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Cayman Islands
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VACCINE CAMPAIGN ON TARGET

**I've had my
COVID-19 Vaccine**

HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY
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Cayman is continuing with an impressive roll-out of the voluntary national vaccination campaign.

The jurisdiction is well on the way to exhausting the first batch of 9,750 doses of the Pfizer-BionN-Tech vaccine which arrived here on January 5th from the UK government.

With over 6,000 persons already receiving their first shot, a replenishment shipment of another 9,750 doses due this Thursday January 28th is expected to ensure a smooth continuation of inoculations.

The previous plan to split the first shipment into two doses covering 4,875 persons was changed to one dose per person from the

entire consignment with a second shot around 21 days later.

At the same time, health authorities are continuing with an aggressive testing programme currently heading towards 70,000 tests, one of the highest rates in the region.

Cayman is also at the forefront of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign in the Caribbean and Americas.

UNITED STATES

Meanwhile, in the United States, the new government of President Joe Biden has revved up the country's COVID-19 fightback with the vaccination programme as a top priority after the Trump administration failed to reach its target

SEE **VACCINE CAMPAIGN**, Page 9

Will you take the COVID 19 Vaccine?

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CAYMAN IN COMPARISON WITH UK VACCINATION ROLL-OUT

Cayman's COVID-19 vaccination campaign has sparked interest in the British media with the influential Sunday Times surprisingly headlining an article; "Cayman Islands awash with Covid vaccines."

In drawing a comparison to the

UK's own vaccination roll-out, the first globally and considered a success so far, the Sunday Times article noted however that "while many over-80s in Britain await a jab, the Caribbean islands have inoculated most over-70s and will soon move on to younger people."

"The Caymans were the first to receive the vaccine, despite having just 38 people with the coronavirus," the article states.

It notes that "more than one in 10 adults on the Cayman Islands have been protected against Covid-19 after a gift of Pfizer vaccine from the UK" while pointing out that "the Caymans have no corporation, income or capital gains tax."

Reporting that the first 9,750 doses of vaccine arrived from Britain on January 5, with more due on Thursday (January 28th), the Sunday Times quotes Premier, Alden McLaughlin as saying that "the relationship we have with the United Kingdom is paying off massive dividends."

It also quotes the UK's Foreign Commonwealth and Development and Office (FCDO) as stating that it had a duty to protect the people's of the Overseas Territories and that it was "committed to sup-



plying them with a proportionate share of the vaccine that it procures."

The Sunday Times article also refers to COVID-19 vaccine shipments from the UK to other OTs mentioning the Falkland Island and Bermuda which have received consignments and Anguilla where a shipment is expected mid-February.

Meanwhile, by Sunday the UK was reported to have vaccinated a total of 6,353,321 people with their first dose of coronavirus vaccine, with 469,660 already receiving their second dose.

The British government said it was planning to offer a vaccine to everyone in the four most vulnerable categories by mid-February.

The Health Secretary Matt Hancock said 75% of all people aged 80 and over have now had their first coronavirus jab.

He also said that the UK has given out more vaccines in the last three days than France has in total since the global race for inoculation against coronavirus began.

The context of the vaccination comparison with France on the one hand and Cayman on the other were not immediately clear.

EDITORIAL

Real Estate Market-Dynamics Evolving in Cayman

The price of real estate in the Cayman Islands has been edging upward steadily, as demand around the world to live in the British Territory has increased exponentially.

For realtors, this particular boom comes on the heels of an already healthy market, before Covid-19.

However, there are some fundamental differences underpinning the trends that have emerged in the current dash for property in the Cayman Islands.

"The dynamics have changed somewhat and what we are seeing is prices going up for homes, whilst the rent market is holding fairly steady or in some instances prices have gone down; maybe 12 to 15 percent," noted Cayman Islands Realtor Matthew Brown.

"Essentially, we are finding that many people who were once living in-land are able to now afford accommodations closer to the coast, as those properties sit empty, due to the pandemic. The majority of persons coming to the Islands are really looking to purchase or build their own properties," he added.

With the tourism market now non-existent - for the most part - and the short to medium-term job markets in the Islands being decimated by Covid-19 restrictions on travel, it has meant that many apartments along the West Bay Road have had to sit empty, especially those that were used by a more transient demographic, according to Mr. Brown.

Beyond this reality is the fact that the demographic of buyers is also changing rapidly.

"What we are also seeing is people from as far as South East Asia attempting to own property in the Cayman Islands.

"As the jurisdiction continues to be featured in the News, the interest has peaked in circles where the Islands may have been once unknown.

"Add to that the fact that there is all but little crime here, the standard of living is among the best in the world and there is no income tax, property tax or inher-



itance tax and Cayman begins to sound more like the Promised Land, than just another Islands in the middle of the Caribbean Sea," he remarked.

A move away from cash by many investors, bolstered by low interest rates, is also causing many high net worth persons to seek to put their money into hard assets as a safe store of wealth; fuelling the heightened interest in Cayman as an investment opportunity around the globe.

"It seems to be the perfect storm and everything from higher-priced properties to those on the lower end of the scale are up for grabs. People want a piece of paradise and that slice is continuing to rise in profile and price," said Fund Manager George Hanni.

It remains to be seen what will happen with larger development projects on the Island of Grand Cayman. However, with the Covid-19 vaccine now available, developers say they are optimistic that once borders reopen and travel begins to return to pre-Covid levels, Cayman will be poised for success.

"With billions of dollars being spent in development over the past several years in the Cayman Islands, the construction industry continues to thrive, despite the hardship being experienced in many other areas of commerce.

"We are in a great position. This is in large part to the sacrifices we made early in this pandemic and we can now see other countries around the world following the strict approach we took at the onset of the Virus," explained Resident Mark Terrance.



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KEEPING HISTORY ALIVE

As a follow on from our highly popular 'Then and Now' series, we are beginning a fresh look at our history, focusing on people, places, activities and events that have created our history and helped to build the Cayman Islands.

The value of the Silver Thatch Palm

Endemic to the Cayman Islands, the Silver Thatch Palm (*Coccothrinax proctorii*) was made Cayman's national tree in 1995, its importance woven as tightly into Caymanian history as the coils of rope this hardy tree produces from its central shoots. It gets its name from the silver-coloured underside of the leaves and was recognised early on in Cayman's development as an incredibly hardy plant, resistant to salt water, making it the perfect material for making rope for ships that was used at home and also sold overseas. Its wider domestic use was great as well, with a thriving local industry creating bags, hats, baskets and more for islanders. Its leaves were also used to thatch rooves of homes, when, in the early 1900s, 75 to 80 per cent of all houses were thatched, (as per the Christmas 1972 edition of the Northwest-er magazine).

In George Hirst's 'Notes on the History of the Cayman Islands' written in the 1930s, it is written that straw plaiting was a busy industry in Cayman, undertaken mainly by women. Hirst noted that the "unopened tops of unexpanded leaves

of the thatch palm...are collected the day before a full moon and put in the sun to dry" though he said he did not know the significance of the full moon, which was that islanders believed the trees held less sap and that the shoots would produce a stronger rope.

When the tops were dried, the leaves were then separated and torn into widths which were then plaited for hat or basket making or separated into what were called 'pegs' for rope making. Unused tips were used for making brooms.

Important early economic driver

In 'The History and Heritage of the Cayman Islands', produced by the CI Government, it describes how rope production "was something of a cottage industry and served as a means of support for many of the poorer residents of the Islands, particularly women and children, who would produce rope by the fathom and then sell it to local merchants in exchange for money or goods."

In fact, the sale of rope provided the only cash income for many families for many years, with 300 to 400 people being involved in the industry during the first half of the 20th Century.

Hirst stated: "The hats... are very serviceable and sell locally from 3d to 6d each."

In 1907, 515,000 fathoms of rope were exported at five pounds a hundred fathoms while in 1909 173,000 fathoms were sold for 15 pounds per one hundred fathoms.

Baskets and hats were exported to the "Lesser Islands" (Cayman Brac and Little Cayman) and also the Bay Islands of Honduras.

Rope-making was particularly prolific in the districts of West Bay, North Side and East End, Hirst noted, with a "considerable quantity" used locally, but the bulk being manufactured exported to Jamaica where it was sold mainly in Montego Bay and highly prized by Jamaican fishermen.

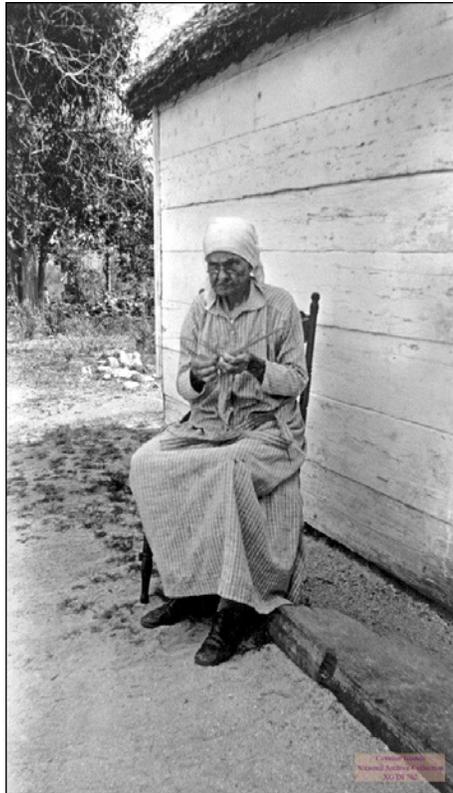
The actual act of making rope involved all the family, with women and children laying the rope, and parents twisting the strands and cutting the tops. Local mer-

chants would then value the rope which was then exchanged via a barter system for items such as flour. Cayman Islands-made rope was popular regionally until the 1950s, when synthetic rope was introduced and its use diminished rapidly.

According to The History and Heritage of the Cayman Islands, at one point, over a million fathoms were produced per annum.

Even though the booming rope making industry died some 70 years ago, the tradition of thatch palm weaving still lives on today with local artisans teaching the younger generations the skill to ensure that Cayman's heritage does not die. Schools have welcomed local experts into their classrooms to teach youngsters and experts are always on hand at events such as the Pirate's Week Heritage Days to showcase their skills. In 2018, people on Cayman Brac held its first competition to make Thatch Palm rope

between the different government departments on the island, the Fire Department emerging as the winners.



Sabrina Turner

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CPI Minister Tours NiCE Work Sites, Thanks Workers

Minister of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure (CPI), Hon. Joey Hew braved inclement weather to undertake his National Enhancement Project (NiCE) tour (Wednesday, 20 January 2021).

The scaled back site visits took in two areas of George Town, namely Windsor Park and the Broadwalk on South Sound Road. At the former, NiCE workers cleared roadside verges, cut bush and cleared fly-tipped refuse from the neighbourhood. Accompanied by the Acting Director Public Works Department, Mr. Troy Whorms; the Deputy Chief Officer of Ministry of CPI, Mrs. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare; and NiCE Project Manager, Mrs. Lois Kellyman; Minister Hew spoke to the teams and thanked them for a job well done on behalf of his Ministry and the general public. Minister Hew also asked workers about their experiences on the programme.

"Seeing the quality of their work, it is clear that many NiCE workers take pride in ensuring that the community can enjoy well-maintained roadsides, parks, cemeteries and beaches," he said.

"Each year that we have run the programme, the Ministry has tried moving it forward with the help and support of our partners including WORC, Department of Environmental Health, National Roads Authority, Mosquito Research & Control Unit and Public Works Department. We hope to expand NiCE, in the future, by working in partnership with other agencies for longer periods of time and using it as a hybrid work initiative, including elements of a second-chance, rehabilitation or an on-the-job training."

This month's two-week NiCE initiative ends on Friday, 22 January.



► Minister of Commerce, Planning and Investment, Hon. Joseph Hew talks to NiCE workers tidying by the Broadwalk area in South Sound

2020 Turtle Season: a record year

The Department of Environment (DoE) reports a record turtle season in its efforts to protect endangered sea turtles in the Cayman Islands. The DoE's Sea Turtle Monitoring programme has been in operation since 1998, when they began conducting systematic annual surveys of our beaches to identify signs of turtle

nesting. This year broke several records and reflects the ongoing success of the programme.

The season started in an unusual way, with the Cayman Islands in lockdown and beaches closed. Although this presented a number of challenges for the monitoring team, it meant that nesting turtles had lit-

tle to no disturbances on the beaches and this positive impact was reflected by nesting occurring in new locations.

Towards the end of the season, a number of tropical storms and passing hurricanes threatened nests and the DoE's Turtle Team were kept very busy assessing nest safety, and where necessary, relocating nests to safer locations. Despite the team's best efforts, high seas caused more than 30 nests to become inundated with varying impacts to the hatch, and 10 nests were completely washed away due to unpredictable and significant beach erosion during the storm season.

On Grand Cayman, the 2020 turtle nesting season was a record with 506 confirmed nests. This included 345 green turtle nests, 156 loggerhead turtle nests, and 5 hawksbill turtle nests. For the endangered green turtles, it was the most nests recorded in a season since monitoring began. Although the increasing number of nests does correlate to an increase in the number of nesting turtles, each female can lay up to nine nests in a season and therefore the size of the nesting population is still very small.

Cayman Brac also had a successful season with 51 confirmed nests which included 41 loggerhead, 8 green, and 2 hawksbill turtle nests. This was also a new record for green turtle nest numbers by one nest. Additionally, Cayman Brac recorded the lat-



► Turtle hatching

est nest on record for the three islands, as a hawksbill nest was discovered on Christmas Eve. The DoE were unfortunately unable to confirm the total number of nests from Little Cayman for the 2020 season due to pandemic related staff capacity restrictions.

Poaching remains an ongoing threat to the adult females when they are attempting to nest and are killed for illegal sale.

DoE's conservation officers remained vigilant throughout the season and undertook several turtle rescues and intercepted a poaching attempt thereby saving the turtle.

The DoE is extremely grateful for the support of the more than 40 regular volunteers who supported the programme by walking beaches to report tracks, assisting with data collection, and helping DoE staff to protect nests and conserve our sea turtles.



► Turtle nest - green

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COMMUNITY NOTICES

Free Advice Available to Small Businesses

The Cayman Islands Centre for Business Development (CICBD), in the Ministry of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure, will collaborate with the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) through the Student Consulting Programme to provide free and confidential advice to small businesses.

The ten-week programme, which begins in February 2021, will partner small businesses with upper-level business students at UCCI. The students will provide advice to business owners to solve a particular problem or reach a specific goal.

Director of CICBD, Althea West-Myers said that the programme, which has been running for over ten years through the Ministry, is part of combined efforts to support small businesses. "The Centre was set up to improve small business viability through increased access to finance but also for training, business counselling and advice. So this programme is perfect alignment", she noted.

Minister of Commerce, Hon. Joey Hew stated that small businesses are a vital part of the local economy and ensuring that entrepreneurs and small business owners receive the support they need is one of the most important priorities for the Ministry, especially at this time.

He further noted, "Government, through the CICBD, has so far implemented a number of measures for micro and small businesses valued over \$14 million. This package included grants, loans, technical assistance and training targeted at assist-



ing our entrepreneurs. This programme with UCCI is just another way in which we continue to encourage and develop businesses".

UCCI Programme Coordinator, Annette Murphy stated that the programme will benefit all parties. "The reason this programme has been so successful is that everyone involved takes away something of value. Business owners will gain free advice and move their enterprises forward, and the students will put their knowledge into practice," she highlighted.

To participate in the Student Consulting Programme, businesses must:

- Be an established business;
- Have a clear problem; a specific area such as accounting or marketing;
- Express an interest in solving a problem and improving business operations; and
- Be willing to spend the time and effort with the student team.

The deadline to apply is Friday, January 29, 2021. Interested business owners should email thais.ducent@gov.ky for information.

Tourism Stipend Programme Re-opens for 2021 Registration

George Town, Cayman Islands (22 January, 2021) The Ministry of District Administration, Tourism and Transport is re-opening registration for the tourism stipend to assist Caymanians who worked in the tourism sector and have lost their employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Displaced tourism workers who have not yet registered to receive the tourism stipend will have another opportunity to do so between Tuesday, 26 and Friday 29 January 2021.

Starting 9:00 am on Tuesday, 26 January, displaced tourism employees who have not yet registered with the Ministry of Tourism can access the registration link at stipend.ourcayman.ky. To qualify for the stipend, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Caymanian, Residency and Employment Rights Certificate (RERC; married to a Caymanian), or Permanent Resident
- Worked in the Tourism sector
- No longer working full-time
- Have not applied already

The registration period closes at 5:00 pm, Friday, 29 January 2021.

Once the deadline has passed the verification process will begin. Applicants are



encouraged to respond to missed calls, voicemails, and emails as representatives from the Ministry and Department of Tourism may be in contact for further information.

The Ministry would like to remind persons who already receive the stipend that they should not reapply as their stipend payments will be automatically extended through to June. Anyone with questions about the programme, the call centre will be open from 9:00am – 5:00pm throughout the registration period.

Call centre numbers are as follows:

- 526-1252
- 526-1254
- 526-1276
- 526-1290
- 526-1291

The tourism stipend programme has been extended to June 2021.

Police Clearance Certificates Required Once Again for Submission of Applications

As a collaborative effort between Workforce Opportunities & Residency Cayman (WORC) and the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS), customers are reminded that the standard turnaround time when applying for police clearance certificates is fourteen (14) working days.

As of 5th February 2021, WORC will no longer accept the receipt showing proof of payment for a Police Clearance Certificate but will require the actual clearance certificate.

As such, customers are advised to apply in advance for their police clearance



to ensure that their certificate can be submitted with the necessary applications. Non-compliance in providing this document will result in processing delays.

Contact Customer Care with questions or queries by calling 945-9672 or email WORC@gov.ky or visit www.WORC.ky

Proper Battery Disposal Reminder Following Two Fires

Cayman Islands Fire Service (CIFS) has been mobilised to the George Town landfill site this week for two unrelated small fires.

At a mixed waste facility, there is an ever-present risk of ignition when materials are disposed of together. In particular, the disposal of electronic items and batteries in the general garbage can easily cause fires in the landfill.

The Department of Environmental Health (DEH) has experienced high volumes of mixed waste through December and January, which increases the risk of ignition during the processing and disposing of that waste.

Residents and businesses across Grand Cayman are reminded of the important safety role they play in ensuring batteries and electronic goods are separated from mixed waste when they are disposed.

Batteries should never be placed in normal mixed waste or general recycling bins. Instead, batteries should be recycled using the proper battery recycling service provided at all major supermarkets. Batteries should be removed from broken devices and recycled separately.



► Chief Fire Officer, Paul Walker

If the battery can not be removed from the device, both may be recycled together using the small waste electrical recycling facility located at the George Town landfill drop off, accessible 24 hours a day.

Chief Fire Officer, Paul Walker, QFSM said "CIFS has a fantastic working relationship with DEH colleagues. It is their diligence in the early notification, the fact these were small surface waste fires and not deep-seated veins of fire and the prompt deployment of CIFS resources and firefighting equipment that has prevented further fire spread and limited the impact of these two small fires on surrounding resident and businesses. The minor excavations and damping down was precautionary and aims to reduce the chance of re-ignition from any unseen hotspots."

"We continue to work closely with DEH colleagues as the landfill site is developed and extended to ensure this facility is as safe as possible. I encourage all residents and businesses across Grand Cayman to do their bit in segregating and recycling their waste to keep volumes of mixed waste to a minimum and help avoid further fire incidents."

CAYMAN ISLANDS EXPORTS FIRST PREMIUM CIGARS TO THE USA!

Cayman Cigar Company, the world's first nonprofit cigar company, is now exporting its premium cigars to the USA.

Granger Haugh, CEO of Cayman Cigar Company announced today that the company will begin exporting its premium cigars to the USA, an historic event for this unique cigar manufacturer and for the Cayman Islands.

An initial shipment of 5000 cigars will soon arrive at Cayman Cigar Company's re-shipping office in Tampa FL. The Tampa office will fulfill all United States orders, while local and international orders will be managed at the Bodden Town store in Grand Cayman.

Cayman Cigar Company was founded in November 2018 as an extension of the nonprofit Beacon of Hope Cayman Foundation (Beacon Farms) whose vision was to grow premium cigar tobacco, create premium hand-crafted cigars and cigarillos and give back to the community.

Like many boutique makers, Cayman Cigar Company is ded-

icated to preserving the art of hand rolled, top quality cigars made from the world's best hand selected tobaccos, sourced from sustainable farms and responsible, passionate growers. But its mission is unlike any cigar company in the world: To donate 100% of all net profits to charity.

Granger notes "While we make the best cigars in Cayman, we are also growing Cayman tobacco here as well. We have a variety of tobaccos planted at Beacon Farms, and our goal is to soon create the world's first 100% Cayman grown and rolled premium cigar for international export. This will be another first for our company and for Grand Cayman."

Eric Bush, Chief Officer of the Cayman Islands Ministry of International Trade, Investment, Aviation and Maritime Affairs ("MITIAMA"), observed:

"MITIAMA is developing a partnership to support Cayman companies that seek to export their 'Made in Cayman' products, such as Cayman Cigars. We will

aid in identifying opportunities that enable people around the world to buy and experience unique, high quality goods that are produced in the Cayman Islands. Beacon Farms stands out for its innovative methods and its commitment to helping individuals in the community through its employment and rehabilitation initiatives."

The Bodden Town facility makes six cigar blends in Robusto, Corona and Petite Corona sizes. Cuban trained Torcedoras (Master Rollers) Barbara Garcia and Maria Delvis Hernandez blend and roll whole leaf tobacco using a combination of old-world tradition, and modern practices. Each hand rolled premium cigar is draw tested for quality before the wrapper is applied, which ensures draw quality and consistency.

Cayman Cigar Company's entire portfolio of premium cigars is available online at www.caymancigars.com. To learn more, contact us at info@caymancigars.com



MORE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS RELAXED

The number of people who can now gather for outdoor gatherings has been doubled, in a significant relaxation of some of the COVID-19 restrictions.

A government announcement Thursday said up to 1,000 people can now gather for outdoor events, up from 500.

However, there's no change to the limit on indoor gatherings which remains limited to 500 people.

Venues hosting simultaneous, separate, and unrelated indoor and outdoor gatherings, can now cater to a maximum of 1,500 people.

That is broken as 1,000 maximum outdoors and 500 indoors for the event being held in those respective areas.

The new changes also extend to April 15th the current boating regulations as well as around-island and inter-island travel by boat and air. These were set to expire on 31 January.

Additionally, processions and parades involving a uniformed service or a youth organisation are now permitted.

Under the new regulations, a uniformed service is defined as a naval force, including Coast Guard, a regiment, police force, fire service and prison service.

Youth organisations listed are; Cayman Islands Scout Association, Girls' Brigade Cayman Islands, Cayman Islands Cadet Corps, Girlguiding Cayman Islands, and Cayman Islands Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Pathfinders.

The government advisory points out that other protocols that remain unchanged from the previous regulations continue to be in force and need to be followed to ensure that COVID-19 is well managed in the Cayman Islands.

These include a ban on visiting or having contact with anyone in quarantine and mandatory testing before visiting a residential care home or prison.

Businesses are still prohibited from allowing hookahs, shishas or water pipes, and the restrictions on rental of certain scuba and snorkelling equipment remain in place.



Persons using public transportation are reminded that masks are mandatory and operators of public transportation vehi-

cles are especially cautioned that all passengers travelling in a taxi or omnibus - including drivers - must wear masks.

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Developed by a Caymanian family-owned and operated business, Sixtees Properties Developments Limited, the Downtown Reach project is led by chairman Jonathan Tonge and his son Ben, who is the Managing Director. A retired law firm senior partner, Jonathan was looking for a new project to undertake that would keep him busy and was good for the Cayman community. It was Ben's idea to create affordable yet high quality homes targeting younger professionals looking to buy their first home. The result has been a collection of highly desirable one-and-two-bedroom apartments and two-bedroom townhouses beautifully put together, offering light and airy living with a contemporary design, high quality appliances and clean finishes throughout.

Demand outstripping supply

The initial breaking ground took place in May 2019 and the first phase consisted of 52 one-

and-two-bedroom units (30 one-bedroom units, 10 two-bedroom apartments, and 12 two-bedroom 2.5 bath townhomes) spanning over three acres. Work has now begun on phase two to create a further 28 units and phase three is currently in the planning stages, while phase four might not be far away either, such has been the interest, which has been extremely positive for the development as a whole.

"The first phase took a bit longer to sell, but the second phase took just two weeks. We have an ever-growing waiting list for phase three," Jonathan confirmed. "Ben's concept – building affordable luxury – was obviously very astute as we sold

out both phases very rapidly, demonstrating the clear need for this product in Cayman."

Phase three is developing under the same concept, in that it is "priced to sell" Jonathan said, and condos and townhouses in this latest phase should be very desirable, forming a new gated community to the south of the existing phases. It is still in the planning stages as yet, but with considerable land still to be used (the plot spreads over eight acres and stretches all the way to Bel Air Drive in South Sound), phase four of the development is also a distinct possibility.

The project is going to keep them busy for quite a while, Jonathan confirmed.

WARNING

Tampering with Utility Poles

CUC reminds the public not to tamper with any equipment attached to its utility poles or transmission lines. This includes the yellow guy wire guards located at the base of the guy wires (pole stabilizers). These guards have been specifically placed there to identify the guy wires and guy rods. On a number of occasions, members of the public have tampered with these guards and when clearing land, certain operators have loosened these guy wires from the guy rods causing transmission lines on the utility pole to become slack. This is a dangerous practice which could result in service interruption or more importantly, injury to the public.

Only authorised CUC employees and contractors are permitted to install, remove or otherwise work on the Company's utility poles.

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NATIONAL TRUST FOR THE CAYMAN ISLANDS: HISTORIC REGISTER UPDATE UNDERWAY

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is conducting an update of its Historic Register over the next several months.

Persons may see our volunteers out and about in the various Districts, compiling information in relation to old time Caymanian Homes and other historical structures, artefacts and relics.

Our data collectors will have identification cards to confirm they are representing the National Trust and we ask the public to please assist them as best as possible. They will be taking photos and speaking with persons about the history of their homes and the important familial relations or prominent persons that make each structure special.

We would like to thank the entire Cayman Islands community for accommodating us as we go about highlighting the Islands' past for present and future generations.

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands was established in 1987 with the purpose to preserve natural environments and places of historic significance for present and future generations of the Cayman Islands.

We do this by focusing on four key areas:



Environment: Our priority for Cayman's natural environment is the establishment of a system of protected areas. These natural sites are essential for the survival of native plant and animal species.

History: Through the preservation of historic sites in the Cayman Islands, we safeguard our unique heritage.

Education: Adults and children alike are exposed to Cayman's natural environment and heritage through lectures and a dedicated student programme.

Conservation: Scientific field research allows us to study and further our knowledge of Cayman's native and indigenous species and to protect the habitats in which they live.

For information on the historic register updates please email historic@national-trust.org.ky.

Find out how you can support our efforts by either making a donation, becoming a corporate partner, sponsoring a historic or environmental site, or becoming a member by contacting 749-1121.

UCCI has new provost and vice president of academic affairs

J.D. Mosley-Matchett, who has served as the interim provost and vice president of academic affairs at the University College of the Cayman Islands since May 2020, has been named to the permanent post.

Mosley-Matchett, a professor with a broad background -- including a doctorate in business administration, a law degree and experience as a private business owner -- has been with UCCI since 2009 and previously served as an interim dean of academic affairs and director of graduate studies.

UCCI President and CEO Stacy McAfee said among the approximately 40 candidates the university considered for the job, Mosley-Matchett was the best fit.

"J.D. brings a unique set of competencies," said McAfee. "She's a strong administrator who embraces the data that informs

decision making. She's comfortable making complex decisions."

As vice president and provost, Mosley-Matchett will oversee the internal operations of UCCI, while McAfee focuses on more external matters, such as partnering with industry and other educational institutions. McAfee said Mosley-Matchett knows the internal operations of the university and is well liked among faculty and staff.

"She's also a scholar," McAfee said, noting that Mosley-Matchett was chosen as the top presenter at last year's conference for the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education.

Mosley-Matchett is a member of the IACBE's board of commissioners and was instrumental in shepherding UCCI through its two current accreditations. That experience,

McAfee said, will be important as the university has just embarked on another, higher-profile accreditation bid, this one with the U.S.-based Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

"I think my experience with accreditation has been key," said Mosley-Matchett about being named as provost.

But the time she has already spent working closely with McAfee was also important.

"This validates my interpretation of the president's vision," she said. "Working with the president is amazing. She is a bundle of energy. I thought I was a hard worker, but she never stops.

"She is very much a visionary," she added. "I've seen her make changes that

I never could have anticipated could be made in any previous administration. Being part of that is exciting."

In addition to leading the accreditation effort, Mosley-Matchett said she hopes to more closely analyze the practices of UCCI to learn which past initiatives have been successful and which have not.

"I tend to be a number cruncher," she said. "I'm really in my element when I'm allowed to do these kinds of things. In the past, there hasn't been a whole lot of ana-



► J.D. Mosley-Matchett

lytical thinking about our practices. Unless we step back and assess what's happening as we go along, we risk tripping ourselves up in the future."

Mosley-Matchett said she struggled with the decision of whether to apply for the vice president/provost position. In the end, she said, she felt an obligation to take on the role.

"I have gained so much by being part of the Cayman community and UCCI," she said, "I needed to give back."

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VACCINE CAMPAIGN ON TARGET

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

of 20 million by the end of last year.

Up to last Wednesday's inauguration of the Biden administration that was short by 3.5 million with only 16.5 million vaccine doses administered.

According to the US Johns Hopkins University, the country is recording close to 200,000 new COVID-19 cases and around 3,000 deaths daily.

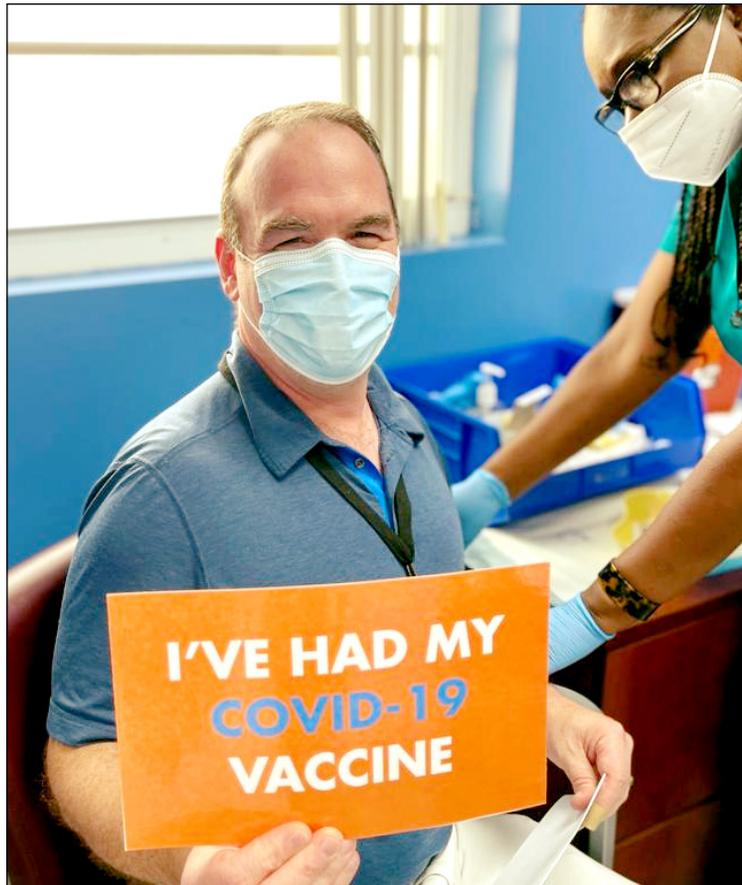
In all over 400,000 people have died from COVID-19 in the US from around 25 million cases and increasing, the highest globally.

Globally, there have been more than 96 million cases of the virus and two million people have died, according to Johns Hopkins University.

UNITED KINGDOM

In the United Kingdom, where the death toll is edging towards a grim 100,000 deaths, the vaccination programme is going much better with close to 5 million people already receiving the jab.

However, the daily death reports cast a continuing dark shadow with the highest numbers since the outbreak of the pandemic now being recorded.



In one day alone 1,850 deaths were reported.

The UK has the highest COVID-19 death rate in the world.

The British government has intensified restrictions including travel bans, and everyone enter-

ing the country now required to go into quarantine.

Lockdowns have also been extended with numerous events cancelled.

Vaccine production in the UK got a scare this week when a



plant where the AstraZeneca-Oxford drug is being manufactured was threatened by heavy flooding in the area. Fortunately, damage was averted.

There were also tense moments in India when a factory

manufacturing the same vaccine for India and other low- and middle-income countries was engulfed in flames.

Officials said it was not expected to severely set back production.

PATIENT HOSPITALISED WITH COVID-19

A person has been admitted to hospital with COVID-19.

A brief statement issued by Chief Medical Officer Dr John Lee said the individual, a traveller, was removed from quarantine and taken to the Critical Care Unit (CCU) at the Health Services Authority.

"The patient is still able to do everything on their own. I know we all wish to express our concern and best wishes to the patient, and their family, for the patient's speedy recovery," Dr Lee said.

The patient had tested positive for the virus upon arrival in Cayman and initially placed in quarantine.

No further details were provided.

The disclosure was made at the CMO reported that there was one positive case of COVID-19 in the last batch of test results reported on Friday.

That brings the number of confirmed cases reported in the territory since the outbreak last year to 383 of which 346 have recovered.

As of Friday January 22nd there was one person hospitalised with the disease and 34 other positive cases in isolation out of a total of 861 in quarantine.

A total of 92 test results, the lowest in recent times, were reported on Friday.

So far, 65,821 tests have been carried out - a number which approximates with the population of the Cayman Islands. However, multiple tests are being done on individuals as the situation warrants.

Meanwhile, the number of persons who have received the COVID-19 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has increased to 6,641,



which leaves just 3,109 doses left from the first consignment.

A further shipment is expected on Thursday January 28th from the UK. The British government is providing the vaccines free of charge to the Cayman Islands and the other Overseas Territories.

The UK government has assured that it has adequate stocks of the vaccine availa-

ble in the short term in the face of reports that both the Pfizer-BioNTech and the AstraZeneca Oxford drugs are running into production shortfalls.

However, this was only expected to affect the EU supplies and not the UK.

Concerns continue to mount over emerging COVID-19 variants, how contagious they are and whether they are more deadly with attention focused on the UK,

Brazilian and South African variants in particular.

The UK variant is said to be responsible for a surge in cases in England and is now showing up in other countries.

Cayman's health officials are in contact with their UK counterparts on that.

Samples collected here have been sent to the UK for testing to determine that any of one those variants might be present here.

CDC requires negative PCR test for travel to the USA

In compliance with an order issued to all international airlines by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States, as of January 26, 2021 Cayman Airways will be requiring all passengers checking in for flights from Grand Cayman to the United States, to present proof of a negative PCR test taken no more than 3 days prior to their flight.



This CDC requirement applies to all passengers aged two and older, of any nationality, including US citizens. The following also applies:

- The name and date of birth on the negative test result must match the passenger's passport
- Testing must be performed using a viral test (PCR)
- The test result/document must include the name and contact for the laboratory
- At check-in on Grand Cayman, each passenger is required to complete an attestation form to the CDC, of having received a negative COVID-19 test result. The form will be provided at check-in but passengers are also encouraged to fill it out in advance to avoid delays. The form can be found here on the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/quarantine/pdf/attachment-a-global-passenger-disclosure-and-attestation-2021-01-12-p.pdf

The CDC also says that passengers who recovered from COVID-19 no more than three

months before their flight will not be required to present a negative PCR test if they can present documentation of their positive viral test results along with a letter from their healthcare provider or public health official stating that they're safe to travel.

A paper copy of the PCR test results is recommended, but an e-copy of the results is also acceptable.

Passengers who do not meet these requirements, will not be able to travel.

For more details on this CDC order, visit: www.cdc.gov/quarantine/pdf/global-airline-testing-order_2021-01-2_R3-signed-encrypted-p.pdf

Cayman Airways has already contacted its passengers directly to advise of these new CDC travel requirements, but passengers are also reminded that they are responsible for ensuring that they have the necessary travel documents required for entry into any country.

POLICE NEWS

RCIPS Responds To Eastern Districts Community Traffic Concerns

Over the course of last week, beginning Monday, 18 January, RCIPS uniform and traffic officers have been conducting traffic operations in Bodden Town, East End and North Side, in response to community concerns about speeding and unsafe driving practices in the Eastern Districts. The operation targeted excessive speeding in the morning hours and early afternoon, especially in and around school zones, which resulted in 74 prosecutions: 68 of which were tickets for excessive speeding, and 6 of which were for other traffic offenses, one of which resulted in an arrest. The operation continues this week.



"There are four primary schools and one high school located along main roads in the Eastern Districts," says Inspector Fernando Soto, Area Commander for the Eastern Districts. "With school resuming this week, it was important for us to put operations in place to reduce speeding in these areas and ensure the safety of our school children,

parents, school staff, and other members of the public."

As we begin the long weekend, RCIPS wishes to remind the public of the importance of safe driving across all three islands, Acting Superintendent Brad Ebanks added, "Our officers will be out across the island to help ensure the safety of all road users, and to prosecute those who engage in unsafe driving. Stay safe Cayman Islands!"

Caymanian Times



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► Appleby Managing Partner, Norman Klein and participating staff members present donation cheque to Jennifer Weber, Operations Manager, Cayman Islands Cancer Society.

APPLEBY DONATES \$1000 TO CAYMAN ISLANDS CANCER SOCIETY

Appleby Cayman are delighted to make a \$1000 donation to the Cayman Islands Cancer Society's Stride Against Cancer annual walk/run which takes place this year on Sunday 31 January 2021.

The Stride Against Cancer is the Cancer Society's largest fundraising event and all funds raised go towards helping to finance the Society's many programmes and activities. The event sees over 1300 participants and more than 100 volunteers come together for a good cause.

This year, the event is in honour of local running coach Derek Larner, who recently passed away from pancreatic cancer.

"Appleby is committed to supporting great causes in our community, and this

most certainly is a fantastic cause," said Norman Klein, Managing Partner at Appleby. "We wish the Cancer Society a successful event and our thoughts are with the friends and family of Mr Larner and all those affected by this disease."

The Cayman Islands Cancer Society is a non-profit organisation committed to reducing the incidence of cancer in the Cayman Islands by providing cancer awareness educational programmes and screening initiatives. The Society also provides counsel, support and financial aid grants to cancer patients and their families.

For more information about the Cayman Islands Cancer Society and their initiatives, please visit cics.ky.

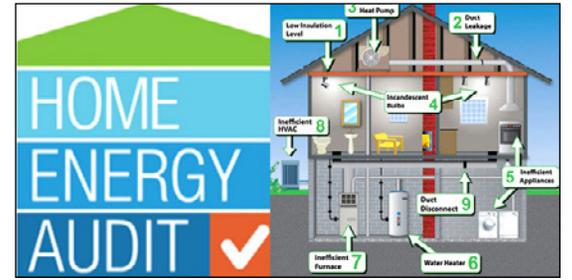
ENERGY CAYMAN LAUNCHES FREE DIY ENERGY AUDITS

To kick off 2021, Energy Cayman, the Ministry of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure's energy efficiency public education campaign, has launched a series of free DIY energy audits aimed at helping people in the Cayman Islands save money whilst saving energy.

Three audits have been produced; one aimed at creating savings around the home, one for businesses, and a third for children who want to become energy superheroes by saving energy.

The DIY energy audits are easy to follow room by room assessments that help people understand their energy usage and reveal where improvements in energy efficiency can be made. They show how much energy individuals use each day and how to prevent wasting energy and money in the future, with simple to follow checklists, tips and tricks.

Minister of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure, the Honorable. Joseph Hew, said, "We recently received over 800 entries for our Home Energy Efficiency Competition that we ran in conjunction with the Caribbean Utilities Company. This just highlights the fact that we have a huge number of people within our community that want to be energy efficient and save money while saving energy. For those that didn't win the competition we wanted to ensure that we could provide tools that would also allow them to start making savings."



Kristen Augustine, National Energy Policy Coordinator, said, "We have created distinct DIY audits for three key community groups as we all have a part to play in energy efficiency. The audits are completely free and are available to download from our website at www.energy.gov.ky/diyenergyaudits. We hope that this can help every member of our community to start making savings today."

Energy Cayman, the Ministry of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure's 12-month public education campaign to embed energy efficient knowledge and good practice into the Cayman community. This has been launched to help meet the goals in the National Energy Policy, which includes 70% of electricity generation from renewable sources by 2037.

The free DIY energy audits are available to download by visiting www.energy.gov.ky/diyenergyaudits. Printed copies for schools and businesses can also be requested by emailing energy@gov.ky or by messaging Energy Cayman on Facebook at @CaymanEnergy.

Heart Warriors and Angels Beach Walk in memory of Baby Nolan – the inspiration of congenital heart disease awareness in the Cayman Islands

Team Nolan, the Pediatric Program of the Cayman Heart Fund, is hosting their third Annual Heart Warriors and Angels Beach Walk during February 2021 Congenital Heart Defects (CHD) Awareness Week. This is the third annual Beach Walk in memory of Sean and Ailian Evans' son, Nolan, who passed away on 25 January 2018 from a complex CHD.

The event takes place on Sunday 7 February at 7:00 am at Public Beach. Registration is CI\$25 and includes an event t-shirt

(while supplies last.) This family and pet friendly event aims to raise awareness for the #1 birth defect, CHD. Kids are encouraged to dress in warrior or angels costumes. Complementary refreshments including coffee will be available as well as face painting, raffle prizes, and much more.

Ailian Evans, CHF Board member and founder of Team Nolan, expressed her gratitude for His Excellency Governor Martyn Roper's continued support of their initiatives "It is an honor having him participate in our third annual beach walk and we thank him and all our loyal supporters for their continued support over the years" said Ms. Evans, "There is no cure for CHD's, but treatment can be as simple as prescribed medication, to surgery and heart transplants. Our mission is to raise awareness about CHD in the community and financially assist local families with CHD babies."

This year's beach walk is sponsored by Davenport Development, Doctors Hospital, Health City, Walkers, Fosters, Vistra, Baraud Development, and Logic just to name a few.

People can register by downloading the form from the CHF Website or by email at [teamnolanevans@out-](mailto:teamnolanevans@outlook.com)

ailianevas@hotmail.co.uk or by calling 9361717.

The Cayman Heart Fund is a non-profit organization incorporated under the Companies Law (2007 Revision) in 2007, with Registration License # 220594. Our aim is to alert, reduce, and help prevent Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) - the #1 cause of death in the Cayman Islands. We achieve this through education, training, and by providing medical equipment and services to the public. The Team Nolan Financial Assistance Program provides financial grants to families in Cayman, assisting them with expenses associated with urgent paediatric cardiology health care. Grants may be awarded in relation to everyday expenses such as utilities, food, and transportation costs.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at: (345) 916-6324 or please email: info@caymanheartfund.com



► Heart Hero baby Nolan Evans



► His Excellency Governor Martyn Roper receiving his Annual Heart Warriors and Angels Beach Walk T-shirt from Team Nolan Founder and CHF Board Member Ailian Evans

Jillian Crooks led swimming charge in 2020

“The Cayman Junior Swim Team standout closed the year with 30 new CIASA and National records.”

Cayman’s swimmers faced the challenge that was 2020 head on, producing incredible results in the pool, in the classroom and in the community.

Across the world, as athletes found themselves unable to train because of the COVID-19 pandemic, competitive swimmers focussed on maintaining their dry-land fitness. In Cayman, after almost three-months enforced absence from training in the pool, the beaches were opened for exercise and swimmers flocked back to Seven Mile Beach’s crystal-clear waters – known primarily as the home of Cayman’s open water sea swims.

The Cayman Islands Government did a phenomenal job managing the pandemic in the Cayman Islands and by DATE swimmers were back at it, training in the pool; and in September the first post-lockdown meet was held.

Cayman Junior Swim Team standout, 14-year-old Jillian Crooks, was not slowed down by the pandemic -forced pause in her training. She closed out 2020 as the proud holder of 15 new CIASA and National records* (30 records in total) and even broke a couple of them twice: and when asked how she felt about her year, Jillian was short and to the point. “I just love swimming.”

Long Course (50m pool)

- 50m Freestyle - 26.83 - Karl Dalhouse, Jamaica
- 100m Backstroke - 1:05.74 - Karl Dalhouse, Jamaica

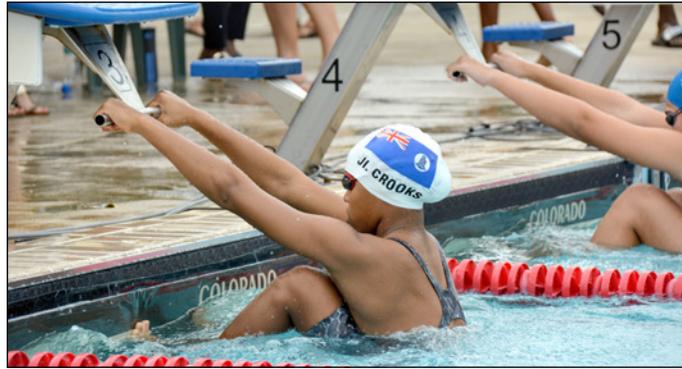
Short Course (25m pool)

- 50m Freestyle - 25:90 - Mike Lockwood Memorial, Cayman Islands**
- 100m Freestyle - 56:26 - Mike Lockwood Memorial, Cayman Islands
- 50m Backstroke - 29.04 - Mike Lockwood Memorial, Cayman Islands
- 50m Butterfly - 28:76 - Mike Lockwood Memorial, Cayman Islands
- 200IM - 2:22.62 - Mike Lockwood Memorial, Cayman Islands
- 50m Breaststroke - 35:16 - Landon von Kanel Memorial, Cayman Islands
- 100m Backstroke - 1:04.08 - Landon von Kanel Memorial, Cayman Islands
- 200m Freestyle - 2:05.94 - Coconut Cup, Cayman Islands
- 200m Backstroke - 2:15.69 - Coconut Cup, Cayman Islands
- 100m Butterfly - 1:03.79 - Coconut Cup, Cayman Islands

(Note: Crooks is Caymanian and now holds these records as both CIASA and National records. Also, the SC 50m Free, 100m Free and 50m Fly are both 13-14 records and Senior records).

Bailey Weathers, Cayman Swimming’s former Technical Director and National Coach (he stepped down last year, moving back to the US to be closer to his family, but continues to support Cayman Swimming while his replacement is being recruited) had this to say about Jillian’s 2020 performance:

“Jillian Crooks had a remarkable year in 2020. When you consider the lack of international competition due to the pandemic, it is remarkable that she was able to set



► Jillian Crooks - Backstroke Start Blocks



► James Allison - Butterfly

both new short and long course records – a total of 30 CIASA and National records, including records across all strokes, as well as in the IM. I don’t believe we have ever had an athlete set the variety and number of records Jillian did in a single year,” said Weathers.

He continued, “In 2020 Cayman Swimmers almost doubled the number of records broken in 2019 and again, when you consider we were out of the water for almost four months with limited access to international competition this is a truly incredible accomplishment. Jillian certainly played a major role in that success.”

Additional swimming highlights in 2020 included Seven Mile Swimmers’ 14-year-old James Allison’s record setting 50m Butterfly (26:57) which broke a record previously held by Caymanian Olympian Shaune Fraser. A relative newcomer to swimming, James looked back at 2020 with the following thoughts:

“2020 was one of my favourite years so far, and the best summer of my life because I had so much fun. I met loads of new people, started getting good at swimming and broke my first record at Nationals – which was nearly a year ago.”

James also set new 13/14 records in the 50m, 100m and 200m freestyle events.

Other 2020 records

Long Course (50m pool)

- Lila Higgs (CBAC) - 11/12 - 200M IM - 2:33.25

Short Course (25m pool)

- Colt Higgs (CBAC) - 8&U - 50m Free - 37.20
- Luke Higgs (CBAC) - 9/10 - 50m Back - 36.25
- James Allison (SMS) - 13/14 - 200m Free - 1:59.14
- James Allison (SMS) - 13/14 - 100m Free - 53.19
- James Allison (SMS) - 13/14 - 50m Free - 24.35

Other 2020 swimming highlights

January

• **Open Water:** CUC Open Water saw 115 swimmers take to the sea for the 800m and 400m open water swims and reporter Seaford Russell Jr. took part as well as covered it.

• **Artistic Swimming:** National Development and Representative Team Trials took place

• **Competitive Swimming:** Brett Fraser back to 2014 form at Geneva International Challenge Meet

• **Competitive Swimming:** John Michael Bodden recognised as a 2020 Proud of Them honouree

• **Community:** Stingray Swim Club donates books to the Sir John A. Cumber Primary School library

February

• **Competitive Swimming:** Stingray Swim Club and Camana Bay Aquatic Club attend Karl Dalhouse in Jamaica and Crooks siblings lead top performances in the pool.

• **College Swimming:** Alison Jackson commits to swim at University of Northern Colorado

• **College Swimming:** Florida State University’s Lauren Hew swims a personal best in 50m free and wins bronze (23.04)

• **Competitive Swimming:** CIASA Nationals, a CARIFTA Caribbean Junior Championships qualifier

• **College Swimming:** Eddie Weber and the Kenyon Men won their league at the 2020 NCAC Swimming & Diving Championships

• **College Swimming:** Krishna Adapa commits to swim at Pace University

• **Artistic Swimming:** Cayman Invitational takes place

March

• **College Swimming:** Audrey Weber commits to swim at Oberlin College

• **Competitive Swimming:** Shaune Fraser inducted into UF athletic hall of fame

May

• **College Swimming:** Zachary Moore commits to swim at Drexel University

• **Artistic Swimming:** Caymanite Synchro team member Helena Frawley graduates Cum Laude from Blair Academy High School

June

• **Competitive Swimming:** CARIFTA 2020 Junior Team members are recognised

• **Community:** Camana Bay Aquatic Club overseas members Lauren Hew; Audrey Weber and Sabine Ellison raise money for Black Lives Matter.

July

• **College Swimming:** Sarah Jackson, rising sophomore at University of Northern Colorado elected to UNC Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

• **College Swimming:** Sarah Jackson recognised as an Academic All WAC team member

• **College Swimming:** Jordan Crooks commits to the University of Tennessee

• **Open Water:** Five Stingray Swim Club athletes cross the North Sound raising awareness of water and boating safety in memory of Emmanuel ‘Manny’ Brown

• **Competitive Swimming:** Jasmine Lambert-Wragg, Cayman Prep Female Sports Person of the Year 2020 and United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands Ethics Award 2020

September

• **Community:** Sky Blue Aquatics organises Swim for Sheillah to provide Car-egiver Swim Assessments

October

• **Open Water:** CIASA proudly supported the 2020 Flowers Sea Swim

• **Open Water:** 36th Annual Foster’s 800m and 400m Open Water sea swim takes place

• **Competitive Swimming:** Shaune Fraser’s 200-yard freestyle in 2009 SEC Championships recognised in Caribbean’s all-time best performances

• **Competitive Swimming:** first meet – the Mike Lockwood Memorial meet – takes place at the new Cayman Brac Swimming Pool

• **Artistic Swimming:** Junior Coaches take part in a FINA Coaches Clinic

November

• **College Swimming:** Alison Jackson (UNC) makes college swimming debut

• **Open Water:** KPMG Pirates Week 5k (and 3K and 1K)

December

• **College Swimming:** Lauren Hew (FSU) featured in article in Swimming World Magazine

• **Artistic Swimming:** Caymanite Synchro Holiday Show is sold out

*All registered CIASA members are eligible to hold a CIASA record, while only Cayman nationals may hold National records.

**The Mike Lockwood Memorial swim meet was the first swim meet ever held in the new pool in Cayman Brac.

CIASA is the recognised national governing body of all Aquatic Sports (comprised of competitive swimming, open water swimming, diving, high diving, water polo and synchronised swimming) in the Cayman Islands and is an affiliated member of FINA, UANA, CCCAN, Island Games Association of the Cayman Islands, CARIFTA and the Cayman Islands Olympic Committee. For more information email ciasaboard@gmail.com or visit the CIASA website at www.ciasa.ky.

CARIBBEAN BRIEFS

Jamaicans selling bogus degrees

Jamaican employers are being alerted that scammers are selling bogus degrees and other academic certificates to people desperate to get jobs.

For six times less than the amount an average student would pay for tuition at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, in three years, a counterfeit degree can be obtained within days by anyone wishing to bypass going through the process legitimately.

Fraudsters now have both the UWI and the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) worried as the job market tightens and the demand for certification increases. A fake UWI bachelor's degree can be obtained for JA\$150,000 (KY\$860) while an associate degree can be had for \$100,000 (KY\$574).

The fraudulent documents are being advertised on social media as well as websites, with claims being made that contacts in the institutions allow the process to take place seamlessly. But monies have to be first wired to a bank account with a



► Jamaica's UWI has a problem with bogus certificates

requirement of a photo showing the transaction reference number being sent to the those running the scheme.

Professor Errol Morrison, Chairman of the University Council of Jamaica, said that while the fraud is not new, fraudsters are becoming technically advanced. "When you look at some of these certificates, they look just like the real ones," he said adding that there are protocols to catch people trying to cheat their way into jobs.

Cuba and EU plea to Biden

Cuba hopes the European Union will help it coax US president Joe Biden to lift its oppressive sanctions as it battles its worst economic crisis in decades.

"The EU rejects the US trade embargo on Cuba and we will continue to express this also vis-à-vis the new US administration," an EU spokesperson said. She debunked a recent US decision to list Cuba as a terrorist sponsor.

Former US president Donald Trump did it on the grounds Cuba hosted members of Colombian insurgent group the National Liberation Army and has too close ties with Venezuela.

But the NLA representatives were there because of a previous Colombia and EU-backed peace process, which the EU still wants to "facilitate", the EU spokesperson said.

"This will only aggravate the already difficult situation of the Cuban people



► Cuba hopes Biden will lift sanctions

in the midst of the pandemic," she added. The US embargo, which Trump also hardened in 2017, including by blocking remittances, has been in place since 1958. And what the EU spokesman called Cuba's "difficult" situation was an economy which shrank by at least 11 percent last year.

Cuba had expected five million tourists in 2020, but only one million visited due to COVID-19.

Guyana troops wary of Venezuela threat

Guyana has deployed more army troops along its disputed border with Venezuela amid a flare-up in tensions.

Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro recently vowed to "reconquer" the resource-rich Essequibo province where ExxonMobil is developing a giant offshore oil field. The Essequibo covers the western two-thirds of Guyana. ExxonMobil forecasts 750,000 barrels per day of oil production from Guyana in 2026, which will bring in billions of dollars to the population of 770,000.

The border dispute involves a part of the deep water Stabroek block on which ExxonMobil has made several discover-

ies since 2015, estimating recoverable resources of 9 billion barrels and from which it is producing 120,000 barrel per day of light crude.

The enhanced Guyanese deployment follows a United States directive to improve its military capacity, as the two countries' coast guards conducted joint exercises.

The UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ) is determining a schedule for arbitrating Guyana's request for validation of its border with Venezuela that has been in dispute for 120 years. Caracas maintains the ICJ has no jurisdiction in the matter and says the Essequibo province is its territory.

The ICJ could rule on the matter "in two to three-and-a-half years," Guyana's agent to the court Carl Greenidge said.

"We have changed our postures on the border," the head of Guyana's army Godfrey Bess said Jan. 13. "We are more alert and ready to constitutionally continue to preserve Guyana's patrimony."

Canada, the Organization of American States, CARICOM and Guyana's opposition have joined the US in

rejecting Maduro's intention to seize the Essequibo province.



► Guyanese soldiers are being deployed

St Vincent and Martinique on volcano alert

St Lucia Prime Minister Allen Chastanet has promised that he is prepared to take in residents of St Vincent and the Grenadines if the current activity at the La Soufriere Volcano intensifies.

Vincentians were alerted after the volcano, dormant for decades, became active again just before Christmas. The volcano erupted in 1979, killing 1,000 people. So far, while there has been no explosion but steam, gas and a volcanic dome, formed by lava, can be seen.

Chastanet said he is in dialogue with hoteliers - some of whom have not opened up their properties due to the pandemic - but say they will consider making rooms available to Vincentians.

Meanwhile, Martinique, where the volcano there is also showing signs of activity, is also being monitored, but not as



► The La Soufriere Volcano may erupt soon

severe as La Soufriere. A major eruption of the Soufriere Hills Volcano in 1997 killed 19 people, devastating the south of the island, burying the capital, Plymouth. Lava from that eruption also landed on St Lucia's south coast. More than half the population left Montserrat and relocated throughout the region.

Ex-Bermuda Premier in court over \$4m

Dr Ewart Brown, the former Premier of Bermuda, was charged with 13 counts of corruption in Magistrates' Court in the capital Hamilton last Wednesday.

The 13 charges included five related to agreements with the Lahey Clinic, through which he allegedly received \$4.01 million in monthly payments between 2001 and 2010.

The remaining eight charges related to allegations of corruptly obtaining \$350,500 in donations to benefit the Progressive Labour Party and the Bermuda Health Foundation between 2007 and 2010.

The first offences allegedly took place while he was the Minister of Tourism and Transport and the latter took place while he was Premier.

Dr Brown, who appeared remotely via Zoom from Florida, was not required to enter a plea to any of the charges

because they must be heard by the Supreme Court.

He remained silent during the proceedings, only speaking to confirm he could hear senior magistrate Juan Wolffe who released Dr Brown on \$250,000 bail with a surety of the same amount. The case is expected to be called in the Supreme Court during the April arraignments session.



► Dr Ewart Brown returns to court in April

Caribbean seeks change to Canadian travel requirements

As from 7th January of this year, all residents and travelers to Canada from the Caribbean must provide proof of a negative Covid-19 PCR test before they leave their country, a move which, it is claimed, will put a strain on health systems throughout the region and cause economic hardship for people from the Caribbean. As a result, the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) have made an appeal to the Canadian government to reverse the new rules.

CHTA's Acting CEO and Director General Vanessa Ledesma said the policy was creating challenges and placed even greater economic hardship on the people and governments of the Caribbean and on the thousands of Canadians currently in the Caribbean who are scheduled to return home in the coming weeks.

After the rules were announced, Canadians cancelled travel plans to the region, harming already fragile businesses and economies and keeping more employees from returning to work.

"As the policy takes effect, we anticipate many stranded Canadians being unable to return home due to their inability to get tests in the required time," she stated, adding that the CHTA's commitment to the health and safety of residents and travelers was best demonstrated by Covid-19 protocols and containment measures already in place

throughout the Caribbean. This was in addition to the thousands of tourism employees who had undergone health safety training conducted by CHTA and its health safety partners, the Caribbean Public Health Agency and the Caribbean Tourism Organisation.

Low tourism-related transmission rates in the region proved this, she said. As a result, CHTA wrote to Canada's Minister of Transport Marc Garneau and shared their response with Canadian High Commissions and Consulates across the region, requesting reconsideration of the policy for the Caribbean.

CHTA said it believed the region's success in maintaining one of the lowest incident rates of Covid-19 in the world was largely because of the stringent health safety and testing measures which were in place, thanks to the leadership of many Caribbean Heads of Government, and the strong partnerships between the health and tourism sectors.

Caribbean health safety protocols can be found at www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com/health-safety-resources. They have been the basis for health and safety training for thousands of employees since June 2020.

These protocols are recognised by health safety partners, including CARPHA, CTO, and the World Travel and Tourism Council.



► Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association Acting CEO and Director General Vanessa Ledesma

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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

	3							
		2	9		4	7		8
	7			1				9
	5							6
		6		4		3		
	9							7
	6			2				8
1		3	7		6	2		
								5

Answer to previous puzzle

3	7	9	4	8	1	5	6	2
6	1	8	5	3	2	7	9	4
5	4	2	6	9	7	3	1	8
8	6	3	7	5	9	4	2	1
4	9	7	2	1	6	8	5	3
2	5	1	8	4	3	6	7	9
7	8	4	9	2	5	1	3	6
9	3	6	1	7	8	2	4	5
1	2	5	3	6	4	9	8	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Boxcar rider
 - 5 Bandage material
 - 10 Swift horse
 - 11 Rabbits' home
 - 12 Corridor
 - 13 Changes, in a way
 - 14 Jokingly
 - 16 "Time to split!"
 - 20 Useful skills
 - 23 Early hour
 - 24 Informal
 - 25 Dries, in a way
 - 27 Silent
 - 28 Los —, New Mexico
 - 29 Scuba weapon
 - 32 Sweetie
 - 36 Oregon city
 - 39 To boot
 - 40 Thais and Tibetans
 - 41 Oboe part
 - 42 Lustful
 - 43 Clothing
- DOWN**
- 2 Vaccine type
 - 3 Ump's call
 - 4 Accommodates
 - 5 Full range
 - 6 Game place
 - 7 Coffee dispenser
 - 8 Last letter, in London
 - 9 Print units
 - 11 Floats on the breeze
 - 15 Staff symbol
 - 17 Hotel offering
 - 18 "Do — others ..."
 - 19 Capone's foe
 - 20 Some charity
 - 21 Diner order
 - 22 One or more
 - 25 De-pressed
 - 26 Nautical rope
 - 28 Dance's de Mille
 - 30 In the lead
 - 31 Actor Cox
 - 33 Cheese choice
 - 34 Not new
 - 35 Auction bids
 - 36 Stirrup setting
 - 37 Much of N. Amer.
 - 38 Collins base

S	A	K	E			J	A	M	B	
C	R	A	G	S		S	E	P	A	L
R	I	N	G	O		P	R	I	C	E
U	S		B	E	A	K	E	R	S	
B	E	A	R	E	R	S		C	O	T
		S	N	O	R	E		H	E	N
			U	S	A	G	E			
	S	E	T		D	R	A	F	T	
A	L	L		B	E	A	T	E	R	S
B	E	A	V	E	R	S		L	A	P
B	E	T	A	S		P	R	I	D	E
O	V	E	N	S		S	I	N	E	W
T	E	S					B	E	D	S

Yesterday's answer

- 20 Some charity
- 21 Diner order
- 22 One or more
- 25 De-pressed
- 26 Nautical rope
- 28 Dance's de Mille
- 30 In the lead
- 31 Actor Cox
- 33 Cheese choice
- 34 Not new
- 35 Auction bids
- 36 Stirrup setting
- 37 Much of N. Amer.
- 38 Collins base

Word Search

F	R	E	N	K	L	U	A	F	N	G	Y	W	E	T
B	C	D	M	J	C	O	W	D	E	A	E	S	F	F
F	E	O	O	A	T	S	A	C	U	U	L	T	T	I
F	R	Y	Z	C	H	R	Y	S	H	A	X	E	N	W
M	V	L	O	A	N	O	T	H	E	O	U	I	A	S
S	A	E	W	O	J	E	E	A	M	F	H	N	S	M
B	N	U	C	G	N	I	T	K	I	N	C	B	S	E
P	T	E	G	U	U	Q	O	E	N	N	H	E	A	L
A	E	T	K	H	Y	J	L	S	G	I	E	C	P	V
M	S	Y	O	C	A	D	S	P	W	A	K	K	U	I
I	W	S	D	I	I	M	T	E	A	W	H	O	A	L
L	O	C	H	N	L	D	O	A	Y	T	O	V	M	L
T	O	G	G	Z	B	E	Y	R	J	C	V	X	E	E
O	L	P	R	O	U	S	T	E	I	G	L	O	D	P
N	F	O	R	S	T	E	R	B	R	O	N	T	E	P

- Austen
- Balzac
- Bronte
- Cervantes
- Chekhov
- Conrad
- De Maupassant
- Dickens
- Doyle
- Eliot
- Faulkner
- Fielding
- Forster
- Hemingway
- Hugo
- Huxley
- Joyce
- Maugham
- Melville
- Milton
- Proust
- Shakespeare
- Shaw
- Steinbeck
- Swift
- Tolstoy
- Twain
- Woolf

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

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10					11				
12					13				
14				15					
			16				17	18	19
20	21	22					23		
24					25	26			
27					28				
29			30	31					
			32				33	34	35
36	37	38					39		
40							41		
42							43		

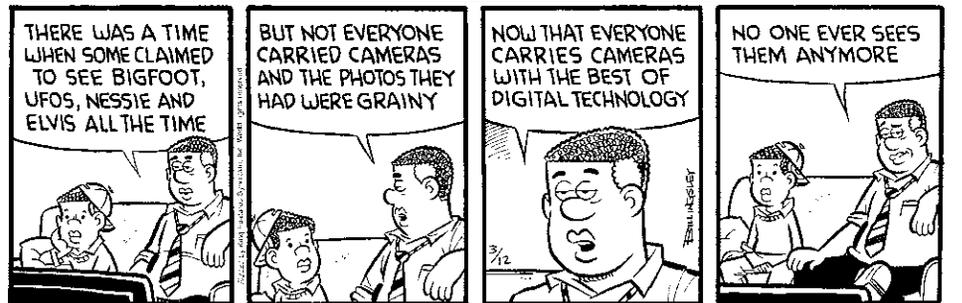
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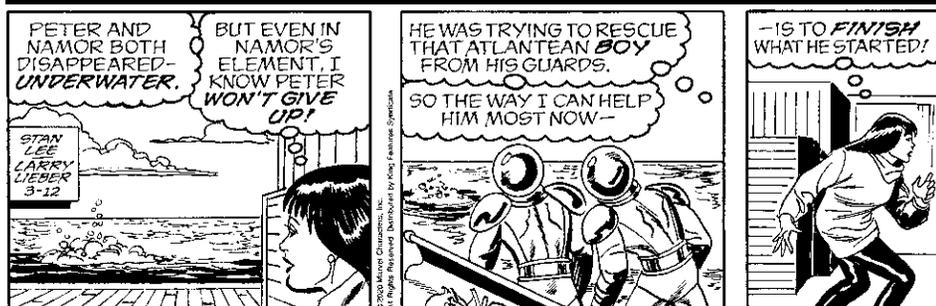
CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley



THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN

By Stan Lee



JUDGE PARKER

By Woody Wilson & Mike Manley



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