mezzo-soprano Beverly McArthur in the parts role as Prince Orlovsky. Her rich and mellifluous voice, added to her expertise as a character actor, set the bar high for the soloists to follow.

Kudos

The challenge was well met by soprano extraordinaire Simona Corbisiero, Canadian born and of Italian descent. Her performance in the title role of Bizet's Carmen of 'L'Amour est un oiseau rebelle' was both stacy and scrupulous, and her coquettish teasing of a red rose to Sir Arthur Foulkes, Governor General, at the conclusion of the aria was the pièce de résistance. To my ears no I'll be hearing a great deal more of this marvelous artist and her exquisite voice.

Continuing with another work from Caruso, baritone Alexander Dubson as Escamillo sang the Torreador song, 'Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre', very convincingly, strutting his stuff to great acclaim.

At this point I should like to offer kudos to the piano accompanist, Professor Michael McMahon of the Schulich School of Music at McGill University in Montreal. Playing beautifully on a Steinway Grand generously lent for the occasion by Nicole and Chad Nevin, Professor McMahon performed with admirable restraint on an instrument whose lid was up all the way, knowing when to be in the foreground, when to be in the background, and when to be an equal partner in the close collaboration between himself and each vocal soloist.

Next on the program was tenor Keith Klassen, who, in his role as Calixt, it prince ignoto (the unknown prince), took us to China by way of Italy with Puccini's 'Nessun dorma'

from Turandot. This is one of the best-known tenor arias in all opera, and it distilld signs of recognition and appreciation in the audience.

We were then immersed once more in the French language, waded there by means of Offenbach's marvelous Barcarolle duet from Les Contes d'Hoffmann as sung by Ms Corbisiero and Ms McArthur. These ladies love a duet, and so do we, for by mutual appreciation and respect for each other's formidable talents. We then found ourselves physically, so to speak, in France but audibly in Italy, as all four singers participated in a scene from Puccini's La Bohème.

The second half of the program was devoted primarily to offerings from Broadway. Ms McArthur, as Eliza Doolittle, opened with 'Snowfall' from Lerner and Loewe's My Fair Lady. Once again, her voice and characterization were spot on. Following with another favorite from My Fair Lady, Ms Klassen, as Freddy Erskind-Hill, sang 'On the Street Where You Live' with all the subtlety and charm of a young man in love.

Comedy

Ms Corbisiero then returned to reside on us with her comedic genius in the song 'Ah, qui dort' from Offenbach's La Peuhlou. Here was one of the finest and funniest performances of this dramatic masterpiece that I have ever had the pleasure to hear. In addition, since the audience was treated to this gem after hearing parodies of a champagne reception followed by a gourmet meal, many of us could identify with the spirit of the piece!

Staying in the realm of comedy, although less broad (pun intended), Mr Dubson served up the ditty 'And her mother came, too' by Novello and Titterton as popularized by

the Old Gostard Park. Much to the delight of the audience, Mr Dubson altered the lyrics to include Nassau locals such as the Old Fort Bay Club, Café Marisco, and Luciano's.

Classics

Ms Corbisiero returned to tug at our heartstrings with Actin and Harburg's 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' from The Wizard of Oz, inviting the audience to join her in song. This was followed by another wistful number, 'Marie', from Bernstein and Sondheim's West Side Story, as sung longingly yet excitedly by Ms Klassen in the role of Tony. Of course that song accentuated the performance of the haunting duet, 'Tonight', that epitome of youthful idealism and passion, as beautifully interpreted by Ms Corbisiero and Mr Klassen.

Not to be outdone, Ms McArthur charmed the Mother Abbess from Rodgers and Hammerstein's Sound of Music, producing the emotional solo 'Climb Every Mountain'. Mr Dubson then sang the equally inspiring 'Edelweiss' in the role of Captain von Trapp, inviting the audience to sing along as well.

The evening's penultimate offering provided a nod to the roots of opera, with Mr Klassen as Alfredo leading the rousing performance of 'Libiamo' from Verdi's La Traviata. The entertainment then concluded with the 'Honey Chalice' waltz from The Merry Widow by Franz Lehár, leaving us all feeling rather nostalgic yet distinctly contented as we exited into the warm and welcoming arms of the Bahamian evening air.

We are most grateful to the Old Fort Bay Club as well for having played its part in perfection in making the event a great success. We sincerely hope there will be a repeat performance next year!

things
2DOJANUARY 26 - SATURDAY
PRE-SUPER BOWL
BIRTHDAY BASH

• Entertainment presents a pre-super bowl birthday bash, 8pm at Du Bateau, Ciega and celebrates with Don, Jersey, and Xavier. Cost: \$10/drink; \$15/plate.

FEBRUARY 5 - SATURDAY
"CUPCAKE WARS"
BY SOMETHING'S
DIFFERENT

• Something's Different presents "Cupcake Wars", a fabulous fun event for kids ages 4-12. Other activities include cake decorating demo by Chef Ian, sugar rose and figurine workshops, guided cake and frosting sampling for big kids and "propose" sampling for dogs.

All participants receive valuable coupons and a chance to win a cake, cupcake and cookie packaged to take at \$1.50. Cost: \$10/admission purchase, includes general admission; \$13/at the door. Tickets available at Something's Different.

EVERY SUNDAY
KARAOKE NIGHT
AT CRICKET CLUB

• The Cricket Club invites you to Karaoke Night where you can have your moment in the spotlight as it's back, sing and listen as people sing hit tunes from all genres, including Bahamian, Soul, Reggae, Motown, R&B, Rock, Disco, Dance, Broadway and more! Telephone: 325-4720.

FEBRUARY 5 - SATURDAY
GIVE BACK
BIRTHDAY BASH:
"AQUARIUS
WITH LOVE"

• We Will Organize presents the give back birthday bash "Aquarius with Love". Open at the Parklin Music provided by Dion De Bardin. Cost: \$15/admission; \$20/at the door. Part proceeds in aid of charities.

FEBRUARY 6 - SUNDAY (DATE
CHANGE)2011 FASHION
FOR A CAUSE

"Fashion for a Cause", a big fashion show that helps HIV/AIDS victims, comes to the British Colonial Hilton in hopes of giving help towards the fight against HIV/AIDS in The Bahamas and providing education, clothes, food, medication and the possibility of shelter for those needing these special services.

With your help, hope can be restored and we can change the mind set and outcome of one individual at a time and help in their decision to live a purposeful life again. Show starts 7:30pm. Email: donna@fashionforacause.com, http://fashionforacause.com.

An Intervention

FROM page 10

the trailer had been tracked down and that the gas would be off so it which was recovered," he explained.

Mr Roberts wants individuals to get the message that the Bahamas has a rich culture that needs to be preserved.

"As anyone who has seen this often reflected in my work understands, I have always been a proponent for ecological conservation and the preservation of our heritage in all its forms. We have a rich cultural history in this island. It is our legacy and we are its keepers. We should not destroy it either willfully or by neglect. It is our duty to preserve our existing buildings, artifacts or anything else of cultural or historical value and communicate this to our children. Without this, how will they understand or

respect what they came from; how will they know that we should, the sacrifices their parents or grandparents probably had to make on the hardships they may have had to endure; how will they know on what to build their future?"

From the 26 pieces of pine Mr Roberts retrieved at the demolition site, he has created small souvenirs, from mirrors to benches to tables.

"I have created a small series of memorabilia to share - benches, small tables and mirrors - with the intent and hope that when we look in the mirror we will see not only our faces reflected back at us, but those of our ancestors and more importantly, perhaps it will come as all to reflect on a question why we are so ready to let go of the past and be so very careless with our treasures."

The exhibit is currently up at the Central Bank Art Gallery. The opening reception will be held tomorrow evening at 6pm.

Endowment

FROM page 10

The College of the Bahamas memorialized the former lawyer, and cultural icon in way the highlighted his work education and contributions made to the arts arena locally.

In 2006, The College of the Bahamas established the Winston Saunders Memorial Endowment with an initial contribution that has since grown to more than \$50,000 through the generosity of donors and friends of the College, including Jo'Anne Miller, an artist and former protégé of Mr Saunders. Mr Miller has been consistently raising funding for the Winston Saunders Endowment through the annual sessions of his new paintings.

"Exploring new ways of thinking in what implies the private wealth manager, accountant, investor or employer to consider variables that their clients may have considered before. This is why the arts are so invaluable and why The College of the Bahamas supports, nurtures and encourages this kind of expression and academic commitment."

The Endowment for the Performing Arts has, over the years, awarded grants totaling over \$60,000 annually, to assist qualified applicants, both individuals and groups, in their creative efforts.

Currently, under the patronage of Lady Joan Foulkes wife of Governor General Sir Arthur Foulkes, the organization is now in full planning mode for its next fundraiser - "Spring Into The Arts" - a gala luncheon at Old Fort Bay scheduled for Saturday, March 12.

Share
your
news

The Tribune wants to hear from people who are making news in their neighborhoods. Perhaps you are raising funds for a good cause, competing for improvements in the area or have won an award. If so, call us on 325-3956 and share your story.



IN MY EAR

BY MIRA & TERESA



CHIT CHAT

BY LESH

THE FACES OF AMERICAN IDOL



RANDY



STEVEN



RYAN



JENNIFER

SIP SIP ON THE NEW JUDGES

AMERICAN Idol season 11 got early starts with a new style and a new 2011 logo, but hired new panel of judges—American singer and song writer Steven Tyler, American actress, singer and producer Jennifer Lopez, and of course American Idol returnee Randy Jackson.

In the first week's auditions of *AMERICAN IDOL* found it hard to say "no". She found herself saying "yes" to every little tear and plead asked of her.

There was some consensus however who managed to get the golden Hollywood ticket with an easy yes from all three of the judges. The trio, Travis Orlando who lived the majority of his life in a homeless shelter sang Jason Mraz's hit song "I'm Yours," even though he appeared extremely nervous, his voice told his story, he got a yes before he got the chance to finish singing. I think we can see him making it to the top 10!

While there were a lot of sad stories on the show, there were also a lot of bounce. Newcomer, Steven Tyler and Randy Jackson joined in with one of the contestants and displayed their aim to incarcerate Lopez.

From the looks of the first week, there is a lot of talent to come.

PEOPLE QUESTION WILL IT SURVIVE WITHOUT SIMON?

Apart from the millions of auditions, I think it is safe to say Simon Cowell made the show with his harsh judgments on the contestants. He always kept fans on the edge of their seat, would it be a yes, a no? He would always look that shocked look on your face thinking "OH MY GOSH, IS HE SERIOUS?"

People are saying when the new season had started, it definitely felt as if something was missing, and that was indeed Simon, the whole line up looks out of order. Critics are saying if it is the soft one, Steven is not so bad, Randy will always be Randy, but who will take on the role as the harsh one?

They agree that American Idol will always have their massive but it is not the same without Simon's comments and judgments. Simon will be hosting a talent show that is called *The X Factor*, debuting this fall.

MOST MEMORABLE FIRST WEEK AUDITIONS

As previously mentioned, Travis Orlando, a 16-year-old who lived a life as a homeless shelter with his family was the last to audition on the first night, and appeared extremely nervous, shaking even. The judges overlooked his nervous appearance when he opened his mouth, they became instantly very impressed with Mr Orlando as he sang two songs for them, he was definitely one of the best.

Another memorable story was taking through the *AMERICAN IDOL* doors earlier that night as Terella Von Hagel, a teenager that dedicated her performance to her father who had throat

cancer. She came walking through with a pretty flower in her hair with the biggest smile on her face, she caught Steven's attention at first glance because of her kind charm. After she got her golden ticket, the judges asked her to bring her father in to celebrate with her.

Michela Adorni, a teenager from Kosovo also had a very sad and touching story but she did not let that interfere with her singing, she almost brought tears to Lo's eyes after her performance.

Apart from the sad stories, there were also some that left your side hurting from the laughter. Ashley Salinas, a huge Britney Spears fan came with a very active

opinion so it is a kind of high experience for me.

Ashley Thompson says: "I think last week was too long some real close calls, but overall it was a good season. Those judges need to do some work, though, they are being and there are nothing like Simon, they say yes to anything."

Giving her views on the first week, Chrissie Costello said in the first week she felt as if the judges were not as intense as they should have been. "I think wasn't standing her ground as a judge. She found it hard to say no to the contestants that weren't good enough to go through to



MENTOR TO THE STARS

Jerry Bruns, left, in-house mentor on the new season of *American Idol*, takes part in a panel discussion with new judge Steven Tyler during the FOX Broadcasting Company Television Critics Association winter press tour in Pasadena, Calif., Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2011. (AP)

and hyper attitude where she came and literally got on her knees and begged the judges to send her through. They all said no but she did not stop until she managed to get Jennifer and Steven to give her a yes.

Last but not least was Mr Yogi "Pop", yes the name says it all. Dressed as the late Michael Jackson, Pop may not have come out with the judges covered their faces and laughed at him, but she did not stop him from continuing to sing the song "Party In The USA". Pop will be going down in *AMERICAN IDOL* history books but he did not get his golden ticket to Hollywood.

WHAT THE FANS THINK

It is a bit of a shame to think that with some *American Idol* fans and Nadine Thomas Brown tells us she felt as if the show is trying to be what it was but is falling miserably. "We tried to become me since we fans to deliver crushing blows to the contestants' ego. Sadly the new season has been replaced by a more sober and altogether too-earnest *AMERICAN IDOL*, there is no Simon replacement to fill the role of the

Hollywood. Randy and the rocker did things fine in my opinion but overall for the 1st week they weren't as intense as they should be."

Zelka Tansquest while she liked the show's funny performers of season 10, she said the show will never be the same without Simon. "Jennifer Lopez was terrific, she was everyone through that cried to her, she needs to lighten up a little."

Karis Herig told *The X Factor* that she thinks there were too many and stories during the first week. "I like the new season but I think the show had already run its course, but I am pleasantly surprised by Jennifer Lopez and Steven."

Going further, Teddy Stinson found "Touchingly Simon was the backbone of the show as well as Paula being the heart however it may matter, because a lot of people agree that the show was in need of a change. I think that it will be especially with the new judge added to the panel because they are superstars and they can give advice from their own experience as well as give just a good judgment as the famous Simon did."

TOP 10 DANCEHALL HITS

YVY2 KARTEL
DUMPER TRUCK

NAVADO
STUILLA

CAMFLOW
PUFF IT

SHAGGY FEAT ALAINE -
R-LICIOUS MUSIC
FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

GYPTIAN
NAH LET GO

YVY2 KARTEL
TOUCH A BUTTON NUH

MR G
SWAGGERIFIC

LOCTANE
NUH LOVE INNA DEM

SPICE
JIM SCREBBCHIE

YVY2 KARTEL
CAKE SOAP





**Broadway
at Old Fort
Bay a
success**
See page 10

Idol Chit Chat
See page 11



The Arts

The Tribune SECTION B •

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2011



AN INTERVENTION: THE HANSARD BUILDING DEMOLITION

By JEFFARAH GIBSON
Tribune Features Writer

ANYONE familiar with prominent Bahamian artist Antonius Roberts and his work, knows that he is a passionate conservationist and has always woven the preservation of organic materials and African heritage into his work.

His new showing, "An Intervention: The Hansard Demolition" is an attempt by the artist to preserve the pine wood used during the original construction of the building.

The Hansard Building located on Rowson Square has a very long history. It was constructed in 1804-1805 and it was the country's original Post Office.

Currently the building is being refurbished as the government signed a contract last October for its renovation. The building will house a much needed Supreme Court facility. The work includes the demolition of the first floor and construction of a sixth room area.

During the demolition Mr Roberts was posing the question, what to do with the pile of discarded wood on the back of trailer and recognized its significance.

"When I was passing Rowson Square, I noticed a large trailer of apparently discarded wood outside the

Hansard Building. I was immediately concerned and curious about the destination of this wood. I phoned the prime architect, Hubert Ingraham to find out if he knew if there was a national plan in place for this trailer full of old native pine, the wood having been used for the original floor boards of this 205 year old building. The Prime Minister indicated that he had seen the trailer himself and was also curious as to its destination or use," Mr Roberts said.

"Naturally I was pleased in some small measure to forward the complete destruction of the wood and to have the opportunity to realize the piece that I did. However, it raised far more questions than answers and it is those questions that need resolution as we purportedly have agencies, systems and policies in place to oversee cultural and historical buildings and artifacts.

"Some of the questions that needs to be addressed are: why these systems and policies failed in this instance to recognize the historical significance of this building in a real and sensitive way for its preservation and why, in the larger context, any of the current policies or procedures are either being ignored or overlooked. In other words, an urgent project or failure to preserve buildings, artifacts or anything of historical significance that these agencies are mandated to do," he said.

Mr Roberts was able to secure some 26 pieces of 3'-4' Pine. "I eventually learned that the location of

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WOODEN MEMORIES:
Antonius Roberts has created mementos of the discarded wood.

Endowment for the Performing Arts donates \$25,000 to the Winston Saunders Memorial Endowment

By JEFFARAH GIBSON
Tribune Features Writer

EVER SINCE its inception, the Endowment for the Performing Arts of the Bahamas, has raised funds that promoted the involvement of all art forms in the Bahamas through scholarships and grants.

To memorialize the late Winston Saunders, the Endowment for the Performing Arts of the Bahamas made a \$25,000 contribution to the Winston Saunders Memorial Endowment at The College of the Bahamas which supports the continued development of the arts and plays a key role in cultivating the country's creative genius. The endowment funds an annual bursary to a student enrolled in the baccalaureate English Studies program of The College and who has distinguished him or herself in an artistic endeavor.

This latest \$25,000 gift brings the

total for the Winston Saunders Endowment fund to over \$75,000. Interest earned from the funds in the endowment provides an annual bursary for a student at the College. Dean Simms an English major, is the first beneficiary of the bursary.

"By making this significant contribution to the Winston Saunders Memorial Endowment, The Endowment for the Performing Arts is supporting the talents and passion of both current and future students with a vested commitment to the arts, the quest for infinite discoveries and national development," said Dr. Betty V. Baze, president of the College.

"In essence, this is what the late Winston Saunders lived and the legacy that he left through his deep involvement, conviction and leadership in the arts and cultural communities. Today's gift honors that commitment."

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FROM LEFT ARE: Chair, School of English Studies, Dr. Marjorie Brooks-Jones, Dean Simms, English major and bursary recipient, Endowment for the Performing Arts members Christiane Oakes, Terry North and Ruth Cleary, Dr. Gail Saunders, widow of the late Winston Saunders, College President Dr. Betty V. Baze, Lady Joan Faulkner, Patron of the Endowment for the Performing Arts, Emma and Maska, Chairman of the Endowment, Endowment members, Antonius Roberts, Debeesh Lotfian and Dave Davies, Jo Romo Miller, artist, and Marina Knowles, mother of COB bursary recipient Dean Simms.