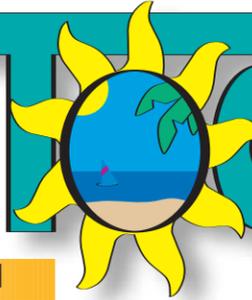


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THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE



Mykal Fax, left, and Steve McAlpin are young Caribbean-born filmmakers with a new movie out and big ambitions to break into the mainstream of a very tough business, page 15.



It's back-to-school time again after the long summer holidays and parents, as well as children, must gear up for the new year. Caribbean Today offers a special feature, pages 18-21.



Last month Grenadian-born Shalrie Joseph was selected to captain U.S. Major League Soccer's All-Star team, a big honor for the New England Revolution star. But the midfielder has his eyes on a much bigger prize, page 26.

HAVE A HEART!



~ Dr. Annmarie Barnes and other representatives from the Caribbean are appealing to what some see as an 'out of step' United States for leniency on its deportation policy, page 2.



Simpson Miller

Jamaica ready for a change... or not?

~ Jamaicans go to the polls this month to decide whether to continue with Portia Simpson Miller, left, and the PNP, which has ruled the country for 18 years, or change course with the JLP led by Bruce Golding, page 7.



Golding

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Have a heart: Caribbean asks 'out of step' U.S. for leniency on deportation

NELSON A. KING

WASHINGTON – For many years, deportation has been a major issue dividing Washington and the Caribbean.

America has sought to cleanse itself of Caribbean nationals, who have done time for criminal acts, but regional leaders have consistently argued that the practice is unjust because some of those deported have learnt their criminal ways in the United States.

One Washington-based human rights group has seen

the challenge of the region in dealing with 'deportees' and has called on lawmakers here to "have a heart" in repealing or amending laws that have proven to be very burdensome on Caribbean states.

Testifying last month before the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Western Hemispheric Affairs, Alison Parker, an attorney and senior researcher for Human Rights Watch, said the U.S. is "far out of step" with international human rights standards with respect to

deportations.

"Human rights law recognizes that the privilege of living in any country as a non-citizen may be conditional upon obeying that country's laws," she said.

"However, a country, like the United States, cannot withdraw that privilege without protecting the human rights of the immigrants it previously allowed to enter," she added.

CHANCE

Parker, therefore, called on Congress to reinstate hearings that

would allow Caribbean immigrants facing deportation the chance to ask a judge to allow them to remain in the U.S. when their crimes are relatively minor and their connections, especially family ties, to the U.S. are strong.

"Providing for proportionality in deportation and protecting family unity are essential to a just and fair immigration policy," she told the committee, chaired by New York Democratic Congressman Eliot Engels.

"And, this cannot be accomplished without amending U.S. immigration law to allow for relatively simple balancing hearings," she added.

Parker said about 672,593 legal immigrants in the U.S. have been deported under the 1996 immigration law, which requires mandatory deportation of non-citizens convicted of a crime after they have served prison terms.

"It does not matter whether



- Photograph by Derrick A. Scott

Dr. Annmarie Barnes, chief technical director in Jamaica's Ministry of National Security, testifying before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere.

the non-citizen has lived here legally for decades, built a home and family, ran a business, or paid taxes," she said.

"And, these laws do not apply only to serious crimes but also to minor offenses," she

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

U.S. Congressman puts focus on Caribbean tax havens

WASHINGTON, CMC – A United States Democratic Congressman has introduced a bill in the House of Representatives that would make it more difficult for American companies overseas to use Caribbean tax havens to avert paying taxes on profits.

Lloyd Doggett, who represents Texas, introduced the measure late last month hoping that it would be tagged on to an unrelated farm bill.

"This bill requires international tax dodgers to pay their fair share," said Doggett, a member of the House of Representatives' Ways and Means Committee.

"This legislation will help stop foreign-owned businesses from abusing our tax treaties," he added.

A frequent critic of American companies that establish offices in the region to reduce U.S. tax liability, Doggett said the measure, if passed, would raise new revenues to the tune of \$7.5 billion over 10 years. He identified companies, such as Accenture Ltd. in Bermuda, among alleged tax dodgers.

"This 'tax abuse' for foreign corporations became a 'tax increase' as they (Republicans) scurried for reasons to kill the House farm bill," said North Dakota Democratic Representative Earl Pomeroy.

VETO

But U.S. Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns said

President George W. Bush will veto the bill partially because of the tax measure.

"I don't think that there is a farmer or rancher in America that says we ought to



Doggett

have higher taxes to help finance farm bills," he said.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Andrew DeSouza said the bill would undermine the United States' tax treaty network, "which would discourage investment in the United States and threaten the important jobs those investments create."

The measure has also been attacked by other Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee.

But Doggett said the bill "would have no effect on legitimate multinational corporations that are not employing a haven to dodge American taxes."

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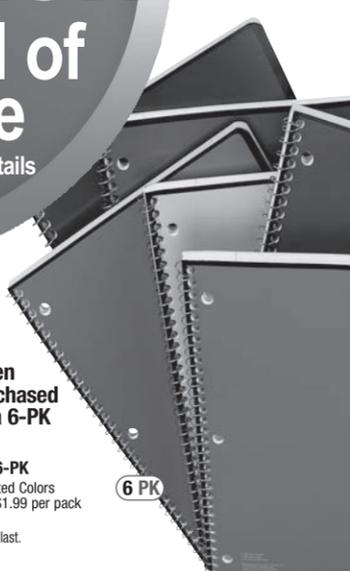
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HOLLYWOOD

Grenada-born ex-judge jailed

NEW YORK, CMC - A Grenadian, who served as a former New York State Supreme Court judge, was last month sent back to jail after failing to convince a Manhattan Supreme Court that he couldn't support his three children.

Reynold Mason told Justice Joan Lobis that he was "dead broke" and could not meet the \$250,000 backlog of child support payments to his ex-wife, Guyana-born Tessa Abrams Mason.

"I made a lot of mistakes," Mason told the court, stating that he was trying desperately to honor the back payments without success.

"I was trying to set myself



Ex-judge Mason, right, being escorted in handcuffs in May.

up to earn money," he added, even though disclosing he had purchased a \$9,000 car as transport to sell real estate.

BANKRUPTCY

Mason told the court that he had only been able to make \$68,000 in 2005 and 2006, compared to \$136,700 annually

when he sat on the bench. He said he had declared bankruptcy in order to survive, but a Manhattan Supreme Court judge in May had jailed him after he was unable to pay child support for four years.

Mason asked the court to reduce his child support payments, but Justice Lobis declined, sending him back to the Manhattan Detention Center until he is able to pay the \$75,000 bond for his children.

"I find his testimony lacking in credibility in a number of places," Justice Lobis said, stating that his financial statements, signed under oath, were "shocking" and "not complete."

"That he is not able to honor his own oath is of concern to the court," she added.



Have a heart: Caribbean asks 'out of step' U.S. for leniency on deportation

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

added.

Human Rights Watch estimates that 1.6 million adults and children, including U.S. citizens, have been separated from their spouses and parents because of this legislation.

"Families have been torn apart because of a single, even minor, misstep, such as shoplifting or drug possession," Parker said.

INCREASE

Gary E. Mead, assistant director for Management Office of Detention and Removal Operations in the Department of Homeland Security, testified that fiscal

year 2006 was a record year, with 196,707 deportations from the US; and that fiscal year 2007 is "currently on pace to exceed fiscal year 2006 by 10 percent."

He said Jamaica, with 1,426 deportations, was among the top 10 countries in the Western Hemisphere for criminal and non-criminal deportations in fiscal year 2006. Mexico topped the list with 114,640 deportations.

The impact of the deportations on the Caribbean has been so adverse that CARICOM leaders were forced to put it on the front burner when they met with U.S. President George W. Bush,

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Congressional leaders, including the Congressional Black Caucus, during June's Conference on the Caribbean in Washington.

Speaking on behalf of CARICOM, Dr. Annmarie Barnes, chief technical director in Jamaica's Ministry of National Security, told U.S. legislators that the mass deportation of criminal offenders to the Caribbean constitutes one of the greatest threats to regional security. She testified that while the vast majority of deported convicted felons might have been stripped of their material possessions,

"their propensity to criminality remains intact.

"By expanding the locale for criminal enterprise, deportation poses serious challenges not only to national security interests in receiving countries, but also to the management and control of security globally," Barnes said.

She pointed to a recent CARICOM study that found that almost 30,000 criminal offenders have been deported to Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago between 1990 and 2005.

In analyzing the data, Barnes said over 17,000 were deported for drug offenses; almost 1,800 for possession of illegal firearms, and over 600 for murder, stating that the U.S. is responsible for over 75 percent of all criminal deportations to the region.

With a combined population of less than five million people in the countries studied, she said the impact of this relocation of criminal offenders would be roughly equivalent to the influx, into the U.S., of more than one million convicted drug offenders, and close to 40,000 convicted murderers.

HARDSHIPS

Barnes said the study also found that many deported persons continue to engage in crime subsequent to their deportation.

She said of 345 deported persons interviewed, the majority were parents whose children in the U.S. face extreme hardships, both emotionally and financially.

The Caribbean security expert, therefore, urged Washington to establish procedural guidelines that would help to "streamline the deportation process, with due regard for the interests of both deporting and receiving countries."

She also recommended a

public and King admitted that St. Lucians were within their right to call for a suitable replacement for the elder statesman.

EXIT

King said he recently held talks with Sir John and that indications were the prime minister would be making his exit from active politics paving the way for a successor.

"This would be a timely moment for this to be executed. It will definitely happen before the end of the year," he said.

The departure of Sir John could also result in a by-election in the Micoud North constituency, which Sir John re-captured in the December polls.



review of the legislative framework that governs the deportation of long-term residents.

HELP

In addition, among other things, Barnes called for the allocation of technical and financial resources to support social reintegration and law enforcement programs in receiving countries, including support for the re-integration of deported persons who need training and access to rehabilitative programming; financial support for establishment of transitional facilities; and increased support for law enforcement services in the receiving countries.

Charles S. Shapiro, principal deputy assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, said the U.S. has already begun addressing some of those issues.

"ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) offered to provide to CARICOM members the computer hardware and software of the eTD system, which has already been shown to be successful in Central America," he told the hearing.

"With the support of the Department of State, DHS (Department of Homeland Security) has begun to brief individual governments on the system," he added.

In addition, he said the U.S. hopes to use a pilot deportee re-integration program in Haiti in other CARICOM states in the future.

But Grenada's U.S. Ambassador Dr. Denis Antoine, told the **Caribbean Media Corporation**, that he is ambivalent about the pilot program in Haiti.

"We have to look at it gradually," he said. "They (U.S.) should not feel that what can happen in Haiti can happen elsewhere."



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Call for better working relationship between U.S. and the Caribbean

WASHINGTON, CMC – A United States-based think tank says there is need for the resolution of a number of issues between the U.S. and the Caribbean.

In its latest report on the Caribbean, the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA) identified the controversial Shiprider Agreement among the outstanding disputes.

The Shiprider Agreement enables U.S. and Caribbean law enforcement teams to work together in the region's territorial waters to beat drug traffickers' attempts to move cocaine from South America to the U.S. The agreement also allows them to co-operate in shipboarding, shipriding and overflight.

"Although some nations signed the agreement, there has been strong opposition to it from others," COHA said.

"Jamaica and Guyana, for instance, have refused to implement the agreements or have imposed stricter limits on them, subsequently feeling the consequences of their actions.

"The U.S. has threatened economic sanctions in the past for failure to implement the measures, as well as refused

assistance to its neighbors in the form of drug interdiction training and equipment," it added.

SOLUTION VITAL

COHA said, with United Nations figures showing 40 percent of the 200,000 tons of cocaine shipped to the U.S. every year pass through the Caribbean and Central America, "a solution to these disputes is vital."

According to the U.S. Institute for Policy Studies, the 1996 Shiprider agreements were "intended to advance international drug cooperation between the U.S. and the Caribbean". The agreements stipulated that, in accordance with anti-narcotic measures, any U.S. Coast Guard vessel be permitted to enter national waters of a Caribbean country once a local law enforcement official was aboard.

COHA said, in the late 1990s, the Shiprider agreements led to severe criticism from many Caribbean nations, "which prefer to work within a framework of cooperation, based on democratic principles and respect for sovereignty".

In addition, COHA said the ongoing dispute between

the U.S. and Antigua and Barbuda over Internet gaming needs to be resolved speedily.

"A recent decision by the court of the WTO (World Trade Organisation) ruled in favor of Antigua-Barbuda against the U.S.," it said.

"Nevertheless, the U.S. remains non-compliant with the ruling, denying the island nation of 70,000 the right to provide online gaming to U.S. Internet customers.

"The decision of the WTO must be respected, so this bothersome quarrel, which only reflects poorly upon the U.S., can be properly remedied," it added.

STRATEGIC

Last month, Antigua and Barbuda formally filed a complaint to the WTO for compensation for U.S.'s non-compliance. The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body is expected to rule shortly on the matter.

The council said, since the Caribbean is geopolitically strategic in terms of security, U.S. cooperation with CARICOM is essential in combating organized crime, drug traffick-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

Congressman wants New York to host next Caribbean confab

NEW YORK, - Influential United States Democratic Congressman Charles Rangel is lobbying for New York City to host next year's Conference on the Caribbean.

Rangel, chairman of the powerful U.S. House of Representatives, said he had already informed Caribbean leaders of his position during the recently concluded Caribbean community (CARICOM) summit in Barbados.

"I suggested to them, and it seems as if it received a very warm reception. I was talking to the leaders of the sense of pride that I felt as a non-Caribbean person at the summit," he told reporters.

"I said imagine if you would allow us in the Black Caucus to feel that if you came to New York, how those of Caribbean backgrounds, how proud they would feel.

"If Brooklyn ever got hold of that, it would be amazing," he added.

PARTICIPATION

The congressman said if the next Conference on the Caribbean is held in New York, it would enable greater participation from the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and the Caribbean diaspora in New York, which has the greatest concentration of Caribbean nationals in the U.S.

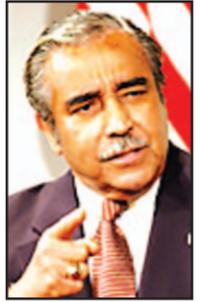
"It's going to happen," Rangel affirmed.

In June, Caribbean leaders participated in what has been described as a "very successful" conference in Washington, the highlight of which was a summit between regional leaders and U.S. President George W. Bush.

The regional leaders also met with other U.S. legislators while in Washington noting they were able to strengthen relations with the CBC, of which Rangel, who represents Harlem, is a powerful member.

The CBC now comprises 43 members, holding four important chairmanships of Congressional committees, including Rangel's, the House Committee on Homeland Security, and the House Judiciary Committee.

"The CBC and CARICOM pledged to strengthen their relationship in a structured manner," said Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, the St. Vincent and the Grenadines prime minister and former CARICOM chairman.



Rangel

Caribbean nations mark Emancipation Day, Aug. 1

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC – Several Caribbean countries on Aug. 1 observed the 173rd anniversary of the abolition of the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade, urging their cosmopolitan societies to continue working towards living in a region noted for its tolerance and equality.

In Guyana, President Bharrat Jagdeo urged nationals to consolidate the gains of freedom. Jagdeo restated his administration's dedication "to zealously pursue, both within the region, at the level of CARICOM and at all international fora, the case for reparations."

In Trinidad and Tobago, where Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni arrived on July 31 to participate in the Emancipation Day activities, Prime Minister Patrick Manning said the emancipation of slaves in 1834 was "one of the most important and decisive moments in the evolution of human civilization."

The Emancipation Support Committee (ECS) said that four

persons, including Jamaican scientist Carl Blackwood and Ghanaian freedom fighter and Pan Africanist Kojo Tsikata, were scheduled to receive the Sylvester William Award for Excellence at a function here on Aug. 1.

The ECS said that composer and ethnomusicologist Pat Bishop, and calypsonian Kelvin Pope (The Might Duke), would also be honored with the award that, since its inception in 2000, has sought to honor some of the most eminent personalities from across the African diaspora.

Emancipation Day is observed as a public holiday in a number of Caribbean states including Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Barbados.



Jagdeo

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To change or not change course: The question facing Jamaica's voters

GORDON WILLIAMS

KINGSTON, Jamaica – It's early Sunday, just four weeks before general elections and music lovers file steadily into an uptown "oldies" session here.

Common sense normally dictates that being out on the town after dark in the run-up to national polls can be risky business in the nation's capital, but the huge crowd flooding into Mas Camp thinks otherwise.

Outside just before 1 a.m., the line at the entrance, next to the country's main financial district, is still long. Even at J\$1,000 (\$15) a head, inside is already packed and, as the reggae classics pump loudly through the speakers, patrons sip beer or soup and chomp down on jerk chicken as they rock away to Beres Hammond and Buju Banton. The mood is mellow.

Yet, hours before the street-side parking in the area surrounding Oxford Road had flowed over, a few miles on Mountain View Avenue, east Kingston, the snaking road en



Simpson

route to Kingston's international airport is almost deserted. The tension is as thick as gun-smoke, which frequently rises into the air. Even in broad daylight, many drivers avoid that stretch, where the sound of shots are as common as engines purring. Political

gangs are at war. Similar situations exist elsewhere in the nation's capital and other spots throughout the country – St. James, St. Catherine and Clarendon. In southern St. Andrew, longtime gang feuds bubble over into the political spectrum. A few nights earlier shots rang throughout the night near August Town, St. Andrew, close to the country's top two universities. Visitors to Jamaica, even in the safety of houses, flinch at each explosion. The next day the death tally is announced. Citizens shrug, even when the toll includes infants and elderly. It is the same elsewhere.

DIFFERENT?

But more curious is that even as the election campaign heats up, with the ruling People's National Party (PNP) and Opposition Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) getting into full mudslinging mode with sometimes humorous media advertisements flavored more with style than substance, the population seems generally unperturbed.

"It's different this time," an assistant manager at one of the nation's top financial institutions explained to **Caribbean Today**. "People are not running away. And they are still investing, whereas during elections gone by they would more

likely wait for the outcome."

The need for information from the political leaders has spread to Jamaicans overseas. On July 26 the PNP and JLP dispatched representatives to



Golding

a town hall meeting in Miramar, Florida organized by the Jamaican Diaspora Southern United States. An estimated 150 people turned up. Jamaica's Minister of Industry, Technology, Energy and Commerce Phillip Paulwell, no stranger to controversy at home, boasted about the PNP's record on taming interest rates and unemployment. Yet Karl Chung, a Florida-based JLP representative, pointed to Jamaica's monstrous debt.

"The vision for Jamaica is one word," Chung told the audience, "change. Change, change, change."

However, the PNP, now being led by popular Prime

Minister Portia Simpson Miller, is perceived to be ahead in the opinion polls despite 18 years in power which have been tainted by scandals, a surging crime wave and rising cost of living prompted by the struggling Jamaican dollar. Bruce Golding, who heads the JLP, is seen as smart and practical, but lacking charisma to match Simpson Miller, Jamaica's first female P.M., who plays the gender, religion and "humble background" cards to the hilt. Some are still confused at her insistence that the country will "not

change course" under a new PNP government. Others do not trust Golding, after he first fled the JLP to form his own National Democratic Movement (NDM) and then returned to the JLP. Even as he argued for a fixed election date recently, his predecessor as party leader offered alternative arguments.

CONCERNS

Last month, when Simpson Miller announced Nomination Day for Aug. 7 and Election Day as Aug. 27, the debate centered more on the prime minister's perceived infatuation with the number seven. But

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

Trinidadians extradited to U.S. to face kidnapping charges

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - Four Trinidadians were extradited to the United States late last month on charges of kidnapping war veteran Balram Maharaj.

Anderson Straker, Christopher Sealey, Kevin Nixon and Wayne Pierre were accompanied to the U.S. by six special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) on an FBI aircraft.

Earlier in the month Magistrate Lianne Lee Kim ordered the four men extradited to face charges of hostage-taking. The four men had 15 days in which to challenge the extradition order, but they failed to do so. They joined four others, including Russell Joseph and Winston Gittens, who pleaded

guilty several months ago after entering a plea agreement with U.S. authorities. They are yet to be sentenced.

Up to press time, former soldier Jason Percival, who was the main prosecution witness, had not formally entered a plea, while David Suchit was found not guilty by a U.S. jury and later returned to Trinidad.

Four other persons have challenged the decision of Chief Magistrate Sherman McNicolls to have them extradited to face trial in the U.S.

Maharaj 62, was kidnapped outside a restaurant on April 5, 2005 and TT\$3 million (\$500,000) demanded for his release. His dismembered body was found in a forest.



U.S. helps B'dos battle fly

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC – The United States is assisting Barbados in its effort to curb the spread of the West Indian Fruit Fly, indicating that the strategy developed here could help fight the pest in other countries.

The fly has been affecting Jamaica plums, hog plums, chili plums and guava trees across Barbados.

Local entomologist, Ian Gibbs last month said it was "virtually all over the island," but assured that the population was still relatively low.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) ento-

mologist Tim Holler said the uniqueness of the Barbadian situation allows for interesting scientific comparisons among countries.

"We are trying to develop the methodologies that we can use to take a biological control program into a country," Holler explained. "We are trying to develop this formula that everyone can use...before the pest population grows."

Since 2006, USDA has been shipping parasitoid wasps to Barbados on a regular basis.



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Diplomat wants greater U.S. focus on smaller Caribbean islands

WASHINGTON – A Caribbean diplomat has called on the United States to place greater focus on the smaller islands of the region.

Denis Antoine, Grenada's ambassador to the U.S., told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)** during the inaugural Conference on the Americas here last month, that while he welcomed the initiative, there was nothing substantial in it for countries in the sub-regional Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

"In the context of the Americas, the smaller islands are not mentioned on the United States' radar screen, but the larger islands are getting some focus," Antoine said.

"Nothing is wrong with helping the larger islands, but I hope some focus can be

given to the smaller entities of the Caribbean.

"I hope their vulnerabilities would be recognized. A little goes a long way," Antoine added.

Representatives from more than 150 regional-based organizations and 100 U.S. groups attended the conference, which came on the heels of June's Conference on the Caribbean here.

THEME

The White House Conference of the Americas was held under the theme "Advancing the Cause of Social Justice in the Americas". Topics included expanding economic opportunity, investing in education, meeting health care needs, and building public-private partnerships.

U.S. President George W.



Antoine

Bush told delegates that his administration is "doing a lot to promote health" in the region. During last month's conference, the president's wife Laura Bush announced the launch of the Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research of the Americas.

She said the initiative would unite experts from the United States, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Mexico in the fight against breast cancer, the most common cause of cancer-related death for women worldwide.

President Bush said the U.S. has provided over \$950 million to improve healthcare in the Western Hemisphere since 2001.

NOTHING NEW

Antoine said while the conference was interesting, the themes were not new.

"It's clear that greater emphasis is emerging on the larger populations of the hemisphere," he said. "Jamaica, Guyana and Haiti were very visible. Outside of that, it seems like the other islands do not exist."

The Grenada envoy said

mention was also made about projects in Jamaica and Haiti, but not a word was said about initiatives in his country, for instance.

"The U.S. assisted Grenada with hurricane relief, but we did not hear anything mentioned about activities in Grenada," he explained.

Antoine, however, viewed the overall concept as "a welcome exercise of neighborliness."

"It's in good taste, occurring at the end of the Conference on the Caribbean. It's an unselfish demonstration of concern that we hope will become a legacy for future U.S. administrations. It should be a concept of consistency," he told **CMC**.



To change or not change course: The question facing Jamaica's voters

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

concerns that the lengthy period between the announcement and the actual date of the polls also surfaced. "The devil finds work for idle hands," older Jamaicans like to say. During the run-up to elections, "idle hands" often find themselves wrapped around the handle of a gun. Yet as the political violence continued to escalate, Simpson Miller declared last month that her party would not meet directly with the JLP for "peace talks" unless a third party was present.

Both PNP and JLP insist they are not the instigators of political violence, accusing

each other of such acts and lying to cover them up. During a rally in St. Catherine late last month, Golding said the JLP was "structuring our campaign to avoid confrontation." But more disconcerting was his declaration at the same event that "I can't give you any guarantee that I won't have more labourites to bury."

Despite all that, a heavy contingent of local and international observers is expected to monitor the elections. The Electoral Office of Jamaica has declared that all systems should be ready for Aug. 27 and warned that no Election Day trickery – not uncommon in Jamaica – will be tolerated.

After Parliament was dissolved last month, 60 constituency seats went up for grabs. And while several are considered safe – including Simpson Miller's and Golding's – political pundits are predicting a few surprises as well. A recent, unscientific poll which appeared on the PNP's website cheekily showed the JLP ahead.

Yet, among the biggest concerns, is what exactly the voters will be casting their ballots in favor of, or against – or if they really care. Both parties were late – some political experts say deliberately so – offering their post-election plans to the public. With scanty information to go on, except the government's record and the Opposition's knee-jerk barking at it, "John P" could be left swinging in the dark come Aug. 27. After issuing several "crime plans" in nearly two decades at the country's helm, the PNP has not stemmed the violence that grips the Caribbean nation and has pushed it near the top of the most murderous in the world. The health care and education systems are under siege. Environmentalists are wondering aloud what will be

done to protect the nation's most vital resource. The middle class is questioning its resolve to continue with its current lifestyle.

On many fronts, it seems, there is not much to cheer about in the "Land of Wood and Water". The general elections will be held around the time of the World Championships of Athletics in Japan. Jamaica usually does well in track and field. That may be a welcome distraction.

There are others. The saga surrounding the break-up of big name entertainer Beenie Man and his wife D'Angel dominated the front page of a local evening tabloid for days in a row late last month. Copies sold briskly. That same newspaper ran a story highlighting where parties can be found every day of the week.

Election fever may be in the air in Jamaica, but outside of the diehard political factions, it seems the nation's citizens are more willing to dance than catch it.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



PLEASE NOTE

• Haiti and Belize are members of the Caribbean community (CARICOM). The July issue of **Caribbean Today**, in a story carrying the headline "Talk shop or not, Caribbean leaders flex muscles on Capitol Hill", reported incorrectly that they were not. We apologize for the error.

• **Caribbean Today** is requesting that all editorial correspondence be e-mailed to editor@caribeantoday.com. Effective Sept. 1, 2007, the e-mail address caribtoday@earthlink.net will no longer be in service. We appreciate your co-operation.



Call for better working relationship between U.S. and the Caribbean

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

ing, and terrorism.

"In this respect, the Caribbean and the U.S. must be able to support and maintain healthy relations into the future," it said.

"CARICOM is wise to take advantage of the opportunity of high-level meetings with the U.S. After all, the U.S. is the Caribbean's closest developed neighbor, its most significant trading partner, and the home of the largest number of emigrants from the region," it said.

COHA said with a population at barely five percent of that of the U.S., Caribbean integration will better prepare CARICOM nations to find their niche in the global market.

However, it said a "good rapport" with the region's

major global partners is necessary in the pursuit of overall Caribbean development goals. "Conversely, one would hope that President Bush's renewal of the CBI (Caribbean Basin Initiative) and the recent Conference on the Caribbean signify a revitalisation of the U.S.-Caribbean relationship that has been characteristically absent during his two terms in office.

"Considering the Bush Administration's consistent preoccupation with other regions of the globe and America's increasingly tattered image around the world, such a conclusion might be refreshing not only for otherwise fragile Caribbean economies but for a battered U.S. regime policy as well," COHA said.



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Voting from afar

GORDON WILLIAMS

Caribbean nations are gearing up for elections this year. Jamaica, for example, has scheduled its general polls for Aug. 27. Other nations from the region are hinting that voting in 2007 is a distinct possibility, even if not constitutionally due.

Outside the Caribbean, the call for allowing members of the diaspora the opportunity to vote in regional elections has gained momentum. More people want to be able to send their votes home.

At June's "Conference on the Caribbean: A 20/20 Vision" in Washington D.C., many made it clear to leaders from the region that they would like to play more significant roles in the development of the land of their birth. They say they deserve that right.

They make a solid point. Remittances help keep many Caribbean nations afloat economically. And as more charitable causes orchestrated by Caribbean nationals overseas continue to benefit the region, it is clear that the diaspora's impact has become increasingly robust.

CRITICS

But should members of the diaspora really expect a vote in their Caribbean homelands if they do not reside there? If they are not living in the country, contributing directly to its day-to-day progress, and moreover feeling the impact of its struggles and their decision at the polls, they should not be allowed to decide who governs the country, critics argue. They claim that simply sending money or contributing goods, while spending all except your vacation abroad, should not qualify you to help determine who rules. They say you simply do not know what is really going on. As the Jamaican saying goes: "See me and come live with me are two different things".

The critics, too, have a point.

But, as many in the diaspora claim, they already influence elections in the Caribbean. For decades, political parties have sought campaign contributions from outside the region. Parties have their organizing committees based in North America and the United Kingdom and regularly send representatives to spearhead fundraisers. And low-keyed and high profiled supporters alike are all too eager to pitch cash into the waiting hats.

Many in the diaspora also

maintain residences in the Caribbean, register to vote there, and make sure they line up at the polling station on Election Day.

But what many in the diaspora are seeking, is the right to stay outside the region and cast their vote, claiming that if they don't go to the Caribbean to drop off remittances or barrels, why can't they mail in their ballots too?

HITCH

Well, from a practical standpoint, that could work. It's just hard to understand why the diaspora would want to embrace this route anytime soon. Generally, the election machinery in the Caribbean needs a vital upgrade. All sorts of shenanigans occur around election time in the region. Even after significant improvements have been done. And the mishaps are not from decades past either. When was the last Caribbean election? It probably happened then too.

If people in the diaspora really want to have a bigger influence, then they should help fix the election machinery. How can a voter living in a cushy U.S. suburb really know about people who yearn for the right to free and fair elections - while facing intimidation and brutalization - if they do not live among them? In some Caribbean countries people risk their lives traveling to a polling station, not to mention voting with someone standing over them. Some entering polling stations have been told not to bother, someone has already voted for them.

Missing ballot boxes, plus-100 percent voting in some constituencies and "accidental" occurrences, such as late opening and early closing of polling stations, are not yet a thing of the past in Caribbean politics. And if all that still occurs in the region, imagine what could happen if ballots are coming in from overseas, where the machinery for accommodating overseas voting has not been fully developed.

So here's a question for members of the diaspora: If you want to stay overseas and vote, wouldn't it be wise if you first make sure your vote actually counts?

Next time the man with the "hat" comes calling, maybe you should demand he deliver that guarantee before you deliver the cash.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



Secret lives of women

When a woman who is perceived to be virtuous, respectable, domesticated and wifely takes unto herself a lover, men freak out.

It's like they were blindsided, hit by a left hook that they never saw coming, taken completely by surprise, and that's why it upsets and hurts them so.

"I never thought that my wife would go with another man, never in my wildest dreams. All those evenings she gone to prayer meeting, and is the parson she deh with."

It really burns. But it's because of this foolish notion that men have, that women do not, and will not stray, plus the fact that wives are 'property' why it burns them when they do.

Some women have confided to me that every few months they have to go outside for a little taste of something different, even though it will not affect their relationship with their husbands.

"I wish men could understand that women have the same wanderlust that men have, but just that many are afraid to act on it. Well, I'm not," one woman told me.

EYE OPENING

I recently read some research papers from various universities that shed some light regarding why women cheat. The eye opening findings of a team of researchers reported that 53 percent of women said that they had been unfaithful to their partners, compared to 59 percent of men.

Still, the reasons why women are unfaithful are different from men. Men are driven by lust, while women usually have more complex reasons and in fact, infidelity can happen even to good people in good marriages, the research paper says.

The top three reasons they say, are friendships at work, child centered marriages and intimate Internet conversa-



TONY ROBINSON

tions. Now we all know how that friendship at work scenario plays out. The wife spends a whole heap of time with her boss or co-worker in the prime hours of the day, with her at her best. They are in constant contact, sharing office stuff, personal stuff and other stuff, seeing each other constantly. By the time she gets home to hubby, she is tired, worn out from the day and ready only for housework and child duties. But come tomorrow, she's fresh again and ready to work with and banter with the man in the office. It's a time that she looks forward to. Naturally something is going to happen, and in no time it grows until it explodes and she gives in. She didn't set out to do it, but it happens and it's her secret.

What's even more revealing, the study unfolds, is that half of all wives cheat on their husbands at some point in the marriage and 90 percent feel no guilt at all. In fact, they felt entitled to cheat, because they had been so unhappy in the marriage, so the cheating was a liberating and justifiable action.

What's interesting is that

just like men, women also have sex driven affairs. For as sure as night follows day, sex eventually dies after marriage.

But hear this now, that death can be resuscitated if a third party enters the graveyard. That same sexless frumpy wife can become a raging inferno if some young stud woos and wins her. And, as for the husband, all he wants is a wink from a young lass and the force of a thousand dormant volcanoes will erupt with a cataclysmic explosion that will rock his world.

ALONG COMES JOHN

Believe it or not, low self esteem, brought on by a woman constantly doing housework and caring for children, will also drive her to have an affair. Her husband only sees her as a wife, a mother of his children, the keeper of the house, no longer a lover. But along comes John, smooth talking lean and handsome John, who reminds her how sexy and desirable she is. You'd be frightened to see how fast she flings off the apron and turns off the stove, for she's desired again, a whole woman.

Remember, women thrive on praise and admiration, just like flowers.

Just last year my friend's wife walked out on him, leav-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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CARIB Comments

• **“Criminal deportees sent to the Caribbean often have established themselves in the United States”** – U.S. Congressman Charles Rangel last month attributing the rising crime rates in the region to the U.S. deportation process.

• **“Are you ready for the first time to give Portia a working class woman and leader of the winning team her first full term**

as prime minister of Jamaica? Are you ready to give to Jamaica a woman of courage, a woman of determination, a woman of the people, from the people and for the people?”

– Portia Simpson Miller rallies her supporters last month while announcing the nation’s general elections date is Aug. 27.

• **“The criminals can never win this fight irrespective of where they carry their activities, whether it’s on land or river”** -



Guyana’s Home Affairs Minister Clement Rohee expressing confidence last month that his country will win the fight against crime.



• **“This is an ethical question, but I will not encourage an HIV man to get married because he is going to pass it on to the wife and this is almost like murder”** - Vernon Duncan, a preacher in Grenada, last month offering his views on men living with the HIV virus.



• **“At this time there is need to earn the forgiveness of the Grenadian people by open demonstration and proof that they take their rehabilitation seriously”** - Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell last month calling on the three convicted men recently released from prison, for the murder of the island’s first left wing Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, to begin their rehabilitation back into society by showing remorse.

• **“The WICB cannot win the respect of the players and their representatives by using a ‘big stick’ approach”** – A statement last month from The West Indies Cricket Board’s (WICB) Governance Review Committee, under the chairmanship of former Jamaica Prime Minister P.J. Patterson, underlining that the players are the most valuable resource in West Indies cricket and should be treated as such.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.



Secret lives of women

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

ing the three kids behind, all because some guy whispered in her ear. I think it was more than whispers, and not in her ears either.

This Internet thing has changed the lives of so many people and has also added fuel to the fire of infidelity. So many wives have intimate relationships on the Internet that eventually grow into the real thing. I’m sure you’ve heard the term ‘cybersex’. Well, it’s true, and many women are hooked on it. It’s so easy to expose yourself and bare your soul over the Internet, especially if you’re basically a shy per-

son. After a while it gets so hot that only a consummation can cool the ardour.

But hear this now, the research says that women can actually be guilty of emotional infidelity. The therapist says that if you’re married and share secrets with a close friend of the opposite sex or go out for drinks after work all the time with the same person, you are guilty of emotional infidelity.

“You can’t have an intimate relationship at work and still have a great relationship at home. Even if there is no sex, it’s still adultery,” he says.

Well, I have been saying so for years, that women can do this emotional no sex thing and

shut out the husbands in the process. After a while she won’t even like her husband any more and not know it. Oh, she still loves him, because of long service and devotion, but doesn’t like him very much and finds everything he does annoying and irritating. Some even focus on their children so much that they virtually cheat on their husbands emotionally with the children without knowing it.

SCARY

What’s even more scary is how women can carry on affairs and act as if everything is normal at home. Usually when men have affairs the world knows - the cliché of

coming home late, scent of perfume and so on.

But it’s different for a woman. The research paper says that there are signs that men should look for. Men, be concerned, be very concerned if your wife suddenly demands more sex, seems unusually attentive to you, and wears her wedding ring more often than she did before.

“But see hear Barbara, is how you suddenly start to show me so much loving, is what you up to?”

Even so, most women who cheat stick to their old routine, leave for work same time, return home same time and none’s the wiser. But it’s what happens in

between that’s important. That’s their secret life.

Let us not forget revenge as a motive, as many women cheat to get back at their men. Revenge they say is a meal best eaten cold, but in this case it’s hot, hot, hot. Men and women cheat, but the women are better at it, and have more secrets.

Do you know where your wife went today, yesterday, the day before, or what she did, or where she is now?

That’s her secret, and you’ll never really know.

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Heading to an investment seminar? Hold on tight to your wallet seniors

HUMBERTO CRUZ

The grilled salmon at the free lunch seminar tasted fine. The mashed potatoes had too much pepper, though. But the worst after-taste was from the speakers who kept scaring and pressuring the mostly elderly audience with half-truths and distortions.

Sadly, that has been my experience at the half dozen "investment seminars" I've attended the past few months, all geared to seniors and with a free meal thrown in.

No wonder. For the first time this year, "investment seminars" made the annual list of "Top 10 Traps" compiled by state securities regulators in the United States. (The list, in alphabetical order, is available at the website of the North American Securities Administrators Association, www.nasaa.org).

"The issues related to these 'lunch programs' have been around for a while," said NASAA President Joseph Borg, referring to the sale of unsuitable investments to seniors. "But these seminars have taken on a life of their own."

Regulators in seven states - Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, North and South Carolina and Texas, and others may join, Borg said - have been examining sales practices by seminar presenters, sometimes attending the lunches unannounced to see what goes on.

SCARE TACTICS

From what I've seen, what goes on is a well-orchestrated effort to prey on seniors' fears and pressure them into high-commission products that, while appropriate for some,

may at best be unnecessary and at worst totally unsuitable for most.

"Here is the scary part," a speaker at a recent seminar



Look before you leap: Seniors must be cautious when evaluating investment opportunities.

repeated.

First it was about possibly ending up destitute in a nursing home, then about the government "taking away your Social Security benefits after you've worked all your life" (he was actually talking about paying taxes on your benefits), then about losing money in stocks.

The solution, another speaker pronounced, lay in insurance products their company offers, including "no-fee" equity-indexed annuities that "go up with the stock market but never go down." He didn't mention the often hefty and lengthy surrender charges, the undisclosed, as high as double-digit commissions built into the annuity terms, or the "caps" and other limitations that can seriously hold down returns.

"Your money is actually safer with an insurance company" than at a federally insured bank, he insisted (a common claim the Federal Insurance Deposit Corporation emphati-

cally refutes). The speaker could also refer you to a retired attorney to draw up an estate plan, including a revocable living trust, at a "terrific price".

"This may shock you, but it's something you need to know," he said about an 82-year-old widow who did not have a trust "and got kicked out of her home by her own children."

CLOSING IN

With the audience sufficiently scared, it was time to press on.

"You are all members of the 'P' (for procrastinators) club," the speaker said. "Information is only as good as what you do with it," so let's all make an appointment with his firm.

"What's the best day for you?," the speakers asked at each table, signing up almost everyone. Most, I fear, will end up buying something they don't understand, need or want.

"The problem is, products are being sold without suitability requirements and are being marketed as one size fits all," said Borg, director of the Alabama Securities Division. "They kick in the fear factor until they wear you down. When that doesn't work, they get out the hammer and try to browbeat you into their product."

As a seminar speaker said: "What are you going to do about your financial future? If the word is nothing (meaning you don't buy something) we all wasted our time." Perhaps, but at least we saved our money.

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Caribbean to benefit from new IDB projects

WASHINGTON - Several Caribbean community (CARICOM) countries are to benefit from a host of new projects from a \$10 million financing arrangement sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

The IDB last month identified Jamaica, The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Haiti, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Belize as regional beneficiaries under its Regional Public Goods Program.

The initiative was created in 2004 to promote "regional collective action on high-impact issues for economic growth and poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean", the IDB said in a statement.

The new financing, approved by the IDB Board of Executive Directors, will be provided to consortia from the 26 borrowing IDB-member countries. It said the projects will cover citizen security and the fight against

human trafficking; science and technology; regional policy coordination in support of small and medium enterprises; rural development; health; education; environment; and indigenous peoples.

The IDB has already approved a number of proposals from CARICOM countries for this year's financing. These include the Regional Engineering Accreditation System for the Greater Caribbean Region (Jamaica); Development of a Caribbean Broadband Network (The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago); Central American Protocol for Drug Procurement and Quality Control (Belize and Jamaica); and Building Capacities to Improve Competitiveness in the Caribbean Agricultural Sector (Barbados, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago).



EXCHANGE OF IDEAS



Photograph by Derrick A. Scott
Vinette Kenne, right, director general of Jamaica's Tax Office, exchanges documents Dr. Errol Cort, Antigua and Barbuda's minister of finance, after they signed a tri-partite cooperation agreement between the Organization of American States (OAS) and the governments of both countries last month in Washington D.C. Antigua and Barbuda will implement Jamaica's Customs Automated Services (CASE), designed to provide customs with online trading interaction between countries worldwide.

LIAT to buy out Caribbean Star

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - LIAT has scrapped plans of a merger or cashless deal with Caribbean Star, agreeing instead to buy out the remaining assets of the Sir Allen Stanford-owned airline for \$5 million.

"We've come to the conclusion now that rather than giving up the 35 percent share of ownership of the company, we will just pay him an amount - I believe five million dollars and for the rest of his assets," said Noel Lynch, the Barbados tourism and international transport minister.

Barbados is one of the three major shareholder governments of LIAT.

Lynch told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) that it is likely that the purchase would be funded

through a \$60 million loan LIAT is negotiating with the Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). Officials

said that the funds would also be used to settle the airline's debts and restructure its operations.

A merger plan had initially been set out for the two carriers, but that was scrapped and a cashless deal put in place, which would have seen Sir Allen getting 35 percent ownership of LIAT.



Lynch

CAN WE TALK?



Peter A. Webley,
Publisher

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

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

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FOOD

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Juicy steaks on the outdoor grill can steal the summer show

WOLFGANG PUCK

With the summer grilling season in full swing, home cooks keep asking for advice on the best way to cook steaks outdoors.

Achieving steak success at home is surprisingly simple.

Remember that great results become much easier if you start with the right steaks. If budget allows, look for USDA Prime meat, the highest quality available in tenderness and flavor, which will also ensure great results.

Use steaks from cattle that have been raised humanely, using traditional, sustainable farming methods, without antibiotics or hormones.

Next comes the cut. In general, since grilling is a quick method, you need a tender steak like a New York, from the center loin; a rib-eye, from the middle of the ribs; a T-bone, from the short loin; or, for ultra tenderness, a tenderloin, also called filet mignon.

If you choose a less expensive cut, such as flank or hanger steaks, you'll ensure more tender results by grilling them no more than medium, then letting them rest for 15 minutes after cooking before thinly slicing across the grain.

Whatever the steak, let it come to room temperature for an hour before grilling, to ensure quick, even cooking. Then, just before cooking, season generously on both sides with sea salt and freshly ground pepper and brush with olive oil to prevent sticking and help them brown.

COOKING

As for the cooking itself, start all steaks directly over the hottest part of the fire. If they're about an inch thick, you can do all the cooking there. But thicker steaks should be seared over the hottest area for three minutes per side, then moved to the side to finish cooking.

Test for doneness with an instant-read grilling thermometer inserted into the thickest part; 130 F to 140 F (54° C to 60° C) indicates a juicy medium-rare steak.

All that's left is to serve it however you like - on its own or with a sauce made in the kitchen, like my easy mixture of buttery, cognac-laced mushrooms. Simple touches like that are among the secrets to steak success.

New York steaks with mushrooms, grilled scallions

INGREDIENTS

- 4 New York strip steaks, each

eight to 10 ounces (240 to 300 g), cut an inch (2.5 cm) thick

- 2 cups good-quality canned beef broth, reduced to a cup (in a skillet)
- 2 ounces (60 g) unsalted butter
- 1 pound (500 g) fresh shiitake or oyster mushrooms, wiped clean, trimmed and cut into slices a quarter inch (6 mm) thick
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup cognac (80 ml)
- 1 small package fresh enoki mushrooms
- 12 large scallions
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for brushing
- Chopped fresh chives, for garnish

METHOD

Remove the steaks and leave them at room temperature for about an hour.

Meanwhile, build a fire in an outdoor charcoal grill or preheat a gas grill. At the same time, put the broth in a wide skillet, bring to a boil and continue boiling until reduced to a cup (250 ml), about 10 to 15 minutes. Set aside.

In a heavy skillet, heat two tablespoons of the butter over high heat until bubbling slightly. Add the shiitakes and saute, stirring frequently, until they



'Simple touches are among the secrets to steak success'.

begin to brown slightly, three to five minutes. Season lightly with salt and pepper.

Remove from the heat, remove the mushrooms from the pan and transfer to a bowl. Return the skillet to low heat, carefully pour in the cognac and, with a long kitchen match, carefully ignite. Let the flames die out on their own. Then raise the heat and, while stirring and scraping with a wooden spoon to deglaze any pan deposits, cook until the cognac has reduced to two tablespoons, about one to two minutes.

Stir in the reduced beef broth and continue cooking until the liquid has thickened slightly, but is still fairly light, two to three minutes more. Stir the shiitake mushrooms and their juices back into the skillet and taste and adjust the season-

ings if necessary. A small piece at a time, stir in the remaining two tablespoons butter. Then stir in the enoki mushrooms. Set the sauce aside, covered to keep it warm.

When the grill is hot, lightly brush the scallions with a little olive oil. Grill them until browned and tender, but still crunchy, about two minutes per side. Set the onions aside and keep them warm. Season the steaks on both sides with salt and pepper. Brush them with olive oil.

Grill them until medium-rare, three to four minutes per side. Remove from the heat and let rest for a minute or two in a warm place.

Serves four.

If necessary, reheat the sauce briefly.

Place a grilled scallion on the side of each of four warmed dinner plates. Spoon most of the mushroom sauce in the middle of the plates, reserving a few tablespoons. Place a steak on top of the sauce, spoon the remaining sauce onto the center of the steak, garnish with chives and serve immediately.

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Publix Joins You in Celebrating Jamaica's Independence Day—8.6.07

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H E A L T H

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A GIFT OF HEALTH



- Photograph by Derrick A. Scott

Dan Majors, left, a registered nurse at the Acute Care Unit, Vanderbilt Medical Center in the United States, explains the workings of medical equipment being donated to Jamaica to, from left, Everard Barton, chairman, Department of Medicine, University of West Indies; Richard Phidd, manager of patient care services at the unit; and Jamaica's Ambassador to the U.S. Gordon Shirley. Twenty-one dialysis machines, valued at \$315,000, were donated last month by Vanderbilt Medical Center's Division of Nephrology and the Department of Medicine, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. Shirley accepted the gift on behalf of the Jamaica government.

Seven sensible steps for pill-taking safety

SUZY COHEN

QUESTION: My pill was smaller this month than it normally is. When I called my pharmacy, they said they gave me a lower dosage of the same drug by accident. I am understanding because this problem was minor and I've made mistakes myself. But, Suzy, I think you should tell readers how to cut down on medication errors. - D.W., Coconut Creek, Florida.

ANSWER: You're fortunate that your medicine was just a lower dose, rather than the wrong drug altogether!

Dispensing errors are bound to happen; pharmacists are human and some drugstores time their pharmacists to see how efficiently they work. Despite the demands for high quality customer service, and the pressure, most pharmacists have a really good track record considering that they fill thousands of prescriptions each week.

Even though pharmacists do occasionally make a medica-

tion dispensing error, they catch, exponentially, more errors than they make. Most you never know about because by the time you're handed your bag at the register, the pharmacist has already called to lower a potentially toxic dosage, or asked your doctor to change your medication altogether because of an allergy or potentially harmful interaction.

To improve your safety at the pharmacy counter, follow these seven sensible steps:

- Don't hurry the pharmacist. Pressuring anyone who has your life, literally, in their hands is never smart. Plan ahead.
- Get into the habit of dropping off prescriptions and coming back the next day for them. It's considerate because it allows the pharmacist time to fill "waiting" prescriptions for people in pain who've just left the hospital.
- Call your refills in at least a day ahead.
- Have your doctor write your prescription(s) legibly. Do you think it matters if you get Plavix or Paxil? Lisinopril or Lipitor?

You bet your life it does.

- Don't put several different pills in one bottle (or pocket). You might chug the blue pill when you meant to take the white one!
- Stick to the same pharmacy. I know those "Transfer Your Prescription" coupons are tempting, but how can your pharmacist effectively screen for interactions, or brainstorm with your physician, if some of your meds are missing from your profile?
- Call your pharmacist immediately if there's a change in the color, size or shape of any of your medications.

DID YOU KNOW? A nighttime cup of Passion Flower tea could help you relax and get to sleep.

Suzy Cohen is a pharmacist and author of "The 24-Hour Pharmacist". The information above is not intended to treat, cure or diagnose your condition.

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Bermuda joins U.S. company to start stem cell research

HAMILTON, Bermuda, CMC – Premier Ewart Brown and his wife Wanda have teamed up with an American company, Stemedica Cell Technologies, to open a stem cell research center in Bermuda later this year.

Brown, a physician who is president of Bermuda Healthcare Services, told a news conference last month that the announcement was one of the most exciting developments in healthcare on the island in recent times.

It could ultimately lead to scores of patients a year flying to Bermuda to receive revolutionary treatment that could help cure illnesses such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and spinal cord injuries.

The company stressed it would use adult stem cells technology, and would not

involve the destruction of embryos, which has attracted opposition from church groups across the world.

The clinic, named Brown-Darrell after the premier's parents, will be on the site of a property in Smith's parish, which is owned by Brown and is currently being refurbished. It will initially be staffed by at least three Bermuda healthcare physicians and two Stemedica physicians. To begin with, it will focus solely on research, but eventually hopes to be able to treat one or two stem cell patients a week.

Dr. Maynard Howe, chief executive officer of the California-based Stemedica, said Bermuda was chosen because of its location near to the U.S.

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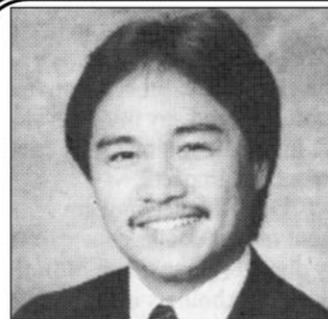


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From 'Foreign' to 'Bashment', Jamaican filmmakers make big screen splash

He was born in Jamaica, attended high school there and graduated from college in the United States with a degree in business. He worked as an accountant and wrote poetry. Now **Steve "Tehut-Nine" McAlpin** is a New York-based independent filmmaker, with two movies

Q: "Foreign", it was the same production crew?

A: Same production team. It was myself and Mykal as co-writers and we produced that one ourselves (and acted in it). I also directed it. That one came out in 2005. Unfortunately it got bootlegged. Besides that, it had a great run. People really

enjoyed it. Still enjoy it. To this day everywhere you go they say 'I saw it'. People react to it favorably. But after that we wanted to do another movie.

Q: So the success of "Foreign" made you want to do "Bashment"?

A: When we decided to do "Bashment" we wanted to do something that could not only showcase our talents, the skill sets that we have, but to show people the range, that we had range. When we did "Foreign" everybody was 'when are you gonna do part two or part three?' You know what I mean?

That's kinda even the way it is with "Bashment" now. Those who've seen it want to know when part two is coming out. And so, being a writer, being that my first strength in this is the writing side, I never like to pigeon-hole myself into doing just one thing and always staying in one groove. So I wanted to do something a little bit more action-oriented, something more dramatic. So we set out to do the dancehall. The dancing aspect of the dancehall (Caribbean) community was very, very prominent at the time so we said we wanted to incorporate something in our next movie that had to do with that.

Q: A lot of Jamaican movies are made with the dancehall

theme. Why did you choose that? Isn't that like doing a story that has already been done?

A: The dancehall theme that has been done a lot, those movies are done around (dancehall) artists. It doesn't really showcase them doing any real acting. They're just playing themselves. And usually it has to do with some kind of competition in the end. And to me that has already been done. That's not what "Bashment" incorporates in the story that we're telling. We're dealing with a young guy (lead actor Fax) who is pretty much very intelligent, a college graduate. He is a bit ambivalent about what he wants to do moving forward and so he spends a lot of time hang-

ing out with his friends and chasing girls and doing different things.

That's one story line. There are actually five story-lines running concurrently throughout the movie and they all work cohesively to tell the tale that brings us to the sub-title of the movie "The Fork In the Road". It's a cautionary tale really, dealing with friendship, dealing with greed, even with tragedy and then dealing with redemption. But ultimately it boils down to you making a choice. We all have to make choices and sometimes the choices we make determine how our lives turn out.

Q: Moviemaking is not a simple business, neither is it cheap. How much did it take to make "Foreign" and how much did it take to make "Bashment"?

A: Well "Foreign" was a work straight from the heart. We didn't really have the budget for that. It cost some money, but I can't go into what the actual figure is because the process of making "Foreign" was an on and off thing. We were just happy that we finally had it finished.

In all honesty, it wasn't something that we were doing for commercial purposes. We were doing it initially just for the core group of friends that we had and when we sat down and looked at the edited ver-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)



The Fork In The Road

depicting the lives of Caribbean people in America to his credit. In this edited interview with **Caribbean Today's Managing Editor Gordon Williams**, conducted at a recent screening of his latest flick "Bashment" in Atlanta, Georgia, the 32-year-old McAlpin talks about the film and his own involvement in the business.

QUESTION: What's your role with the film "Bashment"?

ANSWER: In one lump sum, from all angles I am the principal writer, screenwriter. I have a co-writer, Mr. Mykal Fax, and I also have a production credit. I'm one of the executive producers, alongside Mykal Fox, again, and Brian Blake. I shot the movie and also directed it and played the editor as well. (He also acts as "Job" and Fax and Blake also have roles.)

Q: How long has this movie been in the making?

A: Since 2006. We had the first draft of the script late 2005 and we started actual production on the movie early 2006...

Q: What's the motivation behind making "Bashment"?

A: First of all it is something that I love to do. (Filmmaking) is something that I enjoy doing. After the success of our first film ("Foreign") we didn't want to just stop there.



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Morocco music festival to help Caribbean fight HIV/AIDS

DESMOND BROWN

TANGIER, Morocco – Caribbean community (CARICOM) countries are set to receive a big boost in their fight against HIV/AIDS, when Morocco stages a musical festival in three Caribbean countries later this year.

Officials of the North African country told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)** that what is being dubbed as the "Morocco Music Festival" would be held in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

The festival, which will

include concerts featuring musical bands from Morocco, will run for 10 days in each of the three countries from the second week of September. There will be a three-day break between each festival.

"HIV/AIDS is a very big problem in the Caribbean as it is in Morocco," Jean Paul Coupal, Morocco's special envoy to CARICOM told **CMC**.

"HIV is our biggest living concern right now and every country has to tackle it in a different way."

CARICOM's Assistant Secretary General Dr. Edward

Greene, who led a Caribbean delegation to Morocco for last month's first-ever CARICOM/Morocco Symposium on South-South Cooperation, welcomed the initiative.

WELCOMED

"The Morocco Festival in support of HIV/AIDS is most welcome as it highlights the reduction of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS," Greene said.

"This coincides with the main objectives in the current Caribbean Regional Strategic Plan of the Pan Caribbean

Partnership (PANCAP) against HIV/AIDS.

"Consequently, CARICOM and PANCAP (Pan Caribbean Programme Against HIV/AIDS) look forward to collaboration in this very important event," he said.

In its 2006 epidemic update, the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS said that there were 250,000 people living with HIV in the Caribbean, with nearly three quarters of them in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. It said that national adult HIV prevalence was high through-

out the region; one percent to two percent in Barbados, Dominican Republic and Jamaica, and two to four percent in the Bahamas, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago.

Overall, an estimated 27,000 people in the Caribbean became infected with HIV last year, but UNAIDS and the World Health Organization (WHO) said that several countries were making inroads against the epidemic as a result of having wider access to anti-retroviral drugs.



From 'Foreign' to 'Bashment', Jamaican filmmakers make big screen splash

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

sion we said 'I think we got something here. Let's put it out on DVD and see what happens'. So we did 2,000 copies of it initially and within two weeks those were gone... They flew...

Q: So you covered the cost of making it?

A: Basically. We covered all the money we spent and by time we got to our second print of the film it was already bootlegged everywhere, from south coast to north coast, east coast to west coast. Outside the country as well.

Q: What about "Bashment", how much did it cost you to make?

A: "Bashment" was a different beast. The overall budget for "Bashment" was a little bit over \$75,000. In all honesty it was probably a lot more than that, but because of how we manipulated and worked out some of our contracting with the actors and people we worked with, we were able to not spend as much on it.

Q: You're making a profit on it since its release?

A: Well, since its release, we're scratching the surface and looking for that break. We've gotten some good feedback from it, and actually some great opportunities lie ahead. For example, we've gotten theatrical release in Jamaica, at all the theaters down there. We're shopping it around to different film festivals. We're doing our own screenings at the same time. Doing all these things we're accumulating exposure while we're trying to recoup the expense of making the movie. I can't say that we've already broken even, but we are on the right path.

Q: Your background, you were

born in Jamaica, and a lot of your crew is from Jamaica?

A: Basically. Everybody is from there. There may be one or two people that's in the film who were born on the Stateside (U.S.). The large portion of the cast and the crew are Jamaican-born.

Q: What kind of background do you have in films?

A: I'm a creative person first and foremost. I love movies. I love the writing of a movie, I love the storytelling aspects of the movie. So it started just being an avid observer, a patron of the art and then becoming a student, literally - studying, buying books, watching movies.

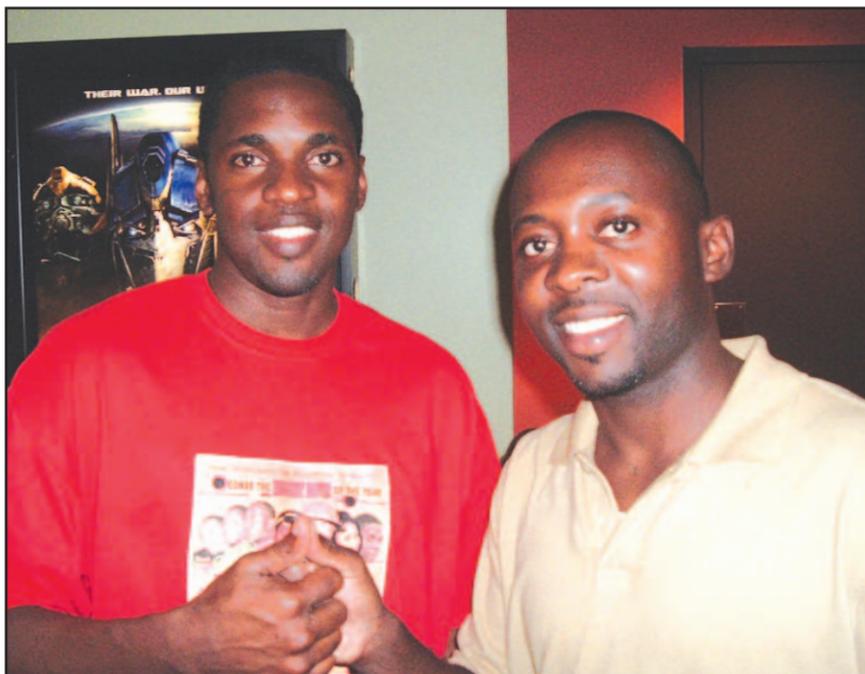
Q: Did you go to film school, did you have formal training?

A: No film school, no formal training. My formal training comes from watching and learning, patterning other people who went to school for the actual training.

Q: The violence theme...it's prevalent throughout the movie. Looking back after making the film, are you satisfied with how that came off or do you think maybe you went a bit overboard?

A: I think the violence in the movie, I was basically trying to mirror some of the things that really happen - you know what I mean - especially living in Brooklyn and being from Jamaica where violence is rampant. Some people might feel like it's a little bit over the top or a little much, but it's to keep the realness of the character.

Whenever I do a project I like authenticity. I like if a character is supposed to be a bad boy, you have to portray him as a bad boy. If he's a church boy, you don't try to portray the church boy as a bad boy, unless that's the transition they make. So I just try



- Photograph by Gordon Williams

Mykal Fax, left, and Steve "Tehut-Nine" McAlpin are the major forces behind the film "Bashment".

to stay true to the characters. I let the story just play itself out because at the end of the whole thing I wanted people to come away with the sense of who these characters were and how a simple little thing, as giving somebody a wrong name or getting involved with the wrong person, can become (dangerous)...

Q: The (violence) carried a whole lot of weight...What's the good message coming out of this?

A: The message is about your choices. If you look at one of the last scenes in the movie, when the character called "Rupert" is talking to Mykal ("Cymbal") and he says that 'since you say you feel like your life is at a fork in the road, let me ask you the same question I asked "Son Son"', and he doesn't really ask it to him ("Cymbal"), he asks it really to the audience: What choice are you gonna make?

So I really made this film to really, in a way reach out to people. It's a very layered

film, so it's hard to even digest everything that is in it in just one viewing. It's very layered. There's a lot of different pieces in there. It's talking about basic issues about the youth. "Son Son" (the film's tragic figure who lives and dies violently) is a young man. He's 17 years old and his name is really "Donovan Future". And you kind of figure that the future of the youth is missing. And if they continue down this path, I think, that's basically where they're gonna end up (like "Son Son").

I really wanted to just impact somebody in the audience because there are a lot of these young guys that look at "Son Son" as this hero and they glorify his lifestyle. I look at those and say 'look at all the different badmen who have come up in Jamaica and gone. What always happen to them? They either end up in jail or dead.' But yet you have these guys who continue popping up. They wanna emulate that lifestyle. So I wanted to

really go in there, and that's why at the very end I kept "Son Son" for so long, 'cause I wanted to get people to get it: 'This is where you're gonna end up'. And everybody knew he was gonna end up like that. That's the sad thing.

So the message is not necessarily to glorify violence, but to show the reality of it and to show that your choices do have consequences and the consequences not only affect you, but it affects the people around you, whether it's your friends, your family, and yourself as well.

Q: How do you approach distribution as a small production company? What are the plans for widespread distribution and what are the obstacles facing you?

A: Right now we're independent. If you start up independent you find that you have to stay independent for a while, until somebody catches on to the magic that people see in the work.

There's a lot of obstacles, because right now we're relatively unknown to the larger industry. We're appealing to a Caribbean market they (big movie companies) don't recognize for film... That's a big challenge. We've reached out to the market in Jamaica and we've gotten good feedback. We've actually gained island wide distribution through Palace Amusement... We've submitted to film festivals... That gives us an advantage because they like to promote diversity.



Garvey birthday celebration in August

Entertainment and cultural awareness will mark a celebration of the 120th anniversary of the birth of Jamaican National Hero Marcus Mosiah Garvey this month in South Florida.

The "2007 Marcus Garvey Rootz Extravaganza", is

scheduled for 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Aug. 17 at the Broward Community College south campus, 7200 Pines Boulevard in Pembroke Pines.

Dr. Leonard Jeffries, black studies professor at City College in New York, is the scheduled guest speaker.



Garvey

Sylvia Jordan, a veteran of the Garvey Movement, will be honored by the organizers.

Vocalist Empress Trejah Ethiopia from New York and Shemana Dixon, Florida International University's "Miss Omega Psi Phi 2007", are also listed among the highlights of the program, along with audio-visual presentations with Priest Dougie and I. Jabulani Tafari, and the Roots & Culture Dancers. The master of ceremonies is radio personality Kevin "Ital-K" Smith.

Admission to the event, presented by the Rootz Foundation, Broward County Library and the Broward Community College, is free.

For more information, call **954-981-1176** or the library hotline, **954-201-8825**.

Ninja Man's U.S. return to highlight New York's 'Reggae Carifest 2007'

Controversial Jamaican dancehall deejay Ninja Man is scheduled to perform in the United States for the first time in some 15 years when he appears at "Reggae Carifest 2007" this month in New York.

The show, which also lists acts such as South African Lucky Dube, Third World, Buju Banton, Bounty Killer, Yellow Man, Movado, Pinchers and Collie Buddz, is slated for Aug. 25 at Randall's Island.

It is being organized by Team Legendary under the banner "Give Peace A Chance".

"Know that all the war in

the business have to come to an end," Ninja Man was quoted in a recent press release issued by the organizers.

"Reggae Carifest" was launched in 1998 to showcase Caribbean culture.

"We are once again doing our part in trying to give the people what they want by moving mountains to bring together on one stage dancehall's finest and reggae greats for a show," said Team Legendary's D'Niscio Brooks.

For more information, visit www.reggaecarifest.com

BLOWING UP A STORM



Trumpeter Etienne Charles thrilled the audience at the recent "Jazz at Lincoln Center" show in New York. Looking on are Arturo Tappin on saxophone and Nicholas Brancker on bass. On drums is Buddy Williams.

ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

• **'Irie Jamboree'**

Several top reggae/dancehall acts, including Stephen Marley, Morgan Heritage and Lady Saw, are in the lineup for "Irie Jamboree 2k7" set for Sept. 2 at Roy Wilkins Park in Queens, New York.

For more information, visit www.iriejamboree.com or call 1-888-irie-nyc.

• **Debate over foreign judges for Grenada's carnival**

The national calypso competitions in this month's carnival in Grenada will be presided over by foreign judges, despite strong objections from some calypsonians in the island.

The unprecedented and contro-

versial decision to seek foreign judges was announced by Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell in May.

• **St. Lucians sweep Caribbean soca contest**

St. Lucian singers made a clean sweep of the "Caribbean Soca Monarch" competition last month.

Jonathan St. Rose, under the sobriquet, "Ninja Dan", pulled away from a field of seven contenders, including defending monarch "Mr. Vibes" from Trinidad and Tobago, to cop the title.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.



Publix joins you in celebrating Trinidad & Tobago's Independence Day—8.31.07

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BACK TO SCHOOL

~ A special Caribbean Today advertising feature

Tips for back-to-school technology shopping

(ARA) – Remember when your biggest back-to-school shopping challenge was finding your elementary student the coolest pair of sneakers and trendy T-shirts?

Now they're high school or college bound and it's a lot more complicated.

Today, shopping for school

means making sure they have all the technology they'll need to make it through the school year. But before you buy, make sure you do your homework and know what kids really need to succeed.

"Computers in school are now as commonplace as computers in homes," says Paul

Ewert, executive vice president and general merchandising manager of CompUSA.

"Parents and educators have come to rely on technology as an important tool to enhance learning for children."

Preparing your children in terms of technology requires more than just making sure their laptop is in working order. Ewert and the technology experts at CompUSA offer the following tips to help you make smart back-to-school shopping decisions:

- If your teenager carries his laptop to school, be sure to invest in locks. Locks will prevent unauthorized users from stealing or accessing the computer. Choose cut-resistant galvanized steel combination locks.
- A great alternative to carrying the entire laptop is to invest in a USB flash drive. "USB flash drives have become hugely popular as reliable, portable pocket-sized means of saving papers, presentations and even music and photos in a device smaller than your thumb," Ewert says. "For most students' needs, 1GB and higher capacities are recommended, with 2GB becoming the new standard for safe storage of information large enough for most purposes."

- For safeguarding important schoolwork, as well as photos, videos and music, an external hard drive acts as a "safe-deposit box". The drives can be



used to back up data in the event of a system crash, corrupted files, accidental erasures or similar maladies common in computers used in a student environment.

"Students should consider an external hard drive of 300 MB or greater, up to 1 Terabyte," says Ewert. "The bigger they are, the more information they can store."

- Many students are also using their cell phones or digital cameras to store photos, videos and music. Additional memory cards greatly expand the storage capacity of these devices. "The most popular memory card is the mobile Secure Digital (SD) cards for cell phones," suggests Ewert. "These are good for saving hundreds of pictures, music files, etc., on a student's phone or Blackberry."

- Repetitive motion injuries are common among people who spend hours a day typing, including students. An ergonomic keyboard and

mouse can help prevent injury and improve posture by helping position the hands, wrists and forearms naturally. Ewert recommends you test-drive a model in the store before you buy it.

"Everyone's hands and wrists are unique," he says. "It's important to find the one that best fits you."

- All work and no play makes for very bored students, so be sure to throw in some technology that's just for fun, like Slingbox, which allows students to tune into their local TV shows while away at school, and add-on TV Tuners that can turn a dorm room PC into a complete entertainment center.

- Finally, on a practical note, consider how you will handle situations when your computer and other technology are not working properly. Consider investing in a technology service plan for your students. Often, this can be available at a discount when you purchase a new laptop or desktop computer.

To learn more about back to school technology, stop by your local CompUSA store or go online to www.compUSA.com to view a Back to School Buying Guide.

Courtesy of ARAcontent



Belize offers free textbooks

BELMOPAN, Belize, CMC – The Belize government has launched an ambitious multi-million dollar national textbook program, warning school principals and other educators that participation in the project was not optional.

"It has been reported to me that there are a few principals and teachers who have suggested an intention not to have their schools or students participate in the textbook program. This is unwise, unreasonable and unacceptable. I remind everyone that this is not an optional program," said Education Minister Francis Fonseca.

He said that those who were seeking to undermine the project were doing a disservice to school children and the nation.

20-YEAR WAIT

The government said that it had spent an estimated BZ\$6.5 million (\$3.3 million) on launching the project that would involve providing free textbooks in five core subject areas to all primary school children attending govern-

ment and denominational primary schools.

Fonseca said that while wide consultation had been held prior to the launch of the initiative, it had taken the authorities over 20 years to get the project started.

"I am satisfied, therefore, that the consultations have been meaningful and adequate, and the evaluation process credible and reliable. We have talked enough; it is now time for us to act in the best interest of the children of Belize," he said.

While acknowledging there would be problems during the first year of the program, the education minister assured citizens that the authorities were "fully prepared to manage this program effectively and efficiently."



Fonseca

BACK-TO-SCHOOL BOOST



This little girl was among more than 70 children who will return to classes prepared to battle common sicknesses after receiving immunizations during the North Broward Hospital District's (NBHD) annual back-to-school health drive last month in South Florida. Along with school immunizations, NBHD volunteers and community health services coordinators provided more than 400 participants with health information, blood pressure and sickle cell screenings. Organizations from all over the county, including the Florida Health Department, also volunteered their services. The Fort Lauderdale Police Department provided fingerprint services for school children and their parents. Guests were provided with live entertainment, food, backpacks, school supplies and prizes.

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BACK TO SCHOOL

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Conquer school year clutter in six easy steps

(ARA) - Clutter is inevitable, especially during the school year when a new batch of graded papers, permission slips and loot from classroom parties arrive on a daily basis.

"Talk to any family with



school-aged children and you'll find them overrun with clutter," says Ginny Bean, a mother of three boys ages 12, 17 and 18, and publisher of Ginny's, a house wares catalog. Necessity has taught Bean a thing or two about organization over the years. Bean suggests the following for cutting

clutter and getting organized this back-to-school season:

- **Establish a daily backpack routine** - Make a habit of sorting through your children's backpacks every day after school. Use a tiered letter sorter or filing system with designated slots for each child's papers, and an "a.s.a.p." space for teachers' notes, permission slips and anything else that requires immediate attention.

For papers and artwork your child can't part with, consider a storage cart for her room, like the 1-2-3 Storage Cart that provides six colorful numbered bins. Think "1" for books, "2" for art projects, and take it from there. Bins are deep enough to hold months' worth of papers and art, so you and your child can sort and pick favorites over school breaks, rather than making those tough on-the-spot decisions.

- **Establish a designated homework spot** - Carving out a specified homework space for every

child can be a challenge in multiple-child families. Portable work spaces can be the perfect solution. Bean favors a folding computer desk, offered through her catalog, that folds to a size not much larger than a standard card table chair for easy storage.

- **Organize your entryway for a speedy exit** - Eliminate the last-minute morning backpack search by setting up a spot near the door for backpacks and other things that need to go to school, such as hats and gloves, books, sports equipment and musical instruments.

Entryway benches with hidden storage compartments provide a convenient place to sit while pulling on shoes and drawer space for stowing everything from outdoor gear to keys and cell phones.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)

Survival guide for teens, parents

(ARA) - Your teen may act "too cool for school", but the truth is that school is a major source of stress for teens.

According to a survey by kidshealth.org of over 600 teens ages 14 to 17, school-work (32 percent), social issues (30 percent) and appearance (25 percent) topped the list of back-to-school worries most cited by teens.

Though these issues are complex, there are steps you can take to reduce your child's (and your own) stress level and enjoy a new start.

The start of the school year marks a time of new subjects, new teachers, and often, different classmates. Transitioning into a new school can be especially difficult. Manage the transition by attacking stressors head on.

First day jitters

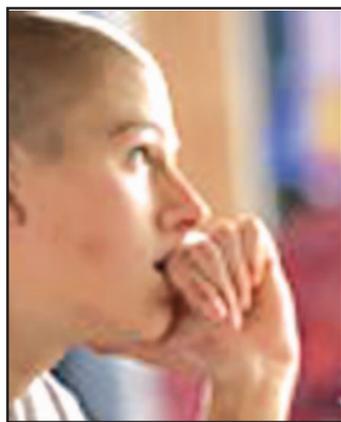
- Have a back-to-school barbecue so your teen can re-connect with classmates to take some of the first impression pressures off the dreaded "first day".
- Have your kids and their friends walk through their schedules on campus so getting lost isn't an issue.

Create a sensible pace

- Balance extracurricular activities and even "down time" with your teen's study

schedule.

- Make sure your teen is sleeping enough. The American Sleep Disorder Association says the average teen needs 9.5 hours per day. Weekend sleep schedules shouldn't deviate by more than one or two hours to maintain consistency.



- Eat breakfast. According to the American Dietetic Association, eating breakfast can upstart your teen's metabolism, which helps with weight control, mood and school performance.

Academics

- Set goals relative to your child's strengths and weaknesses. Unrealistic expectations will increase anxiety and may lead to giving up.

- Have your teen take a learning style test to find the most

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)



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High tech checklist for A-plus students

(ARA) - Preparing for school is more than just buying pencils and notebooks with today's tech-savvy students.

Here's a back-to-school technology checklist for high-school and college-bound students to help make their school year more productive. From "must-have" staples to "nice-to-have" gadgets, students are taking some pretty pricey gear with them to school and they need to know how to use it as well as how to protect it.

Get It: laptop computer - The laptop computer now plays multiple roles in a student's life - typewriter, library, stereo, television, telephone, etc. Dell, HP and Gateway all have laptops for under \$1,000.

Protect it: Laptop tracking and recovery software, Computrace LoJack for Laptops

A laptop is stolen every 53 seconds in the United States. Computrace LoJack for Laptops from Absolute Software can help track down and locate lost or stolen machines, and with the help of local authorities, return it to you. Don't forget the anti-virus, anti-spyware, encryption and firewall software as well as a good cable lock as a visual theft deterrent.

Get It: MP3 Player - Today's MP3 players offer much more than just music. Some have recording functions that allow you to digitally record a lecture and play it back for studying. Didn't have time to read the book? Get it in digital format and listen to it before your test. These nifty gadgets are also portable storage devices. They can hold and transfer files when you are not carrying your laptop.

Protect it: Cases, screen pro-

tectors and identification tags

Most MP3 players need more protection from their owners than would-be thieves. A good soft or hard case and screen protector can keep your MP3 player safe from falls, spills and everyday use. A number of companies make identification tags for gadgets



like these so good Samaritans can return items to their rightful owners. iPods can also be engraved with your personal information.

Get It: portable gaming system

These devices are compact and durable and offer plenty of playtime for kids - and kids at heart. The latest gaming systems offer much more than child's play. Applications for the devices include music, video, photos, Internet and wireless connectivity.

Protect it: Common sense and a locked cabinet

Portable gaming systems are a lot of fun, but losing one is no joke. Use common sense if using the device in public. (You wouldn't play with three \$100 bills on the subway, would you?) And, when back in the dorm room, keep it in an inconspicuous place when it's not in use. It's a good idea to have a locking cabinet to keep your gaming devices and other valuables locked up when you are out of the room.

Get It: cell phone, camera phone or Personal Digital

Assistant (PDA) - Today's cell phones help students communicate and collaborate on all fronts: via phone, email, text message, IM and, in some cases, video.

Although using the devices in the classroom may be controversial, parents and friends certainly appreciate being able to communicate with students at a moments' notice. Plus, if you can store files or receive emails on your phone, you catch some extra study time no matter where you are.

Protect it: passwords, contact information and insurance. Many cell phones and portable computing devices can be password-protected to keep nefarious users out of your address book. If you have sensitive data, personal information or pictures on your phone that you don't want anyone else to get their hands on, using the devices built-in security can offer some protection. You might also want to label the phone, externally or through a locked screen saver, with your personal information so it can be returned to you. Finally, if you invested in a \$500 iPhone or Blackberry, pay the few extra dollars for the service plan to replace it if lost or stolen.

Courtesy of ARAcontent



Time-saving, back-to-school tips for the savvy mothers

(ARA) - When the end of summer finally rolls around it can be difficult to see past all the beach-bumming, lemonade-sipping and sun-soaking you've enjoyed for the past few months. But before you know it, the kids are going back to school and, once again, good old mom is busy arranging car-pooling schedules, packing lunches and helping with math homework.

Even though after-school activities and weekend games can weigh heavily on a time-starved mom, hope is not lost. With a few adjustments to the daily routine, moms everywhere can finally enjoy some time for themselves during the back-to-school season, while still maintaining a happy household.

Cook smart, eat smart - Save time during the week by preparing meals ahead of time. Buy universal ingredients like chicken, vegetables, sauce and cheese to create a variety of dishes without having to over think it.

Scatter the ingredients on store-bought dough to make kid-friendly pizza or mix everything together and serve over pasta for a more rustic meal. You can even grill the

veggies for fajitas to add a little sizzle to the week.

Just prepare all the meals for the week ahead and store the items in separate containers to keep the food fresh.



When you're ready to eat, simply reheat and serve for a quick and easy food fix.

Treat school lunches the same way. Pack your child's lunches in advance or teach them to make healthy choices so they can pack their own - saving you hours of time during the work week.

Let someone else do the dirty work - House cleaning services are gaining in popularity and it's easy to see why. With the majority of mom's time consumed by work and parenting, it's hard to find time to tackle cleaning duties around

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

Survival guide for teens, parents

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19)

effective way for him or her to study:

<http://homeworktips.about.com/od/homeworkhelp/a/lstyle-qz.htm>

- Host study groups at your home (with food) to foster friendships from casual class acquaintances and improve academics.

FEELING CONFIDENT

Since appearance figures prominently in teens' stress list, addressing clothes, hair and skin - relatively "quick and easy" fixes - goes a long way.

Back-to-school fashion

- Choose a few key pieces from fashion magazines with your teen. Make those the priority pieces and build around them.
- Accomplish the "retro-cool" look on a budget at second-hand or consignment stores.
- If your teen is craving a trendy haircut, find a styling school to get a high-end cut for less. Use an online virtual makeover tool to select a style first, without the commitment

(www.makeovers.ivillage.com is one example).

- Reserve some budget for the unanticipated hot trends seen roaming the halls once school starts.

Skin: the catch-22

- Stress causes acne and acne causes stress. "Acne can cause problems that go beyond skin-deep, especially when it affects your social life and even schoolwork," says Dr. Denise Metry of Baylor College of Medicine.

Stress in turn can stimulate oil production and cause more breakouts. So, it's important to treat acne at its source and break the cycle with a product like Nature's Cure 2-Part Acne Treatment (see www.naturescure.com). The treatment includes a benzoyl peroxide cream that clears blemishes on the outside and all-natural tablets that work from the inside to fight acne with no side effects.

- Proper skin care makes a difference. Look for daily care systems or kits that will give your teen a routine to stick with. Choose products which

have proven acne-fighting ingredients like benzoyl peroxide or salicylic acid for efficacy and botanicals like aloe and chamomile for gentleness and soothing. Make sure anything your teens put on their skin - including moisturizers, make-up and sunscreen - is either anti-acne or non-comedogenic (won't clog pores).

- Visit a dermatologist if over-the-counter remedies have not alleviated symptoms after a few months.

SUPPORT COUNTS

While you can't eliminate back-to-school stress, you can minimize it. Recognize that your child's sources of stress are very real to him or her, even if they seem foreign, if not trivial, to you. Regardless, listen to and support his or her concerns and interests.

Even if your "too cool" teen doesn't show it, knowing they have your support makes all the difference.

Courtesy of ARAcontent



Conquer school year clutter in six easy steps

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19)

- Choose clothes for the next day - Encourage your child to spend a few minutes each night selecting his or her school clothes for the following day. Make it a rule that the child must stick with these choices - no dawdling in the morning because he or she doesn't want to wear what was chosen last night.

- Plan breakfast the night before - Set the kitchen table in advance and make cereal and bread available to those who are ready first. Streamline breakfast preparation with helpful products like the 3-in-1 Breakfast Center

that combines a pause-and-serve coffee maker, toaster oven, and even a grill for frying eggs and sausage, into one handy appliance. The product is also a great space and time-saver for the busy home or college apartment.

- Set your alarm clock earlier - Do yourself a favor by rising half an hour before everyone else. Things tend to go much more smoothly in the morning if you're showered and dressed before waking the kids.

Courtesy of ARAcontent



BACK TO SCHOOL

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Paying for college should be a family partnership

STEVE ROSEN

Perhaps your teenage daughter has her heart set on attending a selective liberal-arts college that carries a sticker price north of \$40,000.

Or maybe your son's dream school is near an ocean and a two-day drive from your front door - with tuition, room and board nearly twice the cost of State U.

Is your teen expecting you to foot a big part of the tab? Probably, would be my guess.

But what about your high schooler? Will he or she be helping to pay for college too? And have you even broached the subject?

Contrary to some teens' way of thinking, this is not a radical expectation. It makes perfect sense for children to contribute to their educational funding - even if it's covering their spending money or paying

for textbooks. Not only will your children have a financial stake in their education, but there may be intangible dividends when it comes to keeping the focus on schoolwork rather than parties, especially freshman year. It might be one of the best lessons they ever learn.

DISCUSS

Before scouting out campuses, attending meet-and-greet sessions with admissions representatives and filling out the common applications, have a frank discussion with your student about the family college budget. You don't have to rule out colleges based on their sticker price just yet, since most of them will offer financial discounts and other incentives to attract students. But it may help to talk about paying for college as a family partnership.

Spell out what you would be willing to pay for college. If, for example, you really don't



If students help pay for their own education it will give them the incentive to remain focused.

have the \$40,000 a year to cover the full load of the private college but you can pay half, make sure your teen knows what is available, how much may have to come out of his or her funds, and how much financial aid will be needed to cover the gap.

Put on the table whether there are strings attached to your money, such as needing to maintain a "B" average or attending summer school to graduate in three years instead of four.

SOLUTION

Another possible solution: Require your newly minted college freshman to cover a higher percentage of the costs the first two years of school, when students are more at risk of washing out. If they make it, then agree to take over the load. Or, if graduate school is a strong possibility down the road, discuss whether your financial obligation will end after the undergraduate degree

and theirs will begin.

Stewart Koesten, a financial planner and president of KHC Wealth Management Services in Overland Park, Kansas, has tackled these types of issues with clients and with his own children. He recommends talking about financial expectations for college "at the earliest point the child can understand." Your child may appreciate the heads-up about money sooner rather than later.

"It would be unfair to lead your children down a path of expecting to attend the school of their choice, only to tell them later you can't afford to send them there," Koesten said.

Some parents, he said, struggle with the push-pull of how much they are willing to pay for college and what their children's obligations should be. There also might be feelings of guilt for not having saved enough to make that dream school a reality.

Does that mean emptying your retirement accounts?

"That would be a foolish move," Koesten said. "There are fallbacks for educational funding and plenty of time for your children to repay their loans, but nobody will be there to take care of your retirement."

His point: Get over the guilt and remember that there are a lot of top-flight, affordable schools to choose from.

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U.S. Congress passes Caribbean Educational Exchange Bill

WASHINGTON, CMC - The United States' House of Representatives has passed a bill that seeks to fortify educational exchanges between the Caribbean and the United States.

The bill, known as the Shirley A. Chisholm U.S.-Caribbean Educational Exchange Act of 2007, was passed



Lee

on July 31 by a margin of 371 to 55 votes.

Introduced by California Democratic Representative Barbara Lee, the bill would create "a system" for Caribbean community (CARICOM) students to study in the U.S. It would also implement a plan for, among other things, the enhancement of teacher training and primary and secondary education development in CARICOM-member states.

"This bill will establish a mutually beneficial educational exchange between the United States and the Caribbean," Lee said after its passage.

"And, it is an important step towards strengthening our relationship with our neighbors," she added.

Time-saving, back-to-school tips for the savvy mothers

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

the house.

To ease the workload, residential cleaning services like Molly Maid offer numerous household maintenance services, including dusting, vacuuming, scrubbing and virtually any other household chore you can imagine. Their home service professionals will even provide the cleaning products and equipment so you don't have to. And if you aren't a busy mom yourself, but know one who is, many cleaning services offer gift certificates allowing moms everywhere an opportunity to enjoy some "me" time.

By designing a cleaning regiment specially formatted to fit the lifestyles of each homeowner, Molly Maid ensures convenience and satisfaction with all home cleaning needs. No more picking the kids up from school and returning to a messy home. It's time to prop your feet up, relax and let someone else do the dirty work.

Find time - Let's face it, most people get a later start to the day than they'd like to. We can't figure out whether the snooze button is a blessing or a curse. But either way, we end up making it out the door frazzled and unorganized with each minute passing too quickly.

To slow down the hands of time, organization is key. You can save the extra time you'd normally spend search-

ing for missing car keys, locating misplaced homework assignments and picking out your newest fashion creation. Pick one day to overhaul your organizational skills and the rest is history.

To make sure you always have your keys on-hand, purchase a key rack for the front door. Or for a more fashionable approach, place a decorative, antique bowl to stash them on a foyer desk. Stackable, color-coded trays can be a handy place to store your son or daughter's completed homework assignments. As they're heading out the door, they can simply grab it and go.

And as for your closet, try arranging your items of clothing by formality and color. Keep casual items separate from work-related ones and brightly colored items separate from neutrals. And when you've got some free time in the evening, try picking out your clothes for the next business morning.

By cutting corners and following time-saving tips like these, moms everywhere can enjoy a little more time for themselves without sacrificing their routine or their health. Back-to-school time can be a chaotic transition for summer-loving kids and parents, but simple changes can mean the difference between a happy home and a hectic one.

- Courtesy of ARAcontent

BACK-TO-SCHOOL GIVEAWAY



Miami-Dade County Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle hands backpacks with school supplies to children during his annual "Book Bag Giveaway Health Fair and Optimist Club Extravaganza" recently. More than 2,000 people attended the event that also provided free immunizations and physical examinations for school-aged children, as well as fun activities like a climbing wall, giant waterslide and bounce house.

- Photograph by Miami-Dade County/Ryan Holloway

Caribbean nationals contesting seat in Florida State Legislature

MIAMI – Two Caribbean nationals are among candidates contesting a seat in the Florida State Legislature.

Hazelle Rogers, 54, the first Caribbean American to be elected to office in Broward County in Florida and a longtime Lauderdale Lakes city commissioner, last month announced her candidacy for the District 94 seat.



Rogers

Her decision pits her against her compatriot Eric Hammond, 63, of Lauderdale, a longtime activist who has lost two previous bids for the same seat.

Both Jamaicans will challenge two African Americans in an Aug. 2008 Democratic primary against Robert L. Lynch, 54, and Rubin Young, 46.

Since Rogers's 1996 victory, Caribbean Americans have won commission seats in cities across Broward County, including Miramar, Lauderdale Lakes and Southwest Ranches.

RARE FACE-OFF

But political observers in Florida say the state race represents a rare instance in which two

politically-prominent Caribbean nationals will face-off.

"It is a sign that the Caribbean community is maturing to be able to have two people that are qualified and have been active in the community for a long time," said Lauderdale City Commissioner Dale Holness, who's also a Jamaican.

According to U.S. Census figures, in recent years, Broward's Caribbean American population has increased significantly.

From 2000 to 2005, Broward's black population, which comprises 34 percent Caribbean nationals, grew by 22 percent.

Though Brooklyn, New York, has more Caribbean nationals than any other county in the U.S., Broward County has more Jamaicans – 100,000 – than any other county nationwide, the census said.

CONFIDENT

The current state seat is being vacated by Matt Meadows, and Rogers, a realtor and mortgage broker, is confident of victory, claiming that she has been successful in several previous elections.

She lost her first race in 1995 by a mere two votes, but won the next year and has held her seat since then.

"As Broward County

becomes more diverse, you have elected officials running against elected officials from the same ethnicity," she said.

"Years ago, you would not see that."

But Fitzroy Salesman, the Jamaican-born Miramar city commissioner, said the upcoming race would be difficult for

Caribbean Americans.

"Caribbean American elected officials have been a somewhat tight-knit group when it comes to supporting each other," he said. "Both people have been very committed to their communities. How do you take sides?"

Hammond, who owns an engineering firm, said that, after immigration, the key issue for Caribbean nationals would be access to better-paying jobs.

"Right now, most Caribbean people who come here, especially women, they work three and four jobs," he said. "They leave the kids home alone."

- CMC



BVI sets Aug. 20 for general elections

TORTOLA, British Virgin Islands, CMC – General elections will be held in this British Overseas territory on Aug. 20.

Governor David Pearey has announced that Nomination Day will be on Aug. 9.

The ruling National Democratic Party (NDC), led by Chief Minister Dr. Orlando Smith, will face a challenge from the main Opposition Virgin Islands Party (VIP) of former Chief Minister Ralph O'Neal.

The two parties have been holding various public meetings in anticipation of the polls, which are also expected to be contested by a number of independent candidates.

Voters will elect a new 15-member Legislative Council, 13 of whom are elected for a

four-year term, with nine of them in single-seat constituencies and four at large.

The one ex-officio member and speaker are chosen from outside the Council.

The British Virgin Islands enjoys one of the more prosperous economies of the

Caribbean region, with a per capita GDP of around \$38,500. Its main revenue earners are tourism and the financial services with substantial

funds being generated by the registration of offshore companies.



Smith

Dominica installs new Opposition leader

ROSEAU, Dominica, CMC - Attorney Earl Williams was last month sworn into office as Opposition leader promising supporters that his next goal would be to reclaim the government on behalf of his United Workers Party (UWP).

"My next accomplishment is to be prime minister of Dominica," Williams told reporters after being sworn in by President Nicholas Liverpool.

The UWP had endorsed Williams last month to replace Edison James as Opposition leader.

"All of the Members of Parliament have unanimously given our support to the leader of the party Mr. Earl Williams," Brown said in an interview on state radio then.

"That is something that has been in the making for quite a while. Since the last budget Mr. James had hinted that he would not be the one replying to the next budget."

CHANGE

Meantime historian and former senator in the House of Assembly Lennox Honychurch said he was not surprised by James's resignation.

"It is clear that the UWP

has been considering this for many months and that they have decided that at the opening of a new session of Parliament they are going to make this change," he said.

James, a former Windward Island and

Dominica cricket manager, became the first leader of the United Workers Party in 1988. He led the party to victory in 1995 and became prime minister. But in 2000 his party was beaten by the Dominica Labour Party, led by Rosie Douglas, who has since died.

James failed again to regain power in 2005 when Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit defeated him in the May 5 general elections. Soon after, his Deputy Leader Julius Timothy openly challenged his leadership. James decided not to contest the party leadership last year but instead opted for party president even while remaining Opposition leader. However, it was Williams who became UWP leader unopposed as Timothy by then had broken ranks with the party.

Compiled from CMC sources.



James



Williams

St. Vincent debates replacing queen as state head

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent, CMC – Legislators last month began debating the final report of the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) that is proposing the appointment of a non executive head of state in a new constitution for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves said there has been overwhelming support for the island replacing the British monarch as the head of state.

The CRC, which was convened in 2003 presented its report to Parliament last year and the report is the framework for debates after which a new constitution will be drafted.

Officials say after the par-

liamentary vote, a referendum will be held.



Queen Elizabeth II

Both Prime Minister Gonsalves and Opposition Leader Amhim Eustace have

already supported the move to replace the British monarch, who is represented by the governor general, as the head of state.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Sir Louis Straker said that he has invited Queen Elizabeth to pay an official visit to the island during an audience with her in May last year.

Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Dominica are the only Caribbean Community (CARICOM) English-speaking independent countries that have replaced the British monarch with their own head of state.



T&T's P.M. to face Integrity Commission

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC – Prime Minister Patrick Manning is being investigated by the Integrity Commission for the fifth time, it has emerged.

The probe has to do with the Maha Sabha license issue, in which the Hindu group took the government to the Privy Council for failing to grant it a license, saying it was the victim of discrimination.

Manning told a press briefing last month that he did not fear public hearings and

what they might reveal, noting that "every top sits on its own bottom" in matters of integrity.

Manning had called the briefing to inform the media about the visit of Nigeria's President Yoweri

Museveni and other pressing domestic issues.



Manning

Manning's comment on the Integrity Commission issue came when he said he agreed with the decision to have public hearings by the tribunal investigating Chief Justice Satnarine Sharma. He said justice would be better served by this process. The P.M. then said he had been investigated by the Integrity Commission four times before and was cleared on all occasions and that he would be cleared again.



REGION

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U.K. Privy Council makes region's govts more accountable to citizens

LONDON, Britain, CMC - The British-based Privy Council has handed down a landmark ruling which will make Caribbean governments more accountable to citizens for unconstitutional actions and force parliamentarians to be more careful about what they say under the cloak of parliamentary privilege.

The court gave the decision following a constitutional motion brought against St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, after controversial statements were made about a landfill involving the country's former Police Commissioner Rudolph Toussaint.

Toussaint was represented by former Trinidad and Tobago Attorney General Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj, who said the decision of the Privy Council would have far-reaching consequences for Caribbean governments.

"The decision is of great significance to the region and

to the commonwealth since it is a landmark decision in which governments, through their ministers and prime ministers would be liable for anything that they say in Parliament or for anything that is done in Parliament," he said.

PRIVILEGE CHECK

Maharaj said the ruling challenged traditional thoughts on parliamentary privilege.

"The constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines gave the power of the courts to look at what is said in the Parliament," he explained.

"The Privy Council held that it would be a denial of the access to the right of Mr. Toussaint to go to the court, for the Speaker to prevent the court from looking at very relevant evidence and the Privy Council ruled that the provision of the Privileges Act must be construed with such modifications as are necessary to bring them into conformity with the constitution."



Maharaj

Maharaj, however, cautioned that this should not be interpreted as a review of laws which govern parliamentary privilege, since parliamentarians are still personally guarded by those laws.

"It does not alter the law that members of Parliament would not be personally liable for anything they say or do in Parliament, but the government would be liable," he said.

Up to press time there was no response from Gonsalves to the Privy Council ruling.

CARICOM wants more help for Haiti

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - Caribbean community (CARICOM) countries have called on the international community to do more than just give financial resources to Haiti.

CARICOM Chairman Owen Arthur said that the regional states were willing to work with the international community to establish institutions for good governance and economic development in the former French colony.

Haiti was re-admitted to CARICOM in Feb. 2007 after

a suspension that followed the undemocratic removal of former President Jean Bertrand Aristide from office in 2004.

SUPPORT

"CARICOM believes that at this stage, its greatest support for Haiti is to help it put in place basic institutions of a civil society to help it to put in place a judiciary that works, a civil service that works, customs and all these other things that are basic to building a society," said Arthur, who is also the Barbados prime minister.

Speaking at a joint news conference with visiting Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Arthur said that the "region now stands ready to work with the international community and especially Canada to make sure that the basic requirements of a civil society and modern economy are established.

"It is not just enough to throw a lot of financial resources at Haiti and congratulate yourself as to how bit the pledges are," he said. "The most important thing is developing in Haiti the capacity to absorb the financial pledges."

REGION BRIEFS

• Anguilla cracks down on illegal immigrants

The Anguilla government says it will crack down on persons granted work permits and involving themselves in "illegal practices".

The Ministry of Labor said it had been receiving information that some holders of work permits were performing jobs for which the required legal documents had not been obtained.

• The Bahamas marks 34th Independence

The Bahamas celebrated 34 years of political Independence from Britain last month with Prime Minister Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham saying the country had achieved much to make all Bahamians proud.

"We demonstrated a stern commitment to our democracy over the past 34 years and to the advancement of our people both economically and socially," he said in an address on Independence Day, July 10.

• Judge from Dominica knighted

Dominican Brian Alleyne, acting chief justice of the sub-regional Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, was awarded a knighthood last month.

The jurist was made a Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of the Nation at an investiture ceremony at Government House in Antigua.

• Guyana to discuss civil society issues

A three-day conference aimed at identifying "an agenda for growth and livelihoods" will be held in Guyana in October.

The Government Information Agency (GINA) said the Oct. 15-17 conference comes ahead of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting (CFMM) to be held in Guyana.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.

Guyana steps up fight against smuggling

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC - The Guyana government has established an anti-crime task force to combat fuel and manufactured food smuggling and illicit trafficking in narcotics and illegal weapons.

Home Affairs Minister Clement Rohee said that retired Police Commissioner Floyd McDonald would head the inter-agency secretariat managing merchandise and fuel smuggling while security specialist Errol Vanooten would head a similar body overlooking the battle against illegal drugs and weapons.

Rohee said that the government "is enthusiastic about the task forces which should

have an impact on the smuggling of drugs, goods, fuel and illicit weapons as members will share information and intelligence gathering in these areas."

He also explained that once the agencies become fully operational, "then meetings of the two task forces will be convened separately...in order to discuss the terms of reference (TOR) of the respective task force and to make them operational together."

Rohee said that in order to ensure success in the initiative, security would be boosted along the country's sprawling and mostly unprotected borders.



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Marley's legendary 'yard' flavor rubs off on Bahamas resort

ELEANOR M. WILSON

When you look around the new Marley Resort & Spa on Cable Beach in Nassau, you'll have to pinch yourself to remember that you're in The Bahamas and not Jamaica.

Bold reds, greens and golds mingle with earthtones both indoors and out, reggae music plays in the background, and the aroma of favorite Jamaican foods wafts from the kitchen.

The original house in the complex was purchased many years ago by Bob and Rita Marley as a family getaway to secure a little privacy. Of course, Chris Blackwell's recording studio was just down the road, which may have had something to do with the choice of location.

Unfortunately, Bob Marley died before he could enjoy the renovated ocean side retreat.

Through the ensuing years, the Marley family did take residence here often. But now that so many of the children are business and entertainment icons in their own right, and Rita is devoting much of her time to African philanthropies, the family

decided to turn their house and an adjoining property into a resort hotel, scheduled to open on Aug. 20.

I was told that the intention was not to present it as a monument to The Legend himself, but this pronunciation is contradicted at every turn. Each of the 16 rooms and suites is named after one of Bob's songs. There's "Kinky Reggae", "Lively Up Yourself" and "Easy Skankin'", to name a few. The honeymoon suite is called "One Love". Although size and décor vary, you can't miss the Jamaican flavor.

FUN FLAVOR

At "Simmer Down" restaurant's elegant indoor and casual courtyard tables, the menu includes many of the famous Marley couple's favorite dishes, such as ital pepper pot, jerk chicken stir-fried with organic garden vegetables, escovitched cod fish with candied yam, and irie island green salad. The "Stir It Up" sports bar serves exotic



"We'll share the same room", Marley sang in the tune "Is This Love", and a view of this bed makes that an appetizing thought.

signature drinks and natural fruit blends, several with names reflecting Marley's roots. An indoor/outdoor setting blends into the restaurant courtyard, surrounded by waterfalls and tropical plants.

Themed entertainment takes place five nights a week, showcasing the culture and cuisine of The Bahamas, Africa, Jamaica and Trinidad. Caribbean jazz is featured on Sundays.

Guests in search of pampering step into the Uprising Tea Lounge, located in a cozy corner nook paved with flagstones and dripping in blooming vines. They start with a manicure or pedicure while sipping bush tea made with

natural ingredients, many grown on premises. Now completely relaxed, it's time to move down the arched walkway overlooking the shoreline and into a Natural Mystic Spa treatment room. Using nature's bounty of healing herbs, fruits, spices and essential oils, the masseuse blends ancient traditions and health secrets from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean to stimulate the senses. A

calming tropical rain shower is followed by an aromatic steam experience. Or try the hot stone massage, using a delicious blend of cinnamon, sweet orange, vanilla and patchouli oils to melt away tension. An invigorating Caribbean Mocha Rum Wrap follows. A couples room is available for these and other deliciously scented treatments.

MEMORABILIA

Just past the lobby is a tiny museum with all sorts of Marley memorabilia from the great one's illustrious career. In the gift shop, entered from the resort but fronting onto the coastal road, a collection of Jamaican, Bahamian and African souvenirs, MRS (Marley Resort & Spa) resort logo wear, art objects and Bob

Marley CDs and DVDs are sold. Eye catchers are outfits and accessories from the vintage Catch a Fire clothing line designed by daughter Cedella Marley.

The resort's carefully honed MRS Concierge Service is the pride of daughter Stephanie, who oversees resort operations.

"Our team of dedicated servers handles mail and messages, recommendations and reservations, travel, shopping and electronic communications," she explained. "Team members are selected and trained based on self confidence, adaptable discipline, flexibility and persistence. There is no request that we won't try to fulfill to the best of our ability."

She said that the concierge team members are also social advisors, business expeditors and personal confidantes.

This resort will certainly attract the curious, residents and visitors alike, to all things Marley in spite of the code. It is a nostalgic piece of reggae Jamaica set down - very surprisingly but authentically - on a coastal cliff in The Bahamas. Irie!

Eleanor M. Wilson is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.

CARICOM requires travel card for nationals

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent, CMC - Caribbean nationals, who travel frequently within the region, will soon have the use of a CARICOM travel card, Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves has disclosed.

The prime minister was reporting on the recent CARICOM Heads of Government Summit, which was held in Barbados recently. However, it was not immediately clear how this new card would affect the long-awaited CARICOM visa.

He said the heads agreed to introduce a CARICOM travel card, which could be used by traders, who travel through the region often but do not want to use their passports.



Gonsalves

Noting that the travel card would take the form of a "swipe card", the Vincentian prime minister said a watch list would be developed and certain people would not be issued such a card. Additionally, the

card would have electronically-readable information that would negate fraudulent use.

He added that the card would also allow a person to stay in the country of destination for six months. Prime Minister Gonsalves, however, cautioned that "even while we're doing that, we have to take the safeguards to make sure that the vagabonds and the criminals don't have the same facility."

When quizzed on the CARICOM visa, Gonsalves would only say that much work needs to be done to introduce the document.

Jamaica to build new conference center in MoBay

Jamaica has announced plans to build a new facility to accommodate meetings on the western end of the island.

The proposed Montego Bay Convention Center, planned for Rose Hall, is scheduled to open Dec. 2008. It is projected to cost \$51.67 million.

The convention center is a joint venture between the government of Jamaica and Ex-Im Bank of China, which will be the majority shareholder, financing \$45.4 million. It will be built on 23 acres of land and provide approximately



Smith

215,278 square feet of rooms for meetings, exhibitions and other events.

"The construction of the convention center comes at an opportune time for Jamaica and will become the focal point of our meetings, conventions and exhibitions product," said Basil Smith, director of

tourism for the Jamaica Tourist Board.

"Our plan is to share the true Jamaican experience, one that is filled with diversity, culture and adventure not only with the leisure travel market, but also with business travelers, corporations, incentive groups and meeting planners. This new convention center strengthens our appeal to these market segments and we look forward to welcoming new and returning groups for years to come."

TOURISM BRIEFS

• Air J expands service to Barbados

Air Jamaica last month launched its first nonstop flight between Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport (FLL), in Florida, to The Grantley Adams International Airport (BGI) in Barbados.

The regularly scheduled FLL-BGI flight will operate three days per week, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Barbados-bound flights will depart FLL at 9:40 a.m. and arrive BGI at 1 p.m. FLL-bound flights will depart BGI at 1:50 p.m. and arrive FLL at 5:30 p.m.

• Tourism led Anguilla's economy in 2006

The tourism sector was the main contributor to the economy of Anguilla last year, according to official figures released by the Ministry of Economic Development, Investment, Commerce and Tourism.

It said that the sector accounted for nearly 29 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or EC\$119.5 million (\$44.25 million). A report on the island's economy, released by the ministry, showed that total visitor arrivals increased by 16.8 percent in 2006 over 2005.

• CDB grants LIAT \$60M loan

Cash-strapped regional airline LIAT has been given a Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) financial package that will go towards paying its debts, purchasing Caribbean Star Airlines' assets and carrying on with its restructuring plans.

The Barbados-based bank approved the funds during a board of directors meeting last month.

LIAT's Chief Executive Officer Mark Darby told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) that paying off the carrier's significant debt and paying employee severances will be the first order of business.

• Climate change blamed for region's hurricanes

A new study has blamed warmer sea surfaces associated with global climate changes for the annual increase in hurricanes and tropical storms in the Atlantic.

The study is expected to be of interest to the Caribbean since the region is vulnerable to hurricanes on an annual basis.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.

F Y I

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No passport necessary for travel between U.S. and its territories

QUESTION: I am a legal permanent resident and I am wondering if I can travel to the U.S. Virgin Islands with my green card, Social Security number and driver's license. I really need to know because I am getting married soon and my fiancée and I are planning our honeymoon there.

ANSWER: According to the U.S. State Department, the new Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative will not affect travel between the United States and its territories.

U.S. citizens traveling between the United States, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa will continue to be able to use established forms of identification to board flights and for entry, that is, green

cards, driver's licenses or U.S. birth certificates.

If traveling outside the U.S. or a U.S. territory, a passport application receipt or other secure document will be required. For example, a person may travel to and from the United States to the U.S. Virgin Islands without a passport or other secure document, but under current rules, a passport application receipt or other secure document would be required to re-enter the U.S. Virgin Islands from the British Virgin Islands or another country as of Dec. 31, 2006.



The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative will require all travelers (including U.S. citizens) to and from the Americas, the Caribbean and Bermuda to have a passport application in and the receipt on hand to enter or re-enter the U.S. currently.

For readers seeking to obtain a U.S. passport, you must be born or be a naturalized U.S. citizen to qualify.

U.S. citizens can visit the State Department's travel website www.travel.state.gov or call the U.S. National Passport Information Center at **1-877-4USA-PPT; TDD/TTY: 1-888-874-7793.**

You should allow yourself a sufficient amount of time to apply and receive your passport in advance of travel. Allow some 12 weeks for processing of your passport application if you apply from inside the U.S. Note that there's a current backlog in the system, hence the rule change to allow for persons with receipts for the next six months.

Persons wishing to apply for a passport will need to provide evidence of citizenship through original documents like a birth certificate or naturalization certificate, driver's license, a check or postal money order totaling about \$113 that includes the

passport fee of \$67, the execution fee of \$30 and the photo fee of \$15. Prospective passport seekers can bring their own passport photos. Consumers seeking to renew their passports can obtain postage at the Caribbean Fair to mail the completed application. The renewal fee is \$67.

Compiled by Felicia Persaud. This column is created especially for immigrants concerned or unsure of issues pertaining to the U.S. immigration law. The answers provided are for information purposes only, and does not create attorney-client relationship, nor is it a substitute for legal advice, which can only be given by a competent attorney after reviewing all the facts of the case.



FYI

LIGHTNING TIPS

Lightning is a deadly weather hazard which claims many lives each year. Summer is the peak season for lightning. Therefore, next time a storm rolls in, remember the following tips:

- Use the "30-30 Rule" when you see lightning by counting until you hear thunder. If that time is 30 seconds or less, seek shelter immediately because the storm is close enough to be dangerous.
 - When outside, avoid being the tallest object.
 - Don't stand under or near an isolated tree or small group of trees.
 - Get inside a sturdy structure before the storm approaches.
 - Unplug all unnecessary appliances.
 - Don't use the telephone during a storm unless it's an emergency.
 - Don't stand by open windows, doors or patios during a thunderstorm.
 - Get out of boats and away from water.
 - If a sturdy shelter is not available, get inside a hard-topped automobile and keep the windows up.
 - Don't take a bath or shower during a thunderstorm.
 - If you feel your skin tingle or your hairs stand on end, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands on your knees with your head between them. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. Do not lay flat on the ground.
 - If someone is struck by lightning, call 911 immediately.
- Also be aware of positive or "out-of-the blue" lightning.

Lightning that originates at the top of a thunderstorm carries a positive charge. Positive lightning is particularly dangerous because:

- It frequently strikes away from the rain core, either ahead or behind the thunderstorm.
- It can strike as far as five to 10 miles from the storm, in areas that most people do not consider to be a lightning risk area.
- It has a longer duration making fires more likely.
- It usually carries a high peak electrical current, which increases the lightning risk to an individual.

According to the National Weather Service in the United States, 1,000 people are sent to the hospital annually for lightning related injuries. These injuries can be life-long and debilitating.

IMMIGRATION HELP

The USCIS, Office of Citizenship, has launched [WelcometoUSA.gov](http://www.welcometousa.gov), the inter-agency web portal that presents a comprehensive range of resources and information for use by immigrants.

Visit the website at <http://www.welcometousa.gov>

This website provides immigrants with practical information on settling in the United States and other information about participating in our civic culture. It also serves as the central web portal to locate all federal government resources available to immigrants and the organizations that serve them.

The site contains links to help new immigrants find English classes, links to

www.volunteer.gov for information on ways to get involved with their community, and also contains helpful links to www.uscis.gov, the USCIS website, itself.

Additional topics on the site include: immigration and citizenship, education and childcare, healthcare and families, government benefits, "About the United States", money and finance, employment and emergencies and safety.

PASSPORT FEE HIKE

The fees to obtain a passport from the Consulate General of Jamaica in Miami, Florida have been increased.

The increase has been attributed to a recent hike in postal rates in the United States Postal Service.

The new fee schedule will be as follows:

- passport renewals \$110 for adults and \$80 for children under the age of 18 years;
- replacing passports is \$190 for adults and \$130 for children.

The general fees include mandatory mailing cost for all processed passports. Processed passports will be mailed to the applicants.

Processing time for all applications is approximately six weeks.

The office of the consulate is located at the Ingraham Building at 25 S.E. Second Avenue, Suite 609, downtown Miami.

Call the office at **305-374-8431** or visit the website at www.jamaicacgmiami.org for more information.



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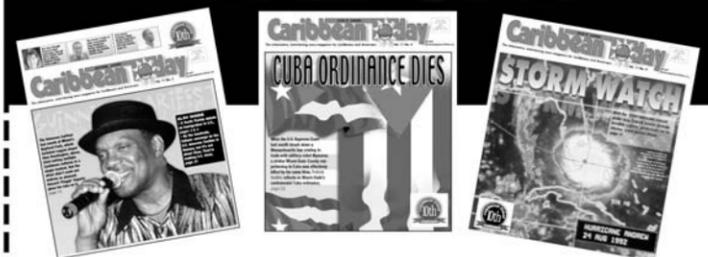
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Caribbean Today

Grenada's Joseph spices up U.S. Major League Soccer

GORDON WILLIAMS

The image of Caribbean soccer received a significant boost last month when Grenadian-born Shalrie Joseph was chosen to lead United States Major League Soccer's (MLS) All-Star team against Scottish Premier League (SPL) champions Celtic.

For the New England Revolution's central midfielder, widely recognized as the best at his position in the MLS, the gravity of the tribute - to his personal work ethic and the support of teammates - was hard to downplay.

"It was definitely an honor," Joseph told **Caribbean Today** recently.

But the respect did not come easy. Joseph's road to professional soccer has been long and, at times, frustrating. Yet, even at age 29, he is still hunting his dream of playing in Europe after encountering several disappointments at his Massachusetts-based club. Joseph spent his early childhood growing up in St. George's, Grenada, where he first embraced soccer. His uncle played for the Spice Island's national team and the

game came naturally for the boys from the River Road area of the capital. "That's where all the 'ballers come from," Joseph said with a chuckle.

DIRECTION

But young Shalrie needed more direction. His mother had migrated to the U.S.,



Joseph

when her only child was about age two, and he never had a chance to know much about his father, who died when he was about 11.

"I was in Grenada going nowhere fast," he admitted.

At age 14 his mother brought Joseph to New York, where he attended George Wingate High School in East

Flatbush, Brooklyn. His love for soccer blossomed there, and except for the odd pick-up basketball game and a bit of cricket, his sporting life revolved around the "beautiful game". After attending Bryant and Stratton, a two-year college in upstate New York, Joseph enrolled at St. John's University where, as a senior in 2001, he earned All-American honors.

Yet when the Revolution selected him with the 14th pick in the 2002 MLS Superdraft, Joseph did not eagerly jump into America's top league. He spent time in Europe, trying to make it with clubs in Germany and Italy. Eventually he joined the Revolution in 2003 and immediately staked a claim for a regular place. That too, was not easy.

"It was difficult coming in as a no name player," he recalled. "I had to come in make a name for myself."

POSITIVE

Joseph does not view his (CONTINUED ON PAGE 27)

T&T rises, Jamaica falls in world soccer rankings

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - Trinidad and Tobago's Soca Warriors reclaimed the number one ranking in the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) last month when they attained a 65th rating on FIFA's July list.

After spending just one month at number one in May, T&T was unseated as the top Caribbean team in the June ratings by Jamaica.

The Soca Warriors jumped eight spots up FIFA's rankings list last month to retake the top CFU spot from Jamaica's Reggae Boyz, who plunged a whopping 25 places down FIFA's list after a wretched tour of Asia recently.

The Jamaicans slid from number 68 in June to 93rd last month as a result of stinging losses to Iran (1-8), Vietnam (0-3) and Indonesia (1-2) during the tour, in which the Boyz scored a 2-0 win over Malaysia.

The drop now places the Jamaicans fourth in the CFU, behind T&T, Cuba (90th in the world) and Haiti (92nd).

LOWEST

For the Jamaicans, who surged to an all-time best 27th

in the world in 1998 when they qualified for the FIFA World Cup finals, this is one of the lowest positions they have held on FIFA's list in many years.

The CFU has a fifth Caribbean team in FIFA's Top-100 with Guyana listed at 100.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 103rd on the world list, are sixth on the top 10 of the CFU log, which is completed by Barbados, 118th in the world, Suriname (125th), and Bermuda (130th), with Antigua and Barbuda (131st) in 10th position.

T&T, eight-time Caribbean champions, is now seventh in the CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football) ratings. Mexico, semi-finalists at the recent Copa America, consolidated its number one spot in CONCACAF by jumping 16 places to 10th in FIFA and the United States stayed second with a world rating of 14th.

Meanwhile, Brazil is again the world's top team. Argentina is ranked second, followed by Italy, France, Germany and the Netherlands, with Croatia seventh and Portugal eighth.

Julian Hunte is new WICB president

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - New West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) president Julian Hunte is keen to address the credibility of the board as he begins his stint as head of the regional body. Hunte, the only nomination for the position of president, formally took the reins on July 29 at the WICB's annual general meeting and declared that building confidence in the board's operations is one of his priorities as they aim to develop the game.

"One of the major concerns in this regard is the credibility of the WICB. This goes beyond our public image and strikes at the heart of the character of the corporation," he said in his acceptance speech to the WICB's members and board of directors.

"It is a matter that we must address since our ability to attract additional support, especially from the private sector, is dependent on both our



Hunte

reputation as an organization and the success of our teams," he said.

CRITICISM

For decades, the WICB has been criticized for its running of the sport. Experts, the media, ex-players and the general public often describe the board's administration of the sport as ineffective - archaic and lacking vision - and a com-

mittee appointed earlier this year to review its operations, appeared to concur.

The three-man committee - led by former Jamaica Prime Minister P.J. Patterson - was appointed to undertake the review exercise and to make appropriate recommendations. The other members were Sir Alistair McIntyre and Dr. Ian McDonald. Outgoing President Ken Gordon announced during the AGM that their findings should "chart a course that will move the structure of West Indies cricket from its largely untouched colonial antecedence into the challenging new world of highly-competitive professional cricket."

Hunte also listed introducing a professional league in the region and developing a more harmonious relationship with the West Indies Players' Association (WIPA) as other priorities for his administration.

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SPORT BRIEFS

• **Digicel renews Windies cricket sponsorship**
 Telecommunications giant Digicel has extended its sponsorship deal of West Indies cricket until 2012. The original deal, expected to end in 2010, was also renegotiated and it will now see Digicel pouring a further \$20 million into the sport

over the next five years.

• **Boost for Florida's cricket**
 The South Florida Cricket Alliance in the United States got a well needed injection of funds and supplementary support recently when it signed a sponsorship agreement with County Line Chiropractic

Centers recently.

The Alliance will receive cash, in-kind services and support gear in exchange for naming rights, exclusivity and promotional benefits.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.

SPORT

www.caribbeantoday.com

Jamaica's Johnson stays sharp for upcoming world title fight

MIAMI, Florida, CMC – Jamaica's former world light heavyweight boxing champion Glen Johnson whipped American Fred Moore on a fifth-round knockout at the Sheraton Miami Mart Hotel in a title-fight tune-up late last month.

Johnson, a 38-year-old veteran, stopped Moore at two minutes, 45 seconds of round five.

It was another performance by Johnson that belies his age and he is expected to secure another crack at the world title later this year. Johnson toyed with Moore for the first four rounds of the fight, allowing him to trade with him. But in the fifth round, the native of the central Jamaican parish of

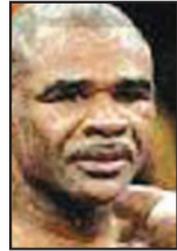
Clarendon, opened up with the heavy artillery and Moore was unable to respond.

DOWN AND OUT

Johnson unleashed an array of powerful punches and late in the fifth, blasting Moore with two powerful shots to the head, sending him to the canvas.

Referee Frank Gentile quickly moved in and called a halt to the bout a few seconds before the round was scheduled to end.

Johnson, who is slated for



Johnson

an International Boxing Federation (IBF) title fight against British champion Clinton Woods later this year, improved his ring record to 46 wins (31 knockouts) against 11 losses and two draws. Moore slipped to 30 wins (27 knockouts) against seven losses. Johnson, the 2004 "World Fighter-of-the-Year", and Woods have fought three title bouts, all in Woods's native England and have split two decisions and fought the third match to a draw.

In Johnson's last fight before Moore, he had stopped veteran Montell Griffin in the 11th round of their IBF title eliminator in Hollywood, Florida.



ON THE FRONT FOOT



A youngster demonstrates his forward defensive shot for West Indies player Denesh Ramdin during the Digicel Cricket Coaching Clinic at the Sir Frank Worrell Cricket Center in Couva, Trinidad and Tobago. This summer, the telecommunications company is sponsoring clinics in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Guyana, Antigua and St. Vincent where young, aspiring cricketers participate with top West Indies cricketers, past and present.

Grenada's Joseph spices up U.S. Major League Soccer

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26)

Grenadian origins as a hindrance to his professional career. He has been a multiple MLS All-Star. However, he understands that the country's standing in the sport can limit opportunities for its players. Grenada is not ranked in the top 10 by the Caribbean Football Union and is nowhere close to the top 100 countries rated by FIFA, the sport's governing body. But Joseph believes that a chance is all he needs to pave the way for others.

"I look at it as a positive," the 6' 3", 180-pound player said. "I represent a small island. It's all about making them respect you. I think I have done that – earning it."

Yet Joseph may be paying a heavy price for his rise in the MLS. European clubs, like the defending SPL champions Celtic, have shown increased interest to acquire his services over the past couple years, but he said the MLS has been reluctant to let him go. And while he said he enjoys his teammates and will continue to do his best for the Revolution, the long wait to accomplish his dream of playing overseas has bothered him. He expected a move before the current MLS season started. It did not come.

"I'm more frustrated, not really bitter," he said. "It can be frustrating coming to work."

Club differences aside, Joseph is looking forward to

representing Grenada in international games. He has watched as Haiti, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have represented the Caribbean at the World Cup finals. When Grenada begins its qualifying campaign for the 2010 World Cup next year, Joseph knows at his age it may be his final shot at the game's big stage. Yet he is confident that Grenada can get the job done.

"It's definitely the time for us," he said. "Jamaica set the bar high. T&T raised that bar. I think we can be that team (in 2010)."

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



Aussie looking to make Windies team

BRISBANE, Queensland, CMC – Jamaica and, perhaps, West Indies may get another Australian influence.

No, it's not another coach, physio, or trainer, but Brendan Nash, the Queensland batsman, who is set to leave Australia in September and attempt to revive his career in the Caribbean.

The **Quest Community Newspaper** has reported that Nash, whose father Paul was an Olympic and Commonwealth swimmer for Jamaica in the late 1960s, has made the decision to try and win a West Indies spot after missing out on a contract with the Queensland Bulls for the 2007-08 Australian season.

"I was obviously very disappointed to miss out on a contract, but I pretty much got told it would be hard for me to work my way back in again and I felt I still have something to offer," said Nash, a solid left-handed batsman and useful left-arm medium-paced bowler.

"I was over in the

Caribbean for the (Cricket) World Cup and although I didn't talk to anyone on the West Indies Cricket Board or anything, I did speak to (former West Indies Test players) Jeff Dujon and Courtney Walsh, and they felt I could make an improvement to West Indies cricket," he said.

FIRST CLASS HOPES

The 29-year-old Nash hopes to join the Kingston Cricket Club and eventually force his way into the Jamaica national team for the next regional first-class season.

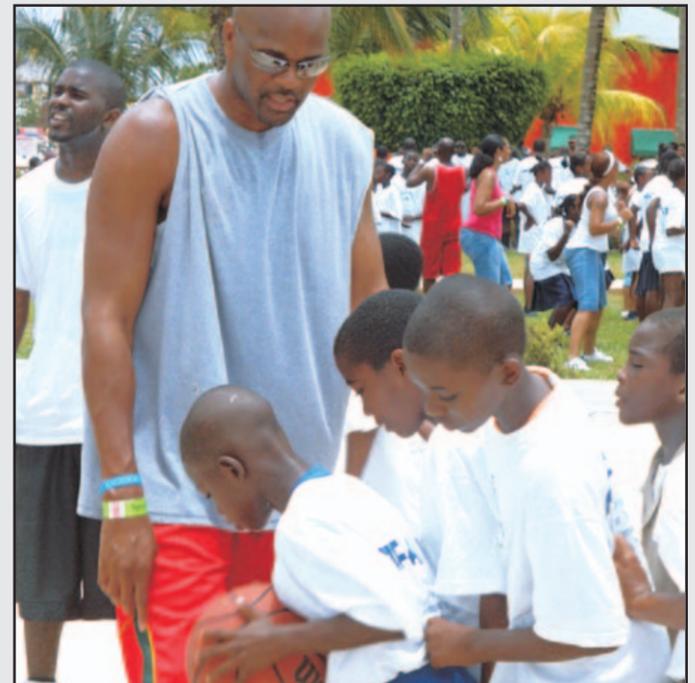
"I've spoken to a lot of senior players in Queensland and most of them felt like they didn't hit their peak until they were 29 or 30," he said.

"I'll give myself plenty of backing to make a go of it, and weigh it up a bit further down the track, it's all been a bit sudden."

Nash has also been described as a stunning fielder.



FIRM FOUNDATION



Several professional athletes from the United States visited the Caribbean recently to conduct sports camps for children. Here former National Basketball Association player Tim O'Connor James offers tips on the proper positioning of the legs before shooting the basketball during the annual Rujohn Foundation Celebrity Sports Camp at Kool Runnings Water Park in Negril, Jamaica. James was joined at the camp by National Football League players Rudi Johnson, T.J. Houshmandzadeh, Jr., Omar Gaither and Shaun Smith, who demonstrated their skills to 123 children from Negril and the surrounding areas of western Jamaica. The foundation is a South Florida-based non-profit organization established in 2003 by two Jamaicans, Andrew and Christina Bachelor, to serve the island's youth.

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