

PASSPORT SCHEME IN SPOTLIGHT

Citizenship By Investment Program under unprecedented scrutiny

By Bert Wilkinson

The larger Caribbean trade group countries such as Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica and Trinidad have so far kept their distance from the scheme but a new light is now being shone on the cash for passport and citizenship program which has been embraced by several nations in the Eastern Caribbean Sub Grouping following the airing of a piece on CBS's 60 Minutes Program last Sunday.

Anchor Steve Croft spent several weeks investigating the Citizenship By Investment Program (CIP) and concluded that Antigua, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, Dominica and Grenada have basically converted their national passports and citizenship rights into another saleable commodity like rice or gold.

The timing of the program has come as President-elect Donald Trump is preparing to take up office in just over a week with his avowed plans to deal with immigration and issues related to terrorism. This has caused some anxieties among countries with active CIP programs but officials say they will wait and see where roads lead.

Criticism of the CIP in the past by American officials have been linked to fears that terrorists and people who finance

terrorism might well be able to exploit the limited ability of Caribbean nations to properly check the background of some appliance as has in fact been the case.

This week, both Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Thomas Anthony, the deputy CIU Head were forced to defend the controversial scheme. Anthony acknowledged that the airing of the program would cast new light on the CIP and push regional authorities to engage American and global security officials much more than in the past.

"It means that we would have to interact with the new administration directly at the level of Congress and also lobby political organizations and other members of the House in the US. Either the producers are bent on highlighting the negative aspects of the CIP deliberately without providing the other view, or they are not sufficiently knowledgeable about the programs," the Observer Newspaper quoted him as saying. "We have a multi-tiered approach to due diligence, and there was very little time spent on the robustness of the background checks."

For PM Browne, he made out the island nation of about 100,000 people as a victim country with few other avenues

Continued on Page 6



Congrats to newborn

Parents Yvele Charles and Francois Mackenson were the parents of Kings County hospital's first baby of 2017. Mom Charles, holds their daughter Nhaya, who was born at 4:43 am on Jan. 1. See story on page 3

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Newborns debut on New Years

By Alexandra Simon

The new year made its debut after midnight on Jan. 1, and so did some Brooklyn newborns at New York City Health and Hospitals / Kings County.

The hospital delivered seven babies on New Year's day, with baby girls leading the way with four births. One of those girls was born to Flatbush parents, Yvele Charles and Francois Mackenson. The baby's thrilled dad said the birth of his daughter will forever be memorable to him.

"This is a moment I will never forget, she was born on a special day and the fact that she is my first daughter — that is history for me," said Mackenson.

The couple's daughter Nhaya was born at 4:43 am. Her expected date of birth was Jan. 8 but she came into the world a few days earlier, making her the first baby of 2017 for the hospital.

Mackenson who is also the father of a two-year-old child with Charles, said a holiday birth is unforgettable, but he also said just being there to see the birth of his daughter holds a much stronger meaning.

"It was an exciting experience — it's not really about the day, but really being able to witness the moment," he said.

Almost an hour later, another baby girl was born to 46-year-old mother and St. Lucia native, Simone Gerald.



Simone Gerald gave birth not long after. Her daughter was the second baby born at the hospital on New Years day.

NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County



WIADCA's marketing director, Trinidadian Jean Alexander.

Photo by Elizabeth Graham

WIADCA unveils 50th anniversary celebrations

By Nelson A. King

The Brooklyn-based West Indian American Day Carnival Association (WIADCA), organizers of the extravagant Labor Day Carnival Parade on Brooklyn's Eastern Parkway, has unveiled several activities to mark its 50th anniversary.

According to WIADCA's marketing director, Trinidadian Jean Alexander, the milestone initiative will be held under the theme, "Celebrating 50 years of Caribbean Carnival & Culture - From A Dream to A Legacy."

Alexander said on Tuesday that over two dozen events are being planned to commemorate the historic achievement.

The celebrations begin with a church service at St. Matthews Roman Catholic Church, on Utica Avenue and Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, on Jan. 15, at 11:30 am.

A Black-Tie Gala will be held on Thursday, April 27, at El Caribe Country Club, 5945 Strickland Ave., Mill Basin, in Brooklyn.

Other events include: Make Music New York – June 21, at Ronald Mc Nair Park, Washington Avenue and Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; Memorial Luncheon for late WIADCA President Carlos Lezama – venue, date and time to be announced; Family Day, July 22, at Ronald Mc Nair Park, Washington Avenue and Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; Arts in Education - Visits to Schools – Costume-Making Workshops, WIADCA Office Rogers Avenue, Brooklyn, May-June; and Costume-Making Workshops – Queens Borough Hall – May-June.

Alexander said West Indian carnival in New York was born in Harlem in the

early 1930's in the Grand Ballrooms of the Renaissance, Audubon, Savoy and other venues in the form of indoor "costume parties."

"They were hosted by West Indian immigrants, who were homesick at carnival time and tried to recreate their carnival traditions here in the US, as they remembered in their home countries of Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and St. Vincent, etc., as the very cold Lenten season approached," Alexander said.

In the mid-1940's, led by Trinidadian Jessie Wardell, the West Indian Carnival was brought onto the streets in Harlem, Alexander said.

After a number of years, she said the rapidly-growing spectacle attracted opposing groups, and was finally stopped by the City.

Rufus Goring, a Trinidadian, who produced costumes for Harlem Carnival, staged a small carnival in Brooklyn in 1965, Alexander said.

However, she said he did not have a "permit, and the authorities stopped the celebration."

Alexander said Goring then enlisted the help of his friend, Trinidadian Carlos Lezama, "a very strong-willed steel pan player who was also determined, ambitious and charismatic, and who always found a way to get things done."

WIADCA was established in Brooklyn in 1967 under Lezama and "a handful of dedicated members," Alexander said.

She said Lezama was re-elected many times during his 34-year presidency.

When he retired in 2001, his daughter Yolanda Lezama-Clark, a registered nurse, was elected president, serving for 10 years.

In 2012, Trinidadian Thomas Bailey was elected WIADCA president, serving a three-year term.

William R. Howard was elected president in December 2015, heading a 13-member board of directors.

Alexander said WIADCA's volunteer membership roster have expanded to over 50 persons.

She said an additional part-time group of more than 100 "seasonal volunteers complement the membership with tasks required."

Alexander said WIADCA recently agreed to partner with numerous established groups and agencies, including the US Department of Commerce; the Barbados-based Caribbean Tourism Organization; and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), with its Secretariat in Georgetown, Guyana.

"WIADCA's purpose is to promote various Caribbean cultural art forms, to develop and encourage talented Caribbean nationals and to provide an enhanced life experience for the wider non-Caribbean community," Alexander said.

"We showcase music, design and performing arts through staged events throughout the year, ending the season with a tribute to our "Caribbean Carnival," while promoting the support of those businesses that make it possible," she added.

Alexander said the five-day festival culminates in a "spectacular New York Carnival Parade" — considered the largest in North America — on Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn on Labor Day, the first Monday in September that is celebrated as a public holiday in the US.

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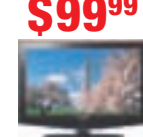
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Antigua left with no other revenue choice



Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

Associated Press / Diego Azubel, Pool

Continued from page 6

for earning state revenues.

“So what are we supposed to do sit back and do, nothing? You tell me,” he shot back at the CBS anchorman.

“Our law provides for them to spend at least five days here. We have made sure at least there must be some face to face contact so we know who these people. We are looking for high networth individuals, people who are established business people who are well known and to make sure we get the crème de la crème,” Browne said.

Except for Antigua and St. Kitts, the other operating countries are still reeling from the collapse of their banana export industries to the European Union and the attendant loss in state revenues.

For Antigua, the US smashed its internet gaming sector that had employed thousands of locals and had brought in nearly a billion in revenues.

Authorities there say they have no choice but to offer passports and citizenship to applicants across the globe for prices ranging from \$100,000 to about \$500,000 with requirements in

some jurisdictions for investment in local real estate.

And damaging to the CIP could be the point made by Dominican officials that applicants do not even have to set foot on the island. They could simply apply online. How this will play with the incoming administration is left to be seen even as the timing of the airing could prove to be devastating.

Haitians fear deportation

By Alexandra Simon

The Temporary Protective Status (TPS) of Haitians in the United States is under questionable circumstances with the new and incoming administration. Fears of restrictive immigration changes when President-elect Trump enters the office looms in the concerns of many Haitian Americans, including a Ditmas Park councilman.

Councilman Mathieu Eugene recently introduced Resolution 1290 to the City Council, which aims to protect the status of Haitians entering and living in the country. He said that by not allowing Haitians to stay in the United States following the destructive Hurricane Matthew, which weakened living conditions, immigrants are subject to the country’s concurring and dire vulnerable state.

“Haiti has seen many natural disasters and all of those disasters have created so much devastation, which makes the living situation there worse,” he said. “Haiti is always in a difficult situation — and now we have a lot of people in United States granted TPS.”

In the aftermath of the deadly earthquake in 2010, the Department of Homeland Security granted TPS to Haitians. Eugene said this grant lessens the strain already put on the country.

“The earthquake was a big blow to Haiti and up to now Haiti is still trying to recover from it, and recently hurricane Matthew destroyed the southern part of the country killing animals and vegetation,” he said.

He said Haiti’s government cannot sustain the demands of its citizens locally and abroad, due to the constant destruction that they cannot prepare for.

“Haiti is not in the position to handle all of those people,” he said. “Haiti is facing so many difficulties because of disasters and if they send them back, this is going to ruin social life.”

Now almost seven years since it was introduced, some are feeling fearful of the policy changing into something that it was not, particularly as the threat of deportation grows. But Eugene said his legislation is asking for an extension that will allow Haitians to stay and live in the states, to allow Haitians living here to be free of other concerns in addition to the ones they deal with here.

“When they deport people to Haiti that will affect Haitian-American citizens,” said Eugene. “Those are their children, brothers, sisters — that is going to affect them and their livelihood, because they would be forced to take care of them when they get back to Haiti.”

OPHTHALMIC SURGERY

Simple Procedure Improves Dry Eyes & Sagging Eyelids

Exclusive interview with Dr. Golio, Director of Craniofacial Surgery

If you have recurring infections on your eyelashes, dry eyes, feeling of dirt, debris, sand, odd bodies or watery eyes, you are not alone. A simple procedure performed under local anesthesia can help.

Dr. Dominick I. Golio says, “A growing number of people flock annually to be examined due to these symptoms. There are many different causes for these problems. Age, Arthritis, the use of certain drugs to lower blood pressure, meds to treat allergies, Parkinsons & nerves may increase the chances of dry eyes exposing them to recurring infections & other serious conditions.”

Not everyone can reduce or stop using meds or drops of artificial tears and antibiotics are not enough for many. Dr. Golio explains, “A test that all patients with these symptoms should take in front a mirror, lower the lower eyelid with the index finger and hold it in this position for five seconds. It is important not to blink for this test. Typically, the lid returns to its normal position in a second. We often see patients with such sagging eyelids that after taking this test their eyelids do not return to their position within 7 to 10 seconds.”

A simple procedure that does not require hospitalization, removes a small amount of skin from the edge of the eyelid restoring the position thereof. “It’s like

pulling the rope of a hammock that has withered with time,” says Dr. Golio.

If this situation is not corrected, eyes that are exposed outdoors for longer periods of time may have increased symptoms and incidences of infections. Flabby eyelids occasionally veer inward and the lashes touching the eye causing even more irritation.

This procedure that corrects a sagging lower lid is done under local anesthesia by removing excess skin, aligning the eyelid to the outer eye while removing excess fat by pulling the eyelid down. There is no pain or patches needed, you return home the same day and the stitches fall out on their own within one or two weeks.

The same day of the surgery you can watch television, read a book, warm up your own food as well as wash your face permitting the stitches to get wet.

In short, you will be able to fend for self the same day of procedure.

Private insurances and Medicare will cover the procedure when it’s done to correct the excess flab, symptoms of tearing, recurrent infections or inversion of the eyelashes. This procedure should not be confused with under-eye bags that are considered a cosmetic concern and therefore is not covered by any insurance.



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Economist and former prime minister, Owen Arthur. Photo by George Alleyne

Whither the Barbados economy in 2017

By George Alleyne

The way forward for Barbados remains uncertain as the island entered 2017 laboring under the burden of high expenditure and a large national debt, with government resisting advice to seek International Monetary Fund help.

Two leading economists have said that the Freundel Stuart administration should enter a deal with the IMF to get access to much needed loans on easy terms, but despite being in constant consultation with that organization, Government has held back from a formal agreement, fearing that the deal may involve devaluation of the Barbadian dollar, which is currently pegged at Bar\$1 to 50 cents US.

This comes against the backdrop of the Central Bank of Barbados statement in September indicating that net government debt had grown to \$8.4 billion from the \$7.8 billion registered at the end of the same period last year.

Also as of September, government's total revenue stood at \$1.2 billion, against current expenditure at \$1.3 billion.

Then in December government moved to parliament and increased the amount it could borrow on the domestic market from \$6.5 billion, which was already used up, to \$7.5 billion.

Added to all this, the Central Bank

stated in the September report that it had financed government operations by lending it \$114 million, an action which it described as 'money creation'.

Economists have long criticized this Central Bank practice of 'money creation', labeling it 'money printing' because the supply of extra currency is not matched by an increase of US dollars in the Treasury.

"The continued financing of government's operation in large measure by the printing of money by the Central Bank will keep us on a path that leads to certain destruction," said economist and former prime minister, Owen Arthur, who led Barbados for 14 years, and is credited with steering

the island through its most prosperous times.

Arthur said in November that the solution lies in seeking an assistance package from the IMF.

But the Prime Minister Freundel Stuart administration has been talking with the IMF, however, only at the level of Article IV consultation, which see representative of the Fund visiting the island annually to examine the state of affairs and make recommendations, that government tries to follow.

Arthur charged that this amounts to, "implementing an IMF style adjustment programme without having access to the IMF funding," that the island so badly needs to get out of its debt hole.



Minister of Finance Chris Sinckler.

Photo by George Alleyne

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TOP DRIVER DISTRACTIONS

Using mobile phones

Leading the list of the top distractions behind the wheel are mobile phones. Phones now do more than just place calls, and drivers often cannot pull away from their phones, even when driving. According to the California Department of Motor Vehicles, studies have shown that driving performance is lowered and the level of distraction is higher for drivers who are heavily engaged in cell

phone conversations. The use of a hands-free device does not lower distraction levels. The percentage of vehicle crashes and near-crashes attributed to dialing is nearly identical to the number associated with talking or listening.

Daydreaming

Many people will admit to daydreaming behind the wheel or looking at a person or object outside of the car for too long. Per-

haps they're checking out a house in a new neighborhood or thought they saw someone they knew on the street corner. It can be easy to veer into the direction your eyes are focused, causing an accident. In addition to trying to stay focused on the road, some drivers prefer the help of lane departure warning systems.

Eating

Those who haven't quite mastered walking and

chewing gum at the same time may want to avoid eating while driving. The majority of foods require a person's hands to be taken off of the wheel and their eyes to be diverted from the road. Reaching in the back seat to share some French fries with the kids is also distracting.

Try to eat meals before getting in the car. For those who must snack while en route, take a moment to pull over at

a rest area and spend 10 minutes snacking there before resuming the trip.

Reading

Glancing at an advertisement, updating a Facebook status or reading a book are all activities that should be avoided when driving. Even pouring over a traffic map or consulting the digital display of a GPS system can be distracting.

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US heads for political showdown with UN

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 27, 2016 (IPS) - The United States has had a longstanding love-hate relationship with the United Nations ever since 1952 when the world body began operations in New York city on an 18-acre piece of land which housed an abattoir where cattle was being trucked daily for slaughter.

The late Republican Senator Jesse Helms, a fulltime chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a part-time UN basher, once said “providing funds to the UN was like pouring money into a rat hole.”

Former New York city Mayor Ed Koch used a five-letter word to describe the UN: a “sewer.” And one of his successors, Rudolph Giuliani, said he will not miss the UN if it decides to pack up and leave New York.

When the 193-member UN General Assembly voted some of the world’s “repressive regimes” as members of the Human Rights Commission (now the Human Rights Council), Congressman Dana Rohrabacher (Republican of California) hollered: “The inmates have taken over the asylum. And I don’t plan to give the lunatics any more American tax dollars to play with.”

And now, US President-elect Donald Trump, peeved over a Security Council resolution last week chastising Israel over its continued settlements in the occupied territories, has signaled an implicit warning he will review his relationship with the United Nations.

Having been rebuffed by outgoing President Barack

Obama who refused to accede to Trump’s appeal to veto the resolution, the incoming President, who will take office on Jan. 20, challenged the effectiveness of the world body and dismissed it as “a club for people to get together, talk and have a good time.”

Immediately after the resolution was adopted by a vote of 14–nil, with the US abstaining, he held out a warning: “As to the UN, things will be different after Jan. 20.”

Currently, the US is the biggest single contributor accounting for 22 percent of the UN’s regular biennium budget, followed by Japan (9.7 percent), China (7.9 percent), Germany (6.7 percent) and France (4.8 percent) – all based on a country’s “capacity to pay.”

The UN’s 2016-2017 regular biennium budget amounts to about \$5.4 billion, excluding its peacekeeping budget and voluntary contributions to UN Funds and Programmes.

Following the Security Council vote on Friday, Senator Lindsey Graham (Republican-South Carolina) said he plans to form a bipartisan coalition to either suspend or reduce US funding for the UN.

And Senator Tom Cotton (Republican-Arkansas) warned that the UN and “nations supporting the resolution (against Israel) have now imperiled all forms of US assistance.”

While the US withheld its veto and abstained on the vote, the other four veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council, namely, the UK, France, China and Russia, voted for the resolution, along with the 10 non-per-



United Nations Secretariat Building. Inter Press Service

manent members, namely, Angola, Egypt, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela.

A defiant Israel was livid, and in retaliation, threatened to build another 5,600 settlements in occupied Jerusalem thereby isolating itself further from the international community.

Jim Paul, former executive director of the New York-based Global Policy Forum, and who closely monitored the politics of the world body for over 19 years, told IPS the US threat of withholding its dues to the UN has been around for a long time – since the 1980s when it was first proposed by the Washington-based Heritage Foundation.

“This threat is effective only if it is believed and acted on by frightened UN officials or member states, who rush to adopt the latest requirements by the bully-state,” he noted.

“It actually might be healthy if the US dues were reduced and the UN were not so dependent on US financing, he added.

Paul pointed out that Swedish Prime Minister the late Olaf Palme once suggested that the UN’s dues structure should be changed so that no single country would pay more than 10 percent of the total budget(s).

“The cost to other states would not be very burdensome and the change might produce some real policy benefits,” said Paul, a well-known speaker and writer on the UN and global policy issues.

Over the years, successive US administrations have manipulated the UN to its own advantage as an extension of US foreign policy.

Paul pointed out that some delegates from governments who are out-of-favour in Washington are constrained to live within a specified distance from the city and some cannot travel beyond that distance in the US without special permission.

Every once in a while, he said, a head of state or other high official will be denied entry and thus an opportunity to speak at the UN.

“How important is this harassment and what does it tell us?”, he asked. It is short of horrendous and well past acceptable.

“We can conclude that Washington likes to remind the other states – and the UN as an institution – that it can do what it pleases and impose its will whether others like it or not.”

In Washington, they like to call this behavior “leadership” but “bully” might be the most appropriate term, said Paul, who frequently served as

Chair or Vice Chair of the NGO Working Group on the Security Council.

Despite the 1947 Headquarters Agreement between the US and the UN, which calls on Washington to facilitate the functioning of the UN, the US has denied visas to several heads of governments planning to visit the UN to address the General Assembly or accredited as diplomats.

Palitha Kohona, a former Chief of the UN Treaty Section, told IPS the US was a key player in the creation of the UN and the organisation has served US interests well over the years.

“One might even say that the US has manipulated the UN to serve its global interests,” he argued.

Against this background, to return to the confrontational attitudes of the early 90s, when the US withheld its dues, would be self-defeating, said Kohona, a former Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the UN.

He said the US is no longer the only country with overwhelming financial clout.

“To threaten the UN with financial sanctions would only result in the further waning of US influence in the UN and globally. All countries, especially countries like the US, must continue to work together to make the world a better place,” he declared.

Although complaints against the UN have been never ending – including unpaid parking tickets, and tax-free and duty-free privileges for high-ranking UN-based diplomats – US politicians have rarely admitted the political and economic advantages of the presence of the UN on American soil.

And a new report released recently by the Office of the New York city Mayor points out that the UN generates \$3.69 billion in total economic output to New York city’s economy.

The 15,890 individuals directly employed by the UN Community took home house-

Continued on Page 12

Caribbean Life

Founded 1990 • Published by Community News Group
Corporate Headquarters: One MetroTech Center North, Suite 1001, Brooklyn, NY 11201

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Political showdown at UN

Continued from page 10

hold earnings of approximately \$1.64 billion. These household earnings and the operating expenses of the UN Community helped create and sustain 7,940 jobs for New Yorkers.

Titled "The United Nations Impact Report 2016", it was released by the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for International Affairs Penny Abeywardena

In 1946, New York City competed with cities from London to San Francisco to host the official headquarters of the UN.

Unlike past Mayors, the current Mayor of New York city Bill de Blasio has been a strong supporter of the UN. "New York City is not only an economic and cultural capital, but a diplomatic one. We are proud to be the host city to the United Nations headquarters and the largest diplomatic community in the world," he said following the release of the new report.

"The impact of the United Nations stretches far beyond New York City and this study reflects the city's enduring commitment to supporting this critical institution," he added

Still the political benefits of the UN to the United States have not been as clearly highlighted.

Kohona told IPS the US, with its vast economic and political influence, has without reluctance, manipulated the UN to justify its actions, including military interventions.

One recalls (former US Secretary of State) Colin Powell's efforts, with videos and photographs, to convince the Security Council of the existence of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in Iraq or the intense phone calls to diplomats whose countries were members of the Human Rights Council when a US sponsored resolution on Sri Lanka was being taken up for vote at the Council.

He said evidence is also now emerging of the blatant US manipulation of the global media, including with manufactured news, with the objective of influencing diplomatic outcomes.

The current Secretary-General, whose interventions, have generally been on the side of the US, also tends to be influenced by the US and the New York media.

His home being in New York is a factor in this outcome. Perhaps the Secretary-General should rotate his residence around the capitals of the P-5, including in the UK, France, China and Russia.

The writer can be contacted at thalifdeen@aol.com

Trinidad investigates financing of terrorist activities

By Azad Ali

The Trinidad and Tobago Financial Unit (FIU) has reported that 182 T&T nationals may be involved in financing the activities of terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State (ISIS).

This was disclosed by Minister in the Ministry of Attorney General Stuart Young who told a post-Cabinet new conference for 2016 at the Office of the Prime Minister that the FIU has picked up Suspicious Transactions Reports (STRs) and Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) that approximately 182 T&T citizens are suspected to be involved in the financing of terrorists activities.

He said the total monetary value of the 739 STRs submitted to the FIU for 2016 was \$ 805. 5 million (US\$120 million) and this represented a 127

percent increase in the STR submissions to the FIU in 2015.

He explained that the STRs and SAR's could involve banks, financial institutions, private members club, attorneys and real estate agents.

Young said the focus is on, "certain countries in the Middle East and near to the Middle East."

The minister said local law enforcement agencies have been collaborating with their international partners who have better global monitoring policies, information and intelligence gathering.

Young said the Financial Intelligence Bureau of The Police Service has been, "conducting a number of criminal investigations into some of these transactions...especially some related to the financing of terrorism and other white collar crime."

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New low in Barbados crime

By George Alleyne

December has presented Barbados with unusual incidents in what residents see a year of crime increases, with robbers attacking the clergy, and in another instance, carting away 26 televisions from the national cricket stadium.

These two strange twists in robberies — where bandits showed no respect for men of the cloth in a country known for its religious fervor, and burglarized Kensington Oval, a place held dear to cricket-crazy Barbadians — seemed a symbolic end of a year in which residents cried out about an increase in crime, while authorities maintained that theft has been decreasing over the years.

Bishop of the Anglican Church of Barbados, Dr. John Holder, Wednesday severely criticized the new low attained by thieves who had robbed the minister in charge of the Sharon Moravian Church, and that place of worship's organist, just as they pulled into the driveway of the institution in St. Thomas.

Expressing an overall worry

of religious bodies about any form of theft, Dr. Holder said, “for us in the church, it’s a great concern when people enter churches and take property. It is not simply a matter of stealing, it is a matter of losing respect for sacred places.”

“In traditional Barbados a church was almost immune from those types of activities, and when this happens it seems to happen at a fairly regular pace. It is saying that we have in this society persons who have lost respect for that understanding of the church as a sacred space, which goes across religions.”

While Barbadians share Bishop Holder’s lament of the displayed contempt for places of worship and persons who lead in such religious practices, residents are also enduring a sense of indignation that the place Bajans regard as the Caribbean ‘Mecca’ of cricket has been invaded and robbed.

Two of the island’s three daily newspapers on Thursday carried reports of a Kensington Oval security officer being remanded to prison for, apparently collaborating with

others, and fetching away 26 of the famed cricket venue’s flat screen TV’s, an essential prop of modern cricket providing action-replays for patrons.

Remanding the suspected TV thief, Linus Joel Cumberbatch, to detention until Jan. 25, Magistrate Douglas Fredrick, pointed out that the accused man is believed to have taken, “not one, two, three or four,” of these appliances, but, “up to 26 televisions... [with] still 16 more to be recovered.”

“A fella carrying 26 televisions from one place... it gives argument to an enterprise taking place.”

Magistrate Douglas’ suggestion of this theft being ‘enterprise,’ or organized criminal activity, comes against a backdrop of Acting Commissioner of Police Tyrone Griffith, and his political boss, Attorney General Adriel Brathwaite, taking a long-term view of crime on the island.

While providing no figures, both men have said that the crime situation is better than it was before.



Anglican Bishop, Dr John Holder.

Photo by George Alleyne

According to Brathwaite, a look over the past five years would show that crime is not spiraling out of control.

In September, acting Commissioner Griffith boasted that Barbados is the safest it has been in 15 years.



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CARIBBEAN ROUNDUP

Continued from page 4

rusting.

Head of the A-FDD Marlan Cole in a statement said that samples of the imported product were retried by inspectors for examination on Nov. 29.

He said upon examination, the coded information on the time revealed that the products were manufactured on Aug. 1, 2014 and not June 1, 2016, as was stated on the labels.

Cole also said that the tins were already rusting while the Free / Sale Health Certificate from China DA was inconsistent with those usually presented to the department.



Jamaica

Jamaica's Commissioner of Police Dr. Carl Williams will be stepping down from office next month.

According to the Gleaner newspaper Dr. Williams wrote to the Police Service Commission indicating he will proceed on early retirement from Jan. 6, 2017. He said his decision was based on personal reason.

Dr. Williams joined the Jamaica Constabulary Force in 1984 and moved up the ranks to top cop. He was appointed Commissioner in 2014.

The commissioner is preparing to leave the JCF as the country grapples with a high crime rate.

Police figures for Jan. 1 to September 2016 show that 894 murders had been committed, averaging 100 murders a month



Castries after attempts were made to fly him to the French island for medical treatment.

Sir Dwight died just over a year after announcing his retirement in late 2015 after 26 years of service as governor the ECCB that serves as a central bank for Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts-Nevis, Montserrat, Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands.

St. Lucia's Prime Minister Allen Chastanet said the Caribbean had lost an "unparalleled genius," noting that Sir Dwight was a pioneer and among the most respected men in "our region and has served the Caribbean and financial fraternity with distinction."



Trinidad

Trinidad and Tobago recorded its highest murder rate in six years with 452 people killed in 2016, which is 10 percent higher than in 2015.

The number is nowhere close to the record high 550 murders recorded in 2008.

In a statement by the Powerful Ladies of TT (PLOTT), in which data for the numbers for 2016 was compiled by the group's Crime Research Team of Danielle Francois and Gillian Wall several facts were presented.

Among those were that, as of Nov. 30, 2016, 88.4 percent of all killings in the country have been by shooting and stabbing.

About 75 percent of all victims were killed by firearms, the majority of them were Africans, the team said.

Most murders were males (88 percent) between the ages of 26 and 35, while 54.6 were males between the ages of 16 to 35 years, the release stated. It said of all the women murdered in T&T, 31 percent were by firearm and 43 percent by stabbing.



-compiled by Azad Ali

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Haiti certifies election results

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — An electoral tribunal in Haiti has rejected claims that massive voter fraud marred the November presidential election victory of first-time candidate Jovenel Moise, officials said Tuesday.

The judges found some irregularities but not enough to affect the outcome based on an analysis of 12 percent of the ballots, the Provisional Electoral Council said in a statement that cleared the way for Moise to be officially declared the winner of the race.

Moise, a 48-year-old businessman from northern Haiti who was chosen by former President Michel Martelly to run as the candidate of his Tet Kale party, defeated 26 rivals in the first round on Nov. 20 and avoided a runoff. He won more than 55 percent of the vote, though turnout was low at 21 percent.

Several rivals challenged the results, but the electoral judges said they found “there was no massive fraud,” according to the council, which was expected to formally declare Moise the winner of the election.

Supporters of Maryse Narcisse, one of the leading presidential candidates representing the Fanmi Lavalas party, marched in protest of the electoral tribunal while supporters of Moise posted posters and photos of the candidate throughout the capital and called for him to be installed as president. There were no reports of significant unrest.

Authorities annulled an initial October 2015 election that Moise also won after a special commission found significant fraud. Moise will be sworn in on Feb. 7 if he is formally declared the winner, as now expected.



A supporter of presidential candidate Maryse Narcisse burns tires to protest the final election results in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2017.

Associated Press / Dieu Nalio Chery



President-elect Donald Trump speaks to reporters at Mar-a-Lago after meeting with former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2016, in Palm Beach, Fla.

Associated Press / Evan Vucci

Trump's big immigration war

By Nelson A. King

With just a few days before he is sworn in as the next United States president on Jan. 20, Donald Trump's big immigration war to deport Caribbean and other immigrants may focus on visas, according to reports.

In announcing his priorities for the first 100 days, Trump has vowed to direct the US Department of Labor to “investigate all abuses of visa programs that undercut the American worker,” reported the Washington, D.C.-based McClatchy-DC news network on Monday.

The network noted that Trump's investigation of the alleged abuse of the visa programs was the first promise he made on immigration after the US Presidential Elections in November — “not building a border wall or deporting millions of immigrants living in the country illegally.”

“While it doesn't generate the same headlines as building a massive wall, the visa issue is almost as explosive,” said McClatchyDC, pointing to critics of offshoring as saying that a US visa program that lets in foreign workers is often the first step to moving American jobs overseas.

The H-1B visa program issues work permits to as many as 85,000 foreign workers a year with “highly specialized knowledge” to fill jobs when qualified Americans can't be found, said the network.

It added that tech giants, such as Facebook, and other corporate entities, like Bank of America and Caterpillar, “have long argued that the 85,000 annual cap is still too few and that they need to bring in more foreign tech workers because they can't find enough highly-skilled American workers.”

But critics of the program say H-1B visas are increasingly being abused and that American workers are being laid off as US companies send work to outsourcing companies that employ thousands of H-1B workers, according to McClatchyDC.

However, it said the possibility that a Trump administration might target the H-1B visa program worries employers who depend on it.

“I, personally, am terrified for what the Trump administration could mean for H-1B visas and access to them,” Onyema Ezech, an immigration attorney in Charlotte, N.C., who has spoken with local chief executive officers about the issue, told McClatchyDC. “The threat of the H-1B visas being limited is a real one, and one that would hurt companies. And that's why they're having sleepless nights at this point.”

But others say, according to the network, that the increasing dominance of the program by outsourcing firms shows its rife with abuse.

“Their allegation is that firms use the program to bring in workers who get trained on how the work is done, then return to their home country to train workers to do the work there,” the network said.

But Ronil Hira, a professor at Howard University in Washington, who studies visa programs, said the US government is allowing the H-1B program to be used to expedite the offshoring of high-wage tech jobs.

Hira said that of the 10 companies that received the most H-1B visas in 2014, eight specialized in outsourcing or provided outsourcing services.

“If we had done something about this 15 years ago, we would have saved hundreds of thousands, if not millions,

of jobs that have been offshored,” Hira said. “Globalization is going to happen, but we shouldn't have government pushing jobs off-shore.”

Sara Blackwell, a lawyer for some of the employees hired by the Miami-based Caribbean cruise line, Carnival Corp., said time will tell if Trump follows through with his promises.

She, however, applauded the nomination of Senator Jeff Sessions, Republican of Alabama, as US Attorney General, and other advisers, “who have been fighting the issue,” according to McClatchyDC.

It said Trump's ascent to the US presidency has “set off a wave of fear among millions of immigrants in the United States illegally,” who are apprehensive that he will “follow through with promises to deport those here illegally.”

“And he will have at his finger trips the identities and legal status of hundreds of thousands of immigrants who submitted their personal information to President Barack Obama following his executive orders to block their deportation,” said the network, referring to some experts, who claim that “Trump is politically obligated to deport them.”

The network noted that Trump never wavered from the hardline stance on immigration that he staked out when he first announced his candidacy for the US presidency.

The New York businessman pledged to deport the 11 million immigrants living in the US illegally, build a wall along the US-Mexico border, and reverse President Obama's executive actions that have shielded hundreds of thousands of young Caribbean and other immigrants from deportation, saying that “they have to go,” according to McClatchyDC.

Three Kings's Day

Continued from page 11

& ETHIOPIANS READY TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

While a huge chunk of the Christian world regard Dec. 25 as the birth date of Jesus Christ, in Ethiopia the population believes the actual day Christ was born is Jan. 7.

Ethiopian Christmas will be celebrated next Saturday. It is a holiday there and therefore Rastafarians who adhere to the practices of the African nation will likely attend church services on Friday into Saturday.

According to Wikipedia: "The difference in the timing of the Christmas celebrations stretches back to 1582, when Pope Gregory XIII, ruled that the Catholic Church should follow a new calendar — called the Gregorian calendar, as it was closer to the solar calendar than the Julian calendar."

The Julian calendar had been established by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.

"Because it was the catholic pope who ruled on the adoption of the new calendar, many churches not aligned to the papacy ignored it, such as Protestants and the Eastern Orthodox Church. Protestants accepted the new calendar in the early 1700s."

Other Orthodox churches that observe the Jan. 7 date include the Russian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian churches, the Serbs and the Mount Athos monks in Greece.

Epiphany, commonly known as Three Kings' Day in the United States is Jan. 6. It celebrates the three wise men's visit to baby Jesus and also remembers his baptism, according to the Christian Bible's events. Epiphany is one of the oldest Christian feasts. It was celebrated since the end of the second century, before the Christmas holiday was established.

It is commonly known as Twelfth Night, Twelfth Day, or the Feast of Epiphany.

The United States (US) Virgin Islands observe the day as a public holiday. Many people here annually observe Epiphany, or Three Kings' Day, on that date.

The kings are important because their visit illustrates that Jesus was the king of all kings who came for the Jews and the Gentiles.

Tradition relates a tale of three kings who followed a bright new star — Melchior a Sultan king from Arabia took gold, Baltazar, a Nubian king from Ethiopia took precious and aromatic myrrh, and Gaspar, who was said to have traveled the furthest — an emperor from the Orient took priceless frankincense to the birthplace of Bethlehem.

Throughout the US Virgin Islands in the Caribbean, the Three Kings' Day is marked by the people with a Christian observance and a public holiday. To emphasize and maintain their heritage and culture, particularly on the island of St Croix celebration of Three Kings' Day features parades, bands, food, music, and other types of entertainment.

In Mexico, 'El Dia de Reyes' (Three Kings Day), is a holiday that represents the height of the Christmas season. The date marks the culmination of the 12 days of Christmas and commemorates the three wise men that traveled from far, bearing gifts for the infant baby Jesus. The children of Mexico in particular look forward to the holiday as traditionally, gifts are exchanged on this date, not on Christmas day.

There, in Puerto Rico, Spain and many other Latin American countries, Santa Claus holds a place but is not as regarded as the primary gift-giver that he is here. Rather, it is the three wise men who are the bearers of gifts. They leave presents in or near the shoes of small children.

The holiday is also known by the name of the Epiphany which dates back to the 4th century.

Although it is not a public holiday in other parts of the United States, many Christians take part in Epiphany activities with: Star processions on the Sunday closest to Jan. 6 for church services; Parties or get-togethers to clean up homes after the festive season and put away Christmas decorations, Treasure hunts to find a figure of the Christ child, Epiphany luncheons, parties and celebrations among churchgoers, Sunday school activities for children that focus on Epiphany, such as creating the star that led the wise men to Bethlehem.

Catch You On The Inside!



Jorge Velez, Joe Muniz and Tomas Hernandez (from left) cut dashing figures as the three wise men — with Muniz's sunglasses adding an anachronistic touch!
Photo by Stefano Giovannini

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Bed-Stuy bistro bounces back from newbie woes



Donna Drakes, who co-owns Brooklyn Beso Restaurant with her husband, poses with a plate of their tapas — one of their most popular dishes. Photo by Caleb Caldwell



Brooklyn Beso Restaurant is situated in the heart of Bedford-Stuyvesant, giving their new and old residents a fun and hip environment to eat in. Photo by Caleb Caldwell

During the temporary closure they lost some business, and possibly some new customers after being featured on a reality television show on the Food Network, which aired the day after the fire. But Drakes said she used the time to go back to the drawing board and create new plans for the restaurant.

“It did make us pause for a minute and when something comes on television an influx of people usually start coming in, but we were closed for six weeks,” she said.

When Brooklyn Beso Restaurant reopened, Drakes said she revamped how they would conduct business, seeking out efficient employees and emphasizing service. She is now confident of the restaurant’s new outlook, and has the clientele to show for it.

“I have invested so much and once you invest a lot it shows in my pride and I succeed at what I do,” she said. “People are supportive — some people waited until we were open again. I even would overhear people talking about the restaurant, not even knowing my husband and I created an environment that was needed in the neighborhood — we’re grateful.”

Beso Restaurant [370 Lewis Ave. between Macon and Halsey streets in Bedford-Stuyvesant. (347) 915-2900, www.brooklynbeso.com. Mon.–Fri., 3-11 pm. Sat.–Sun, 11 am–11 pm.

By Alexandra Simon

Meet the owners of a vibrant bistro based in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

An unfortunate fire and an onslaught of mixed online reviews almost placed Brooklyn Beso’s future in an ambiguous state. But six years since it first opened, the owners of the Bedford-Stuyvesant bistro are proud of what their business has turned into despite early hardship.

Brooklyn Beso is a relaxed eatery inspired by the cuisines of Latin America and the Caribbean. Its Caribbean-American owners, Edwin and Donna Drakes, opened their first

venture into the restaurant industry in 2011, when they observed a lack of restaurants in the neighborhood catering to the young and lively crowd of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

“We never saw something like it in the community, and we wanted to offer the community something different and that’s why we decided to open,” said Donna Drakes, co-owner of the restaurant.

The restaurant’s menu offers fusion dishes that are influenced by the cuisines of Venezuela, Colombia, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic to name a few. Patrons can find everything from seafood, veg-

etables, chicken, fritters, and flavorful drinks. But their most popular dish are their tapas — fried appetizers that come with a different flavors, such as one made with cod fish that is a kitchen favorite.

“We are known for our bacalao tapas — they are very tasty and we have a variety on menu,” said Drakes.

A busy day usually includes people coming in to relax, but during the summer they are the busiest, said Drakes. Guests come in for the \$18 meals and to wind down to music. Brooklyn Beso has found its groove, but business started out tough. In the early stages

of business, crowds of customers were enjoying the food and coming in, but the negative reviews on their customer service started to shadow everything else, said Drakes, who said it was a tough love realization.

“Our customer service was going through growing pains — every night I was seeing nasty comments left and right,” she said. “But it did help me. If people are constantly saying your service sucks but they like the food, it means you leave the food alone and work on service.”

But in 2013 a fire forced the restaurant to close for repairs.

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

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smallbiz.nypl.org
Small Business Services - Empire State Development New York
www.esd.ny.gov/smallbusiness.html

Small Business - Business First - New York State

www.nyfirst.ny.gov/ResourceCenter/SmallBizMenu.html

2013 New York, NY Small Business Resource

www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/resourceguide_3135.pdf

Business Resources: Internet Bibliographies: New York State Library

www.nysl.nysed.gov/reference/busref.htm
Selected business-related web sites compiled by staff at the New York State Library for use in response to reference questions.

Start a Business in New York — Resources for New York Small Businesses

manhattan.about.com/od/careersjobs/a/nysmallbusiness.htm
Find resources and advice on starting a business in New York City. Get information on New York business licenses and incorporation, free NYC resources for starting a business.

Your Money New York - Help and Resources for Small Businesses

www.yourmoneyny.com/helppresource/smallbusiness/index.php
This section of Your Money New York is designed to help small business owners — and New Yorkers interested in starting a small business.

Small Business Resources - The Business Council of New York

www.bcnys.org/inside/smallbusiness.htm

Capital Business Blog - Read about the issues.

Visit www.nyfirst.ny.gov to learn what New York State can do for businesses.

Resources for Businesses in New York City - bfindapc.com

www.bfindapc.com/...business-resource.../resources-for-businesses-i
If you operate a business in New York City, you are especially fortunate. The city has pulled together a wealth of resources for small business owners.

Small Business Resource Guide - New York - HUD

www.hud.gov/offices/osdbu/resource/guide/local/newyork.cfm
100+ items — to assist the small business community in the State of New York.

Shedding your weight and keeping it off

“Lose Your Final 15” by Rovenia M. Brock, PhD
c.2016, Rodale
\$26.99 / \$31.50 Canada
285 pages

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Somebody passed you a plate of cookies. It was the holidays so, of course, you had to take one. Or three, because they were good; and when the fudge came around, you had that, too. And some pie, cheesecake, punch, homemade candy, now your pants are tight, you feel lazy, and your bathroom scale is screaming. Yep, it's time to step back and step toward “Lose Your Final 15” by Rovenia M. Brock, PhD.

When she was just 9 years old, growing up in Washington, DC, Rovenia Brock had a dual life-changing experience: she lost her mother to cancer and she met her mother's friend, a dietitian who taught Brock the “relationship between diet and health.”

Remembering the woman's words, Brock went to college to be a “nutrition educator” but, like many women of color, she “worried that men wouldn't find me attractive unless I put a little more meat on my bones.” That was unhealthy and she knew it, so she created her Final 15 program.

To begin, take the “Self-Assessment Test” and put yourself in the “F-15 Mindset.” This will help you make better choices when faced with cravings. Also, remember that some hunger is emotional, and that you can understand the difference.

In the planning phase of the Final 15, Brock recommends that you eliminate sugar, sodas, and alcohol. Eat breakfast early, and then “eat often.” Get lots of sleep, and “take special care” if you're a nightshift worker. Understand that buying dairy products, vegetables, fruits, and fish is not merely a matter of going to the grocery store.

Phase 1 teaches readers the basics of eating and exercise. Phase 2 adds more choices to both. Phase 3 of the Final 15 diet is the “Coast and Maintain” phase for lifelong health, but

that doesn't mean letting your guard down.

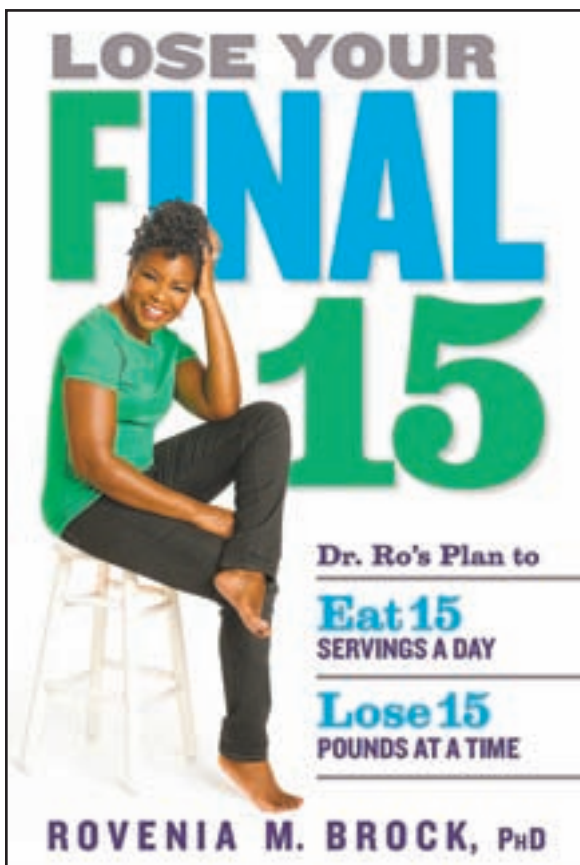
“You can't declare victory,” Brock says, “and then return to your old habits.”

Those last 15 pounds, as they say, are the hardest to lose when you're dieting. But “Lose Your Final 15” helps the first pounds go, the last pounds go, and every ounce in between.

It won't be easy, but author Rovenia M. Brock offers step-by-step hand-holding and useful advice, as well as fat-burner exercises. There are lots of charts inside this book, but nothing too scientific; you'll also find simple recipes that don't require a Food PhD to make. For a little added encouragement, “Dr. Ro” includes success stories from people who've shed their poundage and kept it off.

Readers, however, should know that some chapter sub-headings may seem misleading: you shouldn't, for instance, “Drink Half Your Body Weight in Water,” but you should read the section. The actual page on eating snacks “That Are No Larger Than Your Closed Fist” has more succinct meaning. Read. Carefully.

You might read a little repetition while you do, but it will underscore what's inside this book. If those holiday cookies went from lips to hips and you're walking them off now, “Lose Your Final 15” is a book you shouldn't walk past.



Book cover of “Lose Your Final 15” by Dr. Rovenia M. Brock.



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Antigua PM fires diplomat amid bribery scandal

By Nelson A. King

Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne has fired one low-level diplomat and has threatened to fire another more senior one in the spill-off to an international bribery scandal, according to reports.

Speaking at his government's year-end press conference on Wednesday, Browne disclosed that he fired Hon. Consul Louis Franka and asked Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Casroy James for an explanation, according to the Antigua Observer.

The paper said the prime minister did not give specific reasons for the dismissal of the honorary counsel nor did he indicate why he asked Ambassador James for an explanation.

But the Observer noted that information implicating an Antiguan government official was revealed in a New York court as part of US investigations into a bribery scheme conducted by the Brazil-based construction conglomerate Odebrecht.

The US authorities have not named the two individuals, only describing them as "a consular official" and "an intermediary to a high-level official", the Observer said.

It said the \$3 million bribe was allegedly paid in exchange for the official's promise not to provide international authorities with banking records revealing illicit payments from Odebrecht.

"Prime Minister Gaston Browne says contrary to reports on social media, he has not received any bribes," the Observer said.

The New York Times reported on Dec. 21 that Odebrecht and its affiliated petrochemical firm, Braskem, pleaded guilty in Federal District Court in Brooklyn to charges that they paid hundreds of millions of dollars in bribes over the years.

Together, the companies will pay at least US\$3.5 billion in penalties in a case brought by authorities in the United States, Brazil and Switzerland, said the Times, adding that "it is the biggest penalty for a violation of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977, surpassing a US\$800 million penalty paid by Siemens in 2008 to authorities in the United States."

American officials said that their investigation was continuing and that individuals could also be prosecuted, according to the Times.

It said the settlement followed a



Prime Minister Gaston Browne, of Antigua and Barbuda, addresses the Climate Summit at United Nations headquarters, Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2014.

Associated Press / Richard Drew, File

broad investigation in Brazil into corruption at Petrobras, the state-owned oil company, "that plunged the country into political crisis and spurred protests that led to the ouster of President Dilma Rousseff."

While not implicated, the Times said Rousseff was convicted by Brazil's senate in a separate matter — "the plunge in popular support paved the way for her impeachment in August."

Odebrecht, which built the Miami International Airport and has operations in 27 countries, including the United States, China and Venezuela, has been accused of colluding with Petrobras executives and other contractors, as well as Braskem, to take more than a billion dollars in kickbacks from the oil company, the Times said.

Under the terms of the agreement with prosecutors, Odebrecht has said it will pay US\$2.6 billion, while Braskem has agreed to pay US\$957 million.

The Brazilian investigation into Petrobras, called "Operation Carwash,"

a reference to a service station that laundered money, "has shaken the political establishment to the core," according to the Times.

It said the authorities there have secured 112 convictions of 83 people ensnared in the investigation, including executives of Odebrecht.

The scandal has left Brazil's oil industry bereft of investment during the country's worst economic crisis in decades, the Times said.

"Odebrecht and Braskem used a hidden but fully functioning Odebrecht business unit — a 'Department of Bribery,' so to speak — that systematically paid hundreds of millions of dollars to corrupt government officials in countries on three continents," said Sung-Hee Suh, the deputy assistant attorney general of the criminal division of the Justice Department.

"Such brazen wrongdoing calls for a strong response from law enforcement, and through a strong effort with our colleagues in Brazil and Switzerland, we have seen just that," Suh added.

Go to www.Caribbeanlifeneews.com for the latest in Caribbean news, entertainment, sports, business, viewpoints and more.

UN chief bids farewell

By Nelson A. King

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said goodbye to staff and Caribbean and other Permanent Representatives at UN Headquarters in New York on Friday.

Stating that though he had delivered many speeches over his decade in office, Ban said he had but two important words for those gathered to wish him well: "Thank you."

Thanking staff and delegations for their "hard work [and] leadership for humanity," Ban said that he had been motivated by this commitment and that he was "proud to call you my colleagues."

Citing sustainable development, climate change, gender empowerment and youth, among the issues, which had been at the top of his agenda, Ban urged the enthusiastic gathering to "keep believing [and] working hard" to achieve the noble goals of the UN, and to be a "voice for the voiceless."

"It has been a privilege to serve the world's people. And it has been an honor to serve with you and all our partners — including member states, civil society, and many more," he said.

For his last day in office, the UN said Ban was expected to serve as a special guest on Saturday at the annual New Year's Eve celebration in Times Square in Manhattan, joining New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio to push the Waterford crystal button and lead the 60-second countdown to the New Year.

About one million revelers were expected to fill the fabled Square, joined by over 198 million Americans and more than one billion television viewers worldwide, who will ring in the New Year watching the historic Times Square New Year's Eve Ball Drop, according to the event organizers.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon bids farewell to delegates, staff, senior advisers, and other well-wishers at UN Headquarters in New York. United Nations

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But more than this, now is a wondrous time to discover or re-discover this exceptional catering hall. After a stunning re-modeling of their the grand ballroom, management recently spared no expense when they completely re-did the facility's grand lobby as well as the luxuriously appointed bridal suite, now done up with marble and granite accents for a look of timeless elegance.

They match the walls of marble and granite in the ballroom — which itself sports one of the largest chandeliers in all of Brooklyn — giving you just a brief inkling into what they have in store for you and your guests. Come and see the grandeur for yourself.

But this is only one reason to choose Paradise. Here, they accept only a single function at any one time. There's no splitting of the resources between two or three or even more affairs. When you book Paradise, you get the skills and expertise of every person there, on scene and behind the scenes to assure that your event runs flawlessly.

This sort of ultimate personalized attention starts the very minute you discover Paradise. At this facility, you don't deal with some salesman. You deal directly with one of the owners, Hercules, or his son, Mike. And why is this so essential?

Quite simply, they have a vested interest in making you happy, not just in making a sale. They know their business depends on word-of-mouth recommendations and on the special days yet to come in your life and the lives of your family. Thus, they will do everything in their power to be certain that the affair you have imagined is transformed into reality under the skilled hands of themselves and their staff. That's the secret of their longevity and of their success.

The lavish party room, which can be made intimate enough for parties of 100, or grand enough to host a spectacular of up to 400, is marked by a central chandelier that will take your breath away. It is the focal point for a magnificent space done up in sophisticated pinks and reds, with mirrored accents that lend a touch of infinity to the already expansive area.

The re-done, picture perfect bridal room is large, romantic and very feminine, accommodating up to 15 in easy comfort, with wall-to-wall mirrors.

Ideal photographic locales are assured in this world of environments, which also includes an intimate private garden area, a uniquely designed water fountain, as well as a host of fine, white wrought-iron work.

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Our service is top flight, with the uniformed staff a longtime part of the Paradise family. These are full-time professionals who know their business; not weekend teens learning the trade.

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The catering office is open Tuesday through Sunday, 1 – 9 p.m. Note that the facilities are also available during the weekdays for all types of social meetings and functions.

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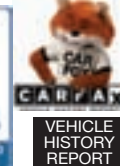
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Travellers leaving Guyana face new fee

By Tangerine Clarke

After enjoying the festive season with family and friends in their homeland, thousands of Guyanese passengers were slapped with an increase in Departure Tax, named a Security Departure fee of GYD\$1000 (USD\$5.00), leaving Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA) on January 1, 2017 when the measure went into effect.

According to the airport administration, all departing passengers must pay the Departure Security Fee, implemented by Finance Minister Winston Jordan who, in his budget speech had announced that the departure tax payable by persons leaving Guyana has remained unchanged for years, and is among the lowest in the world.

As such, Minister Jordan said the Guyana government travel tax that increased from \$2,500 to \$3,500 (USD\$17.50) was put in place to enable airlines to collect and remit the tax to the Revenue Authority, thereby, "making for one less departure line at our airports," and reducing the cost and administrative burden on the GRA. This, he added, would ensure consistency with international practices in the travel industry, according to a release.

The total departure tax is now GYD\$5000, USD\$25.00.

The announcement, however, brought mixed reaction from Guyanese, some, who feel the Republic is an over-taxed nation, not showing any returns for the increases.

In response to invited comments from social media followers, community activist Mark Benschop argues that the departure tax is burdensome on low-income workers who will feel a pinch in their pocket.

"It's always the small man / woman who has to carry the weight. Apart from tax on many things, including water and electricity, I'm yet to hear about job creation or any major investment for



Passengers arriving at Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Guyana.

Photo by Tangerine Clarke

the country," said Benschop, a onetime mayoral candidate.

Jerome M. Patton who is in favor of paying the fee said, "\$1000 Guyanese dollars is only \$5 USD. That is not a hike. Most people traveling to and from Guyana, are from richer countries and certainly can afford that increase."

Noel Issacs said he detests having to pay more for poor conditions at Cheddi Jagan International Airport, and added, "the security staff needs proper training."

"I queried the increase and when an explanation was given to me, I was satisfied that the funds are very important for the plans of the airport expansion. With a new airport in the making, these funds are required."

Lorna Welshman-Neblett added, "I

just wish this was put in place at the time of the 50th celebration," while Olive Crawford foresees the increase going towards rebuilding the airport, and said she would not mind paying the new fee.

"I support the increase because it is reasonable, affordable and goes towards infrastructural improvement, a plausible increase. I am surprised it is not a bigger increase," said Noel Moses.

Guyanese-Canadian businessman Derrick Parkinson, who travels to Guyana regularly, stated, "I have a home and business in Guyana. I am in Guyana much more than many," but agrees that proper service and training of airport staff are needed, although he added, the service does not really bother him personally.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. tribute at BAM

By Vinette K. Pryce

The 31st annual birthday tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. promises another socially enlightening and soul-stirring platform hosted by BAM.

Slated for Jan. 16, this year, the Brooklyn tradition bills Black Lives Matter co-founder Opal Tometi as the keynote speaker.

"This annual tribute at BAM is New York's largest event honoring Dr. King and his legacy," Katy Clark, BAM president said.

"We gather to celebrate his message and its enduring value, and welcome those who have attended this resonant event for many years as well as those new to our community."

Although only three years as a movement, Black Lives Matter started with a social media call-to-action coalition

following the 2014 deaths of two African-American men — Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, and Eric Garner in Staten Island.

BLM became nationally known for its street demonstrations.

Its network now includes 30 local chapters nationwide.

The movement serves as a reminder that social justice is not a given, and the fight for equal treatment of all people should never rest. As the nation addresses issues raised during a polarizing election, Tometi's message will be resonant and timely.

Beginning at 10:30, Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams in his capacity as master of ceremony will introduce activists, musicians, and civic leaders to commemorate the life and legacy of Dr. King.

Through a program dedicated to the memory of the Nobel laureate and Civil Rights martyr, BAM will also feature music performances by The Campbell Brothers and The Institutional Radio Choir.

Following the spirited morning program, at 1 p.m., in the BAM Rose Cinemas (30 Lafayette Ave) the annual tradition of screening films depicting African-American struggle in America offers Ava DuVernay's stirring documentary, "13th."

Directed by Duvernay who has been acclaimed for presenting the Academy-award winning film "Selma" her "thought-provoking documentary," showcases scholars, activists, and politicians in analysis of "the criminalization of African-Americans and the US prison boom."



Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte.
Photo by Tequila Minsky

Bichotte remains committed to equitable education

By Nelson A. King

Brooklyn Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte said she remained committed to New York City public schools "so that all children receive an equitable education."

In her New Year's message to constituents, Bichotte, the first Haitian American from New York City to be elected to the State Assembly, thanked residents for their support in her re-election to the 42nd Assembly District in Brooklyn in November. The district covers Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood and Ditmas Park.

She also commended residents for "contributing to my success in addressing critical issues these past two years."

In 2017, she said she will be committed to "our public colleges by making community college tuition free."

"In addition, I will continue to advocate for affordable housing by continuing to drive the campaign for stronger rent laws, champion criminal justice reforms like raising the age of criminal responsibility for minors and the Fair Chance Act, and push for job creation initiatives and for economic opportunities for Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBs) and small businesses," she said.

"Lastly, I will take the necessary steps to ensure seamless healthcare in the event that the Affordable Healthcare Act is appealed," she added.

"Thank you for allowing me to continue to do the people's work," Bichotte continued. "I will continue to work to my best ability."

As the current Assembly Member and District Leader, Bichotte said she has been an outspoken advocate on issues concerning immigration; unemployment; education reform; health care access; senior citizen centers; affordable housing; and women's and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) rights; "as well as other issues affecting the quality of life in the community."

Eldercare

TODAY



Caregivers can make a resolution to understand every aspect of their loved one's legal and financial situation. iStock

An easier 2017 for caregivers

At a time when family, friends, and colleagues are making well-meaning, but often unrealistic New Year's resolutions, the temptation is for caregivers who are already balancing work, family, and caregiving responsibilities, to do the same. You don't need to add to your burdens by making promises to yourself that may be impossible to keep, but there are some resolutions that make sense:

Resolve to NOT go it alone

There is help available, so take advantage of it!

For example, CaringKind's Helpline is a good place to

start. A knowledgeable professional can provide a free, confidential consultation and access to free services including education and training programs that help you better understand how to choose a doctor, how to evaluate residential care options, and how to handle the financial and legal decisions that must be made following a dementia diagnosis.

CaringKind's early stage programs are a lifeline for those with a diagnosis and the connect2culture program will get you of the house and into NYC's wonderful museums and cultural institutions.

Resolve to grow your circle of care

Too often, caregiving responsibilities fall disproportionately on the shoulders of one member of the family.

As the New Year begins, try to bring multiple family members into the circle of care. Ask for help and teach them how to better communicate with each other and the individual with dementia. Demonstrate how, despite the disease, a relative with dementia can actively participate in their lives in a loving and meaningful way.

Resolve to be better prepared

As a caregiver, I learned the



Care Chronicle

by Lou-Ellen Barkan

hard way about the importance of understanding every aspect of my parents' financial situation and should have dealt more quickly with legal and financial matters that needed attention. My inability to be more proactive delayed military benefits and insurance claims for much longer than necessary.

You can resolve to be vigilant about getting financial and legal items in order. You

can make sure you have three critical documents appropriately signed and accessible: Durable Power of Attorney, Health Care Proxy, and Living Will. All should be prepared at the time either before someone is ill, or early on in the disease when he or she still has capacity. It will save you years of aggravation and heartache and — worst case scenario — the expensive alternative of a custodial proceeding.

Resolve to take care of yourself

Make sure you schedule your medical appointments. And then make sure you keep

Continued on page 32

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Another step in aging in place

Law allows home aides to administer meds

BY JOANNA R. LEEFER

A New York State bill signed into law in November will come as a welcome relief for many family caregivers.

The bill, signed by Gov. Cuomo on Nov. 28, creates a new classification of home health attendant who can administer medications to clients. The new classification called Advanced Home Health Aide will permit many infirmed and disabled people to remain in their homes rather than be confined to a nursing home.

Currently New York law does not permit home health aides to administer medications. The main duties of a home health attendant are to help infirmed individuals with activities of daily living, including dressing, bathing, mobility, toileting, eating, and transferring. Aides can also remind a patient to take her medicine. The aide can bring the medicines to her, but cannot put them in her mouth. Home health attendants are also not permitted to give injections or draw blood. Only a licensed nurse can perform these tasks. Unfortunately, there are not an adequate number of visiting nurses who can make multiple daily home visits to patients. The only alternative home care patients have is to request a neighbor or family member come by to administer medicines.

Another alternative is to apply for the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program, a Medicaid program that permits an infirm person to hire and train someone to care for him and have Medicaid pay for the care.

Under the program, the appointed "aide" can perform tasks that are not traditionally assigned to a home health aide. They include giving medications, operating medical equipment, and administering injections. But there is a down side to this program: the patient who appoints a personal assistant must be able to train and self-direct his own care. This excludes people with memory problems or persons with an inability to communicate their needs.

This new legislation will offer a solution for families with frail relatives who cannot self-direct care. This includes Alzheimer's patients and other individuals with dementia. Many patients with memory disorders are placed in nursing homes because they cannot remember when to take their meds and cannot direct others. Patients with severe diabetes will also benefit. Many diabetics are unable



A new bill creates a new classification of home health attendants who can administer medications to seniors, allowing them to live the remainder of their days in a surrounding they love.

to monitor their sugar level or give themselves insulin injections. The Advanced Home Health Aide will allow them to stay at home rather than enter a nursing home.

To become an Advanced Home Health Aide, an aide must have at least one-year home care experience and must complete a training program. The program will teach the aide advanced health tasks such as dispensing pre-packaged medication, giving insulin injections, and administering emergency injections of epinephrine to avoid anaphylactic shock. Once the courses are completed the aide is permitted to perform advanced tasks as long as she is under the direct supervision of a registered nurse.

The new law is scheduled to go into effect in mid-2018. In the time before implementation New York's Department of Education and Health must determine the types of advanced tasks the aide can perform, develop a training curriculum, and create a graduation criteria. Finally, the department must initiate quality standards, estimate the cost of program development, and create budget guidelines.

New York is not the first state to develop an advanced home health aide category. Nebraska, Idaho, and Connecticut have passed similar laws. All three states require attendants to complete advanced courses and pass a written test before they can administer medications. Many other states are considering similar bills.

The trend to increase the responsibilities of home health aides will help the frail elderly and the disabled to stay in their own homes rather than

Continued on page 32



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Better with age

Nursing home celebrates 40 years

Rutland Nursing Home celebrated its 40th anniversary on Oct. 31. The event was well attended by members of the community, nursing home residents, staff, and local elected officials. Michelle Edwards, Administrator of Rutland Nursing Home, recognized the facilities commitment to providing compassionate elder care and the long-standing commitment of staff who have been with Rutland for numerous years.

Rutland Nursing Home, located on the Brooklyn campus of Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center, is a 466-bed, long- and short-term care facility. It offers skilled nursing, physical rehabilitation, comprehensive wound care, a specialty unit for ventilator-dependent residents, and an array of other sub-acute services. All the resources of Kingsbrook, including general medical and sub-specialties, dialysis, surgical, orthopedic, psychiatric and dental services, and the emergency room, are immediately available to the residents. Nursing home residents are easily transferred to the acute services of the hospital if medical necessity requires, and are subsequently returned to the nursing home.

Rutland Nursing Home has a dedicated 32-bed pediatric long-term care unit for children with severe developmental and metabolic disorders. The unit is staffed with nurses and pediatricians 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Medical care in Rutland Nurs-



Temporah Williams, one of the first registrants of the Adult Day Health Care program and the eldest registrant, with Dr. Berhane Wubshet, RNH Medical Director.

Rutland Nursing Home

ing Home is coordinated by physicians experienced and dedicated to pediatrics and geriatrics. Encouraging the residents to maximize their ability to lead active and fulfilling lives, licensed nurses provide optimal nursing care and therapists deliver state-of-the-art physical, occupational, recreational, and speech therapies. To ensure comprehensive care, dietitians and social workers augment the treatment team.

MEDICINE

Continued from page 31

entering institutional care. This is one of several steps that shift the emphasis of long-term care from impersonal institution care to the comfort of home care. This new movement recognizes that older adults wish to

live the remainder of their lives with dignity and in a surrounding that they love.

Joanna R. Leefer is a senior care advisor, advocate, and founder of ElderCareGiving, a service that helps families make difficult care decision for aging loved ones when family care is no longer enough. For more information, visit www.joannaleefer.com.

RESOLUTIONS

Continued from page 29

them! All too often, stressed caregivers feel they are too busy to go for an annual doctor's visit or mammogram, sometimes resulting in serious medical conditions. And pay attention to your emotional well-being as well. You can't take care of someone unless you take care of yourself. Remember, on a plane, they always remind us to put on our own oxygen mask first!

Lastly, and probably most importantly, resolve to give yourself a break

— literally and figuratively. Dementia care is complicated and exhausting. Forgive yourself if you become angry or frustrated. Don't feel guilty. It is natural to feel a range of emotions from tender love and profound sadness to anxiety and anger. And, don't forget to remind yourself that you're doing the best you can in a difficult situation.

I can promise you an easier new year if you make and keep these simple resolutions.

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Singer Jean Carn (center) with Dr. Jeff Gardere and his guest, Roz Nixon

Love sounds usher in the New Year

By Roz Nixon

There was laughter, tears and lots of “singing a long” on New Year’s Eve 2016 in Harlem, New York as Norman Connors and the regal Jean Carn performed the love sound track of a generation or two. On that evening, we witnessed Norman Connors’ music that sold millions and garnered Grammy nominations such as “You Are My Star Ship,” “This Is Your Life” and “Betcha By Golly Wow.”

The New Year’s Eve audience

Continued on Page 34

‘Wake Up and Smell the Coffee’

Triskelion Arts, in association with Vangelina Theater, presents Wake Up and Smell the Coffee - Butoh for Waste Prevention: Reducing Coffee Trash in New York at Triskelion Arts (106 Calyer Street, Brooklyn, NY 11222) from April 20-22, 2017 at 8pm. Tickets are \$16 and are available at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/triskelion-arts-presents-vangelina-theater-tickets-30044256179>.

Vangelina Theater seeks to increase environmental awareness in New York and nationally, resulting in a positive impact on our ecosystem. As a key component of this initiative, Vangelina Theater will remount an evening-length Butoh performance piece, for a

Continued on Page 34



SALSA REUNION

Larry Harlow is a pianist, composer, bandleader and producer

Harlow, Miranda present ‘Abran Paso’

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts is proud to present Larry Harlow and Ismael Miranda together for Abran Paso, a special historic reunion of Salsa concert on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2017 at 8 pm.

After five decades of one of the most successful partnerships in the history of classical Salsa in New York, Larry Harlow and Ismael Miranda will be performing the best of their classic repertoire including “Abran Paso,” “Señor Sereno,” “Fue Abandonada,” “Se Casa La Rumba,” “Lamento de

un Guajiro,” “Tumba y Bongo,” “El Malecon,” and “Las Mujeres Son.” This concert is produced by Lehman Center and Leo Tizol.

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts is on the campus of Lehman College/CUNY at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468. Tickets for Larry Harlow and Ismael Miranda on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2017 at 8 pm can be purchased by calling the Lehman Center box office at 718-960-8833 (Monday through Thursday, 10 am – 5 pm, and beginning

at noon on the day of the concert), or through online access at www.LehmanCenter.org.

Larry Harlow is a pianist, composer, bandleader and producer who was born in Brooklyn into a family of musicians. His grandfather played piano for silent films; his mother was an opera singer; and his father was a professional bassist and orchestra leader that for many years led the house band at the famed Latin Quarter nightclub, where Harlow was

Continued on Page 34

TOP OF THE CHARTS

TOP 10 SINGLES

- 1 **Don't Wanna Know**
Maroon 5 Feat. Kendrick Lamar
- 2 **Closer**
The Chainsmokers Feat. Halsey
- 3 **Side To Side**
Ariana Grande Feat. Nicki Minaj
- 4 **Scars To Your Beautiful**
Alessia Cara
- 5 **Starboy**
The Weekend Feat. Daft Punk
- 6 **24K Magic**
Bruno Mars
- 7 **Let Me Love You**
DJ Snake Feat. Justin Bieber
- 8 **Black Beatles**
Rae Sremmurd Feat. Gucci Mane
- 9 **Starving**
Hailee Steinfeld & Grey Feat. Zedd
- 10 **Heathens**
twenty one pilots

TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 **A Pentatonix Christmas**
Pentatonix
- 2 **Passion, Pain & Demon Slayin'**
Kid Cudi
- 3 **Not The Actual Events (EP)**
Nine Inch Nails
- 4 **Your Eyez Only**
J. Cole
- 5 **24K Magic**
Bruno Mars
- 6 **That's Christmas To Me**
Pentatonix
- 7 **The Return of East Atlanta Santa**
Gucci Mane
- 8 **Filthy America... It's Beautiful**
The Lox
- 9 **Starboy**
The Weekend
- 10 **Moana**
Soundtrack

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SALSA REUNION

Continued from page 33

practically brought up backstage.

Having learned to play the piano at age 5, he attended the New York High School of Music and Art where he also studied the oboe, flute, violin, and bass, and played in Latin dance bands in New York City. He went to Cuba for two years in the late fifties to study Afro-Cuban music at the University of Havana by day and in the clubs at night where he got "salsified" by immersing himself in the music of Tito Puente, Benny Moré and Machito.

Returning to the United States literally the day before Fidel Castro's revolution, he received his BA in music from Brooklyn College. During the 1964 World's Fair, Harlow played piano for Johnny Pacheco's conjunto before starting his own orchestra, Orquesta Harlow, which had a distinctive Latin brassy sound that paired trumpets and trombones which highlighted his percussive piano solos. In 1968 Larry was signed to the Fania recording label and became a musical star as a bandleader, producer, and recording artist (affectionately known as

"El Judío Maravilloso") and a mainstay of the New York City Salsa scene. (

Ismael Miranda, the most recorded Salsa singer in the world, was born in Puerto Rico and grew up in Manhattan's East Village. He showed an interest in music from a very young age and by the time he was eleven, he was singing and playing the congas with two juvenile groups. He recorded his first hit single, "Rumbón Melón," with Joey Pastrana's Orchestra when he was 17, which led to being hired as lead singer by bandleader Larry Harlow. Together they co-authored the Latin Boogaloo album *El Exigente* (1967), and Miranda headlined the record *Orquesta Harlow Presenta a Ismael Miranda* in 1968.

Over the next five years, he made seven albums with Orchestra Harlow which included many of his original compositions such as "La Revolución," "El Malecón" and "Lamento Cubano." Miranda also began performing and recording with the newly formed Fania All-Stars in 1969, and as the youngest artist in the group, he was given the nickname "El niño bonito de la Salsa" (The



Ismael Miranda, the most recorded Salsa singer in the world.

pretty boy of Salsa). Miranda sang on 17 of their albums and appeared with them in the movies "Our Latin Thing" (Nuestra Cosa; 1972), "Live In Africa" (1974) and "Salsa" (1976).

In 1973, along with Frankie Rodriguez, Joe Santiago, Nicky Marrero, Nelson González and Oscar Hernández he formed his own band, the Orquesta Revelación, and released the Salsa

masterpiece album *Así Se Compose Un Son*. Notable Orquesta Revelación album recordings include *En Fa Menor* (1976), *Con Mi Viejo* (1976), *No Voy Al Festival* (1977) and *Doble Energía* (with Willie Colon, 1980). Several of his hit songs have attained classic status, including "Arsenio," "Pa Bravo Yo," "Señor Sereno," "Lupe, Lupe" and "Se Fue Y Me Dejo."

Connors

Continued from page 33

included television producers, other known artists and network news consultant Dr. Jeff Gardere, who after the show, shared his memories of how much the music of Connors and Carn meant to him.

In the early 1960's, Norman Connors left Philadelphia his hometown, as a teenager on his way to New York, to attend medical school and become a doctor. Instead, he ended up a student at Julliard, an in-demand Jazz drummer and a close friend to his long-time mentor Miles Davis.

Connors went on to become the first African American to sign with ARISTA records. Clive Davis (the head of the label at the time) recognized Connors' unique talent as a producer, composer and arranger and that he also had the uncanny ability to find and discover phenomenal singers such as Phyllis Hyman, Eleanor Mills and Jean Carn and then bring them to the national spotlight.



Norman Connors (left) with Dr. Jeff Gardere.

He is a perfectionist and a quintessential musician who demands not only that his vocalist be the best but that their accompanists like Onaje Allen Gumbs, Marion Meadows and Norman Brown (to name an exceptional few) are ultra-talented as well. It's no small wonder that after Connors' repeating achievement of platinum, gold and top of the chart records, several members of his band were also offered recording contracts by ARITSA and other prominent labels so that they could launch their own solo star-studded careers.

Dancing on coffee cups

Continued from page 33

total of three performances, and the final show will coincide with Earth Day on April 22, 2017.

"Wake Up and Smell the Coffee" utilizes the intensity of the art form Butoho to convey a serious problem: the environmental repercussions of non-recyclable waste. The tradition and techniques of Butoh are rooted in an art form that has the power to bring us back to our humanity and become closer to the Earth through meditative and hypnotic movement motifs. This includes uncomfortable truths we need to face, such as confronting the "garbage," or grotesque parts of our society. The performers will literally dance through garbage; a set made of collected unsalvageable coffee cups. This initiative will serve to increase environmental awareness in New York City through dance and have a tangible impact on our ecosystem.

Currently, Americans are responsible for a staggering

58 percent of the paper cup consumption in the world. NYC counts 212 Starbucks, 454 Dunkin Donuts, and 974 other coffee shops for a total of 1,700 coffee shops within the five boroughs. This results in a daily mountain of non-recyclable coffee cup trash, which, for the most part, ends-up in a landfill.

There are 4100 coffee shops in the Tri-State area alone, which represents an estimated 14 million cups that New Yorkers will generate over the next 10 years. The paper cups used at coffee shops across NYC are laminated with a plastic resin, polyethylene, which helps keep beverages warm and prevents leaking but also prevents the cup from being recycled. Once in a landfill, the paper begins to decompose, releasing methane, a greenhouse gas with 23 times the heat-trapping power of carbon dioxide. This issue is directly linked to the threat of global warming.

Beleaguered boy befriended by tree

"A Monster Calls"
Very Good (3 stars)
Rated PG-13 for mature themes and scary images
Running time: 108 minutes
Distributor: Focus Features

By Kam Williams

Conor O'Malley (Lewis MacDougall) is understandably miserable. First of all, the 12-year-old divorced mom (Felicity Jones) is terminally ill. Second, they're both estranged from his father (Toby Kebbell) who has long since started another family over in America.

Third, Conor is tired of being mistreated by his cold-hearted grandmother (Sigourney Weaver) who cares more about her prized possessions than his welfare. And finally, he's routinely teased at school by a bully (James Melville) about always being off in his own dream world.

So, it's no surprise when



Conor O'Malley (Lewis MacDougall) in "A Monster Calls."

www.rottentomatoes.com

Conor starts being plagued by nightmares on a daily basis. A few minutes after midnight, the giant yew tree (Liam Neeson) standing in the graveyard outside his

bedroom window turns into an intimidating, anthropomorphic monster.

Despite its imposing presence, the beast gradually gains the kid's confidence, agreeing

to tell a trio of insightful allegories on the condition that Conor reciprocate with one of his own. The idea, ostensibly, is that there will be a meaningful lesson to be learned from each

of the parables.

That is the point of departure of "A Monster Calls," a bitter-sweet escapist fantasy directed by J.A. Bayona (The Impossible). The movie is based on the illustrated children's novel of the same name by Patrick Ness who also adapted it to the big screen. Ness' award-winning book was inspired by the late Siobhan Dowd, who passed away before she could tackle the semi-autobiographical project herself.

The film is less a feel-good flick than a picture about making the best of a bad situation. For, the monster's stories paint a sobering picture of life that's anything but rosy. However, they do ultimately enable Conor to own up about his deepest fear, when it's his turn to share.

Given the mature themes and the dire plot developments, it's hard to recommend A Monster Calls for vulnerable youngsters. Nevertheless, it is unique in its approach to preparing a tweener to processing an impending tragedy.

A visually-enchanting, if fateful, fairy tale.

Independent & Foreign Films

Accidental Courtesy: Daryl Davis, *Race & America* (Unrated) Racial harmony documentary about a black musician's efforts to befriend Ku Klux Klansmen.

The Ardennes (Unrated) Reconciliation drama revolving around a repentant robber's (Jeroen Perceval) helping his recently-paroled brother (Kevin Janssens) readjust to society after serving time for a brutal home invasion they'd both committed. With Veerle Baetens, Jan Bijvoet and Viviane de Muijnck. (In Flemish, French and Dutch with subtitles)

Arsenal (R for graphic violence, pervasive profanity and drug use) Crime thriller about a successful businessman (Adrian Grenier) who enlists the assistance of a private detective (John Cusack) after his mobster brother (Johnathon Schaech) is held for ransom by a ruthless crime boss (Nicolas Cage). Cast includes Lydia Hull, Heather Johansen and Christopher Coppola.

Banking on Bitcoin (Unrated) Financial documentary examining the disruptive effect that the alternative currency Bitcoin has had on the mainstream economy. Featuring commentary by Wences Casares, Nathaniel Popper and Senator Rand Paul.

Between Us (Unrated) Romantic



Kam's Kapsules

By Kam Williams

comedy chronicling an eventful day-in-the-life of a couple in crisis (Ben Feldman and Olivia Thirlby) dealing with their fear of commitment as well as social pressure to tie the knot. With Adam Goldberg, Analeigh Tipton, Lesley Ann Warren, Peter Bogdanovich and Scott Haze.

Master (Unrated) Action thriller revolving around the white-collar crime detective (Dong-won Gang) leading the investigation of a multi-level marketing company suspected of perpetrating a massive fraud all across Korea. Supporting cast includes Woo-bin Kim, Byung-hun Lee, Dal-su Oh and Ji-won Uhm. (In Korean with subtitles)

Railroad Tigers (Unrated) Jackie Chan stars in this action comedy, set in occupied China during World War II, as the leader of a ragtag team of freedom fighters who ambush a Japanese military train for some desperately needed provisions. With Jaycee Chan (Jackie's son), Zitao Huang and Kai Wang. (In Chinese with subtitles)

Retake (Unrated) Homoerotic drama revolving around a lonely, middle-aged



A scene from "The Ardennes."

www.rottentomatoes.com

businessman (Tuc Watkins) who hires a male prostitute (Devon Graye) to accompany him on a nostalgic road trip to the Grand Canyon. Featuring Derek Phillips, Kit Williamson and Andrew Asper.

BIG BUDGET FILMS

Underworld: Blood Wars (R for

sexuality and graphic violence) Kate Beckinsale reprises her lead role in this fifth installment of the goth horror franchise which finds the heroine hybrid attempting to end the eternal war between werewolves and vampires. With Theo James, Tobias Menzies and Lara Pulver.

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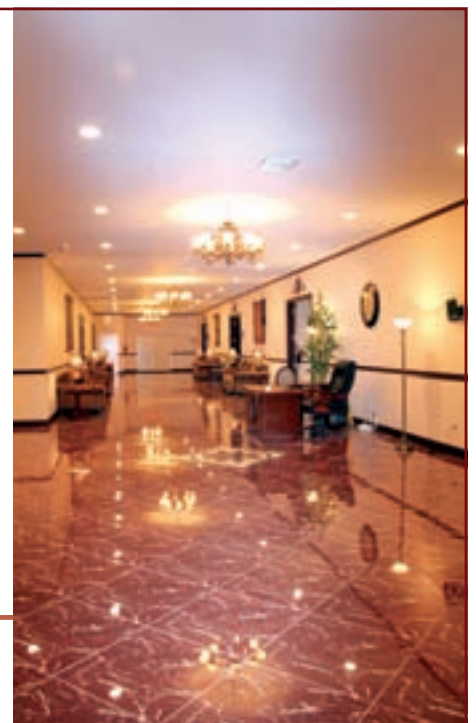
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SPORTS

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Former West Indies' head coach Phil Simmons. Associated Press / Arnulfo Franco

Simmons' new job

By Azad Ali

Sacked West Indies coach Phil Simmons will become the new head coach of the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots for the 2017 Hero Caribbean Premier League (CPL) season.

The new Patriots coach expressed delight that recently signed star batsman Chris Gayle is looking forward to working with him to bring the desired success for St. Kitts and Nevis franchise.

Simmons, a Trinidadian, was an explosive West Indies batting all-round-

Continued on Page 38

Braithwaite wins Twenty20 title

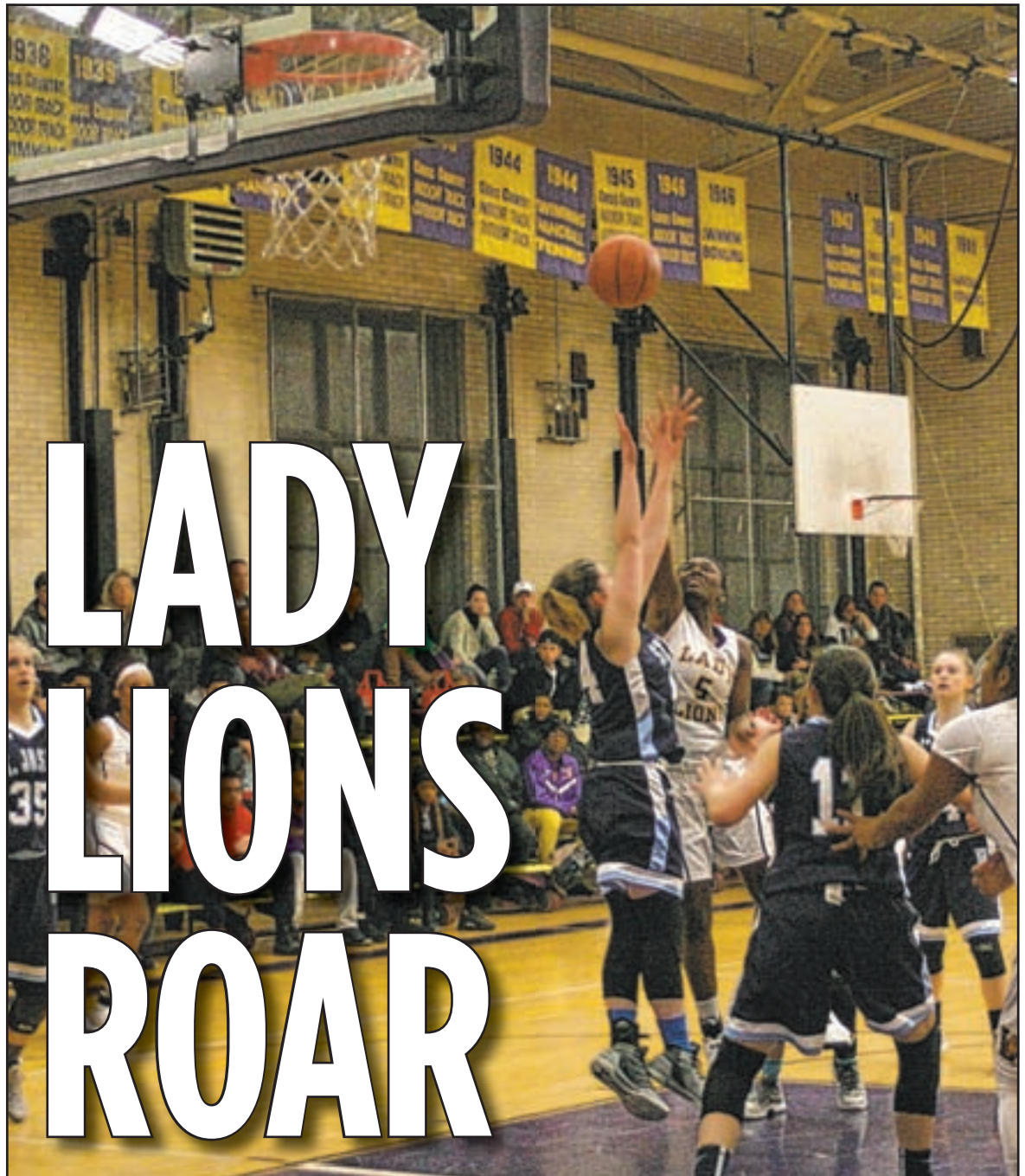
By Azad Ali

West Indies all-rounder Carlos Braithwaite was voted winner of the ICC Twenty20 Performance-of-the-Year for 2016 for his magical innings that won West Indies the Twenty20 World Cup in India last year.

The West Indies Twenty20 captain copped the prize for his memorable batting in the final over of the final game against arch-rivals England last April, when the ICC world governing sports body, announced its annual awards last month (December).

West Indies needed 19 off the final over, and the strongly-built all-rounder hit four consecutive sixes of all-rounder

Continued on Page 38



LADY LIONS ROAR

Getting the roll: Bishop Loughlin senior Lynette Taitt drove the lane more in the second half, attacking the St. Joseph Hill defense, as the Lady Lions notched a 79-70 victory on Jan. 2.

Community News Group / Laura Amato

Loughlin starts new year with a victory

By Laura Amato

New Year, new Loughlin.

The Bishop Loughlin girls' basketball team struggled early in the season, but the Lady Lions are hoping to turn a page after the calendar flipped to 2017. The squad got off to a solid start on Jan. 2, taking down

St. Joseph Hill 79-70 in a non-league matchup.

"Hopefully it can make us play this way all the time," Loughlin coach Chez Williams said of the win. "We can't afford to take off plays — everything we do has to be consistent, and it has to be team-oriented."

The squad (2-5) came out firing on all cylinders, jumping out to a 23-16 lead after the first quarter, but St. Joseph Hill answered in the next period.

The Hilltoppers got a burst of offense from guard Trish Conroy,

Continued on Page 38

LADY LIONS ROAR



Senior star: Bishop Loughlin standout Lynette Taitt led the Lady Lions down the stretch, scoring 23 of her 29 points in the second half against St. Joseph Hill on Jan. 2.

Community News Group / Laura Amato

Continued from page 37

who opened up the second period with seven straight points. St. Joseph Hill notched a 13–2 run in the first four minutes of the second and left the Lady Lions looking for answers on the defensive side of the ball.

Loughlin found that answer rather quickly — in the form of a tough, full-court press. The attack brought a stifling pressure from every angle — the Lady Lions force a handful of late-half turnovers and the rivals went into the break knotted at 34.

“My hat goes off to St. Joseph Hill,” Williams said. “They played us tough, but we were able to get through it, and we’ve got to continue to play like that.”

It wasn’t perfect down the stretch — St. Joseph Hill opened up the second half on a nine-point run — but Loughlin found a bit of confidence in its defensive attack, and its on-court leaders’ late-game performance.

Lynette Taitt led the charge in the third quarter, racking up 12 of the Lady Lions’ 16 points that period, while Laysha de la Santos chipped in the other four. The two pushed the ball out in transition — even setting each other up for shots — and, unlike the first half, they didn’t settle for quick jumpers. It was a change that Williams felt turned

the course of the game.

“The decision making has to keep improving,” he said. “They have to be better shots and good shots. We can’t just shoot the ball whenever. We’re not a good rebounding team, so the shots we take have to be better shots.”

Taitt and de la Santos both kept up the scoring effort in the fourth quarter — combining for 23 points — but

Loughlin also spread the ball out, a team-effort the Lady Lions squad knows it will need heading back into league play.

“I think we were looking more for each other as opposed to trying to do it by ourselves,” Williams said. “And I think when that happens and you start working together, it all works.”

It hasn’t been a picture-perfect season for the Lady Lions, but a victory

like this is enough to give Loughlin a bit of extra confidence. This team knows what it has to do to win — now it’s just a matter of making sure they stay on track.

“We’re trying to establish an identity,” Williams said. “We’re young and people are learning how to be leaders. The more they’ll play, the more they’ll get a better understanding of what they have to do.”

Terriers score second-straight win

By Johnny Kunen

They finished 2016 on a high note.

The St. Francis College men’s basketball team took down Central Connecticut State 86–77 in overtime on Dec. 31, wrapping up the year with a second-straight victory to improve to 2–0 in Northeast Conference play.

The Terriers backcourt trio of Glenn Sanabria, Yunus Hopkinson, and Rash-eem Dunn combined for 62 points in the victory.

“It’s nice to learn through wins,” Terriers coach Glenn Braica said. “We had to learn through a lot of losses early, now we’ve learned through two wins. Now we have to keep moving forward and try to get better everyday.”

The game got off to a slow start as the two squads each struggled to find an early rhythm — hampered by 14 foul calls in the first nine minutes of play — but St. Francis hit its stride midway through the half.

Sanabria led the offensive charge, notching 15 points from behind the arc to spark the Terriers to a 35–31 lead at halftime.

St. Francis (4–11, 2–0) came out rolling once the second half began, jumping out to a 10-point lead just four minutes into the period. Sanabria was once again the sparkplug, scoring six points in the Terriers’ early run.

Central Connecticut State, however, would not go down without a fight, and the Blue Devils responded with a 13–3 spurt of their own to make it a 48–46 game at the 11:14 mark.

Sanabria played offensive hero early for St. Francis — but in the second half, it was Dunn. The freshman guard scored 15 of his 19 points after halftime and kept the Terriers in the game down the stretch.

“In the first half I didn’t have a really good half,” Dunn said. “I just wanted to go out there and play defense. Then as the game started flowing, I started scoring.”

The teams battled back and forth throughout the second half, but Sanabria was whistled for a foul with 22 seconds left, and Central Connecticut’s Austin Nehls sank all three from the line to make it a one-point game. Eric

Bowles tied up the game on a long three-pointer just before the buzzer as the Blue Devils (2–11, 0–2) wrapped up the comeback and forced the game into extra time.

The score remained close for the first few minutes of overtime, but, with the Terriers up by three and 1:16 left to play, Central Connecticut’s Tidell Pierre was whistled for his fifth foul after pushing Keon Williams. The small forward connected on both ensuing free throws, and Yunus Hopkinson followed up with a three-point shot, pushing the St. Francis lead to eight with just 48 seconds left.

The Terriers would have liked to wrap up the victory during regulation, but Braica credited his team for never giving up down the stretch. St. Francis struggled to find success during its non-conference schedule, but after a handful of tough games, starting off Northeast Conference play with a pair of victories is more than enough to spark a bit of confidence.

“It builds character,” Braica said. “We had a very tough schedule with a lot of young guys and they’re learning.”

Simmons

Continued from page 37

er in his heyday.

He retired from cricket in 2002 and embarked on a successful coaching career.

Simmons coached Ireland’s cricket team from 2007 to 2015.

He is best known for coaching the West Indies team to victory in the ICC World R20 in India last year.

Twenty20

Continued from page 37

Ben Stokes at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India, in one of the greatest finishes in cricket sporting history, immediately pushing him to stardom.

In response to the award, Braithwaite said, “It was a memorable night for me, for the team, for West Indies cricket and for all our fans around the world.”

Brooklyn couple to start soccer league in Guyana

By Tangerine Clarke

What began as a kind gesture to 12 boys and 13 girls in a small Spiritual Church in Lodge Village, almost 40 years ago, has become a lavish annual event, where more than 300 children received gifts and eats, and were entertained at the Clarke's annual Christmas party on Dec. 26 in Georgetown.

Thanks to Brooklyn-based Guyanese couple Brian and Pauline Clarke, this tradition will continue to blossom said the duo, who share their love and generosity with the children in the village where they were born, and to many others who came from far and near to partake in this special day of festivities.

"We look forward to coming home to light up the lives of these children. It is great to see their smiling faces when they receive a gift and a piece of clothing at this festive time," said Pauline whose mother started the church 39 year ago.

In celebration of the church's 40th Year Anniversary next year, Brian Clarke, a New York

soccer referee, and former soccer player, plans to expand their 'giving program' to include a soccer league, but is in need of field in the village to engage the kids in the sport.

In preparation for the team too, the sportsman handed out soccer balls and jerseys at the Christmas party to inspire the youngsters to play with the Lodge Rovers Soccer League, a team Brian played for, before it became defunct more than 30 years ago.

"I look forward to engaging the youngsters in their educational pursuits while providing a recreational space for them to play the sport of soccer, that would help them to live a disciplined life," said Brian Clarke, president of the Flanks — a boyhood group from the village — who is willing to help establish the team.

"I am calling on the community to get more involved, especially in helping Brian to secure a ground for the soccer club. We have friends in New York who are willing to back us up with gear and moral support. If we don't get the community's help and



Brooklyn couple Brian and Pauline Clarke bring gifts and entertainment to Lodge Village youngsters. They plan to re-establish the Lodge Village Rovers Soccer League to engage and foster discipline to young villagers.

Photo by Tangerine Clarke

land from the Guyana government for the field, then the youths will loose out," said Mrs. Clarke.

The parents of three boys, who played Pee Wee soccer in New York, know very well how important sports are in shap-

ing children to live a disciplined lifestyle and pleaded with those in authority to get on board to help Lodge village youth.

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ARIES: Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, emails and texts might fill your week as everyone wants to speak with you in the coming days. Schedule a break from your devices if you find yourself overwhelmed.

TAURUS: Apr 21/May 21
Career progress is more complicated than you had originally thought, Taurus. You might need to take a step back and reassess your career path.

GEMINI: May 22/Jun 21
Gemini, doors are opening for you all over the place, but you don't know which one to choose. Speak with someone you trust who can serve as an advisor and mentor.

CANCER: Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, you have a need to be emotionally connected to others at this time, but you also want to exert your independence. You might have to make some decisions.

LEO: Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, others are on your mind this week. You feel a need to help in any way you can, so use this week to explore volunteer opportunities in your community.

VIRGO: Aug 24/Sept 22
You may need an adjustment period to tackle a new assignment, Virgo. This is not something to rush, so take your time even if the results are slow to come along.

LIBRA: Sept 23/Oct 23
Prior commitments this week may prevent you from doing something you've long wanted to, Libra. Keep your head up and another opportunity will present itself.

SCORPIO: Oct 24/Nov 22
It could be now or never, Scorpio. You want to make your mark but are cautious in keeping your intentions to yourself. Eventually your master plan will come to light.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, you're increasingly busy this week, but things are not what you expect. You could be running around for all of the wrong reasons. Reexamine your plan, if necessary.

CAPRICORN: Dec 22/Jan 20
Capricorn, your focus may be on personal gains this week, but you might want to shift it to something else. An unforeseen opportunity awaits if you can recognize it.

AQUARIUS: Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, it's difficult to contain your excitement the next few days. But keep your cool so others do not start to look at you strangely. Your time to shine is coming.

PISCES: Feb 19/Mar 20
You have a secret to share, but you must wait to do so, Pisces. Do your best to avoid spilling the beans before the time has come.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING
The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development
Draft Scope of Work for an Environmental Impact Statement
Bedford Union Armory Project

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT a public scoping meeting will be held as detailed below for the Bedford Union Armory Project. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to comment on the Draft Scope of Work proposed to be used to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Bedford Union Armory Project.

A public scoping meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, January 26, 2017 at 6:30 pm and will be held at Dr. Gladstone H. Atwell M.S. 061, 400 Empire Boulevard, Brooklyn, NY 11225.

Comments on the Draft Scope of Work are invited and may be presented at the public scoping meeting and/or may be submitted in writing to the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination until 5:00 P.M. on Friday, February 10, 2017 to the addresses below.

Directing that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared, the Environmental Assessment Statement, Positive Declaration, and Draft Scope of Work were issued by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development on December 23, 2016, and are available for review from the contact person listed below and on the website of the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination: www.nyc.gov/oec.

The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) in coordination with Bedford Courts LLC (the "Applicant") is seeking a series of discretionary approvals to facilitate the redevelopment of the historic Bedford Union Armory (the "Armory") located at 1555 Bedford Avenue (Block 1274, Lot 1) in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn (the "Project Site") into an approximately 542,393 gross square feet (gsf) three-building mixed-use development. Specifically, the redevelopment would result in approximately 390 residential dwelling units (DUs), including approximately 177 affordable DUs; up to 48,997 gsf of office space; up to 18,122 gsf of academic space; approximately 72,252 gsf of community facility space; and a minimum of 118 parking spaces (the "Proposed Development"). Should the 18,122 gsf of academic space be determined infeasible, 25 additional DUs (including 14 affordable DUs) would be incorporated into the Proposed Development in lieu of the 18,122 gsf of academic space and associated office space (approximately 8,278 gsf).

The Applicant is seeking discretionary approvals including the disposition of City-owned property, zoning map and text amendments, and special permits to facilitate the Proposed Development. These actions are described in detail below and collectively referred to as the "Proposed Actions." The Proposed Actions are subject to environmental review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) in conformance to City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) guidelines and procedures and are subject to review under the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The New York City (NYC) Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development (ODMHED) is the lead agency for this environmental review. The analysis build year for this project is 2020.

The Proposed Project would require the following discretionary approvals:

- 1) Disposition of City-owned Property:** The portion of the Project Site on which the condominium building would be built would be disposed of from the City to the Applicant through a land sale. The remainder of the Project Site, including the Armory's existing Drill Shed, Head House, and garage, would be disposed of through a long-term ground-lease between the City and the Applicant. The disposition of City-owned property requires Mayoral approval pursuant to Section 384(b)(4) of the New York City Charter for the disposition of City-owned property.
- 2) Zoning Map Amendment:** The Project Site is currently located in an R6 residential zoning district. The Applicant is requesting approval by the New York City Planning Commission (CPC) to change the zoning on the Project Site from R6 to R7-2 with a C2-4 commercial overlay.
- 3) Zoning Text Amendment:** The Applicant is requesting approval of a Zoning Text Amendment to map the Project Site as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Area ("MIHA") in Appendix F of the New York City Zoning Resolution (ZR), pursuant to ZR Sections 23-154 and ZR 23-90. In support of this request, the Applicant commits that the Proposed Development would comply with ZR 23-154(d)(3)(ii) - Option 2 ("MIH Option 2").
- 4) Special Permit:** Pursuant to ZR Section 74-74, the Applicant is seeking approval of a special permit to create a "large-scale general development" ("LSGD"). The LSGD would allow the Applicant to address the unique circumstances created by preserving the existing Armory's Drill Shed and Head House, and meet the project goals to provide 50% of the proposed rental DUs as affordable, a large recreation center, a community multi-purpose space, and community office space. Specifically, the Applicant is seeking approval of the following special permits under ZR Section 74-74:
 - Lot coverage relief pursuant to ZR Section 74-743(a)(1)
 - Rear yard relief pursuant to ZR 74-743(a)(2)
 - Height and setback relief pursuant to ZR 74-743(a)(2)
 - Inner court relief pursuant to ZR 74-743(a)(2).
- 5) Special Permit:** Pursuant to ZR Section 74-532, the Applicant is requesting approval of a special permit to reduce the parking requirements for accessory group parking facilities. The reduction in accessory residential off-street parking spaces would allow the Applicant to meet the project goals of maximizing on-site affordable housing while preserving and maintaining the existing Drill Shed and Head House to the largest extent practicable.

In addition, in the future the Applicant may seek public financing by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and/or the New York City Housing Development Corporation (HDC) to facilitate the Proposed Development. Depending on the public funding source additional review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) may be required at a later point in time.

Copies of the Environmental Assessment Statement, Positive Declaration and Draft Scope of Work for the proposed project may be obtained by any member of the public from:

Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
 Attn: Esther Brunner, Deputy Director for Environmental Coordination
 253 Broadway, 14th Floor
 New York, New York 10007
 Telephone: (212)-676-3290
 Email: ebrunner@cityhall.nyc.gov

These documents are also available on the websites of the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination: www.nyc.gov/oec.

CEQR Number: 16DME005K

Lead Agency: Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development
 Hilary Semel
 Assistant to the Mayor
 253 Broadway, 14th Floor
 New York, NY 10007 – hsemel@cityhall.nyc.gov

Applicant: New York City Economic Development Corporation
 Attn: Aileen Gorsuch, Senior Planner
 110 William Street, 6th Floor
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 (212) 619-5000 – agorsuch@edc.nyc.gov

SEQRA Classification: Unlisted

This Notice of Public Meeting has been prepared pursuant to Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law (the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA)), its implementing regulations found at 6 NYCRR Part 617, and the Rules of Procedure for City Environmental Quality Review found at 62 RCNY Chapter 5, and Mayoral Executive Order 91 of 1977, as amended (CEQR).

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Public comments regarding potential effects from the site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: Marianne Walsh, E2PM, 87 Hibernia Avenue, Rockaway, NJ 07866, by email to: Marianne.walsh@e2pm.com, or phone: (973) 299-5200. Please

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refer to E2PM Tracking Number P-16-02-39."

The Board of Trustees of Harlem Hebrew Language Academy Charter School will meet on Wednesday, January 11th at 630 pm at 147 Saint Nicholas Avenue. The meeting is open to the public.

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