

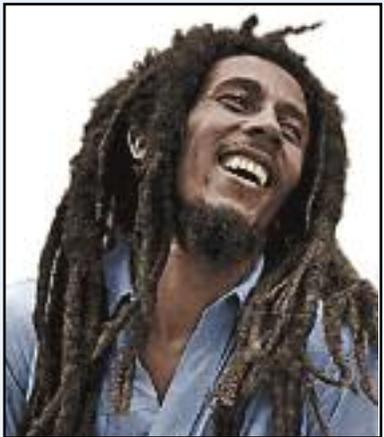
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THE MULTI AWARD WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE WITH THE LARGEST PROVEN CIRCULATION IN FLORIDA GUARANTEED



There were mixed results in Caribbean elections last month. Keith Mitchell, left, was returned as prime minister of Grenada, while incumbent Freundel Stuart retained power in Barbados, page 7.



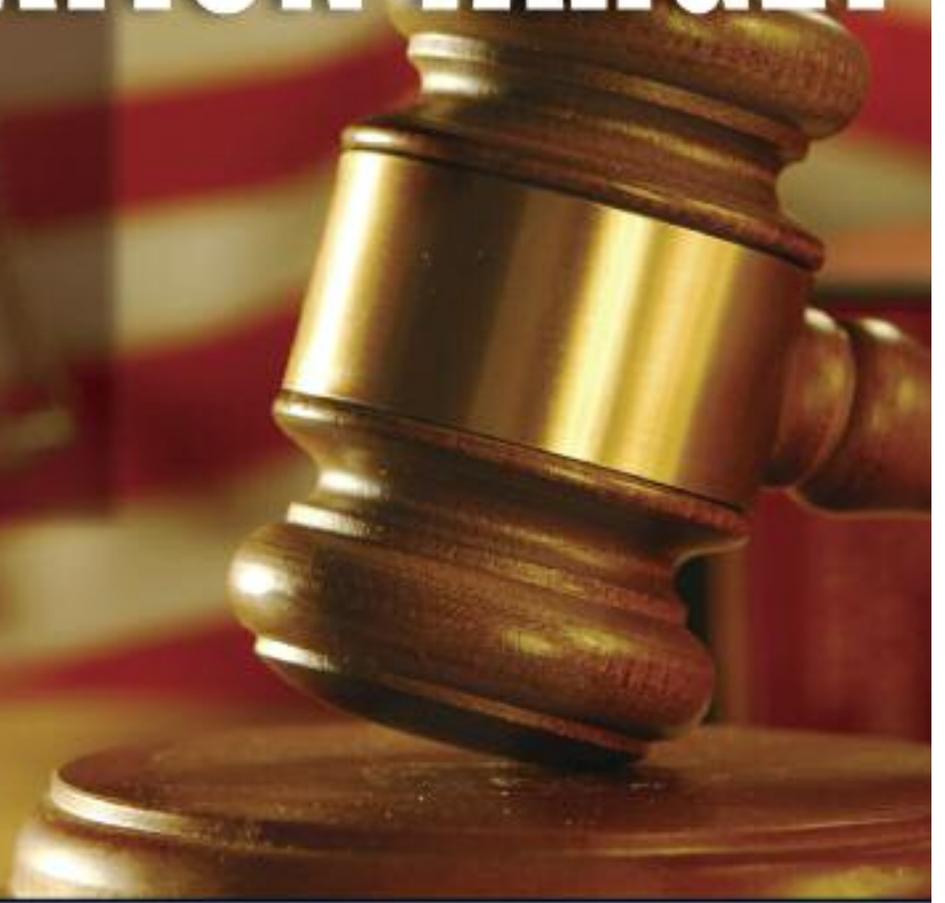
More than three decades after his death, Jamaican-born music legend Bob Marley was honored at the Grammy Awards in the United States with a tribute featuring some of entertainment's biggest names, page 15.



Two-time Olympic 100 meters champion Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, along with Jamaican compatriot Usain Bolt, Grenada's Kirani James and Felix Sanchez of the Dominican Republic, are in line to win sport's big award, page 22.

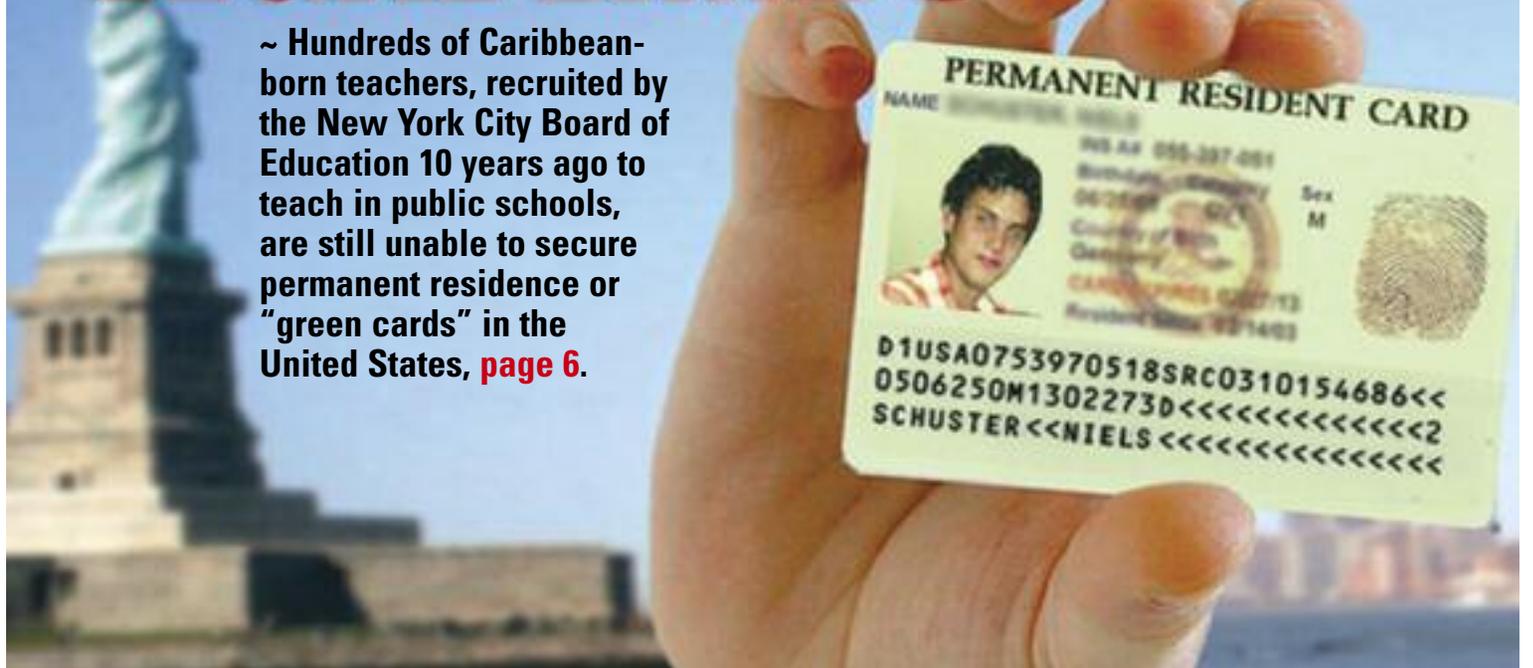
DEPORTATION TARGET

~ The United States Supreme Court has declined to block the deportation of Caribbean immigrants who were not warned by their lawyers, when they pleaded guilty to serious crimes, that they would be sent back home, page 5.



LEGAL LIMBO

~ Hundreds of Caribbean-born teachers, recruited by the New York City Board of Education 10 years ago to teach in public schools, are still unable to secure permanent residence or "green cards" in the United States, page 6.



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MOST WANTED: Dozens of Caribbean nationals top U.S. fugitives list

NEW YORK - The United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) is hunting dozens of Caribbean nationals who are listed as drug dealers on the lam.

All are wanted for trafficking cocaine and marijuana.

Among the 40 fugitives being sought, the most dangerous listed is Miguel Perez, 50, a national of the Dominican Republic. Perez has been a DEA fugitive since Oct. 16, 2000 and is considered armed and dangerous. According to the DEA, gathered intelligence show that Perez is known to be the head of a trafficking organization involved in smuggling drugs from Puerto Rico to the United States mainland.

On July 29, 2000, Perez was arrested at the JFK Airport in New York regarding the involvement of 60 kilograms of cocaine and .665 kilograms of heroin seized at the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan, Puerto Rico (PR). Perez was then extradited to San Juan, where he was charged

on a federal arrest warrant issued in the District of Puerto Rico. On Oct. 16, 2000 Perez was declared a fugitive for bond default. He is one of three drug fugitives from the Dominican Republic.

Most of the 40 Caribbean nationals are from Puerto Rico and are in their 30s. They include: Edward Cruz-Rivera, 37 of Bayamon; Erwins Feliciano-Echevarria, 40, of Sabana Gardens; Carlos X Feliciano-Gonzalez, 29 and Ray Gonzalez, 27, of Jayuya PR; Cäesar Garcia-Cruz, 47 of Camuy, PR; Edwin Lorenzo-Nieves, 23, of Mayaguez, PR; Julio Maquez-Alejandro, 43 of San Juan, PR; Sergio Martinez-Torres, 23 of Ponce, PR; Angel Melendez-Orsini, 33; Edwin Morales-Morrero, 34; Jorge L. Negrón-Castellano, 30; Roberto Negrón-Latony, 27; Erik Omar Ortiz-Melendez, 31; Luis Otero-Valentin, 37; Carlos Pabon, 38; Luis Pizarro-Morales, 45 of Bayamon, PR; Francis Roman-Taveras, 44, of Camuy, PR; Abimael Serrano-Figueroa, 31; Luis Torres-



DEA wanted women Avis Maureen Baker of Jamaica, left, and Carmen Marquez-Burgos of Puerto Rico.



Ramos, 42 and Victor Vega-Quinonez, 33.

WOMEN

One of only two women on the list is also from Puerto Rico. She is Carmen Marquez-Burgos, 29.

The other wanted woman is Avis Maureen Baker of Jamaica. Baker, 50, is wanted for conspiracy to possess and distribute cocaine and mari-

juana. Her last known address was Lower Princess Quarter G. in St. Maarten.

There are two fugitives each from St. Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Kitts and Nevis; and one each from the U.S. Virgin Islands and Trinidad and Tobago.

From St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the DEA wants Ketosh Keron Bibby, alias "Tosh", "Tush" or "Toosh",

36, and Wade Gellizeau, 52, for allegedly manufacturing, distributing, or dispensing, or possessing with intent to manufacture, distribute or dispense a controlled substance.

From St. Kitts and Nevis, the DEA wants Dave Elroy Sweeney, 39, and Patrick Sylvester Warner, 57.

DEA officers also want Dev Harrilal Maharaj, 37, of T&T for possession and distribution. USVI national Wayne B. Serieux, a 43-year-old of Estate Pearl #7, St. Thomas, has been a DEA fugitive since 2005.

Anyone with information on any of the fugitives is urged to call the U.S. Marshals Service 24-hour number **1-877-WANTED2 (1-877-926-8332)** or contact the DEA office in Puerto Rico or the U.S. with information. The full list of alleged criminals can also be seen at www.justive.gov/dea.

- Edited from News Americas.



U.S. convicts drug trafficking kingpin for murder, racketeering, kidnapping

BALTIMORE, Maryland – The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency has reported that a federal jury here has convicted the Jamaican-born leader of a drug trafficking organization of racketeering, kidnapping and murder.

According to ICE last month, a jury convicted Jean

Brown, 43, for "murder in aid of racketeering in connection with a conspiracy to distribute marijuana in five U.S. states and Jamaica."

ICE said it conducted the investigation, which resulted in the eventual conviction, along with the U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the Baltimore County Police

Department and the Anne Arundel County Police Department.

Brown was identified as one of the leaders of "the Brown Organization, a criminal organization whose members distributed narcotics in Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Arizona, California and Jamaica." Brown's co-defendant, Gabriel Campa-Mayen, 45, of Tijuana, Mexico, was acquitted of all charges.

'VICTORY'

"Today's conviction of Jean Brown for drug conspiracy and kidnapping and murder in aid of racketeering is a victory for HSI special agents, who since 2009 have been investigating the Jean Brown drug trafficking organization, which spanned five states and two countries," explained a statement from ICE.

William Winter, special



New York on a monthly basis."

The ICE said Smith was later killed by one of Brown's co-conspirators.

BIG LOADS

Court records indicate that the drug traffickers transported as much as 1,000 pounds of marijuana per month from 2000 until Brown's arrest in 2010.

ICE said Brown "employed truck drivers and arranged for the distribution of the marijuana on the (US) East Coast, principally in Baltimore and Pittsburgh, used couriers to smuggle the drug proceeds to Jamaica, and sent cash back to the Southwest to pay for the next load."

Brown faces a maximum of life in prison for the drug conspiracy, for kidnapping in aid of racketeering and for murder in aid of racketeering, and a maximum of 10 years in prison for conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, ICE said.

Three other Jamaicans, Hubert Downer, also known as "Doc", and "Michael Reid", 51; Dean Myrie, also known as "Journey", 39, and Peter Blake, 55, have all pleaded guilty to their roles in the conspiracy and are awaiting sentencing.



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SPARED: Jamaican gets temporary execution reprieve in Florida

MIAMI, Florida - A Jamaican national convicted of killing a Florida state trooper with a pipe bomb was granted a temporary reprieve one day before he was to be executed



Howell

by lethal injection.

A United States federal district late last month stayed the execution of Paul Augustus Howell, 47, allowing defense attorneys more time to appeal his case.

Michael Ufferman, one of Howell's attorneys, speculated, however, that prosecutors may appeal the judge's ruling.

Howell was convicted of killing Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Jimmy Fulford in Feb. 1992.

'UNPREPARED'

Ufferman and another lawyer, Sonya Rudenstine, had said in court filings that their client's appointed attorneys were "woefully unprepared to represent Mr. Howell," and that they have "discovered numerous factors that should alarm the court in moving forward with these proceedings."

Howell had asked that his appointed attorneys, Clyde M. Taylor and Baya Harrison III, be removed from the case. But Assistant Florida Attorney General Charmaine Millsaps had asked that the stay request be denied, saying

there is a "public-policy reason" to do so.

Rudenstine said Howell's original post-conviction attorney had filed a "critical appellate pleading too late to preserve Howell's habeas corpus review" in U.S. federal court. Rudenstine said that if Howell was executed on Feb. 26, as originally planned, he would be the first person to be sentenced to death in the modern era in Florida without federal review. She also said mitigating factors, from child abuse to mental illness, were not presented during Howell's trial.

Florida Governor Rick Scott had signed the death warrant for Howell's execution by lethal injection.

AMNESTY PLEA

Days before the scheduled execution, the London-based Amnesty International urged Florida to halt the execution.

"While Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases, even supporters of this punishment should be concerned by the questions being raised about the quality of the legal representation this capital defendant received at trial and on appeal," said Amnesty International's USA researcher Rob Freer.

Howell attorneys say he was sentenced without any substantive investigation into his background, which Amnesty International said "would have surfaced a series of mitigating factors a jury should have heard before making its life or death decision."

The human rights group said the lawyers wanted to raise information not fully presented to the jury, including evidence that Howell suf-

fers from brain damage due to head injuries and exposure to pesticides when he was a child, chemicals since banned in the U.S.

"They also have evidence that he suffered extensive childhood abuse in Jamaica where he was born and grew up. Two experts who have

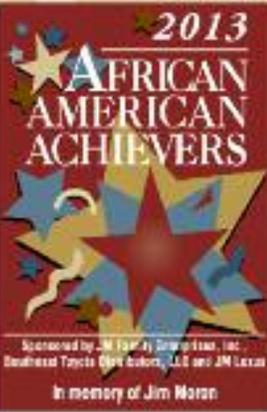
reviewed the case have concluded that this abuse may have resulted in post-traumatic stress disorder

"His lawyers also point to the symptoms of mental illness, including auditory hallucinations developed when Howell served in the U.S. military as a young man,"

Amnesty International said, noting that the crime for which Howell is on death row was committed a year after he was discharged from the U.S. military.

- Edited from CMC.





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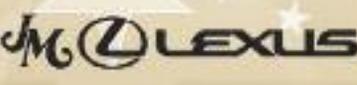
			
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U.S. Coast Guard seizes \$17M in cocaine after Caribbean Sea chase

MIAMI, Florida - The United States Coast Guard said it brought ashore more than half a ton of cocaine seized during recent operations in the Caribbean, with a street value of more than \$17 million.

The Coast Guard said the drug was recovered by a Coast Guard crew "after an at-sea chase."

"Using coordinates provided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Coast Guard cutter Mohawk was sent to intercept a fast boat in the south western Caribbean on January 24," a U.S. Coast Guard statement noted.

It said a helicopter off the Mohawk "located the go-fast vessel and witnessed the suspected smugglers jettison the contraband as they continued their pursuit" and that crew members "plucked from the water 1,400 pounds of cocaine with an estimated wholesale value of more than US\$17 million."

The Coast Guard said "four suspected smugglers," whose names and nationalities were withheld, had been turned over to law enforcement authorities.



BUDGET BUSTER: Lack of money forces U.S. to free Caribbean detainees

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In a move clearly designed to save money, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency said it has released a number of Caribbean and other immigrant detainees from jails and detention centers across the country.

ICE said that the move came as automatic U.S. federal budget cuts loomed on Mar. 1.

"In order to make the best use of our limited detention resources in the current fiscal climate and to manage our detention population under current congressionally mandated levels, ICE has directed field offices to review the detained population to ensure it is in line with available funding," said ICE Spokeswoman Gillian Christensen late last month.

"As a result of this review,

a number of detained aliens have been released around the country and placed on an appropriate, more cost-effective form of supervised release," she added.

'MASS RELEASE'

Christensen declined to give an estimate of how many immigrants, and their nationalities, were placed on "supervised release". But advocates and immigration lawyers reported a "mass release," including dozens of detainees from separate facilities in New Jersey, Arizona, Louisiana, Texas and Florida. Bryan Johnson, an immigration lawyer in Long Island, New York, said a client held in New Jersey's Bergen County Jail called to tell him guards were freeing 12 immigrants.

"We're getting reports



Many Caribbean people arrested by ICE could now be released.

from multiple detention centers in Texas, Florida and New Orleans, where detainees who are low priority are being released in mass without bond," said Domenic Powell, a spokesman for the National Immigrant Youth Alliance, a Washington-based immigra-

tion advocacy group. Christensen, however, said ICE is continuing to prosecute cases in immigration court and will seek deportations. ICE and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said they were analyzing spending as congressional inaction increased the likelihood of so-called budget sequestration or across-the-board spending cuts.

EXPENSIVE

The American Civil Liberties Union said that detaining immigrants is an expensive business, with an average daily cost of \$122 to \$164 per person.

Homeland Security

Secretary Janet Napolitano said ICE "will be forced" under sequestration to reduce detention and removal of undocumented Caribbean and other immigrants.

Immigrant rights advocates have long called for ICE to release some detainees, either to allow them to stay in the U.S. or to keep them out of prison-like detention centers until they are deported. The groups have argued that the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama has violated its stated principle of focusing on the most dangerous undocumented immigrants in favor of padding numbers by going after low-level offenders instead.

- Edited from CMC.



Major decline in police 'stop and frisks' of Caribbean immigrants

NEW YORK - As the New York Police Department (NYPD), over the years, faced intense criticism over the controversial "stop-and-frisks" policy regarding Caribbean and other immigrants and

minorities, the department has reported what it described as a "major decline" in the use of the tactic.

In its latest report of data for 2012, the NYPD said cops used the controversial tactic

22 percent less and seized 14 percent fewer weapons than in the previous year.

Paul Browne, a NYPD spokesman, said the drop in "stop-and-frisks reflects a fall in staffing in high-crime areas, also called impact zones.

"Stops declined after increased training and a decline in impact staffing, but ultimately the number reflects suspicious behavior observed by police officers, there was a period after the first quarter where staffing of impact posts, which had been doubled, was lowered to address demand for staffing of regular precinct assignments," he added.

According to the NYPD data, cops made 685,724 stops in 2011, compared with 533,042 last year.

The figures also reveal that stop-and-frisks took 780



Less searches by New York's cops.

guns off city streets last year, a five percent drop from 2011.

In a letter to City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said the percentage of minorities stopped matched up with suspect descriptions provided by victims of violent crime, and that the racial breakdown of

stops last year stayed roughly the same, with 55 percent being black.

PROTEST

But the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU), a persistent critic of the NYPD's stop-and-frisk policy, was critical of the numbers.

"These numbers show that the NYPD continues to stop, interrogate and humiliate innocent people far too frequently and that New Yorkers of color continue to bear the brunt of this indignity," said NYCLU Executive Director Donna Lieberman.

Grenadian American New York City Councilman Jumaane Williams said he tabled three bills in the City Council aimed at what he claims would provide better police accountability and safer streets. Williams, who was unlawfully arrested during the West Indian American Day Carnival Parade in Brooklyn two years ago, said the bills marked "a huge step forward on the road to police reform.

Caribbean American Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, who represents the 11th Congressional District in Brooklyn, applauded Williams for "producing this groundbreaking package of legislation.

"As we continue to ensure that our communities are safe, it cannot come at the price of diminishing or relinquishing the civil liberties of our law-abiding residents," she told CMC.

- Edited from CMC.



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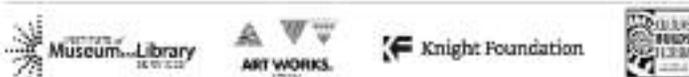
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U.S. Supreme Court allows deportation of legal Caribbean immigrants guilty of serious crimes

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Supreme Court has declined to block the deportation of thousands of Caribbean and other immigrants who over two years ago were not warned by their lawyers that, when they pleaded guilty to serious crimes, they would be targeted for deportation.

The law calls for mandatory deportation for Caribbean and other immigrants, including lawful permanent residents, who have an “aggravated felony” on their record.

In a 7-2 decision late last month, the justices refused to apply the ruling retroactively to cases of immigrants who had unintentionally pleaded guilty before 2010. The ruling came in the case of Roselva Chaidez, a Chicago woman who was born in Mexico and has been a lawful permanent U.S. resident since 1977. Chaidez has three children and two grandchildren, all of whom are U.S. citizens. U.S. prosecutors said that in 2003 Chaidez agreed to plead guilty to two counts of mail fraud for her minor role in an insurance fraud.

According to court documents, Chaidez’s son and several others had staged an auto accident, and that Chaidez received \$1,200 from an insurance company for a false claim of injury. The court sentenced Chaidez to probation



The highest U.S. court’s decision could impact many Caribbean people in America.

and ordered her to repay \$22,000, the total amount of the insurance fraud.

DENIED

Court documents reveal that Chaidez completed her sentence and had paid her restitution by 2004.

Chaidez said when she later applied to become a naturalized U.S. citizen she denied having been convicted of a crime. But only then, she said, she learned that pleading guilty to mail fraud involving more than \$10,000 meant that she was subject to deportation.

Charles Roth, a lawyer for the National Immigrant

Justice Center, said “it is now in the hands of the (U.S. President Barack) Obama administration and the U.S. Congress to keep this family together, as well as hundreds of others who at least deserve consideration of whether a run-in with the law enforcement more than a decade ago outweighs the good they have since contributed to our society.”

- Edited from CMC.

102-y-o Caribbean migrant gets high praise from U.S. president

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Few people are lucky enough to get a presidential spotlight cast on them and, last month, during his State of the Union address, United States President Barack Obama took time out to pay tribute to a lucky few, including a 102-year-old Caribbean migrant.

Desiline Victor, a Haitian migrant, took the spotlight as many strained to see her sitting in the audience after Obama told the world of her three hour wait in line to vote last year. Victor, a former farm worker who only became a U.S. citizen in 2005 and cast her first vote in the 2008 presidential election, waited for hours to cast her ballot on Oct. 28 at a public library in Miami-Dade county for the 2012 presidential election.

“I’m very happy, very proud,” she said of her moment in the spotlight.

During the State of the

Union, the president said the country should follow the example of this Caribbean immigrant-turned-naturalized U.S. citizen and voter.

EXAMPLE

“We should follow the example of a North Miami woman named Desiline Victor,” said the president.

“When she arrived at her polling place, she was told the wait to vote might be six hours. And as time ticked by, her concern was not with her tired body or aching feet, but whether folks like her would get to have their say. Hour after hour, a throng of people stayed in line in support of her. Because Desiline is 102 years old. And they erupted in cheers when she finally put on a sticker that read, ‘I Voted.’”

- Edited from News Americas.

American swallows drugs, faces jail time in Bermuda

HAMILTON, Bermuda, CMC - A 29-year-old American faces jail time after admitting he imported 48 pellets of cannabis into Bermuda by swallowing them.

Magistrate Khamisi Tokunbo remanded Rodney Small into custody last month and ordered pre-sentencing reports before adjourning the case until April 9.

The court had earlier been told that Small, who flew to Bermuda on Jan. 31 from New York, was taken to a hospital after initial X-ray results had shown “foreign objects” were inside his body.

The 48 pellets were excreted from his body over a two day period.



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LEGAL LIMBO: Caribbean teachers in N.Y. still without 'green cards'

NEW YORK – Hundreds of Caribbean-born teachers, recruited by the New York City (NYC) Board of Education 10 years ago to teach in public schools, are still in legal limbo in the system – unable to secure permanent residence or “green cards” in the United States, **News Americas Now (NAN)** has learned.

According to Kira Shepherd, of The Black Institute, while some 500 Caribbean teachers recruited by NYC have finally secured permanent residency status following more than a decade of waiting, 200 more are still awaiting the adjustment of status.

Most are from Jamaica – some 111 – followed by 39 from Guyana and 20 from Trinidad and Tobago. Thirteen are from the Dominican Republic; eight from Barbados; six from St.

Lucia; three from St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and one each from The Bahamas, Cayman Islands and Dominica.

Yasmin Bailey-Stewart, a Jamaican-born teacher at a Brooklyn school, is one of several whose papers are in process mode. She is waiting on her green card after selling everything and moving to the U.S. with a H1-B visa after being recruited in her native land.

HORROR

Bailey-Stewart told NAN it's a nightmare she lives daily, especially because of the toll the immigration



The 'green card', symbol of permanent residence in the U.S.

woes has had on her son. He has now aged out of the immigration sponsorship category

because of the lengthy delay in his mother securing a green card. As a result, his only option now is to obtain residency through a comprehensive immigration reform bill.

“It has been a horror story for us as middle class professionals,” said Bailey-Stewart. “You are made criminal because of the situation you are forced into and some teachers have even gotten fired leaving them now undocumented in the system as well and completely dependent on

friends and family for support.”

Data provided to NAN from the Black Institute and

culled from it through the Board of Education show 213 teachers are now waiting on their green cards.

However, Caribbean teachers make up 61.5 percent of all teachers who have achieved permanent residency to date.

The NYC Board of Education did not respond to NAN's requests for comments up to press time last month. The attorney handling the cases, in an e-mail to NAN last month, said the issue is “a national problem with processing times for permanent residence.

“Hopefully, this will be corrected with the passage of Comprehensive Immigration Reform legislation later this Spring,” she added.

- Edited from a story written by Felicia Persaud of News Americas Now.



U.S. cops arrest Antiguan student golfer

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua - Golfer Kimesha Anthony, one of Antigua and Barbuda's leading athletes, was last month arrested in the United States for credit card fraud, according to media reports here.

Anthony, who is on a full scholarship at the Columbus State University, was picked up by police in Atlanta, Georgia, the Antigua Observer newspaper reported.

Reports suggest that the

top Antiguan golfer was arrested after being caught with a credit card belonging to another student at Columbus State, after reportedly using the card on two separate occasions. Following investigations, Anthony was taken into custody and arrested.

The player, just months away from graduation, was reported to be in jeopardy of losing her full scholarship at the university while the incident also puts her potential



Anthony

professional career at risk. She could also face deportation if found guilty of committing the alleged crime.

Anthony, in September of last year, rallied from three strokes down to win the Montevallo Intercollegiate Tournament held in Atlanta. In 2011, she led the sub-region's charge in the women's division of the Caribbean Golf Championship in Trinidad.

- Edited from CMC.



U.S. congratulates St. Lucia on Independence anniversary

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States congratulated St. Lucia on its 34th anniversary of political Independence which was celebrated last month.

“I wish a joyous and peaceful Independence Day to everyone in Bel Sent Lisi (Beautiful St. Lucia),” said U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on behalf of President Barack Obama.

“As you celebrate, know that the United States stands with St. Lucia as a partner and friend toward a more peaceful and prosperous future for all our people,” he added.

Kerry said the U.S. and St. Lucia will continue to work together on “mutually important issues, including the health of our citizens through the Partnership Framework for HIV and AIDS, and the security and stability of our

region through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative.

“We are committed to strengthening the ties of friendship between our countries as we face challenges and celebrate successes together,” Kerry said.

St. Lucians in New York celebrated their Independence anniversary with a series of programs that culminated with the Independence Gala in Brooklyn. The weeklong series of events – organized by The St. Lucia House Foundation, an umbrella organization for groups in New York, Boston, Connecticut and New Jersey – included a church service “An Evening with St. Lucian Artists”, and a flag-raising ceremony at Brooklyn Borough Hall.



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NNP sweep to power in Grenada

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada – Sixty-five-year-old Keith Claudius Mitchell led his New National Party (NNP) to a clean sweep of the 15 seats at stake in Grenada's general elections last month.

Mitchell, whose NNP was booted out of office in 2008 by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) of outgoing Prime Minister Tillman



Mitchell

Thomas, said he hopes to leave a legacy of having united the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

Preliminary results showed that the NNP, which had only four seats in the last Parliament, had been able to attract many of 62,146 people who were eligible to cast a ballot in the elections.

'UNITED FAMILY'

"As I watched your faces through the campaign...I am even more deeply committed that all of us must be a united family," Mitchell told supporters who had gathered at the Tanteen playing ground on the outskirts of the capital to celebrate the victory.

"I have accepted the awesome responsibility that you have placed on my shoulders, me and my team," he said.

"...This is not a Keith

Mitchell victory," he added, "it is your victory."

Mitchell said he wants his legacy of 30 years in public life to be "that I have done all I can to unite the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique."

The results was a bitter blow for Thomas and the NDC that sought to portray itself as a united party following the infighting that led to the dismissal and resignation of senior Cabinet ministers, including Tourism Minister Peter David and Foreign Affairs Minister Karl Hood.

CONCESSION

Thomas polled 1,153 votes as against 1,288 for political newcomer Clifton Paul, a retired teacher. NDC Deputy Chairman Kent Joseph appeared on television to concede defeat and congratulated the NNP for its victory.

"The younger voters are the ones who played a factor in this election, apart from the economy and jobs," he told reporters, adding "it is not because of what we did not do well."

"We did a very good job in the economy itself from what we had and what we met, but this is democracy so I am not perturbed."

Other casualties were Finance Minister Nazim Burke, Social Development Minister Sylvester Quarless and Works Minister Arlene Walker. Burke was defeated in the St. George's North East constituency by the relatively unknown candidate Tobia Clement, a lecturer at the St. George's University here.

- Edited from CMC.



REPEAT RESULTS: Ruling party returns to lead Barbados after close elections

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados - Barbadian voters kept with tradition and provided the incumbent party with a second consecutive term in power following nerve jangling general elections here last month.

According to the preliminary results, the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) won 16 of the 30 seats in the elections, with the remainder going to the main Opposition Barbados Labour Party (BLP).

In the 2008 general elections, the DLP won 20 seats.

Following the elections, Prime Minister Freundel Stuart, in thanking supporters, said "we are celebrating because this organization during the last five years touched actual lives by its policies and programs, not to any sample, but to the population itself."

CONTRAST

The election results were in contrast to the opinion polls

that had predicted that the BLP, led by 63-year-old former Prime Minister Owen Arthur, would have won as many as 20 seats, while the DLP would have gained 13 seats at most.

"The people have spoken," said Arthur. "...We



Arthur, left, lost to Stuart.

accept the will of the people," adding, "we were up against a number of factors."

Both Stuart and Arthur comfortably won their seats, but there was defeat for Labor Minister Esther Byer-Sukoo, who lost to newcomer Dwight Sutherland, an engineer.

Stuart, 61, insisted that

the DLP had conducted a "very efficient campaign" and that it is sure the public had been fully acquainted with the policies of the party going into the election.

The results could also change as a recount had been ordered in the St. Michael South East constituency where Santia Bradshaw of the BLP won over Patrick Tannis by less than 10 votes.

'ODD ELECTION'

Never in the history of this Caribbean community (CARICOM) island since it attained its political Independence from Britain in 1996, has a government failed to obtain anything more than a 10-year term in office.

"Clearly there has been a swing against the government," said political scientist and pollster Peter Wickham, describing the results as "an odd election."

Another political analyst Hartley Henry said that the electorate had sent a message to both parties and more so

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

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U.S. won't remove Cuba from list of countries supporting terrorism

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States has denied reports that it plans to remove Cuba from a list of countries that support terrorism.

“I saw that report. Let me say firmly here it is incorrect,” U.S. State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland told reporters here late last month. “This department has no current plans to remove Cuba from the state sponsor of terrorism list.

“We review this every year, and at the current moment when the last review was done in 2012, we didn't see cause to remove them,” she added.

‘NO CHANGES’

White House spokesman Jay Carney also said: “We have no changes in our approach or policy to Cuba to announce or under consideration that I'm aware of.”

Reports had indicated that “high-level U.S. diplomats” have concluded Cuba should be taken off the terror list, which would allow Secretary of State John Kerry to “remove a major obstacle to restoring relations” with the Spanish-speaking Caribbean island.

“Top administration officials and members of Congress indicate there is a growing consensus in policy and intelligence circles that Cuba's support for terrorist groups has been terminated,” the Boston **Globe** reported.

It also stated that Kerry, a Massachusetts Democrat who has long favored improving relations with Havana, met in recent days “with officials to review the Cuba policy.”

- Edited from CMC.



Agency to help Haitian families

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) says it has launched a mortgage program that will help up to 4,000 families in Haiti.

OPIC said the initiative will combine loans from OPIC and grants from other groups and the money awarded will include \$1,000 mortgages. Financing will also be given for home repairs.

The 2010 earthquake killed an estimated 300,000 people and left more than a million homeless. Many are still in need of housing.

Home financing is relatively new to Haiti. Most of the population is unemployed or underemployed and banks seldom offer loans to people except the country's small elite.



U.S. court ruling favors Haiti's P.M.

MIAMI, Florida - A United States federal district judge last month ruled against a New York-based online Haitian newspaper for publishing false and defamatory statements against Haitian Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe and Patrice Baker, his former business partner and prominent South Florida businessman.

Judge Ursula Ungaro ruled that the Haiti Observateur's publications were “replete with statements that are outrageous, scandalous and reminiscent

of a tabloid publication,” adding that the paper and its reporter acted with malice.

According to court filing, in Aug. 2012, Leo Joseph, a reporter for the Haiti Observateur, wrote two articles making allegations against Baker and Lamothe in relation to the sale of a bankrupted telephone company in Haiti. Baker and Lamothe sued Joseph and the Haiti Observateur.

- Edited from CMC.



Ruling party returns to lead Barbados...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

raises the question as to the leadership of Arthur, who had sought to regain the government he lost in 2008 by a 20-10 margin.

“The results bring into question the issue of the BLP leadership. If Arthur is unable to get 16 seats...it would be difficult to see him holding power in the future,” he said. But Arthur, following the

elections, told reporters he was not going to comment on his future in the party. Former Opposition Leader Mia Mottley, who easily retained her St. Michael North-East seat, said the electorate had, through the results, sent a message to both parties.

- Edited from CMC.



ROLLING THE DICE: Antigua hikes pressure on U.S. in gambling dispute

GENEVA, Switzerland, CMC - Antigua and Barbuda once again raised its ongoing cross-border gambling services dispute with the United States when the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the World Trade Organization met here late last month.

According to the agenda distributed ahead of the meeting, Antigua and Barbuda was scheduled to make a statement regarding the implementation of the recommendations and rulings adopted by the DSB in the dispute.

In January, the Antigua and Barbuda government said it had been granted authorization by the WTO to suspend certain concessions and obligations it has under international law to the U.S. in respect of intellectual property rights.

‘FINAL APPROVAL’

“Having initially received preliminary authorization to



do so from the WTO in 2007 and negotiating in good faith with the United States government for a settlement of the case over the course of the

last five years, Antigua is seeking final WTO approval of its sanctions in order to compel the United States to either comply with the rulings in Antigua's favor in the gambling dispute or to negotiate a fair and reasonable solution with the Antiguan government”, the government stated.

In 2007, the WTO awarded the Caribbean twin-island state the right to target U.S. services, copyrights and trademarks in retaliation for its online betting ban. But the

WTO capped the limit of annual trade sanctions at \$21 million.



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Vol. 24, Number 4 • MAR. 2013

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Jamaica government responds to controversial German advertisement

KINGSTON, Jamaica - The government has responded to concerns surrounding the controversial advertisement by German appliance company Saturn, which includes images showing the improper handling of the Jamaican flag.

A statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs last month stated that the commercial appears to be well intentioned, as it seeks to use the powerful symbolism of brand Jamaica to project the products and services of Saturn.

However, the Foreign Ministry noted that there are strict guidelines governing the use of the Jamaican flag including that it should never touch the ground or be stepped on.

"It would be appropriate in these circumstances for



Scene from controversial advertisement shows burning Jamaica flag.

Saturn to seek to repair this most unfortunate breach, which has caused discomfort", the statement declared.

The Portia Simpson Miller led administration has also welcomed any initiative which would serve to advance Jamaica's profile and image in the world.

In the advertisement the Jamaican flag is inadvertently set on fire and taken outside a coffee shop where some men stomp on it trying out the fire. Last month, the main Opposition Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) raised concerns about the burning of the national flag in

the advertisement.

JLP Spokesperson on Culture Olivia "Babsy" Grange, then called on the government to address the issue through Germany's Embassy in Jamaica. Jamaica's principal logistics, ceremonial and proto-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

Every woman's life is important

International Women's Day (IWD) is a global celebration, held annually on Mar. 8.

IWD recognizes the diversity of women's economic, political and social achievements. Thousands of events are held in around the world on that day and during March.

While countries and

groups may celebrate IWD with different themes, the focus is on women and girls: our progress, challenges and determination to be recognized and treated equally with men. Achieving equal rights for women has been an on-going struggle for centuries.

Even now, in 2013, in a world where cell phone calls

and text messages fly invisibly around the planet in micro-seconds, women and girls globally lack, and struggle for, equal rights with the men and boys they conceived and raised.

Why?

There are many wonderful, enlightened, compassionate, forward-thinking, emotionally balanced men who daily support their women and children with respect, hard work, finances and love! Men who patiently nurse their wives when they're sick, take care of the children, cook and work. There are many men of good, strong hearts and kind souls.

But they seem fewer in numbers than those men who globally bring pain and destruction into women and girls' lives - through violence, rape, sexual harassment, subversion of females' rights and blatant disregard for women's and girls' intelli-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



MICHELLE
CAWLEY
DRESERIS

FATAL ATTRACTION: Why nice guys finish last

You would think that most women would really clamor for a good man's love, rush to be with a really nice guy, race to snag a gentleman. But alas, that is often so far from the truth.

Statistics have shown that many women don't really want nice guys, that knight in shining armor, and, as the song says: "Nice guys only win in the movies". Plus the French, who are reputed to know all about romance also say: "Women marry gentlemen and fool around with rogues."

So many men suffer from the "nice guy syndrome". These are the guys who'll bend over backwards to please their women, doing everything for them - spoil them rotten. The men who cannot say no, neither do they want to say no.

CATERING

Then there are stories about men driving their woman to the ends of the country, just because she wanted something to appease her appetite.

Hey, if she's pregnant and has cravings, that's fine, But to just jump and do her bidding every time is another matter.

Some men just seem to do every single thing for women, from buying groceries to cleaning the house, to licensing the car to paying all the bills. Just check your female friends and see how many of them even know where the tax office is.

You'd be surprised at what women have to say about nice guys.

I'll always remember this



other good friend who drove over 200 miles - of mountainous and often treacherous terrain both ways - to pick up this lady from the airport and she promptly ended up in the bed of another man.

TWISTED

To take it even further, some women are even drawn to men who are not only not nice, but downright mentally, emotionally and physically abusive. Some not only endure the abuse, but look forward to it, saying, "My man beats me because he cares...he loves me." If the beating stops, she wonders if his affections have gone elsewhere. Strange, but true.

These women will hop

from one abusive relationship to the next, as abuse seems to be their comfort zone.

The irony is, women like nice guys to be their friends, but when that friendship blossoms to become something deeper, some want a little less niceness and a bit more manliness. As some women say, the guy is so nice that he's not challenging enough, and you know that deep down, women love their men to offer the excitement of a challenge.

That's why it's not good for a man to just meet a woman and start to phone her too early afterwards. Don't be too eager. Let her wonder. Let a few days pass before that first phone call, so she'll wonder if you're really interested. When you're too nice and show too much interest they'll say, "Aha, he's eager, he's too good, I have him

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



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FATAL ATTRACTION: Why nice guys finish last

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

where I want him...but guess what, I don't want him again."

BOREDOM

When the guy is too nice and always available, it also bores the woman, as there's no risk, no adrenaline flowing, no uncertainty. I know of so many women who complain how their men are rogues, always breaking dates, can't be found for days and are suspected of having women all over the place. And yet, she would never trade him in for any stable boring nice guy.

Who do you think ends up having an affair with your woman, a decent nice guy or a roguish type, and why did she feel behooved to go behind your back and be with him?

Go figure.

For that same reason, nice guys always end up being burnt or cheated on, while the bad guys end up with all the "criss" women. Just look around, movies show it, from Clarke Gable in *Gone with the Wind* fame saying "Frankly Scarlett, I just don't give a damn," to Bruce Willis, women love them. History has

proven it and modern society shows it as we see these roguish men squiring these fine looking women much to the jealousy of the nice guys.

TESTIMONY

Even the way women talk about their men is testimony to the fact.

Never will you hear them boast: "My man was so good, kind, loving, decent, never had a woman before me...never."

This trend starts very young too, because from as far back as high school days, the girls are drawn to the jocks,

the sports heroes, the guys with the cowboy reputation, but never to the brilliant nerdy guy. Why? The sports guys are like gladiators, rough hewn, strong and rakish, while the bright nerdy guy is just too ordinary, too nice, too damn nice for his own good.

Then there's the question of being so nice that he can't be trusted. That's right, a man can be just too darned nice, always saying the right things, doing the right things, never putting a foot wrong, that his motives become suspect.

"I just don't know what to

make of him, he's too darn nice, he must be hiding something."

"Argghh...I can't take it any more, he's too nauseatingly nice, too good, too decent, it's like being with the Pope."

So whichever way you take it, women aren't really drawn to nice guys.

"I'm sorry, I need some challenge in my life, no nice guys for me please."

seido1@hotmail.com



Every woman's life is important

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 9)

gence and value.

VALUE

Every woman's life is important, whether she is famous nationally or only in the hearts of her family.

Menstrual cycles and pregnancy, less muscle and strength in our bodies, and the full use of our brains and hearts, should not make us less valuable in a male-dominated world!

It is time for this to stop!

If we can advance as a society to where we can unravel DNA strands, then men can love, protect, help, and value

their women, regardless of their color, creed, culture or status in life.

Beneath the tissue-thin colors of our skins – female or male – red blood pulses life into every human heart and brain!

Every woman is vital to the peaceful and economic future of our planet, whether she is married, lives alone, with a partner or is a single mother. She may be Michelle Obama, a president's wife, an artist, writer, homemaker, scientist or nurse. She may clean houses or, like Pakistan's Malala Yousufzai, be a student and risk her life, simply by

demanding her education.

We may be shy or fight like a lioness – protecting our loved ones.

We may go quietly through each day, our history unknown. Or, be like Oprah, recognized by just one word.

Michelle Cawley Dreseris is a Jamaican American writer. Her stories focusing on women with Caribbean backgrounds appear in Caribbean Today's Women's History Month special feature beginning on page 11.



Jamaica government responds to controversial German advertisement

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

col consultant, Merrick Needham, also joined the chorus of voices commenting on the controversial advertisement. Needham said that while the intentions were good, the execution spoiled the good intention.

"I would agree that first of all there should be an apology, but it should be pulled, because it is going to continue inflaming people.

"I don't feel so strongly

now that we should go and raise hell from the diplomatic point of view but we should make the point through diplomatic circles that it is not a good way to represent the country, there should be an apology at least," he said.

- Edited from CMC.

Editor's Note: Saturn later apologized and withdrew the advertisement



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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

Three inductees for Florida Women's Hall of Fame

Florida's Governor Rick Scott has announced the selection of Clara C. Frye, Lillie Pierce Voss and Aleene Kidd Mackenzie to the Florida Women's Hall of Fame.

Governor Scott chose the three women from a list of 10 distinguished nominees selected by the Florida Commission on the Status of Women for making significant contributions to the improvement of life for women and all citizens of Florida.

"The three women who are being inducted into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame...serve as a proud example to all Florida families," Scott stated in a press release.

"Their dedication to serving others has improved the

lives of countless individuals and their legacy is a reminder of the important role that women have played all throughout Florida history."

HONOREES

Frye (1872-1936), formerly of Tampa, committed her life to providing medical care to African Americans throughout the Tampa area in the early 20th century. In 1908, Ms. Frye transformed her small, Tampa home into a temporary hospital, providing care to all persons. She established the Clara Frye Negro Hospital in 1923, the first African American hospital in the Tampa area.

Voss (1876-1967), formerly of Palm Beach, survived the untamed wilderness of early southeast Florida and was the

first non-native child born between Jupiter and Miami. Her life amongst the Seminole Indians taught her how to shoot, hunt, fish and sail a boat. In April 1876, her father became the first keeper of a newly established House of Refuge No. 3, where victims of shipwrecks could be rescued and find shelter.

Voss's impact on Florida stemmed from her courage and stamina. In the 1930s, Voss, alongside her brother, compiled and condensed a 260-page manuscript entitled "Pioneer Life in Southeast Florida" to document the rich, historical accounts of South Florida's early pioneers.

Kidd Mackenzie, 92, of Ocala, created equal opportunities for women of Florida and the nation throughout her lifetime. Urged by Governor Faris Bryant in 1964, she

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

T&T's Carroll among honorees on International Women's Day

Florida's lieutenant governor, Trinidad and Tobago-born Jennifer Carroll, will be among four women honored by World Trade Center Miami for outstanding accomplishments in international business and contributions to South Florida, on International Women's Day, Mar. 8.

The luncheon, to be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton hotel in Miami, will also honor Conchita Muñoz, founder, director and chief executive officer of ACC10, Inc.

Government of Catalonia; Romaine Seguin, president of UPS Americas Region; and Rebeca Sosa, chairwoman of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners.

Carroll is also among the scheduled speakers.

The idea of an International Women's Day first arose at the turn of the century, when in



Carroll

1909 the first National Women's Day was observed in the United States. By 1910, 100 women from 17 countries, who had gathered in Copenhagen, Denmark unanimously approved a proposal to establish an annual Women's Day to honor the women's rights movement and to support universal suffrage for women.



Miami-Dade launches 'Disparity Study'

Miami-Dade County in Florida has announced the launch of its "Disparity Study", which is designed to determine whether minority and women-owned business enterprises have had equal access to contracting opportunities with the county.

The study, to be conducted early this month at multiple locations in the county, will determine how contracts are being awarded to ready, willing, and able market area businesses.

Business owners will have the opportunity to describe

their experiences working on or seeking work from the county.

To conduct the study, the county has retained Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd., an Oakland, California based minority woman-owned public policy consulting firm. The firm has conducted 119 similar studies across the United States since 1990.

For more information call Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd. at 305-402-0107 or e-mail MiamiDadeDisparityStudy@mtaltd.com.



FEMALE FOCUS: For Caribbean American women, the struggle to survive continues

MICHELLE CAWLEY
DRESERIS

Caribbean women. They hail from the Windward and Leeward islands. From Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Barbados, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago and all countries of the region.

They are diverse and wise, with many untold stories. They will know they have achieved gender and racial equality when an

International Women's Day – celebrated this year on Mar. 8 – is no longer necessary.

All women, regardless of country, culture or economic position, are affected by all women's lack of equality. It still has not been achieved in the United States.

"We are women. We are half the population," said Haitian American activist Marliene Bastien. "We should be half the power!"

Women – the friends,

mothers, lovers, wives, employees, sisters, aunts – should never have to ask, much less demand, respect and equal rights!

This month, Caribbean Today features women of Caribbean heritage in the United States. The stories begin on page 12 and can also be read on Caribbean Today's website: www.caribbeantoday.com.



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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

Rachel Sheppard Pallas: Blending Trini culture in costume design, dance

MICHELLE CAWLEY
DRESERIS

Rachel Sheppard Pallas
Age: 49
Birthplace: Port-of-Spain, Trinidad
Residence: Miami, Florida

Growing up in Trinidad, Rachael Sheppard was heavily influenced by the culture and beauty of the island and the creativity of the exotic, colorful carnival costumes.

Trinidad's carnival, a national party of costumes, soca music, dancing and wild street celebrations, takes place annually on the Monday and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday.

Sheppard moved to Miami at age 18 to study apparel design management at Florida International University (FIU). She graduated in 1986 with a bachelor of science degree.

During summers, Sheppard returned home and worked with the late Wayne Berkeley, a carnival design legend in Trinidad. She created costumes for dance, the opera, and theatrical events.

In 1995, Sheppard married John Pallas, an American of Greek descent who has designed and produced for Caribbean Miami Carnival parades, Miami clothing companies, dance schools and dance professionals.

The owner of Rachel Pallas Designs in Miami, her creations were worn by

Jeanine Mason, 2009 winner of "So You Think You Can Dance" during the Fox network's television program.

In 2012, Pallas designed and produced competition dance costumes for the children's cast of "Dance Moms: Miami", season one, on the Lifetime television network.

Describe yourself.

"I'm a Trinidadian American costume and swimsuit designer and artist."

How have non-Caribbean people described you?

"The first thing they say is that they love my accent! My husband's family is Greek, from North Carolina and upstate New York. They like my island hospitality. I always have lots of choices of food and drinks, like in Trinidad..."

"I am a white Trinidadian, and sometimes I feel like I am not considered a true West Indian by some people because I'm white. But, I am a Trinidadian."

"I feel like I half-belong in one place, and half in the other place! Sometimes, I feel like I don't belong anywhere anymore. I miss so many things about Trinidad. But, when I go there, I have parts of me here in Miami!"

She misses returning for carnival.

"My brothers and sisters are 'playing carnival', but January through March is my busiest season for creating costumes for dance competitions and performances."

John adores his Trinidadian wife.



Sheppard Pallas

"Rachael is very independent and strong," he said. "She's very good to my American family, and she is very proud of her country and always says Trinidad is a great country. She loves her culture and spicy Trinidadian food, and she's very family-oriented. Trinidad is so different to the U.S. It's a slower pace of life."

"Trinidad is all about family and nature, and 'liming', or 'hanging out with your friends,'" she added.

The couple's love of family and cultures unites them.

"John always says that I remind him of his Greek grandmother," says Pallas. "His dad's family came from Greece to build the railroads in upstate New York. Grandma had a sweet shop called Pallas Sweets. Maybe that's why I remind him of her a little bit. I'm independent. I have my own business."

What are the biggest challenges facing women and girls today?

"It's a big responsibility to have my own small business. My challenge is trying to take time for myself to do my yoga, or my hair or just relaxing."

"I work as much as my husband, but I often feel divided. When I'm working around-the-clock, he's the one who's cooking or doing laundry."

"My dad cooked and helped us. He didn't sit back and put his feet up, like some men. I guess this bit of guilt comes from being a woman. We don't feel that we are doing enough at home, even though we're working hard."

"In my busy season, I feel that I don't have balance in my life, and that I'm neglecting some of the personal parts of my life – family, friends."

"I come from the islands where Sunday lunches, and family get-togethers are ingrained in us, but, I'm not doing any of that in my busy season. I feel that I should be."

During her dance competition season in the U.S., Pallas says she creates hundreds of individual costumes for children, ages five to 18 years, in local dance studios. She analyzes the dance, designs the costumes and engineers the patterns. Pallas specializes in solo performances. She has a crew of women

who work for her.

"But, many things are specialty jobs requiring my hand and my eye. Sometimes, I'm so busy, I have to turn away clients."

How do your Trinidadian "roots" affect the way you view and handle life's challenges?

"Here in the U.S., everything is about work. The biggest thing I miss experiencing is the culture of my country, Trinidad, because I'm not living there any more. I miss carnival in Trinidad, and the way Trini people are."

Has your perspective changed as you've gotten older?

"Yes. I realize a woman has to be independent, and look out for herself. You have to try to be as strong as you can be. Women are just as important as men in the business world."

"I feel more confident in my art of costume designing now that I'm older. Now, I realize that I am talented and that what I do is beautiful!"

"In my area of work, resistance from men doesn't really affect me. I deal mostly with women, moms and their children."

Has your perspective changed by living in other countries?

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 13)

U.S. first ladies in television spotlight

A new two-season original American television series examining the private lives of the first ladies of the United States and their years in the White House will continue to air this month.

C-SPAN has teaming up with the White House Historical Association to present "First Ladies: Influence and Image". Each week the program will tell the stories of the women who served in the role of first lady over 44 U.S. administrations.



Current U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama.

The series will examine: the first ladies' White House years, the interests they cham-

pioned, their policy influences on the presidents, their stewardship of the White House and their approach to private and public life.

The 90-minute programs air live Mondays at 9 p.m. ET on C-SPAN and C-SPAN3, C-SPAN Radio, and via live streaming on c-span.org.

To learn more about U.S. first ladies, watch video from the series, and find schedule information, visit www.c-span.org/firstladies.



Three inductees for Florida Women's Hall of Fame

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

Founded the Florida Commission on the Status of Women to advocate for the rights and accomplishments of women around the state.

She brought together a team of highly successful women to influence various issues such as education, employment and legislation for Florida's women. In 1956, following the passage of

Federal Aid Highway Act, she also established a statewide committee of women to ensure that the 16 amendments passed by the United States Congress would also be ratified in Florida. Her success enacted the Florida Association of Safety Leaders, linking together women's organization throughout the state to promote highway safety. Following her leadership, the

U.S. National Secretary of Transportation Alan Boyd adopted the same model for other states, eventually forming the National Association of Highway Safety Leaders. Kidd Mackenzie became the first president of the association in 1967.

In 1961, she also established the Florida State University Foundation.



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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

My goal is to have women partake in all decisions ~ *Marleine Bastien*

**MICHELLE CAWLEY
DRESERIS**

**Marleine Bastien
Haitian-American civil rights
activist.**

**Age: "I don't think age is that
important," said Bastien.
Birthplace: Pont-Benoit, Haiti**

Residence: Miami, Florida

Marleine Bastien is a Haitian American activist and humanitarian. She is an advocate for women and children's rights. She is also an unofficial spokesperson for the Haitian community and has taken her causes to the streets, protesting for the rights of Haitian refugees held in the Krome detention center in Miami.

After completing her two-year-degree at Miami-Dade Community College (M-DCC), Bastien earned her bachelor's degree in social work from Florida International University (FIU) in 1986, and a master's degree in 1987.

She has received several international awards, including the "2000 Human Rights Award" from Amnesty International and the "2002 Leadership For a Changing World Award" from the Ford Foundation. In 2005, Essence Magazine named her "One of the 35 Most Remarkable Women in the World".

Bastien has participated in numerous national and global forums to discuss the impact of immigration on families, including "The Global Forum on Immigration in

Brussels, Geneva, and the Philippines".

Bastien is the founder and executive director of Fanm Ayisyen Nan Miyami, Inc. (Haitian Women of Miami).

What is your goal or vision?

"My goal is to have a world where women are able to partake in all decision-making processes. I strongly believe that there cannot be world peace without the full emancipation of women – worldwide.

"Our motto here at Fanm is: Half the Population, Half the Power!

"For the past 30 years all my work has had only one purpose – for social justice and peace. This includes affordable housing, access to health care, better treatment for immigrants and refugees, economic development, and better education for children.

"I know that women are conditioned for world peace. When we invest in men, it does not mean that women and children will benefit. When we invest in women, the family, the children, benefit instantly!

"Our fight for justice is global, even though our efforts may be local!

"We must reach out and join with those around the world who are disenfranchised, and whose rights are being trampled. We must join with those who yearn to be free."

Fanm's vital programs include mental health and



Bastien

family counseling, after school programs, immigration advocacy and citizenship services, breast/cervical cancer education and prevention, health access, family intervention and empowerment, community economic development, adult education and financial literacy.

Describe yourself.

"I'm a very hard-working, compassionate, forward-thinking woman. I believe in diversity and that we should live in unity and peace.

Who are your most important role models?

"My role models are people who defied the status quo and who have strived for unity, equality, justice and peace. My parents are my first and most important role models!

"Growing up, my ances-

tral home in Haiti was like a community center. People came to get help with everything. If they needed money to catch the bus or health care or they were wounded, they came to my house. My dad was a trained nurse. He set up a clinic in our house for the community. He built the first school in our area.

"As children, my parents raised us to clean wounds, to teach, and to always care for others. When I came to Miami, as an adult, I continued my parents' legacy here.

"I have several role models, including Toussaint L'Ouverture, the Haitian leader who ended slavery in Haiti during the French Revolution; Sojourner Truth, and Marcus Garvey."

How have non-Caribbean people described you?

"They describe me as fierce fighter for human rights! I have been compared to Sojourner Truth, the famous African American abolitionist and women's rights activist. She was a fierce fighter and an organizer too."

What do you feel are the biggest challenges facing women and girls today?

"War and violence are the biggest impediments to women's progress! In times of war, women and girls suffer most. Women are peaceful and natural leaders, but we are not being recognized as

equal partners.

"Our biggest challenge is to convince world nations that peace is possible and that they should all contribute to the full participation of women worldwide.

"Women are the primary socializers of children. So, we have a responsibility to empower our girls. The world is dominated by older white males and very few females. But, women raised these men! Women raised all the world's leaders!

"It is time that women, globally, take their responsibility seriously, and invest in their little girls, as much as in their little boys!

"Women must unite globally to ensure that women and girls are given more opportunities and equality. It starts with us women! We have the collective power to change the world! We need to believe that.

"In February, we held a prayer service in Miami to say 'No!' to acts of violence against women and girls, like Malala, and others."

Malala Yousafzai, 15, an innocent Pakistani schoolgirl, was shot in the head by the Taliban in Oct. 2012 because she was demanding the right for girls in Pakistan to be educated. She survived and was released from a hospital in Britain last month.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 14)

Rachel Sheppard Pallas: Blending Trini culture in costume design, dance

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

"I've only lived in Miami. Here, I experience so many cultures – Cuban, American, Caribbean, South American, English, Iranian and many others. It's a multi-experience living here in Miami. In Trinidad, it's one culture with different races that blended together through the years. In Miami, I can experience many cultures through people from different countries. I think Miami really is the Caribbean of the United States!"

Which Trinidadian childhood values would you like to pass on to your children?
"We don't have children. But, I'd like to think that my carnival background, and art, is fused into the artistic experiences of the young dancers. I call them my dance kids! I experience their art of dance. They experience my art of costume, and it's a blend that

works hand-in-hand."

What are the biggest challenges facing you and women today?

"My biggest challenge is financial, because I've been constantly growing since I started my business in 2002. I have help, but much of the work is from my own hands and creativity. It's not mass-produced. I'm at a point of growth where I have to review how I'm going to move forward."

How are you making your dollars stretch in these tough economic times?

"We cook at home most of the time. We eat out only for special occasions. I don't go shopping much, and we don't travel as much as we used to."

- Michelle Cawley Dreseris is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



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www.caribbeantoday.com

~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

My goal is to have women partake in all decisions ~ *Marleine Bastien*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

When you met with U.S. President Barack Obama in 2012, what did you ask him?

"We met briefly at Miami Central High School. I told him that we really need his support for comprehensive immigration reform. I asked him to approve the Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program. That is a very important piece of legislation and it does not need an act of Congress! We shall see what happens."

How do your Haitian "roots" affect the way you view and handle life's challenges?

"When I was growing up in Haiti, I saw how very hard were the lives of women! This really shaped my views of the world. I realized that investing in women and girls is really about investing in the future."

How important is religion or spirituality in your life?

"My dad raised us in the Bahá'í faith. That we should all live in unity, love and peace, and support our fellow human beings. I understand

that world peace is not achievable without the full emancipation and empowerment of women and girls worldwide!"

Has your perspective changed, as you've gotten older?

"Many people say that they think I'm calmer! But, I am not slowing down. I'm just changing the way I fight!"

"When I was younger, I used to be always in a fighting mode! Now, I've found that there are many different ways to obtain the social justice that we want for our people. Now, I don't have to organize big protest demonstrations in the streets all the time! I can have a quiet visit to achieve my goal!"

"...The older I get, the wiser I get."

Is there enough unity among women?

"As women, we are missing out on the power of our collective voice, and flexing our political muscles. Women need to use our collective voice in a more strategic way to improve lives, not only in the U.S. and Caribbean, but

globally. There is so much to be done!"

"Women's organizations need to work closer together, and to develop a common, global agenda for the full emancipation of women and global peace! Men use their collective power. Women need to do the same!"

Has your perspective changed by living in other countries?

"I am a Haitian American. I'm a West Indian. I'm a Caribbean woman. I'm a woman of the world. I've lived in the U.S. since 1981, but my perspective has not really changed."

"Women are the backbone of their families and their communities. Wherever I travel in the world - Guatemala, the Philippines, Venezuela, Europe, Asia, Central America, the Caribbean - I see the same thing: women multi-tasking, organizing, fighting, and taking care of everybody!"

"When the earthquake hit and destroyed Haiti in January 2010, I was so proud of Haitian women! They were

the organizers of the refugee camps, the caretakers! They took charge of the camps. They cooked for everybody. I called them the 'mayors' of the camps!"

"Everywhere I go, I am in awe of women and what they accomplish! That is why we must invest and empower women, because when we do, society benefits. Everybody benefits!"

"Our motto here at Fanm is: 'Half the Population, Half the Power!'"

Who is responsible for the finances in your family?

"I am! I am a divorced mom. I am responsible for everything. In communities globally, we have many models of women being the sole parent."

Bastien is mother of three sons: Oscar, 23; Akim, 19; and Tarik, 16.

What are the biggest financial challenges for you and women today?

"It's maintaining the balance between work, our families and our passions!"

"My passion is community work. I need a second job now for my family's finances. But, how do I get a second job when I'm busy doing all my community work? It's a challenge!"

"Women have more of a problem with this than men, because we are multi-taskers. We want to help everybody! But, we women also need to find ways to nurture ourselves and to strengthen our inner souls! We struggle to maintain our balance, our homeostasis."

- *Michelle Cawley Dreseris is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.*



BRIEFS

• Exhibit in Miami

An exhibition focusing on Women's History Month will be on display in the lobby of the Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 N.W. First St., Miami, Florida, **throughout March.**

• Jamaican Women of Florida luncheon

Former Jamaica First Lady Dr. Beverley Manley-Duncan is the scheduled guest speaker for the Jamaican Women of Florida, Inc.'s luncheon on **April 19** at the Broward Convention Center, 1950 Eisenhower Blvd. in Fort Lauderdale.

Registration is from 11:30 a.m. to noon. Luncheon from noon to 1:30 p.m. For more information,

call **954-963-8555.**

• Women's confab in Fort Lauderdale

"Lifecycle To Womanhood", a conference focusing on women's issues, and including workshops and lectures, will be held from **May 9-12** at the Westin Hotel, 400 Corporate Drive in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

To register, visit www.lifecycletowomanhood.com. For more information, call **954-822-0749.**

- *Compiled from various sources.*



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Grammy Awards pay tribute to Bob Marley

LOS ANGELES, California - The 55th Grammy Awards here last month paid tribute to legendary Jamaican superstar Bob Marley.

But, for a moment, it appeared as though there

massive repertoire, but their own songs. Mars did reggae-influenced "Locked Out Of Heaven" and Sting sang The Police's "Walking on the Moon".

Then the massive audience

rousing version of "Could You Be Loved", electrifying the crowd.

FALLING SHORT

Earlier, Master of Ceremonies LL Cool J had promised a tribute to the late poet, musician and titan of reggae "like we've never seen before." But many argued that it was hardly a "tribute", with only a rendition of an abbreviated version of Marley's "Could You Be Loved".

Mars, however, sought to console the audience, stating "none of this would be possible without Bob Marley," who died 1981, of malignant melanoma, a dangerous type of cancer discovered in his toe.

For her part, Rihanna received a standing ovation for her stirring performance of "Stay". She lost the award for best rap/sung collaboration to Jay-Z, Kanye West and Frank Ocean.

Caribbean artistes did not fare well at the Grammys. Only Jamaica's Jimmy Cliff, who won for Best Reggae Album,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)



Ziggy Marley, left, joins Barbadian pop star Rihanna to sing "Could You Be Loved" one of his late father's songs.

would hardly be any tribute to the late great reggae artiste when about two-thirds of a set that was supposed to honor him was used by other performers.

Bruno Mars and Sting kicked off the tribute by singing nothing from Marley's

at the Staples Center here and millions around the world viewing on television got what they were waiting for. As the audience rose to its dancing feet, Barbadian singing sensation Rihanna and Marley's sons Ziggy and Damian joined Mars and Sting on stage. They did a

Court fines T&T soca star Machel Montano

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - A magistrate here late last month fined Trinidad and Tobago international soca star Machel Montano, a total of TT\$27,000 (one TT dollar = US\$0.16 cents) after he had been found guilty of five criminal offenses last year.

A number of artistes, performers as well as fans flocked to the court where Magistrate Maureen Baboolal-Gafoor also imposed fines totalling TT\$24,000 on songwriter and producer Kernel Roberts, the son of deceased calypso legend Aldwyn "Kitchener" Roberts.

Montano had been found guilty of assaulting Russel Pollonais, Brandis Brown, Janelle Lee Chee and Gerard Bowrin, and using obscene language outside the Zen nightclub in Port of Spain April 26, 2007.

PUNISHMENT

Montano, 36, who successfully defended his International Soca Monarch crown during the recent carnival celebrations here, was fined TT\$13,700 and also has to pay \$TT13,500 in compensation to the victims of the



Montano

brawl.

Roberts, composer of several of Montano's hits, was also found guilty of assaulting Pollonais and Browne on the two charges of assault.

Montano was told that should the fines and compensation not be paid by Mar. 4, he could serve as much as two years in prison.

- Edited from CMC.



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Sean Kingston stars in new E! reality show

LOS ANGELES, California - Jamaican American entertainer Sean Kingston is hoping to boost his career with a new reality show.

The "Beautiful Girls" singer, who survived a horrific Jet Ski crash in 2011, is now on the E! reality special "Fame In The Family", which began airing on Feb. 17.

The E! cameras explore his family dynamics and offer fans a front row seat to his family drama.

With a new album set to drop soon, Kingston's career is building momentum. He's already had three top 10 hits,



sean Kingston

and counts Rihanna, Justin Bieber and Chris Brown among his best friends.

Yet, with all the fame and

celebrity laid at his feet, he still has to report to mom Janice Turner for his allowance. The mother of three lives with her famous son in the lush Hollywood Hills. She works with his management team, has a stake in Kingston's record company and is not shy about asserting herself about his personal life.

Kingston's adult sister Kanema and brother Kurt are influences as well. Kurt is president of the singer's record label.

- Edited from News Americas.



T&T's Peter London brings 'Spring Dance Showcase' to Little Haiti Cultural Center

MIAMI, Florida - Miami's own Peter London Global Dance Company, Inc. (PLGDC) will return to the stage on **Mar. 10** to premiere its "Spring Dance Showcase".

The multicultural group of young artists, under the direction of Trinidad and Tobago native, dancer and choreographer Peter London, is scheduled to present two performances, including new works, at the Little Haiti Cultural Center. The dancers will perform a community matinee show at 1:30 p.m. for students and seniors. The evening showcase will be held at 7:30 p.m.

A Miami-Dade College/New World School of the Arts dance professor, London founded the PLGDC to establish a home-grown, yet world-class contemporary dance organization that promotes South Florida's vibrant arts heritage. In 2011 his company received the 2011 Knight



London's dancers for South Florida shows.

Arts Challenge grant award from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

MISSION

"The Spring Dance Showcase realizes the mission of my company in a way that is bold, large, passionate and honors the diverse heritage of South Florida and America," said London in a press release to promote the event.

"It is with the exceptional and disciplined hard work of

the young dancers and choreographers that makes the dream a reality."

This year's special guest performers will include two soloists from the Martha Graham Dance Company - Lloyd Knight and Mariya Dashkina Maddux. The program will also feature a global premiere by dancer Michael Leonard Three new ballets choreographed by London will also be performed.

The Spring Dance Showcase is made possible with the support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, and matching funds from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

For more information about PLGDC or the Spring Dance Showcase, call **786-953-6824**.



Reggae stars to receive awards in New York

Bunny Wailer, a former member of iconic group The Wailers, singers John Holt and Coco Tea, plus dancehall star Lady Saw will each receive a proclamation by the mayor of the New York City of Mount Vernon Ernest Davis at this year's Linkage Awards in New York.

The awards will be given on Mar. 16 in recognition of their contributions to the develop-



Wailer



Lady Saw

ment of reggae music at The Nellie A Thornton School, 121 S. Sixth Ave. in Mount Vernon.

Wailer, Holt, Coco Tea and Lady Saw will also receive "Lifetime Achievement Awards" and will be inducted in the Linkage Hall of Fame.

The 2013 Linkage Awards will also recognize a number of other top artistes, producers and radio disc jockeys in categories including male/female "DJ of the Year", "Best New Artiste", "Song of the Year", "Singjay of the Year" and "Radio DJ of the Year".



Holt

BRIEFS

• St. Lucia jazz fest April 30-May 12

United States-based entertainers R Kelly, The Jacksons and Akon will join a host of local and Caribbean artistes at this year's "St. Lucia Jazz and Arts Festival".

The 13-day festival, which culminates at the historic Pigeon Island National Landmark, will run from **April 30 to May 12**.

For more information, visit www.stluciajazz.org.

• Jazz in the Gardens Mar. 16-17

The City of Miami Gardens in South Florida will host its eighth annual "Jazz in the Gardens" music festival **Mar. 16-17** at Sun Life Stadium.

Scheduled performers include

Ne-Yo, Earth Wind and Fire, Charlie Wilson, New Edition, Monica, Fantasia, Babyface, Najee, Rachele Farrell and Mary Mary.

• SuperBlue takes T&T's road march

Austin "SuperBlue" Lyons last month captured his ninth road march title in what was dubbed one of the best comebacks in the history of soca in Trinidad and Tobago.

SuperBlue's "Fantastic Friday" reigned over Machel Montano's "Float" in a stunning 511-to-56 victory based on results from the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians' Organization (Tuco).

- Compiled from several sources.



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Grammy Awards pay tribute to Bob Marley

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

earned the prestigious honor.

A Grammy Award, originally called Gramophone Award, or Grammy, is an accolade by the United States' National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) that recognizes outstanding achievement in the music industry. The annual presentation ceremony features performances by prominent artistes.

- Edited from CMC and other sources.



~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

Magazine names Port Everglades 'Best Domestic Departure Port'

Cruise travel magazine **Porthole** has selected Port Everglades for its "2013 Editor-in-Chief Award for Best Domestic Departure Port".

"For decades, Port Everglades has been the premier departure port for cruisers traveling from South Florida to anywhere in the world," Porthole Cruise Magazine's Editor-in-Chief Bill Panoff said in a recent press release to announce the award. "Port Everglades is a favorite with Porthole readers and savvy travelers. I've always had a great experience there."

Porthole's Editor-in-Chief Awards are presented to com-

panies in the cruise and travel industry that have gone above and beyond in terms of service, quality, and excellence. The awards are announced in the magazine's Feb. 2013 issue, online at www.porthole.com and on Porthole's social media sites.

HONOR

"This is a real honor because Porthole has its pulse on the cruise industry, and Bill knows that cruise ports are constantly challenged with providing state-of-the-art facilities that can keep pace with the high standards of the cruise lines and their guests," Port Everglades Chief Executive and Port Director



Port Everglades

Steven Cernak in the release. Port Everglades, already the homeport for the world's

largest cruise ships, recently completed a \$54 million construction project to fully reno-

vate, expand and update four cruise terminals. The enhancements allow for "curbside-to-ship" guest experience with expanded check-in and baggage claim areas, covered walkways and streamlined transportation routing.

Future growth at Port Everglades will include expanding and modernizing Cruise Terminal 4 and extending the adjacent berth by 250 feet to accommodate longer cruise ships. Construction for the Cruise Terminal 4 renovation and berth expansion are part of the port's five-year capital improvement plan and anticipated to be complete by 2016.

LINK BY SEA: New ferry service from PortMiami to Bimini

The **Baleària Bahamas Express**, owned by Spanish ferry operator Baleària and the Capo Group, has launched a new ferry service from PortMiami linking Miami and Bimini with roundtrip service three days a week.

The high-speed vessel **Maverick** offers roundtrip crossings between Miami and Bimini on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The once-daily ferry service departs PortMiami at 9 a.m. and Bimini at 5 p.m.

"We are pleased to wel-

come the **Maverick** to PortMiami," said Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez in recent press release to announce last month's launch. "The ferry is a great new addition to the port's fleet of passenger vessels."

The **Maverick** accommodates up to 357 passengers and sails at a speed of 32 knots. Travel time to Bimini is just under two and a half hours.

"The new ferry service is ideal for a one-day excursion or an overnight adventure," said Miami-Dade County



The **Maverick** offers a new ferry service from PortMiami.

Commission Chairwoman **Rebeca Sosa**.

"We are proud to have

the **Baleària Bahamas Express** join PortMiami's already exciting roster of passenger

services."

PortMiami Director **Bill Johnson** said this is the first ferry service between Miami and Bimini at PortMiami.

Adolfo Utor, president of the **Baleària** Group, said the new service demonstrates the company's commitment to South Florida and the Bahamian markets.

Bahamas Express has launched special offers to travel to Bimini. For additional information, visit website www.ferryexpress.com.

BE BOLD!



Natalie Putman, vice president of marketing for **Ryder Systems Inc.**, addresses high school and college students and industry professionals who attended the recent Miami Dade College "Be BOLD! Women In Transportation" luncheon. The event was geared to women and minorities, highlighting career opportunities in the transportation logistics and supply chain industries.

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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

STEP UP: Private sector urged to invest in global trans-shipment project

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC – The Jamaica government is urging the private sector to support the initiative to develop the country's global trans-shipment and logistics hub by taking advantage of the potential investment opportunities it provides.

Industry, Investment and Commerce Minister Anthony Hylton said the development presents diverse prospects for the growth and expansion of

the local business environment, and Jamaica's economy.

"This initiative...is about positioning...Jamaica as a global asset, and the fourth node in the global logistics supply network. It has the potential to transform our economic fortunes, from which present and succeeding generations will all benefit," he told members of the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce's (JCC) last month.

Government is spearheading the development of the hub, estimated at more than \$8 million, in an effort to position Jamaica to take advantage of anticipated increased maritime activities projected to accrue from the expansion of the Panama Canal, by 2015.

IMPROVEMENTS

It said that the project would involve the dredging of the Kingston Harbor; expansion

of the Port of Kingston; development of the Caymanas Economic Zone, a trans-shipment commodity port, and Vernamfield in Clarendon as an air-cargo and passenger facility.

The Portia Simpson Miller administration said that



Hylton

the project would make it the fourth such globally, along with those in Singapore; Dubai, United Arab Emirates; and Rotterdam.

"Jamaica is deemed ideally positioned for this development, based on its location, midway between North and South America, and the country's relative proximity to the Panama Canal," a government statement added.

**Crowley opens fresh cold storage, warehouse in Miami, Florida**

Crowley Maritime Corp. and Customized Brokers, the company's Miami-based Customs brokerage company, has opened a new cold storage warehouse facility in Miami, Florida.

Crowley Fresh features multiple humidity and temperature-controlled coolers and is open all day, every day to store and handle perishables arriving from the Caribbean, Latin and South America, Europe, Asia and the Far East in South Florida for import and export.

The facility may also be used as an in-transit consolidation/deconsolidation point.



New storage facility offers more options.

Crowley Fresh features high-tech cooling and monitoring equipment, including forced air pre-cooling, which can be adjusted to meet and maintain varying temperature requirements. With 400,000 total cubic feet of refrigerated space, the facility also offers additional storage space for cargo supplies and non-refrigerated materials.

ONE STOP

"When you're shipping temperature-sensitive goods, every second counts," Nelly Yunta, Crowley's vice president for sales, marketing and customer care said in a recent

press release.

"Shippers of perishables need a reliable and committed cold-chain logistics partner who has industry-leading specialized equipment and experience.

"We can offer this and more, including a diverse suite of additional logistics capabilities, such as customs brokerage, air freight and trucking services. For South Florida perishable customers, Crowley is truly a one-stop-shop shipping and logistics provider."

**Guyana demands new airline Fly Jamaica meet financial conditions**

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC - Guyana's Aviation Minister Robeson Benn has called on the management of Fly Jamaica Airline to meet certain conditions before it begins flights out of the country.

Benn last month asked for the submission of corporate financial information as well as a bond from the airline.

"The government of Guyana, like any responsible government and particularly for airlines which are coming to Guyana and we are having failures and withdrawal, has to

be interested in whether there is viability and sustainability and financing for that operation," he said.

The minister noted that the request was a standard requirement worldwide.

"The government of Guyana has to have, as is normal for these kind of investments, information on the



Fly Jamaica

major players in the investment, in the undertaking," he said.

REQUEST

Since receiving its Air

Operators Certificate (AOC) last September, Fly Jamaica has applied to the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) to fly to Guyana. The airline has already conducted a 'proving flight' to Guyana with Jamaican civil aviation officials aboard.

Last month Fly Jamaica started commercial flights from Jamaica to the

United States. Plans are now in the making to fly the Georgetown-to-New York route via Jamaica.

Fly Jamaica Airways is a partnership between Chief Executive Officer Paul Ronald Reece, who is from Guyana, and three Jamaican shareholders, including Chief Operating Officer (COO) Captain Lloyd Tai, who was a pilot with Air Jamaica.

**BRIEFS****• Curacao's P.M. to address summit**

Curacao's Prime Minister Daniel Hodge is scheduled to address Defense IQ's Caribbean Basin Coastal Surveillance and Maritime Security Summit (CAB-SEC) **Mar. 12-14** in Curacao.

Summit participants, including ambassadors, defense ministers, senior government officials, chiefs of navies, defense staff and coast guards involved in regional and hemispheric security, are expected to discuss maritime security priorities and enforcement requirements for the Caribbean region.

• Insel Air joins UATP Network

Insel Air International B.V., Willemstad, Curacao, has joined the UATP Network as a merchant and now accepts all UATP corporate cards, a move which will provide corporate travelers their desired form of payment.

Insel Air is an IOSA certified airline and member of ALTA. It began operations in 2006 with the focus of connecting the Pan-American region.

- Compiled from various sources.

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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

USVI WAVE: St. Thomas Carnival jumps off Mar. 31 to April 27

JASON WALKER

The carnival spirit takes off this month in St. Thomas, one of three making up the United States Virgin Islands, which will host several events to celebrate its 61st staging of the event from **Mar. 31 to April 27**.

St. Croix and St. John, the other two members of the USVI, are scheduled to host their carnivals later this year.

This year the theme for St. Thomas, located in the north eastern Caribbean, will be "A Tropical Scene for Carnival 2013". The Carnival Village's theme is "Chicago's Tropical Parad-Ice".

Diana Brown, of the United States Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, called last year's St. Thomas Carnival special.

"In 2012 St. Thomas celebrated the 60th anniversary of carnival," she explained. "It was our 'diamond jubilee'. The Virgin Islands went above and beyond to make the event memorable."

SIGNIFICANT

However, Brown said this year's version also bears some significance.

"Sixty one years is a considerable run that spans



Carnival revelers take to the streets in USVI.

longer than most Caribbean nations have even been independent," she said.

The longevity is due largely to the "partnership between local government, the community and local businesses," Brown added. "The government supports carnival with funding as well as marketing support to attract visitors.

"Local businesses sponsor troupes with monetary donations and in-kind sponsorship. Community volunteers put in countless hours in planning and preparation and the public actively participates in the events."

According to Brown, the St. Thomas Carnival is one of the standouts in the Caribbean.

"St. Thomas is a melting

pot of cultures and our carnival represents that in the variety of troupes that participate," she said. "People travel from around the Caribbean and the U.S. to participate.

"We also pride ourselves in plan-

ning a well-organized event and our parades are orderly yet festive. Troupes perform choreographed routines at our Post Office Square, so there is an element of performance in addition to the revelry.

"This is an event where the Virgin Islands' rich culture is on display for the entire world to see and enjoy. It's a time when local artistes, cooks, farmers, musicians, storytellers and other culture bearers come together and share our traditions.

"It's a great time to reconnect with family and friends and welcome guests to our islands. It's our annual celebration of food, music and pageantry."

Brown said carnival offers

a boost to USVI's social and economic health.

IMPACT

"Carnival makes a significant positive impact in the Virgin Islands both socially and economically," she said. "From a social standpoint it's an opportunity for young people, in particular, to learn more about V.I. culture and participate in traditional activities. It's also a chance for elders to pass on their knowledge and to preserve cultural traditions of the past.

"Carnival unleashes the creative spirit of Virgin Islanders, from musicians and dancers to costume designers and builders of floats. Carnival also drives a lot of commerce. Local businesses and vendors benefit from the crowds of people in the downtown area and in the Carnival Village and other

business such as beverage distributors, clothing stores, hairdressers, and other service providers experience a surge in business during carnival.

"The event is also a busy time for the tourism industry as visitors flock to the island."

The two marquee events of St. Thomas Carnival will be the children's parade on April 26 and the adult parade on April 27. Activities are held in several locations in the Charlotte Amalie Historic District, including Lionel Roberts Stadium, Emancipation Garden, Fort Christian Parking Lot, Charlotte Amalie Harbor, Main Street and Waterfront.

For more information on the St. Thomas Carnival, visit www.vicarnival.com.

Jason Walker is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Caribbean tourism shows signs of recovery

The tourism industry in the Caribbean is showing signs of recovery with the sector recording a 5.4 percent increase last year as compared to 2011, a senior Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) official has said.

CTO Chairman Beverly Nicholson-Doty

said that the state of the industry gives "reason to be optimistic" and that "all the signs suggest Caribbean tourism is rallying."

She said visitor arrivals to the Caribbean, especially from the North American market, had increased and hotel revenues were moving "in the right direction, albeit with moderate acceleration.

"Of all our major markets, Canadian arrivals showed the greatest buoyancy throughout the challenges of the recessionary period. In fact, arrivals from Canada have continued to move upward over the past five

years. Arrivals went up by 5.9 percent in this market in 2012. There was also no evidence of falling average visitor spending on the part of the Canadians."

LONGER STAYS

Tourists were also spending more during their stay in the region. Figures show an estimated \$27.5 billion was spent by visitors to the Caribbean last year, a 3.6 percent increase over the previ-

ous year and the third successive year of increase.

Nicholson-Doty said this marks a return of aggregate spending by visitors to the pre-recession level.

"The region as a whole has regained ground lost in the heat of the global economic depression in 2008/2009," she said.

- Edited from CMC.



Nicholson-Doty

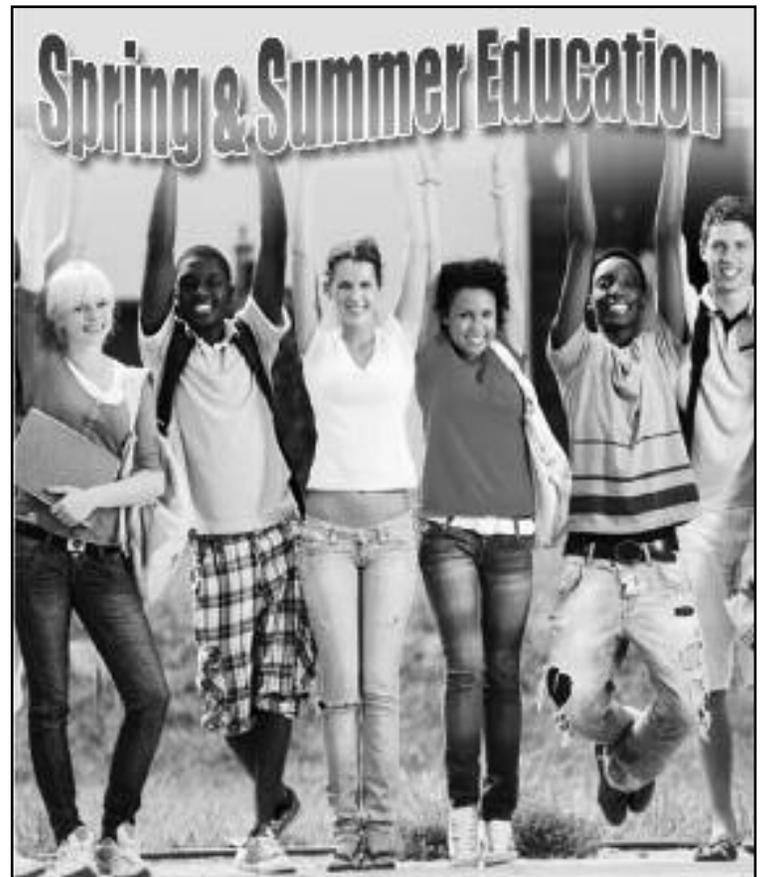




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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

CONQUERING THE CODE: 7 mistakes to avoid on your 2012 tax return

RICK RODGERS

Every year, American politicians talk about the need to simplify the tax code and every year, they make it more complex.

The average taxpayer will spend an estimated 23 hours completing their return this year. Eighty percent of taxpayers will hire someone to do the work, or buy tax software, even though 64 percent of taxpayers don't owe anything.

There are six definitions of a child; more than a dozen educational credits, and 16 different types of tax-favored savings plans. That may seem daunting, but with some basic knowledge and planning, you can avoid costly mistakes.

Here is a list of the seven common mistakes and missed deductions to help you prepare your 2012 tax return.

1. Charitable deductions – cash - Did you make a contri-

bution to charity last year? The United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is cracking down on bogus deductions, so be sure to follow the donation tax rules. One of the most important rules is that you give to a charity with an IRS tax-exempt status. Don't forget to take the mileage deduction when it applies. The IRS allows 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations.

2. Charitable deductions – in kind - Your used clothing donated to charity may not be worth much, but consider using valuation software to determine how much to claim. You may be pleasantly surprised. The same applies for furniture and other household items donated. Clothing must be in good condition or better to take the deduction.

3. Social Security number - Privacy concerns caused the IRS to stop putting taxpayer



Social Security numbers on tax package labels. Most of your tax information is keyed to your tax identification number. Tax ID number errors raise red flags with the IRS, which attempts to match reported income to tax returns. This number is also important when claiming the Child Tax and Additional Child Tax credits

and credits for educational expenses. Take time to verify that your tax ID number is correct on 1099s, W-2 forms and all tax documents to avoid delays processing your return.

4. Dividend reinvestments - Each time a stock or mutual fund reinvests dividends, it's the same as making a new purchase of shares. The amount of the reinvested dividend adds to your tax basis when you calculate your taxable gain from a sale. Make sure you don't overpay the IRS. Mutual funds generally track the average basis of shares and automatically include reinvested dividends in the calculation. Ultimately it's up to you to make sure you calculate the gain properly.

5. Unused deductions from 2011 - The tax code allows capital losses to offset capital gains. When losses exceed gains, the taxpayer can use only \$3,000 of losses against other income. Any excess loss

can be carried forward into future tax years. Don't forget to carry the unused losses over to your 2012 tax return.

Charitable deductions are capped based on the type of property donated and your adjusted gross income. Excess deductions can also be carried into future years. Don't let carryovers get lost in the shuffle.

6. Excess Roth contributions - Single taxpayers whose modified adjusted gross income is between \$110,000 and \$125,000 (\$173,000 and \$183,000 for joint filers) cannot make a full Roth IRA contribution. Check this number when you complete your tax return. Excess contributions are subject to a six percent penalty on the amount you contributed.

7. Overlooked medical deductions - Health insurance premiums are often over-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

Taxpayer tips to fight economic challenges

JASON WALKER

It is tax season in the United States and, unfortunately, it arrives in challenging economic times.

Caribbean Today has checked with financial expert Christopher Stewart for ideas that might be helpful in the current environment.

Stewart is from Financial 700, a company that offers information and services aimed at empowering people with knowledge to help them make the right decisions for the present and future. The former stockbroker, a mortgage loan officer and manager at Semper Home Loans, shared some tips.

"File your taxes on time and make sure you are not overlooking a tax deduction," Stewart advised. "If you are not sure, I am a firm believer in paying a professional to get greater results."

Getting in the habit of doing this can make a positive

difference, he explained.

Stewart also offered taxpayers the following advice for day-to-day operations.

"Set and follow a budget," he said. "If you don't have a plan for your money before you get it, someone else will. Budget and save are the most practical ways to become financially secure."

"...It's not how much money you make," Stewart added, "it's what you do with it. A simple budget and saving plan can change your financial present and future. The difference you will feel and see is less financial stress. You will be more empowered to handle emergencies...and achieve a greater level of control over your life."

COMMUNICATION

Stewart also urged taxpayers to collaborate with those closest to them to gain mutual benefits.

"Communication with your



Proper planning can be a big help to taxpayers.

family is important," he explained. "All members should play a role in empowering the family to reach greater heights. This means parents and children will all have to make sacrifices (giving up something of lesser value now for something greater in the future)."

"Always remember a family that saves together stays together."

Stewart urged taxpayers to pay attention to current trends.

"The housing market took a major downward spiral at the end of 2007 and since then one of the most consistent themes

has been more inventory than customers willing to buy," he said. "Over the last three months we have seen a drastic change in the amount of inventory. There are currently many more buyers than homes being listed. That has created a bidding war and has helped to increase home prices."

"This could be a definite sign that the housing market is changing. This is economics 101: supply and demand. So if you have been waiting to purchase a home you might not want to wait too long."

Stewart is confident that using these tips will help ease current financial challenges.

Jason Walker is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Opening a business – like ABC

In an effort to promote economic growth and development in Miami-Dade County, Commissioner Dennis Moss will host a free workshop on the "ABC's of Opening a Business" from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Mar. 6 at the Pichol E. Williams Community Center in Homestead, Florida.

The small business workshop initiative, spearheaded by Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez, was launched in 2012. Since its inception, six workshops have been held.

During this month's workshop, participants will be offered instructions on the

fundamentals of opening a business, including how to obtain a Certificate of Use, Local Business Tax receipt, Home Business License, Permits and Registration, plus insurance coverage for small businesses.

County staff will be available to answer questions and share their expertise on the necessary tools to start and operate a successful business.

The community center is located at 951 S.W. Fourth St. Seating is limited and will be given on a first come first served basis. To reserve a seat, call 305-375-3677.



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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

RETIRE READY: Planning changes to ensure future security

The economy in the United States may be recovering, but some of the changes wrought by the Great Recession may be long-lasting.

Anyone planning for retirement, no matter what their age, needs to take those changes into account, says financial advisor Philip Rousseaux, a member of the Million Dollar Round Table association's exclusive Top of the Table forum for the world's most successful financial services professionals.

"People in their 40s and younger have some time to retool their plan, but Baby Boomers need to think with more urgency," says Rousseaux, founder and president of Everest Wealth Management, Inc.

The two most common

mistakes people make in retirement planning – having everything in either stocks or short-term savings – is a bad idea, he says.

Only 14 percent of Americans are very confident they'll have the money to live comfortably in retirement, according to a 2012 survey by the Employee Benefit Research Institute.

SUGGESTIONS

Here are Rousseaux's suggestions for ensuring you're part of that 14 percent.

• **Don't take risks you can't afford** - "Don't put the bulk of your assets into anything that makes your principal vulnerable. Gambling that you're going to win big on the market, or any other investment, means you also risk losing big." A portion of your investment should have a



Making the money count is important.

guaranteed return.

• **Seek any guidance from independent financial advisors** - This has two benefits: Advisors who aren't marketing their own products have no conflicts of interest. The second benefit is that independent advisors can devise creative, innovative solutions to meet the needs of individ-

ual clients. Those working for companies...are not free to think outside the box. And that's especially important in this new, post-recession economy.

• **Consider alternatives to the stock market** - One of the effects of the recession is that the public realizes Wall Street is not a safe retirement plan. Even if it can get you there, it's not necessarily going to keep you there.

One alternative is fixed, indexed annuities.

"You loan an insurance company money and it guarantees you payments over a specified length of time. It's a contract between you and the company," he explains.

Fixed-rate indexed annuities have a minimum and maximum interest payment that's linked to a common index, such as the Dow. When the Dow goes up or down, so does the interest rate, but it never goes below the guaranteed minimum or above the guaranteed maximum.

"Your principal is safe and you can ride an up market without the risk," he says.

With pension plans a luxury of the past and Social Security not a guarantee for the future, Rousseaux says whatever your age, it's important to start planning now for retirement by creating your own private pension.

- Edited from News and Experts.



SHOPPING SMART: 10 ways to slash your grocery bill

SARA LUNDBERG

In today's economy, you will be hard pressed to find someone who doesn't think they spend too much money on groceries.

For many people, it is one of their top budget categories for their household. And for many it is the one they feel they have the least amount of control over.

There are many tricks you can use to help your grocery bill get smaller. Some may work for you and some may not.

TIPS

Here are 10 tips to get started slashing your grocery bill:

1. Menu planning - Planning your menu in advance allows you to take your shopping list and locate the best deals on the items you need, instead of paying full price the day you need it. It can also save you money on gas as you normally can make less trips.

2. Buying in bulk - Learn how to properly store the excess and how long it will

last in your pantry, fridge or freezer and plan accordingly.

3. Make a budget - Make a food budget and stick to it. If you are running low towards the end of the month your last week of meals may have to be some of the less expensive ones on your list.

4. Don't buy convenience foods - Don't buy pre-made what you can easily make yourself. You'll find once you start doing it, it doesn't feel like you are spending any extra time at all.

5. Buy generic - Buy generic when possible or a brand you don't normally use if it's on sale. You may find there isn't a lot of difference once you try another. You will find many items that you can substitute for.

6. Shop the clearance section - Don't be afraid of the



Making the right selections can save a lot of money at the store.

clearance or manager special items at the grocery store. Things like meat that have a short shelf life will go on clearance daily. But you can snag it up and use it that night or freeze it with no issues.

7. Shop around to get the best deals - Don't shop at just one store. Know which stores have your basic products priced the lowest and plan trips to each throughout the

month as needed. Also, keep an eye on the weekly sale ads from each store to stock items you use a lot when on sale.

8. Use coupons - Using coupons is a great way to save a few extra dollars almost every time you go to the store. Find out where to find coupons for the items that you use the most and pair them up with the next sale that comes up for even bigger savings.

9. Keep easy meals on hand - Keep a few easy meals for nights when life just doesn't allow time to make what you had planned. That will stop you from spending money going out to eat or ordering in. Making meals ahead of time and freezing them so you just have to pop them in the oven are great for this.

10. Don't always buy fresh - Buy frozen or canned vegetables instead of fresh produce. Frozen and canned veggies are picked at their peak. In many cases it will save tons of time also to buy, for example, frozen diced onions instead of cutting one up yourself.

Try to tackle one or two items to get started. You can add on more as you go. Before you know it you will have cut your grocery budget in half!

Edited from an article written by Sara Lundberg, author of "Budget Savvy Diva's Guide to Slashing Your Grocery Bill by 50% or More".



CONQUERING THE CODE: 7 mistakes to avoid on your 2012 tax return

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

looked. The portion paid by the employee is a deductible expense when you itemize. This includes the portion you pay to Medicare, which is usually deducted from Social Security. Transportation expenses for trips to medical facilities or doctors' offices are

also deductible. The IRS allows 23 cents per mile driven for medical purposes in 2012.

AMENDING

If you have made a mistake or missed a deduction you can file an amended tax return to correct the problem. Some taxpayers worry filing an amended return will increase

their chances of being audited. Amending the return doesn't focus the IRS's attention on your return, but it will extend your exposure to their challenges. The IRS looks back three years from the date you file a return. When you amend your tax return you reopen the three-year window.

No one likes to deal with

the IRS and taxes, but you could be leaving money on the table by not filing an amendment. If the total amount of tax you owe is smaller than your original return, the IRS will refund the difference.

Also file an amended return if the correction results in additional tax owed. The IRS will add interest to the

amount if you amend after your filing deadline, but it rarely adds penalties. Correcting the mistake early saves interest and can avoid penalties.

Rick Rodgers is a certified financial planner.



SPORT



Cuba is Caribbean's lone rep in U-20 World Cup

Cuba will be the only Caribbean nation at this summer's Under-20 World Cup soccer tournament.

The Spanish-speaking nation booked a historic trip to Turkey by reaching the semi-finals of the CONCACAF tournament late last month.

The qualifiers, for teams in the Caribbean, North America and Central America, were held in Mexico. The top four teams, of 12 which made it to CONCACAF's final round, advanced to the World Cup in June.

Cuba finished first in its preliminary group to move into the last eight where it defeated Costa Rica 2-1 to reach the U-20 World Cup for the first time.

Jamaica, after finishing second in its group, was thrashed 4-0 by Mexico in the quarter-finals and failed in its bid for Turkey. The young Reggae Boyz, along with Puerto Rico, Haiti and Curacao were the only other nations from the region in the CONCACAF tournament.



'Teddy' McCook gets IAAF's elite honor

Track and field administrator Neville "Teddy" McCook, who died last month and was buried in his homeland Jamaica, was awarded the Golden Order of Merit by the International Association of Athletics.

McCook, a former head of the sport's governing body in Jamaica, was recognized by the IAAF for "his outstanding contribution and meritorious service to the cause of athletics".

He served as an IAAF council member from 1999 and was among the founders of the Gibson Relays, a highly regarded meet held in Jamaica each year. McCook, the former president of the North American, Central American and Caribbean Athletics Association (NACAC), was an IAAF area representative.

President and Chairman of USA Track and Field Stephanie Hightower visited

Jamaica late last month to participate in activities celebrating McCook's life.

"I thought it was very important that I come," said Hightower. "He was difference...he was a mentor, always very helpful in helping us in the U.S. as well as when I was an athlete



Jamaica faces tough road after bright start to World Cup soccer qualifying

Jamaica, the lone Caribbean nation still with a chance to play in soccer's biggest tournament, made a promising start to its final round of qualifiers last month.

However, the Reggae Boyz, with nine matches remaining in the hexagonal round of the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF) teams, still have a tough road ahead if they hope to make it to World Cup 2014 in Brazil, beginning with two more games this month.

Playing away from home in high altitude, Jamaica

earned a creditable 0-0 draw with Mexico in one of three matches played early last month. Both teams missed multiple scoring opportunities, but the Boyz earned a point from the game, their first ever at the Azteca Stadium.

TIED

Jamaica are now tied for second in the six-team group with three others – Mexico, Costa Rica and Panama – which have each played one game. Honduras leads with three points following a 2-1 win over the United States, which is pointless and at the bottom of the standings.

Jamaica is back in action

at home against Panama on Mar. 22, the same day the U.S. hosts Costa Rica and Mexico plays Honduras away.

Four days later – Mar. 26 – the Boyz travel to play Costa Rica, while Mexico hosts the U.S. and Panama plays away at Honduras.

The top three teams in the hexagonal automatically qualify for the World Cup. The fourth place finisher will play a team from the Oceania group for a place in Brazil. Jamaica's only appearance in the World Cup was in 1998.



Jamaica's Jermaine Taylor, right, who plays professionally in the United States, makes a tackle against Mexico's Javier Hernandez.

Caribbean stars among Laureus nominees

Caribbean stars are again among the nominees for 2013 Laureus World Sports Awards.

The winners of the premier honors on the international sporting calendar will be announced during a globally televised ceremony in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on Mar. 11.

Olympic gold medalists Usain Bolt and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce of Jamaica, Kirani James of Grenada, and the Dominican Republic's Felix Sanchez are among the nominees.

Bolt, a favorite to win in the "Sportsman of the Year" category, won 100 meters, 200 meters and 4x100 meters gold at London Olympics. His competitors include: Britain's Mo Farah (athletics); Lionel Messi

(Argentina, soccer); Michael Phelps (United States, swimming); Sebastian Vettel (Germany, motor racing); and Bradley Wiggins (Britain, cycling).

DEFENSE

Fraser-Pryce, who successfully defended her Olympic title in London, is competing for the "Sportswoman of the Year" honor. The other nominees in the category are Jessica Ennis (Britain, athletics); and Americans Allyson Felix (athletics), Missy Franklin (swimming), Lindsey



Bolt

Vohn (skiing) and Serena Williams (tennis).

James, the Olympic 400 meters champion, faces competition from five others for the honor of "Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year".

Sanchez, who at age 34 won the Olympic 400 meters title, eight years after accomplishing the feat in Athens, is among the nominees for "Laureus World Comeback of the Year".

Nomination is based on performances in 2012 and is decided through a ballot by the world's media. The winners are voted on by the Laureus World Sports Academy, which is made up of 46 of the greatest ever sportsmen and sports-women.



BRIEFS

• Jamaica to play Spurs in The Bahamas

Jamaica's national soccer team will play English Premier League (EPL) club Tottenham Hotspurs in an exhibition game on **May 23** in The Bahamas.

Both teams have accepted an invitation from the government of The Bahamas to play the game at the new Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium on Nassau Paradise Island. It will mark the first match featuring an EPL club in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

• T20 night cricket in Lauderhill

The City of Lauderhill Bedessee SportsT20 Night Cricket Tournament is being played through late April.

The six franchise teams are Florida Destroyers, Westway

Warriors, Sims Sports Daredevils, Laparkan Power, Jamaica National and Kaplan's Wolverines. The teams play on Saturdays at the Central Broward Regional Park in Lauderhill, Florida.

For more information, call **954-730-3000**.

• Reggae Girlz get South Florida boost

Jamaica's female soccer program received a boost in South Florida last month through the Reggae Girlz Initiative, which is offering help for the women preparing to represent the Caribbean nation.

October has been declared Reggae Girlz Month by the Broward County municipalities of Lauderhill, Lauderdale Lakes and Miramar.

- Compiled from various sources.



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It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of **Dr. Fidel S. Goldson Sr.**

Dr. Goldson passed away on Friday morning February 22nd in Kingston Jamaica at the age of 54. He had been visiting family members at the time of his untimely death. As many of you can already attest to, Dr. Goldson was loved by thousands and leaves behind: his beloved significant other Frances Blissett with whom he shared the last eighteen years of his life; sons Fidel Jr, Desmond, Nathaniel, Fidel M, daughter-in-law Thiema and Frances' daughter Gianna. He also leaves behind his father Randolph, siblings (Tony, Ann, and Vivienne), three grandchildren, a great grandson, several nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Dr. Goldson was preceded by his loving mother Daphne and brother Dale.

A message from the Goldson family:

We can not express the magnitude of appreciation for the outpouring of love and support that we have received from the community. We are committed to carrying on the legacy of Dr. Fidel Goldson Sr. as we continue to honor his slogan "Turn up the Life."

He will be missed by us all.

** In lieu of flowers or gifts the family is requesting that donations be made to the Dr. Fidel S. Goldson Sr. Scholarship Fund. Please contact Dwight Davis @ 954-985-2061 for further information. **



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DAMAGE CONTROL



Photograph by Derrick Scott

Minister of National Security Peter Bunting says Jamaica has paid a high cost for crime and, had it not been for the exceptionally high levels of crime in the last four decades, its economy would be between three and 10 times the size it is today. Delivering the third lecture in the Jamaica 50 lecture series, under the theme: "National Security in Jamaica since Independence", at the Silver Spring Civic Center in Silver Spring, Maryland last month, Bunting added that crime has affected Jamaica's competitiveness and investor confidence. As a result of the economic constraints, the minister explained, there have not been sufficient funds to spend on social services and to combat crime. The lecture series, the brainchild of Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States Stephen Vasciannie, was also attended by Jamaica's Minister of Justice Mark Golding, Commissioner of Police Owen Ellington and Director Public Prosecution Paul Llewellyn.

PUSH ON: MLK III keeps his father's dream alive

DAWN A. DAVIS

The legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has taken root in a rainbow of communities

A pivotal leader in the civil rights movement, Dr. King's dream of racial equality and justice through non-violent means and service is being kept alive all across the United States, including among Caribbean Americans.

Martin Luther King III, Dr. King's oldest son, honored his father's memory by recognizing local leaders and inspiring the call to service to help fulfill his dream during a recent breakfast gathering at Fort Lauderdale's First Baptist Church organized by the YMCA of Broward County.

"It has been 45 years since the sanitation workers strike when tragically my dad lost his life (in Memphis, Tennessee)," King III. "Forty-five years since the poor people's campaign in 1968 when Martin Luther King Jr. was talking about a living wage and trying to bring together poor blacks and whites, native Americans, Hispanic and Latino and Asian Americans and Americans from all walks...He did not live to see that come to fruition." Underscoring the



King III.

YMCA's mantra to "Stand for Something", King III challenged the audience to take a stand for change. He bemoaned the level of poverty in the U.S., reminding the audience that there are more than 60,000 people living in poverty, many of whom have been affected by the recession and foreclosure debacle strangling the American middle class.

"We have got to find a way to create a spirit that lifts people up," King III said. "We've gotta find a way to create jobs and opportunities."

SELF REVIEW

He urged members of the audience to look at how they

are creating and perpetuating a culture of violence through films, video games and television screens and mentioned the recent killing of children in Newtown, Connecticut as a tragic example.

"Somehow we have got to find a way to create a bright light out of such a tragic situation," King III said. "...Somehow we have to change that paradigm. We have to change that so we have a culture of non-violence that's uplifting."

King III implored all to engage in service, not just on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, but throughout the year, to move the nation forward and help complete his father's dream.

"Some of us will win victories in our cities, some will win victories in our counties, some may yet even win victories in our state...in our nation, and a few may even win victories for our world," he explained. "But be ashamed to die until you've done a little something to make the world in which we all must live a little better than it was when you arrived."

Dawn A. Davis is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



AIC to honor Colin Powell

Retired General Colin Powell, son of Jamaican parents and a former United States secretary of state, will be honored next month by the American Immigration Council (AIC).

The AIC will celebrate the accomplishments of immigrants and advocates from around the U.S. at its 18th annual Washington, D.C. Immigrant Achievement Awards on **April 11** by giving Powell the Stephen K. Fischel Distinguished Public Service Award.

The Fischel award is presented to outstanding individuals or organizations who exhibit a commitment and dedication to U.S. heritage as a nation of immigrants and to



Powell

the struggle to create fair and humane immigration policies in the country.

For more information, on the ceremony, call Megan Hess at **202-507-7517**.



Immigration forum at MDC Mar. 7

A symposium bringing together a group of influential stakeholders from sectors such as business, labor, faith, education, healthcare and law enforcement, to discuss the issue of immigration in the United States, is scheduled for this month in Miami, Florida.

Miami Dade College, in conjunction with Global Jewish Advocacy (AJC), will host the summit from **8 a.m. to noon Mar. 7** at the MDC's Wolfson Campus in downtown Miami.

Former U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez and MDC North Campus President Dr. José A. Vicente are among the confirmed

speakers. Also expected to make presentations are Darryl Carlton, chief financial officer for the University of Miami Hospital, and Rolando Aedo, executive vice president at Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau.

DISCUSSIONS

Scheduled panel discussions will highlight economics and education - two key themes central to immigration policy and South Florida.

The MDC Wolfson Campus, Chapman Conference Center, is located at 300 N.E. Second Ave.

To register, visit www.ajc.org/miamibridging.



HONORARY HAITIAN



- Photograph by Akeem Brutus/Commissioner Edmonson's Office
Miami-Dade County Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson, right, was named a 2013 Honorary Haitian by the Haitian Heritage Museum at the museum's annual gala last month in South Florida. Edmonson was joined by Commissioner Jean Monestime, left, in presenting a proclamation to Museum Executive Director Eveline Pierre, second left, and Director of Operations Serge Rodriguez, both founders of the museum.