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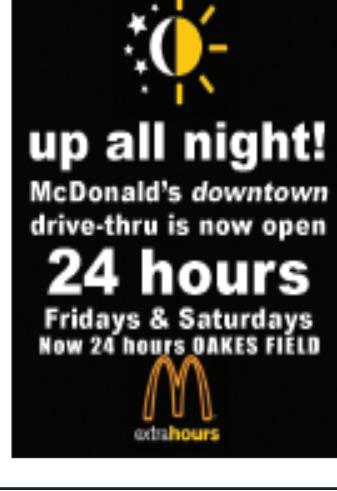


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INSIDE

**CARS FOR SALE,
HELP WANTED
AND REAL ESTATE**
THE BAHAMAS BIGGEST



**Shockers rally
to upset Giants**

SPORTS STARTS ON PAGE NINE

**RAPID STRIKE
OFFICERS SHOOT
TWO SUSPECTS**

By CELESTE NIXON
Tribune Staff Reporter
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

TWO suspects remain in hospital after being shot by Rapid Strike officers during separate police actions.

The first incident occurred on Thursday at 11.30pm, with the second around 2am on Friday – both following high-speed chases.

Operation Rapid Strike was launched by the police in mid-January as an effort to get a grip on the escalat-

SEE page 10

Charity worker murder shock

Tributes for former president of Bahamas Heart Association

By NOELLE NICOLLS
Tribune Staff Reporter
nnicolls@tribunemedia.net

THE brutal murder of a respected leading charity worker has sent shockwaves throughout the health community.

Nellie Mae Brown, former president of the Bahamas Heart Association, was stabbed to death on Wednesday morning in an alleged domestic conflict.

Her body was found with multiple wounds across her body in an apartment complex on Bougainvillea Boulevard, South Beach.

Ms Brown, 42, leaves behind two daughters.

A week before her death, Ms Brown chaired the monthly meeting of the Bahamas Heart Association and was said to be "upbeat and energised". She was mobilising association members to start planning for next year's heart month.

Linda Lafleur, treasurer of the heart association, said: "It is really, really sad and we are going to miss her."

"She was a hard worker. Enthusiastic."

"She gave everyone energy to do more than you really anticipated doing. She got the job done. She really was an exceptional person. She made a tremendous contribution. Everyone is hollering and screaming and crying. No one can believe it. Our office is stunned. We haven't really done anything concrete from day."

Ms Brown spent so much time on heart association business "you would think she was a full-time volunteer", according to heart surgeon Dr Duane Sands.

In fact she was volunteer who served as president in



MURDER VICTIM:
Nellie Mae Brown

addition to her other employment responsibilities.

Dr Sands said Ms Brown would regularly call him early in the mornings during heart month to schedule radio or television interviews.

He said "you could not ask for someone who was more committed to a cause", particularly when there "was no money or acclaim that she got out of it". It was a real labour of love, he said.

"Nellie was a very vivacious, very community and issue-oriented person."

"She was the embodiment of the heart association. She stands out as one of the movers and shakers in that movement."

"My biggest and fondest recollection is the preparation for heart month in February. It required a phenomenal amount of organisation," said

SEE page 10

MAN DIES IN HOSPITAL AFTER SHOOTING

THE FATAL shooting of a Nassau Village man brought the country's murder count to 39 yesterday.

Police are investigating the death of a 30-year-old Dimitri Cherrio Pratt, who was shot in an apartment at Sumner Street at around 1.30am.

The victim, who had been shot in the chest, was still alive when he was found by police.

He was taken to the Princess Margaret Hospital by ambulance, but later died of his injuries.

Last night police said their investigations continue.

PM VOICES 'EDUCATION CRISIS' CONCERN AT OPENING OF NEW COB LIBRARY



ABOVE: COB's new Harry C Moore Library and Information Centre.

RIGHT: Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham with Mrs. Monique Moore, the widow of Harry Moore yesterday at the opening of the new library.

By TANEKA THOMPSON
Tribune Staff Reporter
tthompson@tribunemedia.net

THE low graduation rates of males from the College of the Bahamas is part of a national education "crisis" contributing to high crime, said Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham.

The issue – a mere 15 per cent of COB's graduates are men – is rooted in a deeper social problem that has crept into the nation's primary and high schools, he added.

The problem warrants further study on male educational achievement, said Mr Ingraham, who hopes new ideas on how to tackle the disparity between male and female educational achievement come from the country's scholars.

His comments came at the opening

SEE page two



MAN RECAPTURED AFTER ESCAPE FROM POLICE VAN

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport
Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – In a desperate attempt to avoid being sent to prison, a man jumped out of the window of a police van while being transported to the airport for transfer to New Providence.

Shortly after escaping from police custody on Tuesday, Bernard Ferguson, 20, was recaptured by police in the Maple Close area.

Ferguson and several prisoners were being transported to the Grand Bahama Inter-

national Airport when he made his escape

Assistant Superintendent Loretta Mackey said Ferguson was arraigned in court on Thursday in connection with his escape.

He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to two years behind bars at Her Majesty's Prison in Fox Hill.

Prior to his escape, Ferguson and a juvenile appeared in the Freeport Magistrate's Court on Monday in connection with a number of break-in and stealing incidents at the Our Lucaya Resort.

It is alleged that between

February and March the accused broken into several guest rooms at the Radisson and stole a number of items, including laptop computer, video camera, jewelry, coins, cash, cellular phones, I-Pod, together valued at \$7,019.

Ferguson and the juvenile pleaded not guilty to seven counts of break-in and stealing charges.

The matters were adjourned to June 7 and July 12 for trial.

Ferguson was remanded to Fox Hill Prison and the juvenile was ordered to wear an electronic monitoring bracelet.

LOCAL NEWS

PM voices 'education crisis' concerns

FROM page one

ceremony of COB's Harry C Moore Library and Information Centre.

Researchers should question what new teaching methods are needed to encourage male achievement; what public health and social intervention programmes can stem criminal and anti-social behaviour in young men; and probe what insight the field of behavioural economics can provide, suggested Mr Ingraham.

"We are all concerned that males now comprise only 15 per cent of COB's graduates. The imbalance between the number of female and male graduates speaks to a deeper and broader national problem of male educational achievement."

"The subject is ripe I believe, for study and research by the COB as we seek to develop innovative and practical ideas on how we may address the gender gap as it begins to manifest at the primary and secondary levels of our school system."

"Male achievement in edu-

cation is one of the more urgent challenges facing our country. Male achievement touches on areas of national life from family life to crime prevention to economic development and sustainability," said Mr Ingraham.

"By its very nature, this great national challenge - indeed crisis - requires innovative and cross-disciplinary responses from fields such as sociology, social psychology, education, criminology, economics and other disciplines. If ever we needed to find innovative solutions to a critical national issue, we urgently need to do so on the challenge of boosting male achievement and reducing the level of criminality by young men."

"Even as the country turns to government and others for responses, it also increasingly turns to the institutions of higher learning to provide the research and ideas for innovation that will help us to collectively address this great challenge."

Yesterday's opening ceremony marked a milestone for the college, as it moves closer to achieving university status. The library and information centre is also vital to the advancement of Bahamian scholarship and national development.

"This centre holds the promise of research that may provide scientists, engineers, business people and public policymakers with ideas and

information on the urgent question of alternative energy solutions and greater food security for the Bahamas, among other challenges related to small-island states development and sustainability," said Mr Ingraham.

Its virtual library will be instrumental in fostering the development of new ideas from family island residents who will be able to access information, research materials and Bahamian historical data.

Mr Ingraham added: "Through this centre, a student as far away as the Inagua All-Age School may learn more about the history of our southernmost island and why Mathew Town should be spelt with one 't' and not two. Also through this centre, an entrepreneur on San Salvador providing eco and heritage tours may connect virtually with other Bahamians developing similar tours in Grand Bahama, Andros, Cat Island and indeed throughout the entire Bahamas."

The circular design of the research centre is based on the idea that the quest for knowledge is never-ending. The new facility features a permanent exhibition of the country's first Bahamian Prime Minister, Sir Lynden Pindling, and will serve as the de facto national library. The centre was designed by architects Leslie Johnson and Jackson Burnside.

OPENING CEREMONY HARRY C MOORE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE



ENTRANCE of the new Harry Moore Library and Information Centre.



Felipe Major/Tribune staff

PRIME Minister Heribert Ingraham along with Mrs. Monique Moore the Widow of Harry Moore unveils a portrait of the late Harry Moore yesterday at the opening of the new COB Library.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

SECURITIES COMMISSION OF THE BAHAMAS

The Securities Commission of The Bahamas, a statutory agency responsible for the oversight, supervision and regulation of the Investment Funds, Securities and Capital Markets, in or from The Bahamas, as well as the supervision of Financial and Corporate Service Providers, invites applications from qualified individuals for the following position:

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Qualifications/Experience

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Period of Appointment

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Contact Information

Interested person should submit their applications no later than April 15, 2011 to:

**Deputy Manager, Executive Department
Securities Commission of The Bahamas**
Tel: (242) 397-4100
Fax: (242) 350-7550
Email: Info@securities.bs

April Is "Cancer Control Month."

Each Year, The President Of The USA Declares April As *Cancer Control Month*. Efforts Are Made To Inform People On Ways To Prevent Cancer And Highlight Progress In Cancer Research.

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CEO of McGill University Health Centre



Dr. Caroline Sin Quie
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Director of Pediatric Oncology



Professor Dr. Karol Sikora
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Tuesday April 12th, 2011 @ 6:30 pm

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PC, MD, MBA, FACP, FACR, FAAMA
Director of Radiation Oncology, And CEO of McGill University Health Centre



Dr. Corrine Sin Quee
MBBS, FAAP
Director of Paediatric Oncology



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Securities Commission of The Bahamas

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Fax: (242) 356-7530

E-mail: info@scb.gov.bs

EDITORIAL/LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Tribune Limited

*NULLIUS ADDICTUS JURARE IN VERBA MAGISTRI
Being Bound to Swear to The Dogmas of No Master*

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*Publisher/Editor 1919-1972
Contributing Editor 1972-1991*

*EILEEN DUPUCH CARRON, C.M.G., M.S., B.A., LL.B.
Publisher/Editor 1972-*

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Insurance Management Building., P.O. F-485, Freeport, Grand Bahama

Boeing 737s around the world face new scrutiny

PHOENIX — The crown prince of Thailand has one. So do the presidents of Peru and Chile. The Chinese Air Force relies on it, as do airlines in Russia, Indonesia, Australia and Romania.

The Boeing 737 is a workhorse of international aviation. And the accident in which the roof of a Southwest Airlines jet ripped open 34,000 feet over Arizona has brought scrutiny to the hundreds of older-model 737s around the world that could be similarly vulnerable because of tiny, hard-to-find stress fractures in the aluminum skin.

The planes will now be subjected to repeated examinations as the problem revealed by the fuselage crack on the Southwest flight resonates through the world's 737 fleet for years to come. Many of their owners are now giving the planes a closer look after what happened April 1 in Arizona when a 5-foot section of the fuselage tore apart and forced pilots to make an emergency landing at a desert military base. Light-headed passengers were banged around the cabin and had to quickly put on overhead oxygen masks as pilots made a rapid descent.

The incident has forced airlines and governments around the world to take swift action. The governments of Japan, Indonesia, South Korea and others ordered airlines to beef up inspections. Scandinavian airline SAS is performing similar checks on some of its 737s. Qantas Airlines in Australia is checking four of its planes and Air New Zealand is looking at 15. Airlines said the inspections have not disrupted air travel. Southwest and Continental Airlines have the most planes on the list of 737-300s, 737-400s and 737-500s prone to the fuselage ruptures, but a large number of the planes are owned by overseas carriers. UTAir in Russia, Garuda Airlines in Indonesia, Air New Zealand and three major carriers in China are among the biggest. Alaska Airlines has 17.

Southwest finished inspecting all of its affected planes by Tuesday. They found five that had cracks in the same lap joint that tore open during last week's flight, and were working with Boeing to make repairs. Alaska Airlines is going a step beyond a Federal Aviation Administration directive this week that ordered inspections when the planes reach a 30,000 takeoffs and landings; the airline will inspect all its planes in the coming weeks.

"We're not required to inspect them right now, but we felt it was the prudent thing to do, and to help the industry determine the proper interval," spokesman Paul McElroy said.

There are about 6,000 737s in operation worldwide, and an emergency FAA order on Tuesday only covers 579 that have the type of "lap joint" that failed during last week's flight. Lap joints are used in many places on an aircraft fuselage and get their name because it is the spot where the aluminum skin of the aircraft overlaps and is secured with rivets. The FAA order focuses on a Boeing joint design on planes made between 1993 and 2000.

Experts say that all of the planes around the world will be covered by the FAA order because of international agreements between civil aviation regulators globally. Many of the inspection orders handed down by foreign governments mirrored the one issued by the FAA.

"Some airlines may not always maintain the records that they need to and certainly not all airlines will not maintain their airplanes to the highest levels of safety," said Henry Harteveldt, aviation analysis at Forrester Research, Inc. in San Francisco. "But I would make very clear that the top tier U.S. and foreign flag airlines do this. Airlines like British Airways, Qantas and so on, those airlines maintain their airplanes to the highest standards and the best record-keeping."

The FAA said all of the planes have to undergo inspections when they reach the threshold of 30,000 takeoffs and landings. The 175 of those planes that have already reached the threshold are getting immediate inspections. For example, the planes owned by the crown prince of Thailand and Chinese Air Force have only flown about 5,000 cycles each, meaning their planes have a long ways to go before an inspection. One of the Swedish planes has more than 40,000, requiring an immediate examination.

The inspections are high-tech and labour-intensive. Mechanics using a device that sends magnetic signals through metal to detect unseen cracks will scan about 50 feet of the twin metal seams running along the top of each airplane. The task takes two experts in aircraft service about eight hours. Repairs on any fatigue cracks will take a day or two at most. The checks will have to be repeated every 500 flights.

A 737-200 model flying for Aloha Airlines in 1988 had one of the most spectacular aviation incidents in modern history when its roof ripped off while flying from Hilo to Honolulu. A flight attendant was sucked out of the plane and plunged to her death, and dozens of passengers were injured.

That tragedy was blamed on the failure of the same type of metal joint that forced Southwest Airlines Flight 812 to make an emergency landing near Yuma, Arizona.

The Aloha incident triggered a decades-long effort to prevent similar stress-related failures that came to a conclusion in January when new FAA regulations went into effect mandating closer inspections.

"To Southwest's credit, when that skin ruptured on that plane a week ago or so, that pilot got that plane down from 34,000 to 10,000 feet or so in (four) minutes. No one was severely hurt, no one died, and I think that is an important point to keep in mind," said Henry Harteveldt, aviation analysis at Forrester Research of San Francisco. "I think people will view this as a hiccup, I don't believe that it will have a long-term effect on the 737."

(This article was written by Bob Christie of the Associated Press).

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Justice delayed is justice denied, or no justice at all?**EDITOR, The Tribune.**

ON THE 7th October 2007, Agnes Sylvia Cates was found murdered in her bedroom in Rock Sound, Eleuthera. To date, over three years after her murder, not one single piece of evidence has been presented in Court. Here is a highlight of the events, subsequent to Mrs Cates' murder:

15th Oct 2007: 1st Suspect Charged in Magistrate's Court, Bank Lane

29th Oct 2007: Case brought up for mention in Magistrate's Court, Bank Lane

12th Nov 2007: Case brought up for mention in Magistrate's Court, Bank Lane

25th Feb 2008: 2nd Suspect arraigned in Magistrate's Court

1st April 2008: Case brought up for mention in Magistrate's Court No. 11, Nassau Street. AG's office announced that it intended to move the case to the Supreme Court by Voluntary Bill of Indictment, but needed an additional two months to prepare the case.

5th May 2008: Case brought up for mention at Court 11.

19th June 2008: Case brought up for mention at Court 11.

12th Aug 2008: 2nd Suspect released on \$30,000 bail.

6th Oct 2008: Charges against the 1st suspect discontinued. Case against the 2nd suspect to be moved to the Supreme Court by Voluntary Bill of Indictment, Court 11.

24th Nov 2008: 2nd suspect to be arraigned in the Supreme Court. No appearance by the 2nd suspect.

28th Nov 2008: 2nd suspect arraigned in Supreme Court.

28th Feb 2011: Case to open in Supreme Court. Suspect did not appear.

1st Mar 2011: Case to open in Supreme Court. Suspect did not appear.

4th Mar 2011: Bail hearing in Supreme Court.

11th Mar 2011: Bail hearing in Supreme Court.

What you have above is a travesty of Justice. I am proud to know some of the Cates family. They, like the late Agnes Cates are upstanding

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

and honourable members of society. The violent murder of Mrs Cates is an attack on society as a whole and on each and every law-abiding citizen in this country. Regrettably, their tragedy and pain highlights the horrendous problem that we face as a nation. At any given moment, any one of us could be placed in the tragic circumstances faced by the Cates family.

And like the Cates family, we would be dropped in the hands of a crippled justice system. You will note above, a break in the time line from November 2008 to February 2011. Is this the true reflection of our Justice system? Our elected Government has the responsibility to ensure the effective administration of Justice. It is abundantly clear that they have failed us! Will the madness ever end in granting bail to repeat offenders? This issue has become a menace to society, with no correction in sight.

As a friend stated to me: "You can chase a rat around the room all day with no consequences, but the second you pin him in the corner, he will attack you."

Are the law-abiding citizens becoming rats that are being cornered?

JEROME R PINDER
Nassau,
April 7, 2011.

Talk radio an integral part of society**EDITOR, The Tribune.**

TALK RADIO has now become an integral part of the Bahamian society. Talk radio has enabled a number of major discussions that affect Bahamians to resume at a high level and it is in my view informing and educating Bahamians like never before.

All talk radio hosts have biases, whether intentional or not. And this is the key point of focus. Listeners must be able to sift through the information and make sense of what they are hearing.

I am amused daily when I listen to talk radio in the Bahamas. Everyone has an answer to the problems that nag our country daily. Yes, everyone. And some of our hosts are so one-sided that changing the show's name to PLP Talk or FNM Talk wouldn't even cause a stir.

I would say to the listeners to remain open-minded and not be sucked in to everything that is spoken. In this technological age, I would urge listeners to gather as much material as possible so that informed decisions can be concluded.

Remember that talk is cheap, but money buys land. In other words, action is needed in addition to the "talks." What say you Fayne Thompson? Have you broken this story Steve McKinney? Can I put this in an envelope for you Ortland Bodie? Can I finish my thought Chrissie Love?

Talk radio gives those who listen, a chance to vent and to learn differing views on a subject. It gives us a somewhat false sense of security that through talking something will change. But talk radio alone will not change the landscape of the Bahamas. The listeners also have a responsibility to act on the information being received.

Will change come? It remains to be seen. After all it's Talk Radio. But it's a step in the right direction.

DEHAVILLAND L MOSS
Nassau,
April 8, 2011.

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- Observes quality of food service and gives instructions for maintenance of high standards.
- Works as necessary to insure customer satisfaction, which may include occasional odd hours and/or remaining on-call for problem solving.
- Reviews inventory and requisitions and purchases food supplies as required.

Education and Experience

- Graduation from an accredited college or university including or supplemented by course work in restaurant management and considerable (min. Of 7 years) management experience in a high volume food service unit; or any equivalent combination of training and experience.
- Thorough knowledge of food delivery and casual dining services management procedures and practices.
- Ability to control and manage food service operations.
- Ability to maintain a variety of operating and general records and to prepare reports.

Send résumé to: hr.bah.restaurants@gmail.com

Deadline for application is Friday, April 15th, 2011

BAHAMAS RED CROSS HELPS JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI SURVIVORS

THE Bahamas Red Cross Society has contributed \$5,000 to a fund which is being used to equip 70,000 temporary homes in the earthquake-stricken Japan.

To ease the plight of earthquake and tsunami survivors, the Japanese Red Cross Society with the assistance of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from around the world is to equip 70,000 temporary homes with a package of electrical appliances. The assistance – worth an estimated \$160 million and benefitting over 280,000 people – is part of Red Cross efforts to meet the early recovery needs of those affected by the March disaster 11, when a tsunami swept across 433,000 square kilometres of land.

So far, the equivalent of \$34 million has already been received by the Japanese Red Cross from National Societies overseas.

The first 36 of the government-built prefabricated homes were occupied in Rikuzentakada, Iwate prefecture yesterday. These prefabricated homes will be a major step towards easing the pressure on evacuation centres, allowing people to return to some semblance of normality, the Red Cross said.

The Japanese Red Cross Society is providing each home with a refrigerator, washing machine, rice cooker, microwave, hot water dispenser and television.

More than 188,000 people are still displaced by the disaster. Most of them are staying in over 2,200 evacuation centres spread across 17 prefectures, with the vast majority in the three worst-affected prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima. Although people are returning to homes that survived the disaster as electricity and water supplies are restored, the centres continue to house so many people that a number of them are likely to stay open for months to come.

In the coming weeks, the Japanese Red Cross will continue to place greater emphasis on early recovery.

Up until this point, its major focus has been on emergency healthcare and relief distribution.

Construction of downtown Straw Market is on schedule

CONSTRUCTION on the new \$11.2 million straw market is progressing on schedule and should be ready for occupancy in late August.

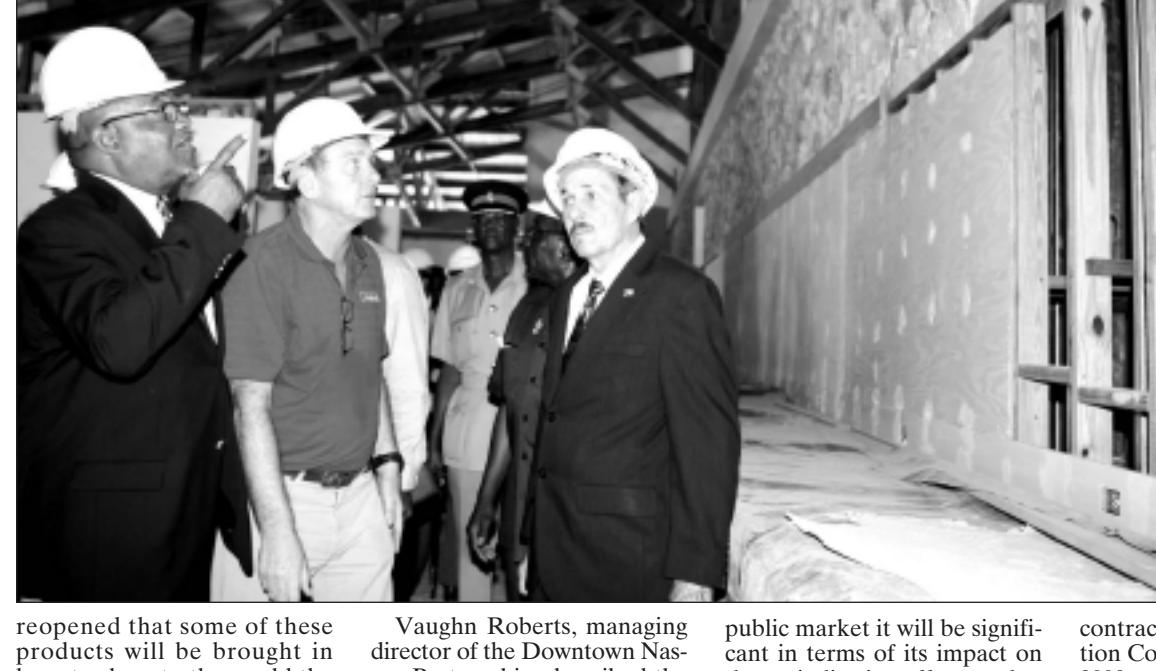
Public Works and Transport Minister Neko Grant made this announcement during a tour of the downtown Nassau Market this week.

Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources Larry Cartwright, who accompanied Mr Grant, said the Bahamas Agricultural Industrial Corporation (BAIC) has been working feverishly throughout the islands in training Bahamians to produce indigenous products for the market.

He said there are persons from every island in the Bahamas who are producing outstanding coconut shell jewellery, marine shell jewellery and straw craft that should be placed in the straw market.

This will give them international exposure and a good reputation for producing indigenous products, he said.

"I endorse the view that whenever this market is



reopened that some of these products will be brought in here to show to the world the good products that are being produced in this country from shells, straw and coconut shells," said Mr Cartwright.

Vaughn Roberts, managing director of the Downtown Nassau Partnership, described the straw market as the "single biggest investment" in downtown in many years.

He said with the design and function of the building as a

public market it will be significant in terms of its impact on the revitalisation efforts and as a catalyst for future development in downtown.

The Government awarded a

contract to Cavalier Construction Company in December of 2009 to construct the straw market.

The contract has a 78-week completion timeline.

WHY YOU VEX?

"I am vex at the slack parents who allow or force their children out into the streets with flimsy 'sponsor sheets' making their children beg for money for everything from the ubiquitous basketball trip or relief due to some tragic event.

"With the numerous basketball trips our young seem to go to you would think we would have the next Kobe Bryant or Michael Jordan in our country. I refuse to give those lazy children, or more likely their greedy parents, any more of my hard earned money."

- Five Year Plan

"And if there are any schools sending children out with these dirty scraps of paper soliciting people, then it's no wonder we have so much crime. Our youth are learning to beg and hustle hard-working people for easy money instead of setting up a car wash, bake sale or provide some other kind of service to fund an event. Get out there and work for what you want and you will enjoy it more. Until they do I will continue to turn my head away from these juvenile hustlers."

- Tired of slackness

"I am vex that I along with plenty people ain't have no extra money to buy shares."

- Tings Rough

"I am vex that I can't walk my dogs in peace without fear of being mowed down by speed-

ing cars in my residential neighbourhood. Not to mention that my tiny poopies get anxiety from the zooming cars who have no regard for pedestrians."

- Watch out for walkers

"I am vex that the product displayed on the supermarket shelf in a Mackey Street area was not the same price as the price sticker showed and the supervisor took it back and said the store policy is that there must be three other similar items with that price. I am annoyed that the big supermarket is right to mark the value of the item incorrectly, waste the customers time who discovered their mistake, admit the price is wrong, and is correct to change the price according to some unknown policy."

- False Advertising

"I am vex that I can't hear all them people who against the death penalty nor do they have anything to say about the high murder rate."

- Crime Victim

"My vexation yuck up 'cause some dem church preachers don't want to really condemn sinners to hell or jail because it looks like they wants to forgive dem so they comes back next time and give money."

- Observer

"I am vex that the Haitians in my neighbourhood who constantly speak Creole are

- Christian citizen

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that DAVID ANIAS of BLUE HILL ROAD SOUTH, 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 9th day of April, 2011 to the Minister responsible for nationality and citizenship, P.O. Box N-7147, Nassau, Bahamas.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that JASON TELUSMA of SANDILANDS VILLAGE, 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 9th day of April, 2011 to the Minister responsible for nationality and citizenship, P.O. Box N-7147, Nassau, Bahamas.

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52wk-Hi	52wk-Low	Security	Symbol	Previous Close	Today's Close	Change	Daily Vol.	EPS \$	Div \$	P/E	Yield
1.15	0.95	AML Foods Limited	BALM	1.15	1.15	0.00	0	0.123	0.040	57	3.36%
10.63	9.05	Bahamas Property Fund	BAH29	10.63	10.63	0.00	0	0.013	0.200	817.7	1.88%
5.72	4.40	Bank of Bahamas	FBB17	5.00	5.46	0.46	1,100	0.153	0.100	35.7	1.83%
0.53	0.17	Benchmark	FBB22	0.18	0.18	0.00	0	-0.877	0.000	N/M	0.00%
2.84	2.70	Bahamas Waste	FBB13	2.70	2.70	0.00	0	0.168	0.090	16.1	3.33%
2.20	1.95	Fidelity Bank	FBB15	1.96	1.96	0.00	0	0.016	0.000	122.5	2.00%
12.40	9.76	Orbita Bahamas	FBB16	9.76	9.76	0.00	0	1.050	0.310	8.3	3.54%
2.85	2.35	Colina Holdings	FBB18	2.55	2.55	0.00	0	1.031	0.040	2.5	1.57%
7.00	5.80	Commonwealth Bank (\$1)	FBB19	6.93	6.93	0.00	37,250	0.488	0.260	14.2	3.75%
2.86	1.90	Consolidated Water BDRs	FBB20	2.14	2.10	-0.04	0	0.111	0.045	18.9	2.14%
2.54	1.40	Doctor's Hospital	FBB21	1.40	1.40	0.00	0	0.107	0.110	1.1	7.83%
6.30	5.22	Fidelity	FBB22	5.22	5.22	0.00	0	0.337	0.000	14.6	2.80%
9.10	5.65	Fincor	FBB23	6.78	6.78	0.00	0	0.682	0.000	9.9	0.00%
11.40	8.75	FirstCaribbean Bank	FBB24	8.76	8.76	0.00	0	0.494	0.350	17.7	4.00%
6.00	4.57	Foco (\$)	FBB25	5.15	5.50	0.35	1,000	0.452	0.160	12.2	2.91%
1.00	1.00	Foco Class B Preference	FBB26	1.00	1.00	0.00	0	0.000	0.000	N/M	0.00%
7.30	5.80	ICD Utilities	FBB27	7.00	7.00	0.00	0	0.012	0.240	608.3	3.29%
10.50	9.80	J. S. Johnson	FBB28	9.82	9.82	0.00	0	0.859	0.164	11.4	6.52%
10.00	10.00	Premier Real Estate	FBB29	10.00	10.00	0.00	0	1.207	0.200	8.3	2.00%
BISX LISTED DEBT SECURITIES - (Bonds trade on a Percentage Pricing basis)											
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	0	6.95%	20 November 2029			
100.00	100.00	Fidelity Bank Note 17 (Series A) +	FBB17	100.00	0.00	2	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	B/S	Last Price	Change	Daily Vol.	Interest	Maturity			
10.06	5.01	Bahamas Supermarkets	CFAL	N/A	-74.01	0	-2.945	0.000	N/M	0.00%	
0.55	0.40	RND Holdings	CFAL	0.35	0.55	0	0.001	0.000	256.6	0.00%	
CFAL Securities Ltd. (Over-The-Counter Securities)											
41.00	29.00	ABDAB	CFAL	30.13	31.59	29.00	4.540	0.000	109.392860	31-Mar-11	
0.55	0.40	RND									

Branville McCartney and the 2012 election

By ADRIAN GIBSON
ajbahama@hotmail.com

IN THE next general election, it appears that newly independent MP Branville McCartney and his purported new party are hoping that Bahamians are tired of playing musical chairs between the two major parties—FNM and PLP—and are more inclined to vote for, and even elect, a third party force. Frankly, our politically expedient culture, coupled with our more traditional Westminster system—where third parties are speedily dispatched to the political gallows and certain political death—dreams of a third party capturing the imagination of the masses are futile this electoral cycle, regardless of the false promises of support made by many fair-weather bandwagon riders in the months before the official campaigns/rallies kickoff.

Without a doubt, Mr McCartney is a self-styled populist whose recent resignation from the FNM—whilst expressing opposition to the BTC deal with Cable and Wireless Communications—has sent shock waves throughout the political sphere and wider Bahamian society. Indeed, whilst there are some who see McCartney's move as standing up for his beliefs and being demonstrative of him showing that he has heart and isn't merely a bootlicker, others see it as a display that is nothing short of full-blown, megalomaniacal grandstanding.

Contrary to the specula-

YOUNG MAN'S VIEW

ADRIAN GIBSON

tion regarding the BTC sale—where a widespread mutiny was rumoured to be in the works within the ranks of the FNM's Parliamentary caucus and was supposedly inclusive of Mr McCartney and three other FNM MPs—no such incident occurred. Whether the alleged MPs chickened out or not remains a mystery, however, there was no crescendo of voices—with in the FNM, among the masses and, I'm told, not even among scores of the employees at BTC—absolutely rebuking the sale of the telecoms company.

Quite honestly, it appears that there will be a political bloodletting in Bamboo Town, with both the FNM and the PLP running candidates and plotting an ambush of Mr McCartney at the polls. With lots of finger-jabbing and verbal bricks being thrown, the contest for the Bamboo Town seat has quickly become a highly contentious matter, seemingly leaving McCartney at a political crossroads and facing a stormy, most combative political season that will see the electoral machinery of both major parties descend upon Bamboo Town.

According to some accounts, Mr McCartney's purported new entity—if it comes to fruition—could feature one or two political

rejects who were cast off by the major parties due to character flaws and questionable dealings. Mr McCartney must be careful not to surround himself with shifty characters and sycophants and must, if he leads a new party, seek to establish a renewed sense of purpose and a coherent political philosophy that appeals to the national consciousness. So, is Bran McCartney close-up-ready? What are his views on the Bahamas' future?

It remains to be seen whether Bran McCartney's apparent out-performance of many of his former Cabinet colleagues was merely artificial hype and a fluke because he headed a highly emotive ministry—Immigration—or because he genuinely possessed ideas and leadership acumen. That said, in this upcoming election cycle, it appears the third party votes will merely tip the scale in favour of one of the major parties as opposed to the other, and not the third parties themselves. I'm doubtful that any of the current or yet-to-be-announced third parties in a general election have reached the stage where they would've encroached upon the percentage of any given party (FNM/PLP) to make people think that a third party is a force to be reckoned with.

Can Mr McCartney woo independent, non-ideological voters particularly in this age of identity politics? Will Mr McCartney's resignation and the impending show-



THIRD PARTY?: Branville McCartney

down in Bamboo Town, coupled with the formation of a new party, expose him as having stepped into a pair of oversized shoes?

As good an MP as he appears to have been, will Mr McCartney find himself hopelessly in the political wilderness after the next election?

And, why didn't Mr McCartney own his political moment and vote no to the BTC sale whilst sitting as an FNM and then allow the FNM to expel him from the party? Why did he resign and walk out of Parliament instead of facing the music—wouldn't that have had greater historical effect? No doubt, he would have gone down in history and become an even bigger political rock star.

Why didn't McCartney bring some of his Bamboo Town constituents with him to Parliament as a show of support for his vote on the BTC sale and his resignation from the FNM?

Indeed, it is true that some within the FNM are whooping and hollering now that Mr McCartney has

As I said in an earlier column, now that Bran McCartney has taken his fate into his own hands, if he remains an independent—a true independent—he's likely to still attract many marginal, non-ideological and independent-minded voters—a class of voters that's rapidly expanding with today's younger, more educated electorate.

Indeed, there remains a jingoistic adoration of the Bamboo Town MP. Moreover, Mr McCartney—regardless of the chair throwing and stirring dramatics at the FNM's recent town hall meeting in the constituency—has a sizeable FNM following and FNMs have, in the past, shown themselves willing to vote independent if they feel that the party didn't do the right thing. In this case, McCartney may not find that support as many FNMs feel like he walked out on them.

Frankly, Mr McCartney would likely suffer a political death if he joins another party—or perhaps forms his own—and thereby returns to the electorate after one term with another "label" attached.

Quite honestly, McCartney should postpone any plans for a third party and instead focus on winning his own seat!

Moreover, this political season Mr McCartney must avoid appearing like a disgruntled FNM and engaging in petty bickering, instead promulgating ideas and promoting national initiatives.

In Bamboo Town, he has demonstrated an ideal work ethic and has a body of work—within the constituency—to bolster his campaign. McCartney,

SEE page 11

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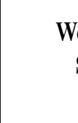
The Holy Ghost Prayer-Line number is 326-7427

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- 7:00 a.m. Rev. Philip Stubbs/Bro. Ernest
11:00 a.m. Bro. Randy McCurdy/Youth
7:00 p.m. Rev. Carla Culmer/Youth Guild

Theme: "As a wise master builder, I laid a foundation and another was building upon it."



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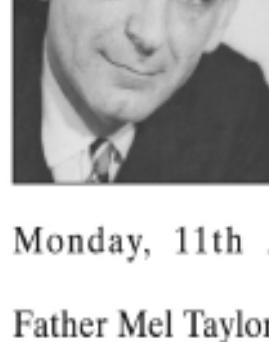
COME TO WORSHIP, LEAVE TO SERVE

KEMP'S FUNERAL HOME LIMITED

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Funeral Service For

George Baker, 91



of Sea Fan Drive, Sea Breeze Estates, Nassau, The Bahamas, who died peacefully at his residence on Thursday, 7th April, 2011, will be held at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, Shirley Street, Nassau, on Monday, 11th April, 2011 at 11a.m.

Father Mel Taylor, O.S.B., will officiate and interment will be in the Church Cemetery, Shirley Street, Nassau.

Mr. Baker is survived by his wife, Juanita and his sisters, Nezera, Freda, Mary and Virginia Baker and Helen Donahue, numerous nieces, nephews and many other relatives and friends.

In lieu of flowers the family request that donations be sent to Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, P.O. Box S.S. 5913, Nassau, in memory of Mr. George Baker.

Arrangements by Kemp's Funeral Home Limited.

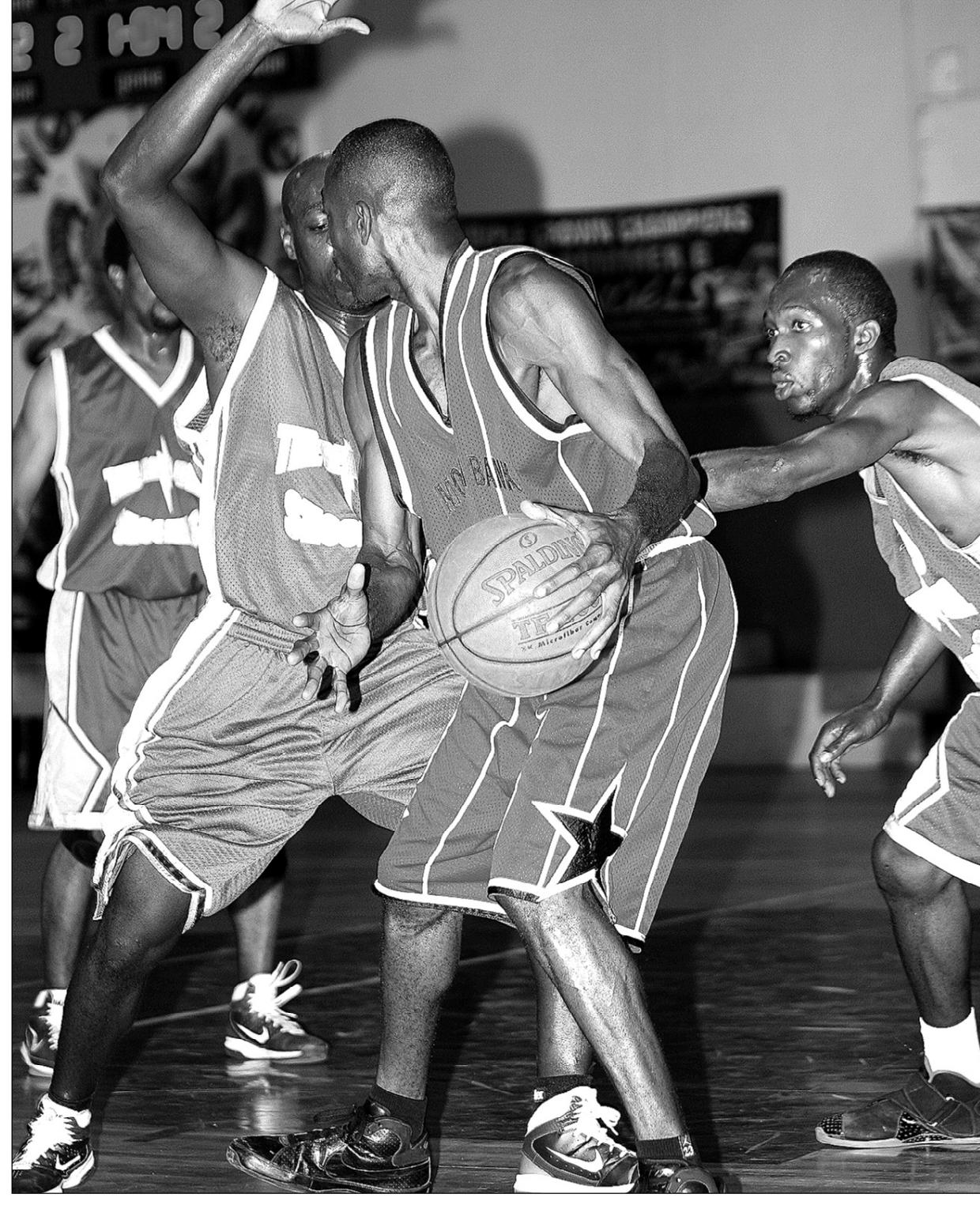
sports

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2011

INSIDE• Billfish Invitational



REAL Deal Shockers' Carvin Cummings dribbles the ball.



COMMONWEALTH Bank Giants' Mark Hanna dribbles against the defence of Real Deal Shockers' Kevin Coakley and Barrington Carter.

SHOCKERS RALLY TO UPSET GIANTS

By BRENT STUBBS
Senior Sports Reporter
bstubbs@tribunemedia.net

THE Real Deal Shockers started under-size and short-handed, blew a 20-point margin, lost another key player to an injury down the stretch, but still won 110-92 over the Commonwealth Bank Giants.

In the process, the Shockers not only shocked the Giants, but they evened the New Providence Basketball Association's best-of-seven championship series at 1-1 as they spoiled the defending champions' bid to remain undefeated.

"Ain't nobody expected it, but they're playing the Shockers and ain't no year and no series that we play in that we lose all of our games," said Real Deal coach James Price, whose team is won a game last year before losing to the Giants in last year's final.

"I heard all over the radio about they are going to sweep us, but there's no way they are going to sweep the Shockers. Now they realise that they are in a fight. We're going to bring it to them the next game (today)."

While he started without the services of Lasario 'Bones' Burrows and Ian 'Wire' Pinder (the latter who showed up to play the final half), Price had his Shockers on a ferocious defence, taking the Giants out of their up tempo game.

Having posted a surprising 34-29 lead after the first quarter and 65-45 at the half, the Shockers watched as the Carter tandem of Barrington and Lorenzo both nurse injuries, but they were able to stave off the Giants' comeback.

Cutting the deficit to 84-69 after three quarters, the Giants managed to chip away until they came within four, 104-100, with about one minute and five seconds remaining on the clock.

But the Giants were resilient in their pursuit of stopping the Shockers' winning streak at 18-0 and they did just that with about 9.1 seconds showing when Kevin Coakley put his stamp on the game with a lay-up for a 109-102 lead.

"The key tonight was just our heart," said Shockers' point guard Sidney 'Seaman' Hillary, the smallest player on the court. "We knew we were up against a big team and actually they was giving us problems down the stretch."

"But we were able to maintain them, take possession of the game and just pull it out."

After shocking themselves by taking their "unbelievable" 20-point advantage, Hillary said they have to give a lot of credit to coach Price, who did "a good job and listened to us."

We were able to pull it out."

Lorenzo Carter, who got bruised and battered as he re-injured his left shoulder, had a game high 34 points on 10-of-23 from the field, 4-of-6 from the three-point arch and 10-of-11 from the free throw line in just 25 minutes. He also had nine rebounds.

Kevin Coakley finished with a double double with 18 points and a game high 13 rebounds; Christoff Stuart had 14 points and Sidney Hillary, Barrington Carter and Georgio Walkes all contributed 10 points.

For the Giants, Ricardo Pierre scored 24 points; Michael 'Ferley' Bain had 22; Jeremy Hutchinson 19 with 11 rebounds and five assists; Mark Hanna 17 points and Gamaliel Rose helped out with just seven points and seven rebounds.

Now that their winning streak is over, Commonwealth Banks' coach Perry Thompson said they can get back to going after their ultimate goal, which is to repeat as champions.

"Everybody got their wish that we made it a series," he pointed. "But Saturday night, we just have to come back out here and play Giants basketball."

Thompson, however, had to take the time to compliment the Shockers on their effort.

"Hats off to them. They came out and they played good basketball," he pointed out. "We had some spurts, but then we got too complacent and too relaxed and we didn't rebound as we should have."

"Our big men just have to keep focus and keep their heads in the game. We have been preaching over and over about boxing out and rebound. Plus we made too many lay-ups and free throws. But we will be okay on Saturday."

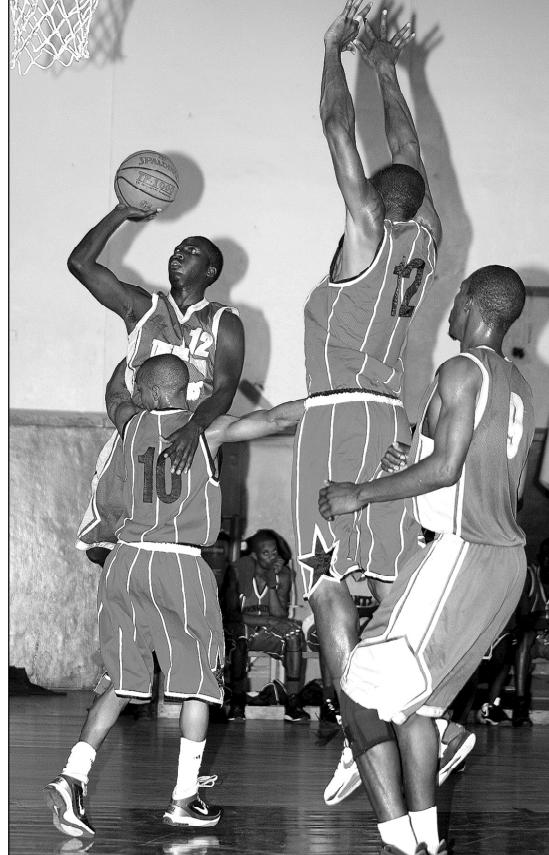
Hutchinson couldn't agree more.

"Tonight, we just came out flat. The Shockers came out with more intensity than us and they came out and out-played us, no question about it," he stressed.

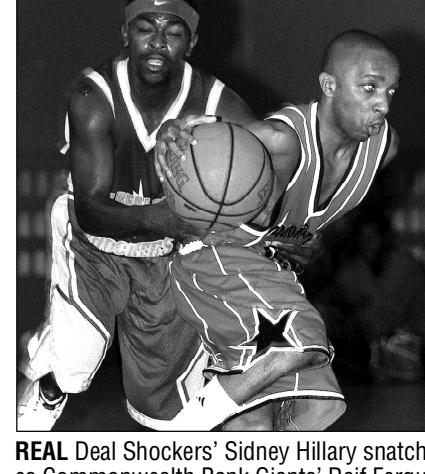
"This series, we're going to take it one game at a time. We should learn from this, their weaknesses and their strengths, and regroup for the next game on Saturday. We just have to be patient with the ball and beat them on the boards, out-rebound them and out-hustle them."

Having evened the series without his full squad, Price said he anticipates that Saturday will be pretty much the same as Thursday night as they intend to have Lasario Burrows and Emeka Watson out to help their frontcourt.

And if Thursday night was any indication, the series could end up being an exciting one.



REAL Deal Shockers' Georgio Walkes goes up for a one-handed shot over the Commonwealth Bank Giants' Raif Ferguson (10) and Gamaliel Rose (12).



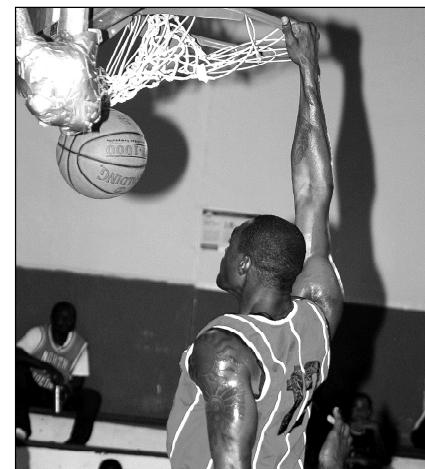
REAL Deal Shockers' Sidney Hillary snatches Commonwealth Bank Giants' Raif Ferguson as he dribbles the ball.



REAL Deal Shockers' Carvin Cummings dribbles around the defence of Commonwealth Bank Giants' Renaldo Baillou.



COMMONWEALTH Bank Giants' Gamaliel Rose tips the ball.

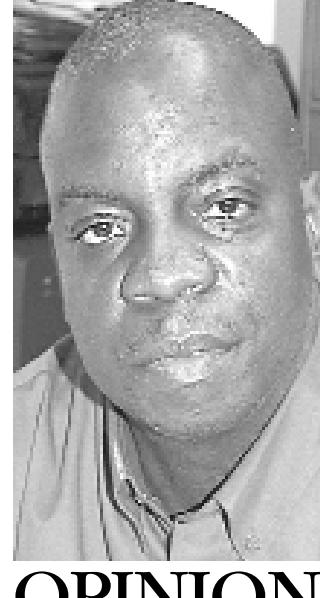


COMMONWEALTH Bank Giants' Gamaliel Rose draws a one-handed slam dunk.

SPORTS

BAAA set to select 2011 Carifta team

STUBBS



OPINION

At last year's Carifta Games in the Cayman Islands, the Jamaicans landed a whopping 72 medals, inclusive of 37 gold, 22 silver and 13 bronze.

Their gold medal topped the combined 23 that the next

four countries collected. Trinidad & Tobago, who were second, had 12 in their 40 total count, while the Bahamas had six in their count of 29 medals for third.

With the games being held in their back yard, it makes it even more difficult for any country to dethrone the Jamaicans, who have dominated the annual junior track and field meet since the Bahamas last won the title in 2004 here at home.

Our athletes, once selected, will have to rise above the level that they competed here at home and realise that the road to glory goes through the Jamaicans, who have had a history of producing the famous 1-2 finish in the majority of their events.

And we should learn from the fact that the Jamaicans pride themselves on working together as a unit from the coaching perspective when it comes to the national level.

BBF HOSTING CBC

The Bahamas Basketball Federation announced this week that the Bahamas will host the Caribbean Basketball Championships for the third time from July 25-August 5 at

the Kendal Isaacs Gymnasium.

It's a remarkable achievement for the federation, considering that the Bahamas has not been able to host the tournament since 1995.

With so many talented male and female players participating in high school, college and even on the pro circuit today, it will be interesting to see whether or not president Lawrence Hepburn and his executives can lure them to come home and play.

The federation last year decided to go back to the selection of foreign coaches to head both teams. Now the question is: Will the players rally around to play on the teams, headed by Larry Brown and Larry Tidwell as the respective men and women's coaches?

Some have argued why did the federation go that route when there are so many coaches who could handle the job? I guess in some ways, the federation doesn't believe that the local coaches could get the job done.

Having gone through the exercise, it's going to be interesting to see if the players are willing to buy into the concept and come home to represent their country.

Come home players. Let's ensure that the Bahamas is represented by the best team possible.

NPSA OPENING

After a turbulent year under its first female president Loretta Maycock, the New Providence Softball Association will be back in action tonight at the Baillou Hills Sporting Complex as its new season begins.

The association's executive board is now headed by Rommel 'Fish' Knowles, who brings a wealth of experience having served as an executive of both the Grand Bahama and Eleuthera Softball Associations. He is also the secretary general of the Bahamas Olympic Committee.

One of the things Knowles and his administration did during the off-season was to settle a legal dispute out of court with the Commando Security Truckers over whether or not the Dorin United Hitmen should be declared the champions.

As the season opens, you can bet that all eyes will be watching for any preferential treatment given to the teams, which was a bone of contention under the previous administration.

Let's just play ball and avoid any further disruption to the game off the field.

CONDOLENCES

Tribune Sports wishes to offer its condolences to the families of two players who passed away.

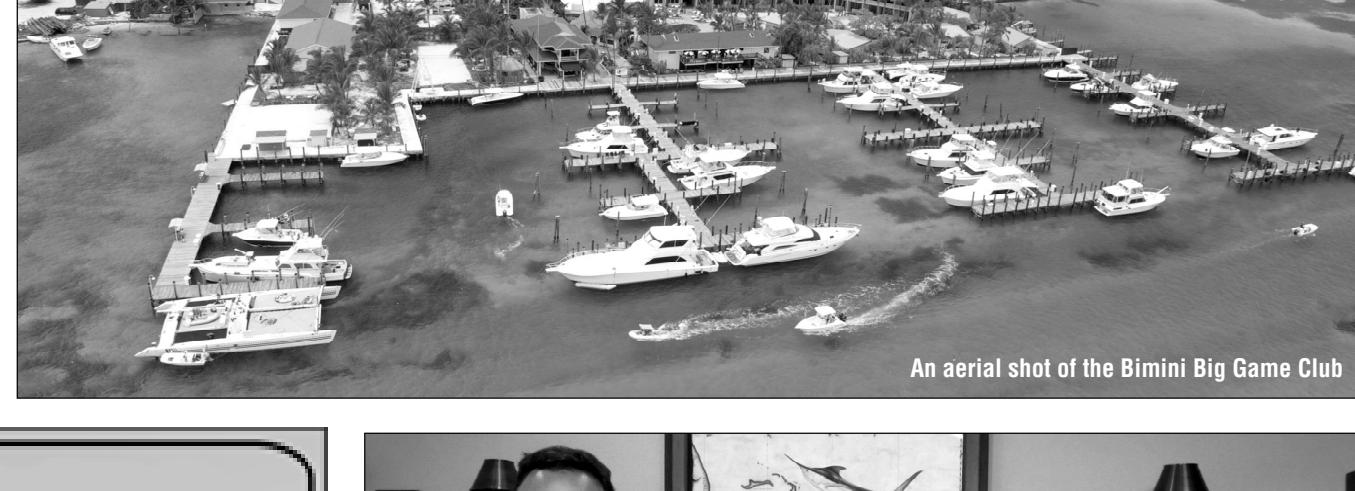
Today, the funeral of Walbert Hanna will be held at Agape Full Gospel Baptist Church. The 53-year-old was a former softball player and brother of Michael Hanna, one of the top softball umpires in the country.

Next Saturday at the Church of God on Shirley Street, will be the funeral of 31-year-old Leroy 'Soggy' Saunders. Saunders is a former basketball player at the CI Gibson Secondary High and in the New Providence Basketball Association.

On Thursday night, before the start of game two of the NPBA's championship series between the Commonwealth Bank Giants and the Real Deal Shockers, a moment of silent was offered in his memory.

May they both rest in peace.

Woods Family sponsors Dr. Guy Harvey's upcoming Billfish Invitational



An aerial shot of the Bimini Big Game Club



The Woods Family

INSPIRED by Guy Harvey's re-opening of the historic Bimini Big Game Club, www.biggameclubbimini.com as a family fishing, diving and scientific discovery destination, the Woods Family, owners of South Florida-based Woods & Associates, have become the Blue Marlin sponsor for Dr. Harvey's upcoming Billfish Invitational scheduled for May 18th.

"Guy's efforts to re-establish the Big Game Club as a premier fishing

destination for big game fishermen is truly an accomplishment to be admired and appreciated," said Pete Woods, patriarch and founder of the company in which his sons, Ryan and Matt, and wife, Anne, are participants.

Ryan and Matt help their father in the yacht brokerage and Anne runs a real estate sales operation all of which is located at the Pier 66 Marina in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

"In the early days of our business in Fort Lauderdale, I spent considerable time aboard the family 48 sport-fisherman, Annabelle, fishing tournaments like the IBL (International Billfish League) and BBC (Bahamas Billfish Championship) and others," said the elder Woods.

"It was only natural and a very comfortable fit to get involved with the Billfish Invitational as it looks to be re-establishing Bimini as a force for big game events."

Woods and Associates, www.woodsyachts.com, which originally began in Fort Myers Beach as Woods & Oviatt in 1973, has long been a fixture in South Florida yacht and sport-

fishing boat sales. The family-run firm joins Hell Bay Boatworks (Sailfish category) and the Bimini Boatyard, Johnson Marine Electronics, ACR Electronics, Seacoast National Bank and Sky Limo Air Charters (Wahoo category) as sponsors so far lined-up for the top-of-class Billfish Tournament.

"The Big Game Club has always been a very special place for Chris and me and our five children, having spent many happy summer vacations there," said Wendi Peterson, who with her husband, Chris, run Hell's Bay Boatworks (www.hellsbayboatworks.com) in Titusville, Florida.

"Having Guy and his team now onboard and doing such a wonderful job in re-opening this unique property, we had to support the Billfish Invitational Tournament. Our involvement as a shallow water skiff boat builder is a natural fit with Bimini's legendary backcountry fishing."

Host to numerous major sport fishing tournaments for more than half a century, The Billfish Invitational marks the Big Game Club's return to world-class bluewater tournament angling, after a decade long hiatus.

The all release tournament will feature three days of fishing, and target all billfish species. In addition to individual prizes, the tournament format will include the award of two perpetual trophies, to be displayed in the Club's new trophy room lounge.

One trophy is named for two giants among a long line of legendary Bimini personalites – Ernest Hemingway and

Michael Lerner – and the second trophy honours Personal Achievement in the Advancement of Big Game Sport Fishing with the establishment of The Frank Johnson Trophy.

The Hemingway-Lerner Trophy will be presented to the tournament's top Billfish Team, recognising friendship, teamwork, and the pursuit of excellence, while Frank Johnson himself will be the inaugural recipient of the Frank Johnson Trophy.

Bimini's location along the legendary Gulfstream (a river of warm water) location is at the apex of a superhighway for migrating fish and acts as a kind of sushi conveyor belt carrying abundant food to the local fish.

Deepwater game fish include marlin, tuna, sailfish, wahoo and swordfish, while big grouper, barracuda and schools of snapper can be found on the reefs. Bimini's flats are home the fishermen's favourite prey, bonefish and permit.

With more than 50-record-setting catches in the waters around the island, Bimini has earned its title of Sport Fishing Capital of the World. Eligible species for the Billfish Tournament include Blue Marlin, White Marlin, Sailfish, Spearfish and Swordfish.

Administered by the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation and the IGFA, net tournament proceeds will be reinvested in Bimini and surrounding waters.

For registration and further details, contact Captain Ned Store at nstone@guyharvey-outpost.com or call 954-524-2225 (office) or 954-205-9595 (cell).

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Syrian protests turn deadly; 32 reported killed

BEIRUT
Associated Press

A MASS PROTEST calling for sweeping changes in Syria's authoritarian regime turned bloody Friday, with the government and protesters both claiming to have sustained heavy casualties as the country's three-week uprising entered a dangerous new phase.

Human rights activists and witnesses said Syrian security forces opened fire on tens of thousands of protesters in the volatile southern city of Daraa, killing 25 people and wounding hundreds. But state-run TV said 19 policemen and members of the security forces were killed when gunmen opened fire on them.

It was the first significant claim of casualties by the Syrian government, which has contended that armed gangs rather than true reform-seekers are behind the unrest — and it could signal plans for a stepped-up retaliation.

Protest organizers have called on Syrians to take to the streets every Friday for the past three weeks, demanding change in one of the most rigid nations in the Middle East. Protests were held in several cities across the country Friday as

the movement showed no sign of letting up, despite the violent crackdowns.

Syria's National Organization for Human Rights said at least 32 people were killed nationwide on Friday. That lifts the death toll from three weeks of protests to more than 170 people.

The protests have shaken the regime of President Bashar Assad, whose family has ruled Syria for more than 40 years. Assad, a British-trained eye doctor, inherited power from his father 11 years ago and tried to help the country emerge from years of international isolation and lift Soviet-style economic restrictions.

But despite early promises of social and political reform, Assad has slipped back into the autocratic ways of his father.

Assad has offered some limited measures of reform as the protests gathered steam, such as firing local officials and forming committees to look into replacing the country's despised emergency laws, which allow the regime to arrest people without charge. On Thursday, he granted citizenship to thousands of Kurds, fulfilling a decades-old demand of the country's long-ostracized minority.

But the persistent demon-

strations underline how Assad's gestures of change have failed to mollify a growing movement that is raising the ceiling on its demands for concrete reforms and free elections.

"The protests are about Syrians wanting freedom after 42 years of repression," Murhaf Jouejati, a Syria expert at George Washington University, told The Associated Press. "So Mr. Assad may fire all the people he wants, this still doesn't touch on the basic issues and the basic demands of the protesters."

The witness accounts coming out of Syria could not be independently confirmed because the regime has restricted media access to the country, refusing to grant visas to journalists and detaining or expelling reporters already in the country. Daraa has largely been sealed off and telephone calls go through only sporadically.

But witnesses, who spoke to the AP independently of each other, said Daraa residents turned mosques into makeshift hospitals Friday to help tend to hundreds of wounded protesters.

One man who helped ferry the dead and wounded to the city's hospital said he counted at least 13 corpses.



IN THIS MARCH 21, 2011 PHOTO, Syrian army soldier steps out from the burned court building that was set on fire by Syrian anti-government protesters, in the southern city of Daraa, Syria. Unlike the armies of Tunisia and Egypt, Syria's military will almost certainly stand by the country's leader as President Bashar Assad faces down an extraordinary protest movement. (AP)

"My clothes are soaked with blood," he said by telephone from Daraa. Like most activists and witnesses who spoke to The Associated Press, he requested anonymity for fear of reprisals.

A nurse at the hospital said they had run out of beds; many people were being treated on the floor or in nearby mosques.

Videos posted on YouTube showed demonstrations in at least 15 towns, large and small, across the country. The videos could not be independently confirmed, but they appeared to show the

most widespread gatherings since protests began.

Ammar Qurabi, who heads Syria's National Organization for Human Rights, said 32 people were killed nationwide: 25 in Daraa, three in the central city of Homs, three in the Damascus suburb of Harasta and one in the suburb of Douma.

Douma has become a flashpoint after eight people were shot dead there last Friday. One activists said tens of thousands protested and dispersed peacefully in the early afternoon, but he saw security forces open fire later in the

evening as a group tried to enter Douma. He said he saw security forces taking the body away.

Syria had appeared immune to the unrest sweeping the Arab world until three weeks ago, when security forces arrested a group of high school students who scrawled anti-government graffiti on a wall in Daraa.

Protests then exploded in cities across the country.

A city of about 300,000 near the border with Jordan, Daraa is suffering sustained economic effects from a yearslong drought.

ST ANDREW'S SCHOOL

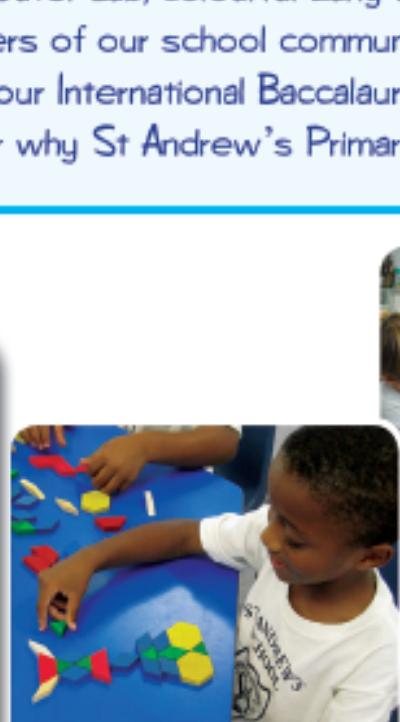


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