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# Teenage girl's kidnap terror

## Victim escapes captors

A 14-year-old girl is back with her family after making a dramatic escape from kidnapers who snatched her on her way to school almost a week earlier.

The girl, whose identity must be withheld because of her age, was last seen leaving her home at around 7.20am on May 17, wearing her school uniform.

Last night, family members of the high school senior, who is the oldest girl of five siblings, were overcome with

**SEE page nine**

## BODY FOUND WITH GUNSHOT WOUNDS

Felipe Major/Tribune staff



**TAKEN AWAY:** The body of a man was found with multiple gunshot wounds in Carmichael late last night. The victim was discovered after police responded to reports of gun fire heard in Sunshine Park shortly before 6pm. Emergency medical services pronounced him dead at the scene. Initial reports indicate that the shooting was the result of an argument between the deceased and another man. However, investigators could not provide any further details up to press time.

## MAN ON BAIL SHOT DEAD

A MAN in his mid-twenties, who is "well known to police" and was out on bail, was shot and killed on Hampton Street off Wulff Road at about 10.15 last night. It is understood that the gunman walked up to him and shot him.

Police were just arriving on the scene of the crime, and other than the man's surname - Babbs - no further details were available at the time of going to press last night.

# Deadly fire 'was not an accident'

By TANEKA THOMPSON  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
tthompson@tribunemedia.net

A RELATIVE of the seven children who were trapped inside their burning home has strong suspicions the deadly blaze was not an accident.

According to the relative who spoke to *The Tribune* yesterday, an individual made repeated threats in the past to "put fire in the house" where the children lived with their father.

Yesterday *The Tribune* was told the health of two of the four children who survived the tragedy has improved slightly. The youngsters - aged one, four, five and 10 - are being treated at Princess Margaret Hospital and have been upgraded from "critically ill" to "very ill". Two of the surviving children also received minimal burns during the blaze.

Their three young siblings died in the May 11 blaze which investigators suspect was caused by a malfunctioning computer.

Dr Duane Sands, a surgeon at PMH, said: "Two of the children, their status has been upgraded to very ill

**SEE page nine**

## GOVT TO ANNOUNCE 'PLANNED DEFICIT' - FORMER MINISTER

By NOELLE NICOLLS  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
nnicolls@tribunemedia.net



JAMES SMITH

THE government is likely to announce a "planned deficit" when it presents the new Budget in the House of Assembly tomorrow, said local analyst James Smith, former Minister of State for Finance.

Mr Smith said he did not expect any "dramatic changes or announcements", based on

the fact a great deal of the budget is "pre-determined." He said the planned deficit could be as much as 3.5 to four per cent of the county's gross domestic product (GDP).

Fifty-five per cent to 60 per cent of the government's budget goes towards salaries, wages and other recurrent expenditures. Unless there is

**SEE page nine**

## DNA SET TO INTRODUCE THREE GRAND BAHAMA CANDIDATES

By PAUL G TURNQUEST  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
pturnquest@tribunemedia.net

THE Democratic National Alliance (DNA) will introduce three of its six candidates for Grand Bahama when they travel their next week to meet and greet residents as their campaign tour kicks into full swing.

According to the party's leader, Independent MP for

Bamboo Town Branville McCartney, the DNA will also begin to hold town meetings in the early part of next month to hear from residents as to what they would like to see in the party's national platform.

"We will have town meetings on our issues. We will start with crime and the fear of crime. We will outline to

**SEE page nine**



Wulff Road  
"The Block People"  
J.B.R.



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Eugene (Gene) Saunders, with 54 years making block makes him our master block maker. Gene takes pride in what he produces everyday and maintains the same goal year to year of producing a first class quality product.

## BAR IS TARGET OF JOINT POLICE RAID



Photo: Ava Turnquest

**RAID:** A bar on Dowdeswell Street was the object of a joint police raid yesterday. Officials remained tightlipped last night over the details surrounding the search of Triple A's Restaurant and Bar sometime after 4pm.

**SEE PAGE TWO**



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LOCAL NEWS



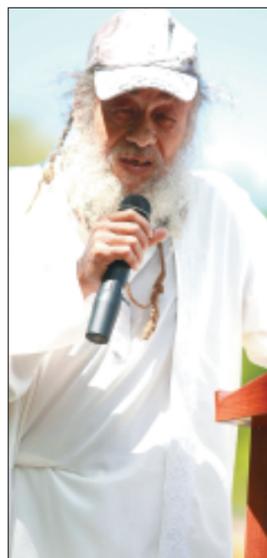
# AFRICAN LIBERATION Day 2011

The newly formed coalition called "Africans United" hosted African Liberation Day at the Southern Recreational Grounds. The event featured, among other things, speeches, music, entertainment, a bouncing castle and face painting.



## BAR IS TARGET OF JOINT POLICE RAID

A bar on Dowdeswell Street was the object of a joint police raid yesterday. Officials remained tightlipped last night over the details surrounding the search of Triple A's Restaurant and Bar sometime after 4pm. According to Supt Leon Bethel, head of the CDU, the search team was comprised of 10 officers, and included SWAT and the Drug Enforcement Unit. Supt Bethel said it was not the first time the establishment had come under scrutiny, and yesterday's efforts were indicative of proactive measures taken by his department.



PHOTOS: Felipe Major/Tribune staff



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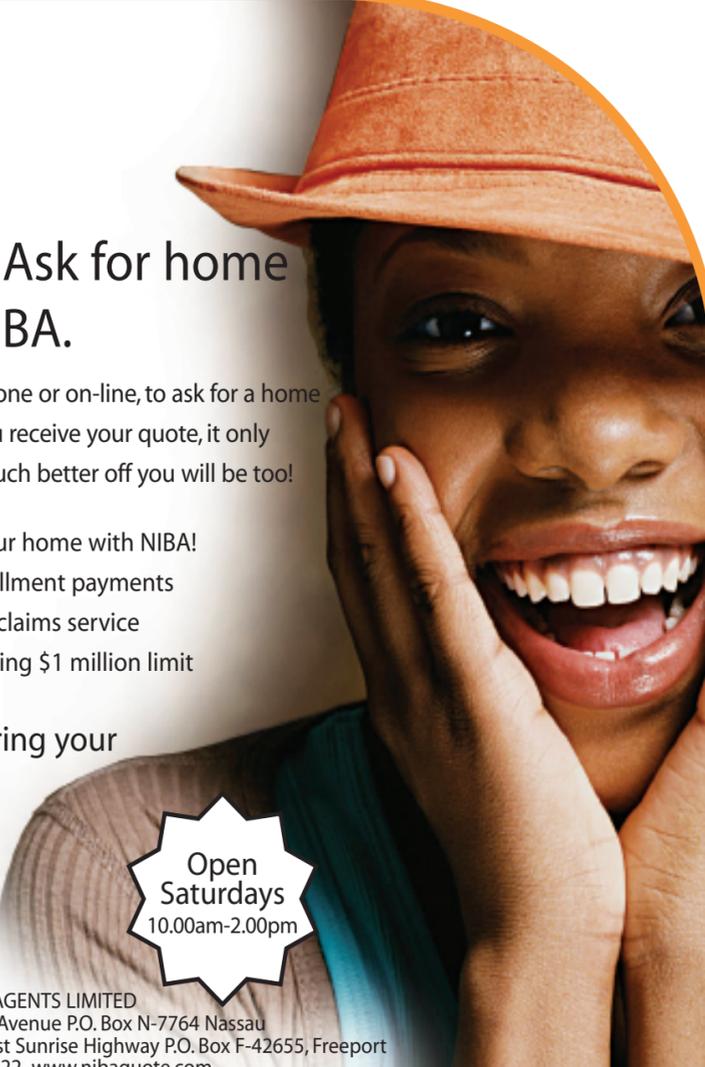
- Big Four or similar experience in delivering consulting services;
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LOCAL NEWS

WIKILEAKS CONTROVERSY

PLP dismisses portrayal of Christie as 'indecisive' PM

A WIKILEAKS cable that cast Progressive Liberal Party leader Perry Christie as an indecisive prime minister is nothing more than rehearsed FNM propaganda that should be taken "with a grain of salt", the opposition said.

The 2007 cable, "PM Christie calls May 2 elections; tight race expected", describes the Farm Road MP as a procrastinator who put off taking action while waiting for accord from his Cabinet.

The cable, the contents of which were documented in a local daily, noted "poor management and indecisive leadership" as factors that made the last general election too close to call - even though the then incumbent party led during a period of low unemployment and economic stability.

"Ingraham is known from his time as prime minister as a decisive leader who accomplished much while suppressing dissension.

"Christie has a well-deserved reputation as a waffling, indecisive leader who procrastinates and often fails to act altogether while awaiting elusive consensus in his Cabinet," the cable said, according to published reports.

Yesterday former Foreign Affairs Minister Fred Mitchell downplayed the reported contents of the cable as biased opinions of American diplomats.

"I urge all citizens of the Bahamas to take all of this very much with a lot of salt. It is simply surprising that United States diplomats would simply rehash the same unvarnished propaganda of the Free National



Perry Christie

Movement to describe the leader of the PLP and the policies of the PLP," said Mr Mitchell, a former Cabinet minister in the Christie administration and current representative for Fox Hill.

Interests

"What does come across however from the cables is that the leader of the PLP did not betray the confidence of the Bahamian people to foreigners. Perry Christie minded the business of the Bahamian people and looked after their interests. If he becomes prime minister again, the Bahamian people can be assured that he is not an agent of any foreign state.

"The reported portrayal by the American diplomats is so shockingly prejudiced that it is

difficult to believe that US diplomats would actually be fooled into repeating idle FNM propaganda as if it were fact," Mr Mitchell added.

But FNM Senator Dr Duane Sands said the cable reinforces the Mr Christie's reputation for procrastination.

"The fact that this is not just political rhetoric on behalf of the FNM but this is how the world sees Mr Christie's style of leadership I think adds some credence to the views already promoted," said Dr Sands.

Another WikiLeaks cable, published in a local daily, documents a 2003 conversation between Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham and a US Embassy official.

During that meeting, Mr Ingraham reportedly dismissed the chances of current Deputy Prime Minister Brent Symonette leading the party because of his "personality and lack of (widespread) appeal."

Yesterday the US Embassy in Nassau responded to the newly leaked cables, explaining that communications between overseas diplomats and officials

in Washington, DC, are a part of policy making.

"By its very nature, field reporting to Washington is candid and often raw information Analysis expressed in cables may also be out of context, or may be the opinion of the reporting officer - and those opinions may not be shared by policy makers.

"The unauthorised release of classified material has the very real potential to harm individuals as well as efforts to advance objectives shared by the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the United States of America. It is unfortunate that a decision has been made to release information from conversations that took place in confidence," said the embassy.

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Bran: Documents show 'true democracy' denied to Bahamians for years



DNA LEADER: Branville McCartney.

By PAUL G TURNQUEST  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
pturnquest@tribunemedia.net

CITING the close working relationship between the leaders of the PLP and FNM in recently revealed Wikileaks documents, DNA leader Branville McCartney said it should now be painfully obvious that "true democracy" has been denied to the Bahamian people for many years.

"There is no doubt that both the prime minister and the leader of the opposition have been friends for many, many years. They have been business partners and nothing has changed. They contact each other on a regular basis and they seem to want to ensure that each one of them will be successful in their own right. When people now speak about a two party system, it is indeed a two party system now; you have on one side the PLP and the FNM together, and on the other you have the DNA. There is no doubt about that," Mr McCartney declared.

Pointing to a US Embassy cable from 2003 released by Wikileaks, in which Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham is quoted by a US official as saying that he speaks to and offers advice to PLP leader Perry Christie a few times a week, Mr McCartney said there is no surprise why both political parties want to make the upcoming election purely about both the PLP and the FNM.

"This is exactly what they want. If it's not Mr Ingraham, then it is going to be Mr Christie and vice versa. That's how it is and that is how it has been. They are playing yo-yo with the Bahamian people," he said.

This tactic, Mr McCartney said, denies the Bahamian people a true democratic process because as long as both leaders of the PLP and the FNM are working together, the Bahamian people never really have an option.

"They are working together, and they will try to work together to try and stop the DNA from becoming the next government of the Bahamas. That has been said to me personally. You would recall when Mr Christie was ill as prime minister, he called Hubert Ingraham to ask for his advice. What does that tell you? The Bahamian people ought to really see beyond that and go for an entity that will give true change for the country.

"If these guys were truly serious about change and serious about moving forward, both of them would have stepped down and allowed some of the other persons in the FNM and the PLP to take the reins."

The DNA is expected to travel to Grand Bahama next week and introduce the island to three of the six candidates they expect to name there for the upcoming general election.

The party has said it hopes to have a full slate of 41 candidates to challenge both the PLP and the FNM in every constituency.

Mr McCartney is the current independent MP for the Bamboo Town constituency.

GIRL AGED THREE IN CRITICAL CONDITION AFTER HOUSE FIRE

By CELESTE NIXON  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

A three-year-old girl remains in critical condition following yet another dangerous house fire.

According to police reports, the blaze began shortly after midnight yesterday in a Haitian Village off Golden Isles Road.

When firefighters arrived on the scene, they found residents of the area attempting to put out the blaze, which had engulfed the two-room wooden structure.

Shortly after their arrival, firefighters were able to gain control and extinguish the fire.

While police have yet to release further details or identity of the young victim, they have reported that she was rescued from a bedroom by a family member and taken to the hospital where she remains in critical condition.

The matter is still under investigation.

In the wake of the blaze, and another fire last week that killed three children and seriously injured four others (see story, page 1), police issued a warning reminding the public that under Chapter 84 of the Penal Code, any person found carrying unsafe torches, candles or any other object that could cause a fire could be fined \$150.

US Coast Guard rescues 3 boaters

MIAMI

The US Coast Guard had to rescue three boaters after their vessel sank in the Bahamas.

Coast Guard officials say the three men had anchored about 22 miles northwest of West End, Bahamas, when the 35-foot-vessel sank Sunday morning.

The boaters had departed from Boynton Beach.

The men were able to activate a personal locator beacon that provided their exact location.

The rescue crew found the men wearing life jackets and clinging to a water cooler. Officials say all three were cold and hungry but otherwise in good health.

Coast Guard Sector Miami Capt. Chris Scraba says the men survived a potentially fatal accident because they were prepared.

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## Obama jolt unlikely to spark peace talks

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is trying to shock the moribund Israeli-Palestinian peace process to life, but there is little chance the patient can be resuscitated anytime soon.

The two sides are more dug in, further apart and less trustful of each other than at any point since Obama brought Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas together at the White House last September with the goal of reaching a framework deal within a year.

That deadline can't be met now. The architect of the diplomacy that was to make it happen, former Sen. George Mitchell, resigned last week. And Obama has now angered and alienated Israel by endorsing a key Palestinian demand, while at the same time deriding Palestinian attempts to win U.N. recognition for an independent state before a negotiated settlement.

In addition, in his speech Thursday and his comments alongside Netanyahu on Friday, Obama offered no specific ideas on how to relaunch the stalled peace talks, and he ignored many of the most divisive issues separating the two sides. Those include the status of Jerusalem that both claim as a capital and the fate of Palestinian refugees. He also offered no prescription for dealing with a power-sharing agreement between Abbas and the militant group Hamas. Israel has said it will not negotiate with a Palestinian government that includes Hamas.

Obama and Netanyahu kept it positive in public remarks after their meeting Friday, repeating that the U.S.-Israeli alliance is unbreakable and that America remains steadfast in support of Israel's defence.

Yet there was no disguising the fundamental issues that divide them and have riven their relationship since almost the moment they both took office in 2009. Aside from presenting a united front in expressing platitudes about the ultimate goal of peace, there was little common ground on how to get there.

"Obviously there are some differences between us in the precise formulations and language," Obama said.

Netanyahu, meanwhile, politely trashed elements of Obama's stand as unrealistic. "A peace based on illusions will crash eventually on the rocks of Middle Eastern reality," he said, and declared that "the only peace that will endure is one that is based on reality, on unshakeable facts."

Tensions between the two have been most evident over Jewish settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which the administration opposes but Netanyahu refuses to halt.

An announcement of new settlement construction last year while Vice President Joe Biden was visiting Jerusalem plunged ties to what was then a new low.

Since then, attempts to repair relations have faltered, with Mitchell, the special envoy, unable to secure a settlement freeze from the Israelis or a commitment from the Palestinians to resume negotiations without one. A frustrated Mitchell quit last week.

Obama's declaration Thursday that the borders of a future Palestinian state should be based on 1967 borders — the lines that existed before that year's Six Day War in which Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem — stunned Netanyahu, who insists that the starting point for eventual borders must be negotiated.

Even though Obama made clear that the solution would have to involve territorial swaps agreed to by both sides, his statement removed the subtlety from what had been a vague U.S. position in support of the Palestinians' "goal" on borders and gave it his imprimatur.

Netanyahu, informed shortly before Obama's speech of its contents by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, sought in vain to keep border language out, U.S. officials said. Netanyahu was incensed, they said.

Public Israeli outrage was swift. Netanyahu called the 1967 borders "indispensable" and said he expected Obama to reaffirm support for commitments made by President George W. Bush that demographic realities — meaning the growth of Jewish settlements in the West Bank — would not allow a return to the 1967 borders. An aide told reporters accompanying Netanyahu to Washington that Obama did not appear to understand the situation in the Middle East.

The administration's relationship with the Palestinians has also been awkward. While Obama did endorse the Palestinians' position on borders, he has been frustrated by their refusal to resume talks, irritated by their intense lobbying for the United Nations to recognize a state and concerned by Hamas, which the U.S. and Israel regard as a terrorist group.

In fact, U.S. officials said his endorsement of the 1967 borders was intended to blunt the Palestinian drive at the U.N. Yet, his comments rejecting the U.N. bid as essentially a waste of time and stressing the need for the Palestinians to address serious Israeli opposition to Hamas may have given the Palestinians new reasons for intransigence and could embolden them to take harder line positions.

(This article was written by Matthew Lee of the Associated Press.)

# 'A prophet, but no honour in his own country'

EDITOR, The Tribune.

Several decades ago, the late great and much lamented Sir Lynden Oscar Pindling prophesied that the day would come in The Bahamas when the buzzards would come home to roost unless and until we would have put in place realistic measures to arrest and minimise the delinquency of far too many of our young and not so young people.

He was laughed to scorn and called everything except a child of the Most High God.

Today, we who would have sowed the wind are now reaping the whirlwind. Our erstwhile politicians are playing doll house and pontificating on all manner of utter foolishness and bullskate while the nation is literally perishing "for a lack of knowledge" men and women whom we once believed had principles and a clear head are now falling for the siren call of political advancement and to ensure their assumed political dominance.

The current Prime Minister has recently arranged what appears to be politically expedient "deals" and accommodations with people who were once his sworn

LETTERS  
letters@tribunemedia.net

enemies. One such deal involves the so-called, but now defunct Bahamas Democratic Movement and its "fly by night so-called leaders."

This is similar to the stunt which the Rt. Hon. Gentleman perpetuated on the people of The Bahamas just before the last general elections when he reeled in Messrs Phenton Neymour and Charles Maynard from the also now defunct and forgotten CDR. Their "leader" swam back into the bosom of the decrepit PLP and the rest is history.

Third parties, hitherto before, cannot be taken seriously as it would appear that all of them are merely jockeying for elusive political ascendancy.

Look at Dr Andre Rollins. Another man who once lambasted the PLP and its leadership now creased up within its ranks as a potential candidate. Another erstwhile son of the soil, Kenyetta Gibson, crossed the floor.

Yet another was, appar-

ently, persuaded to resign from the Hon House of Assembly, for what may have been a patently bogus and mythical promise. Is it possible, and highly desirable, that the Hon Branville McCartney and his team could deliver?

The front line politicians are playing chess with constituencies and the lives of thousands of Bahamians to achieve or to maintain political dominance. Never mind that the real issues are not being addressed and that the nation is fast becoming a failed state and, apparently, a vassal of The People's Republic of China.

I have stopped by to tell my fellow Bahamians that we are an unsustainable and lunatic path straight to the depths of hell itself. There must be a fundamental change in the way we conduct ourselves and the national politics of cannibalism. Indeed, it is written: "And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country ..." (Luke :24) To God then, in all of these things, be the glory.

ORTLAND  
H BODIE JR  
Nassau,  
April 20, 2011.

## Okay if Govt 'can't cut spending', but how about some restraint?

EDITOR, The Tribune.

The fiscal policies followed by successive governments — deficit spending, unfunded liabilities and the overall debt load of The Bahamas — will eventually become a burden for everyone through higher taxes or inflation, if restraint is not built into the system.

Dr. Dan Mitchell of the Libertarian Think Tank, the *Cato Institute* recently provided food for thought — ideas that might help our policy makers — in an article that first appeared in *Investor's Business Daily* on March 4, 2011.

Pointing out that "good fiscal policy doesn't require miracles — or dramatic shutdowns" but limiting the growth of the public sector,

and coupled with normal revenue growth, government red ink disappears surprisingly quickly.

He provides a few excellent examples from around the world:

1. Between 1994 and 1999 the US increased spending only 3 per cent each year and the result was a budget surplus.

2. In the early 90's in Canada, average annual increases in government spending was only 1 per cent. In 1992 spending was 53 per cent of GDP and the deficit was 9 per cent of GDP. By 1997 spending was 44 per cent of GDP. Again after just five years, there was a small surplus.

3. The story was pretty much the same in Ireland. Government spending was 60 per cent of GDP in 1985 with deficits consuming another 12 per cent of the economy's output. After just four years of fiscal restraint, spending was around 43 per cent of GDP and deficits were reduced to 2.7 per cent of GDP.

4. In Slovakia they increased their annual budget by only 1.3 per cent of GDP on average over the

three years from 2000 to 2003 and the public spending dropped from 36.9 per cent of GDP to 29.2 per cent. With other pro-growth policies like the flat tax and personal retirement accounts, economic growth was robust. And finally, 5. From 1990 to 1995 New Zealand dropped spending from 53.5 per cent of GDP and deficits of 4.5 per cent of GDP down to spending of only 43.1 per cent of GDP and a budget surplus of 2.8 per cent of GDP.

In the US Dr. Mitchell points out that: "Two per cent annual spending increases would lead to fiscal balance by 2021. Limiting spending growth to 1 per cent annually would balance the budget by 2019. A spending freeze would balance the budget by 2017."

So if the government "can't cut spending", surely the Budget can be held at current levels in an attempt to get the country's fiscal house in order in the not too distant future?

RICK LOWE  
Nassau,  
May, 2011

## WHAT RESPECT WAS GIVEN TO THE FAMILY OF THE DECEASED FROM THESE HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN?

EDITOR, The Tribune.

At the funeral of Reverend George Cumberbatch on Saturday, May 21, 2011, the Leader of the official opposition and the Chairman of the PLP, showed up at the interment of Reverend Cumberbatch following a three and half hour funeral service. Pray tell me, what respect was given to the family of the deceased from these honourable gentlemen?

Is it fashionable, or just plain disrespectful on their behalf to always show up late for events after a three hour church service?

By the way they never entered the church at all, it would have been better if they did not show up at all, and could have avoided the snide remarks of the hundreds in attendance many of whom were overheard saying: "Late again!" These folks seem to have no shame, imagine who is standing big and bold with the grieving family for an appropriate PR photo in the Freeport News of Monday, 23rd May.

However they were not present at the funeral service because they were late again, in this case far too late, surely the silly season is in full swing. Do you mean that they would use every opportunity they could to promote themselves, even on a sad occasion?

We should all see them for what they really are.

KELLY D BURROWS  
Freeport,  
Grand Bahama.  
May 23, 2011.

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COURT NEWS

# Prosecutors close arguments in fire deaths case

By NATARIO McKENZIE  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
nmckenzie@tribunemedia.net

THE prosecution closed its case yesterday against a man charged with abetment to arson and abetment to manslaughter in the deaths of four people in September 2009.

Jurors are expected back in court on Wednesday after attorneys went into a closed court hearing yesterday afternoon.

Eltorio Ferguson, 29, is charged with abetment to arson and abetment to manslaughter in the deaths of Kayshala Bodie, 18, who was reportedly Ferguson's girlfriend at the time; her mother Theresa Brown, 51; her one-year-old daughter Telair Johnson; and their neighbour Savanna Stuart, 18.

They all died in a suspected arson attack on September 17, 2009 in the family's

home on Wilson Tract. Before the prosecution closed its case, prosecutors called Dr John Neely to the witness stand.

He told the court that while on duty at the Princess Margaret Hospital on October 29, 2009, he examined the accused and documented the complaints he made to him.

## Pain

He said that Ferguson complained of pain about his body, and alleged that he had been punched in the abdomen and suffocated.

Dr Neely said that upon examining Ferguson, he noted that the accused did have tenderness about his body, which was a sign of injury.

When asked by prosecutor Neil Brathwaite whether he had seen any lacerations on Ferguson's wrists and elbow, Dr Neely noted that

if he had, they would have been documented.

Detective Constable Jared Turnquest told the court that on October 29 he was on duty at the Central Detective Unit around 8pm when he and other officers transferred Ferguson from the Central Detective Unit to the Fox Hill Police Station.

Officer Turnquest told the court that as they entered the station, Ferguson began complaining of pain about his body.

The officer told the court that officers at the station refused to accept Ferguson, put the accused back in the police car, and had him returned to the Central Detective Unit headquarters.

The trial resumes on Wednesday before Senior Justice Jon Isaacs.

Ferguson is represented by attorney Geoffrey Farquharson.

# Roadworks on Robinson Road improve driving experience



Letisha Henderson/BIS

**WORK SITE:** Several dump trucks are pictured on the work site at the junction of East Street and Robinson Road. Installation of the 24-inch water-main on the western side of Robinson Road recently began as workmen crossed over East Street.

ROAD paving along with the installation of street lighting columns, signage and road markings on the Robinson Road and East Street corridor will help to enhance the driving experience of motorists, according to the government.

The work is a part of the New Providence Road Improvement and Infrastructure Project, which promises substantial improvements but has been strongly opposed by businesses and homeowners affected by the work.

In the latest in a series of road closures, the portion of Robinson Road from Claridge Road to East Street

was recently closed in 15ft intervals so a 24-inch water-main could be installed. The road has now been reopened.

"As indicated to business owners in the immediate affected area we were under full closure in sections of Robinson Road. We've installed the road pavement beginning from Claridge Road and vehicles can now travel directly to East Street. We've also installed traffic signal poles for new traffic signals for the area and drainage wells required for the junction," said Charlene Collie, project engineer.

"The street light columns will give proper illumination

and greatly enhance the road corridor. The height and type of bulb help with illumination and safety is greatly improved especially during nighttime driving," said Ms Collie.

Having crossed over East Street to Robinson Road, workmen are now progressing westward toward Baily Hill Road with the installation of the water-main.

"We are pretty much on schedule for the installation of the 24-inch water-main. The first section for work on Robinson Road heading west is from the East Street junction to Eighth Street," Ms Collie said.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Amnesty: Jamaica must probe human rights abuses

DAVID McFADDEN,  
Associated Press  
KINGSTON, Jamaica

Amnesty International on Monday urged Jamaica's government to seriously investigate human rights abuses allegedly committed during last year's bloody operation to catch a reputed underworld boss. The London-based human rights group asserted that no one has been punished despite many claims of unlawful killings and arbitrary arrests by security forces.

Neither the police nor the government had any immediate comment on the report released by Amnesty on the one-year anniversary of the launch of raids seeking to arrest Christopher

"Dudus" Coke and re-establish order in his barricaded slum stronghold. The operation, one of the bloodiest episodes in Jamaica's recent history, killed at least 73 civilians.

More than 40 of those who died in Coke's former Tivoli Gardens community in West Kingston during the state of emergency are alleged to have been victims of "extrajudicial" killings by security forces, Amnesty said.

Unlawful killings were reported elsewhere during the weeklong state of emergency and roughly 4,000 Jamaicans were detained, most without charge, under emergency powers. Two people who slumdweller assert were last seen in the custody of security forces remain unaccounted for.



**DUG UP:** Trees are uprooted and will be replanted as work gets under way for the road project in the Cable Beach area.

Felipe Major/Tribune staff

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# Blind Abaco student wins 2011 Primary School Student of the Year award



Anna Albury

ANNA Albury of the Hope Town School in Abaco has been selected as the 2011 Bahamas Primary School Student of the Year.

Praised by the Bahamas Primary School Student of the Year Foundation and the Nassau, Bahamas Pan-Hellenic Council as "an excellent scholar, a multi-talented child and a student who possesses a terrific outlook on everything in life" the blind 12-year-old student was chosen after maintaining a grade point average of 3.80. "Anna handles her blind-

ness as just another facet of her outstanding personality that makes up this charming little student," said the foundation in a statement.

Candace Key, principal at Hope Town Primary School, described Anna as a "gifted young lady who gained the respect of her classmates early on by demonstrating her disciplined manner during school and her pleasant demeanour on campus in student activities and relationships."

Despite her challenges, her parents and school officials

were adamant that Anna be mainstreamed and not sent to the School for the Blind.

"Anna has never been treated differently by her peers or teachers. She is enthusiastic, has an infectious sense of humour and has never allowed her handicap to hold her back," the foundation said.

Anna was second runner-up in the Abaco District Spelling Bee competition in 2009; took second place in the Rotary Club of Abaco Speech Competition; and was the top academic achiev-

er in grades four, five, and six.

When Anna was eight years old, she competed for the first time in the annual Abaco Inter-school Swimming Competition.

When she stepped to the edge of the pool, many whispered, "That's the blind girl! They are letting the blind girl swim!"

When Anna jumped in the pool, several hundred people started cheering her on. Even her parents had never seen her swim 25 meters. There wasn't a dry eye in the

house.

Anna continues to swim as a member of the Hope Town School Swim Team and participants say her presence has given a whole new meaning to competition.

During the 2011 Bahamas Primary School Student of the Year Awards Competition held on Saturday, May 21 at Golden Gates World Outreach Ministries, Anna beat out 115 of the best and brightest minds in local primary schools to capture the top award. She was awarded a \$6,000 scholarship

donated by Bahamas Office and School Supplies (BOSS) and a new laptop computer donated by Jonathan and Michelle Ford.

Anna, who serves as Head Girl at Hope Town Primary, plays the piano, sings in the church, dances, and visits the elderly in the community.

Anna is the daughter of George and Theresa Albury.

## MORE THAN 30 BOYS VESTED AT ABACO SEA SCOUTS

INVESTITURE services for the first and tenth area Abaco Area Scouts was held on Sunday, May 22.

More than 30 boys were vested.

The first Abaco Sea Scouts met at St John the Baptist Anglican Church in Marsh Harbour and tenth Abaco Sea Scouts met at St Martin in Sandy Point.

Their skippers are Lee Johnson and Bradley Russell.



## NOTICE



The MOUNT MORIAH FORUM is currently being organized to mobilize and represent the vital interests of residents and voters in that constituency. Persons who are desirous of becoming a member are invited to contact **Mr. Orland H. Bodie Jr.**, Radio Talk Show Host & Business Consultant @ [orland\\_bodie1@yahoo.com](mailto:orland_bodie1@yahoo.com) for further information and a membership application.

## Heart Church Tabernacle pays tribute to Barbara Thompson

By DENISE MAYCOCK  
Tribune Freeport Reporter  
[dmaycock@tribunemedia.net](mailto:dmaycock@tribunemedia.net)

FREEPORT – Principal Barbara Thompson has been recognised by the teachers and students of Walter Parker Pri-

mary School, where she has served 27 years as an educator.

Students, educators, and Ministry of Education officials paid special tribute to Mrs Thompson on Friday at the Community at Heart Church Tabernacle on Coral Road.

Former principals at WPP Alma Perry and Ross Smith also attended the ceremony. They spoke briefly about their tenure and shared fond memories of working with Mrs Thompson.

Last September, Mrs Thompson was transferred to the Freeport Primary School. Her transfer was met with some opposition by the WPP school board, teachers, and parents.

Walter Parker is one of the top achieving primary level institutions in the country.

Sandra Edgecombe, district superintendent of primary schools, commended former principals Ms Perry, Mr Smith and Mrs Thompson for their outstanding contributions to making the WPP a "school of excellence" in the Bahamas.

She is confident that the new principal Angela Burrows will continue to lead the institution with the same level of excellence.

Under the leadership of Mrs Thompson, Mrs Edgecombe said, WPP continued to perform well and excel in sports; in culture, as winners in primary school category in Junior Junkanoo competition; in aca-

demics, as winners of spelling competitions both locally and nationally; in religious studies and in speech competitions.

"She was always there encouraging her students and teachers which is why they continue to do so well," she said.

Mrs Edgecombe expressed gratitude to Mrs Thompson for her dedication and compassion towards students and teachers at WPP.

"Mrs Thompson, I want to thank you for all you have done. In a very special way, you have touched my life.

"When I became district superintendent of primary schools I came in not knowing very much about primary schools and you showed me and taught me these past six years; I wish to thank you for your advice," said Mrs Edgecombe.

Guest speaker Ross Smith, who worked with Mrs Thompson at WPP, described her as a genuine friend and consummate professional.

The WPP Boys Choir, guest artist Dwight Armbrister, and school staff performed moving musical tributes to Mrs Thompson.

During an emotional address, Mrs Thompson said her years at WPP have been very memorable and thanked the teachers with whom she worked over the past 27 years.

"This school is like family to me. The most rewarding

years of my teaching career have been at WPP," she said.

Mrs Thompson said teaching is a calling and she is happy to serve it wherever she is placed.

"To the teachers at Walter Parker Primary, we have shared some wonderful times that will forever be with me, but this is a new chapter I am opening in my life and I can see for next few years that I have left in education it is going to be a challenge. But, I believe through all of this, God has placed me where I am for a purpose.

"For those of us in the teaching profession, we know that teaching is really a calling but I begin to see teaching now as a ministry, and I would continue to minister to the children of our country wherever I am placed because even though it is hard for me to leave WPP, I know that there is work for me to do at Freeport Primary School," she said.

Ms Thompson started teaching in 1972. She has taught at various primary schools throughout the Family Islands.

In 1983, she was transferred to the Walter Parker Primary as a grade two teacher. She was recognised as Teacher of the Year (1984-85).

She served as senior mistress from 1986 to 1991.

In 1991 she was appointed acting vice principal and served in this position until 2002 when she was appointed principal.

Mrs Thompson is married to Deputy Director of Education Cecil Thompson. They have three children.

Happy Birthday

Wishes goes out to My Crown Prince Vincent Michael Wring III

May God Richly Bless You Today and Always.

Love Mummy

# Mitchell launches reelection campaign

FOX Hill MP Fred Mitchell officially launched his reelection campaign yesterday, declaring that he is committed to fighting for the youth of the nation.



FRED MITCHELL

As he gears up for his fourth bid to represent the constituency, all of which were launched at the Faith Mission Church of God, now known as the Mega Worship Centre, Mr Mitchell said the next election will be about the future of Fox Hill and the nation.

He said: "I have dedicated this general election campaign to fighting for the young people of our country. When I meet them, as I go from house to house, the single most depressing thought is the fact that there are far too many men and women under 25 who are sitting at home with nothing to do. I have given some ideas to the leader of the party about a jobs programme which we must adopt when we come to government which will solve this problem of youth unemployment."

"It is in my view the single biggest factor that will lead to social disorder in this country if it is not resolved and solved."

Mr Mitchell said most MPs only interact with the young people in their constituencies concerning the issue of jobs.

"They want a job and they believe that the role of an MP is to find a job," he said.

Mr Mitchell said it is the PLP's plan to solve the economic crisis and provide jobs, and he pledged to do his best to see this vision become reality. Pointing to the funding offered by the party to the Fox Hill Festival in the past, Mr Mitchell said the community can rest assured that if the PLP wins the election, "its cultural integrity will once again be in safe hands".

He added: "There will be a revitalised Fox Hill Urban Renewal Programme, the refurbishing of homes and feeding of the hungry. All of that is central to building community. My belief is that by building community, people will support their own and not destroy their own communities. I have engaged in this community building in Eastwood and Hill Side Park, Monastery Park and Heights, Grays Terrace, Freddie Munnings Manor, Smithville, Canon Pugh, Canterbury, College Gardens, Gleniston North.

"But you know I don't fool myself. Good representation alone does not get you re-elected. People make decisions for all kinds of reasons. We therefore have to simply pound the pavements and find out where we are. In a resource starved organisation that is our only defence: people to people, one vote at a time."

# Exuma resident recalls hoisting flag in 1973



MEMORIES: Nigel Rolle, a former police officer, remembers taking down the Union Jack and hoisting the Bahamian flag for the first time in 1973. (BIS photo: Gena Gibbs)

EXUMA – Nigel Rolle remembers hoisting the Bahamian flag at the dawn of Independence in 1973, after taking down the Union Jack and shares his memories of working for collective national change. Mr Rolle, who was present for the launch of the National Energy Policy in Exuma, said it is good to see Bahamians supporting the government.

"I am a former police officer. In 1973, I was instrumental in taking the Prime Minister (Sir Lynden Pindling) to lower the flag, to lower the Union Jack and to hoist the Bahamian flag. He was an excellent man and a giant of a man. That was exciting and I had to hold back the tears then," said Mr Rolle, who lives in Rolle Corner in Exuma.

"Seeing the exchange that we were going through and that I was a part of it, I was very, very touched about the situation."

On May 6, Mr Rolle was present to collect his compact florescent light bulbs (CFLs) after Minister of State for the Environment Phenton Nymour launched the National Energy Policy Programme in George Town, Exuma. He was present with at least 100 other BEC customers that lined up to exchange their incandescent bulbs for the IDB sponsored and government-issued CFL bulbs.

"At the time the movement was necessary and, you know, it called for a lot of change. We have made some changes but there is still more that we can do. That was necessary and I think we are better off. At that time we needed a change in government and for the people," said Mr Rolle.

"Not so much for the UBP, but I feel the country had reached the stage where we needed to really make some changes. We have made some changes that have made us better, but there is still more we need to do to unify the country."

Mr Rolle said he believes the majority of Bahamians want to put aside political differences and concentrate on changing the country for the better.

"We need to work together for one common goal as Bahamians, for Bahamians and set aside political parties and take the country as a whole into consideration when we make decisions. Exuma in itself has a lot of work to do," said Mr Rolle.

"I think right now our present prime minister (Hubert Ingraham) is an excellent guy, I'll say. He's doing a good job and right now I don't think you could beat him. He's the man for the job."

# RETIREE SAYS FALLEN OFFICERS DESERVE MORE

By LAMECH JOHNSON

ONE SENIOR citizen believes that the Defence Force officers who died in the sinking of HMBS Flamingo when it was attacked by Cuban MiG jets in 1980 deserve more recognition.

Stanley Sturupp, 66, said the four marines – Able Seaman Fenrick Sturupp, 21; Marine Seaman Austin Rudolph Smith, 21; Marine Seaman David Allison Tucker, 21; and Marine Seaman Edward Arnold Williams, 23 – were killed in the line of duty, yet the country does not honour them accordingly.

"Four Defence Force officers were killed in the line of duty and we don't have even one street named in honour of them," he told *The Tribune*. "As a Bahamian, I really feel bad about this. I think it's very poor. This is a historical event and no other Defence Force officer died in the line of duty like that."

Mr Sturupp called it "sad" that politicians focus so much on themselves and their own legacies rather than those of our national heroes.

He believes the media is also to blame for not giving enough attention the events of 31 years ago.

"All we hear on the radio and talk shows is politics, politics, politics, politics and religion. There is nothing more patriotic you can do than giving your life for your country."

He hopes that a street, building, or even a national holiday can be named or created in their honour.

On May 10, 2011, members of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force commemorated the 31st anniversary of the sinking of HMBS Flamingo with a memorial service in Rawson Square.

It was the first time that the service was held in a central location. Usually it is conducted at the RBDF Headquarters in Coral Harbour.

The four officers were killed when the Cuban air force opened rocket and machine gun fire on their vessel after it had stopped two Cuban boats poaching at Cay Santo Domingo in the Ragged Island chain.

# STUDENTS VISIT GOVERNOR GENERAL



Raymond A Bethel/BIS

TOP STUDENTS: Governor General Sir Arthur and Lady Foulkes welcomed to Government House honourees of the Bahamas Primary School Students of the Year Foundation on May 21. Dr Ricardo Deveaux, president and CEO, is pictured, far left second row. In the front row, from left, are: Anna Albury, nominee of Hope Town Primary School, Abaco; 2010 winner Jared Fitzgerald of Xavier's Lower School, New Providence; Sir Arthur and Lady Joan. At the far right are Cyndi Williams-Rahming, chairman of the foundation and Jaydain Miller, associate director of development.



TIME FOR TOTS: Governor General Sir Arthur Foulkes sits among the students of Grace Academy in Freeport, Grand Bahama during a courtesy call at Government House on May 23. Several teachers from Grace are pictured standing.

Derek Smith/BIS

## Tribune Trivia

### Yesterday's Question

How much did the snapper Sidney Walker caught weigh?

### Yesterday's Answer

77 pounds

### Yesterday's Winners

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Sherolyn Sears   | 3pts |
| Jillian Mullings | 2pts |
| Shavon Peterson  | 1pt  |

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## LOCAL NEWS

## COMMONWEALTH BANK CONTINUES A TRADITION OF SLOOP SAILING SPONSORSHIP

# Paying ongoing tribute to an avid helmsman

Commonwealth Bank's late chairman Robert "Bobby" Symonette was an avid helmsman and a giant of a man, imbued with wisdom, wit and a will to preserve our Bahamian heritage.

Today, the Bank continues to pay tribute to his memory with the steadfast support of sloop sailing in the Bahamas.

Over the last five decades, the bank has extended financial assistance to numerous regatta associations that promote this celebrated tradition.

Among its 2011 recipients is the National Family Island Regatta (NFIR) which once again receives a bronze sponsorship.

Reflecting on its long-standing corporate sponsorship of the NFIR, the bank's president Ian Jennings said: "We are proud to champi-

on Commodore Danny Strachan and the National Family Island Regatta.

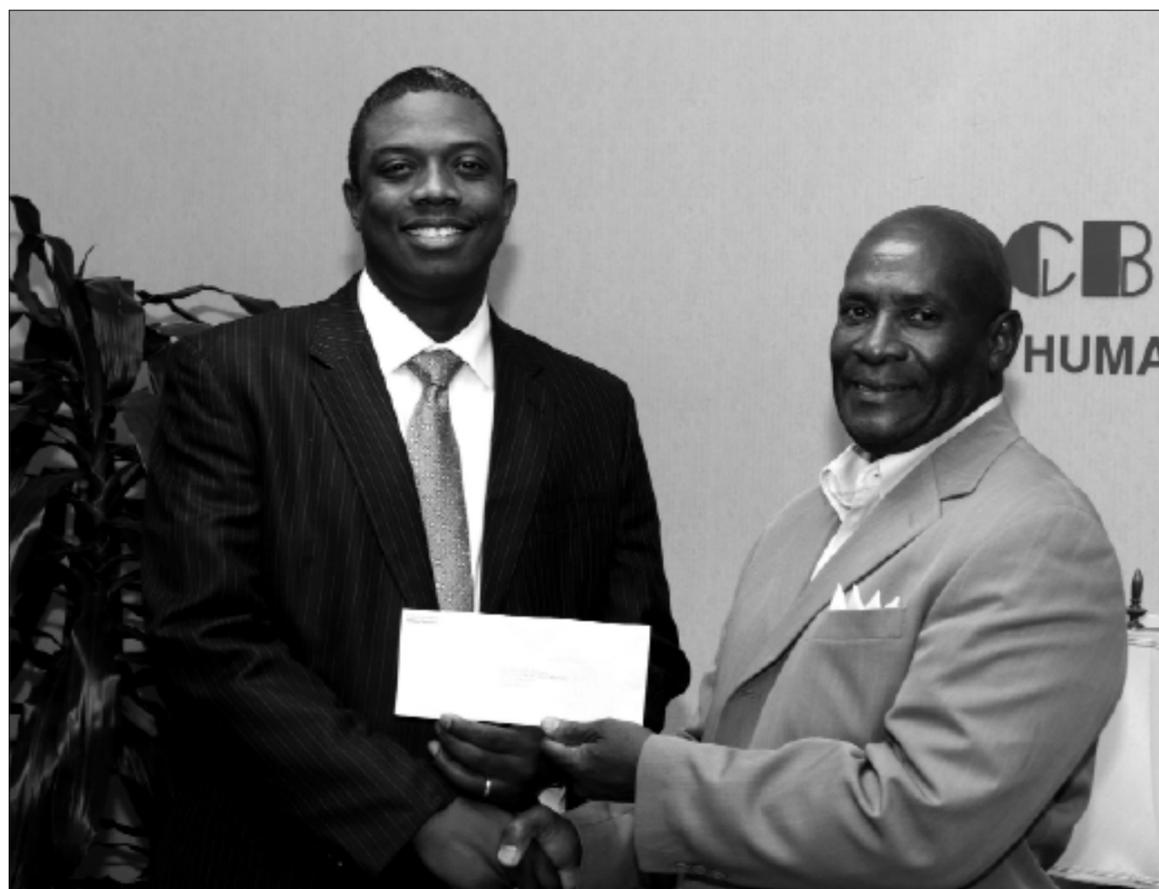
"We believe that sporting and cultural events such as sloop sailing play an integral role in the positive social development of our country.

## Tireless

"To this end, the bank applauds the tireless efforts of individuals, organisations and institutions like NFIR, that work consistently to preserve a treasured tradition, which demonstrates true Bahamian determination, competition and sportsmanship."

The bank's support also extends to the promotion of regatta and cultural dates in its annual calendar.

The 2011 "Bahama Beaches" calendar lists an



**CONTINUING TRADITION:** Pictured left to right: Patrick McFall, vice president and CFO, Commonwealth Bank; and Danny Strachan, chairman and commodore, the National Family Island Regatta Committee.

array of events and in particular, nine months of activities for sailing enthusiasts, residents and visitors alike to participate in or just sit back and enjoy the beauty of sailing. As the NFIR association celebrates 58 years

of unbroken sloop sailing in George Town, Exuma, Commodore Strachan noted that it is through corporate sponsorship that his organisation is able to keep a great cultural tradition alive for future generations.

He said: "We are grateful that Commonwealth Bank continues to partner with us to help make this another successful Regatta.

"Commonwealth Bank's reputation as a good corporate citizen is well known

throughout the Bahamas and they have always contributed to positive and worthwhile activities in our communities.

"I encourage other corporate citizens to follow Commonwealth Bank's lead."

# SANDALS HONOUR

Sandals resorts voted 'favourite all-inclusive resort chain' in budget travel's second annual readers' choice poll



SANDALS Resorts has been voted the "favourite all-inclusive resort chain" in the second annual Budget Travel Reader's Choice Awards.

"We are always particularly thrilled when we receive an award directly from the consumers," said Mr Gordon 'Butch' Stewart, chairman of Sandals Resorts

International, which operates the Sandals Royal Bahamian on Cable Beach. "Our priority has been and will always continue to be to exceed the expectations of guests visiting our properties."

More than 145,000 votes were cast across 33 different categories on [www.budgettravel.com](http://www.budgettravel.com) from Febru-

ary through April. Readers weighed in on their choices for everything from best destinations, hotels, resorts, cruises, cameras, car rentals, travel apps and more. The full results will be featured in the November edition of Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel magazine.

Patrick Drake, general manager of Sandals Royal Bahamian, said: "It is particularly nice when the hard work and dedication of our team members is acknowledged, every single member of the Sandals family including the 500 plus team members at Sandals Royal Bahamian should be extremely proud of another great achievement".

Sandals Resorts has earned a worldwide reputation for providing people in love with a romantic vacation experience in the Caribbean.

Currently, there are 14 Luxury Included Sandals Resorts located in Jamaica, Antigua, Saint Lucia and the Bahamas.

## 20 Kalik winners enjoyed Exuma

AT a reception held at Bennis, featuring succulent Bahamian food and refreshing Kaliks, 10 lucky individuals were presented with two tickets to travel on Bahamasair to George Town, Exuma. These individuals participated in the Kalik enter to win promotion and were the persons chosen to be awarded with the roundtrip tickets for the 58th Annual National Family Island Regatta in Exuma.

Kalik, as a part of its mandate to support all things Bahamian, is always looking for avenues to combine rewarding its loyal consumers while supporting such cultural events.

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### A Funeral Service for

#### RUTH MARGUERETTA WALLACE, 17

of #55 Curlberts Hill, Winton Heights will be held on Thursday, May 26th at 11:00am at East Street Gospel Chapel, East Street. Pastor Tom Roberts will officiate and interment will be made in Woodlawn Gardens, Soldier Road.

She is survived by **Parents:** Cecil & Sherrilyn Wallace; **Brothers:** Nyahuma Bastian, Garvin Wallace, Philip Wallace; **Sisters:** Nadene & Wallicia Wallace, Ancenette Wallace-Shepherd; **Sister-in-Law:** Anishka Wallace; **Aunts:** Eulie Elliot, Earline, Cheryl and Cynthia Bastian, Beryl Mortimer, Oralee Lumpkin of West Palm Beach, Florida, Esther Winder-Storr, Marjorie, Ethlyn and Glennis Wallace; **Uncles:** Earl Bastian, Godfrey Bastian of Miami, Florida, Bursil, Winston and Pastor Perry Wallace, Sam Stubbs; **Nieces:** Paige and Kelly Bastian, Destiny Cartwright,

Dianna, Ameer and Philisha Wallace; **Nephews:** Bryant Shepherd, Orion and Anzel Wallace; **Grand Uncle:** Anthony Woodside; **Grand Aunt:** Maxine Edgecombe of Highland Ranch, Colorado; **Cousins including:** Thorne Earl Bastian, Geran and Gervase Elliot, Jeremy and Joey Bastian of Jacksonville, Florida, Earl Lumpkin Jr. of West Palm Beach, Florida, La-Trese Jackson of West Palm Beach, Florida, Antionette "Kendy" Harp of Florida, Donna Stubbs, Oralee Stubbs, Gregory, Brian, Lester, Darren and Chris Stubbs, William, Paul and Dave Mortimer, Neil Wallace, Sharon Mortimer, Dwayne, Burton and Anthon Wallace. **God Parents:** Dr. Robin and Carolyn Roberts, Sandra Treco, Alex and Caroline Major, Lester Cox, Kathy Harris, Andrea Williams; **Great Grand Aunts:** Gwendolyn Hanna, Doris Fitzgerald, Winifred Munnings; **Surrogate Grand Mothers:** Ruth Millar, Petrona Major; **Family & Friends:** Dr. Merceline Dahl-Regis, Mr. Robert and Mrs. Elma Garraway Marrie and Michelle Bethel, Patsy McKinney, Jackie Wallace, Rev. Dr. Pastor and Mrs. James Shearer, Sis. Mae Johnson and family, Rosita Miller and family, Gabrielle Pratt, Deacon and Mrs. Thomas Sands, Pastor and Mrs. David Adams, Staff and Students of Teleos Christian Schools, Monique Millar and family, Malcolm Culmer and family, Officers and Members of East Street Gospel Chapel, Members of East Street Gospel Choir, Pastor and Mrs. George Berry, Pastor-Elect and Mrs. Sterling Moss and family, Pastor Al and Mrs. McCartney and family, Pastor Tom and Lisa Roberts and family, Pastor Bradley King and family, Mr. and Mrs. Charles McCartney, Mr. and Mrs. Rico Simms, Mr. and Mrs. Crestwell Stuart, Pat Rutherford and family, Rev. Sherelle and Mother Saunders and family, Pastor Edmund and Mrs. Dorsette and family, Moncur family, Rev. Dr. Charles Saunders and the Officers and Members of Salem Baptist Church, Rev. Timothy Stewart and the Officers and Members of Bethel Baptist Church, Rev. Dr. Ivan F. and Dr. Joanne Butler & the Kemp Road Ministries family, Rev. Practon Patton, Officers and Members of the new Birth Kingdom Ministries, Monique Millar and family, Bishop Ezekiel and Paulette Munnings, Bishop Arnold and Vernita Josey, Mrs. Andrea Archer, Ms. Pamela Bowe, Mr. Ben and Christine Burrows, Mr. Raymond and Mars Simon, Mr. Jean Baptiste, Ms. Camille Johnson, Executive Management and Staff of the Ministry of Health, Claudette Wallace, Patricia Larkin and family, Kayla Dean and family, Maurice Wallace and family, Evelyn Wallace and family, Mr. James and Willamae Curry, Staff of E.C.G. Dept. of Princess Margaret Hospital, Mr. and Mrs. Daswell Bevens Sr. and family, Mr. Pat Hepburn and family, Mr. Patrick and Erica Gardiner, Mr. Hubert and Orville Maura, Mrs. Eleanor Smith, Mr. Edward Fitzgerald and family, Mr. Sean and Cyprianna McWeeny, Sen. Hon. Jerome and Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mr. George and Rev. Patricia Bethel, Pastor Leroy "Tinkle" & Melodie Hanna, Mrs. Dorothy Hanna and family, Mrs. Louise Rolle and family, Mr. Ambrose and Lorraine Forbes, Ms. Lenora Munnings, Mrs. Renetta Bastian and family, Ms. Jan Knowles and family, Bishop Ros and Althea Davis, Hon. Perry and Mrs. Christie, Mr. William and Azella Weeks, Mr. Alex and Deborah Johnson, Ms. Sharon and Ryan Winder, Dr. Sparkman and Dawn Ferguson, Dr. Nelson and Debbie Clarke, Mother Francis Edgecombe, Sis. Ena Burns, Sis. Lysanne McKenzie, Azella Major, Mrs. Trixie and Paula Hanna, Ms. Gaynell Newbold, Ms. Krissy Hanna, Ms. Janeene Rahming, Ms. Daphne Lynes, Mr. Kevon Lightbourne, Mrs. Eunice Taylor, Mr. Tuxan Ferguson, Mr. Alphonso Rolle, Ms. Antoinette Woodside-Culmer and family, Ms. Charmaine Butler and family, Mr. Raymond Butler and family, Bishop Leroy and Eva Woodside of Snellville, Georgia, Mr. John Woodside of West Palm Beach, Florida, Mr. Donald and Lorna Woodside of Wappingers Falls, New York, Ms. Joyce Bell of Miami, Florida., Bastian, Woodside, Wallace, Munnings, Culmer, Hanna, Fitzgerald, Winder, Lockhart, Maycock, and Munroe families, Residents of Culberts Hill and Spence Close, Winton Heights.

Friends may pay their last respects at Bethel Brothers Morticians, #44 Nassau Street on Wednesday from 10:00am-6:00pm and on Thursday at the church from 10:00am until service time.

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RANNIE PINDER President

### FUNERAL SERVICE FOR



#### FANNIE LOUISE SWEETING, 93

who died at her daughter's residence on Sunday, will be held at Ebenezer Methodist Church, Shirley Street on Wednesday, May 25th, 2011 at 11:00am. Burial will be in the church cemetery. Rev. Godfrey Bethel officiating.

She was predeceased by her husband, Austin Sweeting on June 16th, 2002, also by her five brothers, Eldredge, Percy, Richard, Edward and George. She is survived by a daughter, Kathleen Albury; son-in-law, Marshall Albury; granddaughters, Connie Legros and Carina Dorsett; grandsons-in-law, Roger Legros and Lawrence Dorsett; great granddaughters, Alexcia and Brooke Dorsett; sisters-in-law, Lucille Russell, Una Russell, Byrl Sands and Sally Sweeting, brothers-in-law, Donald Russell and Paul Sands; numerous nephews and nieces and other relatives and friends. Special thanks to Shawn Fernander (care giver) and Dr. Rao Pabukuri.

Friends may pay their last respects at Pinder's Funeral Home, Palmdale Ave., Palmdale on Tuesday, May 24th, 2011 from 5:00pm until 6:30pm.

# Teenage girl's kidnap terror

FROM page one

emotion at her return. "It's a great relief, especially for her father," a close relative told *The Tribune*. "It has been a great burden lifted from the family to know that she is alive and safe." "She had two older brothers that were really going out of their heads. One of her

brothers was really like her protector and he felt like he failed her."

According to the relative, the teen escaped her alleged captors by jumping out of a car when it stopped at a red light on Shirley Street early yesterday morning. The girl then ran to safety of the hospital. It was reported that officers from the Central Divi-

sion informed the family at around 2am.

The relative said the girl had gone missing in the past, but never for so long, and that this time, "she was being held against her will."

While declining to say whether the girl had been harmed in any way during the ordeal, the relative said she was taken to the hospital for

an evaluation.

"Right now she's very closed," the relative added, "she isn't really talking as much. She would say certain things and then just clam up."

"We're trying to get her to go to a counsellor and get some help so we can understand what happened."

Police investigations into the matter are ongoing.

# Deadly fire 'was not an accident'

FROM page one

- that's an improvement from critical, and two of them remain critically ill. The hope is they will continue to recover."

The seven children were born to two different mothers, one of whom was deported to Haiti a few years ago and another who left the Bahamas for the United States in January.

Police said the children's father, an electronics repairman who operated his business out of the family's home, left the children at home alone the day of the fire.

As the blaze started to consume the structure shortly after 3pm, neighbours banded together and tried to save the children who could be heard screaming from the lower level of the two-story apartment complex where they lived. However, flames and smoke prevented the neighbours' rescue efforts.

The unresponsive children were found by firefighters huddled together in an eastern bedroom of the small apartment on Sandilands Village Road.

# GOVT TO ANNOUNCE 'PLANNED DEFICIT' - FORMER MINISTER

FROM page one

a policy change with respect to public servants, Mr Smith said the allocation can be expected to hold firm.

According to union leaders, there will be good news in the budget for the civil service.

John Pinder, head of the Bahamas Public Service Union, said the government promised to lift its freeze on increments and promotions within the civil service, although it did not committed to an across-the-board salary increase.

He made the announcement last week after his meeting with Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham. Government representatives did not confirm the news and they would not comment on the budget.

Mr Smith said "other charges", such as rent agreements and long-standing contracts, pick up the next 20 to 25 per cent of the budget. After those standing expenses, the government is typically left with about \$200 million for the capital budget, he said.

Of that allocation, he said, about \$50 million goes towards subsidising government corporations, many of which are loss leading institutions. These include Bahamasair, the Water and Sewerage Corporation, the Bahamas Electricity Corporation, ZNS, the Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation (BAIC) and a few others.

"That is the kind of budget we have seen for the past 20 years," said Mr Smith.



JOHN PINDER

Sources inside the government said "by and large 80 per cent of the budget is already committed," with the capital budget usually being "in the order of \$200 million plus." The lion's share of expenditures in terms of percentages goes toward education, national security and health.

The source said, a liberal estimate would project 20 per cent in available funds for discretionary spending, on programmes such as a poverty reduction programme or a self starter programme. This would also include new capital projects, such as a new school or court.

The impact of the recent sale of BTC to Cable and Wireless Communications (CWC) will likely show in the new budget, said Mr Smith, as the new company will probably not pay dividends at the same rate the government did.

In recent years, government revenues

were bolstered by high dividend payouts from the country's most profitable public corporation. The government took home about \$90 million in 2009, according to Mr Smith.

Ryan Pinder, opposition spokesman on finance, said the government should ensure its budget forecasts are realistic and based on sound economic theory. In the past, he said, budget forecasts have been "completely unattainable." Earlier this year, the government reported that its revenues were under projection. Mr Pinder claimed they were under by \$200 million.

"I find it dangerous to give budget forecasts that are unattainable, because you plan the year of governing the country based on your budget forecasts. If your forecast is unreliable you cannot properly govern the country from a financial point of view. That is financial mismanagement at its worse," said Mr Pinder.

According to Mr Smith, the forecast shortfall was not "dramatically off."

"For the last couple of years the forecasts have been overly generous, especially on the revenue side, and they did not get it right. It creates problems because you begin to spend or make provisions for money that is not coming in. But it was not any great amount. I believe it was below 10 per cent," said Mr Smith.

"Even though it has been off it has not been dramatically off. But I think we are in a position to make more accurate forecasts," he said.

# DNA SET TO INTRODUCE THREE GRAND BAHAMA CANDIDATES

FROM page one

the public what our position is, the DNA's position in terms of what we would like to do regarding crime. However, we want to put it to the Bahamian public what their views are as to what they would like to see us do when we become the government," he said.

Mr McCartney said the DNA has a general outline on a number of pressing issues that affect the country today, but they want to give the Bahamian people a chance to help in the formulation of the final masterplan.

"We have our outline as to what we want to do. We want the public to say, yes we like it, or why don't you add or take away from it here or there. See that is what you call participatory governance. And when we are completed with our people's prospectus, we can truly say this is a document that has been developed by the DNA and the people of the Bahamas as to how they want their government to operate," he said.

Once these series of town meetings are concluded, Mr McCartney said they expect to launch their party's platform six to eight weeks before the general election - around the same time the PLP and the FNM would be revealing their own party's manifestos.

"But, you will see snippets of it earlier. You would see what our position is on crime, what our position is on Immigration, what our position is on jobs and the economy. We are going to take it to the people and get the people to participate. And this series will run for a few weeks, and we will put in the newspapers where the meetings will be - the times and places etc," he said.

After the DNA launches its first three candidates in Grand Bahama Mr McCartney said they will be announcing candidates a short time later for North Abaco, North Eleuthera, and South Eleuthera.

Mr McCartney said the DNA will also introduce more candidates for New Providence in due time.



BRANVILLE MCCARTNEY

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

# AP sources: DNA matches Strauss-Kahn in sex attack

COLLEEN LONG, Associated Press NEW YORK

Test results returned Monday found that DNA from former International Monetary Fund leader Dominique Strauss-Kahn matched material on the work clothes of a Manhattan hotel maid who says he attacked her, two people familiar with the investigation told The Associated Press.

The two people would not describe the material found on the shirt, but said DNA matched a sample from Strauss-Kahn, who submitted to testing after his arrest more than a week ago. He denies the charges.

The two people said additional testing was being performed on other items. They were not authorized to speak publicly about the matter and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity. During their investigation, authorities cut out a piece of carpet and swabbed sinks and other surfaces in his hotel room. Investigators told the AP they believed the carpet in the hotel room may contain Strauss-Kahn's semen, spat out after an episode of forced oral sex by the maid.

The forensic evidence is the first to link Strauss-Kahn to the woman. Strauss-Kahn's attorney Benjamin Brafman declined to comment on Monday. At a court hearing last week, he told a judge that forensic evidence developed in the investigation "will not be consistent with a forcible encounter" — leading to speculation that Strauss-Kahn's defense would argue that it was consensual.

NYPD spokesman Paul J. Browne and the Manhattan District Attorney's office would not comment.

The one-time French presidential contender has been charged with a criminal sex act, attempted rape and sexual abuse and is free on \$1 million bail, under house arrest at a lower Manhattan apartment. He has been accused of attacking the 32-year-old West African immigrant on May 14 in his luxury suite at the Sofitel hotel near Manhattan's Times Square. His lawyers say he is innocent.

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## RoyalStar profits 20% 'below expectations'

By NEIL HARTNELL  
Tribune Business Editor

RoyalStar Assurance has "exceeded all expectations" in the eight years under its current ownership, its managing director said yesterday, despite a 39.4 per cent decline in net income to \$4.127 million that came in "20 per cent below" last year's expectations.

Speaking to Tribune Business after the general insurance underwriter revealed a more than \$2.5 million drop from the \$6.816 million profit recorded in 2009, Steve Watson said last year had still produced "a reasonable performance given the various different factors involved".

He added of the results:

- \* But company has 'exceeded all hopes' in last eight years, despite 39.4% net income fall to \$4.127m in 2010
- \* Net equity doubled in last five years to over \$40m
- \* Managing director says generated \$31m in profits since 2005, with \$15-\$16m in dividends paid
- \* Construction starts on insurer's new head office, with 12% return on capital in 2010

"They were probably 20 per cent below target." Premium rates were "modestly down" by between 2-4 per cent, with revenues on the property portfolio off by the same amount. Motor premium revenues were off by a slightly higher percentage.

RoyalStar saw pressures come to bear on both its

top-line gross written premiums and its claims experience. Written premiums fell by 6.4 per cent to \$60.445 million, compared to \$64.573 million in 2009, while net claims grew by 21.1 per cent year-over-year - from \$4.386 million to \$5.313 million.

In common with other

Bahamian general insurance carriers, RoyalStar saw its motor premium portfolio impacted by the economic environment, as cash-strapped consumers switched from comprehensive to cheaper third-party

SEE page 4B

## BOATER FINED \$2,500 OVER 'OUTBOUND DECLARATION'

Consternation, as industry says this has not been required before

By ALISON LOWE  
Business Reporter  
alowe@tribunemedia.net

A \$2,500 fine levied upon a Freeport businessman for failing to make an "outbound declaration" when he left Grand Bahama to take a pleasure cruise to Florida does not indicate an unannounced, more stringent enforcement of the law, the Customs Department said yesterday.

David Fingland, owner of the Jewelry Box store in Freeport, said he was hit with the unexpected fine after a weekend trip to the US with his wife to "hang out and shop". He returned to Freeport and declared the items they had purchased and "went on (his) way".

However, two days later he received a call from the Customs Department, in which he was asked if he had made an "outbound declaration" prior to leaving the Bahamas. Mr Fingland, who travels to and from the US on his boat around twice a year, said he had not as he was unaware of the requirement.

"I said: 'What do you mean outward bound declaration?'. He said: 'Well you know every vessel that leaves the Bahamas legally has to fill out an outward bound before they leave'. I said: 'I didn't know that, and how much is it'. He said it was \$10 stamp duty and that I needed to come to the

SEE page 3B

## MARINAS SEE FUEL PROFITS 'VAPORISE'

By ALISON LOWE  
Business Reporter  
alowe@tribunemedia.net

Marina operators say their reliance on credit business from cruising/fishing tourists, in combination with the lower margins presently permitted for diesel sales than gas, make them



PHENTON NEYMOUR

SEE page 5B

## Public finances tipping point 'in year or two'

- \* Former finance minister predicts GFS deficit might hit 4-5% in 2011-2012
- \* Says 'essential' to improve revenue forecast accuracy, as getting this wrong might push deficit higher

By NEIL HARTNELL  
Tribune Business Editor

The Bahamas will reach a critical 'tipping point' over its public finances within "a year or two", a former finance minister warned yesterday, adding that the GFS fiscal deficit for the 2011-2012 fiscal year might hit 4-5 per cent of GDP if no one-off revenue inflows occurred.

Urging the Bahamas to avoid following many Caribbean neighbours down the road to an International Monetary Fund (IMF) adjustment/bail out programme, James Smith called on the Government to establish "practical but achievable targets" for reducing, then eliminating the fiscal deficit over multiple years to set the national debt back on the correct path.

Acknowledging that it was "essential" to improve the accuracy of Budget revenue estimates, given that failure here could push the fiscal deficit even higher, Mr Smith suggested that on the spending side the key was to curtail growth in civil servant numbers.

Asked by Tribune Business whether the Bahamas' public finances were at a critical 'tipping point', given that the national debt stood at \$4.25 billion or 56.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) at year-end 2010, Mr Smith replied: "Yes, I think we are,

and we might have a year or two to make the adjustments.

"If not, I can see us going the way of many of our neighbours in the Caribbean, where the decision is made for us by the people we have to borrow money from to fund the deficits."

This was a reference to the difficulties faced by the likes of debt-burdened Jamaica, which is currently in the midst of an IMF-led programme to put its economy and public finances back on track. In return for loans and other credit, Jamaica has effectively been forced to cede some of its economic sovereignty and decision-making

SEE page 4B



JAMES SMITH

## AIRLINE TARGETS 3 NEW ROUTES

- \* Sky Bahamas sees 40% year-over-year growth over four-month period
- \* Load factors 72% and 91% for two-way and one-way trips respectively

By NEIL HARTNELL  
Tribune Business Editor

A major Bahamian private airline yesterday said it had enjoyed 40 per cent year-over-year growth between December-early April 2010, as it unveiled plans to launch three



CAPT. RANDY BUTLER

new routes/services within the next three weeks.

Captain Randy Butler, president and chief executive of Sky Bahamas, told Tribune Business the company would today

SEE page 5B

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WITH THE BAHAMAS IN PRE-ELECTION MODE, THE ISSUE OF LEADERSHIP IS A PUBLIC TOPIC OF DEBATE

By LARRY GIBSON

# Defining what we need from a leader

In June 2006, I wrote an article in this column entitled *A refreshing type of leadership*. The column was based on a luncheon address given by President Francisco Flores Perez, who served as president of El Salvador from 1999 to 2004. His presence in the Bahamas was made possible by the Atlas Research Foundation and the Nassau Institute.

Given the fact that the Bahamas is now officially in 'silly season', that is, in pre-election mode, the issues of leadership ability, leadership capacity and leadership style will be the topic of many public and private discussions. I thought that a reprint of an abridged version of my previous column might be instructive in helping us to firstly frame and define our expectations of a Bahamian prime minister, and then to ask pertinent questions about what they will do if elected.

**Nomination**

In El Salvador, as is the case in many Latin American countries, a president is prohibited from serving two consecutive terms in office. In June 2005, President Flores was nominated for the position of Secretary General of the Organisation of American States (OAS). For personal reasons, President Flores declined to let his name go forward, to which US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, lamented: "President Flores has demonstrated that he is a talented and dynamic leader, successfully articulating a forward-thinking vision for a hemisphere that thrives on democracy, respect for human rights and economic opportunity."

What exactly did President Flores accomplish to earn such accolades?

**El Salvador**

El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated country in Central America, a country of 6.7 million people occupying a land

mass of some 8,000 square miles sandwiched between Guatemala and Honduras. It is roughly the size of the state of Massachusetts, and its income per capita is approximately US\$2,100 per capita (Bahamas \$18,000). Literacy is 87 per cent (97 per cent for the Bahamas), and the size of the economy (GDP) is US\$32.4 billion (Bahamas, \$6 billion). An interesting side note is that annual remittances (money sent back home by Salvadorans living abroad) accounts for 17 per cent of GDP.

**Forward-thinking vision**

El Salvador suffered a brutal civil war from 1980-1992 that resulted in the loss of 75,000 lives and the decimation of the economy and public infrastructure.

Voted to power in 1999, President Flores and his administration were largely responsible for making El Salvador's voice heard throughout the world's main international forums. He was also one of the first leaders to meet with George W. Bush shortly after he was voted in as president of the US.

On a subsequent official visit to El Salvador in 2002, President Bush had this to say: "El Salvador is one of the really great stories of economic and political transformation of our time. Just over a decade ago, this country was in civil war. For millions of Salvadorans, violence was a daily reality, and prosperity was just a distant



## Financial Focus

By Larry Gibson



**FORMER EL SALVADOR PRESIDENT:** President Francisco Flores Perez, who served as president of El Salvador from 1999 to 2004.

dream. Today, El Salvador is at peace. The country has renewed its commitment to democracy, and economic reform and trade. It is one of the freest, strongest and most stable countries in our

hemisphere."

**Presentation**

President Flores provided his Bahamian audience with an extremely articulate and passionate speech, high-

lighting some of the radical reforms his government had to implement and some of the difficult decisions they had to make. For instance, in order to restore the rule of law, they had to fire 20 per cent of the officers on the police force, who were corrupt.

The Flores administration had an unshakeable commitment to free markets and careful fiscal management. Free market policy initiatives included the privatisation of the banking system, telecommunications, public pensions, electrical distribution and some electrical generation, reduction of import duties, elimination of price controls and enhancing the investment climate through transparent policies.

**Food for thought**

At the end of his presentation, I had the brief opportunity to speak one-on-one with President Flores. I asked him: "How were you able to drive through so many fundamental and radical changes in such a short time?" He paused for a moment and then responded: "Things were so bad, that the people were willing to give anything a try. The sense of hopelessness was pervasive."

The Bahamas has always been fortunate in that we have never really suffered from a political, social or economic catastrophe that severely damaged our economy. To date we have done

a reasonably good job of building credible institutions, although there have been some bumps along the way and there is still much work to be done.

However, we still have some pressing issues such as education and training, crime, land policy, immigration and tax reform...all of which require some new - and even radical - re-thinking, along with an unshakeable commitment to fixing them.

**Conclusion**

In short order, Bahamians will be asked to elect a new government. What the Bahamas desperately needs at this juncture is leadership with vision, experience and the political will to get things done. The Bahamian people are tired of mere rhetoric. So, when those persons seeking election start knocking on your door, ask them these tough questions that give insight into the vision, experience and political will of their respective parties to fix the many wrongs in our society. For those aspirants who cannot articulate their party's position...well, you do not have to keep your door open too long. Make them talk sensibly about the issues. Until next week...

**NB: Larry R. Gibson, a chartered financial analyst, is vice-president - pensions, Colonial Pensions Services (Bahamas), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Colonial Group International, which owns Atlantic Medical Insurance and is a major shareholder of Security & General Insurance Company in the Bahamas.**

**The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Colonial Group International or any of its subsidiary and/or affiliated companies. Please direct any questions or comments to [rlgibson@atlantichouse.com](mailto:rlgibson@atlantichouse.com).**

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Nassau, The Bahamas**

## BUSINESS

# Robin Hood sale 'not motivated' through financial difficulties

## Schaefer to focus on development of Prince Charles location's plaza addition

By ALISON LOWE  
Business Reporter  
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Leveraging their "purchasing ability" to a greater extent was the primary motivation for Robin Hood president Sandy Schaefer, and his US-based partner, to sell-off the food portion of their business, he said yesterday, denying financial difficulties played any part.

Mr Schaefer said that by signing an agreement with Mark Finlayson's family investment vehicle, Trans-Island Traders, to allow the latter to acquire Robin Hood's food business, which will then be serviced via a "long-term supply contract" with Mr Schaefer and his partner, Suresh Khilnani, the pair would be able to "pass on savings to Mark and his customers, and the number of customers who can benefit will be far greater than we have now (at Robin Hood alone)".

"The ultimate benefit is to the Bahamian people," he said of the deal. The contract will see Messrs Khilnani and Schaefer providing goods for both the Robin Hood food interests and the nine-store City Market chain. Mr Schaefer would not reveal the purchase price, saying he would leave this up to Mr Finalyson. "City Markets has my 100 per cent support in making the chain fantastically suc-



MARK FINLAYSON

cessful," he added, noting that the move brings about "consolidation" in the food retail industry in the Bahamas.

While it has been long speculated that Robin Hood was facing financial straits - Mr Schaefer himself confirmed multi-million dollar losses due to a delay in opening the Prince Charles Drive location on time, and later because of roadworks impacting access to the store - the businessman yesterday said the deal made with Trans-Island Traders was not inspired by such considerations.

"The motivating factor was to leverage our purchasing ability. It puts me more into the real estate track (as a landlord to City Markets, which will lease space in its stores to sell food) and the buying which I enjoy more. It allows each of us (Schaefer and Finalyson) to do what we do best and what we both enjoy most," he said.

Asked what plans there

were for further development of the Prince Charles Drive location, on which Robin Hood's second store is located, Mr Schaefer said the buy-out will allow him to "focus (his) energies" on this project.

"We'll break ground as soon as I've secured the rest of the leases I've been negotiating with the sub-tenants (for the new plaza planned), and when I get a sense of when the road will be done," said Mr Schaefer.

In March, Mr Schaefer revealed he had "indefinitely" delayed plans for a 44,000 square foot plaza next door to his Prince Charles Drive supermarket, due to roadworks that had caused a major drop off in sales at the store.

In January, the businessman had projected groundbreaking on the plaza would take place in March. The development was touted as being set to contain a Scotiabank, Sbarros Italian eatery, the "only fine dining" restaurant in eastern New Providence, a medical centre and a 22,000 square foot gym and spa, which will feature squash and racketball courts and more.

Mr Finlayson could not be reached for comment yesterday. The deal only awaits Government (National Economic Council and Investments Board) and Central Bank approvals.

# BOATER FINED \$2,500 OVER 'OUTBOUND DECLARATION'

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office, as this is a very serious offence and we need to discuss it," said Mr Fingland.

The businessman was informed that failing to make an outbound declaration to Customs before leaving the country in a boat can result in up to a \$10,000 fine under the Customs Management Act of 1976. He was ultimately charged \$2,500.

"I couldn't believe it. I have spoken to a lot of people here and in Nassau who do a lot of boating, and not one said they were aware of the law.

"They can't believe it. They said: 'Well, how come they are enforcing the law? We haven't heard anything'....," said Mr Fingland.

## Publish

"I told Customs it's incumbent on them to publish this and stick it in the paper, but they said all the boat captains know."

An experienced Nassau boater, who said he has taken "hundreds of vessels" from the Bahamas to the US and back, told Tribune Business yesterday he was aware of the outbound declaration requirement but believed it was "primarily aimed at commercial vehicles, like mailboats, not private pleasure vessels".

He said he had once made an outbound declaration but found it to be "a pain in the ass", had not made one in years since, and was aware of "zero" other local boaters who had made the declaration.

He added that he had "never been asked" by Customs officials to show evidence of the declaration upon return to the Bahamas.

"I don't know anyone who's gotten one. If they (Customs) are going to start asking for it they ought to put something in the newspaper," said the boater.

Glen Gomez, Comptroller of Customs denied any "clampdown" by the Department, stating that it has "always been the case" that Bahamians or Bahamas residents taking boats out of the Bahamas were required to make an outbound declaration, and that Customs has sought to enforce the law.

In response to the claim that many boaters were not aware of the requirement or were not being asked to show it by Customs officials upon return to Nassau, Mr Gomez said: "Thanks for telling me that", and promised to tell officers to step up their vigilance.

Only those individuals entering the Bahamas on a cruising permit are permitted to leave freely without making a Customs declaration, suggested the Comptroller.

The outbound declaration requires that those taking the boat abroad provide such information to Customs as "where you want to go, who owns the boat, who will be piloting it, how many people are onboard, their names, status in terms of nationality, and if they are taking any goods they need to declare," said Mr Gomez.

He confirmed that the fine for non-compliance can be up to \$10,000.

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## BUSINESS

# RoyalStar profits 20% 'below expectations'

Public finances tipping point 'in year or two'

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to the Washington-based IMF. This is what Mr Smith wants the Bahamas to avoid and, expanding on this theme to Tribune Business, he said: "Sooner or later we might end up having to compromise our independence in terms of determining priorities."

"If we are to get an IMF programme, they will end up prescribing the medicine. We have been fortunate in not having to go down that road, and we don't want to start that now."

With Standard & Poor's (S&P), the international credit rating agency, forecasting that the Bahamas will run general government deficits of around 3.6 per cent of GDP between 2011-2013, more than double the 1.5 per cent average between 2003-2007, the prospects for reducing the national debt and getting the public finances on a downward trend in the short-term appear limited.

"It's an essential task that will be faced by any government over the next three-five years," Mr Smith said. "I think we ought to kind of establish practical but achievable targets, and these ought to be multi-year."

He added that if the Bahamas started off with a fiscal deficit of 4 per cent of GDP, it should seek to reduce this by one percentage point per year, so that by the start of the third year the deficit was halved - standing at 2 per cent of GDP.

Sounding a cautionary note for this year's Budget, which Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham will unveil tomorrow, Mr Smith said the outcome for the 2010-2011 fiscal year was distorted by the large one-off inflows - totalling around \$350 million - from the Bahamas Telecommunications Company (BTC) sale, plus the BORCO and Baha Mar transactions.

"Unless we have made some fundamental changes in the revenue and expenditure side, and I don't think we can in the short-term..... if that [one-off inflows - or anything significant doesn't happen in 2011-2012, we could be looking at a GFS deficit in the range of 4-5 per cent," Mr Smith said.

"Debt servicing is becoming a very large part of that number, and it's becoming increasingly difficult to reschedule debt because a lot of it is held by foreigners."

The former finance minister acknowledged that it was "a matter of concern" that Budget revenue estimates by successive PLP and FNM administrations appear to be overly optimistic when measured against actual outturn. Case in point was the 2010-2011 Budget, where the Ingraham administration estimated it would earn \$200 more in revenues (excluding the BTC sale) than in the previous fiscal year, believing that new and increased taxes would offset the recession's impact.

Based on the mid-year Budget, that does not appear to have happened, and Mr Smith said problems arose if spending was plans were based on incorrect revenue estimates. If less revenue than anticipated was coming in, the fiscal deficit could rapidly expand if this was not picked up and spending adjustments made.

"Getting them right is essential to a credible Budget," Mr Smith said. "Unless we get this thing right or adjust in time, it's going to be off and likely push the deficit beyond what was planned."

An additional problem was created by the push from various ministers and government ministries/departments for Budget funding for special and 'pet' projects. If no consensus was reached on what could be given up, "the only way to make the Budget more reasonable is to push the estimates up, and if that happens we're doing ourselves a disservice".

Mr Smith said many such requests were "legitimate", conceding that ministries such as Health and Education "always get less than they need, so when these requests come in it's very difficult to reject them."

"It's fundamental economics, and making choices against a backdrop of limited resource and unlimited wants."

On the spending side, Mr Smith said that in the drive to eliminate waste and inefficiency, that inevitably meant focusing on the largest Budget items - the civil service salaries and wages that accounted for 55-60 per cent of total recurrent spending.

Ways needed to be found to reduce or restrict the public sector's growth, or outsource certain functions, Mr Smith said. The "unrestrained" growth of civil servant numbers was unsustainable, he added.

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coverage. And, with vehicle values dropping, sums insured also fell.

Mr Watson told Tribune Business that while "the vehicle count was up", meaning that the number of autos insured by RoyalStar actually increased year-over-year, motor premium was down.

And, in the Cayman Islands, where 20 per cent of RoyalStar's business is written, property premium rates "were down significantly, so we reduced our exposure in Cayman". As a result, property premium income fell by 9.5 per cent year-over-year, although profitability was not impacted due to the "very marginal" return from the Cayman Islands.

Net claims in 2010 were "higher than normal", the RoyalStar managing director added, pointing to increased thefts of Honda Accords and similar vehicles in the Bahamas, plus a claim related to a traffic fatality in the Cayman Islands. Some 80 per cent of the company's business is written in the Bahamas.

While 2010 may have come in below forecast, RoyalStar is pushing ahead with the construction of its new \$5 million head office at the eastern end of JFK Drive. Mr Watson said work had already begun, and the insurer expected to move it its new fully-owned premises by the 2012 third quarter.

"Moving to our new premises will be another major milestone in the

**"I don't think anyone could have imagined that in eight years we'd be in the position we are now, taking into account that during that period we have had hurricanes Frances, Jeanne, Ivan and Wilma, which cost us significant amounts of money."**

Steve Watson

progress of RoyalStar Assurance, which has grown from a company with \$10 million of capital operating from rented premises in 2003 to a company with over \$40 million of capital operating from its own premises in 2012," Mr Watson said in the company's annual report.

## Dividends

He told Tribune Business that in the hurricane-free years since 2005, RoyalStar had made collective profits of \$31 million, and had paid its current owners dividends of between \$15-\$16 million since they took control in 2003.

And, despite the capital returns to shareholders, RoyalStar had doubled its net shareholder equity from just over \$20 million in 2005 to \$40.528 million at 2010 year-end, breaking the \$30 million market in

2008. "Between \$4-\$5 million a year when there's no hurricane, that's acceptable," Mr Watson said, telling Tribune Business it was "vital" for Bahamian insurers to build up retained earnings, capital and cash reserves in hurricane-free years, and that "we've demonstrated the ability to do that".

"I can't speak for my directors, but my personal view is that we've exceeded all expectations, and that's probably shared by everyone," Mr Watson said.

"I don't think anyone could have imagined that in eight years we'd be in the position we are now, taking into account that during that period we have had hurricanes Frances, Jeanne, Ivan and Wilma, which cost us significant amounts of money."

"Taking into account the financial crisis, it's not been smooth sailing, and to be in the position we're in despite troubled waters has

exceeded expectations by a significant amount."

Looking ahead to 2011, Mr Watson said he expected RoyalStar's "top line", in terms of gross written premiums, "stabilise and possibly pick up", due to the hardening of reinsurance rates as a result of numerous recent catastrophes, such as the Japan earthquake and tsunami.

"Modest growth" on the motor premium account was also anticipated amid signs of recovery in the new vehicle market, Mr Watson added, but the ultimate outcome - as ever - depends on whether the Bahamas is hit by a major hurricane or not.

Breaking down the company's 2010 performance, Mr Watson said 73 per cent of RoyalStar's profits came from underwriting. This generated \$3.03 million for the bottom line, with the remaining \$1.097 million consisting of investment income.

Franklyn Wilson, RoyalStar's chairman, said the company generated a "respectable" return on equity of 12 per cent during 2010.

"Our company has never been stronger or better positioned," Mr Wilson said. "This extends to an increasing capital base, significant liquidity, a fantastic team of seasoned professionals as managers, respect within the reinsurance markets, a group of experienced leaders as directors and intermediaries, who conform with the demands of disciplined underwriting."

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## BUSINESS

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even more vulnerable to seeing their profits "vaporise", locking them into an unsustainable "loss-making" situation.

As the Government continues to weigh the request for an increase in petroleum retailers' price-controlled margins, the Minister of State for the Environment, Phenton Neymour, suggested yesterday he has recognised the marina operators' plight.

"One of the specific challenges of the Marina Operators (who sell fuel) is that most of their business is based on credit, which significantly affects their margins. They don't have a cash business. Overall, the arguments in regard to (upward adjust of margins permitted on) diesel are much stronger than that in relation to gasoline," added Mr Neymour.

He met with the Bahamas Petroleum Retailers Association (BPRA), which has been particularly vocal about the financial difficulties faced by gas service stations servicing motor vehicles, and representatives of the Marina Operators of the Bahamas (MOB) a week-and-a-half ago to further discuss concerns harboured by both.

Tribune Business understands that the BPRA and the MOB may have received a further audience with the Prime Minister to discuss the issue, although this could not be confirmed yesterday. It is still unclear when the Government may make a decision on the "margin relief" request.

Marina operators told Tribune Business yesterday that without an adjustment in the amount they are allowed to add to the selling price of a gallon of diesel, they may soon no longer be able to supply it, meaning that boaters will be without refuelling options in the Bahamas.

"When you have customers buying diesel using their credit cards, that's when our profits really vaporise," suggested John Bethell, president of the MOB.

This would affect both local and international boaters, and the industries such as fisheries and tourism that rely upon them. The marina operators find themselves in an even more tricky situation than the land-based fuel retailers, they suggested.

Because of the nature of their customer base - itinerant boaters buying large quantities of diesel on credit - they are more likely to make a loss on a gallon of fuel sold.

This is because for each credit card transaction they are paying 4 per cent of the dollar amount sold, further cutting into profits which have diminished, as the price-controlled margin remains fixed even as the wholesale cost of diesel has

# Marinas see fuel profits 'vaporise'

risen dramatically. The mark-up permitted to be added by fuel retailers per gallon of diesel is also significantly lower than that on gas, at 19 cents compared to the 44 cents on gas.

Meanwhile, as Family Island marina-based fuel retailers do not always shift as much fuel in a short space of time as land-based Nassau retailers, they more often find themselves in the position of having to sell a batch of fuel bought for a higher price at a lower price per gallon if they have not been able to sell it by the time the Government lowers the legally mandated price for which they are able to sell it at the pump.

And while only a small number of land-based retailers have gone this route, Mr Bethell, an owner of several marinas, noted that there is a greater potential for retailers who serve a vehicular customer base to consider doing away with the labour component of their operation by going "self serve" than there is for marina operators. Boats refuelling at dock pumps more often need assistance, and this cost will continue to remain for marina operators, he suggested.

## Supports

Steve Kappeler, president of the Out Islands Promotions Board, and general manager of the Cape Eleuthera resort and marina, said he fully supports calls for an adjustment in the margins retailers can add to a gallon of fuel, as various factors have seen retailers left in a loss-making situation.

"There's no way we can continue to fuel the Out Islands' demand (for fuel) at a loss, and that's just the credit card fees. That doesn't take into consideration that when fuel prices drop we are required by law to sell it lower than the price we paid for it," Mr Kappeler said.

"For example, I may have just taken 10,000 gallons of inventory, which I bought at \$5.50 a gallon, and was allowed to add 19 cents to each gallon, so you sell it at \$5.69.

"Then you are waiting for a few boats and vehicles to come along, and now a week later the price of fuel has dropped, maybe to \$4.50, and so now the price set by your vendor is lower. By law I am required to sell it at that price.

"I can't tell you how many times we've been forced to sell it under the price I bought it for. The government-based regulations has put these operators in this dilemma. There's no way anyone can keep operating at a fixed loss."

The alternative - for Family Island fuel retailers who service the boating community to stop selling gas or diesel - would mean the end of critical sports-fishing and yachting industry events.

In Nassau, Oswald Moore, president of the Bahamas Petroleum Retailers Association, predicted diesel would become a "scarce" commodity at service stations with retailers unable or unwilling to put together the large upfront cash requirement to buy the fuel for so little return.

"The last time we got an increase was back in 2002.

"At that time, gas was \$2.67 per gallon and diesel was \$1.62.

"At current prices today, instead of costing us \$20,000 per load of gas, we are paying \$48,000. For diesel, instead of \$6,000 per load then, it costs almost \$20,000 now.

"You're getting 3.8 cents on the dollar for diesel. That's not a good investment," said Mr Moore.

Mr Neymour yesterday said the Government is well aware of the challenges facing retailers, including the rising cost of fuel, utilities, security costs involved with transferring cash, and the length of time since an increase in the margin was previously approved.

"So they are having some financial challenges, and one has to take into consideration what is necessary for their position again to be a position of profitability to sustain it.

"We recognise that as a result of our geographic layout, retailers are an essential part of life, and so it is important we ensure their business is one that is maintained," Mr Neymour said.

However, he said these considerations must be weighed against the "impact any increase will have on customers at this time".

The BPRA has asked for a 68 per cent increase in their gas margin (44 to 74 cents) and a 145 per cent increase in their margin on diesel (19 to 47 cents).

# AIRLINE TARGETS 3 NEW ROUTES

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launch its four-times-a-week Marsh Harbour to Fort Lauderdale route via a 33-seater Saab 340, aiming to further open up the Abaco market through greater load factors and reduced ticket prices.

He added that the airline, which has been in rapid expansion mode, was also looking to launch a charter service between Abaco and Freeport on May 26, plus a four-times-a-week Nassau-West Palm Beach service come June 9.

"We're just trying to connect the island," Captain Butler said of the Abaco-Fort Lauderdale service. Noting that the route was currently serviced largely by private planes featuring nine seats or less, he explained that with its greater seating capacity and higher load factors, Sky Bahamas was able to offer lower ticket prices.

Having seen at first-hand the difficulty potential visitors were having in getting to Abaco from Fort Lauderdale, Captain Butler said: "I see the hotels in Abaco, asking me: 'Will you please fly to Fort Lauderdale!' We need flights from Fort Lauderdale and bigger planes people are asking for."

Increasing numbers of Bahamians were also travelling to shop in Fort Lauderdale, a destination becoming a major airline hub, because it was relatively cheaper than Miami.

As for the proposed Abaco-Freeport charters, he explained that these were designed to allow the former's residents, who did not have US visas, to pre-clear on Grand Bahama before continuing on to the US.

"We're looking to expand to West Palm Beach with direct flights from Nassau four times a week. We're just waiting now. Our goal is to start that on June 9," Captain Butler told Tribune Business.

"We're still growing at a phenomenal rate. Our growth rate we saw in December, January, February, March and the first two weeks of April was 40 per cent. This week we've seen it taper off, coming back to what we'd normally expect for last year. But based on bookings going forward, from Memorial Day weekend we're at full capacity again."

Sky Bahamas' annual revenues are now around \$12 million, with load factors for round trips and one-way trips standing at an average of 72 per cent and 91 per cent, respectively.

Captain Butler added that Sky Bahamas was currently undergoing a technology upgrade, having "outgrown" its computer system and web page.

"Customer loyalty is what we're really building now," he told Tribune Business. "We'll be rolling out a Customer Loyalty Programme here in a big way on June 14."

Having gone through a fairly rapid period of growth to a company featuring 102 permanent and seven part-time staff, and a six-plane fleet with a seventh on the way, Captain Butler said Sky Bahamas was moving into a consolidation fleet, ensuring it delivered "superior service" and met customer expectations.

He also shrugged off allegations made against Sky Bahamas in an e-mail widely circulated to the media, telling Tribune Business he was focused on making the airline "the best company in the Bahamas".

"Sky Bahamas is definitely doing what it can to build this country, develop our people. We understand people do these things. It's most unfortunate. I'm not going to sit and quantify what's partly true and not true, but my name was spelled correctly," Captain Butler said in response.

"Whoever it is spent a lot of time coming up with a beautiful movie story."

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- Investigating and querying outstanding items on reconciliations

### Core competencies:

- An Associate's Degree or equivalent with experience in a banking environment
- Series 7 designation would be an asset
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite
- Strong customer service, mathematical & organizational skills with an eye for details
- Good knowledge of banking/securities transactions
- Knowledge of money laundering prevention principles and procedures

All interested and qualified applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to the attention of:

Human Resources  
Ansbacher (Bahamas) Limited  
Nassau, Bahamas  
E-mail: [yacancies@ansbacher.bs](mailto:yacancies@ansbacher.bs)

The deadline for all applications is Wednesday May 25, 2011

# health

## BENEATH HER SKIN

*Ravyn Deveaux's Story*

By JEFFARAH GIBSON  
Tribune Features Writer

A STORY that appeared in *The Tribune* two weeks ago titled "Fundraiser For Bereaved Girl With Skin Disorder, would kindle a wave of sadness and a deep sense of empathy for eight year old Ravyn Deveaux.

At eight years old, how does one cope with having a serious skin disorder, being unable to see, and dealing with the death of your mother? Well, as unfortunate as her circumstance is, Ravyn copes by turning up the volume to a Justin Bieber single, repeating the lyrics verbatim, getting on the floor and doing the splits.

Or if she is not feeling the "Beebs" at that moment, she settles for a slice of chocolate cake which is by far her most favourite pastry ever.

Ravyn is not who she appears to be in print or in the news footage taken of her in Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Fort Lauderdale lying in a hospital bed.

Beneath the scars on her skin, there is a fighter living inside of her and she leaves no room for anyone to feel pity for her.

A few months ago, she developed Steven Johnson Syndrome which was caused by a reaction to medication she had been prescribed for her seizures. Two weeks after she was diagnosed in Nassau, she had to be airlifted to the Florida hospital as lesions covered 60 per cent of her skin.

It was her ballet instructor who first

noticed that something was odd during practices.

"Her ballet teacher said to us that she was losing her balance and she was falling down in practice. That was very strange because Ravyn has been dancing for so long and for her to fall that meant something was wrong," her father, Louis Deveaux told *Tribune Health*.

Before being airlifted to Joe Dimaggio Children's Hospital in Fort Lauderdale her parents searched for hospitals across South America and the United States where Ravyn could be treated, and finally had no choice but to have her airlifted to Florida at an enormous expense.

"We spent as much time as we could with Ravyn at the hospital. Sometimes we slept right in the hospital bed with her. At times we didn't even know the night from the day. I would stay for two weeks and then my wife would stay for a couple more weeks to be with her. It was a lot to deal with," Mr Deveaux said.

### Challenges

Ravyn returned home in February following ten weeks of treatment and two surgeries. However, her challenges did not end just there. Her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and received her first round of chemotherapy treatment in March but died on April 4. She was buried on what would have been her 48th birthday.

Despite her challenges, Ravyn has remained in remarkably good spirit. She smiles when she can, laughs when she can and is filled with glee.

"Ravyn is always in high spirits. But

when she first heard about her mother she was very sad. After awhile she began asking questions and she seems to be coping with her mother's passing better than the rest of us. That was a very difficult time for us but we gained strength from her," Mr Deveaux explained.

Ravyn still requires skin treatments and eye treatments at the Baskin Palmer Eye Institute in Florida where specialists are helping her to restore the health of her eyes.

Her treatments will continue for another year, and her father hopes as she recovers fully, Ravyn's eyesight will return. Her skin is now almost fully healed, except for one patch of discolouration.

While she is recovering, Ravyn intends to take on number of ventures. She hopes to start dancing again, and swimming is also on her to do list.

Because Steven Johnson's syndrome is a very rare skin disorder her father hopes to raise awareness. In Ravyn's case there was no way it could have been predicted or prevented, but the drugs she needed to slow progression of the disease were not available in the country, and therefore her late diagnosis and lack of access to medication made her condition worse.

So far the cost of Ravyn's treatment has exceeded \$1 million, and Mr Deveaux is concerned another child with similar problems may not be able to afford treatment. Therefore he wants to establish a foundation that could help them.

The family just recently held an event to raise fund for medical expenses. Persons interested in donating to the Ravyn Deveaux Foundation can contact 323-5144 or 456-1292.



Ravyn Deveaux

## RAYVN DEVEAUX FOUNDATION TO DONATE COMPUTERS TO SCHOOL OF THE BLIND



The Ravyn Deveaux Foundation along with members from Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity INC visited the Erin H Gilmour School of the Blind last week.

The Foundation is intending to donate a number of computers to the school as well.

Pictured from left to right front to back are students Ashley Deveaux, Lacheka Minnis, Ravyn Deveaux, Alex Russell, Ashanti Armbrister, Oscar Pratt, president of Alpha Phi Alpha INC, Wallace Rolle, member of Alpha Phi Alpha, Maria Deveaux, principal at the School of the Blind, Louis Deveaux, president of the Ravyn Deveaux Foundation, and Keith Cleare Alpha Phi Alpha member.

## Mother-daughter team among Get Well Bahamas top finishers

LOSING weight is challenging, but more bearable when one has support from friends and family. So imagine the level of performance achieved when a loved one joins you on a journey to wellness - sweating along with you, fighting the same cravings. The results can be amazing.

For fifty-three year old mother of seven, Bernice Munnings, and her daughter, Reann Kelly-King, the results were just that. During the commencement ceremony for Phase 1 of the National Insurance Board's Get Well Bahamas Challenge, Reann walked away with the second place prize, losing a percentage body weight of 15, while her mother came in a close third, with a body percentage weight loss of 14.1 per cent. Before and after photos of the pair reveal a noticeable weight loss change that Bernice said could not have been achieved without support.

"[Reann] would be there pushing me like 'Mummy let's go' even when I said, oh I worked so hard today. But she was there for me. And I was there for her too... We pushed.

I instilled in my head that this is for us. Now, I don't feel like I'm 53 years old. I feel like I'm a teenager again," said Ms Munnings, her face glowing with excitement after her win was revealed at the GWB closing ceremony on Wednesday night at Worker's House.

When Bernice heard about the Get Well Bahamas Challenge from a friend, she knew that her daughter could have benefited from the programme as well. They applied and were accepted into the three-month wellness coaching and personal training session along with 38 other "challengers." Winning at the end of the Challenge is merely the icing on top of the cake for this team. They went in with the goal to do more than what was required in order to lose a significant amount of weight and be healthier.

Bernice weighed 277 pounds and suffered from high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Reann weighed 248 pounds and had a daily routine that involved working, eating, and watching TV.

While challengers were required to attend personal fit-



**GWB WINNERS:** (left to right) Third place winner, Reann Kelly-King; Tami Francis, Manager, National Prescription Drug Plan; First place winner, Dinah Knowles; Dr Algernon Cargill, Director, National Insurance Board; and third place winner, Bernice Munnings. Prizes included year supplies of Nautilus Water, gym memberships from Body Zone Fitness and Jemi Health and Wellness, gift certificates from Solomon's Super Center, clothing from Fine Threads, Bonneville Bones, Adam and Eve, and Sizes Women's Full-Figured Fashions. TCL Photo Wendell Cleare.

ness training three times per week, Bernice would also work-out on her lunch break and after work. Reann made sure that she had a workout every day, whether in the morning or the evening.

Of all that Reann has achieved during the three-

month session, she is proud that her tastes are changing. During the first ten days of the programme, Challengers were placed on a cleansing diet of fruits and vegetables and water. Then the Challengers were placed on a diet rich in grains and fibre, further detoxing their

bodies. However, six weeks into the programme, Reann decided to eat at a popular local chicken shack. Her stomach disagreed with that decision.

"My stomach wasn't used to the grease anymore, so I couldn't take it. Now, I cannot tolerate that food. So I know that that kind of food is not something that I need or something that I desire anymore. I find that beating cravings will not be difficult or impossible if your heart and your mind are in it and if you know that it's a necessity in order to have a longer life. You make that mind change, then your behaviours change. It's like the Word says, be transformed by the renewing of your mind," said Reann.

Through renewing her thoughts about eating and exercise, Bernice has achieved a better quality of life. She has gone from "walking around like a time bomb" with recurring chest pains and shortness of breath to completing a 5-mile walk with her fellow Challengers. She now has more energy to work with her special needs children at Sandi-

lands Hospital and her two youngest children. She is also able to wear clothes that make her feel young again, much like the stylish pink-patterned top that showed off her toned shoulders at the closing ceremony. Bernice is at 236 pounds now, and proud of her 41-pound loss.

In a culture that prizes the 'solid' shape of a woman, Reann is happy that she and her mother can be both sexy and healthy. She noted that having a "good shape" doesn't mean that one is healthy. So she advises women to focus on adapting a healthy lifestyle rather than just aiming for a certain body shape.

Bernice and Reann plan to continue their weight loss through exercise and healthy eating. Both women expressed gratitude for a programme like Get Well Bahamas which offers free wellness coaching.

"This programme has taught us a great deal not only about how to live, but how to live better," said Reann. At 205 pounds, Reann aims to be fewer than 175 pounds in coming weeks.

## WOMAN

# The elderly and their oral health

THERE ARE growing proportions of elderly persons all over the world. One common chronological criterion for the term elderly is an age of 65 or above. Of note, amongst the elderly population there are a larger number of females. It is consistent with females having a greater life expectancy than males.

A majority of persons over 65 years of age have one or more chronic diseases; are bed ridden; walk with difficulty or are house bound. Nevertheless, the elderly are often reluctant to demand attention especially if they fear hospitalisation and further loss of their independence.

The maladies of the elderly can affect all parts of the body and body systems. The mouth is no exception. Medications used to treat these maladies sometime can accentuate other health problems or can react with each other and predispose to bad drug interactions.

Many elderly persons have few or no remaining teeth and an even larger number have disease of the gums (gingivitis) and their supporting structures (periodontitis). As persons age, there is a natural decrease in saliva production and this may contribute to a high level of root cavities.

Cavities on the top part of teeth also occur, but when gums pull away from the teeth (as a result of gum disease), the softer root becomes exposed and is more susceptible to bacteria assault. With access to these softer surfaces to dissolve, bacteria use food debris to produce acid over time, to create cavities. Impaired saliva production also predisposes to more mouth fungal infections and this can be a nuisance to the elderly patient, especially those who are hospitalised.

Medications like antipsychotics and antidepressants which are often used to manage mental disorders, sometimes add to the decreased



## KEEPING YOUR MOUTH ALIVE

By ANDRE CLARKE

production of saliva, creating dry mouth and its associated problems.

Poor nutrition of the elderly not only affects the body, but the mouth as well. It retards the immune system and can leave the individual susceptible to mouth infections. Poor nutrition will also reduce wound healing capabilities and in general, it will further retard any already retarded physiology of the mouth.

The prospect of developing oral cancer is very high in the elderly, as with age the chances of mistakes in cell division are high. Some studies have identified the occurrence of mouth lesions (abnormal structural changes) in the elderly, to be as high as 40 per cent.

Primarily, the lesions include fibrous lumps and ulcers and are not life threatening, but the potential for serious lesions to occur is ever present. The chance of potentially serious lesions to occur and even oral cancer, is higher in the elderly who smoke or/and drink, especially if they have been doing so for many years.

## Facial pain

Particularly common in the elderly also, is atypical facial pain. The pain can be related to depressive illnesses; migraines, trigeminal neuralgia (nerve pain) and viral infections. All facial pain complaints should be investigated by a dental healthcare provider.

The dentist is important not only in managing the diverse mouth ailments of the elderly, but also in supporting morale

and contributing to adequate nutrition. Functionally independent elderly patients, with no serious medical problem can easily be treated in a general dental practice. However, elderly functionally dependent persons may need domiciliary dental care with portable dental equipment. The hospital environment is reserved for those persons requiring dental treatment with significant medical problems.

We are all aging daily. If you are fortunate, you are already 65 years old or above and I implore you not to neglect your mouth health. If you are unfortunate, you have more birthdays before you can be called elderly. When you are 65 years old or above, your mouth health should be as important to you then, as it is to you now.

It is important not to forget the aged amongst us and not to allow them to neglect their body or mouth health. If you have a parent or grandparent that needs special care dentistry, do not hesitate to arrange such with your dental health provider. The elderly are not a burden, they are you tomorrow.

• This article is for informational purposes only. It is not intended and may not be treated as, a substitute for professional medical/dental advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of a physician or dental professional with any questions you may have regarding a medical/dental condition. Never disregard professional medical/dental advice or delay in seeking it because of a purely informational publication."

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# What your feet say about your health - Conclusion

The Bahamas joins hands with the International Federation of Podiatrists in declaring May to be 'World Foot Health Awareness Month'.

Today's column represents the conclusion of a multi-part series on red flags for foot health problems.

The foot is an excellent communicator and often, the messages are obvious. Take a few moments to read the signs as we continue to highlight the red flags.

"You can detect everything from diabetes to nutritional deficiencies just by examining the feet," says Jane Andersen, Doctor of Podiatry Medicine and president of the American Association of Women Podiatrists and a spokeswoman for the American Podiatric Medical Association.

The feet provide an abundance of insightful data. A pair of feet contain 52 bones, which is more than a quarter of all the 206 bones of the body. Each foot has 33 joints; 100 tendons; muscles and ligaments; and countless nerves and blood vessels that link all the way to the heart, spine and brain. This is an indication of how important nature regarded the foot when she designed it.



## FOOT SOLUTIONS

By BERNADETTE GIBSON

Unresolved foot problems can have unexpected consequences. Untreated foot pain often leads a person to move less and gain weight or to shift balance in unnatural ways thereby increasing the chance of falling and breaking a bone.

For those of you who are reading this for the first time, all of the red flags highlighted in the previous articles are being recaptured below. These red flags are messages being sent by the foot to say that something may be happening with your health.

We conclude this week with the final two of eighteen red flags listed below:

### RED FLAGS:

1. TOENAILS WITH SLIGHTLY SUNKEN, SPOON-SHAPED INDENTA-

### TIONS

2. HAIRLESS FEET OR TOES
3. FREQUENT FOOT GRAMPING (CHARLEY HORSES)
4. COLD FEET
5. THICK, YELLOW, DOWNRIGHT UGLY TOENAILS
6. A SUDDENLY ENLARGED, SCARY-LOOKING BIG TOE
7. NUMBNESS IN BOTH FEET /SORE TOE JOINTS
8. SORE TOE JOINTS
9. PITTED TOENAILS
10. BEING UNABLE TO RAISE THE FOOT UPWARD FROM THE HEEL
11. DRY, FLAKY SKIN
12. TOES THAT TURN PATRIOTIC COLORS
13. FEET THAT ARE REALLY PAINFUL TO WALK ON
14. TOES THAT BUMP UPWARD AT THE TIPS
15. SHOOTING PAIN IN THE HEEL
16. PHEE-UUUUW! SMELLY FEET

**RED FLAG 17: A sore that won't heal on the bottom of the foot**

**What it means:** This is a major clue to diabetes. Elevated blood glucose levels lead to nerve damage in the feet. When this happens, minor scrapes, cuts or irritations caused by

pressure or friction often go unnoticed; especially by someone who's unaware he or she has the disease. If this goes untreated, these ulcers can lead to infections, and even amputation.

**More Clues:** Oozing, foul-smelling cuts are especially suspected, because they've probably been there awhile. Other symptoms of diabetes include persistent thirst, frequent urination, increased fatigue, blurry vision, extreme hunger, and weight loss.

**What to Do:** Go to a doctor immediately for a diabetes evaluation and have the ulcer treated. Diabetics need to inspect their feet daily (older people or the obese should have someone do this for them or purchase a foot inspection hand mirror) and see a healthcare professional at least every three months.

**RED FLAG 18: Old Shoes**

**What it Means:** Danger! You're a walking health bomb if your everyday shoes are more than a couple of years old or if walking or running shoes have more than 350-500 miles

on them. Old shoes lack the support feet need, and they wear out faster than most people think.

**More clues:** Blisters (too tight), bunions (too narrow), heel pain (not enough support). If you're having any kind of foot trouble, there is at least a 50/50 chance your ill-fitting footwear is to blame.

**What to do:** Go shoe shopping and have a professional fitting.

• Bernadette D. Gibson, a Board Certified & Licensed Podiatrist, is the proprietor of Foot Solutions, a health and wellness franchise that focuses on foot care and proper shoe fit, located in the Trinity Plaza, West Bay Street, Nassau. Bahamas [www.footsolutions.com/nassau](http://www.footsolutions.com/nassau)

"The views expressed are those of the author and does not necessarily represent those of Foot Solutions Incorporated or any of its subsidiary and/or affiliated companies. Please direct any questions or comments to [nassau@footsolutions.com](mailto:nassau@footsolutions.com) or 322-FOOT (3668).

# Common questions about canine and feline reproduction

## WHAT AGE IS BEST TO SPAY MY FEMALE CAT OR DOG?

Spaying is the removal of female reproductive organs- the ovaries and uterus. Spaying of animals decreases the likelihood of unwanted litters, decreases the incidence of mammary tumor in older dogs and cats, decreases the incidence of uterine disease, most notably PYOMETRA and the decreased incidence of sexually dimorphic behaviours. It is my professional opinion and recommendation that dogs and cats should be spayed after three months of age but before the onset of their first estrus cycle. Thus I recommend 5-6 months is an ideal age to do so.

## WHAT IS THE BEST AGE TO CASTRATE MY MALE DOG OR CAT?

Castration is the removal of a male's reproductive organs- the testicles.

Castrating dogs and cats will decrease the incidence of sexually dimorphic behaviour and decrease

incidence of disease of the prostate and testes. The sexually dimorphic behaviours best controlled by castration are mounting, roaming, urine marking and aggression. The only significant disadvantage of castration is weight gain, crucial ligament injuries, and certain cancer like bone (osteosarcoma) and blood (hemangiosarcoma). In cats we see an increase in the incidence of urethral obstruction.

I professionally recommend that dogs and cats should be castrated at 5-6 months of age.

## WHAT ARE THE NORMAL PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS FINDINGS AT VARIOUS AGES IN PUPPIES AND KITTENS?

- Normal rectal temperature varies by age averaging 96 degrees Fahrenheit in the first 7 days of life, 98 degrees to 100 degrees Fahrenheit from 7 to 21 days and gradually achieving adult values by 7 weeks of age.
- The eyelids open at about 10 to 14 days on average
- The ear canals are closed until

14 to 21 days

- Teeth erupt in a predictable manner, allowing use of dentition to determine age. First teeth erupt at 2-3 weeks.
- The most common disorders of the skin are fleas and DERMATOPHYTOSIS (ringworm)
- Puppies and kittens start crawling at 7 to 14 days. They start walking and urinating and defecating spontaneously at 14 to 21 days.

## WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF FAILURE TO THRIVE IN PUPPIES AND KITTENS.

Puppies and kittens should be seen if they are not gaining weight. The owners should weigh them at birth and every day thereafter. Environmental causes are hypothermia, hyperthermia, environmental toxins and maternal factors. Genetic causes are developed mentally abnormally like cleft palate. Infectious causes such as bacteria and viruses are always a problem. Internal parasites like hookworm, roundworms, coccidia and giardia are a big concern.



## WOMAN

# You GO Girl!

A spotlight on the talented women in our community



## DAZZLING K'LYSA COMPETES IN THE MISS TALENTED TEEN PAGEANT

By CARA BRENNEN-BETHEL  
Tribune Features Editor

**K**'Lysa Knowles loves to dance and this summer, the 15-year-old St Augustine's student will get the chance of a lifetime when she goes to the International Music Camp in North Dakota for one week to train with other dancers from around the world.

For K'Lysa who feels that dance is "the best way of expressing myself," it is a dream come true.

K'Lysa won the trip when she placed first runner up in the 2011 Miss Talented Teen pageant last month, where she wowed judges with a fantastic performance of "Don't Rain on My Parade."

In a recent interview with Tribune Woman, she said that she is very excited by the opportunity.

She said that she had tried out for a position at the Alvin Ailey Dance Camp in New York but did not make it.

"So this is another chance for international exposure," she said.

K'Lysa has been dancing for 12 years. She studied at the Eurothymic Studio for ten years, one year at Dance Bahamas and is in her second year at the National Dance School. In 2009, she served as an apprentice dancer with the National Dance Company of the Bahamas when they visited Scotland to take part in the Aberdeen Youth Festival.

"It was really fun. I enjoyed dancing on many different stages for people from all over the world. I now have a best friend in Norway."

She says that she would like to become a kinesiology instructor when she finishes school.

K'Lysa said that her experience in the pageant allowed her a chance

at personal growth.

"I decided to enter because I wanted to showcase my talent and be an ambassador for my country. It was not exactly as I expected, there was a lot of training in how to walk and talk and act on stage.

"It's not a beauty pageant, but there is some form of modeling involved, and they really focus on talent. I would tell girls that they shouldn't be afraid to showcase what God has given them."

For K'Lysa, the hardest part of the pageant was the question and answer segment where she was asked about her experience being co-captain of her cheerleading team.

The biggest lesson she learnt was dealing with all the different personalities of the contestants which she says is an excellent life lesson because, "you never know what type of people you will have to cope with in life."



K'Lysa Knowles

## Female directors in the spotlight at Cannes

CANNES, France  
Associated Press

IT'S A good year for women at the Cannes Film Festival. But not everyone is cheering just yet.

Four of the 20 films in the festival's main competition are by female directors, a record number — and better than last year's total of zero.

It's still a small minority, however, and in the festival's 64 years, only one film by a woman has won the top prize: Jane Campion's "The Piano" in 1993.

Campion says there is still a long way to go.

"I think, weirdly enough, progress in the arts for women is really slow," Campion said after a screening of Julia Leigh's Cannes entry "Sleeping Beauty," a film she has championed. "This festival has been very kind to me, but I'm still the only woman that's ever won the Palme d'Or."

Films from female directors at this year's festival include Lynne Ramsay's mother-son tragedy "We Need to Talk About Kevin"; Australian director Leigh's "Sleeping Beauty," an icy film about a student who becomes an object of male erotic desire; and "Polisse," a vibrant movie about a Paris police child-protection squad from actress-turned-director Maiwenn.

Screening Tuesday is "Hanezu No Tsuki," a film about ancient and modern life in the Asuka area of Japan by Naomi Kawase, a former winner of Cannes' second-place Grand Prize.

If the three films already screened have anything in common, it's a willingness to tackle tough and intimate subjects, from child violence to pedophilia to sexual exploitation.

"We Need to Talk About Kevin" has met with the widest praise and is a favorite to win prizes when Cannes trophies are announced Sunday. Most critics approved of its unflinching and inventive depiction of a woman struggling to cope, first with parenthood and then with an unspeakable act of violence by her son.

In "Polisse," the blend of pathos, melodrama and humor was not to all tastes, and some viewers found "Sleeping Beauty" contrived and exploitative. Its central character spends a great deal of time naked and unconscious, while elderly men enact their fantasies on her.

Campion thinks the negative reaction may partly result from the comparative rarity of women's voices in cinema.

"We really need women's voices out there," she said. "People that may have problems with this film, they are just not used to a strong feminist voice being shown on the screen."

Maiwenn, who goes by just one name, said a director's gender shouldn't be relevant to discussion of their films.

"I'd hate to think that my film was selected because there was a quota for women," she said. "I know my film was chosen because people like the film, not because I'm a woman."

But she conceded that "it's hard to be a female director on the set."

"It's a very masculine role," he said. "We have to cope with people putting up



ACTRESS Tilda Swinton, right, poses with director Lynne Ramsay for the screening of We Need to Talk About Kevin at the 64th international film festival, in Cannes, southern France. (AP)

the funds who may be more comfortable working with men than with women."

A walk around Cannes' film market, where hundreds of movies are bought and sold, reveals that cinema is still largely a man's world. The market is dominated by thrillers, horror and action flicks — still largely male-dominated genres.

Cannes is full of high-profile performances by women — Tilda Swinton as the grieving mother in "We Need to Talk About Kevin"; Berenice Bejo as a silver-screen starlet on the rise in silent film "The Artist"; Cecile de France as a hairdresser who takes in an abandoned boy in "The Kid With a Bike."

But moving behind the camera can still be a struggle.

Famke Janssen, who played a Bond girl in "GoldenEye" and telepath Jean Grey in the "X-Men" franchise, has made her writing-directing debut with comic drama "Bringing Up Bobby." The film is for sale in the Cannes film market.

She said that although "we've come a long way... it's still a male-dominated business on every front."

"And there's not that many actresses who direct, either," Janssen said. "It is very difficult to do, especially in a male-dominated world. Studio movies especially are still directed primarily by men."

## Royal Wedding hat sells for over \$130,000 on eBay

LONDON  
Associated Press

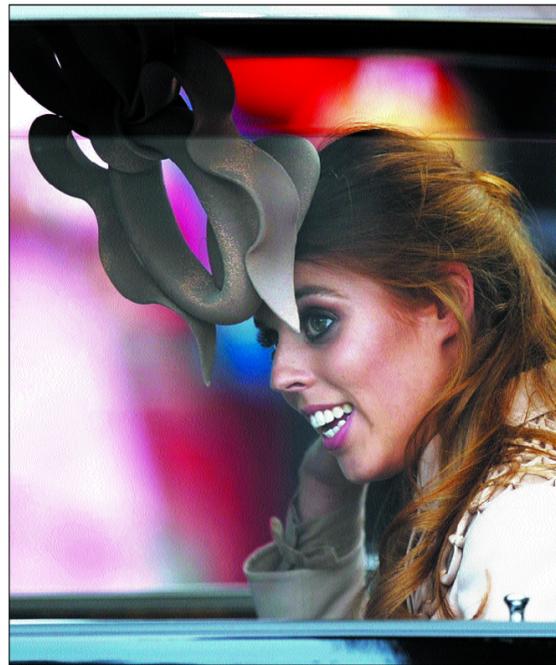
AUCTION site eBay says a bidder has paid 81,100 pounds (\$131,648) for the silk bow hat worn by Princess Beatrice to last month's royal wedding.

The 22-year-old granddaughter of Queen Elizabeth II put the Philip Treacy creation on sale to raise money for UNICEF and Children in Crisis.

The silk hat caused a stir at the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton on April 29.

Since then, it has been compared to antlers and a pretzel, and has been photoshopped into scores of unlikely scenarios on the Internet. Forty bidders vied for the prize, but eBay did not reveal the identity of the winner.

The auction ended Sunday.



BRITAIN'S Princess Beatrice, leaves after the royal wedding service in Westminster Abbey at the Royal Wedding in London. Online auctioneer eBay says that bids for one of the wackiest pieces of royal wedding headgear have approached 18,400 pounds (\$30,000.) Princess Beatrice's massive, ring-and-bow-shaped hat, turned heads at the wedding of her cousin Prince William last month and has since become an Internet sensation. The Philip Treacy creation has been compared to a toilet seat or a pretzel, and has been endlessly photoshopped to feature, for example, a cat crawling through it. (AP)

## Michigan woman dons wedding dress she wore in 1938

MUSKEGON, Mich.  
Associated Press

A WEST Michigan woman has strolled down the aisle in her wedding dress for a second time. The first time came 73 years ago.

Agnes Anderson wore the dress in 1938 when she married her college sweetheart, Delmar Anderson, in Youngstown, Ohio. The Andersons' marriage lasted more than 50 years until Delmar's death in 1989.

Her second trip down the aisle came last week at a vintage bridal gown fashion show at a church in Muskegon.

The 98-year-old from Muskegon County's Laketon Township says the dress was in mint condition when she retrieved it from a storage box.

Dick Anderson escorted his mother into the church sanctuary and to the altar.

The Muskegon Chronicle says the fashion show featured 20 bridal gowns that dated from 1933 to 2006.

# WOMAN

THE TRIBUNE • SECTION B

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2011

## BILLBOARD MUSIC AWARDS 2011 FASHION POLICE

By LESH & FARAH

SUNDAY NIGHT was the Billboard Music Awards and the celebs came out on the red carpet doing their thing. Some made a statement and others however, did not. Award shows are exciting, the nominations, the interviews, everything, but our favourite part of the show is the outfits!

Here Guys and Gals, Check out Lesh & Farah's fashion do's and don'ts at this year's Billboard Music Awards:

### 1. RIHANNA

The 23-year-old arrived at the red carpet wearing a white Max Azria suit paired with a plunging white blouse and nude Louboutin's.

**Lesh:** Simple gorgeous and elegant. This look is not the usual RiRi "over the top" look, but she managed to pull it off by playing it safe. I LOVE EVERYTHING! She was indeed the best dressed in my books.

**Farah:** I must give it to Rihanna she looks great. It is classic and very elegant for Rihanna because we know at times RiRi can get a little raunchy.

### 2. NICKI MINAJ

Known for her outrageous hair wigs and wacky way of dressing, Nicki arrived in a light blue coloured jumpsuit and pink hair. Her jumpsuit had sequins and she also wore white lace up sandals.

**Lesh:** Okay, I know you can't expect much from Nicki Nicki when it comes to her wigs and things right but this outfit right here just screams "lazy". Like she rolled over and picked out the first thing she laid eyes on with no care in the world. Everything is ugly, sorry. Looks like a flea market outfit.

**Farah:** Lesh, I totally agree with you on this one. Nicki Minaj equals Hollywood junglaes with all of those colours. Pink hair, light blue body suit, and white shoes, no Nicki it just doesn't work. It looks like something a junkanooer would rush in, not something to step out on the red carpet in. Sorry Nicki you failed!

### 3. KESHA

The Pop singer Kesha showed up at Billboard Awards in a metallic coloured sequined dress and chignon cut out Jad Ghanour dress with a tulle train.

**Lesh:** I have to burst out in laughter when I see some of the tacky things these celebrities wear. They love to spend their money on garbage. Kesha is a total mess in this outfit! She looks like a low budget "Lady Gaga."

**Farah:** If I didn't know better I would say Kesha's dress looked like it was a monokini first and then it was stitched to a skirt. For a person who makes money and has money to hire a stylist, she shouldn't be wearing such an ugly dress. Love the shoes though!

### 4. JUSTIN BEIBER

Justin wore a shimmering gold and

### AWA Far East Movement



black tuxedo jacket at the awards show.

**Lesh:** Ahhhh, I'm not a fan of this gold number but I love Justin! He's getting older, he's not little Justin anymore. So I would have to say the Beebs is on his "grown man" stuff in this outfit.

**Farah:** If Justin Bieber wanted bling he has enough money to get some, he didn't have to resort to wearing this gold tar paper.

### 5. MARY J BLIGE

Mary J Blige wore a leopard print Marc Bouwer Fall 2010 gown.

**Lesh:** It doesn't matter how expensive or relevant the brand is, it's not cute Mary! Please don't do it again.

**Farah:** Everyone's hating on the leopard print. But I guess I am not seeing what others are seeing. I like the structure of the dress and the leopard print. It's different.

### 6. TAYLOR SWIFT

Taylor wore an Elie Saab nude gown with bronze embellishments which she teamed with Lorraine Schwartz jewels.

**Lesh:** Yes Taylor, Yes! I said 'Yes' to this dress, she looks stunning!

**Farah:** This chandelier of a dress is sort of pretty if you take a two second glance at it but if you stare, it begins to look like an embellished curtain.

### 7. KELLY & MICHELLE

Singer Kelly Rowland chose to wear a pink Herve Leger cross-back bandage dress along with a pair of nude sandals. Michelle added her little twist to her little black dress look.

**Lesh:** They both look nice, but it isn't much to brag about. Kelly looks fierce in that hot pink dress though.

**Farah:** The only thing that catches my eye is Michelle's shoes. I don't like her ensemble, the bottom looks like it was made from crepe paper. And Kelly, well what can I say you look the usual.

### 8. FAR EAST MOVEMENT

The singers arrived at red carpet in black, white and red color coordinated outfits.

**Lesh:** Too tacky for my liking!

**Farah:** They are all over the place.

### 9. SELENA GOMEZ

Selena wore a black Dolce & Gabbana waist cutout sweetheart gathered gown and Giuseppe Zanotti ankle strap bow sandals.

**Lesh:** Not so bad, Selena is definitely stepping out of the box lately. She got that Bieber fever!

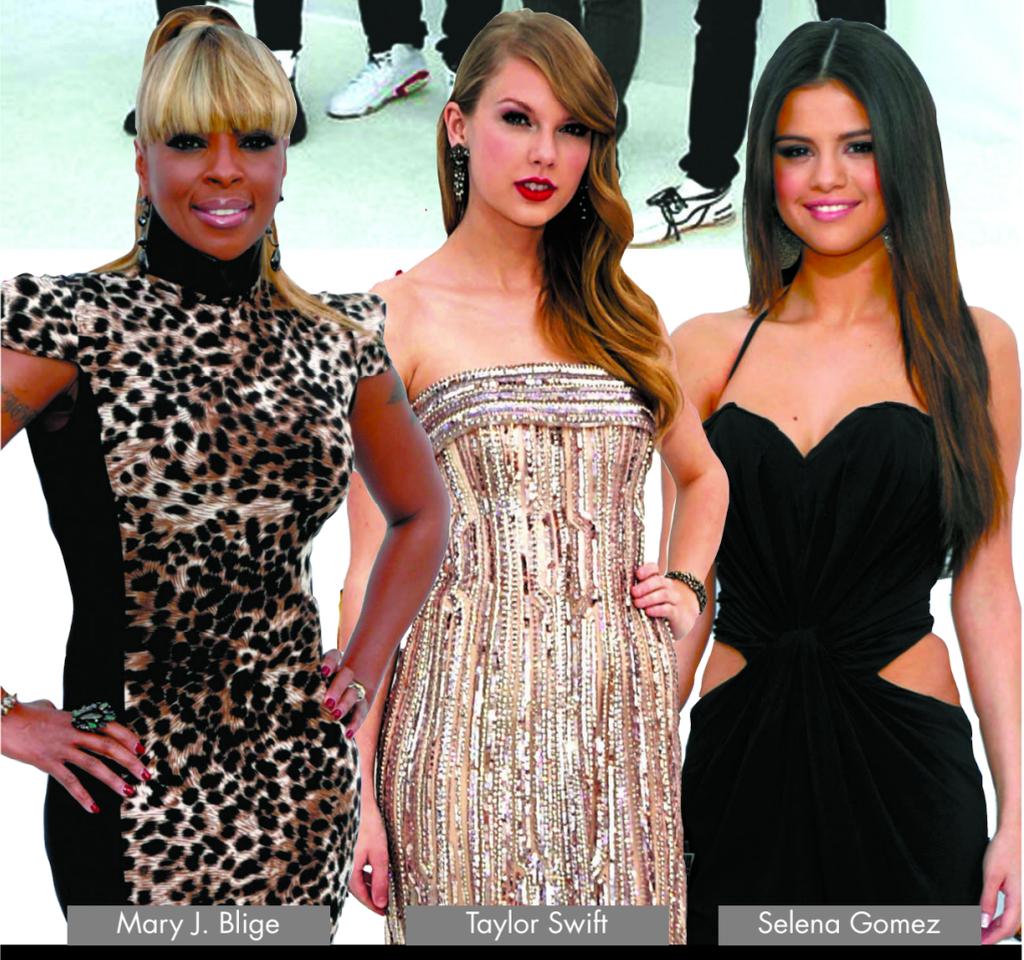
**Farah:** I love this dress and the red shoes. But sweetie, remember never to wear white granny panties with a lovely dress like that again!

### 10. BEYONCE

Beyonce hit the red carpet in a Lanvin long sleeve brooch dress from the Fall 2011 ready-to-wear collection.

**Lesh:** Simply gorgeous!

**Farah:** I saw this dress on a model in the Lanvin 2011 fall fashion show and it looks better on the model. But hey B stills looks nice. I'm waiting for her to change her hair now.



Mary J. Blige

Taylor Swift

Selena Gomez



Justin Bieber

Nicki Minaj

Beyonce

Ke\$ha

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