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CUC and "Marvellous Mangroves" Celebrate 20 Years Together

Freedom of Choice Protest



See story on pages 8-9 >>

▶ "Freedom of choice, stop the divide," read just one of many different messages which could be seen on the protester's placards

TOURISM MINISTER SETS REOPENING TONE

In a message that sets the tone for a full reopening of the borders even sooner than anticipated, Hon, Minister for Tourism Kenneth Bryan has resorted to video production to urge residents to prepare for the next critical step on the road to normality.

Set against a monochrome background and a soundtrack matching the theme of various aspects of his messaging, Mr Bryan said the conversation surrounding reopening and transitioning Cayman out of its protective COVID-19 bubble is no longer avoidable.

"I want to talk to you about the way forward and a path that will allow us to live a life as close to normal as possible. COVID in our midst. I know that it's an uncom-

SEE REOPENING TONE, Page 3



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EDITORIAL

ELDERS MANAGE PANDEMIC TRAVEL

By Basil Springer

"Then you will go on your way in safety and your foot will not stumble."
- Proverbs 3:23

We, as elders in retirement mode, had grown quite accustomed to annual visits from or to our combined grandchildren, who are scattered far and wide.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a change in lifestyle from freedom to lockdown over the last 18 months. When the vaccination program started in April and the Trinidad airport reopened in July 2021, then prospects of traveling again were rekindled.

Four of our combined grandchildren are currently resident in Barbados, which determined the vacation destination for elderly grandparents. How did we manage this process?

There were the new COVID-19 protocols. The international vaccination certificate was easily obtained from the Ministry of Health. A PCR test was taken in Trinidad within three days of arrival in Barbados.

It is wise to book reliable transportation from home to the airport to arrive four hours ahead of the departure time.

Fortunately, friends and family in both Trinidad and Barbados, who had traveled recently, were aware of the pandemic-related protocols and offered to help us through the digitization and protocol hoops.

We got early word from Nicola (Judy's daughter) in Barbados that engaging a concierge service to meet us on arrival would be a wonderful way to begin the vacation experience. So said so done and at reasonable cost.

Concierge agent Deisha advised us on the phone before we left Trinidad how we should prepare to navigate immigration and public health protocols.

When I went through all the hoops online and reported my progress to Nicola she responded: "For an old timer you are pretty darn good at all of this." This made my day.

On arrival in Barbados, we were met by Michael, who was holding a placard with my name. He took our documents



► Dr. Basil Springer GCM is a Change-Engine Consultant

and said leave it to him. He whisked us through the airport, a PCR test was administered seamlessly, and we and our baggage were on our way by limousine to our quarantine hotel. It took us seven hours door-to-door, but it was otherwise painless and much appreciated by us elders.

Now to continue enjoying the visit and to prepare for the return trip in two weeks' time.

The first week began with a two-night quarantine experience at a hotel, and the PCR results were received by email within 24 hours as promised. We were obviously very relieved to see that they were negative, and we set off for home accommodation.

We reunited with two sets of grandchildren and their parents. This was special, to be closely followed by a dip in the sea and establishing a morning walking routine.

My next concern was to reestablish contact with my eye and internist medical consultants in Barbados who reported favorably on my health and the interim care of my Trinidadian medical health care team.

The dentist's protocol precluded me from having an appointment until two weeks after my arrival in Barbados, so I am yet to have my oral examination.

Now that I am in Barbados there are many business activities which can be undertaken without me having to go to a Notary Public in Trinidad to witness my signature. Driver licenses are now renewed online. This is next week's priority as we continue to mingle judiciously, yet safely, with family and friends.

We have arrived safely and pray for a healthy visit and seamless return travels.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

CITA Board of Director Elections 2021/2022

The Cayman Islands Tourism Association (CITA) is calling for nominations for sector representatives to constitute its 2021/22 CITA Board of Directors.

The elections will take place at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association on 30 November 2021. Nominations are due by 5:00pm on Monday 1 November. The Nomination Form and Instructions are available online at <https://www.cita.ky/agm2021>

All CITA Members are welcome to attend. To verify membership standing, renew membership or become a member, please call 1 345-949-8522 or email director@cita.ky.

Due to the continued COVID-19 precautions, members will also be able to attend via video conferencing and a venue will be announced in the near future. If you are unable to attend the AGM, either in person or virtually you will need to send a proxy or a designated representative to ensure your vote is included. The Proxy/Designate Form will also be available online <https://www.cita.ky/agm2021>



There are two representatives each from the Watersports, Restaurants & Nightclubs, Hotels, Condos/Villas, and Allied Sectors and one representative each from the Land Based Attractions, Tourism Transport/Airlines and the Sister Islands sectors. These 13 elected representatives then elect amongst themselves, the President and Officers to form an Executive Committee.

Anyone wishing to learn more are welcome to contact the Executive Director via email director@cita.ky or call 345-949-8522.

Planned Works – Shamrock Rd Road Closure

Water Authority – Cayman wishes to advise the motoring public that, from **6:00am to 3:00pm on Sunday 03 October 2021**, the section of Shamrock Rd between Hirst Rd and the east entrance to Homestead Cres will be closed in order to facilitate the installation of new water supply infrastructure in the area.

At the intersection of Shamrock Rd and Hirst Rd, East-bound traffic will be diverted to Pedro Castle Rd and Homestead Cres.

At the intersection of Shamrock Rd and Homestead Cres, West bound traffic will be diverted along Homestead Cres.

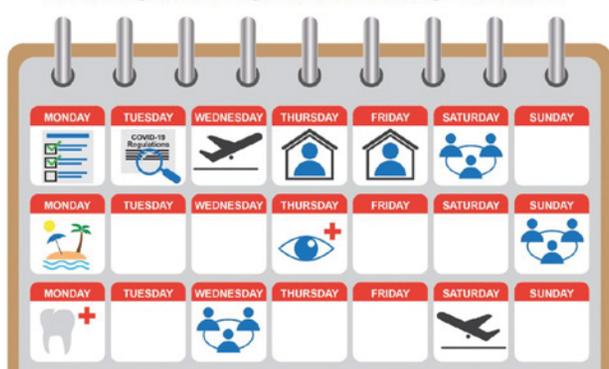
During this time, local access only to businesses and residences in the area will be available and flagmen will be on hand to direct local access traffic.



Traffic signs will be posted in the general vicinity and all motorists are asked to drive with caution to ensure their own safety as well as that of the Water Authority staff.

The Water Authority appreciates the patience and understanding of its valuable customers as it upgrades its water infrastructure to better serve you, and apologises for any inconvenience this may cause.

ELDERS MANAGE PANDEMIC TRAVEL



- Preparation – Dates, budget, flights, accommodation
- Procedures – COVID-19 protocols, digitization
- Support – Family, concierge, friends, self
- Logistics – Departure/arrival, return, visit
- Observation – Medical, business, social activities



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TOURISM MINISTER SETS REOPENING TONE WITH DRAMATIC VIDEO

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

comfortable conversation for most. For others, it's a topic that you'd rather avoid, but it's a discussion that we have to be willing to have together as a community. Because the truth is we can't keep our borders closed forever," the tourism minister stated.

The debate around reopening the borders and rekindling the economy has been growing in intensity especially since the government announced that it was putting its schedule on hold following the spate of community cases of the disease.

The business sector and government have been having discussions on how best to move to the next phase of the opening plan currently stuck at Phase Three limited opening, with the previously announced Phase Four planned for October 14th now on hold.

The government has said that it would keep its plans under review but with concerns mounting over the economic impact of a prolonged closure, especially the loss of business activity for the upcoming Christmas and peak winter tourist season.

"I think it's fair to say by now most people realise it's only a matter of time before the government would have to make a very, very hard decision to say when our borders will fully reopen so that we can rekindle the tourism industry, and prepare for the rest of the world."

In the dramatic 10-minute video message which ranged from the sombre tones of the continuing threat of COVID-19 and addressing the current realities of the public health and economic implications,

Min. Bryan's presentation also equally focussed on the outlook for Cayman.

Although he didn't go as far as clearly indicating when a shift in the government's schedule might come, the tourism minister's video monologue suggests that it could be sooner rather than later - and driven by economic necessity.

"I know for some opening our borders is a scary thought because it comes with risk and the notion of having COVID continuously in our communities is making people anxious and fearful given the seriousness of the disease."

Mr Bryan accepted that "it's hard to think about living with a virus that can take someone's life. Those are legitimate feelings."

But he went on to assure that continuing advances in medicine in tacking the pandemic are encouraging and appealed to the community to do its part in personal and public health to enable Cayman to safely reopen.

"The most important thing each of us can do for reopening is making sure that we are ready, mentally and physically to share space with this virus, doing basic things like learning how to keep our bodies healthy, our immune system strong and getting vaccinated are proven ways to keep us from getting seriously sick."

Tourism Minister Bryan also assessed the risk of reopening in the public health terms against the economic risks of continued closure.

"It's true that opening our borders comes with risk. But it's also true that risk can be managed and has to be managed because COVID isn't going away anytime soon. At some point, we have to be realistic and



accept the fact that keeping our borders closed indefinitely, just isn't an option."

In reviewing the pressures on the economy over the past year and a half, Mr Bryan reminded that "for the last 18 months we've been standing on just one of our two pillars of our economy" - the financial services sector.

"We need to regain our balance, stability and strength by reintroducing tourism back into the mix," he stated.

He also reported that with 4,000 people unemployed due to the COVID-related job losses in tourism, "government is spending close to \$6 million a month, that's \$72 million a year providing stipends, helping people make ends meet because the tourism industry is basically closed."

According to Mr Bryan, that figure is likely to increase if the borders remain closed.

"If we're not willing to be our brother's keeper and come together as a community to make that decision, the potential losses of businesses and jobs can be catastrophic. The long term implications will eventually ripple through our communities, touching us all in one way, shape, or form," he said.

With Tourism Minister Bryan's dramatically-themed solo video address, and recent statements from the business sector against any further delay in fully reopening the borders with a focus on stay-over tourism, the next adjustment to the government's reopening schedule is awaited.

Opposition: New Bills unconstitutional and against European Human Rights

By Staff Writer

Opposition Leader Roy McTaggart has written to the Government on behalf of the Opposition pleading with them to withdraw the Customs & Border Control Amendment Bill and The Immigration Transition Amendment Bill being discussed in Parliament this Monday, calling the Bills unconstitutional and against European Human Rights.

Mr. McTaggart worried that the Bills, which called for mandatory vaccinations for all work permit holders and PR holders and their spouses and dependents (where permitted), would cause deep divisions within the community, and would ultimately do nothing to stem the onslaught of Covid-19 here. He said Bills that were this far reaching deserved far more than the ten days Government had allowed for public input and that they "impinge on the rights and freedoms of spouses, civil partners, children and dependents of Caymanians."

The Opposition felt that the Bills appeared to be discriminatory.

"...indeed, they are also divisive and will, in the end, provide no absolute meaning-

ful protection from the virus since the vaccinated can also contract it and pass it on," they stated.

Mr. McTaggart detailed where the Opposition believed the Bills impinged on the Constitutional rights residents, stating that the proposed vaccination mandates threatened rights protected under the constitution: Including section 2 (right to life); section 3 (prohibition of inhumane treatment); section 9 (right to private life); section 10 (right to freedom of conscience and religion); and section 16 (freedom from discrimination).

"Our present law requires non-nationals who wish to apply to work and reside here to prove that they are not suffering from a communicable disease that would make "the persons entry into the Islands dangerous to the community". In the case of the SARS COVID 2 virus, being vaccinated is no indication that one does not suffer from the communicable disease. Only a suitable test for the presence of the virus before arriving and again after an appropriate quarantine period provides sufficient satisfaction that the person is not infected with the virus and able to transmit it," the Opposition leader wrote.



► Opposition Leader Roy McTaggart

The extent of the Bills, especially the application to non-nationals only, appeared to be unprecedented anywhere and breached a number of the fundamental rights protected by both the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, set out in the Cayman Islands constitution, as well as the European Convention on Human Rights by which the Cayman Islands is also bound, the letter said.

"They have the potential to harm our Islands economically and reputationally and are divisive. As such, our view is that if the legislation is passed in its current form, it is likely to be declared incompatible with our constitution when, inevitably, it is challenged in the court," they worried.

As a result, they called for the withdrawal of the Bills.

CAL confirms October schedule with new Tampa flights added

The Tampa flight schedule, Saturdays October 16, 23 & 30, 2021 (3 flights):

FLIGHT	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
KX200	Grand Cayman	Tampa	1:30pm	4:15pm	Saturdays
KX201	Tampa	Grand Cayman	5:25pm	6:10pm	Saturdays

The Miami flight schedule, Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, October 1-31, 2021 (22 flights):

FLIGHT	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
KX112	Grand Cayman	Miami	10am	12:30pm	MO, WE, FR, SU
KX113	Miami	Grand Cayman	2:00pm	2:30pm	MO, WE, FR, SU
KX122	Cayman Brac	Grand Cayman	8:40am	9:15pm	Saturdays
	Grand Cayman	Miami	10am	12:30pm	Saturdays
KX123	Miami	Grand Cayman (1 stop in CYB)	2:00pm	3:35pm	Saturdays

The Kingston flight schedule, Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays October 1-31, 2021 (13 flights):

FLIGHT	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
KX604	Grand Cayman	Kingston	2:50pm	3:55pm	TH, FR, SU
KX605	Kingston	Grand Cayman	5:05pm	6:10pm	TH, FR, SU

The La Ceiba flight schedule, Thursdays October 1-31, 2021 (4 flights):

FLIGHT	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
KX882	Grand Cayman	La Ceiba	10am	10:25am	Thursdays
KX883	La Ceiba	Grand Cayman	12:25pm	2:45pm	Thursdays



Cayman Airways Limited (CAL) has announced the return of its Grand Cayman/Tampa route in its flight schedule for October 2021.

There will be three Tampa flights for the month, operating on Saturdays, October 16th, 23rd, and 30th.

Miami flights will operate five days a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Kingston flights will operate three days a week, on Fridays and Sundays. Flights to and from La Ceiba will be weekly, on Thursdays. At this time, Cayman Airways has not received approval from the Cuban Government to operate proposed flights between Grand Cayman and Havana.

Seats can be booked online at www.caymanairways.com, or by calling Cayman Airways Reservations on:

- In the Cayman Islands: 345-949-2311
- In the USA, call 305-266-4141 or (toll free) 1-800-422-9626
- In Jamaica, call 876-613-9105 or (toll free) 866-759-1372
- In Honduras, call (toll free) 800-2791-9422

Please note that persons travelling to the Cayman Islands in October must still apply for, and obtain approval, for entry into the country from Travel Cayman. For details visit: <https://www.explore.gov.ky/faqs/covid-19-inbound-travel>

Public Health confirms positive case aboard private day cruise

Public Health confirms that an individual awaiting PCR results to travel tomorrow was found to be positive this afternoon, 1 October 2021.

The patient was notified and was found to be aboard a local cruise operator with twenty-five other passengers and two crew members. The boat had travelled to Star Fish Point, North Side.

Public Health reassures the public that initial contact tracing protocols have been carried out and all aboard the vessel have been placed in isolation. The twenty seven passengers will be tested in three days and will be further advised by public health officials.

"I want to thank the crew and passengers for their cooperation with the screening procedures today at the West Bay Yacht Club. Please remain isolated with your households until you are given advice that you are released. In order to complete contact tracing, we will need to have the



results of all of those aboard to understand the situation, and after that, we will advise everyone when they can be released. Thank you again for your assistance," said Medical Officer of Health, Dr Samuel Williams – Rodriguez.

Public Health and the Ministry of Health and Wellness appreciate the stress that can come with isolation. Please visit www.explore.gov.ky/coronavirus-resources for any assistance you may need or call the flu hotline at 345.947.3077., 1.800.543.8600 or flu@hsa.ky.

For a trusted and reliable source for the latest information visit www.gov.ky and further visit www.gov.ky/news/notice-board for all updates.

Academic achievement honoured at UCCI

By Staff Writer

High achievers who attended the University College of the Cayman Islands in the last academic year and who have made either or both the Dean's or President's list were honoured at a special ceremony which took place at the end of September.

At the event, held in UCCI's Sr. Vassel Johnson Hall, UCCI President and CEO Stacy McAfee said: "We celebrate your commitment and excellence," adding, (bearing in mind Covid-19 restrictions) "You may be the only group of students who have had the opportunity to spend an entire year studying on campus."

To make the Dean's List students, must have a GPA of 3.5 or higher in a given semester. Those with a 3.75 GPA, or higher, are named to the President's List.

Ms McAfee went on to highlight some of the positive gains UCCI has made since the start of her tenure in 2019, including increased numbers for enrollment, philanthropy and scholarship awards.

She told the honourees their awards came with certain responsibilities.

"Your actions will inspire others to give through this programme so that more students like yourselves have a means to succeed at UCCI," she said. "Your job today is the help spread the word, that if you have a way to give, give to UCCI. We hope together we will build a better Cayman."

Education Minister Julianna O'Connor-Connolly appeared via a pre-recorded video. She advised the government aimed to offer free college education within the next four years, while recently they had increased their support for overseas scholarships.

"We have enhanced some of our existing scholarship offerings and implemented additional funding opportunities so that bright and indus-



trious Caymanians like you can continue on your upward trajectory," the Minister said.

For the first time, top faculty members were honoured, based on the results of a student survey, with the inaugural Student's Choice Outstanding Faculty Awards going to Monika Lawrence, Emilia Andaya, Susanne Palmer and Selgin Amador.

The event had been scheduled earlier in the school year but was delayed several times by storms and by the recent community outbreak of Covid-19 cases. Because of Covid-19 restrictions, the gathering was limited to 100 people. Others were able to view the ceremony via livestream.

Learning to live with COVID-19

Private sector gets ready to shift gears from zero COVID-19 to coexisting with the virus

Local business leaders are preparing for an operational and mindset shift in dealing with COVID-19 as the Cayman Islands adjusts to coexisting with the virus.

Since the first cases of community transmission were confirmed last month, a group of Caymanian business leaders from across multiple industries have met to discuss how best to prepare their workforce and customers to learn to live with COVID-19 in the community.

"Cayman has been in the fortunate position that, for more than a year, we were able to eliminate COVID from our shores," said Woody Foster, Managing Director of Foster's Supermarket and a member of the private sector group. "However, we always knew the day would come when elimination would no longer be possible. As a business owner, my job now is to adapt our operating practices so that safety remains our top priority, and to demonstrate to employees and customers how we can all still go about our daily business safely with COVID in our midst. As we have heard repeatedly, getting vaccinated remains our best defence against this virus – to protect ourselves, our families and the wider community."

To support the government and help the community prepare for this next phase of the pandemic, the group plans to launch a public education campaign

which highlights how "getting ready" can vary from person to person, and for different organisations, depending on the situation.

"We recognise and appreciate people have different perspectives and priorities," says Foster. "Our intent is not to impose a single point of view, but to bring the community along with us on our journey toward readiness. The rest of the world is learning how to live with COVID, and I am confident we can too."

Despite coming from a variety of industries, members of the group agree on the importance of reopening borders so both visitors and residents can travel more freely.

With border reopening currently on pause, public and private sectors have additional time to work together and ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place for international travel to resume safely. Once borders reopen, the community's readiness to safely coexist with the virus will be vital to protect lives and livelihoods.

Given the alignment with messaging shared previously by Reopen Cayman, a private sector initiative launched last year, the two groups have agreed to come together to launch a public education campaign on Reopen Cayman social media channels.



► Woody Foster, Managing Director of Foster's Supermarket and a member of the private sector group

"We were delighted to be approached by such a respected group of local business leaders and happy to offer our support," said Kel Thompson of Century21 who originally launched Reopen Cayman with fellow businessman Michael Tibbetts of Clearly Cayman. "The negative impact of our borders remaining closed goes be-

yond the financial loss, it separates families and affects our mental wellbeing. As a community, it is essential we agree a path towards a safe and timely reopening of our borders."

Follow Reopen Cayman on Facebook @reopencayman or on Instagram @reopencayman.

National Heroes Day 2022 Nominations Drive Continues

With the nomination period for National Heroes Day (NHD) 2022 closing on Saturday, 16 October 2021, the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage reminds the public to put forward eligible persons for recognition. January 2022's National Heroes Day event will celebrate "Honouring our Uniform Services."

"This is the first time that my Ministry has been honoured with the responsibility of organising the initial aspects of National Heroes Day," said Minister for Culture, Hon. Bernie Bush.

"Our National Heroes Day Nominations Committee was selected and convened last month. The Committee has met several times to deliberate and decide on all matters concerning the observation of this significant occasion, including defining the theme, agreeing the nomination process, developing the nomination categories and considering designs for the insignia," Minister Bush explained.

"Members are looking forward to reviewing all submissions after the deadline and encourage family, friends and the wider public to continue to nominate former and current uniform services personnel," he said.



► National Heroes Day Nominations Committee members at their inaugural meeting in September 2021. Back row (L-R): J. Carlon Powery (retired Collector of Customs), Chief of Protocol Meloney Syms, Lindsey Cacho (retired Head of Financial Reporting Unit RCIPS), George McCarthy (retired Chief Secretary), Buel Braggs (retired Commissioner of Police), Nickolas DaCosta (Sister Islands representative); Public Communications Specialist Elphina Jones and Ministry of Home Affairs Acting Chief Officer Michael Ebanks. Front row (L-R): Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage Deputy Chief Officer and Deputy Chairperson Joan West-Dacres; Minister for Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage and Home Affairs, Hon. Bernie Bush; Ministry Chief Officer and committee Chairperson Teresa Echenique and Deputy Head of Governor's Office Maria Leng. Missing from photo: Kerry Nixon, Derrick Ebanks, Dolcy Powery (Immigration) and Dennom Bodden (retired Chief Fire Officer).

The 14-person committee, comprising former members of the uniform services,

and representatives from the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage, Min-

istry of Home Affairs, Governor's Office, Cabinet Office and the Sister Islands, is chaired by Ministry Chief Officer Teresa Echenique.

"The nomination form with eligibility criteria and an outline of the categories continues to be available online at www.celebratecayman.ky," Ms Echenique advised.

"For safety reasons at this time, the completion of the online version of the NHD nominations form is preferred, however hard copies are now available both at front reception at the Government Administration Building in Elgin Avenue and at District Administration in Cayman Brac," she added.

National Heroes Day is traditionally held on the fourth Monday of January. The 2022 celebrations are currently scheduled to be held on Monday, 24 January in Heroes Square.

In light of the current local situation regarding COVID-19 public gathering regulations, the NHD Nominations Committee will continue to review the plans and reevaluate dates and locations in due course.

For additional information regarding completing the nominations form, call 244-2426 or email NHD@gov.ky



► A big 'thank-you,' as three students present the course facilitators with beautiful bouquets of flowers



► Lucie Tesarkova receives her two certificates, one in Manual Facial and the other in Body Therapy

Graduation night at Cayman Career Academy

By Christopher Tobutt

It was a very proud moment for nine graduates of Cayman Career Academy when each of the beauty school students were each presented with their CIDESCO – accredited certificates. Eight students were present at the event, and the ninth, Rosanne Myles, who had completed a full Body Therapist diploma, joined by Zoom because she was undergoing quarantine.

The Academy, located at Smith Road Plaza, opened its doors just over two years ago. It was part of the dream of founder and CEO Ms Jacqueline Tomlinson-Smith to enable more Caymanians to gain high-level, professional qualifications in the beauty therapy and spa industry, without having to leave Cayman's shores. However, since opening it has attracted students from all over the world, and many of them work during the day and attend the courses at the Academy during the evenings.

Tatiane Tibbetts is a compliance officer by profession, but she decided that she really had another side to her personality which she wanted to develop and explore, and has just completed the two-year diploma by attending classes part-time on Mondays and Thursdays. "I have really

enjoyed Learning all about human anatomy, physiology as well as electrical treatments. It's a totally new world for me it is really fascinating, and we are so blessed at Cayman Career Academy to be able to study for CIDESCO qualifications because you don't find this high-caliber training or depth of teaching very easily. It's really been a great journey," she said.

After all the stress of study, Blaise Lambert was about to receive her Post Graduate Diploma in Beauty Therapy. "I learned a range of things, and because I already work in the industry, I already know about them, but it has been an opportunity to study them in greater depth, and has made me feel more professional and more confident," she said.

"It's been a really fun experience," said Alexis Peria who received her certificate in Beauty and Spa Management, after completing the course in one year. "I have learned a lot, and grown a lot as a professional. I have learned all about marketing, and how to manage human resources, and all about the spa trend of today."

Lucy Tesarkova who received her Manual Facial and Body Therapy certificates, said, "I more than enjoyed it. Caymanian Adam Shelley spent ten years as a micro-



► Cayman Career Academy students, pictured with course facilitators (front row)

biologist before deciding he would answer the inner calling to go into beauty therapy, and received a Diploma in Esthetics and Body Therapy. "I have always had a passion for esthetics," he said "because I

believe the human form is a living body of art. The cornerstone of my personality is being a 'people-pleaser,' and so I realized that Hospitality and care industry would facilitate that passion," he explained.



► Viktoria Acsal receives her Post Graduate Certificate in Body Therapy



► Alexis Peria receives her certificate in Beauty and Spa Management

Mulch available at Prospect again

The Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is inviting residents to collect additional "free mulch" available at the Prospect Temporary Site from 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 2, 2021.

Residents are invited to visit the site located at the National Road Authority (NRA) stockpile at Poindexter Road and to bring their shovels and bags for the removal of the mulch. The material will be supplied on a first come, first served basis. Assistance will be provided to members of the public to load small vehicles.

The DEH is also reminding residents that all temporary sites for post storm vegetative waste are currently closed to the public following the completion of the Island-Wide Vegetation Collection Schedule.



► Free mulch now available at Prospect Temporary Site at the National Road Authority (NRA) stockpile at Poindexter Road

Additional information is available from the DEH at 949-6696. Individuals may also send an email to dehcustomerservice@gov.ky, visit the DEH's website at www.deh.gov.ky or message its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Department-of-Environmental-Health-Cayman-Islands-Government-335107266641072>

Free Mulch at Prospect



Bring your shovels & containers

Available on Saturday, October 2, 2021



► Free Mulch in Prospect

Thirty-Three Young Caymanians Enroll in Apprenticeship Programme

Thirty-three young Caymanians recently enrolled as Level I trainees in the Apprenticeship Training Programme offered by the Public Works Department (PWD). This is in addition to ten Level II and six Level III learners.

The apprentices who completed orientation and started their programmes earlier this month will be undertaking training in carpentry, masonry, plumbing, electrical installation, air condition and refrigeration, welding as well as building and construction management.

Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure Hon. Jay Ebanks stated that investing in young Caymanians through the delivery of training and development programmes is a key priority of the Government. Minister Ebanks said, "With the scarcity of locally qualified job applicants to perform some specialised roles within government and the private

sector, it is important that we develop our Caymanian workforce. This Government is working to give Caymanians as many opportunities to succeed, as possible. I want to encourage all apprentices enrolled in the programmes at PWD to stay the course and continue to develop their skills and expertise".

Minister Ebanks highlighted that he was pleased that Deputy Speaker and Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education Hon. Katherine Ebanks-Wilks would be working closely with Public Works Department in support of the Apprenticeship Training Programme.

Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry, Isaac Rankine who attended the orientation session for the new batch of trainees emphasised that the training programmes are effective pathways for young Caymanians to gainful employment. He noted that Government was doing everything

possible "to ensure that we promote sustainable and responsible development for the future". He added, "I am confident the apprentices will take their rightful place in the future of these Islands".

Hon. Katherine Ebanks-Wilks who was also at the orientation session, congratulated the Public Works Department for all the work they have done through the Apprenticeship Training Programme. She stated, "I am happy to see this training being offered to Caymanians, which will no doubt, increase employment opportunities and enable career advancement".



► Young Caymanian trainees who recently enrolled in the Apprenticeship Training Programme offered by the Public Works Department with PWD Acting Director Troy Whorms and other instructors

Acting Director at the Public Works Department Troy Whorms commended the PWD team for "stepping up to the plate by providing a medium through which Caymanians can develop skills in a variety of technical and vocational areas important to the Islands, and also for offering themselves to be mentors to the trainees".

He also highlighted that while the Department increased its space capacity with the opening of the Construction Trades Training Centre, there are plans to upgrade existing workshops to accommodate the delivery of other certification programmes.

The Public Works Department currently offers a full-time apprenticeship programme which focuses on construction trades training and a partnership training arrangement with the Cayman Islands Further Education Centre. The Department also offers a full-time internship programme.

Persons interested in the programmes can contact the Public Works Department at 345-949-2547 or email pwd.apprentice@gov.ky.



► Acting Director, Public Works Department Troy Whorms speaks to apprentices at the start of their programmes



► Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure Isaac Rankine encourages trainees during their orientation session



► The protesters lined West Bay Road stretching north of Governor's Beach



► The line of protesters stretched south, far beyond the Westin Hotel

Hundreds attend 'Freedom of Choice' protest

By Christopher Tobutt

More than 300 protesters carrying placards in support of free choice for vaccines came to demonstrate outside Government house on Saturday 2 October. It was an impressive turnout, especially considering the threat of rain, and it stretched all the way from beyond the entrance to Governor's Beach almost down to the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Lots of passing cars tooted their horns in support. The placards carried many different messages, but mostly their concerns were to do with free choice over vaccinations, in light of the Government's bills which, if passed, would mandate work permit holders to either take the vaccine, or leave the country, they said.

Dr. Tomlinson was there to add his voice to the protest. "This is the time that our voices have to be heard, this is the time it is very important for us to be here and let our representatives know that we will not stand for injustice, and that our bodies are our own, and they are not government property, and we will just not stand for what they plan to do," he said.

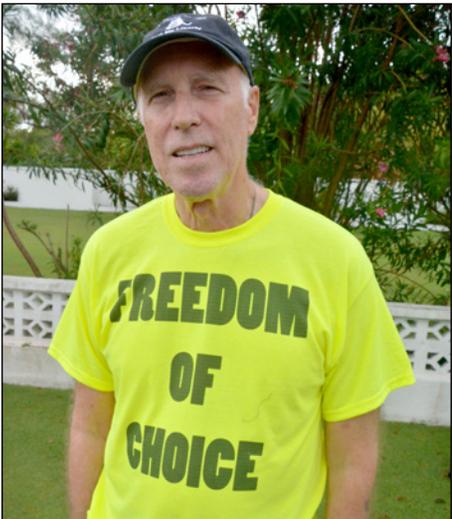
Protester Isadora Ferraro said, "I am standing up for freedom of choice because I believe that I should have a right to say what goes into my body, and what doesn't. I am here to represent those who feel afraid to stand up in numbers, like work-permit holders. I know some people who say, "well that is your choice if you want to live in a country," but why

mandate something that hasn't even been proved to keep you safe?"

Many of the people wished to remain anonymous, such as a man with two placards, one reading 'freedom to choose,' and another reading, 'Don't take away our freedom.' He said, "I'm here for freedom of choice, he and my freedom and ability to choose what I want to be put into my body... They are infringing on our civil, human and labor rights. They are taking everything away from us."

Another "No name," protester said, "I'm here for freedom of choice, no vaccine mandates for Caymanians, Caymanian residents, for the ones on permit as well. The mandate is absolutely wrong,

SEE FREEDOM OF CHOICE, Page 9



► Mr. JC Callhoun stood for Freedom of Choice



► Protesters outside Government House



► Protesters outside Government House

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Hundreds attend 'Freedom of Choice' protest

CONTINUED FROM Page 8

and everyone deserves freedom of choice."

Protester Mr. JC Calhoun said, "I'm here because it should be anybody's choice whether or not they have any substance in their body. The first mandate is going to be for work permit holders, but once you start it for somebody, where are you going to stop it? This is surely overreach, there should be no need for coercing people to take the vaccine."

Another protester simply said, "Not anti-vax, but I am anti-mandate."

Protester Kim said, "I think it's important to stand up for what you believe in. I

believe everyone has a choice as to what decisions they make for themselves, and their own health. And choice is not just about vaccinating or not vaccinating, its about your choice to select the vaccination you like. We don't have enough selection and options. We have one product to take and that doesn't work for everyone."

Another anonymous protester said, "My poster says, 'Even God gives us choice,' and if God gives you a choice, who is to say that we have no choice? I want to encourage people to research and think for themselves, don't just be sheep and follow."

Kattina Anglin was one of the Freedom of Choice group who had helped to organize the protest. "Freedom of Choice are the persons who decided they were not going to take the vaccine mandate laying down. It's a big turnout, it is amazing and I hope that the Government sees it," she said.



► Man with 2 placards

POLICE NEWS

Police Investigate Aggravated Burglary in North Side

Shortly after 3:00AM on Thursday, 30 September, officers received a report of an aggravated burglary and assault that had occurred at an address on Frank Sound Road in North Side.

It was reported that the occupants of the home had awoken to find an unknown male in the home. A struggle ensued during which a male occupant of the house received injuries. The culprit then fled the location. The injured occupant was transported to hospital via private vehicle for treatment. He remains in stable condition with non-life-threatening injuries.

The matter is currently under investigation. Anyone with any information



is asked to contact Bodden Town CID at 947-2220.

Anonymous tips can be provided directly to the RCIPS via our Confidential Tip Line at 949-7777, or via our website <http://www.rcips.ky/submit-a-tip>.

RCIPS Investigate Report of Robbery and Stabbing Incident

Shortly after 10.45pm on Friday 1 October, police received a report of a robbery and stabbing incident in the vicinity of Marquee Plaza, George Town.

On arriving at the scene EMS were attending a man with minor head injuries. The man was transferred to George Town Hospital for assessment, but he latter discharged himself.

Initial investigations report that a verbal dispute turned physical between

the victim and another man, but there is no evidence of a robbery or stabbing, as was originally reported. Police continue to investigate the incident.

Anyone who may have witnessed the incident is asked to contact the George Town Police Station at 949-4222. Anonymous tips can be provided directly to the RCIPS via our Confidential Tip Line at 949-7777, or via our website <http://www.rcips.ky/submit-a-tip>

Arrests Made in Relation to West Bay Shooting

A 26-year-old-man of West Bay was arrested today 30 September on suspicion of attempted murder. The arrest was made in relation to an incident that took place on Reverend Blackman Road in West Bay on 10 September. Following the arrest, police carried out two search operations simultaneously, at addresses that were linked to this individual. He remains in police custody pending further investigation.

This is the second arrest that has been made in relation to this incident, listed below, as on Tuesday 14 September, police arrested a 20-year-old-man, also of West Bay, was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder and later bailed.

Just after 11pm, 10 September, officers responded to a report of a shooting incident at Reverend Blackman Road in West Bay.



On arriving at the location, a 23 year old man from West Bay had a gunshot wound to his pelvic area.

The victim was transferred by ambulance to George Town hospital for treatment and is in a stable condition.

The investigation is still ongoing and detectives are encouraging anyone with information to call the West Bay Police Station at 949-3999. Anonymous tips can be provided directly to the RCIPS via our Confidential Tip Line at 949-7777, or via our website <http://www.rcips.ky/>.

New Police Clearance Certificate Process Results in Decreased Turnaround Time

As of June, 2021, the RCIPS Criminal Records Office (CRO) implemented an updated process for the application and issuing of Police Clearance Certificates (PCC). The CRO has carefully been monitoring this new process, which has resulted in a much more efficient and streamlined experience for members of the public applying for PCCs.

The new system, which moves applications for Police Clearance Certificates to a completely digital process, has allowed the Criminal Records Office to reduce the average turnaround time for PCC applications to 1.5 calendar days.

The streamlining of the PCC application process has also allowed for the CRO to redeploy resources to cover some of the other functions of the RCIPS Business Centre, resulting in increased efficiency for services such as the issuing of Police Reports, Traffic Reports, and Security Licenses.

As a reminder to the public, the new process is now system-generated. As such, the wording and format has been revised and certificates now feature

electronic signatures. No stamps appear on the new PCC's.

Depending on the purpose of the PCC or the method of collection chosen at the time of submission, the PCC can be emailed to individuals, or directly to one of the government entities listed, or a physical copy can be sent by domestic registered mail. There is no longer any in-person pick up option available.

Receiving a PCC by email requires entering a password to access the digital certificate. The password will be related to the form of ID used to apply for the PCC. If the PCC's are forwarded to a third party, individuals must also provide the password.

The RCIPS Criminal Records Office thanks the public for their co-operation in adjusting to this new system. Going forward the CRO will continue to monitor its processes and make further adjustments as necessary, to ensure that all customers receive the best service possible.

All requests for PCC's must be made online at <https://online.gov.ky/cro/faces/kiosk>.

COVID vaccination clinic relocates to accommodate booster programme

Starting Tuesday October 5th 2021, the Public Health Department's primary COVID vaccination clinic will relocate to the Lions Centre with the launch of the booster programme (Dose 3) and a new supply of Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines.

The booster programme (3rd dose) will be available in phases starting October 4th. The phases will be based on specific criteria and health vulnerability. Boosters will be available to persons who are clinically extremely vulnerable (high risk for COVID-19) from October 5 – 8 and October 11 – 15 to persons who are 70 years and older.

"We ask that persons attend for the booster during their designated phase to ensure that we provide the booster first to those who need it most", said Dr Hazel Brown, Health Services Authority Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) stated.

The 3rd dose of the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine must be administered at least 6 months after the 2nd dose. Persons eligible to receive their booster should bring along their vaccination card or digital certificate showing proof of their 2nd dose and a government issued photo ID.

Public Health received 400 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine on the British Airways flight Saturday 2nd October 2021, along with an additional 11,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine.

The AstraZeneca vaccine will be available October 5 – 8 2021 at the vaccination clinics to persons who are unable to take the Pfizer vaccine due to medical reasons or otherwise prefer to take this vaccine.

The Sister Islands will hold a vaccination clinic at the Aston Ratty Center, Medial Wing on October 13 2021 from 9am – 12pm. Persons interested in taking the AstraZeneca vaccine, should contact the Public Health nurse at 244-7619/7620.

If you are home bound and unable to attend one of the vaccination clinics, please contact the Flu Hotline 947-3077, 1-800-534-8600, flu@hsa.ky or your local HSA District Health Centre and arrangements will be made with a Public Health nurse to provide your vaccine in the comfort of your home.

BOOSTER PROGRAMME - OCTOBER 5 – 8, 2021

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Criteria (high risk for COVID-19)

- Solid organ transplant recipients
- People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy
- People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- People having other targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune



system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors

- People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell disease
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- Problems with your spleen, for example splenectomy
- People with down's syndrome
- People on dialysis or with chronic kidney disease (stage 5)
- Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired

• Other people who have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs – GPs and hospital clinicians determination

BOOSTER PROGRAMME - OCTOBER 11 – 15, 2021

- Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (see list above)
- Persons 70 years old & older

GENERAL VACCINE INFO

- Vaccines are available to persons 12 years and older
- Parental consent required for children 12-17 years old
- When receiving your 2nd or 3rd dose, you MUST also bring along your vaccination card or present your digital vaccination certificate reflecting your previous doses
- 3rd dose must be administered at least six (6) months after your 2nd dose
- The date on your vaccination card for the 2nd dose is the earliest that is recommended
- All persons must present photo identification showing date of birth
- **Facemask required – Please bring your own.**
- **Do NOT laminate your vaccination card**

For the most up to date vaccination schedule visit <https://hsa.ky/public-health/coronavirus/>

COVID-19 Vaccine Schedule –OCT 2021 (v1)

The COVID-19 vaccine is available to ALL persons 12 years and over.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR OWN FACE MASK



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
OCTOBER 4	5	6	7	8	9
Boosters (3rd Dose) available to clinically extremely vulnerable (see criteria below)* AstraZeneca available – 5th – 8th October 2021 (Lions Centre)					
NORTH SIDE HEALTH CENTRE 4:30pm – 6:30pm	LIONS CENTRE 11am – 3pm 4:30 – 7pm	LIONS CENTRE 11am – 3pm 4:30 – 7pm	LIONS CENTRE 8:30am – 12:30pm	LIONS CENTRE 8:30am – 12pm 1:30 – 4:30pm	NO CLINIC
11	12	13	14	15	16
Boosters (3rd Dose) available to 70+ years old & clinically extremely vulnerable *					
LIONS CENTRE 8:30am – 12pm 1:30 – 5pm	LIONS CENTRE 11am – 3pm 4:30 – 7pm	LIONS CENTRE 11am – 3pm 4:30 – 7pm SISTER ISLANDS Aston Ratty Centre 9am – 12pm	LIONS CENTRE 8:30am – 12:30pm	LIONS CENTRE 8:30am – 12pm 1:30 – 4:30pm	NO CLINIC



► Mangrove Ranger Chaiz Frederick and Year 5 students from the Edna Moyle Primary School in North Side



► Mike Nelson of Sea Elements introduces the Upside-down Jellyfish to Year 5 students from the Red Bay Primary School field trip

CUC and “Marvellous Mangroves” Celebrate 20 Years Together

The highly successful partnership between CUC and the Mangrove Education Project’s *Marvellous Mangroves* Year 5 curriculum is celebrating over 20 years of working together. This programme teaches Cayman’s students about the function and value of its mangrove ecosystems.

Executive Director of the Mangrove Education Project, Martin Keeley, estimates

that over 15,000 students and more than 200 teachers have experienced the wonders of Cayman’s mangrove forests in the past 20 years. This number also includes many Year 3 classes, which have also experienced the programme.

During this time Mr. Keeley explains that the programme has not only relied on the financial support of CUC but also the classroom and logistical support of the National Trust, the Department of Education, Sea Elements and, of course, the many teachers of Cayman’s primary schools.

“It was great that CUC joined us earlier this year on a scheduled programme with both Year 5 and Year 3 classes from Sir John A. Cumber Primary School,” Mr. Keeley adds, “It has been part of CUC’s mandate to help support environmental programmes and it is obvious that they are in



► Rangers (right) Cassie McDowell and Chaiz le Frederick with Year 5 at Savannah Primary and many mangroves! (Photos by Martin Keeley and Catherine Childs)



► Year 5 students from Sir John A. Cumber Primary School study seagrass at the Central Mangroves Wetlands through the netting on board the Red Bay Sports catamaran

this for the long run as we continue to learn about the true value of our mangrove ecosystems and efforts to protect and conserve them.”

Commenting on the programme, Pat Bynoe-Clarke, CUC’s Manager Corporate Communications, added, “Recognising

the value of environmental awareness and protecting the environment has always been one of the Company’s strategic initiatives. In 2000, CUC partnered with Mr. Keeley to introduce the *Marvellous Mangroves* Programme to primary school students so that they could learn the importance mangroves play in the Cayman Islands’ ecosystem. It has been an exciting and educational journey for the Company and we will continue to support worthy causes such as this.”

In the past year Mr. Keeley has been joined by several of the recently formed Cayman Islands Mangrove Rangers – several of whom have a teaching background and will be taking over several aspects of running the hands-on science *Marvellous Mangroves Programme*. This will shortly be combined with the soon-to-be-introduced Coastal Lagoon Ecosystem Teachers Resources linking mangroves to seagrass and reefs.

*See video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJnhnSlpHYg&t=2s>

Teachers can book the programmes by contacting Haileigh Farrington at: hcfarrington@gmail.com or info@mangroverangers.ky or 927-5871.



► Mangrove Ranger Cassie McDowell and Year 2 students from Cayman International School



► Year 5 students from Sir John A Cumber Primary School and the salt taste test for black mangrove leaves

\$3 Million Allocated for TS Grace Farmers' Assistance Project

Government has allocated \$3 million dollars in relief support for commercial farmers impacted by the recent passage of Tropical Storm Grace.

The Tropical Storm Grace Farmer's Assistance Project is aimed at providing assistance to commercial farmers who suffered loss of income or livestock, damage to crops and farm infrastructure and are in need of financial support and agricultural inputs necessary to recover from loss and damage sustained as a result of the storm.

Minister of Agriculture Hon. Jay Ebanks stated that the support being provided by Government is an immediate input to aid in the quick recovery of the agricultural sector. "This farmers' assistance project will help to provide supplemental income to cover labour costs and purchase agricultural inputs for commercial farmers who suffered as a result of the storm. It is our hope that many of our farmers will be able to resuscitate their production and continue to strengthen their resilience and further bolster the Islands food and nutrition security".

Assessments of the losses and damage reported by the farmers will be conducted by representatives from the Department of Agriculture and the Ministry of Plan-

ning, Housing, Agriculture and Infrastructure as part of the award of assistance under the project. Assistance to farmers will be paid in two tranches and capped at a maximum for each farm.

Application for the Tropical Storm Grace Farmers' Assistance Project will be open from October 1 to October 15.

The overall eligibility requirements and application process is as follows:

- Applicants must be commercial farmers - crops/livestock/both;
- Applicants must submit a completed application form along with required supporting documents;
- Applicant must submit copy of commercial farmer's ID card issued by Department of Agriculture; where no farmer's ID available, a letter from Department of Agriculture approving status;
- Valid Cayman Islands Government issued identification;
- Applicants will be subjected to assessment by representatives from Department of Agriculture and Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

Forms are available at the Department of Agriculture or via www.gov.ky/news/press-release-details/3m-for-ts-grace-farmers-assistance. Completed applica-



tion forms can be emailed to TSGFAP@gov.ky or dropped off in an envelope addressed to: **TS Grace Farmers' Assistance Committee** at the Department of Agriculture, Lower Valley, Bodden Town

or the Government Administration Building on Elgin Avenue.

Interested persons may contact (345) 947-3090, 244-2412 or email TSGFAP@gov.ky for further information.

CIFS Recognises Institution of Fire Engineers Examination Results

Home Affairs Minister, Hon. Bernie Bush, presented 13 firefighters with their certificates from the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) at Central Fire Station today (Wednesday, 15 September 2021).

The officers earned their certificates earlier this year by successfully completing a three-hour, 120 question examination for their IFE Level 2 Certificate in Fire

Science, Operations, and Safety in March 2021. The brief ceremony marked another step on the Cayman Islands Fire Service's continuous journey of self-improvement and professional development.

Speaking at the event, Mr Bush remarked "I am so pleased to present these professional fire and rescue certificates to these young Caymanians. International-

ly recognised professional qualifications reinforce the capabilities and professionalism of our frontline firefighters who work tirelessly to keep residents, businesses and visitors safe across our three Islands."

Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Paul Walker, QFSM said "This is amazing news and I offer my congratulations to my Cayman Islands Fire Service colleagues that were successful on this occasion. I encourage you all to continue your professional studies and go on to attain IFE Level 3 Certificates."

"We hope to continue this trend, increasing the number of participants as well as the level of qualifications being achieved through the tiered examination programme with the IFE."

In 2020 the Cayman Islands Fire Service became corporate members of IFE, an international body that examines the knowledge and professional experience of fire and rescue personnel across the globe.

Membership grades are awarded from Student to Fellow providing an internationally recognised fire engineering professional framework.

Chief Walker says CIFS has ambitions to establish a Cayman Islands IFE Branch where fire and rescue colleagues are



► Home Affairs Minister Hon. Bernie Bush, accompanied by Chief Fire Officer Paul Walker (not shown), presented certificates to nine of the thirteen officers including Jeavhon Jackson (Photos by GIS)



► Home Affairs Ministry representatives pose for a group shot with the firefighters who received their IFE qualifications, following their brief presentation ceremony at Central Fire Station. (L-R) Home Affairs Chief Officer (Atg) Michael Ebanks, Home Affairs Minister Hon Bernie Bush, Noah Seymour, William Hurlston-Watler, Luke Welds, Jah Dean Alexander, Alexander Smith, Luis Rodriguez, Jeavhon Jackson, Mario Berry, Mikol Elliott, Home Affairs Deputy Chief Officer (Atg) Julian Lewis and Chief Fire Officer Paul Walker. Marvin Becerra-Menendez; Henry Medina-Carter and Nicolo Tummings passed the exam but were unable to attend the event. Tashaun Young was presented his certificate by the Minister on Cayman Brac last week.

joined as members by industry partners, such as architects, structural engineers, planners, fire risk assessors, and general engineers.

All IFE members have the opportunity to gain further professional qualifications through the IFE, and subject to previous experience and accredited prior learning can seek Registered Chartered Engineer status.

Any person from industry partner companies or agencies that is interested in working with CIFS to establish a Cayman Islands IFE branch should provide their contact details to any of the five community fire stations.

CARIBBEAN BRIEFS

Jamaica to see Canadians return

Jamaica will soon welcome its second-largest source market, Canada. Fifty non-stop flights per week will commence on Nov. 1. Americans are Jamaica's best market.

The flights will be operated by Air Canada, Westjet, Sunwing, Swoop and Transat with direct services from the Canadian cities of Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Halifax, Edmonton, St John, Ottawa, and Moncton.

This latest development is a result of a series of meetings by Jamaica's Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett and his marketing team.

Bartlett noted that the Canadian market currently has "forward bookings hovering around 65 percent of 2019 levels and airlift for the winter season at around 82 percent of 2019 levels with around 260,000 seats locked in."

Excited about the prospects, he spoke about the impact that COVID-19 had on



Canada, disproportionately impacting the country, resulting in travel restrictions which for several months shut down international travel.

Now with more than 80 per cent of eligible Canadians over the age of 12 fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and a relative easing of international travel restrictions, Bartlett said that interests were cautiously optimistic.

Dominica praised for scuba diving

Dominica has been praised by the UK-based diving holiday experts Diverse Travel as one of the best destinations for scuba divers looking for some exotic adventure.

Diverse Travel said that Dominica is one of those rare places where scuba divers want to spend time above as well as below water. The unspoiled nature lover's paradise is a haven for sustainability and ecotourism. There are many natural wonders to discover, including exciting river adventures, the world heritage site of Morne Trois Pitons National Park, and watching whales, or swimming with dolphins and sperm whales.

Dominica's landscape has formed through centuries of volcanic activity to create a theatrical backdrop above and below water. Diverse Travel said that the spectacularly beautiful Nature Island is one of the Caribbean's best-kept secrets.



► Dominica has an enviable scuba diving industry

Visitors are hosted on private catamaran trips by just six people (three in the water at a time), which provide the unique opportunity to swim and snorkel with these beautiful creatures, as well as observe fascinating natural behaviours, and learn more about research and conservation of the expertise of private guides.

Cuba starts exporting own vaccine

Cuba is proud that it now has the highest coronavirus vaccination rate in Latin America, despite a crippling six-decade US blockade, Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez announced, "applying around 200,000 daily doses on average."

Cuba has also begun commercial exports of its home grown virus vaccines, sending shipments of the three-dose Abdala vaccine to Vietnam and Venezuela.

Cuba President Miguel Diaz-Canel announced the arrival of vaccines in Vietnam

on his Twitter feed. The shipment included 900,000 doses bought by Hanoi and 150,000 more donated by Cuba.

Ministry of Health statistics show that more than nine million of Cuba's 11 million population have received at least one dose. More than six million people have received two doses while 44 percent of the population is fully vaccinated, which in Cuba requires three doses.

The government attributed the success to Cuba's socialist economy and advanced

biotechnology industry, which has enabled it to produce its own supplies.

Cuba has largely used its own vaccines, Soberana 02 and Abdala, as part of its programme. This has been supplemented with China's Sinopharm in some regions.

More than 7,000 people have died from coronavirus since the outbreak of the global pandemic in Cuba. Its mortality rate of 0.84 per cent is significantly lower than the global average of 2.05 per cent.



► Cuba's covid vaccination rate is high

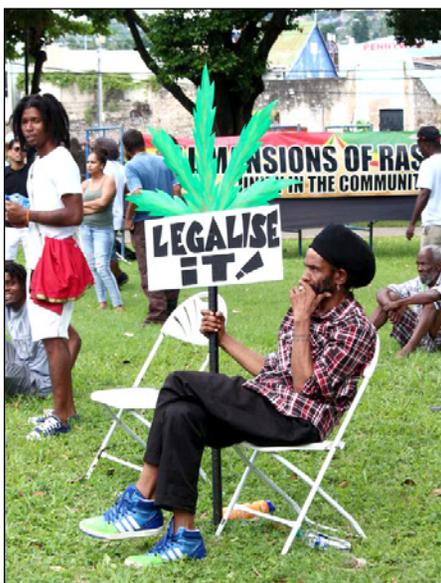
Trini Rastas: Let us sell weed too

Trinidad and Tobago's Rastafarian community wants to be included in the marketing and sale of cannabis now that it has been partially decriminalised in the country.

From his home overlooking Maracas Valley, in T&T's first capital, St Joseph, Honourable Priest Solomon of the Ethiopia African Black International Congress or Bobo Shanti, said a cannabis industry where it could be used to produce medicine, fuel, cloth and pesticides, among other products, should not be exclusive to big conglomerates who could afford licences and other resources for production. Rather, it should be open to ordinary folks.

He said in light of the number of Rastafarians that were imprisoned for marijuana offences over the years, it would only be fair that the authorities give Rastas first preference to produce for a local marijuana industry. It could be a form of reparation, he felt.

In December 2019, the government passed a bill to make the cultivation and possession of small quantities of cannabis legal. Each person is allowed up to four cannabis plants or under 30 grams of cannabis, for personal use only.



► Trinidad Rastas want to be included in marketing marijuana

Since then, the Government has laid the Cannabis Control Bill, 2020 in Parliament and is expected to start debate on the bill soon. A licensing authority could allow for the commercialisation of marijuana. However, at present, the sale of home-grown marijuana is prohibited.

Barbados denies it will change name

Barbados has passed by 25 votes to none a Constitutional Amendment whereby the former British colony, which remained within the Commonwealth after its declaration of independence in 1966 will become a republic and thus remove Queen Elizabeth as head of state. The decision becomes effective on Dec. 1.

Prime Minister Mia Mottley confirmed at the United Nations headquarters last week in New York that the new constitutional amendment would revoke the Barbados Order of 1966

as an Order in Council of Her Majesty while keeping the Barbados Constitution otherwise unchanged. It will subsequently replace a Barbadian citizen with Her Majesty.

The new change marks the end of a British head of state in Barbados since



► Mia Mottley confirmed Barbados will become a republic soon

English settlers landed there in 1625 and claimed the island for King James I.

Mottley made it clear that in no way did the country of 2905,000 plan to change its name. "This bill does nothing else but seeks to make a Bajan the head of state of Barbados," she stressed.



Bonacca fire leaves many homeless

The cay that caught fire in Honduras is still adjusting to life after a huge blaze ruined the resort, ravaging more than 200 homes and businesses and forcing hundreds of residents to flee with only the clothes on their backs.

Dramatic video shared on social media showed rows of seaside properties engulfed in flames and collapsing in Guanaja, 44 miles (70km) off the north coast of Honduras. The fire broke out before dawn and residents struggled to bring it under control, as the cay does not have a fire service.

Helicopters hovered over the fire and poured water over the most raging fire areas. At least five people were injured in the blaze from smoke inhalation, which began in the early hours of Saturday, officials said. Thankfully, there appears no loss of life so far. Many fled to the mountainside for safety.

It's unclear how the fire started but rumours are that a lighted candle fell, caught fire and got out of control. As the houses



are so condensed it was easy for the fire to jump from one building to another. There are many Caymanians who have family and personal connections to the cay called Bonacca, which is about 300 metres from Guanaja, so it has caused immense concern locally. As well as shops and houses, a church and the Seventh Day Adventist school were damaged too. Frantic attempts were being made to prevent the fire reaching a gas station.

Guanaja is one of the country's three picturesque Islas de la Bahia, or Bay Islands, famed for its dolphins and big coral reef popular with snorkelers and divers. The others are Roatan and Utila.

Emergency services from Roatan moved quickly to provide

food, water, medical supplies and clothing for residents, many of whom have lost absolutely everything. Initially they're having to live on the streets and temporary shelters. A local resident said that the last fire of this magnitude was in 1978.

Appeals have gone out for donations and there has been an immense response, especially from the Cayman Islands. Boats are able to operate which means that those who can be evacuated will get a chance to move elsewhere for the time being.

Government minister Max Gonzales said on Saturday afternoon: "We can confirm that we have no human losses, but vast material losses. The fire is 100 percent controlled now. We set up two refuges, in a school and a church, and they are working on humanitarian aid, which will arrive very soon on the island for those affected."



Premier offers aid, sympathies to Bonacca



Premier Hon. G. Wayne Panton has released the following statement regarding the devastating fire on the cay of Bonacca in the Bay Islands, Honduras.

"Good afternoon,

"It has been heart-breaking to see the videos and images this morning of the devastating and wide-spread fire that ravaged the cay of Bonacca off the coast of Guanaja in the Bay Islands, Honduras.

"Caymanians maintain close kinship and strong cultural links with the Bay Islands as many Bay Islanders and Caymanians share a common heritage and multiple family ties. Many of our friends and relatives in Bonacca have watched as fire destroyed their homes and earthly possessions, disrupting their peaceful and close-knit community.

"On behalf of the Government and people of the Cayman Islands, I wish to extend my heartfelt sympathies to all those who have been impacted by this morning's fire.

"I also wish to assure all those directly or indirectly affected by this fire that the people of the Cayman Islands stand ready to offer our support and assistance as they come to terms with the destruction and seek to rebuild their community.

"As the Cayman Islands community is known to do, it has sprung into action via churches, service clubs, businesses and individuals to collect aid for those affected.

"On behalf of the Government, I pledge to assist the people of Bonacca and one of our first steps will be to organise a cargo flight by Cayman Airways to transport supplies and donations collected for the people of Bonacca to Juan Manuel Galvez International Airport in Roatan. We will announce further details on this very soon.

"Let us continue to pray for the people of Bonacca in their time of need and stand ready to support them as they recover."

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

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

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Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

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Difficulty Level ★

3/23

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Goofs off
- 6 Painter
Picasso
- 11 Permit
- 12 Cook's
protector
- 13 "Robinson
Crusoe"
writer
- 14 Honking
birds
- 15 Folded
food
- 17 Director
Anderson
- 18 Nuclear
reactor
inserts
- 22 Norway's
capital
- 23 Sioux
people
- 27 Plant
anew
- 29 Singer
Carly
- 30 Makes
blank
- 32 Brussels-
based org.
- 33 Atom
orbiter
- 35 Place for
a pint
- 38 Sub shop
- 39 Make a
speech
- 41 Like
gymnasts
- 45 Captain's
superior
- 46 Smallest
mammal
- 47 Schemes
- 48 Play
setting

DOWN

- 1 Young
fellow
- 2 Bullring
cry
- 3 TV alien
- 4 Free of
responsi-
bilities
- 5 Take an
oath
- 6 Asian
temples
- 7 Gorilla, for
one
- 8 Make
coffee
- 9 Finish
last
- 10 Wallet
bills
- 16 Atlantic
fish
- 18 Golf
cry
- 19 Manual
reader
- 20 "Frozen"
queen
- 21 Far
from
- 24 Poet
Khayyám
- 25 Dorothy's
dog
- 26 Shortly, in
poems
- 28 Construc-
tion site
workers
- 31 Take in

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

Saturday's answer

- 20 "Frozen"
queen
- 21 Far
from
- 24 Poet
Khayyám
- 25 Dorothy's
dog
- 26 Shortly, in
poems
- 28 Construc-
tion site
workers
- 31 Take in
- 34 School
group
- 35 Pageantry
- 36 River of
Russia
- 37 Mexican
peninsula
- 40 Shipping
weight
- 42 Lyricist
Gershwin
- 43 Table
part
- 44 Ram's
mate

Word Search

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

- Allegory
- Ballad
- Couplet
- Elegy
- Epic
- Haiku
- Hymn
- Imagery
- Line
- Lyric
- Measure
- Pastoral
- Poetry
- Quatrain
- Rhyme
- Sonnet
- Stanza
- Trimeter

Triolet
Verse

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	44
45						46				
47						48				

6-28



Have fun with
**CAYMANIAN
TIMES**

CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

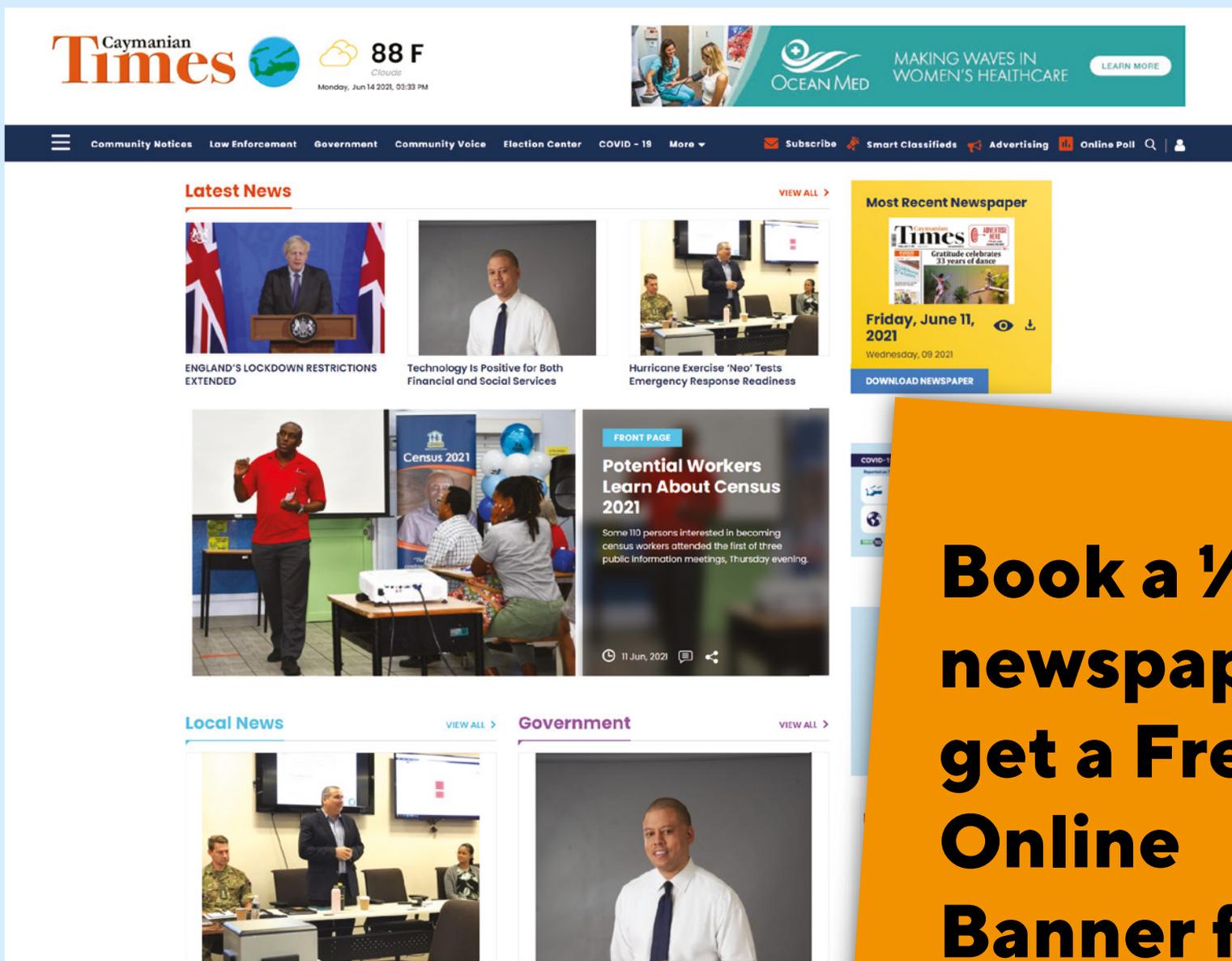
By Stan Lee

JUDGE PARKER

By Woody Wilson & Mike Manley

Caymanian Times

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