

Caymanian Times

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GET THE FACTS

For the latest, accurate information on the Coronavirus (COVID19), please visit

gov.ky/Coronavirus

Complimentary

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

LOCAL NEWS — A4



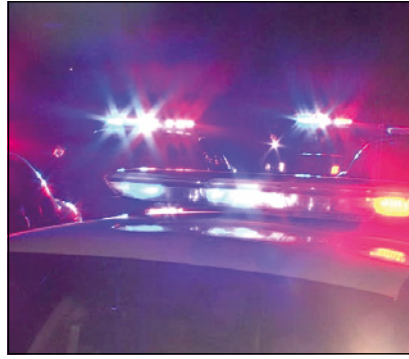
Passenger Flights to Cayman suspended for 3 weeks

HEALTHCARE — A6



HSA expands flu clinic to new location

LAW ENFORCEMENT — A7



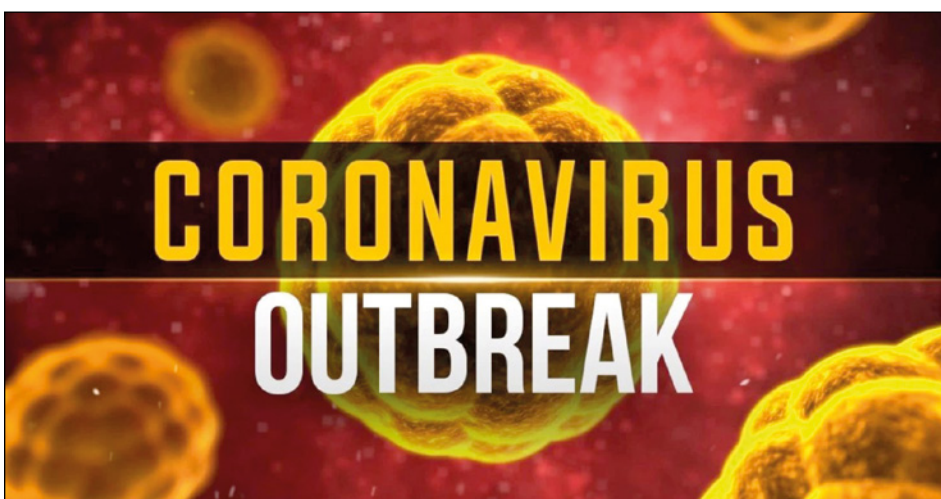
27-Year-old-man of North Side dies from stab wound

LOCAL SPORTS — A8



Little League Activities Suspended

COVID-19 EXPOSES CAYMAN CROWDED HOUSING



The COVID-19 outbreak is forcing a rethink of how society organises and conducts itself; from individual to group interactions.

Personal space has now taken on the broader interpretation of social space and housing is one area where this has come into a rather disconcerting focus.

A closer examination of beyond the family setting takes us into the area of close proximity accommodations driven by a demand for labour, especially cheap and imported labour.

It's not unusual, in fact quite prevalent though generally overlooked, because it has become such a common feature in our society for migrant workers to be housed in woefully overcrowded conditions.

These cramped accommodations are however argued by some to be of a better standard than some workers' dwellings in their countries of origin.

And that may very well be so. But it's an uncomfortable trade-off.

... Continued story on page A2

Panic Shopping Persists

Despite authorities assuring the steady arrival of essentials such as hand sanitizer, toilet paper and other cleaning products, stores in Grand Cayman are still seeing a 'run' on certain items, due to the panic caused by the Island's first case of Corona Virus (Covid 19).

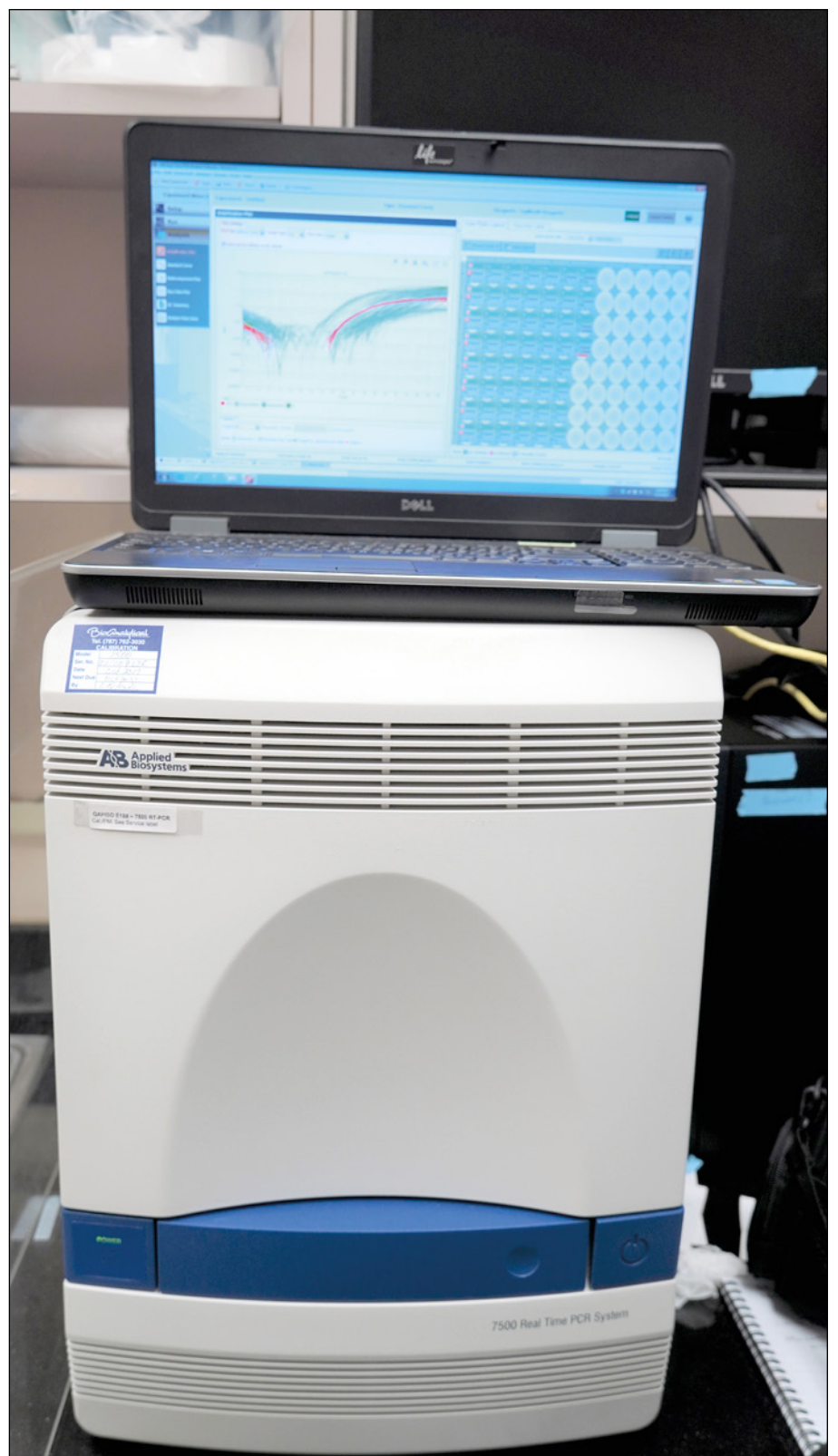
In an effort to curtail some of the hysteria, many stores are now limiting the amount of items each customer is able to purchase. However, some persons in the community told the Caymanian

... Continued story on page A4



Shoppers in Grand Cayman have been over-purchasing goods, according to officials

HSA introduces local testing for COVID-19



Testing Machine

The Cayman Islands Health Services Authority (HSA) has confirmed testing for COVID-19 will be available locally from this week.

The tests will be done at the HSA's internationally accredited forensic laboratory, in partnership with the HSA clinical laboratory.

The introduction of local testing will significantly reduce the waiting period, from 5-10 days to 24-48 hours for confirmation of COVID-19.

Medical Officer of Health, Dr Samuel Williams said:

"The ability for local testing is significant as it further enhances the capabilities of the HSA to not only detect

COVID-19 in real-time but also provides timely intervention in the management of patients."

It is also expected to enhance the HSA's public health surveillance and expedite response capabilities.

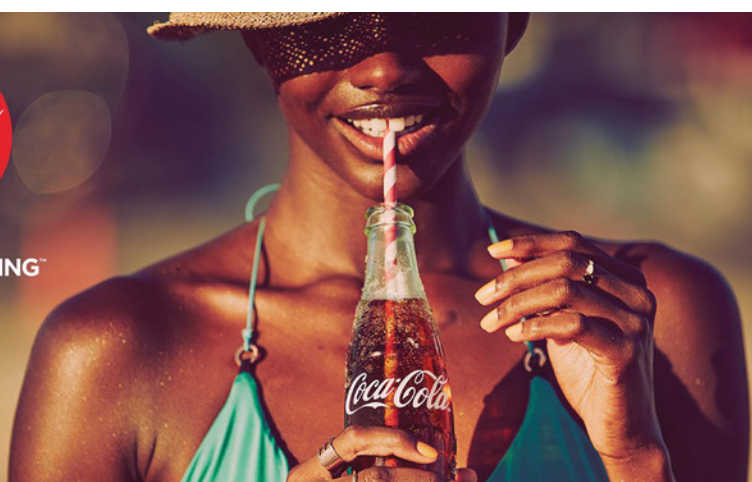
The tests will be carried out with equipment and to standards approved by the WHO, PAHO and Public Health England.

According to Dr Williams, "Being able to test on-island will allow those persons who test negative to come out of home isolation as soon as they get results."

... Continued story on page A3



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People happy with Smith Barcadere news

The group of concerned residents who had campaigned to stop the Government's plan to enhance the Smith Barcadere location have welcomed the Government's U-turn stopping all work on the project.

Ms Berna Cummins, who led a recent demonstration at the location, is part of The People for the Protection of Smith Barcadere group. The group had campaigned to stop Government's plans to build a 45-capacity carpark on the beach side of the site on the iron-shore, install restrooms, cabanas and traffic calming measures, worrying that the site was really being upgraded for cruise tourists. Smith Barcadere, also known as Smith Cove, is a popular beach for many local people, located away from busy Seven Mile Beach in quiet South Church Street, in South Sound.

"I am so happy that no further work will take place at Smith Barcadere and that it will be left in its natural state. It is so beautiful as it is now," Ms Cummins

said. "This is a very special place for so many people not only in Cayman but all over the world."

The protest picnic, which took place last month, saw representatives of the People for the Protection of Smith Barcadere voice their concerns in front of Infrastructure Minister Joey Hew and MLA for the location Councilor Barbara Conolly. The site is also a popular spot with stayover vacationers who have grown to love the peace of the location. At the protest meeting, visitors could be seen with signs protesting the upgrade project, saying it would spoil their vacation.

Ms Cummins said that Smith Barcadere was "for the people to enjoy".

"We do not want all the enhancements proposed. We are delighted that MLA Barbara listened and will not proceed with further work there," she said.

Ms Cummins added that The People for the Protection of Smith Barcadere believed that the enhancements were geared toward the cruise industry as the



Department of Tourism was pushing it on their website.

"It is very popular and stressed enough now as a lot of residents enjoy it," she confirmed.

Even though Government has announced that all work will stop on enhancing the location, Smith Barcadere is definitely in need of some small enhancements, to make the site a pleasant experience for anyone visiting it, in particular,

the inadequate restrooms. This would be addressed by the group, Ms Cummins said.

"We will now focus on cleaning up the restrooms with paint and repairs along with obtaining the sand that was promised to spread under the trees. Also a few handicap parking spaces along the road and moving the boulders further inland so cars can park safely along the road," she advised, adding, "Let's keep it in its natural state." 🌐



Labour Force Survey 2020 Starting Sunday, 8th March 2020

The 2020 Spring Labour Force Survey (LFS) will be conducted by the Economics and Statistics Office (ESO) starting Sunday, 8th March 2020.

The LFS collects data on the employed and unemployed persons, as well as those who are not in the labour force.

Trained interviewers, with identification cards from the ESO will visit 1,500 randomly selected households in all districts.

The interviews are confidential in accordance with the Statistics Law (2016 Revision). No individual data will be published or disclosed. Survey data are exempt from Freedom of Information requests.



For further information on any aspect of the survey, please contact the ESO hotline 516-3329.

EDITORIAL

COVID-19 EXPOSES CAYMAN CROWDED HOUSING

... Continued story from page A1

This is evident not just in the rich and other relatively well-to-do countries, but wherever the less-well-off (read: poorer) people move in search of better economic opportunities.

The 'developed' world, hungry for cheap - and in most of these cases, migrant - labour often sees these people exploited in search of their sometimes elusive dreams.

In many instances these workers who form an important cog in the wheels that keep wealthy societies running, exist in a world far removed from the one they serve.

It's not far-fetched to describe some of their living conditions as squalid.

It's not unusual to hear accounts of, men especially, living five or more to a room meant for one person.

While often-times less so for female workers, such inhospitable conditions pose other challenges for them.

Although they might have entered the country through proper labour recruitment channels to satisfy skilled and general labour demand, these workers quite often end up in these challenging housing situations.

Cramped accommodations and low rent for many of them are accepted as part of the 'bargain', and comparatively low pay locally, though high compared to their home countries, allows them to send home remittances.

That's the reality of the trade-off.

But these conditions, as is now being highlighted by the COVID-19 pandem-

ic are quite literally Petri dishes for the disease to rapidly develop and spread.

In such an environment self-isolating becomes a major challenge for the health authorities to manage should it come to that.

And in the event of COVID-19 or any other infectious disease in such cramped conditions, the challenge of treatment and isolating become even more acute.

The risk of spreading disease in these types of circumstances not only puts the occupants of such dwellings at risk, but it also poses a health hazard to the wider community.

The pace at which COVID-19 is spreading and the recommendations to combat it by heightened personal hygiene and social spaces brings this matter into sharp focus.

It requires looking into as part of the overall strategy to curtail the spread of that disease and others, both in the current situation and going forward.

Our society might have been turning a blind eye to this matter; a convenient trade-off for cheap labour to maintain our standard of living.

COVID-19 has virtually lifted the lid and exposed this societal incongruity.

The risk is greater than the reward; for the occupants of these cramped accommodations, their landlords, and the wider community.

As a caring society, Cayman cannot afford to turn a blind eye any longer or sweep it under the carpet.

Not only is it unacceptable, but it's also a public health risk waiting to happen. 🌐



COVID-19 TESTING NOW IN CAYMAN

... Continued story from page A1

Public Health will only be testing persons with a suspected case of COVID-19 who match specific criteria of symptoms.

These are:

- Flu symptoms and have a travel history to a country that has reported local transmission of COVID-19 disease during the 14 days prior to symptom onset;

- Any acute respiratory illness and who has been a contact of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 disease during the 14 days prior to the onset of symptoms;
- Severe acute respiratory infection requiring hospitalisation.

Meanwhile, the Health Services Authority(HSA) is encouraging members of the public who are experiencing flu-like symptoms to contact the flu hotline on 1-800-534-8600, 947-3077 or email flu@hsa.ky.

Statement by HE the Governor on COVID 19

The announcement that we have COVID 19 in the Cayman Islands will be of great concern to everyone. However, this was not unexpected and the Government has been putting plans in place to minimise the impact. I support the Government's sensible measures to restrict public gatherings, close schools and to introduce travel restrictions.

We have excellent infrastructure and medical professionals in Cayman and we will come through this. We also have access to expertise in the UK and the region and specialist advisers will be on island shortly. These include a Communicable Disease Control Consultant, a Consultant Microbiologist, and a Laboratory Quality Expert. Public Health England have provided us with modelling which gives us more accurate information to help plan our response. Public Health England will also be supporting us with supplies of personal protection equipment. The laboratory has received kits for testing for COVID 19 and we should be able



► HE Governor, Martyn Roper

to begin testing on Island early next week.

Now is a time to remain calm and to come together as a community. Cayman

has a strong Christian tradition of helping each other. The majority of us will only get mild symptoms if they contract COVID 19 but some will be more seriously affected. Please look after our elderly and those with underlying health issues so they can follow the medical advice.

Panic buying is unnecessary. Our supply routes are robust and ships and flights are operating normally.

The media and those on social media have a responsibility for the community. The spreading of rumours is totally unacceptable when we are dealing with a situation like this. You should only get your information from official government sources. If necessary, we will use the law to tackle those who spread false rumours. Please act responsibly and please support our medical personnel and other officials as they work to help us all.

We should remain calm and continue to carry on with our day to day lives whilst following the expert advice from the HSA.

HSA restricting all visitors to protect patients & community against COVID-19



In order to protect our patients, the Health Services Authority is restricting all visitors effective immediately (14th March 2020), except for parents of children in the paediatric ward and those accompanying mothers in labour.

"This heightened measure is to protect the most vulnerable to reduce the risk of spreading any virus," said HSA CEO, Lizzette Yearwood. "All of our patients and immediate

family have been notified of this change in policy."

If you need to contact a patient, you may do so by calling 949-8600.

All doors into the facility will be locked and only accessible to authorized personnel. Accident & Emergency will be open to patients who require immediate emergency care.

We apologise for any inconvenience.

Clarification on Public Gathering Ban

Further to the announcement on a temporary ban on all public gathering of 50 people or more, the Ministry of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure has clarified that staff members are not included in the numbers for establishments such as:

- Bars
- Restaurants
- Hotels

The Ministry has further clarified that the 50 people gathered at any establishment should include those inside and outside.

Business establishments must have the necessary food safety and sanitary protocols in place and seek advice from the Public Health Department, where needed.

In addition, hotels across the Islands are being asked to restrict restaurant services to only their guests.

In light of the ban, Commerce Minister Hon. Joey Hew is urging the industry to act responsibly and help contain the spread of the coronavirus. "We all have to use an elevated sense of caution as we respond to this situation so as to protect ourselves and



MINISTRY OF
COMMERCE, PLANNING &
INFRASTRUCTURE
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

the people of the Cayman Islands," he said.

The temporary ban on public gathering has been implemented in light of the global pandemic.

Advice from the Ministry of Health is that limiting opportunities for large groups to congregate is one way to halt the spread of the virus.

The strategy aims to delay the peak of confirmed cases in order to lessen the strain on the health sector.

Anyone found breaking 50 people in public spaces ban will be guilty of a criminal offence and faces a fine of \$1,000 and six-months imprisonment.



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The Cayman Islands
Bankers' Association

ADVISORY

Potential DEBT Servicing Challenges with the detection of COVID-19 in the Cayman Islands

Rest assured that your Cayman Islands Bankers' Association member lending institutions are committed to working with you to find a realistic solution in servicing your debt obligations in the advent of an emergency impacting your income.

It is important to engage as early as possible with your financial services professional at your bank who will advise and try to assist in developing a strategy to manage your financial commitments.

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FIDELITY

Panic Shopping Persists

... Continued story from page A1

Times they were still devising ways to get as much of certain products as possible.

"I send my husband to buy certain items and then I go back to the store myself to pickup the same stuff," noted a young woman exiting a popular shopping location on the West Bay Road. Other shoppers explained that they had to seek out items, which they would normally get at the supermarket at variety stores instead and locations that were not usually the first option for those particular products.

At Valu-med Pharmacy in Bodden Town shoppers were surprised to see a line outside and customers being called into the store by intercom/loud speaker to limit the amount of people inside the store.

With the first death of someone confirmed to have had the Corona virus confirmed in Grand Cayman, the public concern has been ratcheting up and the government's ban on gatherings of

more than 50 persons is now being enforced with the threat of a fine and even imprisonment.

Since the announcement of the very first case and the subsequent fallout at the Health City facility in Grand Cayman, those whom have been in the vicinity of the institution have been asked to be extra vigilant and some employers are contacting their employees to ask if they or any of their immediate family and/or contacts have been to the Health City.

Proprietors of popular retailer Reflections noted that people were also panic buying cigarettes and stockpiling anything they thought would need in the event of an Island-wide shortage of goods.

According to a statement from Deputy Director of Hazard Management, Mr. Simon Boxall, "...panic buying is not necessary, as the supply of goods remains strong and steady,"

Mr. Boxall added that residents should be aware that stocks of most products are normal and ships with more products are en route to Grand Cayman.

However, some in the community are growing more concerned, as news of the United States now extending their travel ban to the United Kingdom and Ireland has been announced.

"Persons are becoming more concerned, as the situation remains fluid and the prospect of all ports closing does not seem far-fetched; considering the novel nature of the times," said Stacy-Ann Wilson, who was stood outside Valu-med Pharmacy in Bodden Town.

In fact, even funerals have not been exempt from the CI Government's with Bodden Funeral Services issuing the following statement on Saturday, March 14th:

"Yesterday CI Government placed a 50 person limit on social gatherings. This includes funerals. We, as undertakers do not have the authority to refuse admittance to people entering a public church, however the Pastors of the Meshach Mugabe Myles and Perla Bush funerals have indicated they will be, as delicately as possible, enforcing this governmental policy. The same adherence to govern-

ment policy should be expected for funerals in the coming weeks.

"Very few, if any things in life are as painful as the loss of a loved one. I, we, understand that. However the mitigation of the spread of COVID19 is a responsibility of each and every one of us. I would ask the funeral going public to consider that responsibly when deciding to attend funerals until things are back to normal.

"Until this storm passes, we will be assisting some new ways at funerals:

- 1 guest book monitor will be positioned at the guest book, take the funeral goers names and write it in the book. No physical contact will give the virus one less place to be passed.
 - we will position one person at the entry to open and close the door, again limiting cross contamination opportunities.
- "These small measures, along with diligent daily sterilization of our facilities and proper usage of personal protective gear are a part of our dedication to the people we are so very honored to serve." 🌐

Cayman Airways Update

As Cayman Airways Limited (CAL) has been closely monitoring the situation regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19), several proactive and voluntary measures have been implemented to help ensure the continued safety and well-being of CAL passengers and employees.

The three main areas of focus have been: the cleaning of aircraft; the sanitization of catering items and equipment; and clean environments for employees and customers.

"Our regular cleaning practices for aircraft have always met or exceeded all regulatory guidelines, both locally and in the markets we serve, and now we've introduced enhanced and specialized cleaning measures between flights daily," said Cayman Airways President and CEO, Fabian Whorms. "For every flight you take with Cayman Airways, you can rest assured that your safety and well-being, as well as that of our employees, are our top priority at every step of your journey with us."

Mr. Whorms said that, in accordance with required procedures, all catering equipment on board CAL's aircraft already undergo a thorough sanitization regimen, but that the company's catering providers locally and overseas have also now introduced their own enhanced sanitization measures and procedures at their facilities, as well as for the trans-

portation of scheduled catering to and from CAL's aircraft.

CAL's VP Airport Operations, Ivan Forbes, said: "We work closely with all airport authorities in the markets we serve to ensure a clean and safe environment for our employees and customers. Our airport partners are ensuring that check-in areas and departure gates are maintained in a suitable sanitary condition, while all Cayman Airways employees, especially those on the frontline, are being briefed on the best practices and health advisories issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and local health officials with regards to how to stay germ free and healthy in the fight against COVID-19."

Cayman Airways is advising customers to stay updated on the latest developments related to COVID-19 from trusted sources, and to implement their own strategies for a healthy travel experience based on the guidance of the WHO and the health authorities in their area.

Customers are also urged not to travel when sick, and are encouraged to travel with their own hand sanitizer.

To learn more about protecting yourself from the Coronavirus, visit the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website in the USA at cdc.gov/coronavirus or



Travel can be rebooked within the validity of the original ticket, but changes must be made on or before December 31, 2020.

Any student returning to the Cayman Islands due to the closure of the educational institution they are attending abroad, regardless of the date of travel, will be eligible for a waiver.

Effective March 3, 2020, any new tickets purchased on or before March 31, 2020 will not be subject to a change fee. However, the ticket will be non-refundable.

This waiver of change fees will apply for tickets purchased during this timeframe for travel up to October 31, 2020. It is important to note that, while change fees will be waived, fare differences may still apply.

Passengers booked to travel on/after June 30, 2020 and are not eligible for any of the waivers above at this time. Cayman Airways will continue to evaluate the situation and update the travelling public as needed.

Customers wishing to change their bookings should contact their travel professional or call Cayman Airways Reservations on: 345-949-2311; 1-800-422-9626 (toll free in the USA); 866-759-1372 (toll free in Jamaica); or 800-2791-9422 (toll free in Honduras). 🌐

visit the Cayman Islands Government's website at www.gov.ky/coronavirus

CHANGE-FEE WAIVER EXTENDED AND ADJUSTED

The change-fee waiver currently in effect has been further extended and adjusted as Cayman Airways Limited (CAL) continues to closely monitor developments related to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Any passenger wishing to make changes to an existing ticket for either international or domestic travel may do so without being subject to the change fee, providing:

- Travel is on Cayman Airways (waiver applies only to CAL flights)
- The ticket was purchased prior to March 3, 2020
- Travel is scheduled between March 2, 2020 through June 30, 2020

Government announces airport closure

By Christopher Tobutt

At the Monday 16 March Press conference, Premier, Hon Alden McLaughlin, Minister for Health, Hon Dwayne Seymour, H.E The Governor Martyn Roper, and Chief Medical Officer Dr. John Lee updated Cayman's public on the new developments concerning the coronavirus.

The Premier announced the decision to close the Owen Roberts international Airport and the Charles Kirkconnell international airport to international passenger flights, "For a temporary period of three weeks beginning on Sunday 22 March 2020 at 11.59 PM until Sunday 12 April 2020 at 11.59 PM," he said.

This time period will continue to be reviewed," he said. "for all destinations with the exception of the United Kingdom, inbound flights from Thursday 19 March will operate for returning residents only. Outbound flights will operate as usual through Sunday 22nd of March. Flights from the United Kingdom will operate as normal from Sunday 22

March. With immediate effect, any person arriving in the Cayman Islands will be required to isolate for a period of 14 days.

"Flights to Cayman Brac and Little Cayman will be restricted to essential needs and personnel, and for residential travel only," he said. "Domestic flights between Owen Roberts International Airport and the Charles Kirkconnell airport and the airfield on Little Cayman will continue, and cargo flights into the three airports will also continue. The airport will also remain open for any emergency flights."

The reason that travel was being restricted between Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac was, Mr. McLaughlin said, to protect the many elderly people on Cayman Brac.

"The government has not taken this decision lightly... to give all persons who are here who wish to leave the opportunity to do so," Mr. McLaughlin said.

"A Big part of the discussion of ministers with the business community is about how they can help the Govern-



► Chief Medical Officer Dr. John Lee



► Premier, Hon Alden McLaughlin

ment ease the burden loss of jobs loss of income, the decision to close the cruise ports, and the loss of income for tour operators and taxi drivers," he said.

"We have asked the banks to consider Payment holidays or the waver of loan or mortgage payments I am happy to say they have already considered it, and will proceed on a case-by-case basis.

"I can also say discussions with CUC and Cayman water authority have undertaken not to do any disconnections for 60 to 90 90 days. Please contact the relevant officer to talk about a payment plan," he said. "The Final thing I want to emphasize is the importance of isolation for persons who think they have the symptoms - you have a moral obligation to withdraw from community activities to protect especially the elderly, and other vulnerable people in the community. Not-isolating in many cases will be the same as imposing on people a death sentence on these people," he said.

Governor Martyn Roper said: "The Government have taken robust measures and I support these measures fully. Public Health England is supporting us, and as of today we have the ability to test for the virus. I want to support what the premier has said about isolation. If you experience any symptoms coughing, shortness of breath, then self-isolate and try to avoid visitors to your home. We all have a responsibility to people on these islands."

Minister Seymour reiterated the ban on public gatherings, which, "Excludes hospitals supermarkets, pharmacies, but still try to stay six feet apart," he said.

"I am pleased to see the spirit of Cayman Kindness cannot be extinguished, and there is a call-centre manned by cadets, and the number is 949 6555," he said, as he used people to avoid 'fake news,' and urged them to check on www.gov.ky/coronavirus as an official source of reliable information. 🌐



Make Use of Government's Online Services

Commerce Minister Hon. Joey Hew is urging members of the public to make use of government's e-services online platform to conduct business with government departments and agencies as the Cayman Islands prepares for the coronavirus.

"We are closely monitoring the developments around the spread of the coronavirus and the main priority of the government and my Ministry is the well-being and safety of our people," he said.

Minister Hew continued, "Particularly at this time when social distancing is important, I want to remind persons that there are a wide range of the government services that can be accessed online through our government e-services platform and they should make use of this option. We want the general public to apply online for what services are available there and skip the lines".

Director of E-Government, Ian Tibbets has supported Minister Hew's call noting that the platform offers both resident and business services for "immigration, business and industry, planning and lands, driving and transport, education and employment, among many others areas".

"With an emphasis now on less face to face interactions, the e-services website provides a mechanism to do this. I am encouraging those persons who are unfamiliar with using the online system to seek help from family and friends," Mr Tibbets stated.

The range of services that members of the public can conduct at e-services.gov.ky include but are not limited to:

Business and Industry

- Apply For or Renew a Trade and Business Licence
- Customs Online System
- Cayman Online Registry Information System
- Immigration Online
- National Job Link Portal
- Online Planning System
- Search companies information
- View companies struck off Register
- CIMA Filings
- Government Procurement Opportunities
- Cayman Business Self-Service Portal for Resident Companies

- Corporate Administration Portal for Corporate Service Agents
- Domain Registration

Births, Deaths and Marriages

- Order a birth certificate
- Order a death certificate
- Order a marriage certificate

Driving and Transport

- Vehicle and Drivers' Licencing Renewals
- Express Mail Service Tracking
- Parcel and Registered Mail Tracking
- Ship Registry
- Aircraft Registry

Planning and Lands

- Caymap Online Mapping



► Commerce Minister Hon. Joey Hew

- Lands & Survey Online Tools
- Online Planning System
- Buffer Map Calculator
- Land Registry forms
- Land Registration Section by Block
- Land Parcel Change History Report
- Track Land Registry Submission
- Submit land transfer form

Justice and the Law

- Search for a Justice of the Peace
- Search for a licenced attorney
- Search for a Notary Public
- Apply for police clearance certificate
- Criminal Record Checks (Personal and Legal Entity)

Virus hits cruise lines the hardest

The global cruise industry is in disarray for the foreseeable future as travel restrictions due to the pandemic coronavirus outbreak takes hold. Caribbean tourism, including the Cayman Islands, relies heavily on revenue from cruise passengers but for the next month at least there will be no operations. The fact that the halt will fall over the crucial Easter period is an extra blow.

The first cruise operator to announce it was suspending its river and ocean cruises for a temporary period was Viking which is based in Basel, Switzerland, closely followed by Princess Cruises, based in Bermuda and nearly all other major cruise lines have made similar announcements in the past week. The biggest who have shut down are Royal Caribbean, Carnival, and Norwegian who collectively make up around 70 percent of the world market.

The unprecedented move to shut down the cruise industry follows advice from European and US governments that those aged 70 and over, and those with pre-existing health conditions, should avoid cruise holidays for the time being, while Covid-19 is such an important health issue.

Such advice is a devastating blow for a cruise industry that attracts all ages and is a particularly popular holiday choice for mature travellers. However, across the industry, which prides itself on high service levels and optimal customer care, many cruise lines are simply unable to deliver the experiences they promise guests presently, with port closures and travel restrictions growing by the day.

The Caribbean is suffering in all sectors of tourism, but the cruise lines are probably hardest hit. Cruise ships have repeatedly come under fire around the region for dumping sewage, food waste, plastic, and oil into the aqua waters as well as damaging coral reefs. Environmentalists do not trust the cruise industry to protect the islands from a health crisis any more than they trust it to protect the environment.

Carnival has ceased cruises for ships based in North America until April 9. In



► Pollution from cruise ships infuriates environmentalists



► Costa Luminosa brought Covid-19 to Cayman

a statement the line said: "While Carnival has not had a diagnosed case linked to our operation we realise this situation is bigger than the cruise industry and we will continue do our part to support public officials to manage and contain this unprecedented public health challenge."

The Dominican Republic turned away the Braemar at the end of February due to health officials' concerns about flu-like symptoms reported on board. But in a move typical of an industry that tends to play island nations against one another, the cruise company called the decision an "overreaction" and found a friendly port in St Maarten. Passengers disembarked and new ones filed on board.

From there, the Braemar headed to Cartagena, Colombia, where an American who disembarked became the first recorded coronavirus case in the city. Four crew members and one passenger tested positive on a stop in Curaçao. Meanwhile, in Canada, Alberta's chief medical officer revealed that a Braemar passenger had tested positive after returning home from the ship. As the crisis continued to unfold on board, Barbados turned the Braemar away, and it headed toward the Bahamas, the country whose flag the ship flies, home to one of the busiest Caribbean island cruise ports.

The Bahamian government announced that the Braemar would



► Cayman is missing out on cruise ship revenues

not be allowed to dock, and by Friday, Fred Olsen announced it would suspend cruises in the face of the crisis.

Across the Caribbean, cruise lines have placed enormous pressure on governments to be allowed to continue to dock their ships, even when concerns about illness on board arose.

In Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos, Carnival Cruise Line, the namesake brand of Carnival Corporation, which controls about half the market share, threatened to pull its business after government officials attempted to stop ships carrying potentially sick passengers from docking in their ports or restricted which passengers could disembark. The three governments were left to make critical public health decisions under threat from a

corporation that holds enormous sway over Caribbean economies.

One of the ships turned out to be carrying the virus. On Friday, authorities in the Cayman Islands and Puerto Rico announced that their first confirmed coronavirus patients had entered on the Costa Luminosa, a Carnival Corporation ship.

Only after news broke that the Cayman Islands would be forced to shut down one of its three hospitals because of worker exposure to a Costa Luminosa patient did the Cruise Lines International Association announce that its members would suspend operations in the US, cancelling many Caribbean cruises.

This is an industry notorious for not listening to consumers or to people providing feedback. The outcome is that they're exporting illness.



► The Braemar was one of the first ships to report coronavirus

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HSA expands flu clinic to new location

With increasing incidences of flu being reported in the Cayman Islands the Health Services Authority has expanded its flu clinic on the main Hospital campus with a dedicated unit to treat patients with flu moderate to severe symptoms and help mitigate the spread of the virus in other clinic settings.

Medical Officer of Health, Dr Williams recommended that persons first make contact via the 24 hour Flu Hotline at 1-800-534-8600 or 947-3077 or email flu@hsa.ky as initial triage before coming into the Flu Clinic.

Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Samuel Williams says the high number of influenza like cases emerging in recent weeks has resulted in an increase of patients entering the emergency room and general practice clinic. "We saw approximately 300 cases of respiratory tract infections reported within the last two

weeks in February so the need is still there."

The dedicated Flu Clinic is located in the space previously occupied by the Outpatient Mental Health Unit, on the side of the hospital facing the Seventh Day Adventist Church, to the far left of A&E. Signage on the hospital campus will direct patients to the Clinic, which will be open Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All persons at the flu clinic will be required to wear a face-mask to prevent the spread of flu.

If you have flu symptoms and have traveled within the last 2 weeks please stay at home and contact your health-care provider or the Flu Hotline. Callers will speak with a health professional about their symptoms, be screened for travel history, etc and will be advised on what they should do e.g. come to the Flu Clinic, stay home in isolation.

Dr. Williams says that most people with the flu have mild to moderate symptoms and will recover within about a week without medical treatment. Persons are reminded to rest, take over-the-counter medications and drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions should call the hotline or their primary care doctor at the first sign of flu symptoms.

Flu symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Chills

If you experience worsening symptoms such as:

- Sudden dizziness and confusion;

- Severe or persistent vomiting;
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen; or,
- Difficulty breathing

Call the Flu hotline or 911.

To help avoid the spread of germs and reduce the risk of contracting viruses, it is essential to practice the following:

- Wash your hands with soap and water (hand sanitizer if a sink with soap and water is not available).

- Don't touch your face unless you have washed your hands, as that is how the virus gets into your body.

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away, or cough and sneeze into your bent elbow.

- Stay 3 -6 feet away from sick persons with respiratory symptoms.

Patients visiting the flu clinic can use the Seventh Day Adventist Church parking lot, just opposite A&E. 📍

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24 Hour Crisis Line - 943-2422

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If you are a victim of domestic violence, contact us now and find out how we can help.



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Cayman Spirits Co Begins Production on All Purpose Sanitizer

Last Friday, Cayman's Local Distillery – Cayman Spirits Co., announced efforts to begin production of an all-purpose sanitizer to alleviate the current stress on supply. Cayman Spirits Co., the makers of Seven Fathoms Rum, have decided to offer the sanitizer free of charge to all frontline healthcare workers, emergency service personnel, and police completely free of charge. Currently, Police Officers, nurses at the HSA, Cayman Airways Commissary, have been supplied over the weekend and the company is currently in discussions with several more government and healthcare entities who are currently in need and unable to find supply.

In addition, the local distillery has also made some bottles of sanitizer available to the public at the distillery with a limit of 2 per customer. The company will update their social media pages with availability to the public at the distillery tasting room on Bronze Rd. in Industrial Park.

The sanitizer is a 65% liquid alcohol solution, not a gel or aloe-based sanitizer. As it is a liquid, it can be used on the hands or also on surfaces. If being used frequently, it is also recommended to use moisturizer on the hands from time

to time to keep hands from becoming dry.

The sanitizer is made as a by product of the distillation process of Cayman Spirits locally distilled spirits. As such, a small quantity will be able to be produced on a daily basis as long as the employees can continue regular production of their local spirits.

Nelson Dilbert, co-founder, said "We are happy to be in a position that we can alleviate some stress on those that are in a position where they are exposed. For any emergency services workers or frontline healthcare staff, please get in touch as we are working hard to make sure we can supply any of those who are in need."

Cayman Spirits Co. is the local distillery of the Cayman Islands and the producer of Seven Fathoms Rum, the official rum partner of Cayman Airways. The company also produces a wide range of other products including Governor's Reserve Rum, HH Hutchings, Gun Bay Vodka and some seasonal spirits like Gin and Mango Brandy. Currently their locally crafted products are distributed across the Cayman Islands as well as in 6+ countries across North America and Europe. 🌐

POLICE NEWS

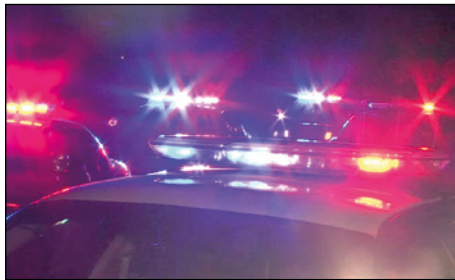
27-year-old-man of North Side dies from stab wound

Just before 3AM today, Sunday 15 March, police and other emergency services were dispatched to a report in Splendid View boulevard, North Side. It was reported that a man was stabbed and was unresponsive.

The 27-year-old-man of North Side was attended to by Emergency Medical Services and transported to the hospital by ambulance. He was later pronounced dead at the Cayman Islands Hospital by an attending doctor.

The circumstances of this incident are being investigated by the Criminal Investigations Department. A 36-year-old-woman of North Side was arrested on suspicion of murder and remains in custody pending further investigation.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is encouraged to contact



the George Town Police Station at 949-4222.

Anonymous tips can be provided directly to the RCIPS via our **Confidential Tip Line** at 949-7777, or via our website www.rcips.ky. Tips can also be submitted anonymously via the Miami-based call centre of **Crime Stoppers** at 800-8477(TIPS), or online www.crimestoppers.ky/home. 🌐

DAILY PAPER

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Girls Softball – Game Report

Scotiabank 9, Kirk Freeport 8

On Wednesday evening Scotiabank cruised to a 9-1 lead, and held off a dramatic final inning comeback by Kirk Freeport to hold on for a 9-8 victory.

Scotiabank tallied six runs in the first two innings, with Shay Windsor, Zhanna McDonald and Janey Veilleux each scoring twice. Clara Ramos had RBI hits in both innings. Meanwhile, Zhanna was in command on the mound, keeping the Kirk Freeport bats silent, and helping her own cause with two good catches.

Each team scored a run in the third inning, with Keirsten McLaughlin sprinting home for Kirk Freeport and Hannah Lawrence crossing the plate for Scotiabank to make it 7-1.

In the fourth inning Shay and Zhanna were each hit by pitches and later both

scored with some excellent baserunning.

In the top of the fifth, Kirk Freeport began a furious rally! Leila Dixon, Aiyana Barnes, Krystal Morales-Ebanks, Natalia Bent, Demae Lee, Sofia Watter and McKenna Knapik scored seven consecutive runs, utilizing some timely hits and a few errors by Scotiabank fielders. Scotiabank second baseman Dena'e Alexander made an excellent defensive play to force out a runner, or her team might have been in more trouble. With the tying run on third, Zhanna fielded a grounder and calmly threw to first base for the final out in the 9-8 win.

Kirk Freeport pitcher Ariyana Ebanks struck out ten batters, one of the highest



► Scotiabank players



► Kirk Freeport players

totals in the past several seasons. Lead-off batter Demae Lee had two hits and reached base in all three plate appearances.

Players of the Game:

- Zhanna McDonald (Scotiabank): 3 runs scored, 3 strikeouts and 5 putouts at pitcher.

- Shay Windsor (Scotiabank): 3 runs scored, excellent defense at catcher and good fielding at shortstop.

Scoring by inning:

TEAM	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	TOTAL
Kirk Freeport	0	0	1	0	7	8
Scotiabank	3	3	1	2	—	9

Current Standings:

TEAM	Won	Lost	Tied	RF	RA	GB
Kirk Freeport	2	1	0	25	29	0
Coldwell Banker	1	1	0	18	16	0.5
Scotiabank	1	2	0	18	16	1

Little League Activities Suspended

Due to the current situation regarding COVID-19, the Little League sent out the following message to all families on Friday:

Dear Little League Families and Friends,

We all want to play ball so badly, but we need to take a break. During this challenging time, it's critically important that we are extra cautious, vigilant and responsible. In doing so, and in cooperation with global and local health authority recommendations, as well as Little League International, we are suspending the current season, effective immediately.

We remain hopeful that containment efforts are effective over the weeks ahead and that play can resume after the scheduled Easter break. Of course, plans will be confirmed as more information is known and the situation progresses.

Our opponent is proving to be a tough one, but the game is not over and we're looking forward to a strong rally in the late innings to finish with a big WIN!

Please click on the following link for additional notice provided from Little League International:

<https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/>

We will keep everyone updated as the situation progresses and ask that you direct any questions to: info@littleleague.ky.

Coronavirus – Self-Isolating

Do

- Stay at home
- Try not to be in the same room as other people at the same time
- Only allow people who live with you to stay
- Stay in a well-ventilated room
- Ideally, keep two weeks of food, drink, medication and cleaning supplies at home
- Ask friends, family members or delivery services to carry out errands for you such as getting groceries, medicines or other shopping
- Make sure you tell delivery drivers to leave items outside for collection
- Clean toilets and bathrooms regularly
- Think about a bathroom rota if a separate bathroom is not available, with the isolated person using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bathroom themselves
- Use separate sheets and towels from anyone else in the household and launder at the hottest temperature possible for the material
- Wash crockery and utensils thoroughly with soap and water. Dishwashers may be used to clean crockery and cutlery
- Stay away from your pets—if unavoidable, wash your hands before and after contact

Do Not

- Invite visitors to your home or allow visitors to enter
- Go to work, school or public areas
- Use public transport or taxis
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with other people in your home

Self-Isolation and Mental Health

Stay in touch with friends and relatives on the phone or by social media. You may find it helpful to talk to them.

Most importantly, remember you are supported.

For the latest updates and information, please visit [HSA.ky/public-health/coronavirus](https://hsa.ky/public-health/coronavirus) or gov.ky/coronavirus.



RCIPS Helicopter conducts Life Saving Mission

A team from the RCIPS Air Operations Unit carried out a mission on Saturday, 14 March 2020 to deliver emergency medical supplies for the MS Braemar cruise ship, which is currently off the Bahamas and unable to dock at present due an outbreak of COVID-19 onboard.

The medicines, which are not related to COVID-19 treatment, were standard prescription items which were urgently required by passengers and in good sup-

ply on Cayman. The operation was coordinated by the Governor's Office and the British High Commission in Nassau. The supplies were landed in the Bahamas and were delivered to the ship, which is off Grand Bahama, by the British High Commission.

The MS Braemar has over 680 passengers onboard most of whom are British. They include a number of people who are in urgent need of the medicines.

The operation was authorised by Governor Martyn Roper and Premier Alden McLaughlin.

The Governor commented, "Once again we are extremely grateful to the team at the RCIPS Air Operations Unit for their service. This mission was vital to ensure the passengers on the Braemar had access to life saving medicines. My thanks also go to the pharmacy team at the HSA for providing such a professional response."

Premier Alden McLaughlin said, "This is a time when the world needs to come together to help each other. The RCIPS helicopter has proved vital in saving lives not only in Cayman but also in the region. This operation was essential to provide vital medicines to vulnerable passengers and I am pleased that here in Cayman we have the capability to protect people at home but also to help those in distress on the sea."

NAU Revises Existing Clients' Service Delivery to Support Preparedness Measures


As a part of Government's Coronavirus preparedness measures, the Ministry of Community Affairs has announced that existing Needs Assessment Unit (NAU) clients need not visit the agency's offices to receive temporary assistance. Instead, NAU staff will reach out to clients to provide updates as to the way forward.

New clients seeking NAU services are advised, if possible, to first contact the agency via email at NAUInfo@gov.ky, so that the agency's pre-assessment form can be sent out to them. The form

can also be accessed by visiting www.nau.gov.ky. As necessary, phone contact can also be made to our offices both in Grand Cayman and in Cayman Brac.

The NAU offices in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac will be opened from 8:30am to 5:00 on Monday to Friday. Its offices are located at 1st Floor Aqua Mall, 55 South Church St., Grand Cayman (Tel: 946-0024) and Dennis Foster Rd, Stake Bay, Cayman Brac (Tel: 948-8758).

For the safety and wellbeing of all, services will be processed by phone as



NEEDS ASSESSMENT UNIT
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

much as possible. Again, those persons already registered with the NAU will not have to visit the offices, as clients will be contacted by the agency or for urgent matter they may call for guidance.



Caymanian Times
DAILY PAPER

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Coronavirus Information and Advice for Vulnerable People

Prevention Tips

- frequently **cleanse hands** with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- **cough or sneeze** in a tissue and bin it
- **if a tissue is not available** cough/sneeze into your elbow not your hands
- **avoid close contact** with people suffering from fever or cough
- **avoid travel** if you have a fever, cough, or flu-like symptoms
- **avoid wearing a surgical mask** unless advised by a medical professional

Extra Steps You Can Take To Avoid Covid-19

If you have a **chronic illness** (e.g. respiratory disease, diabetes, heart disease, COPD, hypertension or cancer), are **elderly** (over 60) or have a **compromised immune system**, you can further protect yourself with the below extra precautionary steps in addition to the prevention tips above.

1



limit guest visits
at home to a few family and friends or your district community officer during an outbreak

2



avoid guests who show signs of flu-like symptoms

3



remain 3 – 6 feet away unless being checked by your healthcare provider

Most importantly, remember **you are supported.**

Call the H.S.A. helpline on **1-800-534-8600** or **947-3077** if you have any questions.

For the latest updates and information, please visit HSA.ky/public-health/coronavirus or gov.ky/coronavirus



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Stars generous to staff hit by virus

Sports stars around the globe are donating large chunks of their huge salaries to those hit by the coronavirus pandemic, particularly NBA players.

New Orleans Pelicans' Zion Williamson is the latest who has pledged to cover the salaries of the employees of the team's Smoothie King Centre for the next month.

It follows the postponement of major sport in the US because of Covid-19.

"My mother has always set an example for me about being respectful for others and being grateful for what we have," said the 19-year-old ace.

The NBA's MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo has pledged \$100,000 for workers at the Milwaukee Bucks' Fiserv Forum.

Antetokounmpo, 25, posted on social media: "It's bigger than basketball. During this tough time I want to help the people that make my life, my family's lives, and my team-mates lives easier."

Williamson added: "Many are still recovering from long-term challenges created by Hurricane Katrina. My mother has always set an example for me about being respectful for others and being grateful for what we have, and so today I am pledging to cover the salaries for all of those Smoothie King Centre workers for the next 30 days."

The 6ft 6in rookie was the first pick in the 2019 NBA draft. In February, the forward became the first teenager in NBA history to score 20-plus points in 10 straight games.

The Utah Jazz announced on Saturday that Rudy Gobert, who tested positive for coronavirus, is donating \$500,000 to a fund for part-time employees who work in basketball and for local health care services.

He apologised for potentially exposing others to the virus. Earlier in the week, he jokingly touched reporters'



► Zion Williamson is covering wages for a month



► Giannis Antetokounmpo has pledged \$100,000 for workers

microphones and Dictaphones at a pre-match news conference.

"I know there are countless ways that people have been impacted," he said. "These donations are a small token that reflect my appreciation and support for all those impacted and are the first of many steps I will take to try to make a positive difference, while continuing to learn more about Covid-19 and educate others."

Cleveland Cavaliers forward Kevin Love, Detroit Pistons' Blake Griffin, Charlotte Hornets' Cody Zeller are among the other players who said they would financially help employees of their respective teams.

Golden State Warriors players, owners and coaches are stepping up to donate a whopping \$1 million to help Chase Centre employees.

Houston Rockets leadership is "working on" a plan to help employees who

were scheduled to work at the Toyota Centre.

At the Indiana Pacers, Bankers Life Fieldhouse employees will get financial aid for the nine home games the Pacers were set to play.

Los Angeles Clippers, Lakers, and Kings are joining together to help Staples Centre employees. The initiative was launched by the Lakers.

At the Memphis Grizzlies, Robert Pera, team owner, has pledged money to game-day employees. Miami Heat have promised that American Airlines Arena employees will be compensated.

In the UK, Premier League clubs Aston Villa and Brighton have donated hundreds of meals to local homeless charities after weekend fixtures were postponed and all clubs are making their contribution to community causes. 🌐

Mane is \$140m Real target

Real Madrid have made Liverpool ace Sadio Mane their top transfer target this summer.

Mane has been one of the standout stars for the champions elect this season after helping them to Champions League glory last term.

And his form in the past two campaigns has endeared him even more greatly to Real boss Zinedine Zidane, who is a huge admirer of the Senegalese international.

Zizou wants to take Mane to the Bernabeu and it is understood that his representatives have been made aware of the Spaniards' interest.

Los Blancos are confident he can be tempted by a move to Madrid for a new challenge and they plan to make a move to land him when the transfer window opens.

Mane still has three years to run on his contract at Anfield and it would

take a whopping offer for Liverpool to even contemplate selling him.

But there is a belief in Madrid that a fee in the region of around \$140million would give them plenty to consider.

Mane, 27, has scored 14 goals in the Premier League once more this season, having taken a share of the golden boot last term.

He was hailed by ex-England defender Rio Ferdinand this week, with the former Manchester United man stating he would least like to play against Mane of the Reds' front trio.

"Mane's been phenomenal. He's the guy that normally scores first. Out of the three strikers Liverpool have, he's the one I would least like to play against. He's unpredictable, he's sharp, he's quick, he's direct, clinical."

"Listen, they're all great players but there's just something different about him for me that I really, really love." 🌐



► Sadio Mane could move to Real Madrid this summer

Semenya aims for Olympic 200m glory

Caster Semenya, the two-time Olympic 800m champion has been forced to compete in the 200m at Tokyo 2020.

The 29-year-old South African cannot compete in events between 400m and a mile without taking testosterone-reducing drugs after a World Athletics rule change.

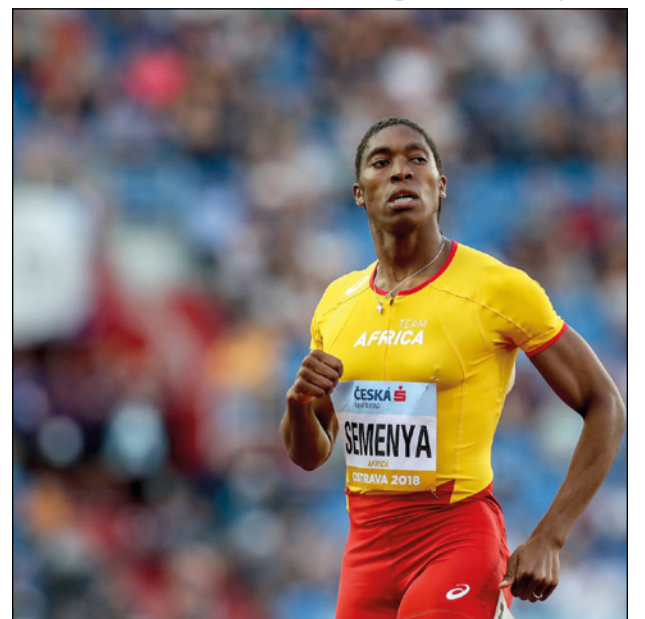
Semenya ran 200m in 23.49 seconds - 0.69secs outside the Olympic qualifying time - at an event in Pretoria last week. Nevertheless, she feels she can medal in Tokyo. "I call myself supernatural," she said.

The three-time world 800m champion, who spoke of her decision to switch to the 200m in an Instagram post, must bring her time down to 22.80secs before 29 June to qualify for the South African Olympic team.

"We are chopping the times and I call myself supernatural. I can do anything I want," she added. "I always challenge myself. This was not an easy decision to make."

"I am used to running two laps and then you come and run half a lap. You have to adjust, which is not easy, but anything is possible."

If Semenya qualifies for the Olympics - which begin on 24 July - she would be



► Caster Semenya needs to make the Olympic qualifying time

set to compete against Great Britain's Dina Asher-Smith, who won 200m gold at the 2019 World Championships.

Semenya missed the chance to defend her world 800m title in Doha last year, having failed in her bid to prevent the governing body's rule change.

World Athletics argued female athletes with differences of sexual development (DSD) - such as Semenya - have "a competitive advantage".

In February, Semenya competed in her first track meeting since last June with victory in the 300m in Johannesburg, winning in a national record of 36.78secs. 🌐

Lara believes Pollard will retain World Cup T20

West Indies legend Brian Lara feels that the current team has the quality to be a top player in the ICC T20 World Cup 2020 in Australia later this year, while backing Kieron Pollard to get the best out of the power-packed outfit.

Pollard became the first cricketer to play 500 T20 games when he took the field in the first of the two T20Is against Sri Lanka two weeks ago. Lara marvelled at the West Indies' limited-overs captain's achievement and believes he will lead them to success in the future.

"It's a tremendous achievement first of all to play so much T20 games, it's unbelievable," Lara said. "Kieron Pollard has been around for quite some time. I remember his first game was 2007 for the World Cup. Obviously, he's played a lot of franchise cricket around the world and I think the experience he has gained under different captains brings a lot of experience."

"What he also has is cohesiveness amongst the players. I think everyone respects him, which is important. The most important thing is a captain is as good as his team, and if he has support from his team - and a very talented team at that, especially in the T20 version of the game - I think he's going to get the best out of them."

As for the other established T20 greats in Chris Gayle and Dwayne Bravo, who alongside Pollard are the only players to have played more than 400 games, Lara feels that their performances in the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League will play a key role in determining their selection for the T20 World Cup. Bravo recently made a comeback to the West Indies team for the home series against Ireland, while Gayle's last international appearance dates to August 2019.

"I think the IPL is going to be a huge point or signal for who is actually going to carry on," said Lara, who himself featured in five 50-over World Cups for West Indies. "It's still going to be five months after the IPL for the World Cup. Fitness levels are very important, but a gruesome tournament like the IPL is going to tell the West Indies selectors who are the players that they really need going into the last four months of preparation for the World Cup."

West Indies are the only team to have won two T20 World Cup titles, in 2012 and 2016, and Lara has every confidence in them retaining that record with players of the calibre of Shimron Hetmyer, Nicholas Pooran, Pollard, Dwayne Bravo, Andre Russell and Evin Lewis.



► Shimron Hetmyer is a hard-hitting batsman

"I don't think we are going to be dark horses in the World Cup. I think everybody is going to look at the West Indies as the team to beat." 🌐

COVID-19 Causes Suspension of University Classes and Closure of Schools in Jamaica and Guyana

The University of the West Indies (UWI) Mona Campus has suspended classes and public schools across Jamaica have been closed for two weeks, in light of the spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Similar measures have been taken in Guyana where one fatal COVID-19 case was recorded this week.

UWI classes have been suspended from today until after Easter, Education Minister Karl Samuda told Parliament yesterday.

In an advisory, the university said: "All mid-semester examinations scheduled for March 13, 2020 have subsequently been cancelled. Teaching is expected to resume, either online or face-to-face from April 14, 2020 and this may result in the semester being extended."

"All Jamaican students who reside on hall are required to move home during

this period. International and regional students are welcome to remain on hall, but are asked to strictly adhere to all instituted protocols," it added said.

Earlier in the day yesterday, Prime Minister Andrew Holness had announced that all public schools would be closed for 14 days, from today.

He said the decision was made after consultation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, and will be reviewed after 10 days.

"Parents will now have Saturday and Sunday to make further preparations for their children and that would give us time to complete our preparations to ensure that those schools that do not have Internet connectivity that they could receive materials to distribute to students so they can continue their education at home," the Prime Minister said.

In Guyana, the Ministry of Education advised that with effect from next Monday, all schools will be closed for two weeks, during which time the decision will be reassessed during this period.

The University of Guyana (UG), meantime, said that while the mid-semester break is over, the university remains closed to non-essential staff and students and is expected to reopen for classes after March 20.

COVID-19, which has reached 117 countries since it was first detected in China, has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). In addition to Jamaica, which now has eight cases, and Guyana, Caribbean



countries affected include: Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, St Vincent and the Grenadines, the Cayman Islands, Cuba, Martinique, the Dominican Republic, Saint Martin and Saint Barthelemy. 🌐

Financial Measures Necessary to Ride Out Coronavirus

By Sir Ronald Sanders

Regardless of the number of Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases that occur in the Caribbean, the economies of each of them, particularly those dependent on tourism, will suffer in the immediate to medium term.

Fear and travel restrictions on persons living in countries with COVID-19 have already disrupted the global economy and supply chains for goods and services.

Indeed, every country in the world will be adversely affected economically even if any of them avoid a major public health emergency. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has already made an early forecast that its predicted 3.3 per cent growth in 2020 will not occur. Optimistically, the Fund now expects growth below 2.9 per cent.

Growth rates in the tourism-reliant countries have already declined. Many hotels have experienced cancellations over the immediate period and well into the next winter season. Of the world's top 25 tourism dependent countries, nine are in the Caribbean.

In order of highest dependence, they are: British Virgin Islands, Aruba, The Bahamas, St Lucia, Belize, Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Jamaica.

With a reduction in the numbers of hotel guests and patrons of restaurants as well as the number of persons renting vehicles, earnings in the sector have dropped; jobs are being lost; and government revenues are declining.

The situation is worse for those Caribbean countries that also rely on cruise-ships as part of the overall contribution of tourism to the economy. The latest authoritative figures rank those countries in order of dependence as: St. Kitts and Nevis at 5.9 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP); Antigua and Barbuda, 4.1 per cent; Belize, 4.0 per cent, St. Lucia, 3.9 per cent; Bahamas 3 per cent; Dominica, 3 per cent; Grenada, 2.8 per cent; and Barbados, 1.5 per cent.

The US State Department has been discouraging Cruise ship travel, warning U.S. citizens, particularly travellers with underlying health conditions, "not to travel by cruise ship". The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued guidance, cautioning travellers of "increased risk of infection of COVID-19 in a cruise ship environment."

Fear of being quarantined on a cruise ship anywhere in the world has frightened potential passengers. Cruises to the Caribbean have been badly affected. Stock values in Carnival Corp. is down 52.7 per cent year-to-date; Royal Caribbean is down 61.3 per cent, and Norwegian has fallen 65 per cent.

Obviously, all the commercial businesses in the tourism sector in Caribbean countries will also face a reduction in their profits. If the fear over COVID-19 persists and the quest for a vaccine is protracted, these businesses could fall into financial loss. In those circumstances, even more workers will be laid-off and their restricted spending will impact other sectors from which they buy goods and services.

Governments will be particularly hard-pressed because they will be deprived of revenues at a time when they are required to spend more money, much of it in foreign exchange, in their attempts to militate against COVID-19 which, despite best efforts, will enter their countries and could spread into community clusters as it has done elsewhere in the world.

Small Caribbean states do not have the considerable resources or economic and fiscal tools of rich North American and European countries that can be deployed by Treasury Departments and Central Banks. But, there are still some options available provided all sections of the society assume the mantle that "everyone is in this together".

Measures to stop the incubation and spread of the virus, including good hygiene, meticulous handwashing, self-isolation, cancellation of events that attract large crowds – all of these are necessary. But steps will also have to be taken to help both persons who become unemployed and those self-employed persons who get ill with COVID-19 and are forced not to work for a minimum of 14 days.

The banking sector could be enormously helpful in efforts to keep the economy buoyant by implementing several actions. Among them: renegotiate payment terms for house mortgages and other property, particularly vehicles, for persons who are either temporarily laid-off or self-employed persons who cannot earn because of illness; bank fees and charges, which are higher in the Caribbean than in many other parts of the world could be reduced significantly; and interest rates on loans could also be decreased while COVID-19 affects economies.

Certainly, government debt to domestic banks should be renegotiated and the banks should agree to extend the repayment periods and reduce the interest rates while governments are compelled to increase spending to deal with the public health emergency that all Caribbean countries now face.

If, heaven forbid, Banks are unwilling to adopt such measures, which, ultimately, will be to their benefit by ensuring that loans don't sour, and customers can continue to buy their services, then governments might



have to resort to legislation to urge them in a sensible direction.

Trade Unions and other bargaining agents could also play an important part in the current crisis by putting into abeyance all demands for increased wages and payment of arrears. Making such demands, at a time when both governments and the private sector face reduced income, would destabilize already unstable economies.

Governments might also have to consider placing a moratorium on repayment of foreign debts. The repayment of such debt requires foreign exchange, whose earning will be reduced by the decline in tourism. Further, existing foreign exchange reserves will dwindle as those reserves are used to continue to import goods and services for the society, including new spending on equipment and medicines to fight the coronavirus.

No reasonable international bank or foreign lending agency, including Export-Import banks of individual nations, could demand to be paid debts in full at a time of impossibility, when there is every possibility of debts being discharged in the future.

The spread of COVID-19 in North America and Europe, and the economic effect on the Caribbean region, once again demonstrates the region's vulnerability to external circumstances. The need for a stronger, more resilient, more integrated region – at all levels including fiscal policies and financial strategies – is emphasized by the vulnerability that COVID-19 has underscored, even though the virus itself hardly hit Caribbean shores.

Sir Ronald Sanders is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the US and the OAS. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London and at Massey College in the University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own. 🌐



Court Orders St Kitts & Nevis Opposition Leader to Vacate His Seat in National Assembly

Leader of the Opposition St Kitts-Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP) Dr Denzil Douglas has been ordered by the Court of Appeal of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court to vacate his seat immediately because he holds a Dominican diplomatic passport.

And while saying that he was taken aback by the judgement, Douglas, the Parliamentary Representative for Constituency Number Six, said he would be contesting the next elections.

In the ruling handed down yesterday, the Court of Appeal said the former prime minister should not sit in the National Assembly since the Constitution states that a person shall not be qualified to be elected if he is, by virtue of his own act, under any acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience or adherence to a foreign power or state.

"Dr Douglas, by his application for, receipt and use of a Dominican diplomatic passport, placed him in clear breach of Section 28(1)(a) of the Constitution. As a matter of law, the consequence in the terms of Section 33(3)(c) follows. That consequence is that Dr Douglas is required to vacate his seat in the National

Assembly in Saint Christopher and Nevis," the court judgment stated.

"It is hereby declared that Dr Douglas, by reason of his becoming a person who, by virtue of his own act, is under an acknowledgment of allegiance, obedience or adherence to the Commonwealth of Dominica in breach of Section 28(1)(a) of the Constitution, is required, pursuant to Section 31(3)(c) of the Constitution, to vacate his seat in the National Assembly."

Douglas was issued with a Dominican diplomatic passport on July 30, 2015. It expires on July 29, 2020.

At a SKNLP news conference held shortly after the ruling, the former prime minister said he had no intention of pursuing the matter further.

"I must let you know that we are very surprised and we disagree with the judgement. Having sat in the court and listened to the questions asked and the answers given by myself and my team, we are really surprised that this judgement has come in the way it has. However, we accept the judgement and we move on definitely to the next level," he said.

"We respect the judgement given by the appeal judges and so that ends the legal process. We are now in the political process of this matter."

The 67-year-old Douglas said while he would no longer will serve the people of Constituency Number Six in the Parliament during this term, which is already ended.

"In other words, although I will not sit in the Parliament for the next two, three days or weeks. The matter is, I, however, will contest the next elections for Constituency Number Six whenever those elections are called.

"The judgement does not preclude me in any way from seeking re-election by the people of Constituency Number Six. My own colleagues, only a moment ago, have all endorsed what has been the position of the people of Constituency Number Six – that Denzil Llewellyn Douglas will stand again as the candidate for Constituency Number Six, when the elections are called, for the St Kitts Nevis Labour Party," he said.

Douglas, who was Prime Minister of the twin-island federation from 1995 to 2015 when his SKNLP lost the elections,



► The Court of Appeal of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court says Dr Denzil Douglas cannot sit in the National Assembly

added that he expected the ruling Team Unity coalition to try to use his removal from the Parliament to further delay the call for a general election by giving the impression that it has to call a by-election first.

"Absolute nonsense!" he said. "So, today we call on the expired government of Timothy Harris: call the general elections now, do not delay one minute more because your government has expired." The next election in St Kitts and Nevis is constitutionally due by August 12 this year. 🌐

CROSSWORD

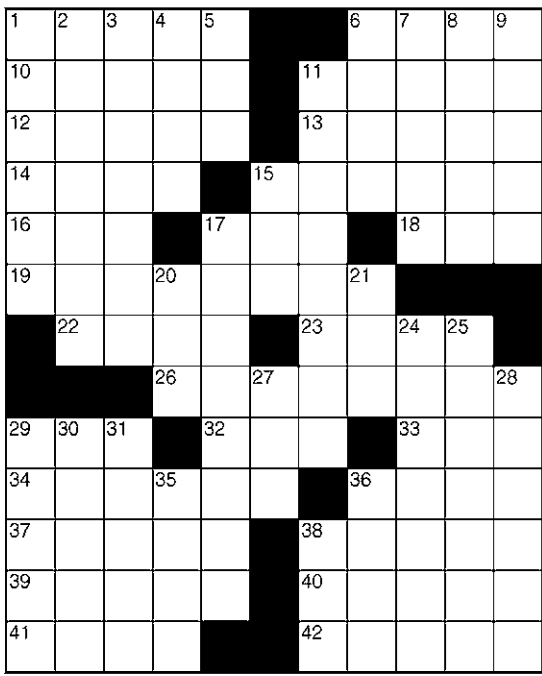
By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 41 Basket-ball's
 - 1 Deli fixture
 - 6 Quartet's makeup
 - 10 Magnet ends
 - 11 Strong suit
 - 12 Eyeballs
 - 13 Enter a password, say
 - 14 Bills in tills
 - 15 Royal home
 - 16 Old horse
 - 17 Frodo's friend
 - 18 Slangy denial
 - 19 Wrote badly
 - 22 Bar mixer
 - 23 Put on
 - 26 Spread out ungracefully
 - 29 High hit
 - 32 Spoil
 - 33 Next-to-last letter
 - 34 Brunch dish
 - 36 Race goal
 - 37 Wish granter
 - 38 Unspoken
 - 39 Deal maker
 - 40 Seething
- DOWN**
- 1 Setting items
 - 2 Some brandies
 - 3 Brisk tempo
 - 4 Sediment
 - 5 Slalom shape
 - 6 Ninny
 - 7 Choir accompanier
 - 8 City on the Mohawk River
 - 9 Make fresh
 - 11 Nasty online
 - 15 Buddy argument
 - 17 Collectors' event
 - 20 Spots on TV
 - 21 Grass coater
 - 24 Llamas' kin
 - 25 Break
 - 27 Scoundrel
 - 28 Calorie counter
 - 29 Boston airport
 - 30 Last letter
 - 31 "John Brown's Body" poet
 - 35 Script bit
 - 36 Poi source
 - 38 Gratuity



Yesterday's answer

- 9 Make fresh
- 11 Nasty online
- 15 Buddy argument
- 17 Collectors' event
- 20 Spots on TV
- 21 Grass coater
- 24 Llamas' kin
- 25 Break
- 27 Scoundrel
- 28 Calorie counter
- 29 Boston airport
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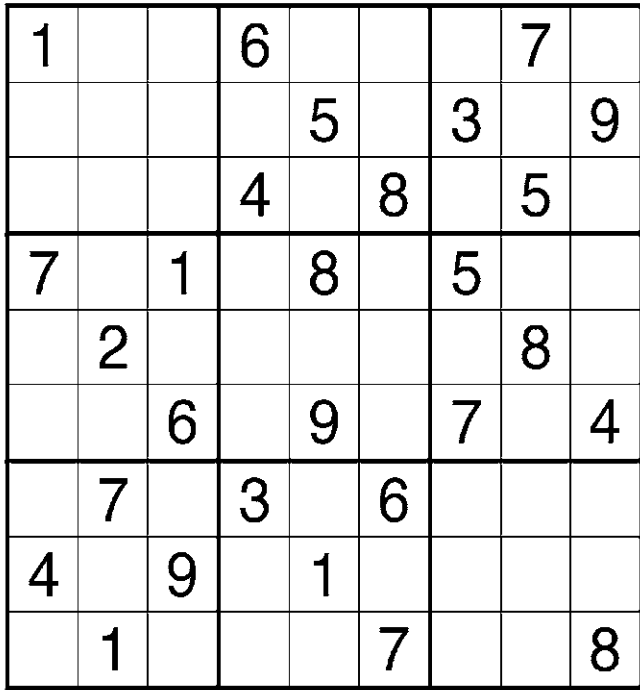
1-30

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Conceptis Sudoku

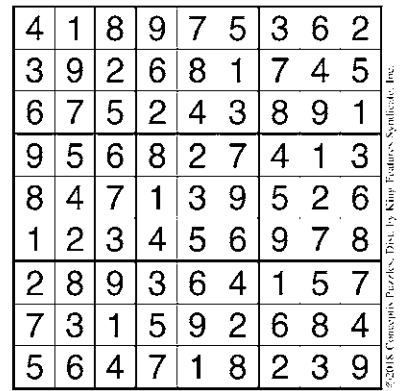
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★

12/06

Answer to previous puzzle

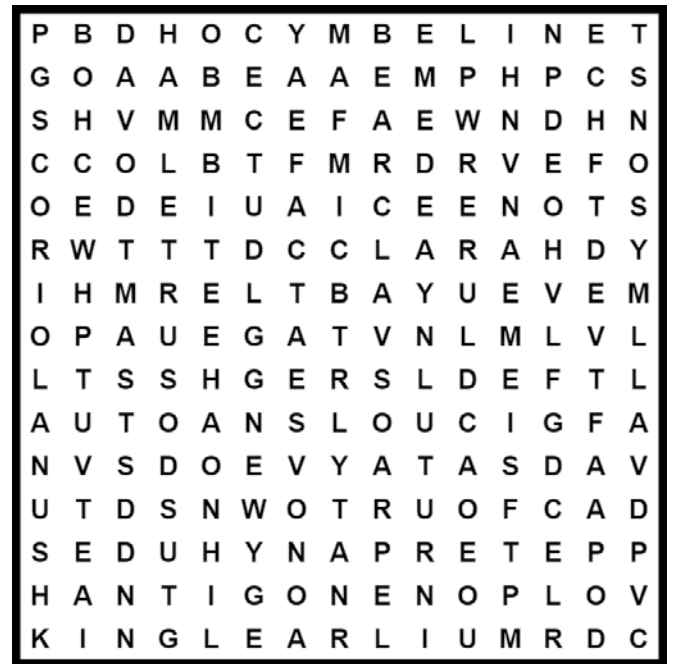


Difficulty Level ★★★

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Word Search

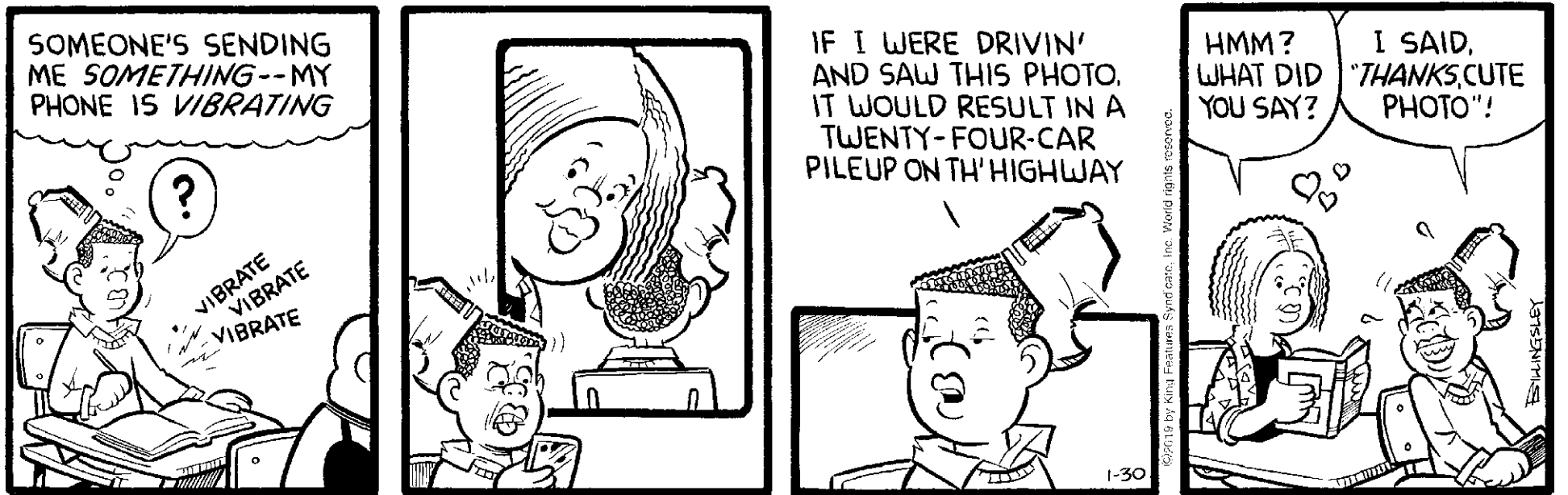
- All My Sons
- Amadeus
- Antigone
- Candida
- Coriolanus
- Cymbeline
- Electra
- Faust
- Ghosts
- Hamlet
- Hedda Gabler
- Henry V
- King Lear
- Macbeth
- Medea
- Othello
- Our Town
- Pericles
- Peter Pan
- Tartuffe
- Volpone



Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions – forward, back, up, down and diagonally.

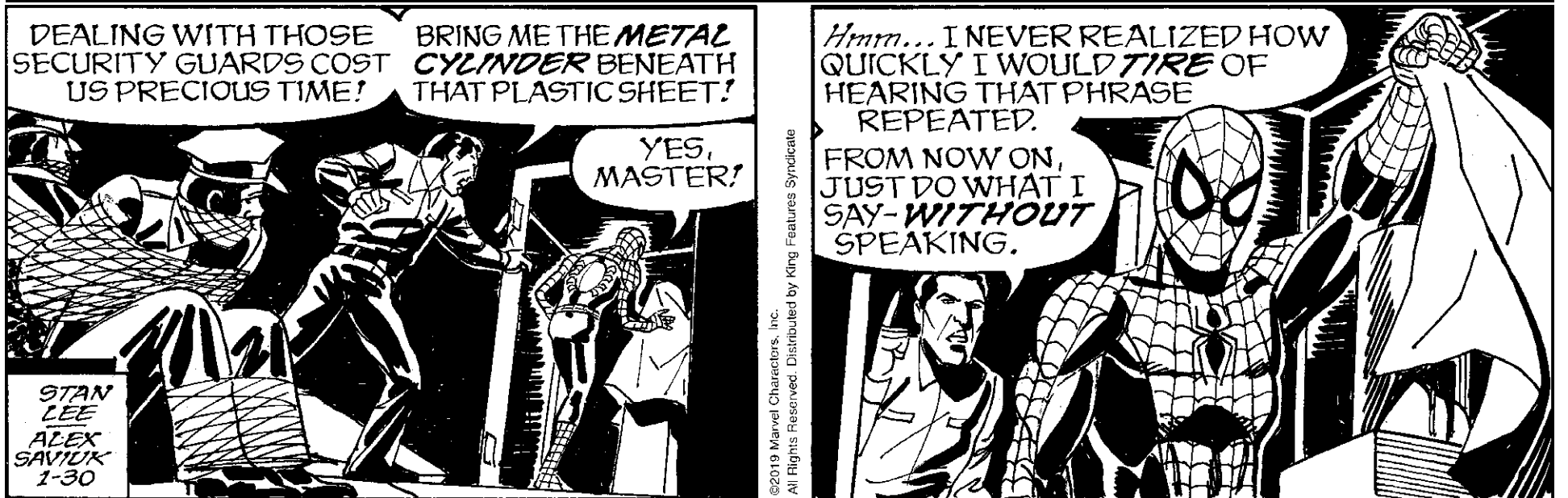
CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley



THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN

By Stan Lee



JUDGE PARKER

By Woody Wilson & Mike Manley





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"Be Informed" theme for series of port meetings

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Government to Hold Public Meetings on Cruise Berthing

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