

Caribbean Life

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Brooklyn/Staten Island Edition

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African Tale**
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Effort to end slavery

By Nelson A. King

A top United Nations official on Mar. 26 called for a "comprehensive approach" through laws, education and international cooperation to end modern-day slavery.

"The terrible impacts of slavery and the slave trade are still felt to this day," said Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, president of the U.N. General Assembly, in remarks commemorating the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

"They have devastated continents and countries. They have led to profound social and economic inequalities and have given rise to hatred, racism and prejudice," he added.

In 2007, the General Assembly designated Mar. 25 as the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to honor an estimated 28 million Africans who were violently removed and cast into slavery, mainly in colonies in North America, South America and the

Continued on page 4



Plenty to celebrate

Joyful Senegalese New Yorkers, Diagne (left) 21 of Manhattan greets Mariam Diame Sunday at the Frederick Douglass Academy, where expatriots voted for change at home. See page 3.

Photo William Farrington

DESI ON THE ROPES

Strongman faces justice

Bert Wilkinson

A major row has erupted in Dutch-speaking Suriname over a proposal by a small group of parliamentarians to grant an amnesty for war crimes committed during the turbulent 12-year period from the 1980 military coup which, if approved, will wipe away the December 1982 executions of 15 government critics and the near decimation of a southeastern village near French Guiana, among other atrocities.

But while the Mega Combination

coalition group of former military strongman, now the elected president of the republic, Desi Bouterse has an easy working two-thirds majority in the 51-seat assembly, it has made it clear it wants some kind of consensus before any vote on amnesty for the period is approved.

The 'offending' period will cover the February 1980 coup when then Sgt. Desi Delano Bouterse and a group of military officers and subordinates overthrew the elected Henck

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Barbados

Barbados is moving to boost its tourism industry with new additions to the list of tax exempt items provided under the Barbados Tourism Development Act.

This is according to Minister of Tourism Richard Sealy who disclosed recently that these amendments were all part of efforts to strengthen the sector.

"This act makes available a wide range of concessions to tourism investors. Tourism is very vibrant and dynamic industry, the act has to be flexible in order to keep up with demands of the industry. Some of items required by the sector that were deemed as luxury items, five or 10 years ago are no longer deemed as such.

"Recognizing this fact, and acknowledging the strident lobby from the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, my ministry is currently fine tuning a proposal for consideration by Cabinet, which recommends the expansion of the range of items that investors and operators in the sector can access free of duty under the Act," he said.

Belize

The main opposition People's United Party (PUP) is threatening legal action over the recent general election in Belize that resulted in a narrow victory for Prime Minister Dean Barrow and his ruling United Democratic Party (UDP).

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News from back home updated daily at

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Local pols show solidarity with Sanford residents

By Amadi Ajamu

In solidarity with the community of Sanford, Florida, Councilman Charles Barron, State Assemblywoman Inez Barron, the family of Ramarley Graham, the family of Jateik Reed, The Freedom Party, other elected officials and community groups denounce the killing of Trayvon Martin, along with the killing of Ramarley Graham, and the brutal beating of Jateik Reed.

The local officials held a press conference and rally on Monday, March 26 at 4:00 p.m. on the steps of City Hall to denounce the recent killing of Trayvon Martin.

As a show of solidarity and support they held this rally at the same time that elected officials and church leaders held a rally on the steps of City Hall in Sanford, Fl. They gathered to denounce the killing of Trayvon Martin and call for the Justice Department to conduct a thorough investigation and for the Seminole Police Department to arrest George Zimmerman.

George Zimmerman is accused of killing 17-year-old Trayvon Martin on Feb. 26 while he walked through a gated community in Sanford after buying Skittles and a can of Iced Tea from the local 7-Eleven.

Ramarley Graham was killed on



Councilman Charles Barron speaking at the solidarity press conference and rally on the steps of City Hall. Photo by Lem Peterkin

Feb. 2 by NYPD officers in the bathroom of his parent's Bronx apartment in front of his grandmother and six-year-old brother. Police did not have a search warrant and the 18-year-old was unarmed. Critics have challenged aggressive police tactics including beating of Jateik Reed by the police, Commissioner Raymond Kelly's stop and frisk policy and called for the Bronx District Attorney Robert Johnson to submit

evidence to a grand jury for criminal charges against the officers.

Councilman Barron declared, "This madness must stop. We have a God given, constitutional, human right to move about safely and freely in our communities. These cold blooded killers must be brought to justice. The families of Ramarley Graham and Trayvon Martin call for justice in the unjust killing of their sons."



Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer.

Antigua PM to help recover fraud funds

By Azad Ali

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer has pledged to work with other agencies to try and help recover money that victims across the globe lost to convicted Texas tycoon Allen Stanford through his bank based on the Caribbean island.

Spencer did not give details of the cooperation when he spoke with reporters after a U.S. Federal Court jury in Texas convicted Stanford of 13 of the 14 charges, including conspiracy, wire and mail fraud.

Prosecutors say the financier used his Stanford International Bank to swindle investors out of more than US\$7 billion, using the money to fund a string of failed businesses.

Spencer said he feels justice was served with the U.S. verdict, but said it doesn't bring real joy because he fears the verdict could provide more fuel to a U.S. victims' coalition that has promoted a boycott of Antigua.

The group has sometimes set up booths at travel shows to urge holidaymakers to avoid the tourism dependent island.

"This is a very unfair campaign," he said.

"This country was made out as a country that encouraged and gave sustenance, if you like, to such types of developments, and that clearly was not the case," Spencer said.

Stanford was once the largest private employer in Antigua with 800 workers. He owned a cricket stadium, a restaurant, an airline, a newspaper and a development company.

U.S. prosecutors say they hope to seize about US\$300 million from more than 30 Stanford-controlled companies including Switzerland, Britain and Canada through civil trial, which is being heard by the same jury that convicted the 61-year-old Stanford.

Raúl Castro receives pope in Cuba

By Nelson A. King

Shortly before Pope Benedict XVI met with Cuban President Raúl Castro for a courtesy visit at the Palace of the Revolution in Havana, Miami's Archbishop Thomas Wenski, who led about 800 pilgrims from Florida, assailed the communist island's Marxist ideologies.

During a mass in Havana at the capital city's oldest cathedral, Wenski invoked Pope John Paul II, who visited Cuba in 1998, calling for more freedoms in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean island.

In reiterating Pope Benedict's earlier criticism of Marxism as being "a spent ideology," Wenski urged Cubans to be the "protagonist of their own future."

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Pope Benedict XVI and Cuban President Raul Castro walk outside the Revolution palace at the end of their meeting in Havana, Tuesday, March 27, 2012. The meeting took place behind closed doors on the pontiff's second day on the island. (AP Photo/Gregorio Borgia)

Taking a stand on trickle-down economics

By *Kenton Kirby*

The Adjusting for Income Disparity Act of 2012, (AID Act) tabled in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 26 by Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-Brooklyn) seeks to end the income disparity between the haves and the have-nots.

The so-called AID Act addresses “the scourge of income disparity currently afflicting our nation,” Clarke said.

If enacted, the law would provide a tax credit for the middle class, aspiring middle class and working poor as well as ensure that the top 1 percent of income earners pay their fair share in taxes by bringing an end to the Bush era tax cuts.

The Bush-era system of trickle-down economics, does not work, Clarke said, adding: “It’s time we give the financial power to the Americans who are the real drivers of our economy. It is simply the right thing to do.”

If enacted the AID Act of 2012 would:

- ~ Create a refundable tax credit loosely based on the AMT the average disparity in income between the top 5 percent and bottom 5 percent of income earners;

- ~ Repeal the Bush tax cuts which, according to Citizens for Tax Justice, would cost \$5.4 trillion if extended another decade; bringing their 20 year cost to a staggering \$7.42 trillion;

- ~ Define “income” to include wages, income derived from capital gains, interest on municipal bonds, and benefits derived from federal assistance;

- ~ Create a threshold for tax credit eligibility that encourages Americans to continue to seek employment, and;

- ~ Direct the IRS to adjust the tax credit yearly for inflation.

Income inequality has grown to its greatest point since estimated income inequality in 1929, at the start



U.S. Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-Brooklyn).

Photo Courtesy of US House of Representatives

of the Great Depression. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, income for the top 1 percent of households grew by 275 percent between 1979 and 2007. During that same period, income for the middle-class only grew by approximately 40 percent while the bottom 20 percent of income earners only saw their wages increase by 18.3 percent.

According to Moody’s Analytics, Clarke said, the top 5 percent of income earners account for 37 percent of consumer outlays, nearly equaling the 39.5 percent of the bottom 80 percent.

“As we slowly progress from the current economic downturn, we must empower those who are having the hardest time getting back on their feet. For too long our economic policies have favored the top 1 percent of income earners.

“When we focus on ensuring that the poor and working poor have the ability to become economically-viable middle class citizens, then we will know that our economy is headed in the right direction.

“This bill directs this economy to help the majority of Americans, not just a select few,” Clarke added.

Press conference marks milestone for Wall St. protest

By *Tequila Minsky*

Last week, just days after the six-month anniversary of its historic protests, and as the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement (and the NYPD) gear up for a milestone demonstration on May 1, 74 people were arrested as hundreds converged on Zuccotti Park on Saturday, March 17. Several protestors sustained injuries, as did some police officers.

The March 19 press conference at Zuccotti Park, at which aggressive police tactics was the subject, was not the first showing of solidarity between members of the New York City Council and Occupy Wall Street.

City Council members Ydandis Rodriguez and Jumaane Williams, long-time supporters who were arrested during various OWS actions, denounced the police abuse of power at the press conference.

In the democratic tradition, people meet in the public square, Williams said. (This “is suppression of dissent.”

Rodriguez called for a “Protestors Bill of Rights” and for people to



OWS supporters and councilmembers, at Zuccotti Park, protest police brutality.
Photo by Tequila Minsky

come out to protest on March 24.

Brooklyn councilman Stephen Levine called for Speaker Quinn to hold a hearing on the conduct of law enforcement.

Several OWS supporters, present Saturday night spoke. Bill Livsey showed a large black and blue mark

sustained from a police baton. In tears, Liesbeth Rapp, a 27-year-old activist, described one female protestor who had a seizure and was not able to obtain timely treatment, barred by the police. The park was closed Saturday night, following the arrests.

Senegalese strongman loses a vote

By *William Farrington*

Expatriot Senegalese nationals in Harlem, Brooklyn, the Bronx and cities across the U.S. last weekend participated in the election of a new president in their homeland.

Opposition candidate Macky Sall won a runoff in second round voting after a long emotional campaign, particularly significant because incumbent Abdoulaye Wade changed the constitution to allow himself to run again.

In West Harlem, the halls of Frederick Douglass Academy were abuzz. Voters entered one of the six precincts, showed IDs, picked up a card for each candidate and an envelope, and disappeared behind canvas drop-cloths where they made their choice then deposited the ballots in plexiglass voting boxes.

After dipping a finger in ink and finishing the process, many stayed behind to greet friends and follow election news from back home on the radio, exuding unity as an immigrant community, overshadowing political differences.

Amadou T. Ba, of the Bronx, a construction worker who has lived in New York 20 years explained: “We argue about politics but we share everything else,” describing the



Newly elected Senegal President Macky Sall.

AP Photo/Tanya Bindra

camaraderie of the moment.

On the constitutional change that allowed Wade to run again, Ba remarked that Wade supporters argued that “even in America they do it. Why not in Senegal.”

When people are talking they mention Mayor Bloomberg’s changing of election laws to remain in office, but adding: “I don’t like what he did, but I think he is a good

mayor otherwise.”

Supporters of both candidates compared the constitutional change allowing Wade to run again, to changes to the City Charter that allowed him to run a third time.

“For all the setbacks to democracy, the vote seems to be taking care of the issue,” said Souleymane Diagne, a philosophy professor at Columbia

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Tense Wait For Paramaribo Verdict

Continued from cover

Aaron government at the wrong end of a series of disputes between the military and authorities.

The issues had included a quarrel over demands by the military to be represented by a labor union, unheard of in neighboring Caribbean Community member states of which Suriname has since become a member.

Any parliamentary amnesty will also cater for the unprecedented December 1982 executions of 15 government critics at an old Dutch fort on the Surinamese river that is less than 200 yards from the Assembly Building where a vote could be held in the coming weeks if the Mega Combination goes ahead with plans.

But while various civil society groups, individual critics and opposition figures have railed against the possibility of the coup-makers and 1982 protagonists escaping possible jail time under cover of an amnesty, others like former Army Officer Edgar Ritfeld who, like President Bouterse is on trial for the executions, wants "to be freed by the court rather than be let go by an amnesty" because he said he

is innocent of murder charges.

The move to get parliamentary pardons for nearly 25 mostly ex-soldiers, has come as the four-year mass murder trial of Bouterse and the rest appears to be nearing an end and as some witnesses have directly fingered Bouterse for being at the scene and even giving orders to execute some of the journalists, clergymen, labor leaders and academics who died on Dec. 7-8, 1982.

Bouterse has always denied giving any such orders but has said that as the then boss, he has to accept "collective responsibility" for those events. If February 1980 and December 1982 are not important enough dates in local history, the country's main advocate lobby, the Moiwana Human Rights Organization of Suriname says that it is "surprised and disappointed" that any assembly forgiveness will include the 1986 slaughter of Moiwana Maroon Village by soldiers chasing anti-government rebels operating from across the river in neighboring French Guiana.

More than 50 elderly men, women and children were killed because of the perception that

they were assisting rebels, then led ironically, by now Bouterse ally and Mega Combination legislator Ronnie Brunswijk.

The main opposition New Front Coalition of former President Ronald Venetiaan also says it plans to oppose the amnesty proposal.

"Let it be clear that I am absolutely against the granting of amnesties for serious human rights violations," says New Front spokeswoman and veteran parliamentarian Ruth Wijdenbosch," noting that for "laws are the same between politicians and the man/woman of the streets."

Both the party and Moiwana argue that now that a trial verdict nears an end and after the last set of witnesses definitively fingered Bouterse and other key players now in government for 1982, a play is being made to wipe away all sins that they totally disagree with.

The result is that everyone now awaits the ruling of the court. Tensions were heightened in Paramaribo last week when the court visited the fort to get a better sense of what went on during that morbid period of 24 hours more than 30 years ago.

Working to end modern-day slavery

Continued from cover
West Indies.

In his remarks, Al-Nasser emphasized that member states must work tirelessly to eradicate modern slave-like practices that have emerged in the forms of racism, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, child labor, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

The General Assembly president also underlined that existing international instruments on slavery "should be fully utilized to bring about necessary change in attitudes and customs, to punish the offenders, and to support innocent victims in re-gaining their lives and dignity.

"Let us learn from the horrors and sacrifices of the past, and ensure through concrete actions and results that slavery in all its forms is forever eliminated," he said. Since March 23, the U.N.

has been hosting a series of events to pay tribute to the men and women who bravely fought against the transatlantic trade, as well as those who continue to stand up against modern forms of slavery.

This year's commemoration at U.N. headquarters in New York included an exhibition of images of heroes and activists, original documents, historical illustrated newspapers and artefacts, as well as an evening of cultural and culinary specialties of Africa and a global student videoconference.

In addition, plans are underway to erect a permanent memorial in the U.N. headquarters complex "to remind the world that millions of Africans were violently removed from their homelands, abused and robbed of their dignity over the course of four centuries during the transatlantic slave trade."



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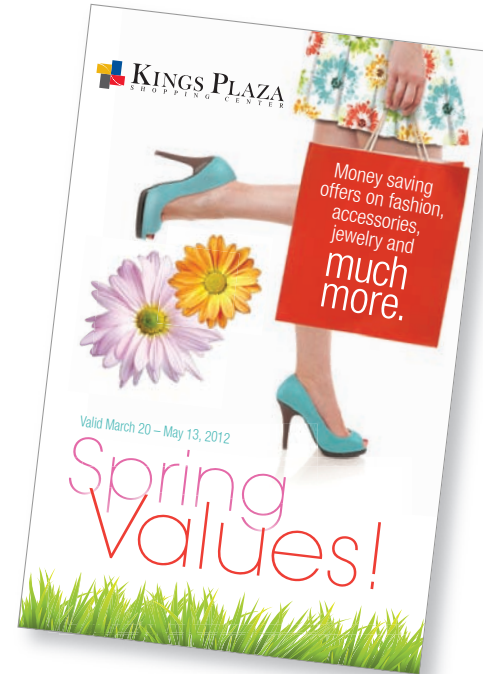
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Senegalese strongman loses a vote

Continued from page 3

University, as early word out of Senegal indicated that Sall was leading.

Diagne was on hand as president of DE CENA, the organization responsible for monitoring the 27 polling places overseas, compiling the votes and sending them to Dakar.

"The election is all the more significant because of what is happening in Mali," [Senegal's neighbor to the east] Dakar said, where there is an ongoing Touareg rebellion crisis that led to a presidential military coup.

Yacine Wade, a dancer and former member of the Senegalese National Ballet spoke of her father's life as an example of the change that was needed in Senegal.

"He worked all his life for the government as security for the president, but after he had a stroke and was sick he received no support."

Ironically Wade, who dances here with the Sankofa Drum and Dance



Senegalese national Fatou Sene, voting at Harlem's Frederick Douglass Academy, Sunday, a polling place where expats could vote in the presidential election back home. Sene, of the Bronx has lived in New York for 12 years and works for the Senegal Consulate here.

Photo by William Farrington

Ensemble, the Rhythm Monsters and others, supports herself as a home health care nurse.

The crowd swelled by mid-afternoon. Groups of men conversed in the entrance courtyard, a group of women in the colorful traditional dress that the younger generation refer to as "granman" sat on the steps inside.

Polls in Senegal closed at 2:00 p.m. New York time and before polls closed here at 6:00 p.m. President Wade had conceded defeat.

Final results were not known at press time, but early estimates had Sall winning 82.5 percent of the vote, compared to Wade's 17.5 percent in the Diaspora according to Prof. Diagne.

Amadou Ndiaye, a Harlem resident for 20 years who represents the Socialist Party of Senegal in the U.S. summed up the feeling this way: "If there are two cars, one driver is 90 and the other in his mid-50s, whose car are you going to use?"

"The burden of running a country is much heavier than driving a car."



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62 years in the beauty business

By Kenton Kirby, Editor
Caribbean Life salutes Dermalax System, Inc., located at 507 Nostrand Ave., Brooklyn, New York and its founder, Dr. Joseph Mosely, on the company's 60th anniversary in the trichology and cosmetology business.

Dr. Mosely, a leading researcher in both fields, earned a doctorate degree from the London Institute for Applied Research in England -- the site of the world-famous Institute of Trichology, in the scientific study of hair and its care.

Dr. Mosely was later joined in research by his daughter Jo Ann Mosely, a graduate of Central State University, and cur-

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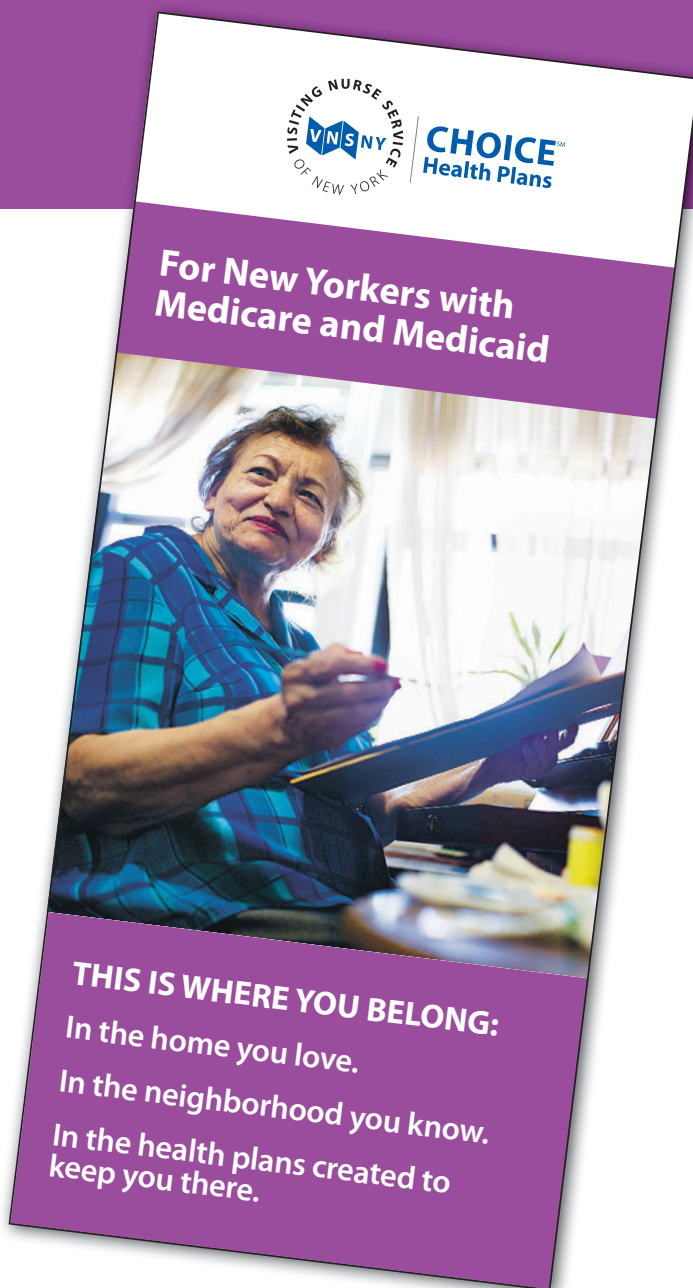


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Letter

Fundamental issues for the Belize Football League

By Wellington Ramos

For many years now the people who are involved in the sport of football in Belize have been saying that my relative Bertie Chimillio, has been using the football leagues funds for his own personal activities. Now, that he has been removed from the presidency the government of Belize, along with FIFA, are going to investigate all the financial transactions made under his reign as president of the league.

I just hope and pray that they find no evidence of misappropriation of funds; for if they happen to find any evidence, the consequences against him will be very severe.

Many people have been speaking to me about Bertie Chimillio in Belize and the United States not knowing that we are related and the things they have been saying about him are not nice. I would caution that we make no assumptions until all the evidence is presented to the government of Belize and FIFA, because he should be considered innocent until proven guilty.

Many other Belizeans have been dying for years now to get Bertie Chimillio's position; not because they possess the necessary skills, experience and education to improve the quality of football in Belize, but because they want to have access and control over the money that he was controlling.

In the Belize National Interdistrict Football Champions of 1975 and 1976 which was controlled by Belize Amateur Football Association (B.A.F.A.), I was a member of the All Orange Walk selection team that ended up in the finals against Dangriga's Queens Park Rangers that was defeated twice.

In 1975 we were given a gold plated medal, and in 1976 we received a gold-plated trophy.

This was despite the fact that thousands of dollars were made at M.C.C. Grounds during those years, yet there was no football stadium in the city of Belize. After living in the United States for a few years, I felt that I was used and abused by the people who were controlling football in Belize and I decided to throw both of those trophies in the garbage.

Football is Belize's No.1 sport, yet over the years the quality of football I see Belizeans playing today is worse than when I was growing up watching and playing the sport.

There is no building that I know of, where our young children can go and gather information on our Belizean football heroes, because there is no Belize Football Hall Of Fame that is active in our country.

There was an attempt by my friends Nick Dujon and Ray Davis years ago, but without any cooperation they got frustrated and gave it up.

I am now 57 years old and if I was to be selected, I might not be around to witness it, like many other great players who are dying yearly.

Belize has not qualified yet to reach the World Cup. Getting rid of Bertie Chimillio is one thing, but there are other fundamental football issues that FIFA, the Belize government and the Belize Football League need to address.

Yours truly,
Wellington C. Ramos
wramos451@hotmail.com

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all readers. They should be addressed care of this newspaper to Kenton Kirby, Editor, Caribbean-Life Publications, 1 MetroTech Center North, Brooklyn, New York 11201, or sent via e-mail to caribbeanlife@cnglocal.com All letters, including those submitted via e-mail, MUST be signed and the individual's verifiable address and telephone number included. Note that the address and telephone number will NOT be published and the name will be published or withheld on request. No unsigned letters can be accepted for publication. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

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Op-Ed

Women's History Month: A Time for Cautious Celebration

By Sandy Pappas

March marks Women's History Month, a celebration of women's achievements and a reminder of the work that still must be done to ensure basic security and rights for women. Nowhere is this contrast more significant than in Afghanistan, where a successful transition to a sustainable peace hinges on the inclusion and equality of women.

Afghan women have made gains these past 10 years. There are now 3.2 million Afghan girls enrolled in school since the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001. Afghan women's organizations lobbied diligently for a provision of gender equality in the Constitution and have won the right to vote in elections. Afghanistan has adopted a 25 percent parliamentary quota in the lower house of parliament, one of the highest in the world and, unlike the United States, Afghanistan has signed the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

But while providing opportunities for women to vote, work and attend schools in Afghanistan is paramount to equality, women can't pursue these opportunities if they aren't safe. Combat activities like night raids and drone strikes are not furthering Afghan women's security. Instead, these activities are fueling military conflict that hinders the development of political solutions.

According to a Washington Post-ABC News poll conducted in March 2011, 63 percent of Americans are opposed to continuing the war in Afghanistan. Washington also has joined the chorus calling for our troops to come home. On Feb. 1, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced that the United States will end its combat missions in Afghanistan by "mid- to the latter part of 2013." In late February, 87 members of Congress sent a letter to President Obama praising this accelerated timetable. There is no question that we are leaving Afghanistan, but what will we leave behind?

As U.S. troops leave Afghanistan and we begin to think beyond war, our engagement with the country must not end. In a recent National Public Radio (NPR) interview, Fawzia Koofi -- who has been a deputy speaker of Afghanistan's parliament and is now being talked about as a potential first woman president in Afghanistan -- said of the United States, "I know in your capitals, in your country and among your public, issues like women's rights, human rights are not the main rea-

son you are in Afghanistan, but this is one of the achievements you have invested blood and treasure for." We should honor this sacrifice and we should invest wisely in economic and social programs that enhance security through demilitarization and promote women's rights through inclusive peace processes. These investments will be far less costly than the decade of war that came before.

In December 2011, President Barack Obama released the first-ever U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, and signed an Executive Order directing the plan to be implemented. Together, the Executive Order and National Action Plan (NAP) chart a roadmap for how the United States will accelerate and institutionalize efforts across the government to advance women's participation in preventing conflict and keeping peace. These documents represent a fundamental change in how the United States will approach its diplomatic, military and development-based support to women in areas of conflict like Afghanistan. It is a step in the right direction, but there is far more work to be done.

The meaningful representation of women in all peace negotiations and post-conflict recovery planning is critical. As a state legislator, I know how important it is for women to be at the table to build coalitions, speak up for unheard voices and decide how resources should be allocated. This is true of peace-building around the world, too. At the 10th anniversary of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in October of 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, "It's not as though we are doing a favor for ourselves and them by including women in the work of peace. This is a necessary global security imperative. Including women in the work of peace advances our national security interests, promotes political stability, economic growth and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. ... No peace that sacrifices women's rights is a peace we can afford to support."

Women's History Month gives us reason for cautious celebration. Can we preserve the gains that Afghan women have made? We must support a peace-building transition strategy that emphasizes the roles and rights of women.

Pappas is a state senator from Minnesota and co-founder of the Global Women's Convening at the University of St. Catherine. She serves as the vice president of the Women Legislator's Lobby - a program of Women's Action for New Directions (WAND).

The frantic search for an issue

By Les Slater

Those gatherings in Washington aimed at influencing the deliberations of the Supreme Court when the justices rule on the challenge to the health care reform law include folks who hope not only for the health care legislation, or perhaps major parts of it, to be ruled unconstitutional, but that it serves as the big 2012 rally point Republicans are desperately in search of. The agitators for repeal of the law know very well that, as things now stand, the GOP/Tea Party alignment is back on its heels, as far as being battle-ready for the November stakes.

What that element dares to dream about is a re-run of all hell breaking loose, as it did in 2009, when the anti-Obama crowd made health care reform a wedge issue that had the kind of galvanizing effect that facilitated the big Congressional turnover in 2010. Election to the House of a slew of right-siders, a number of them proponents of extremist views on the role of government, gave Republicans a taste of blood for the next time around when the spoils of battle would include the presidency.

Fortunately, a scenario in which all of Washington would fall in and dance to that far-right tune is not how it has played out. Rather, what we've had is a graphic illustration of governmental dysfunction, where intransigence on the part of conservative hardliners has seen Congress plummet to public approval numbers so low as to practically defy measurement. Republicans are uniformly seen as the main culprits whenever public attitudes toward this Washington paralysis are sampled. Net effect for the GOP has been that the hoped-for drive to bring government to an embrace of those well-known right wing talking points has run into some bumps in the road. And the signal received most clearly by Americans is of recklessness by an out-of-control bunch who, under the guise of advocating for "the people"

Viewpoint

in fact push an agenda that leaves most of "the people" hung out to dry.

Republicans being seen as generally favoring those in the society of higher socio-economic profile is hardly new, but it has become much more stark in the heady expectations following the success of those 2010 House elections. It was a classic case of going for too much of a good thing and believing, to boot, that the rap about having the public's back was a saleable defense even against excessively irresponsible conduct. Legislative decisions or votes constantly going to the down-to-the-wire stage, threats to shut down the government, open defiance of public sentiment (as in popular support for the well-to-do being asked to pay a higher tax rate) all cast a hot-to-trot House majority as being totally out of step with the public they claimed to protect.

Such behavior has only given rise to a highlighting of the now famous 99 percent versus one percent phenomenon – something for which Republicans have hubristically laid the blame on Democrats for what they have labeled "class warfare." That sense of almost permanent Washington gridlock has also led to a souring, among those of even slightly moderate bent in the GOP fold, of attitude about what the party brand has become. Maine's Sen. Olympia Snowe is only the latest of that ilk to give up in disgust, announcing in February that she would not seek reelection in November.

The antics of presumptive GOP nominee Mitt Romney during the current campaign have been a perfect caption for what now frames the party's identity. Romney absolutely could not have won himself the governorship of Massachusetts had he merchandised himself then as the

avid conservative he now purports to be. But his past profile is the Achilles heel that has the right-side party faithful obviously unconvinced about his go-to line of rhetoric. Romney's attempts at pulling off this role have often been so clumsy, it clearly has messed with the GOP's sense of confidence regarding the man who will apparently lead their charge this fall. The combination of an electorate fed up with Capitol Hill tomfoolery and a presidential candidate considered well shy of the genuine article is surely baggage the party would rather not have.

Hence the frantic search for whatever could prompt a revisiting of 2009's anti-Obama uproar. Had there not lately been positive economic recovery news, that frenzy from three years ago would have been an easier reach today. But encouraging economic developments makes less palatable the bellowing of folks who've shown themselves capable of holding the country hostage in pursuit of an agenda that doesn't necessarily sit well with most Americans. Looking to the legal challenge to healthcare reform to provide the "Aha!" moment might not be the sure bet the challengers think it is. For one thing, some provisions of the law which have so far been rolled out could already be making a difference that is more likely to garner public support than engender opposition. Changes in Medicare, for instance, where an emphasis on preventive services includes elimination of fees for services for most beneficiaries is pretty certain to register positively. Ditto, the change which allows young people to be covered in parents' insurance plans through age 26.

Even if the government mandate that everyone have insurance becomes the central issue for the court and is struck down, healthcare reform seemingly has enough going for it to deny the opposition the political wallop they're figuring it will be.

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How the Affordable Care Act helps small business

By Laura McDowell Waite

According to national news reports, Mary Brown, the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit challenging the health reform law and owner of a small auto shop in Florida, has had to close her business and file for bankruptcy due to thousands of dollars in unpaid medical bills.

My husband and I own a small auto shop too, at the other end of the country in Renton, Washington. Our business is alive and kicking – thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

For as long as I can remember, fixing cars in my own small business has been my dream. My dad served 40 years in the military and knew a little about everything. I grew up fixing cars with him, starting when I was little holding a flashlight while he worked. His lessons stuck with me: you always do what you can to help.

My husband and I met while studying to be auto mechanics. For the last 15 years, we've lived our dream – owning our own shop not far from where I grew up.

We're your typical Mom-and-Pop operation – the two of us and one auto technician we employ. I know our customers by name. They all know my dog. We've raised two beautiful children while doing what we love.

When we started our business, buying expensive health insurance seemed completely out of reach. With so many start-up costs, there were many things we did without.

But, getting older I've started worrying more about my health. A few years ago, we decided we needed to get insurance. Obtaining policies for Jay and my employee went smoothly, but I was rejected for a pre-existing condition I've had since birth – a genetic condition called psoriasis.

When I got that rejection letter, the thought that kept going through my head was that we'd have to close our business and find jobs with health insurance. It was a devastating thought. We're living our dream. It's everything I'd ever hoped for.

Then I found out about the Pre-existing Condition Insurance Plan. It's part of health care reform – a plan where people who've been rejected by insurance companies can get coverage until the ban on pre-existing condition denials takes effect.

I signed up. I've since learned that my psoriasis has led to other conditions that need treatment. I'm getting the care I need, and Jay and I are still doing what we love.

That's why I'm outraged that Republican attorneys general, including my state's AG, Rob McKenna, are taking a partisan lawsuit that threatens to take my dreams away to the U.S. Supreme Court.

They're joined in this lawsuit by the NFIB, which purports to be the "Voice of Small Business." Not small businesses like mine.

I actually used to be an NFIB member, until I read their literature and realized they're more interested in playing politics than giving real small businesses a voice.

I've never considered myself a very political person. Growing up in a big family (11 kids), you learn to consider all sides. I have siblings who are Republicans, Democrats, even Independents. I love them all. My sister, a Republican, has been skeptical of health reform, but even she admits that it's working for people like me.

I'm sure some people might say I'm at fault for my own

situation. Even though I would have been rejected whenever I applied due to my pre-existing condition, I still feel some responsibility for not applying for health coverage when I was younger.

But isn't personal responsibility part of the point of health care reform? The new law is built on the idea of sharing responsibility to fix a broken system.

It's the insurance companies' responsibility to stop denying coverage for pre-existing conditions.

It's the government's responsibility to ensure that coverage is affordable with premium assistance on a sliding scale and tax credits for small businesses.

And, if we get access to coverage that's affordable, isn't it all of our responsibility to be a part of the solution by purchasing insurance?

If any one of us – insurance companies, the government, or individuals – fails on our end of the bargain, reform breaks down.

So, for the NFIB, McKenna, and the other AGs on this lawsuit, I have a message. I believe that I – and millions of other Americans who are benefiting from health care reform – deserve for you to look us in the eye and explain why you want to take our health care away.

Maybe, just maybe, when you hear our stories, you might consider changing your mind.

Laura McDowell Waite and her husband Jay own Jay's Professional Automotive in Renton, Washington, and are members of the Main Street Alliance of Washington, a coalition of over 2,000 small business owners in Washington State and founding affiliate of the national Main Street Alliance network.

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Are You Suffering With Severe Constant Pain?

New Laser Light Breakthrough Treatment May Reduce Or Even Eliminate Pain Of The Worst Kind In Just Minutes

If you are suffering with severe pain despite all the treatments, that may have failed you in the past, you may now have some hope of reducing or even eliminating your pain with a new non-surgical, painless laser treatment now available in Brooklyn.

Deep Tissue Laser Treatment is an innovative, scientifically based, therapeutic modality. This new technology offers advanced pain relief and expedited healing times through a process known as photobiostimulation.

Deep Tissue Laser Treatment delivers, deep, penetrating, photonic (light) energy to bring about profound physiological changes. ATP (Adenosine-triphosphate) production is increased, inflammation and pain reduced and circulation increased at the site of pain. These changes in cellular chemistry are triggered by the deep tissue laser making it a true healing modality.

Deep Tissue Laser Therapy does not require the use of drugs or surgery, and there are no known side effects or risks that may occur with other forms of treatment. In addition, it can often achieve results faster than other treatment modalities. During the treatment the patient will feel a deep soothing warmth. This pleasant sensation reassures the patient that the laser is stimulating cellular activity.

Lasers have made a remarkable contribution toward healthcare, allowing practitioners to treat a variety of conditions with the speed of light. As a non-invasive tool, the laser is particularly effective for the efficient treatment of soft tissue injuries, sprains and strains, and a variety of other ailments and pain.

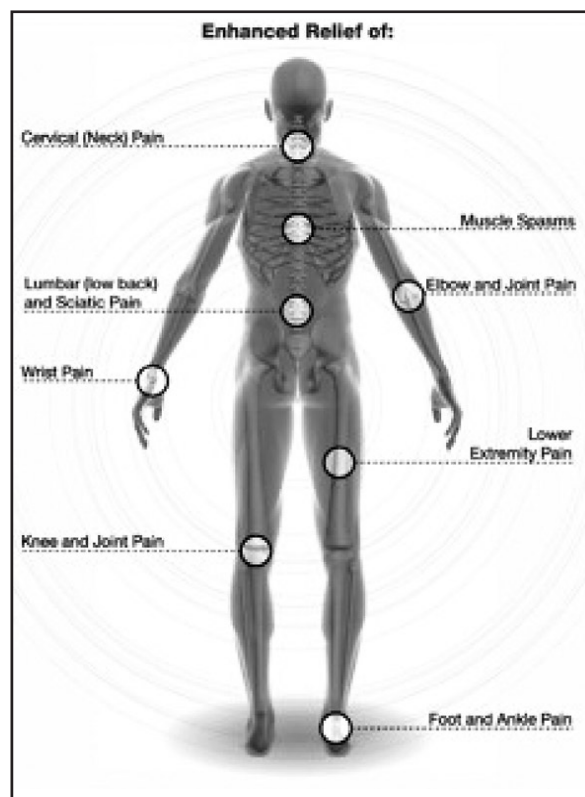
Low Level Laser enhances metabolic activity at the cellular level, without generating tissue-damaging heat.

Some of the benefits of laser treatment include:

- Fast reduction of pain
- Improvement of nerve function
- Reduction of muscle spasms.
- Speeding of tissue repair
- Development of muscle tissue and collagen
- Reduction of inflammation, swelling and scar tissue formation
- Pain reduction immediately

The Class IV laser, approved by the FDA in 2006, packs a punch while remaining non-invasive. The Class IV laser is capable of reaching depths of 6 to 9 inches, with a treatment beam of up to 3 inches.

Because the Class IV laser reaches deep into the tissues, it is ideal for treating sprains and strains, arthritis, calcified muscles and fibrotic adhesions, as well as intra-articular tissues inside of the joints. Its far-reaching capabilities also allow the Class IV to achieve results in less time than most cold lasers currently used today. With treatment times of as little as 5 to 15 minutes, the Class IV laser allows many conditions to vastly improve within a few visits. Oftentimes, patients find immediate, soothing relief that improves with each treatment.



A partial list of the kind of conditions that can be helped...

- Bulging, Slipped Discs
- Spinal Fusion
- Neck Pain
- Sciatica Pain
- Migraine Headaches
- Back Pain & Spinal Conditions
- Tennis Elbow
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Neuropathy Pain
- Bell's Palsy
- Plantar Fasciitis
- Sports Injuries
- Sprains & Strains
- Knee Pain
- Hamstring Tears
- Arthritic Pain

If you are tired of living with pain and would like to see if you qualify for deep tissue laser treatment call **718-559-6992** for a **FREE CONSULTATION** right now. Dr. Keller has seen such dramatic fast pain relief with Deep Tissue Laser Treatment, that she offers one **FREE** treatment to see if you respond and if you are a candidate for this revolutionary new non surgical pain relieving treatment. Due to the overwhelming response to this type of offer, this offer will be good for the first 25 callers. If the lines are busy, keep trying.

Listen to what patients are saying:

"I had been suffering from knee pain for many months before I tried laser treatments using Deep Tissue Laser. After just a couple treatments, my knee pain was reduced to the point where I can finally live a more normal life again. These treatments are simply remarkable!"

- Jennifer C.

"I started treatments with Deep Tissue Laser after I had injured my neck in a car accident. The treatments allowed me to return to work much more quickly than anyone had expected, considering the pain I was in. During the treatments, all I felt was a warming sensation as the laser was moved across the injured area where all my pain was. After just three short treatments, my pain was almost totally gone. Thanks, Doctor!"

- Jason B.

"The Deep Tissue Laser treatments I received dramatically helped my recovery from a broken leg. Not only did it help reduce the swelling, the pain relief I experienced was nothing short of miraculous. My orthopedic doctor was amazed with the results."

- John M.

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Diabetes and oral health

By N. Blonda-Gil, D.D.S.

According to the American Diabetic Association more than 25.8 million children and adults in the United States—8.3 percent of the population—have diabetes. Diabetes develops in people of all ages. However, there is higher frequency of development in African Americans and Hispanics. Diabetes is a disease that can affect the whole body, including your mouth.

Research shows that there is an increased prevalence of gum disease among those with diabetes, adding to the list of other complications associated with diabetes, such as heart disease, stroke and kidney disease. Emerging research also suggests that not only are people with diabetes more susceptible to serious gum disease, but serious gum disease may have the potential to affect blood glucose control and contribute to the progression of diabetes.

Because diabetes can lower your resistance to infection and can slow the healing process. The most common oral health problems associated with diabetes are:

- Tooth decay
- Periodontal (gum) disease
- Salivary gland dysfunction
- Fungal infections/Oral Candidiasis
- Lichen planus and lichenoid reactions (inflammatory skin disease)
- Infection and delayed healing
- Taste impairment

Tooth Decay
Your teeth are covered with plaque, a sticky film of bacteria. After meals, snacks, or beverages that contain sugars, the bacteria release acids that attack tooth enamel creating cavities.

When diabetes is not controlled properly, high glucose levels in saliva may help bacteria to increase. Plaque that is not removed can eventually (calcify) into calculus, or tartar. This can create conditions that lead to chronic inflammation and infection in the mouth.

Periodontal Disease
Periodontal disease is an infection of the gum and bone that hold your teeth in place. Periodontal diseases often appear to be more frequent and more severe among persons with dia-

betes. Signs of Periodontal Disease are gingivitis/bleeding gums, bone loss, periodontal abscess, bad breath and tooth mobility.

Salivary Gland Dysfunction

Saliva helps wash away food particles and keeps the mouth moist. Without enough saliva, bacteria will increase. Dry mouth, or Xerostomia, is a common complaint among diabetic dental patients. Dryness irritates the soft tissue in the mouth, often making them inflamed and painful. This condition greatly increases the risk of tooth decay and periodontal disease. Some recommendations for dry mouth are using a saliva substitute for relief from discomfort, taking frequent sips of water, using melting ice chips and restricting intake of caffeine and alcohol.

Infections and Delayed Healing

Infection is a risk for the diabetic patient and can make it more difficult to control blood glucose levels. If you are having extensive oral surgery or even a simple extraction, the dentist may prescribe antibiotics to minimize the risk of infection.



To help the healing process, blood glucose levels should be under control before, during and after surgery extractions.

Other oral conditions that can be associated with diabetes are Oral Candidiasis, a fungal infection in the mouth that appears to occur more frequently among persons with diabetes including those who wear dentures. Dentist may prescribe antifungal medications to treat this condition. Good oral hygiene is critical. Another is Lichen Planus, a skin disorder that presents oral manifestations. Lichen Planus involves painful lesions in the oral mucosa. There is no permanent cure, dentist may prescribe a topical anesthetic or other medication to reduce and relieve the condition.

HIV community treatment as prevention

By Healthy Living News

A new study finds that treating HIV infected community members reduces the spread of the virus to others within that community. The study found that as more and more community members are put on treatment, fewer and fewer people become infected with the virus.

The community “treatment as prevention” study results were presented in Seattle at the Conference of Retrovirus and Opportunistic Infections.

Researchers from the Africa Centre for Health and Population Studies used HIV surveillance data collected in KwaZulu-Natal, a poor rural area of South Africa where almost one out of three have HIV. Over time, about 20,000 individuals among 228,000

area residents were put on HIV treatment.

The study found that for each percentage point increase for those in the area who were put on HIV treatment there was a significant decrease in HIV transmission.

When HIV treatment coverage reached 20 percent of the infected population, there was a 22 percent decline in HIV infections community-wide, said study researcher Frank Tanser, PhD, of the Africa Centre for Health and Population Studies in South Africa. “In communities where HIV treatment achieved 30 percent, the individuals’ HIV acquisition was 38 percent less likely.”

The results have implications for HIV at-risk communities well beyond AIDS



ravaged Africa. Here in the United States greater HIV treatment access should achieve the same “Treatment as Prevention” reductions in new transmissions for affected communities.

“These findings are extremely important,” said Paul DeLay, deputy executive director, Programme, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

“The results give clear evidence that HIV incidence is

reduced as a result of high coverage of antiretroviral therapy,” added Dr. Tanser.

The research also confirms last year’s breakthrough study that proved the concept of Treatment as Prevention. It found that effectively treating HIV infection provides an HIV prevention bonus of reducing the spread of the virus for couples where one partner in HIV infected and the other is not. The groundbreaking study, known as HPTN 052, found that if an HIV-positive person stays on antiviral therapy, the risk of transmitting the virus to their uninfected sexual partner can be reduced by 96 percent. That study was conducted among African heterosexual couples, not on a community-wide scale like the new study.



Doctor, Doctor Questions Often Asked

By Herbert Okun, M.D.
Diplomate American Board of Urology

What a little bit of urine can tell

By Herbert Okun, MD

Perhaps it was 40 years ago that a friend of mine came to my home late in the evening, very upset and concerned about his father. He had brought with him only a sample of his father’s darkly stained brown urine, which foamed with the slightest agitation. He was concerned that his father might be bleeding in the urine from some tumor of the bladder, prostate or kidney.

A few pertinent questions established that his father’s eyes and skin were deeply stained yellow but his bowel movements were almost colorless. It was my sad task to inform my friend that his father required hospitalization without delay. If he was lucky, his problem might be traced to a gallstone obstructing the flow of bile but unfortunately, cancer of the pancreas would have to be considered a more ominous cause.

Sorry to say, that was the diagnosis and the father succumbed to this illness soon thereafter. Foaming of the urine was the key; bile makes the urine foam. So a diagnosis was reached or at least strongly suspected

just by examining the urine. Patients often ask why they’re asked to give a urine specimen before they are examined. So much information can be obtained from the proper examination of a patient’s urine specimen; it would be unthinkable for the urologist to reach a conclusion about a patient without first having done a complete urinalysis.

Even in ancient, Babylon, Egypt, India and particularly during the Roman and Byzantine Eras, doctors were skilled

in making diagnoses simply by looking at the patient’s still warm urine specimen in a clear glass. This skill was known as “Uroscopy,” often included actually tasting the urine for sweetness or sugar and it has become the forerunner of modern urinalysis.

Today, a complete urinalysis requires not only the visual appreciation of the appearance of the urine specimen but a complete chemical and microscopic evaluation as well. Usually, the chemical testing is done by use of a “dipstick,” which rapidly and accurately gives the results to up to 10 different tests including sugar, protein, blood, ketones, bilirubin (bile), urobilinogen, nitrates, specific gravity, pH (acidity), and white blood cells (pus). That’s only part of the story however; microscopic examination of the centrifuged urinary sediment completes the urinalysis because white blood cells, red blood cells, bacteria, fungi, yeast, crystals, and casts, which are solidifications of certain proteins within the kidney tubules are easily seen.

Many different types of crystals, each one distinguishable under the microscope give valuable clues as to the cause of a patient’s kidney stone formation. Complete urinalysis remains an indispensable tool for the modern urologist to properly diagnose and treat every patient. The next time you are asked to give a urine specimen, be happy that so much information can be obtained “from just a little bit of urine.”

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Raúl Castro receives pope

Continued from page 2

He said the pope and the Catholic Church in Cuba desire a political system that grants dignity to all people.

During his near hour-long meeting with Castro, Benedict asked the president to declare a holiday for Good Friday, when Catholics commemorate the death of Jesus Christ.

The request was a follow-up of sorts to Cuba's decision to declare Christmas a national holiday in honor of John Paul's 1998 visit. Cubans hadn't had Christmas off for nearly 30 years.

"It's not that it changes reality in a revolutionary way, but it can be a sign of a positive step, as was the case of Christmas after John Paul's visit," said the Vatican spokes-

man, the Rev. Federico Lombardi.

Pope Benedict also raised "humanitarian" issues with Raul Castro, an apparent reference to political prisoners.

But Marino Alberto Murillo Jorge, Cuba's minister of economy and planning, has ruled out political change following Benedict's call for Cubans to "strive to build a renewed and open society, a better society, one more worthy of humanity, and which better reflects the goodness of God."

Murillo addressed foreign journalists on Mar. 27 about the island's economic changes, but added, "In Cuba there will not be political reform."

Nonetheless, Cuban dissidents have seized on the pope's visit to shine light on the Communist government's treatment of

those with opposing political views.

The government has been closely following the activities of dissidents, particularly the Ladies in White, a small movement of women who wear white and gather at Masses at Catholic churches in Cuba to protest the treatment of the island's prisoners of conscience.

On Mar. 28, Pope Benedict XVI wrapped up his visit with an open-air Mass in the shrine of the Cuban revolution. He also met with former President Fidel Castro, Raúl's elder brother.

"I will happily greet His Excellency Pope Benedict XVI as I did John Paul II, a man for whom contact with children and the humble raised feelings of affection," Castro had written the day before.

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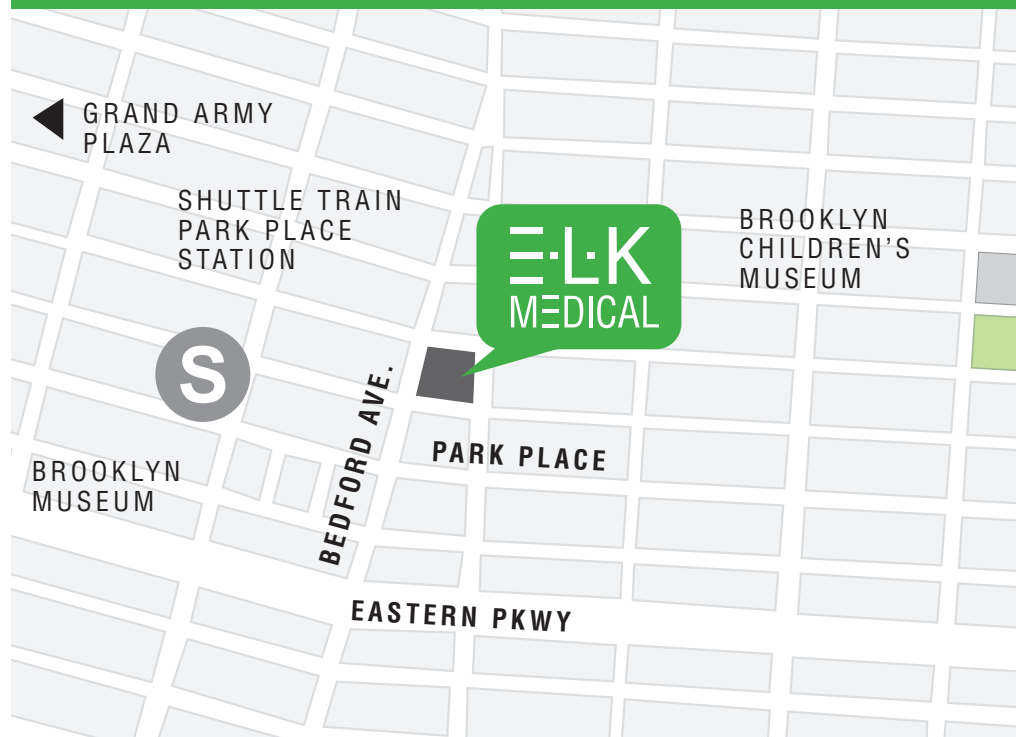
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Caribbean Roundup

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Continued from page 2

The UDP won 17 of the 31 seats with the PUP improving significantly on the six seats it held in the last parliament to take 14 seats.

Opposition Leader Francis Fonseca said the polls which were monitored by an observer team from the Organization of American States (OAS), were neither free nor fair and that the electoral process was tainted with irregularities.

He said across the country there have been credible, reliable, documented reports of abuse and illegality in the conduct of the election process.

“Our party has assembled legal advisers, who are examining the documented evidence and reviewing the legal options available,” he said.

The opposition leader said it is the intention of the PUP to file several election petitions in respect of the March 7 general elections.

The OAS praised Belize for the peaceful conduct of the poll, but urged the authori-

ties to regulate campaign finance and curb the level of electioneering around polling stations.

Grenada

The Grenada government is taking legal action against Lawrence Duprey, the former executive chairman of the financially-troubled CL Financial and its Colonial Life Insurance Company (Clico) subsidiary.

Grenada and other Caribbean countries have been severely affected by the financial problems plaguing the Trinidad-based conglomerate, CL Financial, the parent company of British American Company (Baico) and Clico resulting in the loss of millions of dollars to policy holders.

Finance Minister Nazim Burke told legislators that the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) member countries are continuing to pursue support from the Trinidad and Tobago government that has pumped billions of dol-

lars as part of a rescue plan for Clico policyholders in that country.

Burke said the support is being sought from Port of Spain for non-traditional policyholders including policyholders with Flexible Premium Annuities.

Guyana

The Guyana government has denied that it entered into a secret agreement with the Trinidad-based conglomerate ANSA McAl to build an ethanol plant in the South American country.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Leslie Ramsamy reiterated the government’s position, less than 48 hours after an official government statement indicated that the ANSA McAl Group would build the ethanol project on 110,000 hectares.

The government said ANSA McAl’s selection was done by the U.S.-based company Numark Associates Inc. which won a publicly tendered service consultancy to

expand bio-energy opportunities in Guyana

The agreement was signed last September to process up to 2,000,000 tons of sugarcane per year and produce 40 million gallons of ethanol annually.

Ramsamy said from his knowledge, no past or present government officials have ever engaged in any secret deal for the production of bio-fuel locally.

Haiti

President Michel Martelly displayed his Haitian passport on national television recently to try and quell rumors that he gave up his citizenship and is not eligible to hold office.

The Haitian constitution does not recognize dual nationality for senior government officials.

Critics of Martelly charged that he had renounced his Haitian citizenship prior to taking office last May. He had already denied that he held the citizenship of another

country. But recently he showed reporters eight stamped passports that he has held over the years.

Jamaica

Reggae singer Adidja Palmer, better known as Vybz Kartel, was remanded to prison recently after he appeared in court charged with the murder of a businessman.

He will return to court later this month when the prosecution is expected to hand over documents to his defense attorneys.

Palmer, 35, is accused of conspiring with other men to murder businessman and promoter Barrington Burton.

It is alleged that on Monday July 11, 2011, Palmer, along with other men conspired to murder Burton, a 27-year-old businessman/promoter, who was killed while standing with friends along Walkers Avenue in Gregory Park.

The dancehall entertainer is also facing charges of conspiracy to murder and illegal

possession of a firearm.

St. Kitts

The opposition in St. Kitts says it has drafted a Freedom of Information Act and has submitted it for debate in the National Assembly.

Opposition Leader Mark Brantely said as with the Integrity in Public Life, which the opposition had unsuccessfully submitted for debate among legislators last year, the Freedom of Information legislation was essential for the development of the country.

He said even as the opposition submitted new bills, it was not giving up on its efforts to have the Integrity in Public Life legislation brought to the House for debate, even if it meant making amendments.

Brantley said the Freedom of Information Act is vital for the democracy and the draft legislation had the input of all members of the opposition.

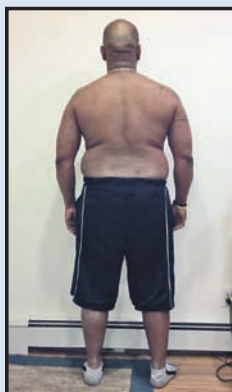
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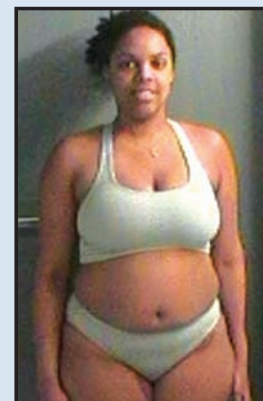
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Comets Club Int'l to honor outstanding Jamaicans



Roland Brammer.

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By Aubrey Campbell

Comets Club International (CCI), a New York City-based charitable organization, will recognize two individuals for their outstanding contribution and commitment to community development through education, culture and business.

CCI will present awards and citations to entrepreneur Roland Brammer for his work with several organizations, focusing on youth,

while Richie Stephens, cultural ambassador-at-large, gets the nod for his steadfast love for country through his music and mentorship.

The awards ceremony highlights the organization's annual reunion dinner, which will take place this year at the Venetian Terrace Ballroom, 86-15 114th Street (corner of Jamaica Avenue), in Richmond Hill, Queens, N.Y., on Saturday, April 14. Start time is set for 9:00 p.m.

A Brooklyn resident, Brammer's credits include two Subway Restaurant franchises in Brooklyn, N.Y., a tax accounting practice and a journalist. He will be presented with the CCI CODPAR (Community Development Partnership) Award – National Class – for his work with the Union of Jamaican Alumni Associations (USA), Inc., and the NAACP NYC ACT-SO Program.

"Being able to mentor the students who come through the UJAA (USA), Inc., High School Graduates Awards program and the NAACP Olympics of the Mind (ACT-SO) program here in the City, mirror my youth, growing up in Kingston, Jamaica, and so I'm extremely honored to be recognized by the Comets Club International," noted Brammer, a Jamaica College (JC) alum and one time assistant editor with the Weekly Gleaner, NA.

Stephens, who last year turned tragedy (death of his son) into triumph with not one but two, top ten singles, has already earned his place alongside the icons of the reggae genre. As a cultural ambassador, his work for the Jamaica Tourist Board 'sings' volumes and has earned him numerous awards and accolades worldwide. He will be presented with the CCI CODPAR Award – International Class.

So far, 2011 has carried over into 2012 following the release of the chart-topping single "Live Your Life" featuring Gentleman, the German Reggae record-

ing phenom. The song was voted 'Song of the Year' on Irie Jam Radio's Top 100 Songs for 2011.

"The response to the song has given me wind beneath my wings and I look forward to performing the song, while saying a big 'thank you' to the many fans who will be there to support me at the awards dinner on April 14," noted Stephens via 'phone from his Kingston, Jamaica base.

The annual charity dinner and awards gala is one of two major fundraisers for the CCI and benefits the athletics development program and scholarship fund for the Montego Bay Comets Athletics Club, founded by a group of Cornwall College student/athletes in the Fall of 1977.

Past recipients of the CCI CODPAR Award include; ISSA-Jamaica/Clement Radcliffe (2007); Western Union Financial/Garfield Comrie/Nadine Johnson (2007); VMBS/Suzette Rochester/Michelle Reynolds(2007); Wesmore Thomas – Entrepreneur, PA (2007); Team Jamaica Bickle/Irwin Clare Sr/Blaine Stoddart/Vincent HoSang (2007); Grace Kennedy Limited/Ricardo Bryan/Shelton Rose, (2009); Union of Jamaican Alumni Associations (USA), Inc./Karlene Largie/Barbara Richards/Anton Tomlinson (2010); Errol Evans, CCI Member (2010); and Golden Krust Caribbean Bakery & Grill/ Lowell Hawthorne/Omar Hawthorne/Haywood Hawthorne(2011).



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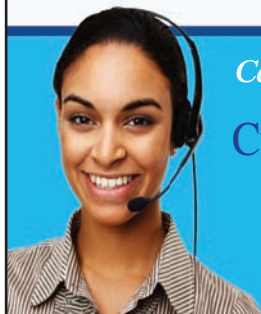
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Richie Stephens.

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Former T&T minister to get CARICOM honor

By Azad Ali

CARICOM has agreed to bestow the Order of CARICOM Community on Trinidad and Tobago's former People's National Movement government Minister Kamaluddin Mohammed, who is also the holder of TT's highest award, the Order of Trinidad and Tobago.

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar said she nominated Mohammed for the award and it was accepted by the other CARICOM heads at the recent meeting in Suriname.

The prime minister

said all relevant documents pertaining to Mohammed's nomination are to be submitted shortly and the Order should be bestowed on him as early as June.

Persad-Bissessar said she is aware of Mohammed's contribution to CARIFTA and CARICOM and he was very deserving of the award.

Mohammed is expected to celebrate his 85th birthday next month.

The former PNM minister, who served under the late Dr. Eric Williams was appointed Minister of West Indian Affairs and

in 1970 became minister of foreign affairs and helped pioneer the movement from CARIFTA to CARICOM. In 1999, he was appointed ambassador to CARICOM under the Basdeo Panday administration and he pioneered the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME).

Former recipients of the Order of CARICOM include Sir Shridath Ramphal, Dame Eugenia Charles, Sir Gary Sobers, Derek Walcott, Michael Manley, ANR Robinson, Slinger Francisco (Mighty Sparrow), Lloyd Best and Brian Lara.

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Dr. Steven C. Tawil: Colon Cancer Screening & Prevention

By Camille Sperrazza

Stop postponing your colonoscopy.

Everyone age 50 and over needs one, but African-Americans are at an especially high risk of developing colon cancer, says Dr. Steven C. Tawil, gastroenterologist and internist.

"It is recommended that they be screened for colon cancer at age 45," says the doctor.

The reasons the mortality rate is higher for African-Americans is not known, says Dr. Tawil, but the good news is that having this simple procedure "can improve the numbers."

It has never been easier or more convenient to undergo this procedure. It can be done right in Dr. Tawil's Brighton Beach office, with an anesthesiologist present.

"This means it is an 100 percent painless procedure," says the doctor.

The administration of the anesthesia is quick, so patients feel no pain, he assures. The presence of the anesthesiologist also means that a patient's vital signs are constantly being monitored.

"It's another pair of hands in the room, another doctor checking oxygen, heart rhythms, and pulse," says Dr. Tawil. "It's all about the comfort and safety of the patient."

Dr. Tawil's office is recognized by the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery. Facilities accredited by this organization must meet rigorous standards of cleanliness and other criteria that assures the highest standards, says the doctor. This feat is not an easy achievement, and he takes pride that his practice is held in such high esteem.

The Brighton Beach Avenue facility, at the same location since 1991, recently moved from the second floor to the third floor, securing a new 6,000 square foot office. Among the highlights is an endoscopy suite with a private changing room, a recovery room, and a private bathroom in the recovery room. Such a set-up makes screening easy for the patient, as there's no running down a hall to find a toilet. Everything is convenient and private.

Make an appointment to see him if you have rectal bleeding. This could be a sign of colon cancer, and should never be ignored, says the

doctor. A change in bowel habits or unexplained weight loss are other reasons to undergo an exam. If there is a history of polyps in the family, being screened is a must, he says. Polyps are small growths that occur on the wall of the colon, and if they are not removed, some may eventually turn into cancer, says Dr. Tawil. The removal of polyps can be done right after the colonoscopy is performed, while the patient is still under anesthesia. That way, patients don't have to return to get another procedure.

Patients can also come to him to get their blood pressure checked and their sugar levels monitored. He also treats heartburn, ulcers, constipation, liver issues, and stomach ailments. He specializes in the treatment of hepatitis, particularly hepatitis C.

"We have the latest treatment, available right in the office," he says.

Dr. Tawil's credentials are impeccable. He is board-certified in internal medicine and gastroenterology, which means a "double certification," he notes. In addition, he is re-certified every 10 years, which involves undergoing a seven-hour test. It all proves he is at the top of his game, aware of the most recent developments in the field.

A graduate of Syracuse University, Dr. Tawil trained at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine for five years. He is on staff at the New York Methodist Hospital, and is a member of the American College of Physicians; the New York State Medical Society; the American Medical Association; and the American College of Gastroenterology.

The office accepts most major health plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. For the convenience of his hard-working patients, the office is now open on Sundays. It is handicapped accessible, and convenient to bus and trains. The doctor sees patients by appointment.

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New Yorkers join 'Million Hoodie March'

By Tequila Minsky

Hundreds of demonstrators wearing hoodies rallied at Union Square last week at the "Million Hoodie" march

protesting the shooting of Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida and demanding the shooter's arrest.

Martin was returning

from the store with a cell phone and box of Skittles, wearing a hoodie, when he was shot by neighborhood watch captain George

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All ages came out to protest the shooting death of Trayvon Martin.

Photo by Tequila Minsky

Zimmerman, because he looked suspicious.

Local activists and New Yorkers compelled to make a statement joined with Trayvon Martin's parents, in New York for interviews with media outlets. "Our son is your son," Sabryna Fulton, Trayvon's mom,

said. "This is not a black white thing. This is a right the wrong thing." Tracey Martin, Trayvon's father said, "My son did not deserve to die."

Ralliers wore hoodies in solidarity and to call attention to racial stereotypes.

An internal coordinat-

ing committee and Occupy Wall Street organized the rally with external partners including Occupy the Hood, Color of Change, MoveOn.org and local churches.

"We were going to march to the UN but decided to go to Washington Square

Continued on page 38



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Empowering women through survival skills

By Gideon Manasseh

New Future Foundation Inc. and Harlem Women International sponsored a Women's History Month forum at the United Nations Church Center in New York City recently.

The 56th Annual Commission on the Status of Women had as its theme "Rural Women." The forum emphasized empowering women and girls through the effort to alleviate poverty by teaching them survival skills.

Queen Mother Dr. Deloris Blakely, Community Mayor of Harlem and Goodwill Ambassador to Africa delivered the main address. Maxine McCrey Montano, president of the Harlem Women's Committee moderated the event.

Co-sponsors and guest speakers were Asha Castleberry, chairman of the International Youth Council and Farida Yesmin, NGO Partner of Bangladesh

and Kristen Wayman, youth worker and Native American Women/Land rights activist.

Women representing Africa, the Caribbean, India, Mexico, America, Bangladesh, and other countries asked the speakers questions and shared their concern to empower the rural women in their country.

Hon. Theresa Freeman, state committee woman and district leader who was born in the rural south in America received the Sojourner Truth-Eleanor Roosevelt Award for her years of dedicated service to inspire and empower the lives of women in New York State. Jazz singer JaRon Eanes dedicated a song in honor of The Hon. Theresa Freeman.

Special thanks were given to Patreinnah Acosta Pelle, executive director of New York Foundation Inc., Harlem Women International and Melba's Restaurant for refreshments.



From left, Asha Castleberry (Chairperson International Youth Council), Dr. Deloris Blakely, Maxine M. Montano (Moderator), Hon. Theresa Freeman (Honoree), Kristen Wyman (Youth worker & Native American Women Activist). Photo by Gideon Manasseh

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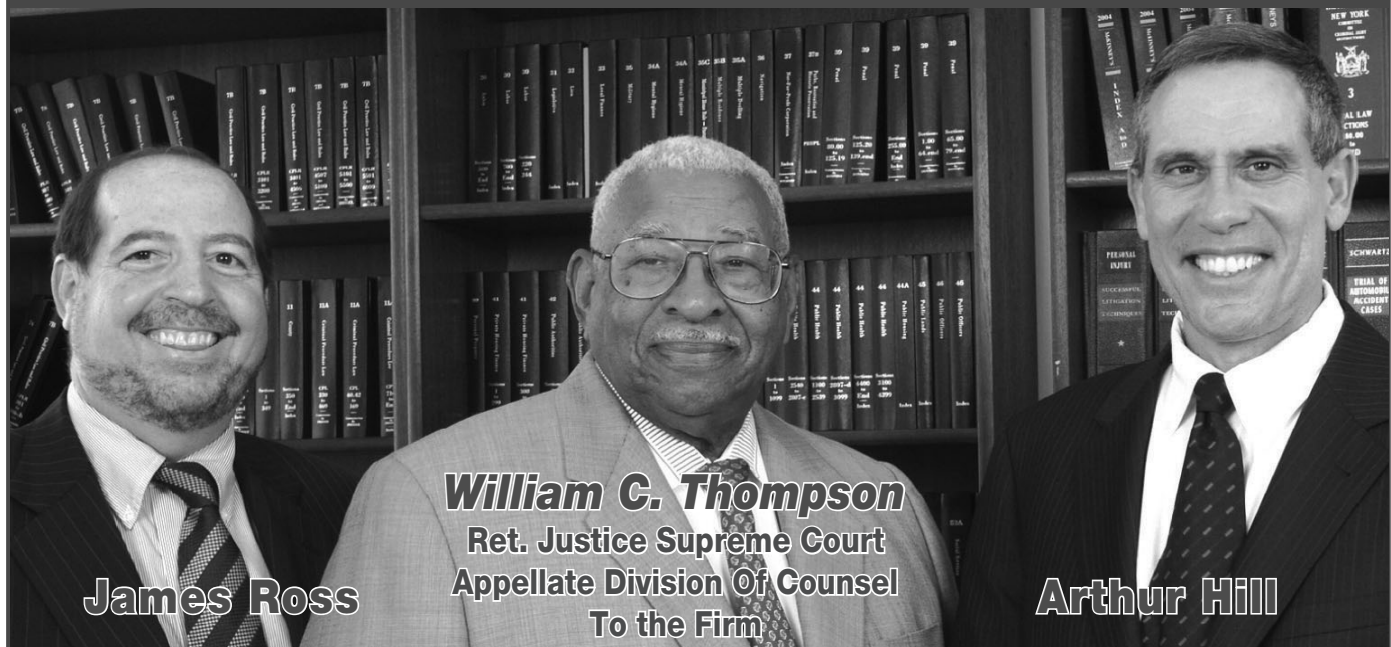


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Four women to receive Emerald Awards

The distinguished Woman of Great Esteem (WGE) Organization will host its 16th Annual Awards Dinner and Gala on Saturday, March 31 at 7:00 p.m. at the Palm House, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, New York.

The evening themed "An Emerald Night in Brooklyn" honors women who, without regard for race, ethnicity, religiosity, gender, age or national origin, develop and advance their communities.

This year's honorees include Gynecologist/Obstetrician Dr. Karlene Chin Quee; former Consul General to New York from Jamaica, Dr. Geneive Brown-Metzger; and attorneys Shari Lee Sugarman who is based in Long Island, New York and Hon. Alix Boyd Knight, Dominica's current Speaker of the House of Assembly.

Paula Cox, premier of Bermuda and a former Emerald Award recipient, will deliver the keynote address. In addition, Premier Cox will receive this year's Award of Excellence.

The annual Woman of Great Esteem Emerald Award Ceremony has become a calendar event with persons traveling from across the globe to pay homage to these illustrious and powerful women of great esteem. Broadcaster and journalist Sharon Gordon will host the event.

The red carpet affair begins at 7:00



Paula Cox, premier of Bermuda.



Dr. Geneive Brown-Metzger.

p.m. with a soiree followed by dinner and the award ceremony at 8:00 p.m. This is followed by live entertainment by the Vision Band with dancing until midnight.

Woman of Great Esteem is the brainchild of Jamaican born, the Rt. Rev. Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales who in 1995 established the Woman of Great Esteem Emerald Award, as a division of QKingdom Ministries, Inc. It began with a vision to recognize the increasing contributions of women who have excelled beyond normal expectations in a multi-

cultural society.

The award is a vehicle used for the empowerment of women, honoring them for their relentless efforts to nurture and serve their communities. More specifically, the institution honors women worldwide for their extraordinary contributions to the advancement of human rights and world peace in today's society.

To date, the organization has honored more than 140 women from 27 countries, from North America, Africa, Europe, Asia, Bermuda, the Caribbean and Central America.

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Jamerican redefines diva in memoir

Actress/singer Sheryl Lee Ralph has added author to her illustrious identifying status.

The Jamaica-born wife of Pennsylvania Senator Vincent Hughes and mother to Etienne and Coco --identifies herself as Jamerican -- recently celebrated publication of her first book "Redefining Diva." Published by Karen Hunter's Gallery Books, the 16-chapter, 200-page "life lessons from the original Dreamgirl" presents a first-person description of the abused adjective often used to identify a self-indulgent, egotistic personality.

Ralph steps away from the popular usage to claim what she perceives her best moniker.

Divinely Inspired Victoriously Anointed...Definitely Inspirational and Vivaciously Alive...Daringly Inquisitive and Valiantly Aware -- are some of the acronyms she has configured to explain her re-definition.

"I am the ultimate diva," she declares in the first chapter.

"Diva is more than big hair and an even bigger, badder attitude for me."

Those defined by those standards she says, "gives diva -- a bad name."

"My kind of diva has a voice and uses it to speak her mind, understanding that inner thoughts don't always need to be outer thoughts. She loves herself. She believes in herself enough to respect herself. But disrespects herself and others by pitching hissy fits, fighting, cursing and throwing things at people. ...she gets what she wants because people want to give it to her... and demands respect by respecting herself and others."

Ralph indulges readers by making reference to the origination of the term used to identify a Prima Donna two centuries ago in operatic circles.

She uses her adolescent and adult experiences in the USA to amplify arguments of a redefinition of the term and her



Inside Life

By Vinette K. Pryce

claim to the title.

Ralph harkens back to schooldays when she was discriminated against at a parochial school.

How she defied the odds to win auditions and command roles in movies and onstage.

Her most coveted she claims were to join the cast of Sidney Poitier's film "A Piece of the Action" and Broadway's "Dreamgirls."

The latter seems the pivotal, theatrical launch to a career that has broadened her range encompassing stints on television, fundraising campaigns and high profile visibility.

While the Great White Way afforded Ralph notoriety to a segment of the society, "Moesha" a television show starring R&B singer Brandy may have enhanced a national profile affording her visibility to a wider and younger demographic to many whom might not have heard of the musical.

On Broadway, she joined Jennifer Holiday and Loretta Devine to mimic a trio of singers often described akin to Motown Records triumvirate Supremes.

Ralph portrayed Deena, the character Beyonce revised in a film of the same name and the one most similar to the lead singer of the popular and most successful girl group of the sixties.

That the character resembled Diana Ross seemed an impediment to a future friendship, Ralph says. Ralph places emphasis on the fact Ross might have resented her for the focus, spotlight or role. Although she takes care in explaining how she had always "adored" "admired" the acclaimed

'Boss,' Ralph seems to revel in gaining redemption three decades later when Ross met face to face with disapproving Jamaicans attending the Air Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival on her home turf.

Ross had snubbed her on occasion and according to the author had heard that the super-star singer/actress had spoken unfavorably of her "rip-off" portrayal of her life-story.

When angry patrons to the fest booed and hissed Ross' decision not to perform if video screens were used during her performance, Ralph said she tried to defuse the ugly response.

The two met again at the airport in a VIP lounge and there she said, a cordial exchange settled the score.

Ralph insists the musical was not about the famous Detroit group.

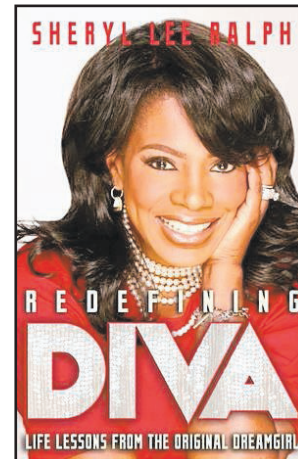
She contends she created the role and was responsible for much of the words spoken throughout the production.

Ralph also explains the rift that made her walk away from the hit television show, "Moesha."

Ralph's tome provides an enlightening view of the immigrant personality who won a Tony Award early in her career.

She successfully maneuvered the field to secure positive roles co-starring with Denzel Washington, Robert DeNiro, Sherman Helmsley, Bill Cosby, Lynda Carter, Danny Glover and Phillip Michael Thomas among others.

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'October Baby' is nonetheless an apolitical coming-of-age adventure apt to touch the hearts of audience members on either side of the abortion issue.'

Kam Williams – Page 33

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Spotlight on African film

Film Society of Lincoln Center (FSLC) and African Film Festival, Inc. (AFF) have again joined forces to present the 19th New York African Film Festival (NYAFF).

Presented under the theme "21st Century: The Homecoming," this year's festival will explore the modern notion of home and homeland, from the legacy of music legend Miriam Makeba—subject of the Opening Night Film Mama Africa—to Diasporic visions such as the New York-set Restless City.

The NYAFF will also mark the 100th anniversary of the African National Congress (ANC) and the 50th anniversary of independence for Algeria, Burundi, Jamaica,



A scene from "Maami," part of the New York African Film Festival coming soon to Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Courtesy of the filmmakers

Rwanda and Uganda, as well as give a unique look into the life of President Obama through a film on his half-sister: The Education of Auma Obama.

The NYAFF will run
Continued on next page

Bass Odyssey, Black Kat vie for title



Bass Odyssey (left) and Black Kat

Despite international visibility and fame, there is an age-old debate that resonates among clash fans over whose sound rules Jamaica's countryside -- Bass Odyssey or Black Kat.

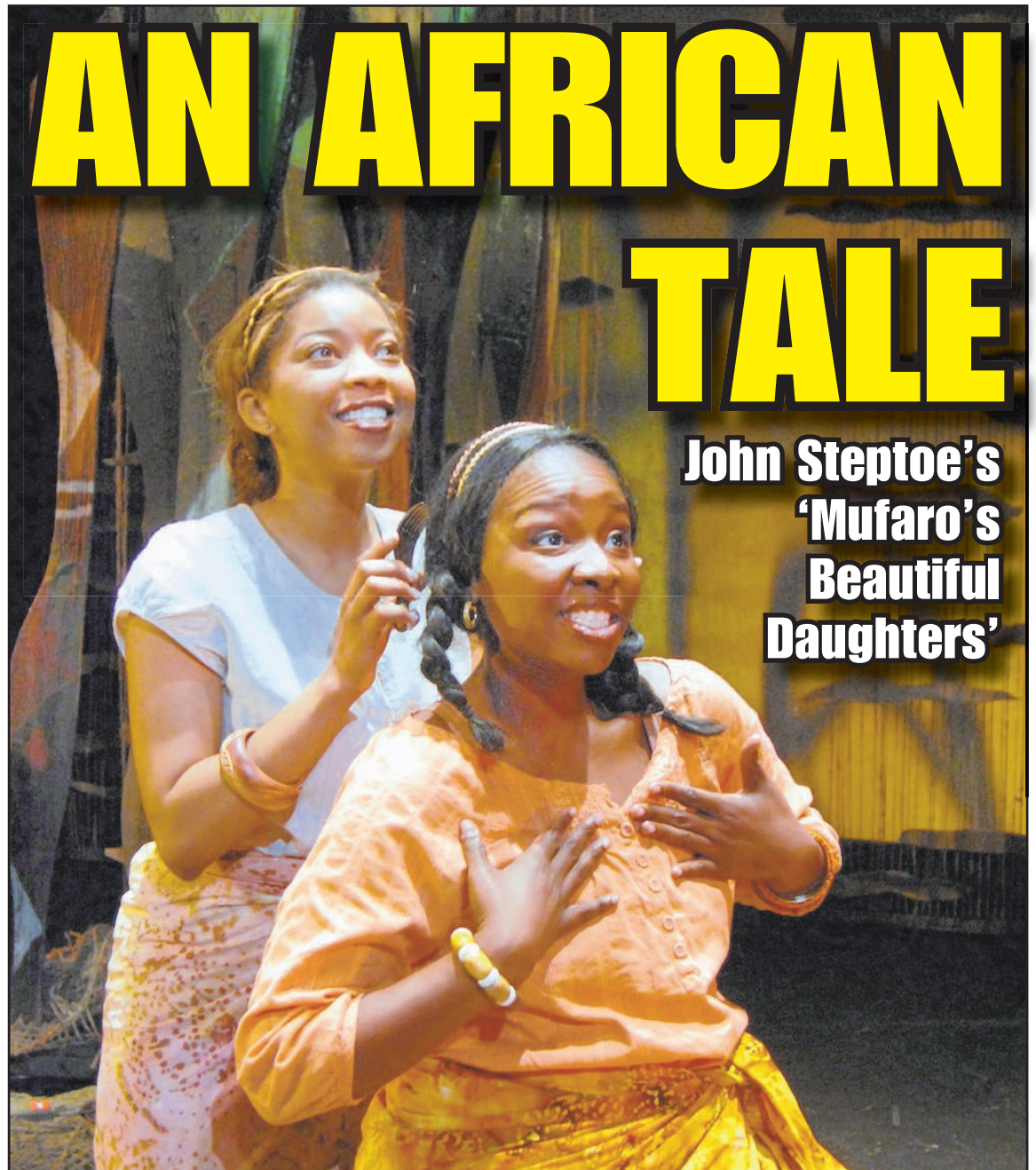
Hailing from the remote Jamaican territories of

Saint Ann and Christiana, far from the city life of Dancehall hotbed Kingston, Bass Odyssey and Black Kat have been battling over the title of Jamaica's top country sound for years.

Now, before thousands
Continued on next page

AN AFRICAN TALE

John Steptoe's
'Mufaro's
Beautiful
Daughters'



Nyasha and Manyara in John Steptoe's, "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters."

Photo courtesy of Dallas Children's Theater

By John Marrast

Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College continues its 2011-2012 Target FamilyFun series on Sunday, April 22, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. with John Steptoe's "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters - An African Tale," performed by the Dallas Children's Theater on Tour.

The series concludes with American Family Theater's "Cinderella" on May 20 at 2:00 p.m.

When a great African king desires a wife, only the most perfect maidens in the land are invited to meet him. Mufaro's daughters, Nyasha and Manyara, two young women of very different dispositions, travel a

half day's journey through a mystical jungle and across a deep river to be presented to the king.

Along the way they encounter several mysterious situations that test their courage, kindness and strength of spirit. Both are beautiful, but does either have the inner beauty of a potential queen?

Continued on next page

TOP OF THE CHARTS

TOP 10 SINGLES



- 1 **Set Fire To The Rain**
Adele
- 2 **Stronger**
Kelly Clarkson
- 3 **Turn Me On**
David Guetta Feat. Nicki Minaj
- 4 **Take Care**
Drake Feat. Rihanna
- 5 **We Found Love**
Rihanna Feat. Calvin Harris
- 6 **Part of Me**
Katy Perry
- 7 **Glad You Came**
The Wanted
- 8 **International Love**
Pitbull Feat. Chris Brown
- 9 **Good Feeling**
Flo Rida
- 10 **Young, Wild & Free**
Snoop Dogg & Wiz Khalifia

TOP 10 ALBUMS



- 1 **Up All Night**
One Direction
- 2 **Greatest Hits**
Guns N Roses
- 3 **21**
Adele
- 4 **Take Care**
Drake
- 5 **Making Mirrors**
Gotye
- 6 **Passion: White Flag**
Passion
- 7 **Project X**
Soundtrack
- 8 **Some Nights**
Fun
- 9 **Wrecking Ball**
Bruce Springsteen
- 10 **Klusterfuk (EP)**
Tech N9ne

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BCBC Family Fun Series

Continued from previous page

from April 11 through 17 at Film Society of Lincoln Center, and throughout April and May at The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space, Columbia University's Institute of African Studies, Maysles Cinema Institute and the Brooklyn Academy of Music's BAMcinémathèque.

"This is a continuation of the discussion about the shape of Africa that has taken place since Independence and that is now not being embraced by the younger generation," said African Film Festival, Inc. Executive Director and Founder Mahen Bonetti. "Though these young people have not in many ways been thrown a lifeline as post-Independent con-

flict emerged, they have somehow managed, through technology, to craft their own narrative, unconsciously drawing on the past and creating something new and very modern without having disavowed the past."

Special events and highlights include the Opening Night film *Mama Africa* by Mika Kaurismäki (Special Jury Recognition—Documentary at the 2012 Pan African Film Festival) on April 11, and the Centerpiece film *Relentless* by Andy Amadi Okoroafor, starring internationally renowned Nigerian-German hip hop and soul singer Nneka, on Friday, April 13.

With the election year in full swing, the NYAFF will present a

film that offers a window into the African family of President Barack Obama and insight into his father, with "The Education of Auma Obama" by Branwen Okpako; the film won the Viewers' Choice Award at the 2011 Africa International Film Festival and the Festival Founders' Award at the 2012 Pan African Film Festival. The film noir "How to Steal 2 Million" by Charlie Vundla features the top South African actors, Rapulana Seiphemo, Terry Pheto and John Kani.

"African cinema was born in the same year as the New York Film Festival—1963—and it's always been a source of great pleasure and pride for me that for 50 years our programs have provided a vital showcase for the best in African filmmaking," said Film Society of Lincoln Center Program Director Richard Peña. "We also salute our dear friends and partners at the New York African Film Festival, which for almost twenty years has worked successfully to make African cinema a reality around the United States."

The popular blog Africa is a Country (africasacountry.com) will present "Africa is a Country: Talking Media and Russian Archives," a free panel discussion, on Saturday, April 14 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the



Sderot, "Last Exit."

Courtesy of the filmmakers

Frieda and Roy Furman Gallery at the Walter Reade Theater.

Featured bloggers and special guest will examine the relationship between Africa and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s, as is evidenced by Russia's extensive film archive of the continent, and then explore the relationship between film and social media movements on the continent (e.x. Tahrir revolutionary cinema, which documented the Egyptian Revolution in Tahrir Square, and Kony 2012).

"Africans in the Diaspora: Expatriates and the Homecoming," a free festival preview will take place at The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space on April 5 at 6:00 p.m. to welcome audiences to the 19th edition of the NYAFF; the event, moderated by renowned journalist Femi Oke, will include a special performance by popular artist-emcee DJ Spooky in which he rescues Father of African Cinema Ousmane Sembene's Borrom Sorret, filmmaker-scholar Yemane Demissie and music and African cinema critic Beatiz Leal.

Dallas Children's theater

Continued from previous page

Based on the Caldecott Award-winning children's book of the same name, this new family musical sets the Cinderella story amidst the splendor of Zimbabwe, incorporating authentic African drumming, original songs, and powerful and majestic choreography.

John Steptoe's "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters - An African Tale" is based on the book by John Steptoe and adapted for the stage by Karen Abbott.

Music and lyrics are by S-Ankh Rasa. The show is recommended for ages four and up.



John Steptoe's "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters - An African Tale."

"Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters - An African Tale" will be immediately followed by Brooklyn Center's fifth annual National Grid Earth Day Celebration, a free community festival.

Country-style rivalry

Continued from previous page

of clash revelers at both World Clash New York R.E.S.E.T. on Saturday, April 7 (w/Fire Links, Tony Matterhorn, Poison Dart, Earth Ruler and David Rodigan) and World Clash Jamaica R.E.S.E.T. on Easter Monday, April 9 (w/Kilamanjaro, Black Blunt, Heavy Hammer, Rootsman and Code Red), these powerhouse sounds will settle the score.

While the stages in New York and Jamaica will serve as battlefields, the ultimate proving ground for Bass Odyssey and Black Kat will clearly be in their homeland in front of loyal supporters at Pier One.

Stellar war sounds Bass Odyssey and Black Kat are

synonymous with high power sound clash. Rising to prominence in the early 90's, the sounds have cemented themselves as fixtures in the sound clash arena, generating scores of victories, a worldwide fan base and the utmost respect from fellow members of the fraternity. Known for craftily defeating legions of sounds over time, Bass Odyssey and Black Kat remain the most feared players in game. Most of today's modern day sound systems don't feel that they can properly reach the big leagues without facing off against these clash leaders.

It's no secret that Bass Odyssey and Black Kat are not just dynamic sounds, but also powerhouse brands. Their names

carry weight, allowing them to periodically interchange and showcase team players without losing their position or credibility. Regardless of who plays the sounds, one can almost always anticipate high caliber, strategic sound clash entertainment. Bass Odyssey also excels in juggling. Boasting the role of teacher, some of today's most prominent sound men admit to learning or studying the tactics and careers of Bass Odyssey and Black Kat front men. Historically, one of the most heralded and praised duos in the sound clash industry consisted of DJ Mark and the late, great Squingy of Bass Odyssey.

Tied with seven World Clash victories (along with "The Far East Rulers" Mighty Crown), Bass Odyssey and Black Kat are set to come head to head on

two World Clash stages in April 2012. There is intense energy among fans centered on these highly anticipated face offs. Whenever, these two giants are billed for the same event, only "helter skelter" can erupt.

While Bass Odyssey boldly attacks contenders with a fusion of well structured speeches and sharp music selections, Black Kat's team often dons smiles and sneakily strikes opponents with witty warnings and well-known dub plate anthems.

No matter one's position on who will take home the coveted World Clash R.E.S.E.T. trophies, fans are certain that Bass Odyssey and Black Kat's showdown will be forever written in the pages of Dancehall history.

Courtesy Images Newsletter
www.imagesnewsletter.com

Abortion survivor searches for birth mom

"October Baby"
Excellent (3.5 stars)
Rated PG-13 for mature themes.
Running time: 107 minutes
Studio: Provident Films
Distributor: Samuel Goldwyn Films

loving parents (John Schneider and Jennifer Price).

Everything comes to a head during her freshman year in college, after she collapses on stage while performing in a school play. Her parents rush to campus where they inform her doctor (Lance E. Nichols) in the infirmary that their daughter has considered committing suicide.

Hannah's dismay upon learning that her folks had invaded her privacy by reading her diary is forgotten as soon as they proceed to make an even more shocking revelation. For not only do they subsequently announce that she had been adopted, but that she had miraculously survived an attempted abortion when her mother was only 24 weeks

pregnant.

That bombshell triggers an explosion of emotions inside Hannah ranging from bewilderment to desperation to rage. But at least she finally has an idea why she's been so sickly and saddled with emotional trauma all her life.

Next, the understandably-anguished teenager demands a copy of her birth certificate before deciding to track down her biological mother over Spring Break. And, accompanied by her supportive best friend, Jason (Jason Burkey), she sets out on a spiritual sojourn via Volkswagen bus to Mobile, Alabama in quest of self-discovery and perhaps closure.

This is the compelling point of departure of *October Baby*,



Hannah (Rachel Hendrix) and Jason (Jason Burkey) set out on their journey to find Hannah's birth mother.

a modern morality play co-directed by Jon and Andrew Erwin. The brothers, who admittedly "never knew there was such a thing as an abortion survivor," were inspired to make the movie after learning about the real-life ordeal of Gianna Jessen.

While I suspect that the Erwins aren't the only ones previously unfamiliar with the phenomenon, their moving tearjerker will undoubtedly go a long way towards spreading the word. The principal cast is comprised mostly of relative unknowns, as well as a couple of familiar faces from TV in John Schneider (*The Dukes of Hazzard*) and Jasmine Guy (*A Different World*).

Though unabashedly pro-life in point-of-view, *October Baby* is nonetheless an apolitical coming-of-age adventure apt to touch the hearts of audience members on either side of the abortion issue. A faith-based parable bringing to mind Psalm 139:16's sobering message: "You saw me before I was born."

Independent & Foreign Films

The Beat Hotel (Unrated) "Cool, Daddy-o!" documentary revisiting the dive located in the Latin Quarter in Paris which became the haunt and home of literary American expatriates in the late Fifties, beatniks like Allen Ginsberg, Greg Corso and William Burroughs.

Bully (R for profanity) Award-winning filmmaker Lee Hirsch (Amandla!) directed this escalating wedgies expose' following the diverging fates of five students pushed to the brink of suicide by their classmates' merciless bullying.

Four Lovers (Unrated) Bawdy sex romp revolving around the complications which ensue for two couples after they decide to swap partners. Principal cast includes Roschdy Zem, Elodie Bouchez, Marina Fois and Nicolas Duvauchelle. (In French and English with subtitles)

God Save My Shoes (Unrated) Fashion documentary examining the psychological, cultural, erotic and emotional aspects of women's fixation with their footwear. (In French and English with subtitles)

Goon (R for drug use, graphic sexuality, brutal violence and pervasive profanity) Seann "Stiffler" Scott stars in this overcoming-the-odds hockey com-



Kam's Kapsules

By Kam Williams

edy about a halfwit bouncer who leads a ragtag, semi-pro team of misfits to glory on the ice. With Eugene Levy, Jay Baruchel and Alison Pill.

I Kissed a Vampire (Unrated) Gory, Goth musical about a teenager (Lucas Grabeel) who develops fangs and an insatiable lust for blood after being bitten in the neck by an exchange student (Tahlena Chikami) from Transylvania. With Drew Seeley, Adrian Slade and Chris Coppola.

Intruders (R for terror, violence, sexuality, nudity and profanity) Haunted house horror flick about a father's (Clive Owen) desperate effort to protect his daughter (Ella Purnell) from the faceless monster that visits their home every night. Cast includes Carice van Houten, Daniel Bruhl and Kerry Fox. (In English and Spanish with subtitles)

The Island President (PG for violence, smoking and mature themes) Climate change documentary chronicling the effort of Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed to save his low-lying island nation

from being sunk into the Indian Ocean as a consequence of global warming.

Turn Me on, Dammit! (Unrated) Coming-of-age comedy about the sexual awakenings of a 15-year-old girl (Helene Bergsholm) with raging hormones who fantasizes not only about the classmate (Matias Myren) she has a crush on but about practically every guy she encounters. With Malin Bjorhovde, Henriette Stenstrup and Beat Stofrin. (In Norwegian with subtitles)

Womb (Unrated) Deliberately-paced romance drama about a grieving woman (Eva Green) confronting an ethical dilemma after allowing herself to become impregnated with a clone of her dearly-departed childhood sweetheart (Matt Smith) after a tragic accident. Featuring Lesley Manville, Peter Wight and Hannah Murray.

Big Budget Films

Mirror Mirror (PG for action and mild crude humor) Overhaul of beloved classic fairytale has exiled

Snow White (Lily Collins) returning to the kingdom to wrest both the throne and a handsome prince (Armie Hammer) from the clutches of the evil queen (Julia Roberts) with the help of seven dwarfs. With Nathan Lane, Mare

Winningham and Michael Lerner.

Wrath of the Titans (PG-13 for action and intense violence) Fantasy sequel, set a decade after the conclusion of "Clash," finds demigod Perseus (Sam Worthington) embarking

on a perilous descent into the underworld for an epic showdown with the Titans in order to save humanity and to rescue his father, Zeus (Liam Neeson). Cast includes, Ralph Fiennes, Edgar Ramirez and Bill Nighy.

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SUN KULCHA

COMMUNITY EVENTS

ONGOING

SATURDAY, MARCH 31

Health Fair Crown Heights Beacon Program is holding its second annual Health Fair at P.S. 138, 760 Prospect Place, between Nostrand & Rogers avenues, Brooklyn, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., featuring free blood pressure and diabetes screenings, mammograms, HIV/AIDs testing, health & nutrition information along with free giveaways, Child IDs and library cards. For information, call (718) 771-3105 or (718) 919-0744.

Ballet Workshop Manhattan Movement and Arts Center presents Manhattan Youth Ballet's 2012 Spring Workshop from March 31-April 1, including performances on Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. & Sunday at 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. at the Center, 248 W 60 St., between Amsterdam & West End avenues in the Lincoln Center area, N.Y.C. Tickets are available at www.manhattanyouthballet.org & more information is available at www.manhattanmovement.com.

Jazz Festival The Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Music of the Spirit, presents Lil Phillips/Tribute to Gloria Lynne, 9:00 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. at Sistas' Place, 456 Nostrand Ave. at Jefferson St., Brooklyn. For reservations & information, call (718) 398-1766.

Jazz Festival The Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Music of the Spirit, presents the Eric Wyatt Quartet, 10:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. at BAMcafe, Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Ladayete Pl. Admission free. For information, call (718) 636-4100.

Blues & Soul N.Y. based blues favorites Renee & The Derelicts (redux) perform classic & original tunes at American Bar/American Trash on Manhattan's upper East Side, 1471 First Ave. @ 76 St., 9:00 p.m. No cover. For information, call (212) 988-9008.

LGBT Health Expo The Staten Island LGBT Community Center is holding a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Health Expo, "Take PRIDE in Our Health," featuring resource tables focusing on information on stress management, quit smoking help, massage therapy, yoga classes & healthy food options along with free health screenings for blood pressure & rapid HIV testing, 12 noon - 4:00 p.m. at 25 Victory Blvd, 3rd Fl., Tompkinsville. Free & open to the public. For information or to take part in the exposition, call (718) 808-1364.

MONDAY, APRIL 2

Jazz Festival The Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Music of the Spirit, presents Sankofa Souz featuring King Tut, 7:15 p.m. & 9:15 p.m. at For My Sweet, 1103 Fulton St. @ Classon Ave. For information, call (718) 857-1427.



Food Stamp Outreach

Find out if you are eligible to receive Food Stamp benefits! A representative from the NYC Human Resources Administration will be available to assist you with eligibility pre-screening & to answer any questions every Tues. & Wed., 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Community Board 12, 4101 White Plains Road at 229 St., Bronx. For more information, call (718) 881-4455.



Financial Coaching

We all have goals - paying off bills, saving for a home, improving our credit score, etc., etc. The Financial Capabilities & Coaching Program is a personal approach to help reach goals. For more information, call the Neighborhood Housing Services of East Flatbush at (718) 469-4679.

TUESDAY, APRIL 3

Jazz Festival The Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Music of the Spirit, presents Eric Frazier Open Mic Jam Session with Danny Mixon, Rome Neal, Sheryl Renee, 8:00 p.m., at Rustik Tavern, 471 Dekalb Ave @ Franklin Ave., Brooklyn. For admission & information, call (347) 406-9700.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4

Jazz Festival The Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Music of the Spirit, presents Pucho & his Latin Soul Brothers, 7:00 p.m. at Dweck Center Brooklyn Public Library, 10 Grand Army Plaza. Admission free. For information, call (718) 230-2100.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5

Jazz Festival The Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Music of the Spirit, presents a Tribute to Kenny Dorham & Cecil Payne presented by LIU Brooklyn Music Faculty, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the Kumble Theater, 1 University Plz., Downtown Brooklyn. Admission free. For information, call

Children's Program

The Mount Carmel Worship & Outreach Center, 788 East 46 St., between Clarendon & Ave. D, Brooklyn, is offering a children's tutoring/computer training program, standardized test preparation & job skills training program, Saturdays, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. For registration details, call (971) 609-0909.



(718) 488-1624.

FRIDAY, APRIL 6

Jazz Festival The Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Music of the Spirit, presents three performances: The Houston Person Quartet, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m. at JAZZ 966, 966 Fulton St. @ Grand Ave., Brooklyn. For admission & information call (718) 638-8910; Rudi Wongozie Ft. Eric Lemon Band, BrownstoneJAZZ at Sankofa Aban Bed & Breakfast, 107 Macon St. @ Nostrand Ave., 8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.. For admission & information, call (917) 704-9237; WMC Allstars Jam Session at the Williamsburg Music Center, 367 Bedford Ave. @ South 5 St., Brooklyn, 10:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. For admission & information, call (718) 384-1654.

Billie Holiday Tribute Entertainer, vocalist & jazz aficionado Keith Dames pays homage to Billie Holiday at "Happy Birthday, Lady Day" at the Club Room of Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians in Manhattan, 322 W. 48 St., between 8 & 9 avenues, 7:00 p.m. For information, call (212) 245-4802.

S.O.S. Program The S.O.S. Crown Heights (Save Our Streets) program is in search of artists of all ages to participate in the second annual "Arts to End Violence Contest & Festival." Youth artists (19 & younger) are especially encouraged to submit two-dimensional art, video shorts and t-shirt designs. Submissions are due by April 5. Winning artists will be announced during "Increase the Peace" week, June 3-10. Submissions should be sent to Anthony Mohen, Crown Heights Community Mediation Center, 256 Kingston Ave, Ground Fl., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11213. For more information, visit www.artstoendviolence.tumblr.com; soscrownheights.org; facebook.com/soscrownheights or call (718) 773-6886 for more information.

Volunteers Needed Volunteer readers are needed for the Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center Network Reach Out and Read Program at the Mount Vernon, Yonkers and Greenburgh Health Center locations. Bilingual readers are helpful, but not required. Just a few hours a week reading to a child can make a difference for the child, the family & the community. For additional information or to volunteer, contact Ms. Eneida Rivera, director of Reach Out & Read at (914) 699-7200 ext. 1048.

Free Tax Preparation The Bethex Federal Credit Union is offering free tax preparation every Wednesday, 12 noon - 7:00 p.m. & Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Bronx Independent Living Services, 4419 Third Ave., Ste. 2C, Bronx. For more information & necessary paperwork, call (718) 515-2800 ext. 111 or for an ASL interpreter, call & make appointment with Ms. Saldana at (866) 882-3244.

Free Tax Help The Brooklyn Cooperative Federal Credit Union & the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program will be offering free tax help to low-to-moderate-income residents of Bedford Stuyvesant and Bushwick. In addition to providing free, high-quality tax preparation, the program gives Central Brooklyn residents an opportunity to open credit union accounts. For more information, call (212) 505-EITC (3482).

Adoption "You Gotta Believe!," a community based older child adoption agency is looking for families (regardless of age, marital status, gender or income) who would be willing to provide love and nurturing to a child in the foster care system. Classes held on Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Church, 2801 W 8 St., in Coney Island & Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. at Church of the Holy Redeemer, 2424 Linden Blvd. in East New York. For information, call (718) 372-3003.

Winter Aches & Pains Jamaican Fountain Pimento Oil is an all natural, chemical and preservative free herbal medication that relieves sore muscles, stiff joints, nerve damage, circulation issues, fluid retention amongst a host of other ailments. Call Sandra at (866) 223-2414 to book a free massage appointment for your place of worship, senior citizens group or nursing home. For more information, visit www.pimentooil.com.

Compiled by Ida Eisenstein

What an Anniversary Present!

Happy Couple is remodeling their home and saving money too, thanks to the HRA program.

Iris Escobar is proud to be frugal. But when she and her husband, Victor, decided to remodel their home, she had to find another way to save.

As it turns out, Iris didn't have to look far. The answer arrived in her mailbox last summer: a postcard advertising the Housing Rehabilitation Assistance program.

Thanks to the HRA, the Escobars are getting a world-class home make-over without spending any cash or increasing their mortgage payments. Taking advantage of the program is saving them well over \$10,000 and, thanks to refinancing, they're making the same monthly payments they were before, with \$200 each month going towards the principal now.

"It's been a great ride," Victor said. "I can't say enough about the HRA program. I can't say enough about everybody involved."

His wife agrees. "I'm very excited," she said. "I'm glad I met this team; they're great!" Speaking to Carlos Fontanez, the couple's HRA representative, she added, "I tell everyone about you."

What Iris is telling everyone about is how the HRA guides clients through every step of the home remodeling process, from deciding what work should be done to how it will be



Iris Escobar shows off the new tiling that will be going in her bathroom.

financed, from securing financial assistance to overseeing the work and making sure the contractors are not paid until the homeowner is satisfied.

A fan of "The People's Court," where she sees a lot of irresponsible contractors sued, Iris said she was especially glad that the HRA

holds clients' money in escrow until they certify that they're satisfied.

HRA representative Jesse Friedman explained the program's basic approach: "The services offered by the HRA extend beyond just financial assistance for home improvement projects. We have implemented numerous processes to ensure that projects completed by HRA-approved contractors are done so to the homeowner's satisfaction."

Just take a look at some of the program's requirements for contractors. They all must be:

- licensed, bonded and insured for at least \$100,000 per incident;
- registered with the Better Business Bureau, with a rating of an A or higher;
- in business for at least 10 years;
- able to provide the names and addresses of eight clients that they have performed home improvement projects for in the past year;
- able to perform four test projects for the HRA prior to working for any clients.

At the Escobars' house, it's a big job that's underway and the Escobars are thrilled with the results. There's a stunning new bay window in the dining room that measures and the kitchen features a garden window; an especially deep one with a glass shelf so Iris's

plants can be surrounded by light.

The interior of the kitchen and bathroom were gutted, with everything from new gas lines and plumbing to new sheetrock and insulation going in. The door to the basement was moved to make room for all the cabinetry, in fact.

The new kitchen is going to feature only the best equipment and materials, including a six-burner stove with a pot-filler faucet, double sink with pull-out faucet, beautiful real-wood cabinets, granite countertops and floor tiles.

The bathroom shower will feature a bench and a modern rain showerhead. The tile walls will be accented by a mosaic design. The hardware will be bronze, and the contractor even found a toilet in Mexican Sand, which compliments the décor perfectly. In the front of the house, the contractor replaced all the windows in the foyer and added insulation. An added benefit, the Escobars earn tax credits for promoting energy efficiency in their home.

Iris likes to entertain, but hadn't bothered for years because she wasn't happy with the look of her home. Now, she's looking forward to holding a big bash in June, to show off the HRA renovations and to celebrate her 10th anniversary with Victor. The timing couldn't have worked out better.

To find out if you qualify for the Housing Rehabilitation Assistance program, just call the HRA toll-free at 866-791-6302. Tell them you read about the Escobars' project, and they'll give you same level of excellent service.



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Lifetime Achievement Awards for McKay, Livingston

Sirius Satellite Radio Program Director and radio host, Pat McKay and Indy label executive, artiste manager and record producer, Robert Livingston will each receive a Lifetime Achievement Award for their outstanding contribution to the entertainment industry at New York's signature Caribbean fashion event -- Irie Fashion Rave.

In celebration of Jamaica's 50th anniversary of independence, McKay and Livingston will join Fashion Mogul Kingsley Cooper who was honored at last year's event. Livingston is credited with pioneering the careers of platinum selling reggae artiste Shaggy, Rayvon and Super Cat.

Bobby Clarke, CEO of Irie Jam Radio and co-producer of Irie Fashion Rave, who made the announcement said, "Robert is a true ambassador of Jamaica and one of the most successful artiste managers in the history of our music.

"One only has to look at the accomplishments of Shaggy, Super Cat, Maxi Priest, Gregory Issacs, Rayvon and Chris Martin to understand the impact he



Robert Livingston.



Pat McKay.

Photo Credit Images Newsletter

has had on the reggae industry. His impact spans management, production, writing/publishing, groom artists, per-production, A&R, tours, rehearsals, marketing and promotions" Clarke said.

Livingston, who started in

the music industry more than three decades ago was ecstatic when he received the news.

"I feel really great about being honored for the work that I have done over the years. I have a lot of respect for Irie Jam Radio and what they represent so that

makes the award even more special" he said.

"To have seen Shaggy receive a Diamond record for the work that we did, I would say is my biggest accomplishment," he indicated.

Award recipient Pat McKay

has been blazing her own trail as a successful Caribbean broadcaster in the USA. Her accomplishments are impressive and includes being the first person of Caribbean descent to have programmed 24/7 national broadcasts of music in the US - first for Music Choice and currently for Sirius Satellite Radio. In the 90's she hosted "The WBLS Reggae House Party" for 4 years. This was the first ever all-Reggae show on general market radio in the USA. She was also a staff member of urban WBLS, 107.5FM and sister-station WLIB/1190AM until 2004.

Syntyche 'Syn' Dawkins, Marketing Director of Irie Jam Radio and co-producer of Irie Fashion Rave said "Pat is a radio pioneer who has made a significant contribution to the promotion of Jamaica's music and culture here in the Diaspora."

Irie Fashion Rave, which is held annually by Social Eyes Entertainment Inc and New York-based Irie Jam Media takes place at LQ, 511 Lexington, Manhattan on Sunday, April 25, 2012.

Courtesy Images Newsletter

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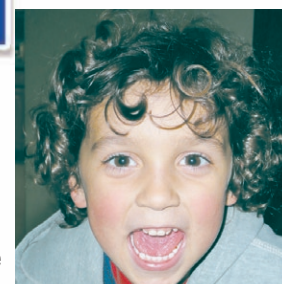
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From left, Sabryna Fulton, (Trayvon's mom), Benjamin Crump, the attorney for Martin's parents and Tracey Martin during the Million Hoodie March in New York.
Photo by Lem Peterkin

New Yorkers join 'Million Hoodie March'

Continued from page 24

Park. The police stopped us from crossing 14th St.," said organizer Daniel Maree, which explains how the march ended up walking west in the street, 14th St. There were slight skirmishes with the police who tried, unsuccessfully, to contain marchers to the sidewalk. Segments of marchers walked to Times Square, others returned to Union Square, while others marched downtown to Manhattan's Zuccotti Park.

During the days following the New York demonstration, similar rallies took place around the country. Several thousand came out in Philadelphia, hundreds

in Iowa; demonstrations were held in Los Angeles and Phoenix.

The coordinating committee is in touch with Trayvon Martin's legal team and his parents to decide on the strategic next step that would be most effective to bring George Zimmerman to justice.

The day following the New York demonstration, Sanford Police Chief Bill Lee temporarily stepped down from head of the Sanford Police Department. A public letter from the NAACP calls on the Florida State prosecutor to swiftly pursue justice.

Similar demonstrations in London and Australia

are broadening the focus to fight racial discrimination.

A vigil held at Union Square on March 26 read 20 names, paying tribute to victims of hate crimes. Remarley Graham, an unarmed Bronx teen, killed by police in his own home this year on Feb. 8, was one who was memorialized. On March 27, Trayvon's parents testified in Washington on Capital Hill about racial profiling.

"We are coordinating with local leaders and actively looking at what's next," Maree said. Organizers are thinking about a massive rally near the two-month anniversary (April 26) of Trayvon's death.



Demonstrators from all walks of life came out to show their support.

Photo by Tequila Minsky

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- Form 1099-INT if you received interest from a bank account in 2011.
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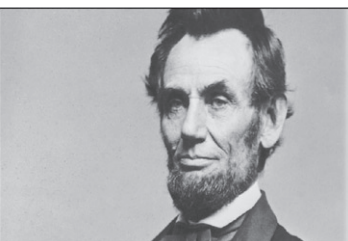
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Respect to 70-yr-old Queen of Soul

By Vinette K. Pryce

The queen of soul, Aretha Franklin probably made her own history on March 24 when she personally invited a very select group to join her for a private dinner marking her 70th birthday and gifted them with the promise of new music.

The avowed Detroit resident hosted the affair during Women's History Month and accommodated less than 80 guests at the swank Park Room at the Helmsley Hotel on Central Park South.

On arrival, guests were informed by publicist Gwendolyn Quinn, "Miss Franklin personally arranged the seating order."

That said, it was no surprise that her mentor, record executive Clive Davis would be seated right next to her at table number one.

As for me, I was placed at table number 4C and happy to be included among the guests to toast Detroit's most respected singer.

Ms. Franklin arrived



Aretha Franklin.

AP Photo/Shea Walsh

promptly at 6:00 p.m. and was met by flashing lights and camera lens.

ABC-TV anchor Dianne Sawyer took the lead to express compliments of the day to the monarch.

Wearing, short-cropped, curly locks, a tri-colored, silver, white and black, sparkly, short-sleeved dress, the soul

songstress made her way past opera diva Kathleen Battle, singer, Nona Hendrix, choreographer, George Faison, activist, Al Sharpton, academic, Michael Eric Dyson, singer Fonzi Thornton, BET CEO, Debra L. Lee, CNN commentator, Roland Martin, her on and off fiancé Willie Wilkerson as well as

other notables to situate herself at the front of the room.

Loads of fabulously-wrapped gifts were mounted near a dance-floor.

The tables accommodated 10 guests each.

The menu comprised a four-course delectable of cold appetizers, hot appetizers, entrée and desserts.

"She is the queen and still reigning," Reg Wells told me.

Wells is best known as make-up guru to Oprah Winfrey.

"She looks great," Tracey Jordan her former publicist told me.

Davis gifted his host with a brand, new record deal.

Allegedly, the two will collaborate again to release perhaps another platinum-seller.

"I have re-signed with Clive Davis, so I'm recording with Clive again," Franklin said of her resumed relationship with the music mogul who she recorded with when he headed Arista Records.

Franklin added that Davis will celebrate his birthday next month and afterwards, "we're going to sit together and decide what it is we're going to record."

No formal announcement was made during the dinner but RCA Records will likely name the label.

Two ballet performances marked the occasion with a

jazz band providing dance music for the elegant crowd.

The revered R&B singer who is best-known for a spirited recording of a song titled "Respect" seemed happy and jovial throughout the dinner.

At one point she joked that like Benjamin Buttons was turning back the hands of time.

"I was wondering, what is it going to be like to be 50?" I can tell you now it feels like 40."

In the film "The Curious Case of Benjamin Buttons" the character aged backwards to get younger through the years.

"So remember Benjamin Buttons?" Franklin said.

She referred to herself as "Ree Ree Buttons!"

Her adoring guests seemed enthused by her banter laughing and smiling at every gesture and comment. The dinner lasted much longer than the invitation suggested.

Franklin seemed to enjoy her 70th birthday celebration.




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'An error by captain Darren Sammy resulted in a loss for the West Indies in the fifth One-Day International against Australia.'

- Eyes on Cricket, Page 43

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Red Bulls defeat Rapids



New York Red Bulls forward Thierry Henry (14) and Colorado Rapids defender Marvell Wynne compete for the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer game, Sunday, March 25, 2012, in Harrison, N.J. AP Photo/Julio Cortez

By Patrick Horne

If last Sunday afternoon's opening day festivities and fan enthusiasm at Red Bull Arena in Harrison New Jersey is a gauge as to whether soccer in the New York/New Jersey area is here to stay, then we're in for a long haul.

Continued on next page

Players Assn. claims victory

By Azad Ali

The present Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the West Indies Players Association (WIPA) and the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) will remain in force until the dispute between the two parties is decided in the High Court of Trinidad and Tobago at a future date.

According to a WIPA media release, Justice Ricky Rahim granted a final mandatory injunction recently forcing the WICB to treat the agreements as in full force and effect, despite the board's pleas to the contrary and has made it clear that the WICB would be held in contempt of court if it breaches the court's order.

Continued on next page



PSAL CHAMPS

BOYS AND GIRLS ARE THREE-TIME WINNERS

Senior Leroy Fludd (1), of Boys & Girls High School readies for his shot.

Photo by Lem Peterkin

By Robert Elkin

It's nothing new for Boys & Girls High School to come into Madison Square Garden and compete for a New York City Public Schools Athletic League basketball championship. Some of the boys are very familiar

with the facilities and the coaches are, also. And for some of the players it is a steppingstone in the right direction.

For one of the assistant coaches, Madison Square Garden is nothing new for him, for he has been around

for a long time, both on the high school and college levels.

He is Gene Carroll, a veteran of coaching, as he at one time became head coach at the Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Continued on next page

Boys & Girls on a high

Continued from previous page

He held the coaching position there for 28 years.

However, for now it is the developing of the high school players so that they can reach the next level.

"It (coaching Boys & Girls at Madison Square Garden) is back home for me, for I was here in 1973 with (head coach) Frank Mickens (at Boys High)," said Carroll after his Kangaroos of Boys & Girls defeated Thomas Jefferson, 71-67 for the title. "And we won in '79."

He came back to the present Boys & Girls school after his tenure at a community college.

He was so glad to return to the high school level where he helped to develop some real great basketball players.

"It's a great job to coach this team when you got an engineer and a head coach like (a female) Ruth Lovelace," Carroll said. "She embraces your knowledge of the game along with hers and it makes a championship. We put everything together and it's a win situation."

In the game last Saturday the Kangaroos were led in scoring

by Rashad Andrews, who scored 26 points from the backcourt position and by forward Leroy Fludd, who tallied 17 points and grabbed 12 rebounds. Jaquan Lynch scored 18 points for Jefferson.

"We three peated (won three straight titles)," summed up Carroll.

The Kangaroos, especially the nine seniors, along with the underclassmen, worked hard for this title.

"We all looked good playing on the Garden floor, and for the win," said Fludd. "This is the most famous arena and we were given the opportunity to play here (at the Garden)."

And it is big for the team, including the players, coaches, and staff at the school, to win three titles during the same number of years, as no school has ever done it before.

"We are honored and felt great for our championship," added Lovelace. "It was difficult (at the start of the season) to bring new players in (and they jelled together very well). The guys stepped up and made plays (in the win over Jefferson). And I did the job successfully."

Cricket Board, players take dispute to court

Continued from previous page

The agreements and other documents safeguarding the rights of the players, came into effect on Sept. 1, 2005, with the provision that they could only be changed or replaced with the agreement of both parties. If not, they would continue in force.

In 2008, the agreements rolled over. However, in 2011, the WICB signaled its intention to unilaterally terminate the agreements.

The WICB's position was that a termination provision can be implied in the agreements even though none is specifically stated.

WIPA objected to this and in reply stated that not only did the parties intentionally omit a unilateral termination clause, but that the agreements mandated that the parties negotiate and come to a new agreement themselves.

Commenting on the judgment, WIPA President and CEO Dinanath Ramnarine said, "This is a big victory for WIPA and the

players.

"Justice Rahim's decision in the matter ensures that the WICB cannot continue to trample upon



WIPA President Dinanath Ramnarine.

AP Photo/Shirley Bahadur

the rights of the players until the matter is thoroughly ventilated in the High Court."

Anthem, fireworks salute Red Bulls

Continued from previous page

The air at New York Red Bull Arena was decorated red and white with flying confetti against the backdrop of flags from the countries of players represented on the Red Bull team; then there was an energetic rendition of the USA national anthem further animated by fireworks during the singing. The fans, numbering 21,024, took the cue and completed the pre-game festivities with loud chants of "let's go Red Bulls! Let's go Red Bulls!"

Moments later, on the cool afternoon with temperatures around the mid-40 degrees, the 2012 home season was under way against the undefeated Colorado Rapids and it was over to former French international and Red Bulls captain Thierry Henry and company, and they did not disappoint.

In the first six minutes of play, both Red Bulls forwards scored; Henry intercepted a back pass by Ross LaBauex in the third minute and scored, and at the six-minute mark, the Frenchman fed scoring partner Kenny Cooper for the second tally and the Red Bulls (2-1, 3pts.) were off and running to a 4-1 victory, its first win of the season in three tries. The loss was Colorado's (2-1, 6pts.) first.

Clearly, there was a marked improvement from the two road losses at FC Dallas and Real Salt Lake. The Red Bulls' 2-0 halftime lead gave impetus to the chants, which continued as the players took the field for the second time. The scoring continued and the same actors performed: Henry registered his second goal of the game and second of the season in the 54th minute and his 20th goal as a Red Bull, while Cooper, in his first start as a Red Bull, got his second of the game and third on the season in the 89th from a cross by the overlapping left defender Roy Miller.

The change was evident first in the Red Bulls defense as Colombian international Wilma Conde immediately made his presence felt with his on-field leadership; the central defender brought calm and composure to the New York defense and made the rest of his teammates better.

Swedish defender Markus Holgersson, who was so shaky in his first two MLS games, seemed composed, and rookie goalkeeper Ryan Meara got his first MLS win and had four saves in the process. It was Conde's lofted pass over the Rapids' defense that sent Henry in on goal for his second tally.

The Rapids, though, soiled



Colorado Rapids goalkeeper Matt Pickens is unable to stop a shot by New York Red Bulls's Kenny Cooper, not pictured, on a goal in the second half of an MLS soccer game, Sunday, March 25, 2012, in Harrison, N.J. The Red Bulls won 4-1.

AP Photo/Julio Cortez

Meara's scoring sheet when Jamaican international Omar Cummings benefitted from Mexican International Rafael Marquez's mistake in front of the home team's goal and scored from 20 yards in the 77th minute for his first goal of the season.

The confidence permeated the team; midfield play was much better, though still lacking a creative spark, and the overall aggression last Sunday afternoon, instigated by the enthusiastic fans, led to Colorado's early mistakes.

The Rapids were without captains and midfield duo Pablo Mastroeni and Jeff Larentowicz, which caused constant distortions in the team's shape. LaBauex's back pass, which led to New York's first goal, was a result of a lack of midfield support; there was no one in sight to help LaBauex and this led to the pass back to goalkeeper Matt Pickens. The Rapids looked a disorganized bunch who lacked leadership.

The Red Bulls will host the Montreal Impact in its second home stand on Saturday, March 31 at 4:00 p.m.; Montreal (1-1, 3pts.) is in its first MLS season.

In other MLS games last weekend, the Seattle Sounders knocked off the Houston Dynamo, 2-0; San Jose topped Toronto FC, 3-0; Columbus Crew beat the Montreal Impact, 2-0; New England Revolution got its first win, over Portland Timbers, 1-0; Chicago handed Philadelphia its third loss in as many games with a 1-0 victory; Chivas USA got past Real Salt Lake, 1-0; Kansas City keeps rolling as it defeated FC

Dallas, 2-1; and the Vancouver Whitecaps and DC United played to a goalless draw.

Trinidad & Tobago Lose

The Trinidad and Tobago men's Under-23 team is on the verge of missing the summer Olympics in London this summer after a devastating 7-1 loss to Mexico in its CONCACAF Olympics qualifier at the Home Depot Center in Carson, CA. Friday night; the Junior Soca Warriors, needing a win in their second game, managed a 1-1 tie against Panama on Sunday.

The result revealed a big gap between Caribbean youths and the top teams in Central and North America; against Mexico, the Trinidadians had problems to keep possession of the ball for long periods in the game. The Trinidadian defense kept the Mexican attacks at bay for the first 20 minutes of the game, but eventually broke down and made way for the Mexican onslaught.

Caribbean youngsters need more exposure to top-level competition to build confidence and to be able to hold their own in international contests. The tactical approach to the game has to be more positive; Trinidad failed to pressure Mexico in their half and allowed the Mexicans to come out of their half of the field uncontested. Trinidad defended too deep in front of their goal and created many problems for themselves. The Junior Soca Warriors were scheduled to play Honduras in the last group match.

Windies decision to bat last was wrong

West Indies' decision to bat last in the fifth and final One-Day International against Australia was premature. It does not matter if it was Captain Darren Sammy's decision or a collective decision with Head Coach Ottis Gibson, it was still wrong. The fourth One-Day International ended in a victory for the West Indies with most of their batsmen returning to form. Adrian Barath's return was a boost for the team and Kieron Pollard's 102 was a clear sign that the West Indies has taken the initiative.

Batting First was Essential

Batting first after winning the toss was important to the West Indies in getting the upper hand of the match. West Indies are playing at home and confidence, along with knowledge about wickets and playing conditions, should be advantageous for the host team.

Captain Darren Sammy and Ottis Gibson erred in



Eyes on Cricket

By George H. Whyte

allowing Australia to take first strike. Team Australia piled up 281 runs with their openers having a swash-buckling partnership of 118. Captain Shane Watson and his opening partner David Warner took full advantage and used their experience, mixing aggression with caution and expedited their batting powers with excellence.

The most important thing for the Aussies in the final One-Day was that they did not lose an early wicket, while David Warner was more of the aggressor of the two openers, playing aggressively against every bowler that he faced. The tourists' innings of 281 was boosted by three half-centuries by Captain Shane Watson 66, David Warner 69 and Peter Forrest 53. It was unnecessary to give the Aussies first strike. The West Indies were

bowled out for 251, losing the game by 30 runs.

West Indies captain and head coach will have to modify their decision-making going into the test series, which starts Saturday, April 7. The ODI series ended 2-2 -- a tame draw, with one game ending in a tie.

Andre Russell Has Great Potential

Andre Russell has tremendous abilities but his batting must be closely monitored by Head Coach Ottis Gibson. Russell should be batting at Number Four, because he has the ability to perform against pace and spin. He is a powerful and confident player who has the courage to bat in that position and produce for the West Indies. Darren Bravo must bat lower in the batting order.

Darren Bravo Must go Down in the Order

It is fitting to allow Dwayne Bravo to bat ahead of his brother Darren Bravo. In spite of Darren being out of form, he will serve the team much better in One-Day cricket batting at number six. Doing this will create stability for the middle order and give the West Indies batting much more depth.

A vital partnership is important in the top order of the batting and another two at minimum is needed in the middle to reach winning targets. In the top order, aggression must be mixed with excellent consolidation to avoid too many wickets being taken. Dwayne Bravo has been around for a good while and as a senior player he needs to come up with some good scores for the team.

Wicket keeper Carlton Baugh seems to have a crucial battle with the higher level of cricket. He is not



West Indies' Captain Darren Sammy drives for a single off Australia's Clint McKay during their fifth and final One-day International cricket match in Gros Islet, St. Lucia, Sunday, March 25, 2012.

AP Photo/Andres Leighton

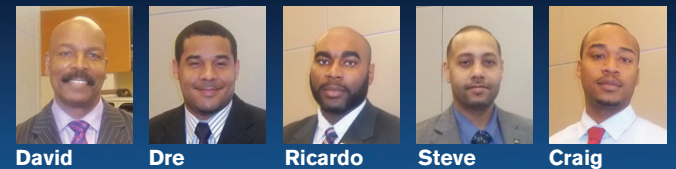
getting useful scores and that contributes to the setback for the team. In order for West Indies to effectively challenge the Aussies

in test cricket, they have to bat extremely well and avoid too many mistakes. Windies bowlers seem to be internationally competitive.



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Caribbean Crossword by StatePoint Media, Inc.

ACROSS

1. *Harry Potter's antagonist
6. Hole puncher
9. Attention grabber
13. Beyond suburban
14. Sheepish cry
15. Supports climbing plants
16. *Holmes would try to verify this
17. Make a mistake
18. Popular jewelry stone
19. *Toni Morrison's Pulitzer winner
21. *Emerald City visitor
23. Before tac
24. Sports award
25. Siesta
28. **"A Clockwork Orange" protagonist
30. Performed alone
35. Away from wind
37. Heart feeling
39. Mother-of-pearl
40. Live bait
41. "Now _____ entertainment!"
43. Not Sunni
44. Used to call someone's attention, pl.
46. Expression of pain
47. Dissenting clique
48. Street of shops, especially in orient
50. Fraud or imposter
52. U Rah ____!

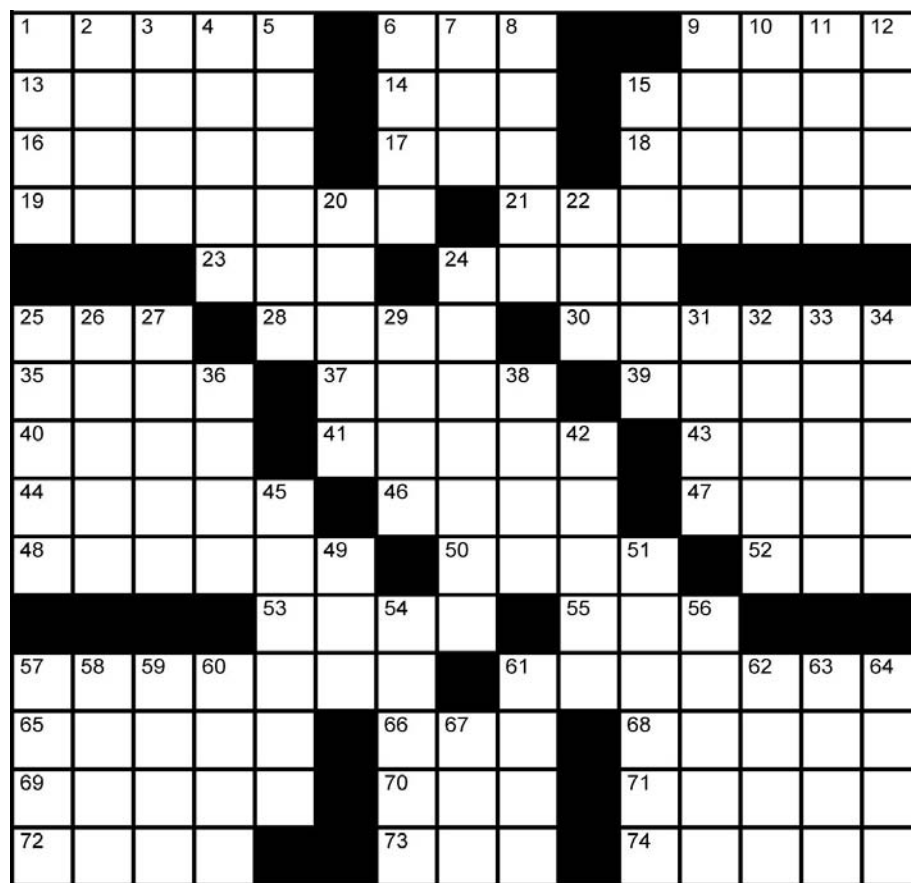
53. Mixed breed canine

55. ____ de Janeiro
57. *It chronicles Leopold Bloom's journey through Dublin
61. *Twist and Heep creator
65. _____ Protocol on climate change
66. Consumed
68. China Grass
69. NBA great _____ Baylor
70. St. Louis player
71. Speak one's mind
72. Make hot and dry
73. ____ Lanka
74. Used as fertilizer and explosive

DOWN

1. Not bright
2. "_____ of thumb"
3. Seed cover
4. 15th century North America explorer
5. Famous picture book pig
6. Tucked in
7. *One main topic in Tolstoy's 1869 classic
8. Hog fat, pl.
9. Jumping stick
10. A team reserved for emergencies
11. Comedian with red, curly hair
12. 3-point shot

15. Heavy elementary particle
20. Enthusiastic approval
22. Roman goddess of fertility
24. Car emission, e.g.
25. Honorific title given to Muslim rulers
26. Central Pacific greeting
27. Actress Rosie
29. Repeating sound
31. Lad's counterpart
32. Autumn color
33. **"Fear of Flying" author Jong
34. *It happened in Venice
36. *Jane Austen classic
38. _____ A Sketch
42. African river, also spelled "Chari"
45. Delilah's trusting victim
49. Street in Paris
51. One millionth of a meter
54. Former Russian leaders
56. Giraffe-like African animal
57. Short for ukuleles
58. Singer/actor Lovett
59. Hindu discipline
60. Evoke emotion
61. Ashton's ex
62. Give off
63. Number of baseball fielders
64. Tiresias in "Oedipus Rex," e.g.
67. Smoker's lung residue



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TO: BERNADETTE FLOOD
ADDRESS: 961 Eastern PWY, Apt. F5, Brooklyn, NY, 11213
CASE NO. ST-11-DI-208
ACTION FOR DIVORCE
Within the time limited by law you are required to appear before the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands and answer to a complaint filed against you in this action for divorce. In case of your failure to appear or answer, Judgment by Default will be taken against you as demanded in the Complaint for Divorce. Witness my hand and seal of this Court this 2nd day of November, 2011.
Clerk of the Court
Venetia H. Velazquez, Esq.
Address:

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Trevor Antoine, Pro Se
19B Kongens Gade
St. Thomas, VI 00802

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FAMILY COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF BRONX AMENDED SUMMONS
Docket No.: F-10074-11/11A
In the Matter of GEORGE NURSE, IN THE NAME OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
TO: ALLISON ALEXANDER. A Petition under Article 4 of the Family Court

► LEGAL

Act having been filed in this Court, and annexed hereto; YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to appear before the Family Court at 900 Sheridan Avenue, Lower Main Floor/Room Part 22, Bronx, NY, Continued Trial/Hearing, on the 13th day of April, 2012 before the Hon. Harold E. Bahr III at 11:00 o'clock in the forenoon of said day to answer the petition and to be dealt with accordance with the Family Court Act. PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on your failure to appear as herein directed, a warrant may be issued for your arrest. PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that you are entitled to be represented by an attorney, and, if you cannot afford to retain an attorney, one will be appointed to represent you by the Court free of charge to you. Dated: BY ORDER OF THE COURT s/ Michael J. Williams Clerk, Family Court, Bronx County.

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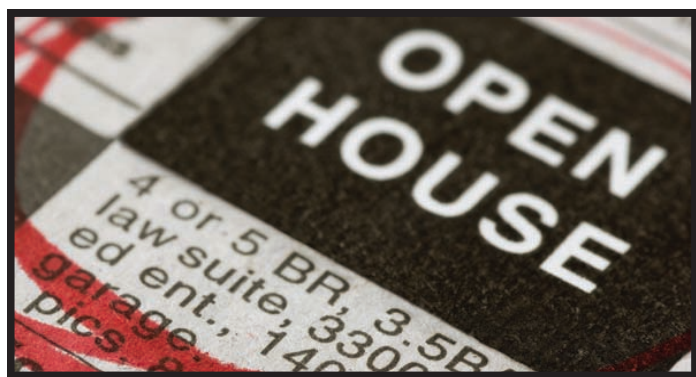
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Last week, we discussed how to take notes. This week we'll focus on listening.

No matter what method of note-taking is used, adequate listening skills are necessary to take effective notes. This helps students transfer what the professor is saying into ideas that can be put down on paper. Staring off into space or having your mind drift can cause a student to miss out on key parts of a lecture. To improve note-taking skills, a student must first improve listening skills.

•**Sit up closer to the teacher or professor:** This enables eye-to-eye contact that may help a student focus. It may also trigger visual clues to a professor to gauge whether the class is catching on or missing what's being taught. It's also advantageous from a practical standpoint. It enables students to better hear what's going on. If the professor is garbled or inaudible when sitting far away, moving closer is essential, especially in a large lecture hall.

•**Remove distractions:** When a student enters the classroom, he or she should be ready to learn. That means silencing mobile devices and gearing the mind toward the lessons. Not every lecture will be exhilarating, so students should make a conscious effort to pay attention. Limiting distractions can help.

•**Use an assistance device:** Students who are prone to "zoning out" may want to ask permission to use a voice recorder. This way if key elements of the lesson are missed, they can be played back. This method also helps students fill in gaps when taking or studying notes. Keys To Note-taking Once listening skills have improved, students can go onto to other note-taking pointers.

Continued next week.

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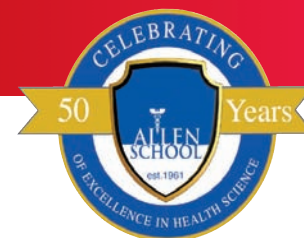
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