

# **Early Election called by Premier**



Governor dissolves Parliament

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Beacon Farms show the way forward

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Cayman Airways to start B737-8 flights next week



► His Excellency the Governor Martyn Roper



Premier Alden McLaughlin

## **MAJOR WIN FOR DOCTORS EXPRESS**



Against a litany of procedural failures, material non-disclosures, misrepresentation and abuse of court process, the Grand Court has ruled in favour of Doctors Express in its case against the government over its sale of medical cannabis vapes for which it had a licence.

Doctors Express had challenged the legality and validity of a Cease and Desist order signed by Chief Medical Officer Dr John Lee, a search warrant issued by a justice of the peace, and a resulting raid on its premises by agents of Customs and Border Control(CBC) and the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service(RCIPS).

#### SEE DOCTORS EXPRESS, Page 3



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washing



## EDITORIAL

## A Tough week for Government

In the ebb and flow of the political tides, last week was a good week for the People's Progressive Party-led Unity coalition government.

After riding a wave of appreciation over a plenitude of announcements packaged in a safety net of support for businesses and individuals, there was little in the forecast to suggest serious headwinds ahead.

But politics, like cricket, has its moments of 'glorious uncertainties'.

After a series of setbacks this week, not many people were quite prepared for the political riptide that has swept aside a series of events that had dulled the glow of the People's Progressive Movement-led ruling coalition over the past days.

When Premier Alden McLaughlin called the polls early on Wednesday afternoon that sent shockwaves throughout not just the political community but the community of voters as well.

The government was already on the backfoot from a series of setbacks.

A Grand Court judgement had rocked the government over what the court ruled was an illegal raid in 2019 on Doctors Express to stop the sale of medical cannabis vapes - which they were licenced to sell.

They government also found itself on the wrong side of the Ombudsman who ordering the release of key documents in the discarded Smith Barcadere Development Project.

Then came the decision to again close the recently reopened Cayman Craft Market which has also not gone down well.

All told a series of developments that have wiped some of the sheen off the government's shine this past week.

That was before the opposition in Parliament, which a few weeks ago seemed on the verge of further fragmentation, found common cause in requesting a meeting of Parliament to move a motion of no-confidence against Speaker McKeeva Bush.

Mr Bush was found guilty last year and received a suspended sentence for assault on a woman.

Premier Alden McLaughlin's reluctance and then refusal to call a meeting of the Parliament at which the motion would have been debated became a political sorepoint.

With the Opposition on Wednesday arguing that the government was constitutionally bound to hold a meeting of the current Parliament at least once a calendar year, it was hard to see how the government would have navigated its way out of what had become a political cul de sac.

Seven MPs were required to sign the request for the meeting.

By Wednesday, they were just one short - with indications that a seventh, George Town Central MP, Kenneth Bryan likely to come on on board under specific conditions.

Premier McLaughlin had been daring the Official Opposition Leader to find the requisite support at a time when the opposition seemed to be moving further apart.

Just a few hours later, Premier McLaughlin dropped the early election political bombshell. Strategically?

The 2021 election campaign just went into overdrive. As former British prime minister Harold Wilson said: "A week is a long time in politics".

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## PREMIER CALLS EARLY ELECTIONS OVER BUSH DILEMMA

## By Staff Writer

In a move that has caught many off-guard, Premier Alden McLaughlin has announced early elections.

In the surprise announcement on Wednesday afternoon, Mr McLaughlin linked the move directly to repeated calls by the Opposition for a meeting of Parliament to debate a motion no-confidence against Speaker of Parliament McKeeva Bush.

The motion arises out of the Speaker's guilty plea and conviction late last year on assault charges from an altercation with a woman in February.

The most recent call for the meeting came today.

"Despite the fact that the Parliament was due to be dissolved on the 29th March and no further meeting is being planned by the Government, the Opposition and others continue to press for the removal of the Speaker," Premier McLaughlin said in a statement.

He added that "currently, and for the second time, the Leader of the Opposition is circulating a letter seeking signatures of at least 7 Members to call a special meeting of the House to debate a motion of no confidence in the Speaker.

"He has not yet obtained the requisite number of signatures, but it is plain that as long as Mr Bush remains as Speaker, the controversy



over his recent convictions will not abate," the Premier stated.

He pointed to the Unity Government, which he leads, is made up of 7 members of the Progressives Party, 3 Independents and 2 members of the Cayman Democratic Party (CDP) which Mr Bush leads.

According to Mr McLaughlin, Mr Bush has indicated repeatedly that he will not resign the post of Speaker and as I have said publicly on more than one occasion, I believe the forcible removal of Mr Bush by the Government would threaten the stability of the Government. Were that to occur, it is almost certain that the Governor would be forced to dissolve the Parliament in any event.

He further stated that "a rancorous session of Parliament debating the no-confidence motion may not end with the removal of Speaker Bush as some Opposition members may decline to vote in favour of the motion despite having signed a letter calling for a special meeting.

Instead, he feels it "will create rancour in our community and likely amongst members of my Government.2

"Without question it will be a massive distraction from the critically important work we are engaged in, which ranges from dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts at reopening the economy while keeping Cayman safe, to addressing the continued threat

**2021 GENERAL ELECTIONS** 



Premier Alden McLaughlin

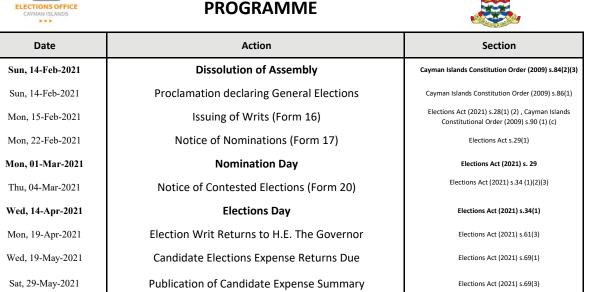
of EU blacklisting," the PPM leader reasoned.

Mr McLaughlin, who is completing his second consecutive term at the helm of government as stipulated by the constitution, declared that:

"After careful consideration, I have therefore determined that it is in the best interest of the country for Parliament to be dissolved immediately, which will have the effect of vacating the seat of the Speaker."

"Mr. Bush will no longer be the Speaker of the House and the country, by way of earlier elections, will determine who they wish to serve as their representatives – this includes the voters of West Bay West deciding whether they wish Mr. Bush to be re-elected to Parliament."







## Caymanian Times

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# MAJOR WIN FOR DOCTORS EXPRESS IN VAPE RAID CASE

#### CONTINUED FROM Page 1

No one was ever arrested in connection with the raid.

In his ruling, the Hon. Presiding Judge, Mr Justice Ronin McMillan concluded that the 2019 raid was "unlawful", and that there are compelling grounds to conclude that in exercising his powers the Chief Medical Official (CMO) Dr John Lee "had acted unlawfully and ultra vires" (beyond his authority).

In both of those critical instances, the Court ruled in favour of Doctors Express and noted a number of shortcomings by Dr Lee, the JP and the costumes authorities.

It called the Cease Notice "defective in areas of law and fatally flawed", and also stated that "it also considered the decision to rely on the law (the CMO) chose was unreliable and unpersuasive."

The judge also found that regarding the sale of medical cannabis by Doctors Hospital that "there is no restriction on the manner in which these are dispensed - a matter solely for the discretion of the medical; judgement of the prescribing physician."

Justice McMillan noted that "on or about the same date as the CMO issued the cease and desist notice, the CMO had formed the view that the medicinal cannabinoid vapes issued by Doctors Hospital were not themselves injurious to health."

He also determined that despite the CMO having sent an email to health practitioners ordering that processing and selling of cannabinoids be discontinued, that no rules or regulations existed to underpin that order.

Evidence submitted as evidence showed that the CMO had stated in an email that he was not aware that CBC had relied on his Cease and Desist order in conducting the raid, and had said that he was not aware of the raid until he read about it in the press.

"Given the obvious predicament in which the CMO therefore finds himself, the question inevitably arises as to his credibility," the judge stated.

The judgement also concluded that "a licencee should not have its licence suspended or revoked indefinitely without some means of knowing why it is so and an opportunity to argue that the decision should be reversed."

"The CMO considered that he was expected to act even though it was established that he had no genuine medical reason to act at all" the judge stated and raised the question: "In light of this unfortunate situation, did the CMO act for an improper purpose in issuing the cease notice?"

It was also noted that there is no evidence that prior to this initiative the CMO had formed an intention to take any action whatsoever.

"It is also factually correct that only Doctors Express were the only ones dispensing vapourisable medicinal cannabis in the Cayman Islands," it points out, and also refers to "opacity and ambivalence" in the CMO's instruction.

"At no point in his affidavit dated 10th February does the CMO indicate that the health issues being raised are not applicable or relevant in the context of the medical cannabinoids which Doctors Express were using."

"He should have done so fully and truthfully," the judge added.

"Frankly, the presiding judge stated, "(the court) has genuine difficulty in accepting the reliability and persuasiveness of his evidence" in relation to the timeline of events associated with his decision. In its conclusion regarding the Cease Notice, Judge McWilliam said "the CMO knew that in relation to the products of Doctor's Express there was no health risk to issue a Cease notice."

It also ruled that there was a breach of the widely accepted principles of natural justice and that in issuing the Cease Notice "the CMO acted in fact and in law what would properly be described as an improper purpose."

The court found that "not only was it functionally targeted at Doctor's Express but it was also issued against Doctor's Express on a basis that the CMO himself did not truly believe.

The court also addressed what it regarded as significant flaws in the execution of the search warrant and the raid including "who was authorised and required to enter the premises."

It expressed a concern that "ultimately these cumulative breaches of formality could undermine the rule of law itself."

"From beginning to end, when the law is applied to the facts this was a complete failure to follow the law," it noted, adding that upon reviewing the volumes of evidence there were numerous shortcomings including that, "the process of the search was entrusted to an inexperienced customs officer."

The court found that there "there was no basis for a search of any kind."



3

Chief Medical Officer Dr John Lee

In setting aside (ruling against) both the Cease Order and the search warrant, Justice McMillan ruled that "the court shall consider if damages should be awarded, and the amount in favour of Doctors Express.

He also stated that the court will hear submission as to costs against the government departments responsible at an appropriate time.



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## **Street Renaming Notice**

In accordance with Section 3(2) and 3(3) of the Roads (Naming and Numbering) Act (2019 Revision), the Minister responsible for Lands notifies the public of the intention to rename: the portion South Church Street from Boilers Road to Shedden Road; Harbour Drive; and the portion of North Church Street between Fort Street and Mary Street to Seafarer's Way. Any objections to the renaming of this street can be made in writing to the Minister responsible for Lands at the Government Administration Building, Box 105, Grand Cayman KY1-1900 within one calendar month of the date of the publication of this notice.



## **DOCTORS EXPRESS**

Doctors Express has successfully challenged a controversial 2019 raid on its premises over the sale of medical cannabis vapes which it always claimed it was licensed to sell.

In a statement following the Grand Court ruling on Monday, Director of Doctors Express, Samuel Banks, said that he was pleased with the outcome but re-



Director of Doctors Express, Samuel Banks

gretted that it had ever been necessary to bring the case.

"I am relieved but not surprised that the Grand Court agreed that we acted entirely lawfully throughout. The Judge found that the failure of lawyers on behalf of Customs, the CMO (Chief Medical Officer) and RCIPS (Royal Cayman Islands Police Service) to offer any timely concessions inevitably added complexity to these court proceedings."

He also said he was "disappointed that the Attorney General and these defendants unreasonably chose to contest this case in the face of the overwhelming evidence against them."

Mr Banks stated: "I feel vindicated that the Grand Court saw through the untruthful evidence — sworn on oath — by (CMO) Dr John Lee and Customs in an attempt to cover up this conspiracy and pervert the course of justice."

The Doctors Express director said he will be "making formal complaints of criminal offences including perjury and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice."

#### DR LEE

Meanwhile, a statement in Tuesday by Chief Medical Officer Dr Lee on the outcome of the case said taht "at all times in the function of his duties, he has acted in what he believed to be the best interests of the Public."

It said the CMO sought legal advice and consulted with both the Health Practice Commission and the Registrar of the Department of Health Regulatory Services amongst others.

Dr Lee who was not called to court to give evidence in person also stated, "At all material times I acted in good faith in the public interest for the protection of Public Health".

The statement from Dr Lee's office also quotes Professor John Britton, expert witness for the Government, who has expressed support for the decisions taken by the CMO.

"I therefore consider the Cease Notice issued by Dr Lee to be an appropriate, proportionate and necessary response to a potential serious risk to public health," the professor wrote.

Additionally, Professor Britton said, "In my opinion it would have been negligent



Chief Medical Officer Dr John Lee

for any chief medical officer, faced with this situation, not to act quickly and decisively to prevent the widespread use of these and any other THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) vapes in Cayman, and to sustain that action at least until the cause of the US epidemic had been determined."

# **GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING MORE RIGHTS FOR REFUGEES**

#### By Staff Writer

The Cayman Islands Customs and Border Control Service (CBC) says persons campaigning for changes to the asylum law that "Government will review and consider legislative amendments and will advise when the amendments are agreed."

This comes as Cuban political refugee Javier Jouz Varona, along with his wife, Erica Alvarez Freites, from the Dominican Republic have been holding a series of protests in front of the Government Administration Building.



Javier Jouz Verona

Mr Varona who has been granted political asylum in Cayman, is demanding that his wife who does not have Caymanian Status or employment should be granted the same rights he has through the marriage.

He also claims that their marriage had not been recognized by the Cayman Government.

In a statement on the issue, the CBC says the Ministry of Employment and Border Control (MEBC) and the Customs & Border Control Service (CBC) are aware and understand the "gap" in legislation as it relates to section 111 of the Customs & Border Control Law, 2018.

Admitting that there is a discrepancy in the law, the CBC has assured that they are "looking at options to rectify this."

Referring to the ongoing protest by Mr Varona, the agency says: "With respect to the persons recently protesting at the Government Administration Building, CBC has had discussions with them in the past and has advised that any changes in the law would require some time for the Cabinet and Parliament to consider."

Meanwhile, Mr Varona who has received support for his campaign maintains that "if the government gives me that right (the right of political asylum) then it needs to respect that right. The same rights that I have, I want her (my wife) to have."

Those rights included the rights of residency, and the right to work, Mr Varona said, adding that 'it is very expensive to live here in Cayman,' and also that their



Cuban political refugee Javier Jouz Verona and his wife, Erica Alvarez Freites, protesting in front of the Government Administration Building

baby had a special medical condition, and that they could not afford to live here if only one of them was working.

The Cuban refugee who has been living in the Cayman Islands since 2017, has also said that on an earlier occasion, he had been arrested along with his baby, a Cayman Islands Citizen, for protesting outside the Government Administration Building.

"The protest is now to have all my family together, so that we are united," he said.

The couple have a 10-month old child, Helem, who was born in the Cayman Islands.

In addition, Ms. Alvarez Freites has two children, 12-year-old Jason, and fouryear-old Samantha who are still in the Dominican Republic. The CBC says that as with other persons who are seeking asylum or who have been granted asylum, the Government continues to provide financial support in the form of rental and utilities assistance and in some cases food vouchers as well and Mr. and Mrs. Freites continues to benefit from that programme.

"We are aware of the circumstances pertaining to Mrs Alvarez-Freites and the outcomes being sought," the agency states.

"While the option to obtain employment through a work permit exists for Mrs Alvarez-Freites, the Government is also actively considering alternate options under the current legal framework that would facilitate her request to remain and work in the country with her family."

## ELECTIONS BROUGHT FORWARD! CAYMAN GOES TO THE POLLS ON APRIL 14th

The General election in the Cayman Islands will now be held on April 14th instead of May 26th.

This is confirmed in a statement issued by the Governor's Office this afternoon.

The full statement from HE Governor Martyn Roper reads:

"At the request of, and in consultation with the Premier, I will be issuing a proclamation on Sunday 14 February 2021 dissolving the Parliament, in accordance with Section 84(2) of the Cayman Islands Constitution.

I will, by proclamation, set Wednesday 14 April 2021 as the date for the next General Election, replacing the May General Election date, as the Constitution sets out a maximum of two months between the dissolution of the Parliament and a General Election. This date ensures that no newly registered, eligible voters are disenfranchised," the statement said.

Returning Officers will be issued Writs setting Nomina-



tions day as Monday 1 March 2021.

Governor Roper said, "This date, just over two weeks from the dissolution of the Parliament

allows time for potential candidates to prepare."

He also states that he has been assured by the Supervisor of Elections that the Elections Office will be able to deliver a smooth, fair, and transparent General Election on this new date.

"Cayman Islands General Elections have historically had excellent voter turnout, and I encourage all voters to exercise their democratic right and vote in the 14 April 2021 General Election," Governor Roper added.

## **OPPOSITION (EXCEPT ONE) DEMAND NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE ON SPEAKER**

Six of the seven opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) have sighed a request calling for a meeting of Parliament to debate a motion of no-confidence against the Speaker McKeeva Bush.

In a press release on Wednesday, Leader of the Official Opposition, Arden McClean, said he had written to each of the 18 MPs individually inviting them to sign the request, which requires seven members in order to be triggered.

Six opposition MPs had signed by mid-afternoon Wednesday.

They are: Mr McLean, (East End), Alva Suckoo (Newlands), Anthony Eden (Savannah), Chris Saunders (Bodden Town West), Bernie Bush (West Bay North) and Ezzard Miller(North Side).

None of the MPs on the government side - neither People's Progressive Party members nor independent pro-government MPS, have signed the request.

Also not included on the list of signatories up to publication time was Kenneth Bryan the independent MP for George Town Central, who would be the crucial seventh signatory unless one of the MPs on the government benches broke ranks.

The Official Opposition is led by Mr McLean and includes five of the seven opposition MPs, except independent MP Ezzard Millar - who has signed the request for the meeting), and the other independent opposition member Kenneth Bryan.

Meanwhile, the Official Opposition expressed its disappointment that Premier

Alden McLaughlin has said the government did not intend to schedule a meeting of parliament before the May 26th election.

In the press statement, Mr McClean said, "The Official Opposition expresses its disappointment and grave concern with the announcement by the Premier that Parliament will not be sitting for the remainder of this session of Parliament, despite there being work to be conducted on behalf of the people."

He said they believe this to be a deliberate move to avoid debating the motion of no-confidence in the Speaker.

The statement also refers to a clause in the constitution stipulating that Parliament should meet at least once per calendar year.

"The Opposition therefore is of the view that the refusal of the Premier to call a session of Parliament for this calendar year is in breach of Section 83 (2) of the Constitution," it said.

Opposition Leader McLean said the Premier was "reckless and cavalier" and breaching the constitution "in order to facilitate his political objectives and avoid debating a motion of such magnitude and public importance as to challenge the continued tenure of the Speaker."

He said it creates public distrust and political division. Mr McLean also stated that it was false for the Premier to suggest that the Government may fall if he calls a meeting of the Parliament and debates a Motion of No Confidence calling for the removal of the Speaker from that position."

"This is simply false," he stated. "To remove the Government, it would require an affirmative vote of the Parliament of no less than 13 members, the same number required to remove the Speaker."

He calculated that even if the Speaker is removed from that post, the Government would still have a clear majority and could continue to function as normal for the remainder of this administration.

The Opposition Leader also pointed out that "to achieve 13 votes, the Official Opposition would be

required to participate in those numbers." He declared that it is not their intention to vote to bring down the Government and that they have not sought to bring a No-Confidence Motion in that regard.

Mr McLean termed the Premier's stated concerns " baseless and intended to confuse the public so as to create some sort of excuse for not taking the right and honourable action regarding the Speaker."

Meanwhile, with Cayman due to participate in a meeting of the Commonwealth



Speaker McKeeva Bush

Parliamentary Association later this month, Opposition Leader McLean felt it was "embarrassing" that the jurisdiction would be participating in the session discussing best practices of legislation and protecting women from violence across the Commonwealth.

"How can we add value to the process when one of the highest post holders on our island was recently convicted and found guilty of violence against a female and so many MPs remain silent?" he asked.







Inside the farm's tobacco plant nursery

# **Beacon Farms show the way forward**

► The farm's new grinding machine

#### **By Christopher Tobutt**

Beacon farms keeps showing the way forward in Cayman agriculture. The 34 acres of land, just off Frank Sound Road in North Side, was started by The Bridge Foundation to help find employment for more than a dozen people who have broken free from substance abuse and need to make a new start. But it is also a visionary farm, full of good ideas. It is one of the few farms that not only grows, but markets high value product from the farm, namely Cayman's only locally-made cigars. The proceeds then go back into the enterprise, so that more people are helped.

The idea is to sell the cigars all over the world, as well as to local vendors; part of

a bold new marketing plan put together with cigar sales manager Tom Gaw. The plan includes reaching out to local bars, restaurants and liquor stores, as well as featuring the cigars at prestigious highend events such as Rum & Robusto, part of the Cayman Cookout at the Ritz-Carlton, where ten dollars from every cigar sold went into the Cayman Islands Food Bank, or the Breast Cancer Foundation's 'Gintonica' event. "Events are a real nice way to interact with the people face to face. We have developed a close relationship with the Ritz-Carlton," Mr. Gaw said. The cigars are made from tobacco that

is grown and dried on the farm, before being made into cigars by experts, under the auspices of the Cayman Cigar Company



Busy planting tobacco seedlings



The new rock-crusher produces usable soil out of rocks

which donates 100 percent of its profits to the Bridge Foundation. That's great too because it shows that Cayman Farms can produce unique, niche products and so gain the profit that comes from controlling more of the supply-chain.

"The first shipment of Cayman-made cigars in the history of the island went out two weeks ago," said Beacon Farms' Chairman Granger Haugh. "We sent more than 5000 of them, worth 133,000 dollars, to Tampa." That's a first for Cayman agriculture, but it's not the only new field being ploughed at Beacon Farms.

The farm has purchased two major pieces of machinery. There is a rock-crusher attached to the back of a large, powerful tractor which pulverizes big rocks and mixes them into the soil. It is a big investment -, and It is hoped that the crusher can be eventually hired out to other farms eventually, making the equipment a big blessing to other farms too.

The farm has also bought a big horizontal grinder which grinds up all manner of organic material – including cardboard, pallet wood, and thick tree branches, as well as ordinary landscaping waste into fragments small enough to be composted in the farm's state-of-the-art static aerated composting facility. The composting facility is really another "first," for Cayman agriculture, turning the material into high-quality compost in a matter of weeks by a system of air which is pumped through pipes into the compost pile, accelerating the rate of chemical reactions and producing a high temperature that kills of plant pathogens and pests. Most of the compost is going to be mixed into the soil/ rock fragment trail left behind by the rock crusher, increasing the depth and fertility of the soil, but there are also plans to sell some of it to local plant growers.

The ability to increase soil depth is good news, because one of Beacon Farms' other pioneering enterprises are beet mangels, a root crop used for animal feed, and mangels need good, rich, deep soil. Lots of local farmers are already interested in buying the mangels, which can be feed to cows, pigs, and horses chickens and goats. So far, all the animal feed in Cayman has been Imported from overseas, Mr. Haugh said, so it makes a lot of sense for Cayman to be able to grow its own animal feed. The farm is also in the process of growing its own coconut trees, to provide coconuts for the on-site coconut oil and flour processing plant.



**COMMUNITY EVENTS & NOTICES** 

# **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

#### **Prayer for Schools in the Cayman Islands**

13 February - The InterSchool / InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of the Cayman Islands (IS/IVCF) will host its semi-annual Prayer Breakfast on Saturday from 9 -11am in the UCCI Cascade Room. IS/VCF is inviting all members, supporters and alumni of student campus ministries (Scripture Union, ISCF, UCCF, InterVarsity, SCM) to attend. The event is free but RSVP is requested. For more information interested persons may contact ISIVCF at 929-5111 or isivcfky@gmail.com.

#### **National Gallery Family Fun Day**

13 February - The National Gallery is having a free family fun day from 10am to 1pm, based on the exhibition "Homegrown". Activity sheets and art activities will be available for children of all ages. Beverages and snacks will be available for purchase. For more

information, contact education@ nationalgallery.org.ky or call 945 - 8111.

#### Coco Fest - Pedro St. James

13 February - Don't miss the 6th annual Coco Fest on Saturday 13th February from 12pm-6pm at Pedro St. James Castle. Join them for crafts, games, music, coconut inspired food & treats, health & beauty products...and quench your thirst with fresh coconut water! Admission only \$5! FREE for kids under 6. All proceeds will go to build a wheelchair accessible walkway at Pedro St. James

#### Stargazing with the CI **Astronomical Society**

**15 February -** Join the Cayman Islands Astronomical Society for an evening of stargazing at Seven Mile Public Beach on Monday Feb 15th from 7pm on the grassy area near the playground. The Moon and Mars will be on show as well

as the Pleiades cluster and the Orion constellation with its interesting stars and nebula which is the birthplace of stars. As always, all are welcome and the event is totally free! Event will be cancelled if there is more than 50% cloud cover. Check the Facebook event page for the latest updates.

#### St. Alban's Church of **England - Ash Wednesday Service**

17 February - The Service of Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes will be conducted by the Rt. Rev. Dr. PJ Lawrence, Bishop, on Ash Wednesday, February 17th at 9:30am at St Alban's Church of England on Shedden Road.

#### **National Arts & Culture** Awards

18 February - The National Arts & Culture Awards gala takes place at the Harquail Theatre and is open to the public. While there is no admission fee, those interested in attending do need to make a reservation by calling the Cultural Foundation office at 949 - 5477. The ceremony recognises those



Coco Fest

who have contributed to the arts, culture and heritage of the Cayman Islands, attained a level of merit in their artistic discipline and/or supported the work of CNCF.

#### **St. Ignatius Friday Fish Fry Nights**

19 February - The popular St. Ignatius Friday Fish Fry Nights are back for this Lenten season starting on 19 February from 5:00-8:00 pm in the School Canteen. Serving Snapper or Mahi-Mahi with fries or rice, cole slaw, grilled onions and festival. Free desserts! Dine in or carry out!

#### **Cayman Brac CIFA U8 Football Festival**

20 February - All are welcomed to the Cayman Brac Sports Club for the CIFA U8 Football Festival starting at 9:30am.

**Send your community** events to wendy@ caymaniantimes.ky

# Cayman Airways to start B737-8 flights next week

## **By Lindsey Turnbull**

Having been grounded for 23 months, Cayman Airways' two Boeing 737-8s will be used for all passenger flights from 19th February, as the planes have undergone the necessary refitting to ensure their safety, airline officials said. With Cayman Airways now operating on a vastly reduced schedule due to Covid-19 restrictions, it will be able to accommodate all current flights using the two 737-8s that will be in operation from 19th February.

Following the Lion Air and Ethiopian Airlines crashes by Boeing 737-8s and the subsequent tragic loss of life, Cayman Airways immediately grounded their 737-8s almost two years ago, the first airline in the world to take such unprecedented action, having only just taken delivery of the planes. Since then, the planes have been refitted and Cayman Airways pilots undergone training over and above what has been required of them, CAL President and CEO Fabian Whorms advised.

Because of the accidents, a huge amount of apprehension had developed about the 737-8s returning to service globally and as such, they had received a level of scrutiny from regulatory authorities throughout the world which was unprecedented in the airline industry, Mr Whorms said.

"It also meant we as an airline kept ourselves thoroughly abreast of all of the developments, all of the proposed design changes," he advised. "We participated in events where we were allowed to have input with the manufacturer as to what some of these changes would be, and we have been quite comfortable for some time that with the changes that have been



implemented it is now impossible for an accident such as what happened with Ethiopian Airlines or Lion Air to repeat itself."

Mr Whorms said he wanted it to be remembered that if ever there was an airline that was cautious in the first instance, CAL demonstrated that care, diligence and cautiousness when they voluntarily removed the aircraft from service, and they would not for a minute attempt to put it back into service with any less care, caution or diligence than they had on 10th March, 2019 when they grounded the aircraft.

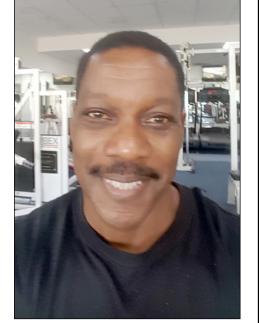
CAACI, said he was very confident that the actions that had been taken to put this aircraft back to service were the right ones at this time and the public should be reassured of the safety of this operation.

"I'm very proud of Cayman Airways as an operator under our jurisdiction and we support them fully in their actions in abiding by all safety regulations," he said.

There will be a series of events lined up to help ease people's worries, including pilot training flights to Jamaica ahead of the first passenger flights. The public will

Richard Smith, Director General of the be able to view the planes and speak with senior pilots on Saturday at the Owen Roberts International Airport at a special open day to be held from 10am until 2pm. The first passenger flights will take place on 18th February when CAL staff, Government officials and specially invited guests will fly to Cayman Brac, ahead of the first revenue passenger flight that will begin the next day, flying to Miami. Mr Whorms said that CAL realised people's reservations about flying in the planes and people will be offered refunds if they felt the need.





Ernest Ebanks

## Feels good, doesn't it?

There is incredible power in your daily habits. Your habits quite literally mold your body, your health and your accomplishments in life.

And it turns out that there's a special secret sauce to making new habits stick that I'd like to share with you today...

This secret sauce goes against our instincts and the way that we are wired, which is why so many of us fail to make healthy, new habits truly stick and become part of our ongoing routine.

It's more natural for us to take on the role of a critic with ourselves than that of a cheerleader. We compare ourselves to others and focus on our flaws rather than pausing to celebrate our wins by really feeling good.

This works against us because it is proven emotions create habits and that the positive emotion of FEELING GOOD is the BEST WAY to get a new habit to stick!

Now if you're anything like me then the idea of celebrating tiny little wins is a bit uncomfortable. I'll feel good about myself when I do something substantial, you may think. However, by training yourself to truly FEEL GOOD about each and every step that you take in the right direction, you're more likely to keep on making progress.

It's time to tell your inner critic to take a hike! All those times that you wallowed in feeling bad only made it more difficult to make positive progress toward your goals.

Once you capture the power of feeling good, you'll train yourself to enjoy and celebrate all of the healthy new behaviors that will ultimately lead you to your goal.

Do I have your commitment to try out the secret sauce of feeling good?

When you wake up and drink your protein shake, pause and give yourself a mental pat on the back. FEEL GOOD ABOUT IT! Really, actually, FEEL GOOD.

It may take some practice, but with time you'll look forward to feeling good after practicing each healthy new behavior.

If you aren't yet one of my prized clients, then please reach out to me. I'd love to be a big part of your health and fitness journey this year!

Simply call Ernest at Body Shapers Fitness Studio 325-8696 or email bodyshaperscayman@gmail.com today to set up your first workout.

# Youngsters get help with mental health

HEALTH MATTERS

The Cayman Islands may have been sheltered from the worst effects from the global pandemic with very little in the way of restrictions to normal life when compared to places like the UK, but that does not mean that people's mental health, especially young people's mental health, has not suffered as a result. A recent report on the BBC from a few days ago noted the effects the pandemic was having on the UK's youngsters:

"From increasing rates of mental health problems to concerns about rising levels of abuse and neglect and the potential harm being done to the development of babies, the pandemic is threatening to have a devastating legacy on the nation's young."

A relatively short (in comparison to the UK) lockdown and period of home schooling last year will still have made its mark on young people's mental health, along with constant information on the pandemic from social media and other online sources, which means Cayman's young people are not oblivious to the mental toll the pandemic has taken on us all.

Thankfully there is an excellent resource within Cayman's community that can assist young people, who are often not mature enough to adequately express their feelings. The Alex Panton Foundation has grown to become an important resource for those looking to help young people with mental health issues. Next Saturday, 20th February, is it holding its 4th annual symposium at The Ritz-Carlton , during which time they will be looking back at the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on youth mental wellness, their recovery efforts during this time and how, through programmes such as the Youth Ambassador Programme and the Emotional Literacy Programme, the Foundation is helping to build resilience in Cayman's young people.

The Alex Panton Foundation runs a number of great programmes to help

youngsters in the community, and their Emotional Literacy Programme called Zippy is one of them, which is aimed at children aged 5 to 9 years.

For this, the Foundation partnered with Partnership for Children, a UK based non-profit organisation, to create a school-based programme for children to help them develop skills to communicate effectively, and thereby cope with anxieties. There is also an adapted programme for children with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities. The programme allows children to develop their own positive strategies to deal with problems through engaging activities, such as listening to stories, discussion, games, role-play and drawing. A broad cross-section of Government and private schools are currently engaged in this programme. For more information on this and other Alex Panton Foundation programmes visit: alexpantonfoundation.ky



Email sales@caymaniantimes.ky or call 9162000 / 9458463

## GOVERNMENT ORDERED TO RELEASE SMITH BARCADERE PROJECT DOCUMENTS

The Cayman Islands Ombudsman has directed that the government should release a previously withheld extract of a Cabinet decision regarding the suspended Smith Barcadere (Smith Cove) Redevelopment Project.

The ruling follows an investigation by the Ombudsman after an applicant using a Freedom of Information (FOI) request was denied access to various records related to the government project to develop the area.

A request to release an extract of Cabinet minutes related a decision by the project's governing body regarding an exemption to planning permission should be granted, had also been rejected by the government.

The project to develop the popular Smith Barcadere (Smith Cove) beach area followed the government's purchase of the property in 2016, and included plans for additional restrooms, parking spaces and lighting.

It was due to start in March 2020 at an estimated cost of over a million dollars but was suspended after protests by residents opposed to the plans.

Ombudsman Sandy Hermiston ruled that the government was wrong to deny the initial FOI request, by stating that the extract was a record of deliberations arising in the course of Cabinet proceedings. It was also found that The Cabinet Office did not conduct an internal review of the request as required by the FOI Act, which resulted in the applicant appealing the matter directly to the Ombudsman.

"The contested record in this appeal hearing was the extract, an excerpt of the Cabinet minutes in relation to this project, not the full record of the meeting minutes," the Ombudsman Hermiston stated.

She said, "The Cabinet Office did not conduct an internal review of the request as required by the FOI Act, which allowed the applicant to appeal the matter directly to the Ombudsman.

It was also pointed out that the contested record in this appeal hearing was the extract, an excerpt of the Cabinet minutes in relation to this project, not the full record of the meeting minutes.

In reviewing the extract, the Ombudsman found "it does not document any Cabinet discussion, does not show how Cabinet reached its decision, does not state any matters being considered in that decision and gives no details of Cabinet members' discussions."

These issues, the ruling states, are important in determining whether the section 19 exemption of the FOI Act would apply. The Ombudsman found the wording of the section 19 exemption focuses on consultative or deliberative processes of Cabinet.



Moreover, it noted that the Cabinet decision was already a matter of public record, as it had been reported in the local media.

Additionally, it was pointed out that the Cayman Islands Development and Planning Act requires any granted exemption from planning permission to be listed in the Cayman Islands Gazette, a public document.

The ruling states that: "The Ombudsman found no evidence that gazettal of this decision occurred. However, if the project were exempted from planning requirements the Act would have required that decision to be made public."

"The FOI Act is in place to promote government openness and transparency

and decisions made under this legislation should give due regard to that fact," said Ombudsman Hermiston.

11

A further finding is that the Cabinet Office violated provisions of the FOI Act when it failed to conduct an internal review of its original decision to deny release of the extract as requested.

The Ombudsman ruled that the extract from the Cabinet minutes containing information on whether Cabinet granted planning exemptions in relation to the Smith Barcadere Redevelopment Project is not exempt under the relevant law.

She ordered that the Cabinet Office must disclose the extract related to this decision.

## How Historically Reliable is the New Testament? Part Two

For Christians, the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is sacred. I do not believe, however, that enough Christians are aware of the current debate among New Testament scholars concerning the historical reliability of the New Testament. It is an important and consequential discussion as it concerns the credibility of a main sacred text around which millions organize their lives and anchor their hopes.

This is the second of a three part series. Bart Erhman, and by extension, others in this camp, spend much time detailing what they regard as discrepancies in in the resurrection narrative. Read horizontally, one soon sees these differencessuch as who goes to the tomb, whether the stone is rolled away, if Jesus himself was seen there; did Jesus tell them to go to Galilee or Jerusalem; do the women tell anyone; not to mention, the witnesses being at odds with each other. In Matthew's account, dead saints come back to life at the death of Christ, rocks split, tombs open, which would have certainly caused a ruckus in Rome, Ehrman explains.

Those opposed to the historical reliability of the New Testament have a particular aversion to the notion of miracles, not to mention the most dramatic of these, the resurrection narrative. Certainly, the New Testament has many miracles happening. Jesus drives out screaming demons, walks on water, feeds the multitudes with five loaves and two fish, the Holy Ghost descends in the form of cloven tongues on the waiting disciples, Peter heals, Paul has a dramatic confrontation with a light brighter than the midday sun and hears Christ speaking to him, angels free Peter after prayers are delivered on his behalf and so on.

To quote Bultman (1958) 'It is possible to use electric light and the wireless and to avail oneself of modern surgical and medical discoveries and at the same time, to believe in the world of spirits and miracles?' Commenting on the resurrection he says 'But what of the resurrection? Is it not a mythical event pure and simple? Obviously, it is not an event of past history'. John Dominiz Crossan, Co-Founder of the Jesus Seminar, says 'Jesus could not and did not cure those diseases' and 'I do not think that anyone, at any time brings people back to life.' Jarl Fossum, also of the Jesus Seminar, '.... or it can be asserted that Jesus did raise from the dead, which would reflect fundamentalist naivete.' It was the conclusion of the Jesus Seminar that: 'Whenever scholars detect knowledge of postmortem events in sayings and parables attributed to Jesus, they are inclined to the view that the formulation of such sayings took place after the fact.' These scholars have not difficulty accepting the death of Jesus. Crossant, for example says, 'That he was crucified is as sold as anything historical can be' and Borg (also of the Jesus Seminar), 'The most certain fact about the historical Jesus, is his execution as a political reaction.'

#### Summary of the Arguments Against the Historical Reliability of the New Testament

An essay this brief, on such a huge and expanding subject as this, must be very frugal in the selection or material. This summary is barebone. Those who believe that the New Testament is not a historically reliable document ground their thinking in the belief that these documents were written principally to instruct, exhort and propagandize, and were less concerned to produce accurate data. They are too marred by inconsistences and contradictions in their accounts of main events, too anxious to record superhuman feats and too dependent on the oral tradition as the source of their data, to meet the requirements of historical reliability. These works, to paraphrase Ehrman, were moving targets evolving to accommodate the theology of the writers, who adjusted, augmented, or even invented realities to provide cohesiveness to their narratives.

For Ehrman, Jesus was essentially an apocalypticist who though the end of the world was imminent. This sense of apocalypticism was shaped by the political history of the Israelites which had seen some eight hundred years of periodic war and near-permanent foreign domination. The Jewish sect, he concludes, arose out of the social, political, and religious crisis of the times, as modes of resistance. Apocalypticism, formed around the understanding of God's covenant to protect Israel, but was punished for their sins, tried make



Dr. Livingston Smith is a Professor at the University College of the Cayman Islands. He is also Director of the CXC Education Volunteer programme

sense of the oppression of the people of God. "Mark 8: 38 '.... Truly I tell you, there are some standing hers who will not taste death until they see the Kingdom of God has come in power.' 'And in those days, the sun will grow dark, powers in the heavens shall be shaken, and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great

**ARTS & CULTURE** 



Film maker/photographers David Hartwell and Bill Ferehawk help raise awareness about the beauty and importance of Caymanian plant life in their new exhibition



Stunning images at the National Gallery's new 'Homegrown' exhibition

## Exhibition showcases Cayman's natural beauty

### By Lindsey Turnbull

'Homegrown' is a new exhibition on display until 31st March at the National Gallery, a collection of photographs by film



 Bill Ferehawk and David Hartwell - Still Life with Orchid I, Banana Orchid (Myrmecophila thomsoniana)

maker/photographers David Hartwell and Bill Ferehawk, who have been working with the National Gallery and the National Trust, raising awareness about the beauty and importance of Caymanian plant life.

> The resulting exhibition is a series of plant 'portraits' that capture the uniqueness of local plants, familiar to Cayman residents, but given a character all of their own through the medium of photography.

> The project is the latest in a series of collaborations between the National Trust and the National Gallery, designed to raise awareness about the natural environment and the importance of environmental stewardship, an example of which is the Blue Dragon Trail, a public art project featuring large iguana sculptures painted by local artists highlighting the plight of the endangered Blue Iguana.

Natalie Urquhart, Director of the National Gallery, said the collaboration with the National Trust on the project was a natural one, their expertise and responsibility for the natural environment making them natural partners for Homegrown.

"We are also grateful to the team at the QEII Botanic Park and Ann Stafford for their support," she advised.

Bill Ferehawk had worked previously as a filmmaker in the Cayman Islands and was inspired by the uniqueness of the environment, which began a conversation about ways to collaborate with National Gallery.

"The result is Homegrown," she advised, "which continues their multi-year investigation into the ways places and histories are marked and remembered place through a series of portraits of native and endemic plants of the Cayman Islands."

The artists were initially invited to participate in the Gallery's international residency programme, that has invited international artists, writers and curators to the island over the years to engage with the local art community and to share skills. This particular residency was designed as a skill-sharing project with local interns and photographers having the opportunity to shadow Bill and David on location, Mrs Urquhart explained, adding that they had hoped to bring them back to Cayman for a workshop series during the exhibition but the pandemic prevented this, however, they have continued the relationship via Zoom.

Laura Butz, Marketing Manager, National Trust for the Cayman Islands said: "Now, more than ever, it is vital that we preserve endemic plants to ensure the survival of biodiversity within our natural environment for the betterment of local wildlife,



David and Bill at work in QEII Park

ecologically significant habitats and for future generations."

She went on to say the exhibition beautifully captured Cayman's unique native plant species.

"We are excited about this collaboration with the National Gallery and for the public to visit the exhibit celebrating the richness of our environment," Ms Butz confirmed.



Tessa Hansen (r) and guest



Stuart Wilson (from the National Trust) and Katia Dahan

# **Older Persons Eligible for Discounts Requesting Birth Certificates**

As part of a legislative package to ease the financial burden on senior citizens, the Cayman Islands Government has reduced the fee for older persons requesting birth certificates by 50 percent.

Cabinet approved the discount, which also applies to applicants requesting the certificate on behalf of senior citizens. A

fee reduction of 50% is in effect for the issuance of birth certificates for persons aged sixty-five and older. The new fee is \$5 - which is a reduction on the previous \$10 fee.

Birth certificate requests are being overseen by General Registry. The process for obtaining the certificates remains unchanged. Persons can order certificates at the General Registry counter in the Government Administration Building between 9am and 4pm, Mondays to Fridays. Alternatively, certificates can also be ordered and paid for online.

For more information, persons can visit the counter or email bdm@gov.ky.



MINISTRY OF FINANCIAL SERVICES & HOME AFFAIRS CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

## **CBC Conducts Awareness Session** for Chamber of Commerce Members

On 22nd January 2021, Customs and Border Control Service (CBC) staff, led by Deputy Director Kevin Walton conducted the first awareness session for 2021. The Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce requested CBC support in conducting this seminar.

CEO Wil Pineau of the Chamber of Commerce expressed delight that CBC was able to assist, and he futher stated the desire to have additional sessions throughout the year.

The presentation gave a general overview of CBC, but focused primarily on the Trade and Revenue portfolio headed up by Deputy Director Kevin Walton. Presentations were also made by Deputy Director Kevin Walton, Trade Compliance and Statistical Manager Michael Godfrey and Senior Officer Johann Taylor. Additionally, the team including Assitant Director for Collections Kerrylyn Ebanks, clarified queries of relevance from the participants.



L-R Deputy Director Kevin Walton, Training & Development Manager Jenifer Gager-Sterling. Assistant Director for Collections Kerrylyn Ebanks, CBC Senior Officer Johann Taylor and Trade Compliance and Statistical Manager Michael Godfrey

**Deputy Director Walton** states, "I am very pleased with this initiative and anticipate that for both entities, CBC and the Chamber of Commerce, this will be the start of a productive partnership. Seminars of this nature will significantly help us to move forward in our intelligence-led risk managemnt approach of operation."

Topics of interest included but were not limited to CBC's new business processes; and the organisation IT platform which speaks to Customs Infor-

mation Management Systems (CIMS), Customs Online Systems (COLS) and electronic declarations (E-declaration). Of equal benefit to particpants was an understanding of Tariff classification and how goods are managed under the Customs Law. Extremely welcoming news was the addition of the CBC Customer Support Centre (CSC).

The Customer Support Center was established and designed to manage and coordinate the increased volume of both telephone and email queries. Through a new managed process queries are now answered in a timely manner.



CBC Deputy Director Kevin Walton presents to Chamber members

The thirty six participants in attendance were enthusiastic and engaging.

Training and Development Manager Jenifer Gager-Sterling explains, "Training is critical to business outcomes. The context sets the stage for success or failure. Proactively assisting clients using CBC service is a win win for everyone; and the customers served by CBC deserve to be assisted and thus make doing business with us a pleasurable experience".

CBC was established in February 2019 following the merger of Immigration and Customs Department.

# **Canvassers Reminded to Exercise Quarantine Caution**

The public are reminded that house- the potential risk that still exists and we holds undertaking COVID-19 quarantine should not be approached by unauthorised individuals including friends and family, delivery personnel or political canvassers.

Individuals who are quarantining at their chosen residence should advise anyone who approaches the household that they are observing quarantine protocols and refuse entry.

"The systems we have in place to protect those who quarantine at residence have so far been working well in keeping the general population safe. However, it's important that we all don't lose sight of

continue to each do our part in helping to keep the community safe from COVID-19 says the Director of Travel Cayman, Dr Tasha Ebanks-Garcia.

"In the lead up to the next General Election in May, we naturally expect to see more people canvasing houses hoping to speak to electorates. As with many things in recent times, canvassers must exercise additional caution and consideration this year to protect everyone from the COV-ID-19 pandemic," said Wesley Howell, Supervisor of Elections.

According to Dr Ebanks-Garcia, anyone attempting to approach a household are advised to take extra care. "It may not be obvious from the outside that a household is in quarantine. There are simple, practical steps which we can take to keep everyone safe such as asking if anyone is in quarantine before making face to face contact or entering a home and respecting their response. A face mask may be worn, particularly when visiting the elderly and frequent hand washing is strongly advised."

The public and those in quarantine are reminded that anyone found to be in breach of the mandatory quarantine provisions will be warned for intended prosecution and is liable on conviction to a fine



of up to ten thousand dollars and imprisonment for up to two years.

## SUPPORTING THE CAYMAN ISLANDS YOUTH, OFREG WELCOMES A NEW INTERN

The Utility Regulation and Competition Office (OfReg) is pleased to announce the addition of intern Mr. Romaine Knight as part of a programme to provide young Caymanians with an opportunity to gain valuable technical experience, learn new techniques as they transition into their career path, and "bring to life" what they have learnt at school.

Romaine started his internship in November 2020 after showing a keen interest in joining the Fuels Inspectorate Division at OfReg. Mr. Duke Munroe the Chief Fuels Inspector and Director, Fuels Market who has been integrally involved in internship and mentoring programmes over the last few years, indicated how delighted he was for the opportunity to positively influence another young Caymanian who has great potential. "Romaine is not a typical intern, and having recognised his penchant for learning and mastery, we could not miss the opportunity to bolster his career prospects. We simply did what was right here at OfReg - enrolled him into what promises to be a comprehensive, mutually beneficial and rewarding internship program."

Mr. Malike Cummings, OfReg's CEO added, "We're driven by the desire to make a difference for all of our interns by transforming the early career landscape. We are committed to giving Cayman's youth a chance to test and apply their knowledge in a real business context. Through this internship, Romaine will build relationships, gain exposure and regulatory experience in a unique environment, only OfReg can offer and which perhaps, may shape his future career."

Romaine said he has always been interested in being involved in the work that Of-Reg does since it was the Petroleum Inspectorate. "I have been involved in some of the fuel related work that OfReg oversees, for



Intern Romaine Knight

example meter calibrations, but I've always wanted to join the team after gaining more information on what OfReg is about and also the distinguished work that is done in the sector. I plan to further my studies in this area and will use the internship opportunity to learn as much from the Chief Fuels Inspector and his team as I can."

At OfReg, we value new ideas, curiosity and collaboration. As an intern, Romaine will not only be pursuing personal and professional growth, but he will also be part of our development as an organisation. The fresh perspectives he brings will help us to fine-tune how to better meet the needs of our customers, stakeholders and employees.

## Taste of Cayman Food & Drink Festival moved to 2022

The Taste of Cayman Food & Drink Festival has been postponed to 29 January 2022 in response to ongoing COV-ID-19 suppression measures for mass gatherings under the Prevention, Control and Suppression of COVID-19 Regulations 2021. Mr Marc Lan-

gevin, President

of the Cayman



Attendees at the 2019 Taste of Cayman Food and Drink Festival

Islands Tourism Association said while the Cayman Islands Government had recently expanded the numbers allowed for outdoor public gatherings from 500 to 1,000 people, it was currently not feasible to plan for the festival for the current year.

"Taste of Cayman brings upward of 5,000 people together to celebrate the best of Cayman's food and drink offerings, so under the current circumstances we cannot proceed this year," he said.



Entrance of the 2019 Taste of Cayman Food and Drink Festival

"The Covid-19 pandemic has created an exceptional set of circumstances for our event and large events around the world, and while we are unable to hold our festival this year, we strongly encourage the people of Cayman to continue to support the hospitality, food and beverage industry in any way they can during these unprecedented times of economic hardship."

"Once again, we thank the hospitality industry, our partners, sponsors, suppli-

ers, and volunteers for their ongoing support of Taste of Cayman," Mr Langevin said.

All ticket purchases for the previous dates will be honored when the festival is held in 2022. Any enquiries regarding ticketing should be directed to taste@tower.com.ky.

Further information can be obtained at the Taste of Cayman website: tasteofcayman.org

## HSA Cares provides aid to the most vulnerable

Staff of the Health Services Authority (HSA) have joined civil servants to give back to the community by launching a new initiative, HSA Cares, that has raised funds to help feed some of the most vulnerable groups through the Cayman Islands Meals on Wheels (MOW).

"The HSA has experienced such an outpour of generosity, compassion and gratitude from our community over the course of COVID-19 in the Cayman Islands. We received several meals and other donations by businesses and individuals who wanted to show their appreciation for the essential medical service we provide to the people of these Islands," said Chief Human Resources Officer Samantha Bennett.

"Adjusting to life amidst a pandemic has been challenging for many of our residents. The HSA Cares initiative is our way of paying forward the support we have received by aiding those most vulnerable during this difficult time," Mrs Bennett explained.

In a staff survey, HSA employees voted the Cayman Islands Meals on Wheels as the non-profit of choice. MOW provides free, hot, nutritious meals to seniors, the homebound, infirmed and the disabled, Monday to Friday, 52 weeks of the year. This service supplies these vulnerable groups with the assistance needed to retain their self-worth and independence and the ability to remain in their homes.

"I am delighted that our staff have selected Cayman Islands Meals on Wheels to be its charitable organisation of choice," said HSA's Chief Executive Officer Lizzette Yearwood. "As healthcare workers we are in a unique and crucial position during this global healthcare crisis. Our staff have been at the forefront of our national COV-ID-19 response, risking their own health to serve their patients, many of whom are seniors, immunocompromised and infirmed. Our staff know their challenges because they have witnessed them on an intimate level and this is an opportunity for them to go beyond the scope of their professional responsibilities and give back through a more community-driven approach."

HSA staff raised funds over a four-month period to donate to the charity through

optional monthly salary deductions, an optional one-time lump sum or a combination of both.

"We are honoured to have been chosen by the HSA staff for this initiative, and their partnership is greatly appreciated. The funds will be used to provide a daily lunch meal and soup to our clients across Grand Cayman," noted General Manager of Meals on Wheels Jennifer West.

"Meals on Wheels serves meals in all five districts and COVID-19 has brought an increased demand for service. During the peak of the pandemic up to 525 persons were

receiving daily meals which is more than double the MOW 2020 budgeted projection. Meals were being delivered on weekends, public holidays, hard lockdown days and service also extended to providing grocery bags and a "Call-A-Senior" programme to maintain social interaction



HSA Chief Human Resources Officer Samantha Bennett (right) presents MOW General Manager Jennifer West (left) with HSA Cares donation

despite the loss of social interaction," she further stated.

In 2020 Meals on Wheels team of staff and over 150 volunteers delivered 72,438 hot, nutritious meals and hearty soups to seniors, disabled, infirmed, homebound and persons in need.

#### WEEKLY WEATHER FORECAST **Monday Friday** Saturday Sunday **Tuesday** Wednesday Thursday 83°/77° **81°**/78° 80°/78° 84°/76° 84°/76° 82°/76° 79°/77° Partly sunny Breezy in the Breezy in the Partly sunny Mostly sunny A passing shower A shower in the or two morning morning morning **MOMENTS OF DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS INSPIRATION** Ω Churchill's Funeral Home The family of the late LINICE MARINDA CATOE We have been asked to announce the passing of Mr. Roy Faulknor Snr, (nee SMITH) who passed away on Monday, February, 01, 2021. regret to announce his passing A Thanksgiving Service for the late Rov Faulknor Sm on 29 January, 2021. AkA Dudley will be held at Agape Church 50 Fairbanks Rd, George Town, Grand Cayman on Saturday, 0.~<sup>2</sup>.0 February, 13, 2021 at 10: 00 a.m. Viewing: 9:00 -10:00 a.m. Interment: Prospect Cemete A quiet graveside Service This funeral Service will be live-streamed on the John 20:29-Churchill's funeral Home Facebook page starting from and Committal will be held at 9:50 a.m. the Watering Place Cemetery, Condolences can be registered at churchillsfuneralhome.com Cayman Brac, HAVE on Saturday, February 13, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. Π Churchill's **YOU EVER** Funeral Home Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page We have been asked to announce the passing of Ms. Zenda May Robinson, Bodden Funera DOUBTED? who passed away on Wednesday, Jan.13, 2021. A Thanksgiving Service will be held at the Church Of God Prophecy, 314 Eastern Ave., George Town, Grand Cayman on Saturday, Great men and women have doubted. Abra-February 13, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. ham, Moses, and even Joseph and Mary voiced Viewing: 1:00 - 02:00 p.m. The family of the late Interment: Prospect Cemetery Lolette A. Miller Bacon some doubts when they were given their assignregret to announce her passing on ments. Only Thomas had the dubious attachment Condolences can be registered at churchillsfuneralhome.com 3 February, 2021. of, "doubting Thomas." 0.~<sup>2</sup>.00 "My Lord and my God," were words of faith as ſſ exclaimed by Thomas when he saw the wounds Churchill's A funeral service will be held 1:00 of Jesus. Did he doubt that Jesus was the Messi-Funeral Home p.m. at William Pouchie Memorial United Church, North Side on ah? No! That He was the Son Of God. No! But he been asked to announce the passing of Saturday 13 February 2021. Ms. Cheryl Islyn Ebanks, doubted that Jesus was alive. He probably carried who passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 03, 2021. some guilt for not defending his Lord. Whatever it A Thanksgiving Service will be held at the Interment will follow at the is doubt is a part of our make. But we need not be Red Bay Church Of God (Holiness), Miller family Cemetery. overcome by it. Remember Jesus' words, "Blessed 38 Lords Way Off Selkirk Dr., George Town, Grand Cayman on are they who have not seen and yet believe." In lieu of flowers please make Sunday, February 14, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. donations to Jasmine Hospice. Viewing: 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Interment at: Prospect Cemetery Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Special Request: Please wear black and/or white Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page Condolences can be registered at churchillsfuneralhome.com ςB Bodden Funera Advertise The family of the late Jade H. Miller regret to announce his passing on 25 January, 2021. Advertise here We get 10,000 plus ~readers RE ه و محصی each week A funeral service will be held rom across 11:00 a.m. at Bodden Funeral the island Service, 117 Walkers Rd. on Saturday 13 February 2021. Interment will follow at the Prospect Cemetery. All ads in full colour Save 30% with our Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page low advertising rates Email sales@caymaniantimes.ky

Bodden Funera

or call 916 2000

# "America is back"

#### By Mike Jarvis, UK Correspondent

With those three words, new US President Joe Biden set the stage and the tone for the United States to step in and fill the leadership vacuum left - and created - by his predecessor Donald Trump.

And he repeated it as if to reassure not just the world, not just America - but also himself.

Those three words, delivered in Mr Biden atypical whispered authority - a softly-spoken yet authoritative tone - reverberated reassuringly around the democratic world.

It might have come just in time as the world seemed poised on the brink of an influence-grab to fill the gaping hole in global leadership caused by his predecessor's isolationist tendencies.

The geopolitical risk was a world fragmented into blocs under the influence of mainly China and Russia, less so the European Union or the United Kingdom - facing its own internal fragmentation after its self-inflicted painful exit from the EU.

In a foreign policy reset for the US which carries wide global implications, President Biden's declaration of "America is back" has set the tone and the stage for a return to the normal before the abnormal that came after.

From trade to climate change, immigration, less soft-peddling on Moscow and maintaining pressure on China, the about-turn is welcome.

In this region, the details are still awaited on Mr Biden's approach to Latin American and Caribbean affairs, especially Cuba.

But his reversing of Trump's harsh immigration stance with a more relaxed and humane approach is a welcome start.

But as encouraging as it might seem, this is just the beginning of a long road back... and not just for America.



► US President Joe Biden

## PERSPECTIVE: CARIBBEAN TOURISM STILL ELUSIVE AS PANDEMIC LINGERS

Caribbean countries with economies heavily reliant on tourism are facing another challenge as the industry is confronted with the real prospect of further delays to a much-hoped-for recovery.

A spate of COVIDS-19 cases in some of the region's key tourism destinations coupled with the disease still running rampant in several source countries has dampened prospects of a return to normal anytime this year.

A surge of cases in countries such as Barbados, St Lucia, St Vincent, Antigua, St Maarten/St Martin, Aruba, the Bahamas and Jamaica, which all depend on tourism as a main economic pillar has forced a rethink by respective governments.

Their priority now is suppressing the outbreak within their borders rather than looking outward.

At the same time, source tourism countries; mainly the United States, the United Kingdom and European countries are grappling with their own challenges managing new strains of the virus now showing up in their populations.

Many have instituted travel restrictions on their citizens.

The UK this week announced tough and costly quarantine measures on persons

#### coming into the country from abroad, including residents. Vacations, including in-country 'stayca-

tions' are also being discouraged as the country remains in its third lockdown.

The United States has also toughened-up its COVID-related travel protocols forcing citizens to reconsider plans for immediate overseas vacations.

Destination countries are also under pressure by source markets to institute rigid and costly testing regimes, alongside quarantine periods which reduce the time that visitors spend actually 'vacationing'.

Some Caribbean countries, their economies reeling from the slowdown in tourism, have ventured to marginally reopen their borders by rolling out the welcome mat to international air travel.

But in many instances they've had to roll it back, fine-tuning and tightening their protocols in the process.

Clearly off the agenda for the foreseeable future is cruise tourism, despite some cruise companies advertising and encouraging bookings in anticipation of a post-pandemic demand for stress-beating get-a-ways.

Initiatives to target niche tourism opportunities such as the popular remote worker scheme being introduced by many islands have been relatively slow to get off the ground.

The UN World Tourism Organisation, (UNWTO) has said that tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, impacting economies, livelihoods, public services and opportunities on all continents.

It had forecast that revenues from industry could fall by US\$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion in 2020, reducing global GDP by 1.5% to 2.8% - and tourism-dependent countries in the Caribbean are among the hardest hit.

An intensified global vaccination development and inoculation campaign is being the pandemic. Caribbean countries are in the queue of developing states, relying on the goodwill

relied on to arrest the further spreading of

developing states, relying on the goodwill of developed countries with the capabilities of researching, manufacturing and distributing vaccines - the same source markets for the region's tourism.

Industry experts are expecting a huge post-pandemic growth in tourism as people yearn to escape the gruelling restrictions they have been forced to live under.

With its appeal of fun, relaxation and tranquillity, this return to normality - or some semblance of it - will be a boon to struggling Caribbean economies placed under added pressure due to the pandemic.

## **New Testament**

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

power and glory- truly, I tell you, this generation will not pass away before all things take place' (Matthew 24: 29-31).

For these scholars, these works, beautiful and useful as they are, lack the requirements of historical reliability- they were not meant to perform this function. Using the tools provided by the various criticisms, they argue that these works are not to be taken as credible history. Form-criticism, which looks at the shape in which information existed before they were compiled into coherent documents, leads to the conclusion of the orality of the sources used, and thus subjected to the challenges of recollection and veracity of accounts. Source criticism looks at the sources from which authors took their

information and here these thinkers have much to say. Redaction criticism considers the editorial work of the authors of the Bible, how they linked materials from various sources, etcetera. Historical criticism investigates the origins of texts to understand the world behind them, the goal of which is to discover the original, primitive meaning of the text in its literal sense and to establish a reconstruction of the historical situation of the author and recipients of the text. Textual criticism looks at manuscript history and literary criticism analysis a text using the craft of the prose and poetry writer. Using these various tools, these writers reached their conclusions.

#### A Brief Response to the Doubters

The acknowledgement of differences in the accounts and manner of the gospel writers is nothing new, except, maybe, the evangelical approach and tone of the current crop of leaders in this area. Julius Africanus of the first century did, so did Origen of the early third century, etcetera. As early as the first century, Chrysostom argued that if the gospels agreed in every detail, the authors would be accused of collusion. He advised that if the differences were in terms of time, place and specific words, this would not discredit the major matters in them (Chrysostom died 407 AD). Esteemed historian Josephus, on many occasions, offered different accounts of his stories.

In a very recent work entitled, **Why are there differences in the Gospels? What can we Learn from Ancient Biography?** Licona (2017), reasserts the fact that the majority of New Testament scholars now hold that most, if not all of the Gospels belong to the genre of Greco-Roman biography and that this genre permitted

some flexibility in the way in which historical events were narrated. In this book, he examines the biographical nature of accounts of major historical figures like Plutarch and says that, applied to the Gospels, the biographical nature of these accounts goes a far way to explaining differences among them.

Licona is on target when he says that hasty dismissals of the Gospels as reliable accounts are misguided. He invites readers to approach them considering their biographical genre and, in that way, to gain a clearer understanding of why they differ. The writers of ancient biographies emphasized cohesion of narrative, and in the writing culture of the time, allowed the biographer to show the essential character and personality of the main character, by utilizing sayings and speeches, etcetera.

I present the final piece on this subject in the next article.



# **UK TERRITORIES CONNECTION**

## BERMUDA: SAME-SEX MARRIAGE AT PRIVY COUNCIL

Judgement has been reserved at the Privy Council in the case in which the Bermuda government is appealing the enactment of same-sex marriage in the laws of that Overseas Territory.

The government is seeking to have it removed from the laws after Bermuda became the first country in the world to legalise same-sex marriage.

The controversial decision has gone through a series of legal hurdles and challenges since 2017 when it was first enacted, the subsequently repealed and then reinstated.

A 2016 non-binding referendum had resulted in a vote against same-sex marriage.



The Privy Council hearing which was held over two days earlier this month will decide the constitutionality of Bermuda's 2018 Domestic Partnership Act which replaced the same-sex marriage law.

A separate case from the Cayman Islands is also on the Privy Council agenda to be determined this month.

Legal scholars say these cases are historic and could determine the future of the same-sex marriage issue in the Overseas Territories.



British Virgin Islands Premier Andrew Fahie

## BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS: PAY HIKE PROMISE

Civil servants in the BVI could soon be in for a pay raise.

Premier Andrew Fahie says he has ordered a review of the pay scales of all government employees.

"People have to start to be paid what they are worth," declared Premier Fahie whose ruling Virgin Islands Party (VIP) has been conducting a series of high-profile community meetings across the islands giving rise to speculation of early elections.

Stressing that the review won't mean an increase in the number of civil service posts, the Premier explained that "It means those who are there will get their worth."

"That's a government working for you the people," he declared.

Mr Fahie led the Virgin Islands Party (VIP) back to power in 2019.

## MONTSERRAT: COVID SPIKE ON QUARANTINE BREACH Just days after launching its Remote

Workers Programme to much global media acclaim, Montserrat has been forced into lockdown over a sudden surge in COVID-19 infections.

A breach of the territory's quarantine regulations has resulted in a spike in cases not seen since July, the last time that Montserrat had a positive COVID-19 test result.

So far, five cases have been confirmed since a returning traveller and several residents breached the quarantine rules to visit the home where he was staying.

Ongoing contact tracing has so far tested over 30 persons with whom they have come into contact.

Another 40 people, including staff and students at a school, are also being tested after a student became infected.

The government of Montserrat has imposed severe restrictions on community movement initially until February 21st.



Up to last July Montserrat had recorded only 13 COVD-19 cases and two deaths.

Meanwhile, Montserrat also started it's vaccination campaign against the virus this week with a shipment of the UK-provided Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine.

ANGUILLA: COVID VACCINATION STARTS

Anguilla has rolled out its COVID-19 vaccination programme.



Anguilla Governor, Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam

The territory last week received its shipment of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from the UK.

Anguilla's new Governor, Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam, said in a statement posted on the Facebook page of the Governor's Office that "the arrival of the Astra Zeneca vaccine in Anguilla is a huge step towards a return to normal."

She said she was "very hopeful that Anguillians will make the informed choice to get vaccinated."

Governor Daniel-Selvaratnam, arrived in Anguilla mid-January and underwent a 14-day quarantine before formally starting her duties.

She was one of the first to take the Oxford University/AstraZeneca jab when the vaccination programme started on February 5th.



## **Caymanian Times 2021**





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DOGGITIO 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 Answer to previous puzzle Inc ndicate. 6 9 Features <u>4</u> King ŝ Dist Puzzl Difficulty Level \*\*\* 

Difficulty Level  $\star \star \star$ 

## Word Search

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Tacitus Virgil

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

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**PUZZLES / COMICS** 

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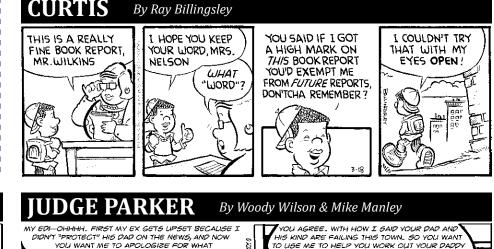
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