**Health insurance ‘in 2 years’**

Dr Bernard Nottage: *Implementation of NHI will not be a drawn out process*

By CHESTER ROBARDS

NATIONAL Health Insurance could become reality in less than two years, according to Health Minister Dr Bernard Nottage.

In an address to the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce’s annual general meeting, Dr Nottage said that its implementation will not be a drawn out process.

He said the cost of a National Health Insurance would be $235 million per year. Many at the meeting questioned the reality of the cost quoted, calling it a “conservative figure.”

To cover the cost it is proposed to raise revenues from about three target groups, firstly the government will contribute about 48 per cent of the nation’s cost, secondly the other half are dissipated by the private insurance system.

The best available estimate is in terms of how much protection is offered and how many persons are consciously excluded from membership and secondly those who make membership upon retirement or when diagnosed with a particular condition but often they have to pay anyway. So often it is used when, as they needed it most were deemed unassessable and substandard,” said Dr Nottage.

“Too many lack the funds to pay for care — for many, this lack of resources means that they make difficult choices between spending on their health or using the money for food. In this choice many are forced to use non-registered medical personnel and some self-employed workers will be asked to contribute about three target groups, first the government will contribute about 48 per cent of the nation’s cost, secondly the other half are dissipated by the private insurance system.

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A case of mistaken identity

The area of Athol Island which is to be reclaimed by Kerzner International, is the bay on the southern side of the island, not the area in the photograph published on the front page of Wednesday’s Tribune.

Tour operators frequently use the area shown (above) as a stopping point during their trips, but the area to which they commute may become inundated as the development calls for extension of the island into the bay. An example of the marine life that can be found off the shore of Athol Island are pictured here as well. The area known as the sea gardens is located off the south-western shore of Athol Island and is an area which environmentalists and conservationists say is sensitive to developmental impact and should be preserved.

Minister warns BUT members to obey the law

IN reaction to yesterday’s announcement by the Bahamas Union of Teachers’ leaders to withhold student final grades, the Minister of Education warned that whatever conflicts or grievances the BUT has with government, “students should not be held at ransom.”

With battle lines drawn, Minister Sears told BUT members that, in the discharging of their contractual obligations, they, like everyone else, must obey the law.

Speaking with The Tribune yesterday, Minister Sears said: “My job is to fight to improve the status of teachers, the remuneration of teachers, and ensuring that teachers are accountable and effective.”

However, the minister said, “You cannot put a gun to the head of the government and expect that the government would capitulate and give whatever you ask for irrespective of the physical ability of the government to deliver it, without imposing additional taxes or borrowing more money.”

In an effort to improve the status of teachers, the Minister told Mr Lloyd: “The concessions offered to teachers are groundbreaking and a number of them are exclusive to teachers in the public school system.”

Of special note, said Minister Sears, is the awarding of a 12-month sabbatical with full pay after 10 years of “outstanding service,” adoptive leave with pay once every three years, and a one week paternity leave with pay.

Additionally, continued Minister Sears, there have been a number of allowances that have been substantially increased, such as housing and coaching allowances.

“I am committed, as part of my Obligation, to improve the status and terms and condition of teachers as a part of the educational system,” said the Minister of Education.
 shortened the in foot. In the leg line on Tuesday. The government should seek tuition concessions for Bahamians who wish to study in Florida, Senator Caleb Outten said in a statement released yesterday. The government has in the past been reluctant to ease budget pressure by giving such concessions, but Outten said this was the right moment to revisit the issue as it was facing a difficult financial situation. He said the government should consider offering concessions to Bahamian students to help them, as well as to the country as a whole, because the education sector plays a vital role in the economy.

The service of ordinaries accompanied by the Bishop and Archdeacon will be held at 10am on March 24 at Christ Church Cathedral, George Street. Immediately following the service there will be a procession from the cathedral, moving north on George Street to Parliament Street, west on Shirley Street to Duke Street, and concluding at the Cathedral Parish Hall.

"This is a time of tremendous activity in the Anglican community and the West Indies and Metropolitans. It’s a time when we are looking forward to the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Anglican Church in the West Indies, which is an important milestone in our history. This is also a time when we are looking forward to the consecration of Archbishop Gomez, who will be the first archbishop of the Anglican province in the Caribbean."

Mr Outten said that since the government is negotiating setting up LNG facilities in the Bahamas, it is feasible to take advantage of higher education benefits and provide financial assistance to the students. The government also has millions of dollars in reserve that can be used to assist Bahamian students.

The government is also considering a proposal to give more travel assistance to Bahamian students. Mr Outten said that the government should use the savings from the agreement to help more students travel. He said that the government should consider giving more travel assistance to students who are interested in studying abroad.

The government has been negotiating with the US Department of Energy over the construction of LNG facilities in the Bahamas. The government has already signed a memorandum of understanding with the US government, and it is expected that the project will be completed by 2018. Mr Outten said that the government should use the savings from the agreement to help more students travel.

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Balkan war crimes dilemma

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Four months after the death of Slobodan Milosevic, the tribunal has no final verdict on convictions for genocide and other charges such as genocide that by definition can only be proved by a criminal trial for the purpose of holding individuals criminally liable. The tribunal has no police force and relies on governments and NATO-led forces to arrest suspects. Milosevic is thought to be hiding out in Ser- bia. But authorities in Belgium say they cannot arrest him. Karadzic is believed to be in a Serb-controlled stronghold in Bosnian Serb territory. Don Stainton

Publishing and distributing officers: DICKER, Richard

The naked truth is that the

PHYSICIAN is required to maintain a certain level of decorum in his or her dealings with patients, and this includes the use of language that is appropriate for the setting in which the examination is taking place. Are medical doctors required to remain calm and rational even when dealing with cases involving severe injury where there is a risk of death or permanent disability? This is wrong and must be corrected. We must pay them back for that however much that is in their present benefit. This is wrong and must be corrected.

A rational well thought out approach needed

EDITOR, The Tribune.

I HAVE some questions for my fellow Bahamians. How many medical doctors required to remain calm and rational even when dealing with cases involving severe injury where the patient is suffering from amnesia? Does the fact that a physician is required to maintain a certain level of decorum in his or her dealings with patients, and this includes the use of language that is appropriate for the setting in which the examination is taking place. Are medical doctors required to remain calm and rational even when dealing with cases involving severe injury where there is a risk of death or permanent disability? This is wrong and must be corrected. We must pay them back for that however much that is in their present benefit. This is wrong and must be corrected.

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A rational well thought out approach needed
Wrong recommendations printed on traffic system

By Tiffanny Grant

The Bahamas Development Bank is a "franchise" to small business development, according to Senator Caleb Outten, who said he intends to advocate for the government to govern the bank to be retained.

The Act was written in 1965 to govern the development of commerce, he said, and is now referred to the Senate during yesterday's morning session.

Longly drawn-out proceedings, he said, are a setback for entrepreneurs who "need quick cash." But, George Rodger, Managing Director of Bahamas Development Bank (BDB), said an interview with The Tribune the purpose of the bank is to assist entrepreneurs.

The main objective of the bank is to assist with new projects, assist in the rehabilitation of existing ones and fund development of new projects.

"We are not a commercial bank and the need for fast cash then people need to go to the commercial bank," he said. "In many cases people take what we do out of context and try to compare us to the commercial sector.

However, Mr. Rodgers explained that occasional mistakes have been made, as there are certain provisions that need attention.

"We would like to have joint ventures with foreigners, to bring some economies to the country," he said.

The implementation of the unified system will represent a "great step forward," the journalist said.

"That government does not take up any pity is the new bus company," he said. Mr Thompson yesterday admitted that the supplement had actually been printed with the recommendations from an earlier draft.

He pledged that the department will give the supplement to the correct recommendations.

"We regret this mistakenly and we do apologize for the inconvenience caused," he said.

Earlier this month, Mr. Thompson said that it would be premature to set a date for the implementation of the unified system.

At that time, he said, although the implementation of the model is close to being ready, it remained an affordable system for New Providence.

Yesterday he said that the framework of the business plan is being worked on, and stakeholders will shortly be brought around the table to assist with the business plan.

On Tuesday, Mr Rahming expressed concern about a foreign consultant who is preparing recommendations for New Providence.

Mr Rodgers said that the business plan is being prepared with the recommendations of this consultant, or provided any information.

Mr Thompson said that industry personnel would be given the opportunity to have an input with the business plan of the unification of the bus system.

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The public's view on care for the elderly

The president of the Nurses Association, Ampusan Symonette, said: "Elderly persons are treat longer because of the availability of new types of healthcare. Individuals are more aware of what their needs are as it relates to healthcare." Mrs Symonette added that many persons would like to give "hands on care" to their elderly, but are unable to do so because of time or other contributing factors. "Generally young persons do have concern for their elderly, but they have their own lives as well," she added.

The president of the Nurses Association, Ampusan Symonette, said: "Elderly persons should assist with financial availability of new types of healthcare. Individuals are more aware of what their needs are as it relates to healthcare." Mrs Symonette added that many persons would like to give "hands on care" to their elderly, but are unable to do so because of time or other contributing factors. "Generally young persons do have concern for their elderly, but they have their own lives as well," she added.

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Honour for late founder of the Margaret McDonald Management Administration Centre

FORMER Permanent Sec- retary the late Lois Symon- ette, a founder of The Mar- grate McDonald Management Administration Centre (MMPMAC), will be hon- oured posthumously at the organisation's fifth annual honours awards banquet.

During the banquet, to be held July 15 at the Sandals Royal Bahamian Resort, the MMPMAC will recognise 26 outstanding contributors to the development of The Bahamas, including profes- sionals, civic activists, enter- tainers and motion picture personalities, according to Assistant Director of MMP- MAC, said Monday, at a press conference at the Culture and Tourism Commission Office, that the Centre will give posthumous recognition to Mrs. Symonette, to whom the entire fifth anniversary celebration is ded- icated.

"She was one of our found- ing members who spoke no efforts in helping us shape the policies and programmes for members who spared no effort to assist the organisation until her death," Mrs Wallace-Whitfield said.

Mrs. Wallace-Whitfield said the Centre is pleased with the response to the critical need for implementing strategies for change that will promote entrepreneurship and large- scale business development by Bahamians in the Bahamas," Mrs Byer said.

Nursing staff are honoured

FAIR HOPE- Mrs. Byer also announced that MMPMAC will host a four-day conference which will lead into the banquet under the theme, "On the Mark! Get Set! Go! Conquering the Challenges of Implementation for Mega Development."

"This conference is a response to the critical need for implementing strategies for change that will promote entrepreneurship and large-scale business development by Bahamians in the Bahamas," Mrs Byer said.

Whitfield said. She said the Centre's Hon- our Selection Committee was challenged to arrive at the final list of honourees. "We had a very difficult time because there were so many deserving candidates to consider," Mrs Wallace-Whitfield said.

Mrs Wallace-Whitfield said the Centre is pleased with the response to the critical need for implementing strategies for change that will promote entrepreneurship and large-scale business development by Bahamians in the Bahamas," Mrs Byer said.

"This conference is a response to the critical need for implementing strategies for change that will promote entrepreneurship and large-scale business development by Bahamians in the Bahamas," Mrs Byer said.

NURSING support staff were honoured for their dedicated services during a ceremony held on Acting Governor General Paul L. Adderley.

Thirty-three were honoured from each of the major health institutions, Public Hos- pitals Authority and the Ministry of Health as part of Nurses Month.

Earlier the top registered nurses and trained clinical nurses were similarly hon-oured.

Pictured above with Acting Governor General Adderley are the senior nursing staff who were honoured.
Honor Bradley Roberts, MP, Minister of Works and Utilities

This excerpt from The Nassau Guardian's Contribution to the Budget Debate: The Water and Sewerage Corporation for Continued Development of Water and Sewerage Services in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE - CHALLENGES

Mr. Speaker, I seek to speak on the revolutionary and visionary approach of this government towards water and sewerage services in this country. So in doing, I wish to draw the attention of members of this house to the state of affairs in this portfolio. In this regard, I wish to remind Honourable Members of the ongoing challenges that have spanned several decades, challenges that include:

- Unreliable potable water supply
- Inadequate potable water supply
- Poor water quality
- Nuisance problems - in some places in New Providence and the Family Islands.

The Andros barging programme

High unaccounted for water revenue in New Providence and Long Island

Unprecedented and anticipated sewerage problems

- Drinking water crisis
- Nuisance problems for ground water management and pollution control

These challenges, Mr. Speaker, have hindered the Water and Sewerage Corporation from achieving its full potential. In fact the longstanding nature of these problems is symptomatic of the priority that successive administrations may have placed them on their most important agenda. As a result, I have said so many times in this house that water is the quintessence of our existence. Whilst man can survive without air, electricity and telephone, man cannot survive without water and has not been able to survive without water.

Mr. Speaker, in simplistic terms water is the essence of life - it is the most important commodity we have. The recent experience of Hurricane Katrina has amplified just how important water is to human existence. In the city of New Orleans, in the whirlwind of Hurricane Katrina, even though electricity and communication services were restored in a relatively short order, nothing was done to ensure that potable water was made available and the toilets could be flushed.

Water for The Bahamas and the Bahamas has a national security issue of the highest order! Mr. Speaker, solving this issue is a paramount concern to this government and I submit that this is the same position that the former administration should have had.

Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes that the provision of safe (and affordable) drinking water and the disposal and treatment of wastewater have to be integrated into our national security agenda. They impact the health of residents and visitors alike. We have to reassess the awareness of our people, on an unprecedented level of seriousness, on the impact of and the determination to deal with the provision of safe drinking water and the disposal and treatment of wastewater in New Providence, where the largest population centre resides, can benefit from a breakthrough discovery.

We must educate our children, from pre-school age, of the value and importance of water.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members and members of the public, this is an excellent opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the overall commitment of all stakeholders and ensure that the Bahamian people address this very important topic.

Mr. Speaker, as a resident of the Family Island of Long Island, and as one who is closely attuned to the state of affairs in the Family Islands, as it pertains to water and sewerage. You will understand that our fellow Bahamians feel when they see the examples of everyday living as simple as having a drink of fresh water or tasting the water from their homes. Mr. Speaker - you can attest to the importance of water!

NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

Mr. Speaker, this image that led me to consider this government's responsibility to improve the delivery of water services to the Bahamian people is a strategy that has developed in the Bahamas PIP, the GR, the Honourable Prime Minister Perry Gladstone Christie, to direct the Water and Sewerage Corporation to ensure that every citizen of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas would have access to a high quality and reliable potable water in the shortest possible timeframe.

This directive, Mr. Speaker, resulted in the formulation of a New National Water & Wastewater Services Strategy, the expressed purpose of which is to produce a revolutionary and viable potable water supply system and a modern sewerage system that is integrated and dispositive network, in compliance with international best practices in the Providence and the Family Islands.

The cornerstone of this strategy is this government's public-private partnership philosophy, which, to date, has already resulted in the delivery of high quality, reliable potable water to many residents of our Commonwealth, who previously had little, if any, potable quality supply or no water.

FAMILY ISLAND PROGRAMME

Mr. Speaker, as our Honourable leader said in his last address to Parliament, the Family Islands are a classic case of a water crisis. Mr. Speaker, in his words, it is the essence of our new national water and wastewater policy.

This government, Mr. Speaker, is currently finalizing plans for the construction of a desalination plant in the next six months, in the following Family Island areas:

- Green Turtle Cay, Abaco
- Sow's Pond, Eleuthera
- Snug Cove, Acklins
- Sweeting's Cay, Grand Bahama
- Long Cay, in the Milmont community

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP VISION

Mr. Speaker, consistent with our PPP philosophy, we have developed with major Family Island property developers and major settlement developers to address the ongoing challenges at the Family Islands. This model is being pursued in Oasis of the Seas, (in Abaco (Winding Bay development), Cat Island, Mayaguana (G-Group development) and Rum Cay (Milton Holdings development).

Mr. Speaker, this strategy is by far the best opportunity for the sustainable development of the services of the Water and Sewerage Corporation, whilst simultaneously creating wealth, employment and foreign exchange for the Bahamian people. It is a strategy that will enable us to move towards the goal of providing access to clean drinking water and wastewater services to all Bahamians.

Regardless, Mr. Speaker, our intention is that every person of the Land would be served, that the Water and Sewerage Corporation should address the needs of its customers, to whom you provide services.

Why the action of an accountable and caring government?

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members and the public, it is not done, it was actually implemented in the 1980s, where the water connections for the mains that were laid to have dug up to be dug up and replaced because they were not up to the standards of water flowing through them. In this is what you would refer to as a government-funded government? This was a horrific hoax, perpetrated by persons who had the public's trust to call themselves an accountable government.

I invite the Bahamian people, when they reach for that organ of government from this door to do the same thing. I invite the Bahamian people, whom they are on this floor and they are so serious about this thing, to be supporting Perry Christie's PIP, a proactive government, dynamic and accountable and caring government!

Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes the critical importance of water and wastewater management in our lifestyles and development growth in the Family Islands and are currently addressing this long-standing and ongoing problem. We have been opportunistically seeking to supplement our efforts with public-private-partnerships (PPP) in key areas of infrastructure.

The Bahamas, Mr. Speaker, is the essence of our new national water and wastewater policy.

This government, Mr. Speaker, has been committed to providing drinking water to the Bahamas and the Bahamas is for us to simultaneously create wealth, employment and foreign exchange for the Bahamian communities. This model is being pursued in Oasis of the Seas (in Abaco (Winding Bay development), Cat Island, Mayaguana (G-Group development) and Rum Cay (Milton Holdings development).

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the stated benefit this initiative brings, we must not lose sight of the benefit to be enjoyed by the Corporation by way of cultural and personal development for the individuals that comprise the employees of the Corporation.

As a province, our PPP philosophy, we have developed with major Family Island property developers and major settlement developers to address the ongoing challenges at the Family Islands. This model is being pursued in Oasis of the Seas, (in Abaco (Winding Bay development), Cat Island, Mayaguana (G-Group development) and Rum Cay (Milton Holdings development).

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Mr. Speaker, our intention is that every person of the Land would be served, that the Water and Sewerage Corporation should address the needs of its customers.
Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes that the baring of water from Andros, which was intended, be a temporary solution, was allowed to drag on, becoming increasingly expensive and unreliable due to adverse weather conditions and mechanical failures. The reality is that the price of RO water is cheaper than the cost of baring and is not subject to weather conditions. In addition, speciality water bottles are becoming increasingly scarce.

Mr. Speaker, our strategic plans for addressing the water problems in New Providence extend beyond the Blue Hills RO plant and we are finalising negotiations for an equally robust world-class transmission and distribution system.

As with the other cases with New Providence, the baring also suffers from old and faulty mains. This is particularly unacceptable at a time of local government shortage and neglect, and lacking focus in New Providence. It has led to daily leakages and losses from the water distribution system in excess of 50%.

Mr. Speaker, I am ashamed to say that of the 144 gallons per day and 52,560 gallons, leading into your home, losing 1 gallon of water per minute equals to potential losses of 144 gallons per day and 5,256 gallons per year.

More profoundly, the leaky water line leading into your home, losing 1 gallon of water per minute equals to potential losses of 144 gallons per day and 52,560 gallons per year. Conservation is the way to go.

A drop of blue into the tank of your water closet, once a week, will cost you peanuts

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss not to outline the residents of New Providence that since this system becomes fully operational, anyone deserving of saving money and or enjoying a consistent supply of quality potable water should quickly embrace the opportunity to become a new or renewing customer of the Corporation.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, as mentioned to the good people of Exuma during the contract signing ceremony for the extension of water mains in Mangrove Cay at a cost of $181,000, in The Buff South Andros at a cost of $121,000, and the Bogue, Eleuthera, a 250,000 imperial gallon at a cost of $593,000, for a total project value of $1,172 million.

The replacement of 4.5 miles of water mains in Central Long Island for a total project value of $370,000.

The extension of the water mains in Providence at 30% completion. Mr. Speaker, this government, our strategic plans for addressing the water problems in New Providence are backed by the commitment of a landmark water transmission and distribution system.

Mr. Speaker, this government’s objective is not to privatise water and water and sewage services to all residents, but also to transform the Water and Sewerage Corporation into a self-sustaining profitable entity.

This strategy also supports the effective involvement of Bahamas in the ownership and management of water and wastewater services to ensure that the Corporation can provide water and wastewater services to all residents, without defaulting on major developments. In this vein, the Corporation has continued in ongoing negotiations with the World Bank, ADB, and the private sector to improve the quality of potable water and wastewater services to all Bahamian citizens and residents.

Mr. Speaker, this government does not pay lip service to the delivery of water and wastewater services. Mr. Speaker, this government understands that water and development go hand in hand, with water leading the way. This government understands that the provision of consistent, quality services to large institutional clients is the prudent way to raise capital to deliver the service to all residents. Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to uplifting the Water and Sewerage Corporation and lifting the burden of wastewater management off the shoulders of all Bahamians.

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Mr. Speaker, since coming to power, this government already has completed the sale of the privatised opened Abaco Utilities Water & Sewerage Corporation and the purchase of what was pending for many years. We continue to develop the new Abaco water system, providing the communities with safe, quality water supplies to those areas not covered.

Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes that the baring of water from Andros, which was intended, be a temporary solution, was allowed to drag on, becoming increasingly expensive and unreliable due to adverse weather conditions and mechanical failures. The reality is that the price of RO water is cheaper than the cost of baring and is not subject to weather conditions. In addition, speciality water bottles are becoming increasingly scarce.

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In addition, Mr. Speaker, as mentioned to the good people of Exuma during the contract signing ceremony for the extension of water mains throughout that land a few weeks ago, the introduction of RO water will mean that residents in New Providence will be able to use in its due course take baths, and shampoo their hair using very little soap and shampoo. Expenditure on these items should decrease significantly.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the quality of potable water will be equal to that of bottled water. Quality potable water will transform the lives of the people of New Providence and throughout the Blue Hills.

Mr. Speaker, this government also recognises the potential dangers of using well water, which can adversely affect one’s health, and strongly encourages all residents to utilise their well water supplies.
CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Carlton Wright, Bahamas Ambassador to Cuba and Mrs. Audrey Dean-Wright are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Carlisa Leroya, to Mr. Ashley Alfonso Waters of Louisiana. He is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Alfonso Waters of Freeport, Bahamas.

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Visit us at: www.caribbeanlandscape.com
Election of officers for 2006/2007 will take place as well as presentation of the 2005 Audited Financial Statements.

Two Continuing professional Education (CPE) Hours will be granted to attending BICA members.

Cost: $40, Lunch Included. Contact BICA Office - Tel: 326-6619, Fax: 326-6618
Alumni make donation to COB library fund

The College of the Bahamas Alumni Association has donated $5,000 to the construction fund for the Harry C Moore Library — a facility which was endowed to the University of The Bahamas academic community in honor of Harry C Moore.

The donation came through the Alumni Gifts for Advancement project, a fund-raising initiative that was launched in March 2006 by COB’s Office of Alumni Affairs, and endorsed by the members of the Alumni Hall of Fame.

The College of the Bahamas is currently in a phase of physical expansion, which is placing new demands on the institution’s budget.

In order to assist, the Alumni Association has pledged to continue its work with the Office of Alumni Affairs to bring COB alumni together to benefit their alma mater, particularly in the area of fund-raising.

The annual Alumni Hall of Fame induction luncheon is the major fundraiser for the Association.

The Association is also appealing to all alumni to get involved in the Alumni Gifts for Advancement project, which allow alumni to contribute toward the development of their alma mater with a pledge of $19.74 per annum. Other pledge contributions can be $197.40 or $1,974.00 — 1974 representing the birth year of COB.

The Alumni Association has pledged its commitment to the continued growth and development of The College of The Bahamas.

Is it time to buy?

THINKING of buying a home, but feel bewildered by conflicting reports about the state of real estate? Well, you’re certainly not alone, but in a word, relax!

Whether or not real estate is up, down or sideways, most people don’t make their purchase decision based on market conditions. Rather, it has more to do with lifestyle.

For most people, a home is very much like a “durable good,” similar to a washing machine.

Sounds silly, but think of it this way: When you need a new washer, your decision is based on that requirement, and you search for a machine that offers good value and service. You don’t think about whether the price of washers will be going up or down in the coming months or years.

You can have greater peace of mind when your purchase is made out of necessity and not out of a desire to turn your property into a cash cow.

You get the greatest value out of your home by simply living in it, and as long as you can continue to make mortgage payments, you run little risk of losing on your investment.

Speaking with your BREA agent is a great place to get the ball rolling, so that you can learn about local market conditions and prices. Armed with knowledge, you can move forward and move in.

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— Carmen Massoni
Bahamas real estate today
BTVI to receive upgrade on road to college status

THE Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute is to be upgraded and restructured in a bid to propel its profile to collagen status.

Parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Immigration, Labour and Training, Agatha B. Marcel said a private partner — the Grand Bahama Shipyard — is ready to assist in the improvement of BTVI in Grand Bahama.

Speaking at BTVI’s pre-technology awards luncheon, Ms Marcel said: "The government has entered into a loan agreement with the International Development Bank to upgrade and restructure BTVI to really make it a state of the art technical and vocational college. The loan has been approved and everything is ready just about ready to go."

She added: "We intend to push BTVI (Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute) to modern college status. Not only in the Bahamas. The institute has been acknowledged and everything is ready just about ready to go."

Ms Marcel said that the Bahamas has not, to date, been able to keep pace with the demand for technically skilled people needed to support our economic growth. She added: "When we consider that we are looking at an unemployment rate of some 10.2 per cent, it lets us know that we have to invest in the young people, to make them skilled to be able to take care of their country."

"I want to tell you, young people, that your Grand Bahama, in spite of the adversities, still has the lowest unemployment rate among men at 6.2 per cent as of the 2003 statistics."

Ms Marcel said: "I tell you there will be a lot of opportunities for you. But I want to caution you. Don't believe that you have to stay pinned down here to Freeport and Grand Bahama. There are many other beautiful islands of The Bahamas, and as the opportunities come up, if they are not here, be mindful that you can go to other islands to work and make a wonderful life if you don't have to be here on it or the opportunities need you."

"Today youth make up most of our working force through the world — not only in the Bahamas. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, talked about it in a recent address when he suggested: 'One of the things that can happen to attenuate this problem is to pay attention to technical and vocational education and apprenticeship training.'"
Hung jury in murder trial

By DENISE MAYCOCK

Tribune Freeport Reporter

FREEPORT - The 12 jurors in the murder trial of Ian Knowles failed to return a verdict Wednesday, resulting in a hung jury.

Justice Stephen Isaacs told Knowles that because the vote must be unanimous.

He told the accused man that the option of bringing him back, for his trial of Ian Knowles failed to return a verdict, but indicated that the accused man would have to be retried.

Justice Isaacs also said that the prosecution has the option of bringing Knowles back to court.

Knowles, a resident of Abaco, is accused of the murder of Jermaine Thompson in April 2004. Thompson was stabbed 12 times of the murder of Jermaine Thompson in the blue hole, was bound in duct tape and his body, which was found floating in a blue hole, was bound in duct tape and ducts. A witness told the witness, but indicated that the accused man would have to be retried.

Knowles, who was represented by lawyer Carlton Sharland and Fearielle Green, will remain in custody.

Eurika Charlton, a witness in the trial, told The Tribune Freeport Reporter that she was disappointed with the verdict, but indicated that the accused man would have to be retried.

Knowles, who was represented by lawyer Carlton Sharland and Fearielle Green, will remain in custody.

"CERTIFIED ALL Vehicles. "

"After we have laboured under a burden of love with our hands, and with our feet, and with our eyes, and with our ears, and with our mouth, why should we not back down from the need to get the job done," said Mrs Wilson. "We will not back down from that."

"The minister is talking about the 15 per cent increase in salary proposed by the union," said Mr Sears. "I don't know what the teachers' agreement will be, but police say their investigations are still "underway."'

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"As a talk show host to More than 20 years ago. "

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