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A United States federal appeals court has overturned the deportation order against Jamaican-born Carlyle Leslie

Owen Dale, a long time resident of New York who had been locked up for years while battling a variety of illnesses – including diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma and liver disease, page 3.



The importance of the Caribbean as a conduit for cocaine imported into the United States has “greatly diminished” over the past 15 years, according to a new report issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as traffickers look beyond the region, page 8.



Calyptonians in Grenada have threatened to boycott this year’s carnival celebrations if the Tillman Thomas government reduces the subvention to facilitate the staging of various shows across the island, page 11.

LOCKED AWAY



~ United States law enforcement agents are convinced Caribbean nationals Abdel Nur, left, and Christopher “Dudus” Coke are dangerous men. Both were extradited and are in U.S. custody. Nur, from Guyana, pleaded guilty to involvement in a bomb plot at JFK airport in New York, page 2, while Coke, a Jamaican, is facing illegal guns and drugs charges, page 5.



POSITIVE VIBRATIONS

~ Jamaica and Jamaicans are making positive strides. Audrey Marks, right, became the island’s first female ambassador to the United States and was welcomed by President Barack Obama. Others with connections to Jamaica are doing well too. See Caribbean Today’s Jamaica Supplement, starting on page 14.



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Guyanese pleads guilty to participating in international terror plot

NELSON KING

NEW YORK – A Guyanese national charged in an international plot to blow up fuel lines at the John F. Kennedy International Airport in 2007 has pleaded guilty to furnishing material support to his co-defendants.

“I provided guidance in order to assist them in their plan to attack the fuel line at JFK airport to cause major economic harm to the United States,” Abdel Nur told United States District Judge Dora Irizzary, of Brooklyn federal court, one day before he was scheduled to go on trial.

Nur, 60, was extradited from Trinidad and Tobago to stand trial.

U.S. prosecutors said he acted as a “go-between” with



Abdel Nur being arrested in Trinidad and Tobago in 2007.

the alleged mastermind, Guyanese-born Russell Defreitas, 66, a U.S. citizen, who worked as cargo

handler at John F. Kennedy International.

An indictment unsealed in 2007 said the men hoped to

“cause greater destruction than in the September 11 attacks” in New York by using explosives to ignite a fuel pipeline feeding JFK and to destroy the airport and parts of Queens, the New York City borough where the line runs underground. The authorities said the plot, which the men code-named “Chicken Farm”, never got past the planning stages.

TRIAL

Defreitas and fellow Guyanese, Abdul Kadir, 58, a former People’s National Congress parliamentarian, were scheduled to go on trial late last month.

The fourth defendant, Trinidadian Kareem Ibrahim, 59, has been granted a separate trial after he had gone on a hunger strike in prison and

became ill. It is now unclear when he will be tried.

Under the plea agreement made public on June 29, Nur has avoided the possibility of life in prison if convicted. He now faces up to 15 years in prison, prosecutors said.

“I became aware that individuals who I had known were developing a plan that had as its goal the use of an explosive device or material to destroy or extremely damage fuel tanks or fuel pipelines at the John F. Kennedy international airport,” Nur told the court, reading from a prepared statement.

“I understand the destruction of the fuel and planes was to cause major economic loss in the U.S.,” he added.



No bail for Haitian accused of bomb plot in New York

NEW YORK - A United States federal judge has denied bail to a Haitian man accused of joining three others in placing what were described as bombs outside two synagogues in the Bronx, New York.

Judge Colleen McMahon denied bail to Laguerre Payen, 27, who is illegally in the U.S., as well as his alleged accomplices.

Prosecutors said Payen and James Cromitie, 44, Onta Williams, 32, and David Williams, 28, were also planning to shoot a missile at planes at the Stewart Air National Guard base near Newburgh, in upstate New York, where they reside.

All four have pleaded not guilty to terrorism charges and have been in jail for over a

year.

The accused claim they were entrapped by an undercover agent, who proposed and directed the plot and then furnished the fake bombs and inactive missile. But Judge McMahon ordered that the defendants remain jailed even though “the court is also aware that the government’s case may not be as ironclad as it appeared in the hours and days immediately after the defendants were arrested.”

Defence attorneys argued that their clients were not dangerous and should, therefore, be released.

- CMC



U.S. court overturns life sentence for Jamaican driver linked to deaths of 19 illegal immigrants

HOUSTON, Texas – A United States federal appeals court has overturned the life-without-parole sentence given to Jamaican truck driver Tyrone Williams in Jan. 2007.

In tossing out the life sentence, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said Williams, whose actions resulted in the deaths of 19 illegal immigrants in south Texas in 2003, will return to federal court for a new sentence.

Prosecutors had sought the death sentence for Williams on 19 counts of transporting illegal immigrants. It was described as the deadliest human smuggling attempt in U.S. history. The three-judge Appeals Court panel ruled that the government’s case against Williams

failed to establish that he had committed an “act of violence”, as required by federal law.

“We hold that an ‘act of violence’ must involve the use of physical force”, the Appeals Court ruled, adding “Williams’s conduct during the smuggling trip, despicable as it was, fell short of the statutory minimum to subject Williams to the possibility of a death sentence.

“Because the evidence was insufficient, as a matter of law, the threshold intent question should not have been submitted to the jury, and sentencing should have been done by the district court”, the judges ruled.

The court left untouched Williams’s sentences of 34 years and 20 years that were handed down on related charges.

The court also did not reverse the capital transporting conviction for which he received the life sentence or

find merit in other appeals issues.

UNCLEAR

Williams’s attorney Seth Kretzer said he does not know what the effect of the Appeals Court decision will be other than to lower the penalty to something below life without parole.

“Williams’s conduct did not fall within the scope of the Federal Death Penalty Act,” he told reporters.

The Appeals Court said Williams’s reckless disregard for the safety of 74 immigrants trapped in a trailer he was pulling through south Texas did not rise to the level of conduct necessary to become a death-eligible crime. It said such conduct must involve an “overt expression of violence”, adding that “negligence, no matter how extreme, would not meet the requirement”.



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Peter A. Weibley,
Publisher

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U.S. court overturns deportation order, releases Jamaican from jail

A United States federal appeals court has overturned the deportation order against Jamaican-born Carlyle Leslie Owen Dale, a long time resident of New York who had been locked up for years while battling from a variety of illnesses – including diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma and liver disease.

Dale, 61, was released from the Oakdale Federal Detention Center in Louisiana late last month.

His case had received national attention in the U.S. Advocates of the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) petitioned the United Nations on his behalf after learning that he had been hospitalized several times for his illnesses while incarcerated.

The NIJC said that as Dale's court appeals languished, his health had "sharply declined".

According to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) had wrongly decided that Dale should be deported as an "aggravated felon" for a 2000 conviction for attempted

assault. The matter was sent back to the BIA to render a new ruling.

Since 2005, the U.S. had tried to deport Dale. He had pleaded guilty to attempted aggravated assault following a shooting in New York. He was locked up although he had never been convicted of a crime before

and had paid \$9,000 in restitution to the person he had shot with an unregistered gun. The victim, Dale claimed, had attacked him with a knife.



Dale

SUFFERING

Though doctors reported that he had suffered "near respiratory arrest", the NIJC petition said Dale had endured days of gasping for breath at the Oakdale detention center; he had a nebulizer mask pulled from his face by an infirmary assistant who accused him of "faking it" and told him to do push-ups in his cell.

Dale filed a complaint about the assistant's behavior, but it was declared "without merit" by the same detention official who had denied all his requests for release while his appeal was pending, the petition said.

"I cannot understand why I should have been detained for five years and suffer as much as I did in a country like this, just because I exercised my rights to challenge my deportation," Dale told reporters from the detention center on learning about the court's recent ruling.

After his release, Dale visited the home of his son Dwight in Orlando, Florida, where he enjoyed the company of grandchildren.

"I want to tell you how good it feels to be back in my America — the America that I love and that loves me," he told the New York Times newspaper in a recent telephone interview.

Before his incarceration, worked in New York at the John F. Kennedy International Airport and an advertising agency. He

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

U.S. alleges another Ponzi scheme in the Caribbean

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) says it has filed charges against a U.S. Virgin Islands-based fund manager who used the National Bank of Anguilla to deposit funds he raised in a multi-million dollar Ponzi scheme.

The SEC said that Daniel Spitzer "perpetrated a US\$105 million Ponzi scheme against investors" and "used several entities and sales agents to misrepresent to investors that their money would be invested in investment funds that, in turn, would be invested primarily in foreign currency."

"Investors were falsely told that Spitzer's funds had never lost money and historically produced profitable annual returns that one year reached over 180 percent", the SEC explained in a statement.

COURT ORDER

It noted that Spitzer used money raised from new investors to pay earlier investors, and misappropriated investor funds to pay unre-

lated business expenses.

"He concealed his scheme by issuing phony documents to investors that led them to believe their investments were profiting", the SEC noted, adding that it has obtained an emergency court order freezing the assets of Spitzer and his companies.

According to the SEC's complaint, filed in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Spitzer conducted the alleged fraudulent scheme, which involved 400 investors, from at least 2004 to present. It said he only invested about \$30 million of the more than \$105 million he raised from investors. Of that amount, Spitzer used about \$13.5 million to invest through an offshore entity via a bank account in the Netherlands Antilles, the indictment charged.

The SEC alleged that Spitzer used offshore bank accounts to pay purported business expenses of his companies. It also charged that he deposited investor funds into

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

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Four charged in Ponzi scheme targeting Haitians

MIAMI, Florida - Four men were last month slapped with charges of mail fraud and money laundering for their alleged roles in a multi-million dollar Ponzi scheme targeting the South Florida Haitian American community.

Maxo Francois, also called Max Francois, Jean Fritz Montinard, Aiby Pierre-Louis and Maguy Nereus, also called Maguy Jean-Louis, were charged with one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering.

According to court documents, the investment scheme involved two businesses known as Focus Development Center, Inc. (Focus Development) and Focus Financial Group, Inc., a/k/a Focus Financial Associates, Inc. (Focus Financial), and centered around the sale of 12-month

notes with a guaranteed annual return in excess of 15 percent.

To convince people to buy these notes, the defendants allegedly made presentations in churches and on local radio stations claiming that Focus Development owned and operated successful businesses and that the money raised would be used to create Haitian American businesses and jobs and improve the Haitian American community.

The four also allegedly told investors that their principal was secure and fully refundable and that the annual return would be paid from business profits.

NO PROFITS

The indictment further alleges, however, that Focus Development and its affiliated businesses never generated sufficient profits to pay annual returns in excess of 15 percent

promised to investors. Instead, the defendants allegedly used newly collected investor money to pay annual returns or "interest payments" promised to investors and to repay investors principal.

The indictment further alleges that the defendants misappropriated money from investors for their personal use.

As a result of the scheme, the defendants raised approximately \$8 million from more than 600 Haitian Americans living in South Florida who ultimately suffered a loss of approximately \$6 million.

If convicted, they each face up to 20 years on each count and fines of up to \$16,000,000.

- *CaribWorldNews*



Toxic fumes force Belize P.M. to evacuate Miami Beach hotel

Belize Prime Minister Dean Barrow was among hundreds of guests who were forced to evacuate a Miami Beach hotel late last month after a body and toxic fumes were observed on the premises.



Barrow

Barrow, who was the guest of honor at a dinner, was preparing to address the gathering when he was handed a note by his wife Kim Simpliss-Barrow indicating

that they were required to evacuate the building. They were then whisked away unhurt by Secret Service agents.

Miami Beach police are investigating the shooting death that took place on the 11th floor of the hotel, several floors above the ballroom where the prime minister was attending the event.

When police stepped off the elevator on the 11th floor they smelled a foul odor and called in Hazmat crews to investigate the cause of the stench before giving the all clear.



Haitian-born Catholic priest accused of sexual misconduct

BOSTON, Massachusetts - Allegations of adult sexual misconduct has resulted in the revocation of a Haitian-born priest's right to perform mass by The Catholic Archdiocese of Boston.

The Boston archdiocese announced last month that the privileges of Reverend Gabriel Michel, a priest of the Archdiocese of Cap-Haitien in Haiti, has been revoked.

Father Michel has served in Boston since 2002 and was most recently parochial vicar at St. Angela's Parish in

Mattapan and a coordinator of the archdiocese's Haitian Apostolate. He was also a chaplain at Massachusetts General Hospital.



Michel

No further details of the allegations against the Rev. Michel were available up to press time.

- *CaribWorldNews*



U.S. alleges another Ponzi scheme in the Caribbean

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

bank accounts at the National Bank of Anguilla and the First Bank of Puerto Rico, from which he paid more than \$15 million in purported operating expenses and payments to himself and various sales agents. Spitzer also used more than \$4.8 million to pay third-party business expenses, the SEC charged.

'COLLAPSE'

According to the SEC's complaint, Spitzer's scheme is

"on the verge of collapse as he has attempted to delay and avoid paying investor redemptions".

As recently as Mar. 2010, the SEC claimed that Spitzer obtained \$100,000 from an unidentified investor for an investment in one of his "purportedly more conservative investment funds."

"Rather than invest the money, Spitzer used a portion of the money in April 2010 to pay other investors and third-party expenses", the com-

plaint alleged.

In Feb. 2009, the SEC filed a civil lawsuit against Texas financier Allan Stanford, accusing him of masterminding a \$7 billion Ponzi scheme involving his Antigua and Barbuda-owned Stanford International Bank. Stanford, who is currently jailed in Houston, Texas, has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing. He goes on trial in January.



U.S. court overturns deportation order, releases Jamaican from jail

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

later established a halfway house business.

BUMPS

His fight for release hit several bumps over the years. He was denied release by U.S. immigration while his appeals against deportation were pending. Even after last month's ruling by the appeals court he was still subject to mandatory detention. However, on June 30 a settlement freed him on his own recognizance. He was allowed to go to Orlando.

According to the New York Times, Claudia Valenzuela, the justice center lawyer who represented Dale in his detention case, said the case highlighted the arbitrariness of the detention system.

"The government detains individuals on a massive scale

without really evaluating whether that person merits detention," she said. "It serves to create a system in which individuals who should never be detained in the first place, much less for years on end, find themselves deprived of their liberty, of everyday contact with family and friends, and of even basic medical services without justification."

Now Dale is happy to rejoin members of his family.

"My two-year-old, she's all over me," he told the newspaper about his granddaughter who was born while he was locked up. "My health is not as bad because my spirits are so high."

Information from this story compiled from various sources, including the New York Times and Caribbean Media Corporation.



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In custody: 'Dudus' Coke returns to New York court in September

NEW YORK – Jamaican Christopher “Dudus” Coke,

Manhattan court for him to obtain his personal team of



Federal law enforcement agents arrive with handcuffed Coke in the U.S.

the reputed leader of the notorious “Shower Posse” gang, is to re-appear in a United States court on Sept. 7 following a brief appearance late last month.

Coke, who was extradited to the U.S. last month, is making representation before a

lawyers to defend him. Up to press time, Coke, 42, was being represented by a court-appointed lawyer. But he wants his team of attorneys, likely to be led by New York-based Frank Doddato.

Under U.S. law, Coke is required to satisfy the court

that the money that will be used to retain an attorney was not obtained through any criminal activities. Both his court-appointed attorney Russell Neufeld and attorney Dottato were in court during his brief appearance on June 28.

The indictment, filed in the U.S. District Court

Southern District of New York, cites Coke for conspiracy to distribute marijuana and cocaine in violation of sections 812 and 841 of Title 21 of the U.S. Code. It identifies Coke as the lead defendant, who operated on several aliases since the early 1990s when he allegedly took over control of

the garrison community of Tivoli Gardens in West Kingston, Jamaica.

It also charges members of what the state believes is Coke’s organization, known as the “Shower Posse”, and also as “Presidential Click”, who reside in Tivoli Gardens, other

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

U.S. assures Caribbean of support

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has assured the Caribbean that “the U.S. is back”, in the face of concerns



Clinton

In April, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates made a further commitment of \$79 million under the security initiative for next year. Following her 90 minute meeting on June 10, the secretary of state also announced that the region was in line to receive a further \$170 million in funding for HIV/AIDS and climate change programs.

TRADE HELP

In terms of trade, Clinton also said the May signing into law of the 10 year extension of the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act should go a long way in helping the region gain access to the U.S. market. She also restated the U.S. government’s continued support to Haiti as it continues to recover from the Jan. 12 earthquake.

“We have a lot of work to do and we believe very strongly in addressing these issues in a collaborative fashion,” she said.

Responding directly to concerns raised that the U.S. government has been absent from the Caribbean, she assured “we are back 100 percent.

“We are back and committed. We are looking for solutions to common problems and we are also looking to listen. I came here to listen as much as to express our hopes and our plans and I am very grateful for the positive

raised by regional governments that its support has been absent from the region.

During a more than hour long meeting with Caribbean leaders and officials last month, she further assured the region that it will get some much needed financial assistance to help deal with a number of pressing problems, the vexed issue of crime and security.

The Barack Obama administration has already pledged \$45 million to the region this year under the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative. United States officials said the process of disbursing those funds, which were announced by Obama last year, should get going by next month.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

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U.S. assures Caribbean of support

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

response and the agreement on what we are calling the Bridgetown Commitment," she told reporters.

WELCOME

The new commitment has also been welcomed by Caribbean states that have been bogged down with security and economic concerns.

"This re-engagement is real," said Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer, who is the chairman of the Caribbean Community Council for Foreign and Community

Relations (COFCOR).

"We are extremely pleased that the United States has seen it fit to properly and effectively engage the Caribbean because we are a very important and integral part of this hemisphere and our futures are intertwined and we recognize this."

The Caribbean also used the opportunity to call for the end of the decades old embargo against Cuba and to propose the convening of a special conference on interpersonal violence later this year.



Villain or hero? Two sides of 'The President'

Christopher "Dudus" Coke, 42, has been branded as both hero and villain, depending on which pair of eyes are cast upon him.

In his West Kingston, Jamaica stronghold of Tivoli Gardens, the reputed leader of the notorious "Shower Posse" gang is revered by many. So respected – or perhaps feared – is he that many in the area refer to him as "the President", or "Presi" for short, even though the area is represented in Parliament by Prime Minister Bruce Golding.

Many Tivoli residents have praised Coke as their benefactor who provided security for the community and paid for children to attend school. However, in the eyes of law enforcement authorities in the United States or in his homeland of Jamaica, Coke is considered to be a powerful and dangerous criminal mastermind.

MOST WANTED

For just over a month until his capture by Jamaican police on June 22, "Dudus", said to be a supporter of the ruling Jamaica Labour Party, was the country's most wanted man. An incursion by security forces into Tivoli Gardens in May turned bloody, as many gunmen loyal to Coke barricaded the community as they sought to prevent him being captured and handed over to



Coke

U.S. authorities, who said he was responsible for a number of drug and gun-running deals between the two countries.

Despite his picture being plastered in the local and international media, Coke managed to evade the authorities for several weeks. He was nabbed from a vehicle being driven by pastor Al Miller, who claimed he was taking the country's number one fugitive to the U.S. embassy in the capital to surrender to American authorities.

Coke was captured donning a wig as part of his disguise. Local media reported that the well-known "don" also had a pair of glasses and a pig wig (separate from the black one he was photographed wearing under a baseball cap).

After waiving his right to an extradition hearing in Jamaica, Coke was flown out of the country under the guard of U.S. federal agents to New York where he faces charges of conspiracy to distribute marijuana and cocaine, and firearms conspiracy.

Coke, who is also listed in the U.S. District Court indictment as "Michael Christopher Scott" among at least half a dozen other aliases, has pleaded not guilty to the charges. If convicted, he faces a life sentence.

- CMC



In custody: 'Dudus' Coke returns to New York court in September

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

areas of Jamaica, and in other countries, including the U.S.

INDICTMENT

The indictment states that since 1994, members of the organization have been involved in drug trafficking in the New York area, Kingston, Jamaica and elsewhere and have sold narcotics, including marijuana and crack cocaine, at Coke's direction and on his behalf.

The proceeds of the drug sales were allegedly sent to Coke in Jamaica, in the form of cash and/or goods.

In addition, the indictment states that members of the organization in the U.S.

allegedly supplied Coke with firearms in exchange for the assistance that he provided, in recognition of his status and power within the organization.

The indictment lists several telephone conversations, which allegedly occurred between Coke and co-conspirators, in support of the claims Coke, who faces life in prison if convicted, was indicted last August. He was captured by security forces in Jamaica last month after more than 76 people, including 73 civilians were killed during gun battles with the security forces mainly in the West Kingston constituency.



Haiti elections set for Nov. 28

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, CMC - President René Préval has announced Nov. 28 as the date for presidential and legislative elections in the earthquake battered Caribbean country (CARICOM).

Préval has also issued a decree mandating the country's nine-member Provisional Electoral Council to prepare for the presidential elections.

His five-year presidential term ends next February, but the Parliament recently voted to allow him to remain in

office until May 14, 2011, exactly five years after he took office, should his successor not be chosen by the constitutional deadline of Feb. 7.

In May, Préval said that he planned to do everything in his power to ensure that general elections were held before the constitutional deadline. But he also noted that while the Haitian constitution states that the president must depart office on Feb. 7, it also indicates that the head of state must serve for five years.



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U.S. issues travel alert for Haiti in wake of Americans' killing

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Department of State has warned Americans traveling to Haiti to exercise caution following the murder of four American citizens in recent months.

The United States embassy in Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital, said on June 28 that the U.S. citizens were robbed and killed near the airport in the capital in separate incidents in the last three months. It said that the victims were visiting relatives in the earthquake ravaged country.

“While the Embassy’s ability to provide emergency consular services has improved in the months following the earthquake, it is

still limited”, the State Department explained in a statement.

“U.S. citizens traveling to and residing in Haiti despite this warning are reminded that there remains a persistent danger of violent crime, including armed robbery, homicide, and kidnapping”, it warned.

“In particular, there have been a number of recent cases in which travelers arriving in Port-au-Prince on flights from the United States were attacked and robbed while traveling in cars away from the airport”, it added.

TARGETS

The State Department

said police authorities believe criminals may be targeting travelers arriving on flights from the U.S.

“Travelers are advised to use extra caution in arranging transportation from the airport. Most kidnappings are criminal in nature, and the kidnappers make no distinc-

tions of nationality, race, gender, or age”, it noted, adding that some kidnap victims have been killed, shot, sexually assaulted, or physically abused.

The State Department said U.S. embassy personnel are under an embassy-imposed curfew and must

remain in their homes or in U.S. government facilities during the curfew. It said some areas were off-limits to embassy staff after dark, including the capital Port-au-Prince.

- CMC



Guyanese gets seven years in U.S. for scamming investors of millions

NORTH DAKOTA - A United States federal judge late last month sentenced a Guyanese man to seven years in jail for scamming investors out of millions of dollars.

Justice Ralph Erickson told 67-year-old Neville Solomon that he had committed the “worst kind of white collar crime.

“Mr. Solomon was taking advantage of desperate people,” said the judge, who also ordered him to pay more than two million dollars in restitution.

Solomon was arrested in Trinidad and Tobago last year after eluding law enforcement officials for 18 months. He was convicted here in February on three counts of

money laundering and one count of conspiracy to defraud the U.S.

Prosecutors said Solomon, who underwent triple by-pass surgery since his arrest, was involved with Minot commodities broker Frederick Keiser Jr., who was convicted in 2007 and sentenced to 12 years in prison. They said Solomon and Keiser recruited investors into bank programs by promising high rates of return with no risk.

Prosecutors said Solomon joined the scheme in 2001 after Keiser was prohibited by North Dakota’s securities commissioner from doing business.



Second man pleads guilty in Haitian smuggling case

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida - Federal law enforcement officials here said a second man has pleaded guilty in connection with last year’s disastrous smuggling operation that cost at least nine Haitians their lives.

Prosecutors said that Jimmy Metellus, 33, the captain of the boat that sunk off Palm Beach County’s coast last May with at least 25 people aboard, pleaded guilty to 22 counts of smuggling, including nine charges of smuggling that resulted in death. He will be sentenced in federal court here on Sept. 3.

Metellus’s co-defendant, Jean Morange Nelson, 33, pleaded guilty last month. At that plea hearing, federal prose-

cutors said they would recommend that he receive a seven- to nine-year prison sentence. But U.S. District Judge Kenneth Marra said Nelson could be sent to prison for life when he is sentenced on Aug. 20.

Metellus also faces a possible life sentence, although the plea deal indicates prosecutors will seek a less severe punishment.

While his plea agreement is similar to the one Nelson took, prosecutors said Metellus should be treated more harshly because he was the captain of the boat. They also said they would recommend he receive the maximum sentence within the federal sentencing guidelines.



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Traffickers looking beyond Caribbean to export drugs into U.S. ~ U.N. report

UNITED NATIONS – The importance of the Caribbean as a conduit for cocaine imported into the United States has “greatly diminished” over the past 15 years, according to a new report issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The report, released here late last month, said during the early days of the trade, traffickers preferred the Caribbean corridor and it was used preferentially from the late 1970s.

“In the 1980s, most of the cocaine entering the United States came through the Caribbean into the southern part of the state of Florida. But interdiction successes, tied to the use of radars, caused the traffickers to reassess their routes”, it noted.

“As a growing share of cocaine transited the southwest border of the United States, Mexican groups wrested control from their Colombian suppliers, further directing the flow through Central America and Mexico”.

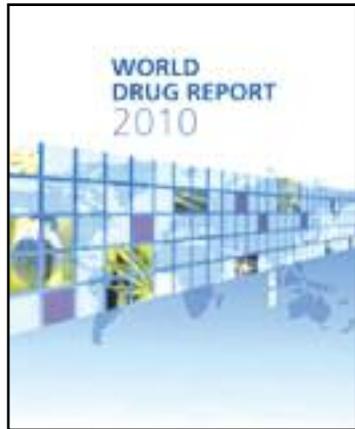
INSTABILITY

But UNODC said that the decline has not necessarily led to increased stability or lowered violence in the transit countries.

“On the contrary, it seems that once the drug is intro-

duced, instability in the market can drive violence”, UNODC stated in its global report, noting that Jamaica provides a case where violence has become the norm despite the efforts to eradicate the trade. It noted that estimates of the cocaine flow through Jamaica dropped from 11 percent of the U.S. supply in 2000 to two percent in 2005, and falling to one percent two years later.

“This is reflected in declining seizures in Jamaica



and declining arrests and convictions of Jamaican drug traffickers in the United States. It is also negatively reflected in the murder rate, which rose from 34 per 100,000 in 2000 to 59 per 100,000 in 2008”, it stated.

“There are historical reasons for this paradoxical effect. The importance of Jamaica as a transit country in the cocaine trade really rose



The flow of illegal drugs and money between the Caribbean and U.S. has slowed.

after the violent 1980 elections in that country. A large number of important crime figures -including some so-called ‘area dons’ and their enforcers- left Jamaica for New York, where they became key suppliers in the crack cocaine boom”.

CALM

The report noted that this period of growing criminal opportunities represented a time of relative calm in Jamaica.

“When this market died out and cocaine flows began to shift westward, these men returned to Jamaica to find a much less well organized crime scene, where ‘neighbor-

hood dons’ had turned to more direct means of income generation: violent acquisitive crime, including extortion and robbery”, it stated.

“The Jamaican cocaine trade suffered another blow when cooperative efforts between Jamaican law enforcement and the United Kingdom sharply reduced the air courier traffic to Europe around 2002”.

It noted that street-level competition for diminishing returns has fuelled growing homicide rates; the highest in the Caribbean and among the highest in the world. UNODC stated that a similar, but more compressed, effect could also

have occurred in the Dominican Republic where the share of the U.S. cocaine supply that transited Hispaniola dropped from eight per cent in 2000 to two percent in 2004, before rising again to four percent 2005 and nine percent in 2007.

“Around this time, the murder rate in the Dominican Republic doubled, from 13 per 100,000 in 2001 to 26 per 100,000 in 2005. It has remained at high levels, and the drug trade in the Dominican Republic is still volatile.

“Dominican traffickers have grown in importance in Europe since about 2005, and today are second only to the Colombians among foreign cocaine traffickers arrested in Spain, the primary point of entry”, the report added.

It stated that another shift that may have affected local stability is the reduction in air courier traffic though the Netherlands Antilles.

- CMC



‘Sunday Project’ offers welcome relief for struggling Haitians

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - Carel Pedre is one of Haiti’s favorite celebrities. His morning show is the most popular on Radio National, the country’s widest-reaching station and he’s the host of Digicel Stars, Haiti’s version of “American Idol”.

When January’s earthquake struck, he was back on air within hours, sleeping in his car outside the station and opening the microphone to those crying out for help.

“The first thing we did was to let victims reach out to their families via the radio, to come on and simply say ‘I’m alive’,” he said.

He also embraced social networking platforms Facebook and Twitter to send out some of the first pictures of the quake and conducted interviews via Skype with media around the world.

Once the initial shock of the quake wore off, he started thinking about doing something more practical to help. On Easter Sunday, he and a group of friends spontaneously cooked up pots of soup,

loaded them into the back of his car and drove around looking for someone to give it to.

EXAMPLE

“I wanted to set an example to everyone else,” he said. “Just to show people that it is possible to do something...I wanted to show that the time for waiting is over.”

Pedre and his friends randomly stopped the car in Cité Soleil, Haiti’s poorest slum, which has a reputation for violence.

“We saw some kids that looked hungry,” he chuckles, “and we just said ‘this is the place’. We couldn’t drive uphill, anyway, as the soup would have spilt!”

That spontaneous act of giving has morphed into the “Sunday Project”, which now feeds over 350 children in Cité Soleil every weekend. It’s still an entirely homegrown operation. Pedre put the word out for volunteers via his radio show and via Twitter and the group meets in a members’ house to cook up simple meals in the kitchen then pack

them into Styrofoam containers.

I joined them on their seventh Sunday and they had managed to source extra food in the form of crackers and juice donated by local company Tampico.

“When the food runs out, we just hand out the rest of the juice and we give them crackers,” Pedre explained. “There’s never quite enough, which just proves how much more there is for us to do.

“Ultimately, we’d like to cut down on the containers, which create rubbish, and cook the food in Cité Soleil itself. But that will take a bit of time to organize, so in the meantime we’re just doing as much as we can ourselves.”

ORGANIZED CHAOS

The scene when the convoy of cars pulls up near some open ground across the road from the vast shantytown is one of organized chaos – community leaders cajole, boss and even slap children into tightly pressed but orderly lines. The younger ones look

out wide-eyed from between the legs of their older siblings, each clutching a red ticket. They file up some steps into a ruined building to receive their food package and a precariously balanced glass of brightly colored juice, then toddle off purposefully into the slum’s narrow alleyways.

Soon the packages are gone, and those children who arrive too late have to make do with packets of crackers and tiny bottles of juice. The moment these run out, leaving several children empty handed, is heartbreaking.

“We need to do so much more,” said Pedre, his usual air of bonhomie gone. “...We should be feeding them every day, sending them to school, finding them an education...”

Gemma Pitcher/special to CaribWorldNews.

To support the Sunday Project by joining its Facebook group, visit <http://bit.ly/dzFMcv>.



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Immigrants beware

Just when you thought many immigrants had become savvy about the immigration laws, fraudsters have struck again, this time in the Haitian community.

As if Haitians have not suffered enough already this year, several more have become the victims of greedy immigration service providers who have been targeting this community since the Jan. 12 quake in Port-au-Prince.

According to New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, several companies in Brooklyn, New York, including Chay Pa Lou Community Center, Inc., Delegee Tax Consultant, Inc., and their owner and operator Jean Michel; as well as Rincher's Multi-Service, a/k/a Rincher Bookstore, a/k/a Rincher Associates, a/k/a Haitian American Entrepreneur's



FELICIA PERSAUD

Group, LLC, and their owners and operators Deslande Seixas-Rincher and Sharlene Seixas-Rincher, targeted the Haitian community with fraudulent immigration services.

Last month, Cuomo stepped up to bat for the voiceless Haitians, slapping lawsuits on the companies and alleging that their owners - who are not lawyers - have been illegally providing legal advice and services to Haitian immigrants. The attorney general's investigation revealed that these companies charged Haitian immigrants for processing immigration applications that could be filed for free through a waiver or for a nominal fee.

The companies also charged some immigrants for processing applications even when they were not even eligible to stay in the United States. Further, some immigrants paid for application processing and legal services that were never provided. As non-lawyers, the owners are prohibited from providing legal advice or representing

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

Sorry? You're so busted!

Do you remember the words from the song that goes, "You aren't really sorry at all, you're just sorry you got caught", or something to that effect?

People will always try to pull the wool over their partner's eyes, but somehow, there are still ways to find out what they're up to...and, as we like to say, "you're so busted", caught red handed, with your hand in the cookie jar, flagrante delict in legal terms, which is Latin for...you're so busted.

Given the right circumstances, the truth will always be unearthed, revealed, uncovered, even though it's hidden deep within the center. People will go to any lengths to find out the truth about what their partners are doing, and they'll stop at nothing until they are satisfied.

The sad reality is, trust is often lost after a relationship has lost its shine and cheating enters the picture. Cheating is usually done under a veil of secrecy with the other partner not being aware of it, as the cheater has great levels of skill...or thinks so.



TONY ROBINSON

examined her underwear, right there on the street, which landed him in court of course.

But women have been doing this for years, albeit only in private, as I know of wives who regularly sniff their husband's underwear every night after he's sleeping, just to see if he was cheating or not. I tell you, airport sniffer dogs and security search officers could learn a thing or two from these people as they test their partners for cheating.

Usually it's not so difficult for a woman to test her man for cheating though, as many men get careless after a while, or chat too much, so it's only a matter of time before they fail the cheating test.

HARD TIME

But it's the men who really have a hard time getting the women to fail the test, for women are either born to it, or study real hard so that they can pass with flying colors.

It really is scary, but it's perhaps one of a man's biggest fears, to have his woman cheat on him. But they say that what you fear shall certainly befall

you.

So, these women are so secretive, that it takes a great test master to discover their activity. The trick is not to ask questions, as that's really pointless. A woman will always know what to say, and many men will just accept it as the truth...because they want to. It's far better to observe the subtleties and mark her test papers accordingly.

For example, if suddenly she starts looking really sharp, pretty, radiant and glamorous, it's usually one of two things; she either has a new man in her life, or new life in her man. And since you haven't taken any energy tablets, it's got to be the former...new man in her life, so she failed that test. So busted. Cock mouth kill cock, and her vanity will give her away.

Worse if she starts to go out more, keeping late nights, spending less time with you for whatever reason, but more with her 'friends', she's failed that test also. Busted.

RISKS

Men will try almost anything to get a little honey on the side, and the risks that they take are great. But that's why it's called a risk, because there's always a chance of getting caught, of being busted.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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Sorry? You're so busted!

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

So he'll come in late at night reeking of perfume, or with lipstick on his face, or even a hickey or two. Careless man.

And even when he tries to be careful, there is always some little clue that gives him away. If his wife does the laundry and he happens to leave a motel receipt in his pocket, then he's so busted. Of course, leaving his cell phone lying around will also make him vulnerable to being busted.

So many great men have been busted by seemingly innocuous bits of evidence. Presidents, busted by saved underwear. Golfers, busted by cell phone text messages. Movie stars, busted by hidden cameras.

People will even employ the services of private eyes to garner evidence and take photographs of their guilty part-

ners. And the camera does not lie.

Even when men are caught in the act, they will not admit to being busted.

TRUE TEST

The true test though, comes in the bedroom, as there is a test paper that she has to fill out correctly to pass or fail. Ask her to tick the appropriate box: Are you having more or less sex with your man? If the answer is less, the chances are she's cheating, as most women cannot deal with two men for any sustained period of time. The twist though, is if answers yes to: Are you suddenly being more kinky with your man, or less? If it's more, chances are she learned the kinky stuff elsewhere and wants to try it with you...she failed again.

When she starts complaining about sex with you, saying

that it's boring and ordinary, that's a failing grade too. And, finally, when she starts to wear more layers of clothing to bed than a North Pole fisherman and it's the middle of summer, then you know she's failed that test.

Sadly, this is one test that men really want their women to pass. For when they fail, the whole school mash up and everyone gets expelled. But as one man told me:

"Why give any test? Remember, it only hurts if you care, so when you see the signs, try and stop caring."

I guess that's one way to deal with it. But in so many cases, even when they try to cover their tracks, they usually make a mistake...and are so busted.

seido1@hotmail.com



Immigrants beware

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

anyone before immigration authorities. Further, the lawsuits allege that the companies are charging Haitian immigrants thousands of dollars for processing immigration applications that could be filed for free through a waiver.

TARGETS

The alleged fraud relates to the United States Department of Homeland Security Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program that will allow undocumented Haitians to stay in the country for 18 months. After Homeland Security made its TPS announcement, the attorney general's office said it received complaints that Haitian immi-

grants were being targeted through advertisements by companies offering fraudulent and illegal immigration services at exorbitant prices.

"In light of the recent devastating earthquake in Port-au-Prince, New York's Haitian residents have sadly been a target for immigration scams, bringing further pain to a community that has already suffered so much," said Cuomo. "These cases are a part of my office's ongoing crackdown on immigration scams throughout New York and I urge anyone who has been affected by this type of fraud to contact my office."

Cuomo is seeking to permanently shut down these companies and prevent them from providing immigration legal services. The lawsuits also

seek restitution for the victims who have paid thousands of dollars for legal services the companies were not authorized to provide and in many instances did not provide.

I sincerely hope the victims of this alleged fraud get the restitution they seek. But it really is one more reason why Congress and the Barack Obama administration must move to provide real reform so that immigrants will not continue to fall prey to vampires who continue to suck their hard earned dollars and leave them penniless and pained.

Felicia Persaud is founder of CaribWorldNews.com, CaribPR Wire and Hard Beat Communications.



Turning point for Miami-Dade County

During boom and bust, I'm bullish on Miami, and nothing about the last few years has changed that.

Anyone who disagrees is welcome to take a walk onto Biscayne Boulevard past the condos, bustling shops and sidewalk cafes that were not there six years ago. I'll take you to the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts which helped reinvent Downtown Miami. I'll show you projects from the Building Better Communities bond program, which is laying the foundation for the next generation of growth in Miami-Dade. And I'll give you an amazing view of the whole thing from the upper deck of our new ballpark, which is on track to be a national model for public-private partnerships.

We have taken a yesterday airport and are transforming it into a gateway worthy of what Miami has become. We have taken a seaport that is globally competitive today and launched extraordinary projects to make it globally competitive tomorrow.

We're providing jobs in

sectors that need them most at a time when they're most needed. Our challenge today is...to be the architects of our own best future, the authors of our own greatest destiny. For better or worse, we will look back on this season in 10, 25 or 50 years, and realize what a crucial turning point it was.

SACRIFICES

Over the next few months, this community will hear news and make decisions that simply have no precedent in our modern history. Last month, we learned that property values fell more than 13 percent across the county.

Sacrifices are coming. That is inevitable and, in some ways, can be healthy. Over the last three years, we at the county have closed budget gaps totaling \$800 million. Now we're facing a gap of another \$420 million.

For many of you, the cracks have not yet appeared. There's a degree to which we're proud of that. We had built up reserves and contingency funds, and that helped us persevere. We've been able to streamline our operations in ways my predecessors could never have hoped.

We have fewer employees per resident than we have had since the early 1990s, and the typical resident pays less for government today, adjusted for inflation, than they have in for some 20 years. Our union partners have made concessions that their predecessors would never have considered. And our employees have stepped up in ways we could never have imagined.

Our police and firefighters will still be keeping you safe, the traffic lights will still have electricity and the tap water will still be clean, safe and delicious. The time has come, though, to talk about what role government should play in Miami-Dade County. This community needs to move past the sound bites and into a great conversation.

*George Burgess,
County Manager,
Miami-Dade County*



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Calypsonians threaten to boycott Grenada's carnival 2010

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada, CMC – Calypsonians here are threatening to boycott this year's carnival celebrations if the Tillman Thomas government reduces the subvention to facilitate the staging of various shows across the island.

The government has said it will provide EC\$60,000 (\$22, 346) this year, down from EC\$80,000 (29,795) last year, to share among the eight calypso tents.

Head of the Grenada Professional Association of Calypsonians and Tent (GPACT) Adrian Thomas said that the subvention is to supplement the drop in revenues as a result of the low turnout of patrons.

"This is money that was aggressively negotiated for and we will not just give that up, we need it to continue with the tents," he said.

But Colin Dowe, chair-

man of the Grenada Carnival Committee (GCC), said he hopes the performers would re-think their position given the effects of the global economic crisis on Grenada.

"People are being sent home and so it cannot be business as usual," said Dowe. "We are doing some restructuring and just as persons have to make adjustment in their personal life so too the GCC is adjusting its operations."

TOUGH TIMES

He said it was not right for the committee to have a debt of more than ES\$300,000 (\$111, 731) annually and then ask the government "to bail us out for the new season and the cycle continues again and again, we are in recessionary times."

He said that the authorities had not followed other



A boycott threatens to cloud the color and spirit which has marked Grenada's carnival in past years.

Caribbean countries, like Barbados, in removing the subvention totally.

"Barbados has cut out

subvention and instituted Value Added Tax on costumes, but here we have agreed to a moratorium for

this year on VAT for mas bands...but we are still hearing complaints," he said.

Earlier, GCC was forced to reach a compromise with the steel bands after they threatened to pull out of carnival 2010 on the grounds that they had not yet received payment of prizes for last year.

Dowe said that as a result of the financial situation, the GCC has already decided that the traditional Monday pageant parade will now be held on the streets rather than at the National Stadium and that the "Groovy" and "Soca" monarch competitions will now take place on the same night with the GCC, saving an estimated EC\$60,000.

Festivities to mark the carnival begin the first week of August.



Young filmmakers helping Haitian cinema flourish despite hardships

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - When the earthquake hit the southern Haitian town of Jacmel on Jan.12, students at the country's only film school, Ciné Institute, were on the ground within hours.

Their classrooms collapsed, but they salvaged what equipment they could and filmed the aftermath, the rescue efforts, and the collapse of buildings weakened by the initial impact. The students' footage was broadcast around the world by networks including CNN, PBS and CBC, and their still photographs featured in the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, France's Le Monde and The United Kingdom's Guardian.

"It felt like a bad dream, some of the time," said student Hermane Desorme, 22. "But it helped tremendously to focus outwards on recording what was going on in the community, rather than focusing inwards on all the stuff that was going on inside my head."

For three months after the earthquake, the institute's classes were taught in the stifling confines of an army tent, hastily erected at the airport. Over 15 short documentaries were produced, on subjects ranging from silent memorial services and stories of heroism to a child's view of the earthquake.

"Being all together at school helped us deal with the depression that kicked in after the initial adrenaline wore off," says Ebby Angel Louis, a 28-year-old second year student.

INTENT

Now more than four

months on, things are slowly getting back to normal for the graduating class of 2010.

They've found a new home in a former dive center, an idyllic spot with the turquoise sea winking in the background and classes held outside under bougainvillea trees. The relaxed venue belies a deadly serious intent, though – the creation of a successful Haitian film industry, and the mobilization of film as a way to empower Haitians to tell their own stories to the world.

The students are hard at work on a full-length documentary about one of Jacmel's tented camps, which will follow four central characters through the birth, death, violence and joy that comes with everyday life in Haiti.

"When we graduate, we're all definitely going to keep in contact," said Ebby. "We need to collaborate with each other and with other creative Haitians to form a cinema culture, because until now we haven't really had one. We need to pool resources."

The Ciné Institute was founded in 2008 by American filmmakers David Belle and Andrew Bigosinski. They managed to attract attention from big names in United States cinema, with Francis Ford Coppola among those who initially sent funds to help buy equipment. The students are taught by filmmakers from all over the world. Annie Nocenti, a teacher at the school, is deeply proud of the work the students have done so far.

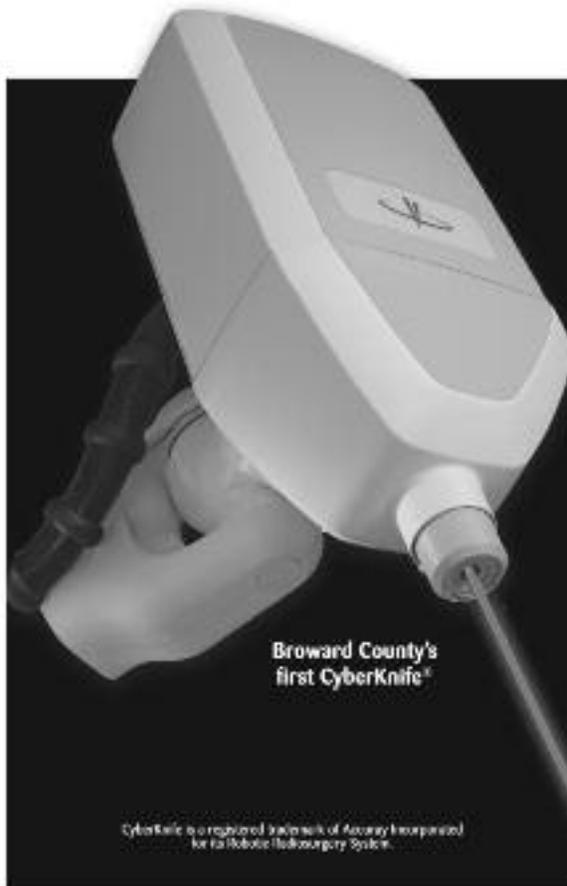
"We don't really have a formal writing culture here,"

she explained "So we get the students to work on scripts in brainstorming sessions, and they improvise together to arrive at a plot and find natu-

ral dialogue. They've become extraordinary filmmakers."

"Other people can't tell our stories the way we can," said 30-year-old Marie-André.

"The institute runs an agency called Ciné Services, which is helping us to find work in on commercials and on film proj- (CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)



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Fireman wins 'Vincy Soca Monarch'



KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent, CMC – Delroy "Fireman"

Hooper continued his domination of the "Vincy Soca Monarch" competition when he won the title for a seventh time last month.

"My chemistry is getting stronger and I'm doing my thing to make Vincy Mas the best carnival in the world," said Hooper, who defeated 14 other contestants, including defending monarch Raeon "Maddzart" Primus, who placed second. Jason 'Galanaire' Bess placed third.



Young filmmakers helping Haitian cinema flourish despite hardships

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

ects for some of the NGOs (non-governmental organizations)."

STRUGGLE

Marie-André is working on an autobiographical feature about a woman who leaves her husband when he refuses to let her carry on with her film studies.

"I'm the only female sound technician at the institute," she said proudly. "I want to see more female tech-

nicians coming into the industry, but it's not always easy for Haitian women to persuade their families to let them study something like this."

Her ambition? To forge her own career in cinema, then return to the Institute as a teacher one day.

"Haitian cinema is going to really start now," she said confidently.

- Gemma Pitcher/special to CaribWorldNews.



Grenadian-born doctor hit with lawsuit for wrongful death of Michael Jackson

LOS ANGELES, California – The father of the late Michael Jackson's has filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the Grenadian-born doctor charged with giving the pop superstar a lethal dose of sedatives one year ago.

Joe Jackson is accusing the doctor of negligence, secrecy and poor training.

The suit was filed last month on the anniversary of Michael Jackson's death in Los Angeles.

The complaint, which seeks more than \$75,000, accuses Dr. Conrad Murray of professional negligence for

providing the singer with a mix of sedatives - including the anaesthetic propofol - that authorities say killed him.

Propofol is normally administered only in hospital settings, but Dr. Murray had been providing Jackson the drug in the bedroom of the singer's rented mansion here.

Jackson contends the physician tried to conceal his administration of the drug after his son's death.

The lawsuit also names medical clinics that Dr. Murray operates in Las Vegas, Nevada and Houston, claiming they did not properly train

or supervise the doctor.

Dr. Murray has pleaded not guilty to an involuntary manslaughter charge filed in February. His attorneys have said that he



Murray

did not give Jackson anything that "should have" killed him. Charles Peckham, his civil attorney, repeated that assertion on June 25.



Celebrity designer Indashio for 'Styleweek Jamaica'

Jamaica's cultural and entertainment capital Kingston will host international celebrity stylist and designer Indashio, of VH-1's "Glam God" reality series, as he unveils his latest collection during "Styleweek Jamaica" this month.

The event will be staged July 9-11.

Indashio, is no stranger to Styleweek and Jamaica, having made his debut at the 2007 staging, where he received acclaim for his bold cuts and

use of fabric.

Indashio's celebrity clients include Amerie, Aubrey O'day, Amanda Lepore, Kim Kardashian, Nicky Hilton, Christina Milian, Vanessa Carlton, Vivica Fox and Tyra Banks. The designer who currently resides in New York City, said



Indashio

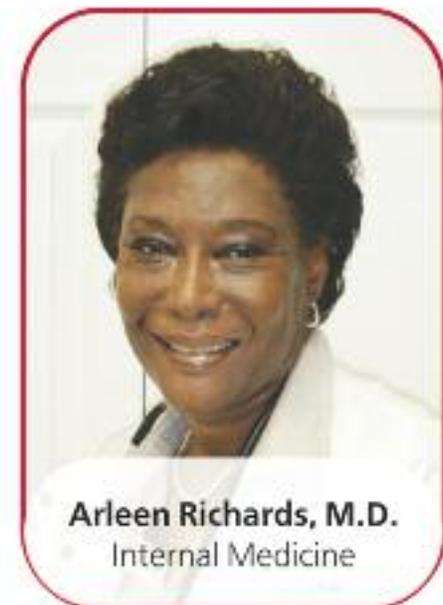
this collection draws on the jet set lifestyle of the wealthy in New York and Hollywood who go to tropical retreats like Jamaica.

"Indashio is a really energetic and talented young designer whose infectious creative dynamism wows the young celebrity set," said Deiwght Peters, chief executive officer of Saint International in welcoming Indashio's return to Jamaica.



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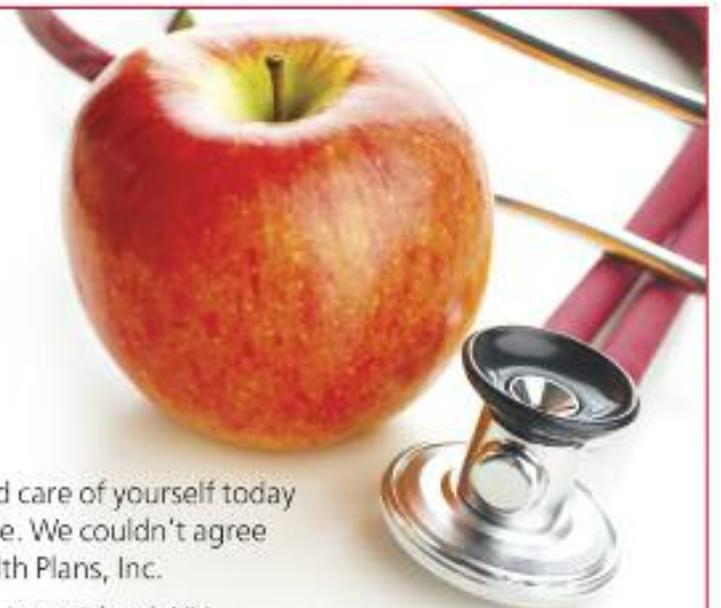
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HIV/AIDS remains a pressing challenge for the Caribbean ~ U.N.

UNITED NATIONS – The Caribbean community (CARICOM) claims despite the progress, HIV/AIDS remains a pressing challenge within the region.

Guyana's Charge d'Affaires to the United Nations George Talbot, speaking on behalf of the regional grouping, told the United Nation's General Assembly Review Of International Efforts Against HIV/AIDS last month that a "renewed focus on prevention efforts was needed to reach the most at-risk population groups.

"Efforts by CARICOM States, through the Pan Caribbean Partnership against

HIV and AIDS (PANCAP), towards mobilizing technical support and resources have become a challenge to undertake in light of global crises," he said.

However, he said there was still much to achieve, making reference to the signing of the Partnership Framework Agreement in July 2009 and the approval of a PANCAP proposal for \$34.5 million by the Global Fund in November last year.

Talbot said CARICOM states were, in addition, pursuing the establishment of a Regional Technical Support Facility as a joint initiative

between PANCAP and UNAIDS.

COMMITMENT

He called for U.N. members-states to fulfill their commitments of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and urged active involvement in the Replenishment Conference of the Global Fund in October.

"In light of linkages between the Millennium Development Goals, factors such as education, the role of women and children, and a healthy workforce in sustainable development are vital in combating HIV/AIDS," he said.

Talbot said that CARICOM states were seeking to ensure universal access to HIV/AIDS related preven-

tion, treatment, care and support services for all persons in need. He said this was through collaboration with regional and national entities, the promotion of policies and legislation addressing stigma

and discrimination, intensified negotiations for reduced-cost antiretroviral drugs, and strengthened international links with development partners.





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MAKING HER MARK



United States President Barack Obama greets Audrey Marks, Jamaica's first female ambassador to the United States, in the Oval Office at the White House after she presented her letters of credentials on June 28. The Jamaican envoy was accompanied by her husband, Jassel Dunstan and their daughters Morgan and Madison. Ambassador Marks expressed Jamaica's desire to "deepen the bonds of friendship and the ties of co-operation that have united" the people of Jamaica and the U.S. President Obama expressed his desire to see the continued development of the relationship that exists between Jamaica and the U.S. Ambassador Marks assumed duties on May 17, 2010.

Summer getaways: Jamaica offering special packages for holiday travelers

Jamaica is offering several special packages for travelers needing to get away this summer.

"Summer is a fantastic time for travelers to experience Jamaica's more than 150 tours and attractions, gor-

Resort & Golf Club's Girls Golf Getaway is a five-night offer for \$1,065, including double occupancy accommodation; a one-hour private lesson at the resort's 18-hole, PGA-quality golf course; a one-hour Native's Touch mas-



Cool off at Breezes Runaway Bay Resort & Golf Club.

geous natural surroundings, and exciting line up of island events," said John Lynch, Jamaica's director of tourism, in a recent press release.

"With many of Jamaica's finest accommodations offering special savings and over 1.3 million air seats from gateways across the U.S., an affordable island getaway is within reach."

Jamaica is served by all major United States carriers, with non-stop service available out of many U.S. gateways. These routes also offer convenient connections from cities across the U.S. Nonstop service to Jamaica this summer includes:

- American Airlines from Miami, New York (JFK), Dallas and Chicago (ORD);
- AirTran Airways from Atlanta, Baltimore and Orlando;
- Continental from Newark and Houston;
- JetBlue from New York (JFK) Boston and Orlando;
- Delta from New York (JFK), Atlanta, Detroit, Memphis and Minneapolis;
- Air Jamaica from New York (JFK), Philadelphia and Fort Lauderdale;
- U.S. Airways from Charlotte, Phoenix and Philadelphia;
- Spirit from Fort Lauderdale;
- Apple Vacations from Chicago (ORD) and St. Louis; and
- FunJet from St. Louis.

SUMMER PACKAGES
Breezes Runaway Bay

sage featuring tropical ingredients to boost the immune system, as well as a manicure and pedicure at the full-service à la carte Blue Mahoe Spa; plus a night pass to the neighboring Hedonism III, including round-trip transfers.

The package is valid for travel until Oct. 31. Ladies seeking a longer retreat can combine the Girls Golf Getaway with the Every Fifth Night Free promotion. Those traveling before Aug. 21, and who stay nine nights, will receive the tenth night free, representing an additional savings of up to \$350 per room. Visit www.Breezes.com.

At Franklyn D. Resort & Spa mom and dad can save 35 percent on family vacations and kids under age six stay free when traveling through Dec. 16. At this all-suite, all-inclusive family resort, each family is assigned a vacation nanny for the duration of their stay. Families can also enjoy daily meals from four restaurants, snorkeling, sailing, tennis, interactive kids, preteens and teens programs, live nightly entertainment, plus a shopping tour to Ocho Rios. Visit www.fdrjamaica.com.

FUN, SAVINGS

Half Moon doubles the fun of family savings with two packages. The Summer Break, available for a minimum of four nights stay, gives families \$150 in resort credit per room, as well as free breakfast for (CONTINUED ON PAGE 26)

Longing for some of that home cooking? Satisfy your hunger with some of grandma's rice and peas, finger licking jerk pork and savory curry goat – all with family and friends.

Come home

{it's time}

This is a great time to reconnect and reacquaint in Jamaica. Come enjoy the feast! Catch up with friends! Let's have some fun! If you haven't been home for a while, a lot has changed. There's so much to see and do.

Jamaican holiday periods offer sheer excitement no matter what the holiday. What better place to spend this holiday season than in Jamaica – your true home.

And though you may have been away for a long time, and are a green card holder, or became a US citizen, remember, all persons traveling by air between the United States and Jamaica now need to have a passport to enter or re-enter the US.

We look forward to welcoming you home. For further information contact your travel agent or www.visitjamaica.com

JAMAICA

~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

'Miss Jamaica Florida' showcases island's youthful talent in U.S. diaspora

DAWN A. DAVIS

Jamaica is known for its culture, people and beauty. The island is also famous for its beautiful women.

No other Caribbean island can boast winning the coveted "Miss World" title three times. Carole Crawford brought home the crown in 1963, Cindy Breakspare in 1976 and Lisa Hanna in 1993.

These women were not only beautiful, but also talented and intelligent - the perfect ambassadors for Jamaica.

That tradition continues today and extends beyond the island to the diaspora.

Celebrating Jamaican culture and the arts, the 21st Annual "Miss Jamaica Florida" pageant showcased the talent, intelligence and beauty of young Jamaican women in the United States diaspora at South Florida's Coral Springs Center for the Performing Arts on June 27. Ranging in ages from five to 21, the young ladies opened the show with a rousing tribute to the late Rex Nettleford, a Jamaican cultural icon who left a legacy of dance, litera-



2010 winners, left to right, "Little Miss Jamaica Florida" Jheannelle Johnson; "Junior Miss Jamaica Florida" Monet McFarlane; "Teen Miss Jamaica Florida" Jessica Waite; and "Miss Jamaica Florida" Shanice Cox.

ture and language. They continued to honor his memory through their personal interpretation of music, theater and dance.

Five-year old Dana Dixon, vying for the "Little Miss Florida" crown, said it best: "When I dance I feel like I am playing music with my body. Through dance I can tell stories with my creative expression."

Routines ranged from modern dance to interpretive,

to ballet, while others showed off their singing and theatrical talent. Conivia Ramsay, second runner-up in the "Miss Teen Florida" category, performed such a convincing part as a frustrated "Jamerican" at the Kingston airport forced to "bruk out inna patwa" all were convinced she is destined for the theater.

SHINE

The formal wear parade and interview segment to test

the ladies' poise and intelligence truly made them shine. Questions ran the gamut, bringing focus to topics such as mentorship, HIV/AIDS and business. Asked, "if you started your own business what would your product be and why would it be valuable to consumers", "Miss Teen" winner Jessica Waite answered without hesitation: "If I could start my own business I would market my own dermatological line majoring in products for acne. I know from my own personal experience that acne will scar beyond pimples on your face. My product would be a benefit to consumers by allowing them to not only to clear physical blemishes, but the emotional blemishes that acne can leave behind."

Shanice Cox, winner of the "Miss Jamaica Florida" category, gave the audience a valuable lesson on the HIV/AIDS epidemic with her answer to the question "What advice would you give to young children in this audience and also your peers on how to prevent HIV?"

"As my peers I would tell you guys to practice absti-

nence, and if not, practice safe sex," Cox said. "Today we are affected by this deadly virus, and one in 50 African Americans have contracted this virus or disease. Now, out of that it's 49 percent of us as teenagers who have contracted it through sexual transmission. Now that's a very steep number. And as my peers, if you are sexually active, I would advise you to take annual screening to test if you are positive or negative. These statistics are not just from out of the blue, this is from the Centers for Disease and Prevention, and the key word is prevention. AIDS sees no race, no face, no color, no socioeconomic status or sexual preference. So, if you want to save your life, have knowledge and know that this is out and you need to be aware."

LEGACY

The "Miss Jamaica Florida" pageant was launched in 1989 by Anthony Baker as a means of showcasing young Jamaican talent. Although Baker is not alive today to witness the 21st

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 24)



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~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

Jamaica Women of Washington earn high praise for charity work

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Audrey Marks, Jamaica's ambassador to the United States, has lauded the Jamaica Women of Washington (JWoW) organization for contributing just over J\$1.75 million to a number of charitable organizations in Jamaica.

In her address to the organization's 8th Annual

Tea-off for Good Health and Silent Auction, delivered by Sharon Miller, the deputy chief of missions at the Embassy of Jamaica, in downtown Washington last month, the ambassador said JWOW's contribution was no small feat. Over the years, she said "through your generosity and talent of your members, you

have positively impacted the life of scores of under-served citizens by focusing on issues such as the prevention of HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy and infant mortality." Over the past five years, according to Marks, organizations that have benefitted from JWOW's contributions include the Combined Disabilities Association; the University of the West Indies (UWI) Development and Endowment Fund; Jamaica AIDS Support; Mensana Community for the Upliftment of the Mentally Ill; Westmoreland Association of Street People; Children First; Women's Media Watch; Family and Parenting Center; and Western Society for the Upliftment of Children.

The Cornwall Regional Hospital, the ambassador noted, received neonatal equipment valued at J\$1,780,000 (\$20,000) from JWOW last year. The equipment included infant warmers, bilirubinometers, which are used to test infants for jaundice, and pulseoximeters, which measure blood oxygen levels.

Ambassador Marks said JWOW's theme for this year, "Homelessness: It Takes a Village to Shelter the Vulnerable", is no less important as the scourge of homelessness can be seen in every society.

"I therefore laud your decision to spotlight this issue and its attendant social cost, as well your contribution to the reconstruction efforts in Haiti," the ambassador noted.

"Your focus on homelessness is both timely and inspirational. While we normally view the homeless as persons who are destitute and without



Haiti's Ambassador to the United States Raymond Joseph, right, accepts a token from Dr. Jacqueline Watson, president of the Jamaica Women of Washington during the JWOW's 8th Annual Tea-Off for Good Health and Silent Auction last month.

shelter, might I suggest that being forced to live without the protection of the state, and having your freedom and the ability to decide your destiny on your terms within the norms of a civilized society, severely curtailed, could be viewed as being destitute and lacking in hope for a better tomorrow."

Ambassador Marks told the audience that Jamaica, in the past weeks, has been forced to confront this hopelessness as the government, with the collaboration of civil society have begun the long and difficult process of dismantling garrisons.

"There is therefore a need for all Jamaicans, both at home and abroad, to act in unison to ensure that this process moves forward," said Marks. "We must recognize that Jamaica is at tipping point, and failure to act could result in us being at this place, once more, in the not too distant future."

The Jamaican envoy challenged the executive and members of JWOW, as well as all Jamaicans and friends of Jamaica, "to join us as we begin this journey to build a better Jamaica."

In her remarks, Michelle Fenty, wife of Washington D.C.'s mayor, who is of Jamaican heritage, commended JWOW for its contribution in assisting the less fortunate and under-served in the District of Columbia. She noted that the two charities to receive assistance this year, the Harriett Tubman Women's Shelter and

My Sister's Place, are worthy of the assistance offered by JWOW.

Haitian Ambassador Raymond Joseph, in his remarks, thanked JWOW on behalf of the government and people of Haiti for selecting the country as one of its main beneficiaries from this year's fund raising efforts. He congratulated JWOW for its decision to improve the health and quality of life of the under-served and vulnerable women, children and families.

"Undoubtedly, your focus is primarily Jamaica, but I applaud you for also including the Caribbean region," he said.

Ambassador Joseph expressed thanks for the show of solidarity with Haiti at a vulnerable time in the Caribbean country's existence.

JWOW President Dr. Jacqueline Watson said the organization's mission is to provide support to improve the health and quality of life of women, children, and families in Jamaica as well as in Washington, D.C. Dr. Watson disclosed that the both ambassadors Marks and Joseph will jointly decide on the two projects (in Haiti and Jamaica) to benefit from this year's fund raising efforts.

JWOW's membership is representative of a broad cross-section of Jamaican women in the U.S. capital, drawn from a range of interests and occupations.

- Edited from JIS



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Jamaican authors charm young readers with delightful lessons from home

- **TITLE:** Leaving Home
- **AUTHOR:** Judith Hudson
- **TITLE:** Adventures with Bilari & Plim-Plim
- **AUTHOR:** Monica Morgan Wedderburn
- **REVIEWED BY:** Dawn A. Davis

animal sanctuary, readers meet the Cruckshankle family as they prepare to fly south for a warmer climate. Before they leave their comfortable thatched roof cottage in the friendly town of Windsor Hollow, Plim-Plim and her brother Dancy fly off to bid

their friends farewell for the winter. This is where the adventure begins, for the inquisitive Plim-Plim finds herself in a life-threatening predicament based on sugar-coated words from a "false friend". But, she learns a valuable lesson. Young readers

will too.

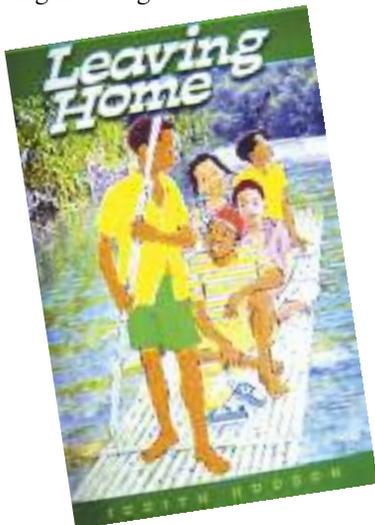
MUCH TO TELL

Asked where she came up with the names in this rich fairy tale fantasy, Wedderburn, laughing, says "my grandmother called me Plim-Plim as a little girl...The

stories developed in my head as I was growing up. I have so much to tell."

Indeed, both authors tell their stories in a rhythmic voice, quite like the unique cadence that define Caribbean (CONTINUED ON PAGE 18)

The bittersweet emotions surrounding the prospect of "leaving home" is one many in the diaspora have experienced. In "Leaving Home", Jamaican-born author Judith Hudson weaves a poignant tale, based on true-to-life events, about leaving the beauty that is Jamaica, including life-long



friendships, childhood memories and lessons about putting trust in those we love.

Through the eyes of 12-year-old Todd Christian, readers relive the colorful, tropical life so familiar before the journey to "farrin" for a better life. Certainly not a sad tale, the story elicits reflection on what life might have been.

So too, the feathery characters in "Adventures with Bilari & Plim-Plim" are set to take on two journeys - one real, the other taking them through a lesson on trust. With names like Mother Florriebecca, Pularchi, Croppet Rarerattle and places like Bottleneck Mews and Muss Muss Manor, author Monica Wedderburn, also Jamaican, tickles the imagination, pulling in young readers with a daring tale.

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~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

Jamaican conquers illiteracy to enrich grandma's storytelling tradition

MARIE GREGORY

Muriel Kingsley is a remarkable woman.

Raised in rural Clarendon, Jamaica she attended school intermittently between the ages of seven and 12. On days when her father could not give her lunch money, she stayed at home. When rain washed out the road, she was housebound. This meant that she had only the rudiments of an education.

At 13 she got her first job, watering tobacco at the nursery of a local factory. Her wage was one shilling and three pence per day. She used the three pence to buy lunch, gave her mother a shilling a week and managed to save from the remaining four shillings. Food was provided by her parents.

When she worked her way up and eventually planted tobacco, she earned four

shillings a day.

Kingsley's mother read the Bible to her each day. Muriel eventually bought her own Bible, but her reading skills were limited. She could follow her mother's reading, but feels now that this was because she knew the stories so well rather than a measure of her own literacy.

Against this background, it is remarkable that at age 66, Kingsley has had two books of children's stories published and a third is in process.

How did this come about? After Muriel married and had two children, her husband moved to England where he had family already settled. When she applied to join him, people helped her to complete the forms as she found standard English difficult. She admitted she could not read properly.

Her early jobs in London were as a cook or cleaner, but

with four more children she could not work regularly or full time. She decided to take advantage of adult education



Kingsley displays her books in her garden in London.

classes. When her children went to school, she attended classes during the day.

Over the years she has taken classes in English, mathematics, creative writing, painting and drawing. She achieved city and guilds level

in cookery, then enrolled in a four-year ceramics course which earned her a diploma.

FEAR

Throughout the adult education classes, her fear of English continued. When she began the cookery course, she was horrified to discover that she had to write papers. Her teachers and her children helped, but it was never easy.

One day, during an English class, the teacher gave her a picture of a man sitting under a tree and asked her to write a story about it. She saved her effort and will incorporate it into her third book.

Writing poetry came more easily to Kingsley than prose. She found poems fun to write. Yet in true Jamaican oral tradition, she told stories to her grandchildren. Her character "Mary-Ann" was a little girl in rural Jamaica in the 1950s

when, according to Kingsley, "life was pure and simple." Storytelling then was part of everyday life. Grandmothers were the narrators who passed on history and traditions.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Kingsley's children encouraged her to try to find a publisher for two stories: "Mary-Ann's Grandma's Ghost Story" and "The Two Little Mice and Mary-Ann".

The first two publishers she approached told her the books did "not fit in with what they were doing." One of her grandchildren found another publisher and advised her to

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 22)

Jamaican authors charm young readers with delightful lessons...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17)

people. Like Wedderburn, Hudson's main characters, Todd and his sister Zara, build bonds with friends, long-lost relatives and strangers, but learn to decipher the sincere from the false. The story builds as it progresses, creating a tempo youthful readers can follow.

The beauty of "Leaving Home" also lies in the island-home descriptions:

I watched my friends swim and splash about in the clear waters of the Rio Grande, and my eyes moved to the luscious green hills that stretched for miles, embracing the mountains like old friends, the bamboo trees swaying in the breeze and the tall coconut trees, which arched up in the air as if wanting to touch the sky...

It is the imaginative illustrations by Gibran Kahlil Brown and Wedderburn's unique words that will make "Adventures with Bilari & Plim-Plim" unforgettable for young readers.

Dawn A. Davis is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today. Both books are available on Amazon.com. "Leaving Home" is published by Author House. "Adventures with Bilari & Plim-Plim" is published by Push Kuya Publishing LLC.



Warmest wishes — straight from the heart

Jamaica is a country of warmth. The meteorologist would say it comes from the sun, but we at South Miami Heart Center at South Miami Hospital know the warmth of Jamaica comes from the hearts of its people. On the occasion of your 48th Anniversary of Independence, we extend our warmest wishes.

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~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

Alexander in N.Y. for 'Summer Celebration'

NEW YORK - Renowned Jamaican jazz pianist Monty Alexander is set to turn the heat up this summer with a return to New York City.

Alexander, who has the distinction of being named



Alexander

one of the greatest piano players in jazz history, is set to bring his "Summer Celebration" to Dizzy's Jazz Club at Lincoln Center from July 20-25. He will be on stage

for two shows per night, at 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., respectively.

The Kingston-born musician said that he and his ensemble are looking forward to "bringing uplifting and positive Jamaican rhythms and vibrations in our current challenging times" to Lincoln Center.

Alexander has performed with the likes of Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Ray Brown, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Clark Terry, Quincy Jones, Ernest Ranglin, Barbara Hendricks, Bill Cosby, Bobby McFerrin, Sly Dunbar, Robbie Shakespeare and on the "Concrete Jungle, The Music of Bob Marley" collection.

In a career spanning five decades, Alexander, a largely self-taught musician, has built a reputation for exploring and bridging the worlds of American jazz, popular song and the music of his native Jamaica. He has recorded over 60 albums.

- Edited from CaribPR Wire.

**Jamaica approves casino gambling**

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - The long-awaited casino bill has been signed into law following its recent passage in both houses of Parliament.

As a result, the way is now clear for the establishment of the Casino Gaming Commission and the crafting and implementation of appropriate regulations.

However, Junior Finance Minister Arthur Williams said great care had to be taken in ensuring that the regulations comprehensively address the details governing the roll-out of casino gambling in Jamaica. He said the major challenge was to ensure that casinos are operated according to the

strict rules that are set out in the domestic legislation.

With the approval of the new bill, officials say the plan is to legalize casinos in the tourist capital of Montego Bay and the northern parish of Trelawny, in the hope of encouraging Las Vegas-styled casino hotel resorts.

It was feared that the bill would not have been signed into law due to the religious beliefs of Governor General Patrick Allen, who is a Seventh Day Adventist. However, Information Minister Daryl Vaz said the bill was eventually signed.

**IRIE FM's creator dies**

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - Karl Young, the creator of Jamaica's first ever all-reggae radio station IRIE FM died last month from a lung-related medical condition, according to his family.

The businessman died following surgery in the United States.

Young revolutionized the reggae industry with a 24-hour format that enabled IRIE FM to become the most popular station island wide over the last decade.

Launched on Aug. 1, 1989, IRIE FM stands as a testament to Young's will, character, spirit and originality that saw him going on to launch another successful radio station, ZIP 103 FM, which has emerged as one of the island's most popular media entities, industry officials said.

Young also operated the Basement Night Club, where major local acts performed.

**SUMFEST SIZZLE**

Jamaican stars, from left, Shaggy, Etana and Beenie Man, plus Mavado and Queen Ifrica, along with American R&B singers Chris Brown and Usher, are expected to take top billing at this year's Reggae Sumfest in Jamaica. The music festival is scheduled for July 22-24 at Catherine Hall, St James. Each year, the festival draws thousands of local and overseas visitors to Jamaica's western city of Montego Bay. Organizers said that in addition to entertainment, Reggae Sumfest is expected to significantly boost the local economy.

"We expect Reggae Sumfest to be a major contributor to the economic landscape for this year," Johnny Gourzong, executive director of Summerfest Productions, producers of Reggae Sumfest, said in a recent press release.

"This festival causes people to not just spend on it, but to spend in preparation for it, and in several other endeavors related to it, and this year should be no different."

Air Jamaica

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'Aunt Ver' celebrates 101st birthday in Washington, D.C.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Age is just a number goes the old saying. This is especially true for Jamaican Veronica Wisdom who celebrated her 101st birthday here recently.

Born in Alexandria, in the parish of St. Ann, Jamaica, on May 23, 1909, Wisdom migrated to the United States more than 60 years ago. She currently resides in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area.

Since coming to the U.S. Wisdom has established herself in the Caribbean community, serving as mother, aunt, friend and mentor to an unknown number of persons of Caribbean and non-Caribbean descent.

"Aunt Ver", as she is affectionately called in the U.S. capital, is a founding member of the Jamaica Nationals Association (JNA) here. She helped keep the JNA going through many difficult times, often financing events from her own pocket. In 1966 JNA recognized her for the invaluable contribution she made not only to her community in the U.S., but also Jamaica.



Elise Morse, left, presents a potted plant to Veronica "Aunt Ver" Wisdom while the birthday girl samples some cake.

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Close friend and founding member of JNA Rayniss Mayne described Aunt Ver as an effervescent woman whose home was always open to students, particularly those attending Howard University. Among them was John Junior, a former Jamaica government minister. Her home was also considered the home away from home for a many senior police officers from Jamaica, among them retired former Assistant Commissioner of Police Reverend Allan Lewis.

Wisdom was an indefatigable hostess, well known for her parties with sumptuous food, including hard dough bread, Easter bun and other Jamaican fare. She was never tired of extending a helping hand to persons in need. For her work in the community she received several awards.

'FAITH'

In reflecting on her life, Aunt Ver told JIS news that "my profound faith in the Almighty made me stick to my church and serve as a deacon for many years in the Northminister Presbyterian Church."

She said one of the secrets

to her longevity is she always enjoys a glass of wine and "cut the rug" (dancing).

Jamaica's Ambassador to the U.S. Audrey Marks congratulated Wisdom on behalf of Prime Minister Bruce Golding and the government and people of Jamaica and wished her continued long life.

On the occasion of Wisdom's 101th birthday on May 23, her church community, along with family members, representatives of the JNA and friends hosted a special birthday reception in her honor at the church's fellowship hall.

Aunt Ver has two sons, Leonda and Clarence Lee, several grand and great grandchildren, as well as several nieces and nephews. She is being cared for by who she describes as her special nieces - Winnie Greaves and Inez Barnes, as well as her sons and their families supported by a team of caregivers.

- Photographs and story by the JIS.



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Mission impossible?: Officials set out to repair country's image after unrest

LEROY ADOLPHUS

NEW YORK – Jamaica's Tourism Minister Ed Bartlett said he is on a mission to repair his country's image following the civil unrest that left 76 people dead recently.



Bartlett

Bartlett, who attended the annual Caribbean Tourism Week here last month, told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)** that there is no doubt that the island's image had been affected when the security forces clashed with gunmen loyal to fugitive Christopher "Dudus" Coke, who was wanted in the United States on drug trafficking and gun running charges.

"Part of my mission here...is to use this opportunity to kick start that process and to move on to the United Kingdom and to Canada in the exercise," Bartlett said.

"The first five months of the year have been strong per-

formance months for Jamaica, and I think perhaps our most significant performance is out of the United States market where we have increase by 10 percent over last year, which really is phenomenal."

He said an assessment done by the Jamaica Tourist Authority revealed that the island could lose an estimated J\$350 million (\$10 million) as a result of the mayhem in West Kingston.

"What we are driving at is ensuring that the loss is not a reality and the campaign which we are on, is first to restore the confidence in the destination, and secondly to move beyond that to ensure that the growth projections that we have for the year is realized and that growth is estimated at six percent."

CAMPAIGN

Bartlett said that the promotional campaign is designed also to ensure that persons who were booked to visit Jamaica do not cancel.

"So the campaign has to be really strong, driving values of the destination, the historical connections that people would have had and more importantly that the fact that the people that are there are having a great time," he explained.

Recently, St. Lucia's Tourism Minister Allan Chastanet told CMC that the

violence incidents in Jamaica, had the potential to affect the region tourist industry. Bartlett agreed that the "brand Jamaica is stronger than the rest of the Caribbean" and agreed with Chastanet even though he noted that the "timings were a little off in making such a comment.

"But he is my friend and I understand the point he was making at the time. Whatever happens to us does reflect in the wider sense in the Caribbean, so therefore the move to ensure Jamaica's image is repair quickly is important to the Caribbean as well because the impact of that will benefit the Caribbean overall."

- CMC



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American Friends of Jamaica honors JNBS at South Florida gala

CORAL GABLES, Florida - The American Friends of Jamaica (AFJ) recently hosted a gala here in honor of Jamaica.

The annual affair is the organization's major fundraising event and this year it was used to recognize the Jamaica National Building Society (JNBS).

JNBS began business over 130 years ago. The company has pioneered a multifaceted approach to national advancement, which has influenced the quality of life of Jamaican citizens through contributions to education, entrepreneurial activities and philanthropic initiatives.

JNBS is now a multi-national organization, augmented by 11 subsidiary companies and five overseas offices, with its main operations in the areas of finance, information technology and insurance and automobile services. Its core business con-

tinues to be savings and home loans.

The AFJ presented JNBS with the "Humming Bird Award for International Achievement" in recognition of the company's philanthropic accomplishments and leadership initiatives. The AFJ also deepened its partnership with the JNBS by announcing plans for a pilot program for donors in the U.S. to be able to make charitable tax-deductible contributions through the AFJ to Jamaica. These donations would be directed to AFJ educational initiatives, among them the JNBS's Jamaica Partnership for Education.

AFJ President and retired U.S. Ambassador Sue M. Cobb pledged renewed commitment to educational, healthcare and economic development in Jamaica, with grant in aid funds earmarked for charities on the island.



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~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence 'Little Ochi Seafood Carnival' offers holiday spice

Forget the hot dogs, hamburgers and backyard BBQ. Pack up the family and head to Jamaica for a sumptuous culinary adventure during the Little Ochi Seafood Carnival on July 11.

"Jamaica is celebrated for its delectable cuisine, a distinct product of the island's rich culture and history," said Jamaica's Director of Tourism John Lynch.

"(The carnival honors) the legacy of our distinct and unique flavors, as well as the people who take pride in preserving our culture and sharing it with curious minds and adventurous souls."

The Little Ochi Seafood

Carnival is a celebration of culinary delights that are famed on Jamaica's South Coast. "Little Ochi" is nestled on the rugged beachfront of a quaint South Coast fishing village called Alligator Pond in Manchester. On July 11, visitors and locals will dine on the beach while enjoying the laid-back island atmosphere and hospitality.

Patrons can anticipate local seafood infused with Jamaican flare including peppered shrimp, stewed conch and octopus, jerk lobster and foiled roasted fish. Guests can also groove to the rhythmic sounds of reggae as they will be entertained by Byron Lee's Dragonaires and other local

reggae musicians.

The technique of "jerk-ing" is thought to have originated with Jamaica's Maroons, descendants of slaves who were freed from their Spanish masters and lived in the island's most remote mountain

areas. Meat is first marinated for hours in an incendiary mixture of peppers, pimento seeds, scallion and thyme and then cooked over an outdoor pit lined with pimento wood. (The Maroons did the cooking underground to camouflage

the smoke.) The low heat allows the meat to cook slowly, retaining the natural juices while becoming infused with the flavor of the wood and the different spices.



PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO



John Woolcock, left, Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) business development manager for Boston, shares information about what to do in the Caribbean island with an attendee at the third annual Harvard Negotiation and Leadership Conference held recently at Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts, United States. The JTB showcased the destination's varied offerings during the recent conference.

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Jamaican conquers illiteracy to enrich grandma's storytelling tradition

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

try again. The two books were accepted for publication and have been beautifully illustrated. They are suitable for young children who either have a Jamaican background or who can appreciate another culture.

Kingsley is pleased that her six children have had educational opportunities which she did not. One son has a Ph.D. in psychology, another has an M.B.A. One teaches, one is a baker. All have jobs and are scattered throughout England. One son was able to visit Jamaica when he won a poetry prize.

VISIT

Kingsley has made one visit to her homeland after 30 years away. She stayed with her sister and noted the improvement in electricity supply and that everyone had telephones, although roads were still poor and public transport was lacking. She said it was lovely to wake up in the mornings in rural Jamaica, and when she heard the crickets and tree frogs at night she felt she was a little girl again.

Another long held ambi-

tion has been fulfilled in that Kingsley now owns her own house in Thornton Heath, London. For years she lived in apartments, first in West Kensington, then in Battersea, then Putney. Finally in 2002, she was able to buy a spacious home and to have a garden of her own. This is her great love and occupies her spare time. The roses are beautiful and she has even managed to grow bananas inside! She rents an allotment on which she grows vegetables.

Kingsley attributes her success to the adult education classes. According to her, "they did it" and she is grateful to the teachers for their encouragement.

She sums up her philosophy by saying: "If you put your mind to something, you can achieve, perhaps not to go to the moon but something within reason."

She should know. Not many people who left school at 12, barely literate, can claim to have had two children's books published. The third will be published this summer.

Marie Gregory is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

Anderson becomes first Jamaican judge to sit on CCJ bench

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - Former University of the West Indies lecturer Winston Anderson has taken the oath of office as a judge of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), becoming the first Jamaican to sit as a jurist on the regional court.

Anderson told last

month's ceremony at King's House, the governor general's official residence in Jamaica, that he was humbled by his appointment to the Trinidad-based court that has been operational for the past five years.

"There are not many places in this world of ours

that a journey such as mine is possible," he told the gathering that included Governor General Sir Patrick Allen, CCJ President Michael de la Bastide and Jamaica's Prime Minister Bruce Golding, among others.

"I shall be forever humbled by the faith of Caribbean



Anderson

Justice Duke Pollard, who served as a CCJ judge since Feb. 2005. He also previously served as general counsel for the Caribbean community (CARICOM) secretariat in Guyana from 2003 to 2006.

The CCJ was set up to be the final court of appeal for CARICOM countries. However, only Barbados, Belize and Guyana have fully signed on to both jurisdictions of the court, while other CARICOM member states continue to embrace London's Privy Council as their highest court.



people in affording me this opportunity to serve." Anderson's appointment followed the retirement of

Jamaica-based hotelier is new CHTA president

Josef Forstmayr, managing director of Round Hill Hotel and Villas in Montego Bay, Jamaica, last month assumed the presidency of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) for a two-year term ending in June 2012.

Following recent meetings with the CHTA executive team and outgoing CHTA President Enrique De Marchena Kaluche, who now takes over the chairmanship of CHTA, Forstmayr outlined the various objectives he wishes to address during his two-year term as president.

Key issues for Forstmayr include: stimulating membership growth, particularly amongst the region's new larger chain hotels; providing greater support for the Caribbean Society of Hotel

Association Executives (CSHAE) who manage the 35 hotel associations that constitute CHTA's membership; improving regional linkages between the hotel sector and other Caribbean industries, particularly agriculture; elevating the awareness and

international status of Caribbean cuisine; and reviving the public and private sector's regional marketing initiative through the proper funding of the Caribbean Tourism Development Company (CTDC) - a marketing company owned equally by CHTA and CTO.

"Since his days as president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourism Association, I've worked very closely with Josef and have found him to be remarkably competent and adept in his approach to hotel

local communities in supporting the vision of the hotel and tourism sector in its daily operations has resulted in a greater understanding of the industry and its importance to the economic development of the constituency in which it operates."

Forstmayr began his career in the fall of 1979 as assistant manager at Coconut Cove in Negril, later moving to the Tryall Golf and Beach Hotel as resident manager. He served as general manager at the Trident Villas and Hotel in Port Antonio, Jamaica, until arriving at his current position as Managing Director of Round Hill Hotel and Villas in Montego Bay.

Forstmayr held the role of president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourism Association (JHTA) from June 2001 to 2003. He was voted "Caribbean Hotelier of the Year" by the CHTA membership in 2007 and currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Jamaica Tourist



Forstmayr, left, accepts the gavel signifying his move up to president of the CHTA, from former President Enrique De Marchena Kaluche.

marketing and extremely decisive and visionary as an industry leader," said Alec Sanguinetti, director general and chief executive officer of CHTA.

VISION

His ability to integrate

Board.

Born in Austria, Forstmayr attended the University of Salzburg, where he studied economic sciences and tourism. He is fluent in four languages - German, English, French and Italian.



Why Do Jamaicans Run So Fast? Find out July 10 in South Florida

"Why Do Jamaicans Run So Fast", a film featuring super sprinter Usain Bolt, will have a United States public screening this month in the South Florida city of Miramar.

The film will be shown twice - 2 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. - on July 10 at the Miramar Cultural Center.

It chronicles the accomplishments of gold medal-winning Jamaican sprinters Usain Bolt, Shelly-Ann Fraser,

Asafa Powell, Veronica Campbell-Brown and Melanie Walker at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Set against a Jamaican backdrop, scenes include interviews with the athletes, their families, reggae and dancehall artistes, government and athletic community officials, and fans.

For more information, contact the Miramar Cultural Center at 954-602-4500.



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Wayman G. Bonnerman, M.B.A. Chief of Staff <http://www.miamidade.gov/District09>

~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

'Miss Jamaica Florida' showcases island's youthful talent in U.S. diaspora

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

anniversary of the extravaganza he founded, his wife and current president, Marcia Eigg-Baker, continues his legacy through Anthony Baker Incorporated. Now in association with Partners for Youth Foundation, the pageant is also a platform to raise funds for orphanages, hospitals, and other charitable institutions.

One deserving young lady is also awarded a cash scholarship to help further her university education in the arts. It is hoped that these young ambassadors will excel in their chosen fields of study with grace, poise, confidence and a love and understanding of a culture that defines them as Caribbean Americans.

Story and photographs by Dawn A. Davis, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



"Miss Jamaica Florida 2010" Shanice Cox performs at the pageant.

THE WINNERS

• **Little Miss Jamaica Florida (ages 5-8)**

Jheannelle Johnson - *winner*
Chinya Taylor - *1st runner-up*
Michaelah Ward - *2nd runner-up*

• **Junior Miss Jamaica Florida (ages 9-12)**

Monet McFarlane - *winner*
Amanda Ebanks - *1st runner-up*
Michaeleigh Ward - *2nd runner-up*

• **Miss Teen Jamaica Florida (ages 13-16)**

Jessica Waite - *winner*
Shenelle Grant-Harvey - *1st runner-up*
Conivia Ramsay - *2nd runner-up*

• **Miss Jamaica Florida (ages 17-21)**

Shanice Cox - *winner*
Yshele Johnson - *1st runner-up*
Jhanile Smith - *2nd runner-up*

JTB re-launches 'Experience Jamaica'

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) has reintroduced the "Experience Jamaica" program to encourage Jamaicans to taste, see, feel and enjoy the country's tourism product.

First introduced in 2009, the "Experience Jamaica" program uses customer education and value-added discount offerings to generate interest in and use of the tourism facilities available on the island, including accommodations, attractions, transportation and shopping.

This year, the number of participating entities totals over 100, with discounts ranging from five percent to more than 50 percent. This is a marked increase in the number of participating companies from 2009, which peaked at 65 participating entities. All six resort areas are represented in the program.

"This is the start of the summer period when many Jamaicans come home to visit friends and family, and local school groups also organize day trips for their students," explained Director of Tourism John Lynch. "Plus, with the Emancipation and Independence holidays just a few weeks away, this is an excellent time to offer discounts to our people."

The 2010 program will run through December.



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~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

JAMAICA TO THE WORLD



The Jamaica Lightning Bolt clipper yacht, named after Jamaican Usain Bolt, the three-time Olympic and World Championships gold medalist and "world's fastest man", visited New York City recently as part of the Clipper 09-10 Round the World Yacht Race. Last month, the Jamaica Tourist Board hosted a group of travel agents onboard the vessel for a sail around Manhattan. The Jamaica Lightning Bolt is one of 10 yachts competing in the Clipper 09-10 Round the World Yacht Race.

FIRST AND FOREMOST



Veronica Campbell-Brown of Jamaica, center, breaks the tape to win the 200 meters at last month's Adidas Grand Prix meet in New York. Campbell-Brown, the two-time Olympic champion in the event, finished ahead of her arch rival, American Allyson Felix, left, the three-time IAAF World Champion. The Jamaican's winning time was a 2010 world leading 21.98 seconds.

SKY'S THE LIMIT



Jamaica's Jerome Jordan, left, was last month selected by the Milwaukee Bucks in the second round of the National Basketball Association (NBA) draft in the United States. The 7' 1", 244-pound center, who spent four years at Tulsa University in the U.S. after leaving high school in Jamaica, was the 44th overall pick. The 23-year-old from Kingston averaged 15.4 points, 9.1 rebounds, 1.3 assists and 2.3 block shots while playing 29.8 minutes per game during his senior season at Tulsa. He appears to have a promising future in the NBA. According to ESPN basketball analyst Chad Ford, "Jordan has great size and he's a pretty skilled big man..."

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WHY DO JAMAICANS RUN SO FAST?

Saturday, July 10, 2010
2 PM (\$6) and 8:30 PM (\$10)

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Miramar, FL 33025
For Tickets and Information:
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www.MiramarCulturalCenter.org

~ Celebrating Jamaica's 48th Independence

Summer getaways: Jamaica offering special packages for holiday travelers

parents and children ages 11 and under. Children 11 and under stay free with 50 percent off any meal plan, while those 12 to 16 stay free when the European meal plan is purchased.

This package is valid through Dec. 15 and rates start at \$250 per night for double occupancy.

With the Family Break package, families receive daily breakfast and round-trip airport transfers, nanny service for up to four hours for two children ages three and under; and all children 11 and under stay free. This package is valid until Dec. 15 and rates start at \$250 for double occupancy. Visit www.halfmoon.com.

The Hilton Kingston created the Jamaica "Emancipence" package, which is valid when guests book a minimum of two nights stay for a maximum of three persons. The \$65 per person,

per night package includes double occupancy in a Garden room, daily buffet breakfast, and guests can participate in the signature Emancipence Food Festival and experience live entertainment featuring local cultural performers.

The offer is valid from July 30 through Aug. 8 and is subject to availability. There is an additional third person charge of \$20 per night. Visit www.hiltoncaribbean.com/kingston.

Marblue Villa Suites has a Summer Special Villa Retreat package that is valid for its Verandah Villa Suites. The package is available through Aug. 30 and includes daily maid service, pool service and a chef. The rate starts at \$1,995 per week for up to two rooms (four persons). Visit www.marblue.com.

Rondel Village is offering 2010 Spring/Summer Specials at its villas, as well as Superior and Garden rooms. Guests



The Hilton Kingston created the Jamaica "Emancipence" package.

who book three nights in a Superior room will receive 17 percent discount on their stay

when they book by July 9 for travel until July 13. The Garden rooms are also 10 percent off when travelers book four nights by July 9 for travel through July 13. Visit www.Rondelvillage.com.

The Ritz-Carlton Golf & Spa Resort, Rose Hall is offering a fourth and fifth night free plus \$150 resort credit promotion when guests book by Oct. 31 and travel through Dec. 22. The fourth night free is a room-only promotion where guests who book four nights but only pay for three, plus they receive a \$150 resort credit (one resort credit per stay).

Rates start at \$189 per night based on single/double occupancy. The fifth night free is an all-inclusive promotion where guests who book five nights only pay for four and they receive a \$150 resort credit (one resort credit per stay). Rates start at D\$429 per night based on single/double occupancy. Visit www.ritzcarlton.com.

Tower Cloisters Resort has a Super Summer package for families or a group of four. Guests stay for seven nights at a two-bedroom condo and receive free cable, WiFi connection, daily breakfast and a welcome fruit basket. The package starts at \$976 and is available until Sept. 5. Visit www.cloisters-jamaica.com.

Villas By Linda Smith has created a Free Nights This Summer package. Travelers who book a seven-night stay by July 31 will pay for five nights and receive two nights free. The package is available for travel now through Nov. 15. Visit www.jamaicavillas.com.

Jamaica Inn offers a "7 Night Romance" package,

including private round-trip airport transfers, accommodations in a Deluxe Verandah Suite, a bottle of sparkling wine, breakfast, nightly five-course dinner with live entertainment, a one hour Couples Sunset Massage at the KiYara Ocean Spa, a boat trip to Dunn's River Falls and a Summer Citrus Scented Jamaica Inn Candle.

The package starts at \$4,198 per couple and \$538 for each additional night. Guests can upgrade their seven night stay to a Premier Verandah Suite for \$560 additional, and \$80 additional for each additional night. Book now through Dec. 7 for travel through Dec. 14. Blackout dates are Nov. 23-30. Visit www.jamaicainn.com.

Families can take advantage of the Free Nights Special at Round Hill Hotel & Villas. Guests who stay for seven nights will only pay for five. Those who stay for four nights will only pay for three and persons who stay 14 nights will only pay for 10. Additionally, visitors will receive a \$100 food and beverage credit per booking.

Offer is available through Dec. 18, excluding September and the week of Nov. 23-30. Visit www.roundhill.com.

Information supplied by the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB). For details on upcoming special events, attractions and accommodations in Jamaica, visit www.visitjamaica.com or call the JTB at 1-800-JAMAICA (1-800-526-2422).



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