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# Caymanian Times

Sports page



Wednesday, December 29, 2021

Issue No 728

www.caymaniantimes.ky

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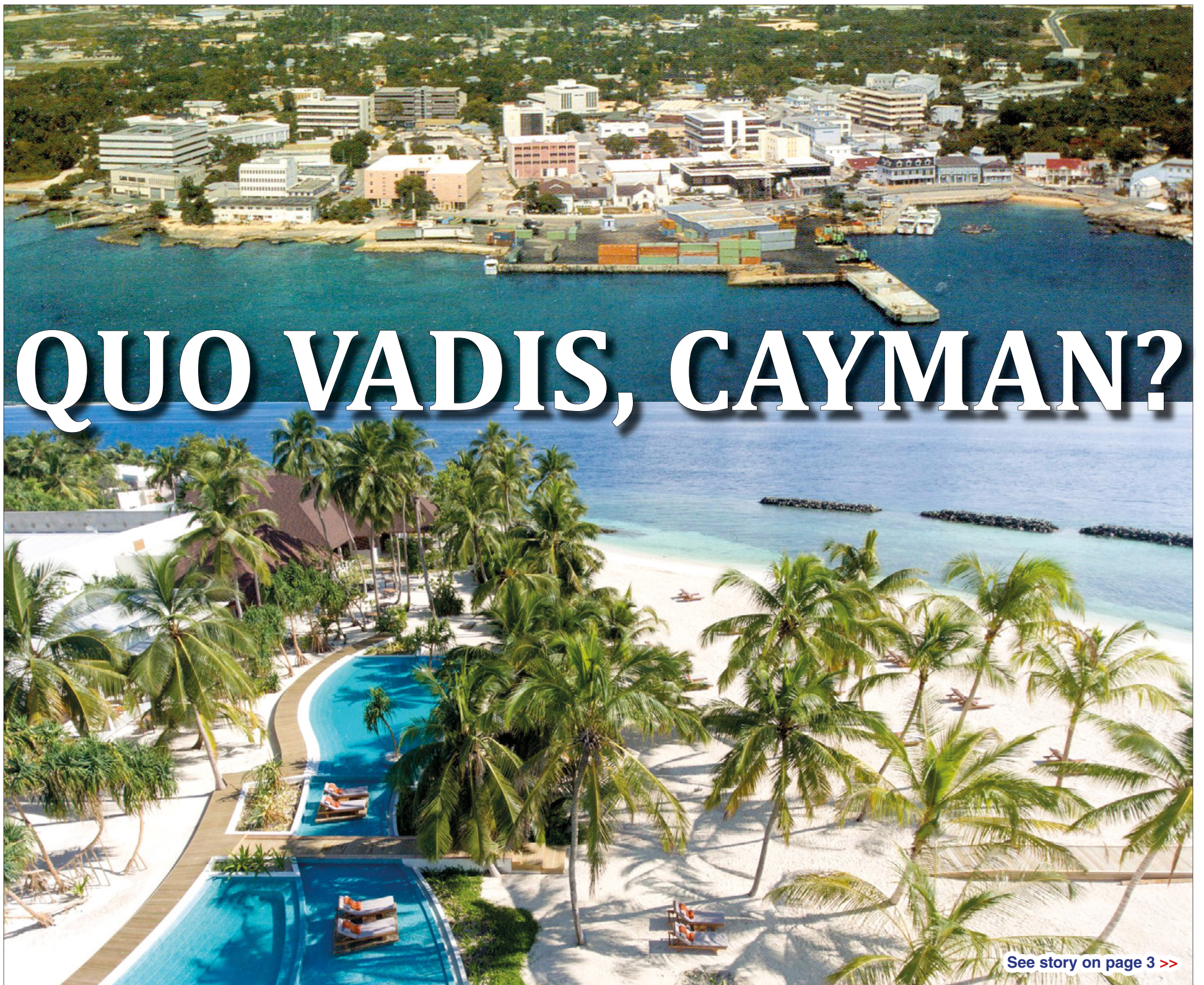
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# A Caymanian Times Vision for 2022

As we welcome 2022, emerging from the past year we are mindful that the health and economic challenges faced in the past year will still be 'clear and present' challenges for Cayman.

But despite the downside, events in life - such as the persistent pandemic - can be seen as existing for a purpose and providing us with opportunities for individual and community self-examination.

Inasmuch as we'd like to 'accentuate the positive', reality dictates that we take a close hard look, admit to our collective shortcomings as a society and commit to making the changes that will make Cayman better for all of us.

We have much to be thankful for in spite of the disruptions to our way of life caused by COVID-19.

In fact, it might just have served to highlight where things might not have been



Sending New Year's wishes to you and your family.

Happy New Year from all of us at Sagicor.

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New Year's Eve (December 31st) - 1:00p.m.  
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going right and has provided us with the chance to put them right.

To put that in nautical terms that Cayman is quite culturally and historically familiar with - make a course correction...or adjustments as needed.

That also holds true for us at Caymanian Times.

As we look forward to navigating our way through 2022 with renewed vigour and gratitude to God, our supporters and team, The Caymanian Times will also be launching our new vision and outlook.

This will principally be reflected in our main product - our twice-weekly newspaper, along with our newly launched discussion programme - The Panel, along with our special media and other online offerings.

In all of this, we will remain true to our mission statement which has guided our editorial policy since our inception and is evident in our growth since then.

"The ability to influence the future is in our hands. Our children are the conduits through which this influence flows. The importance of factual balanced reporting is an important stage in our country's development. We are committed to creating and passing on positive information to our readers who have come to enjoy our approach to news reporting. Fair and unbiased reporting is the cornerstone of Caymanian Times and will be protected throughout our existence."

During 2022 we'll be placing an even sharper focus on current affairs topics that relate to our economic recovery, community cohesion, safeguarding the environment, opportunities for Caymanians from education to business, and 'living with COVID'.

All this will be from a perspective of encouraging our society as we together traverse 2022 with a new vision for Cayman.

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## Caymanian Times

Issue # 728

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# QUO VADIS\*, CAYMAN?

By Staff Writer

As the New Year beckons, we've chosen not to overly pre-occupy ourselves with reflecting on 2021.

But instead of relegating it to the dust bin of history, there are nevertheless a few lessons we can no doubt glean from the past year as we head into 2022.

There's no question that 2021 has been an eventful year that will be indelibly inked into the annals of Cayman's history, perhaps even more so than others in our recent history.

From politics to the pandemic and a few near misses from the past hurricane season, 2021 was a turbulent year for Cayman (and elsewhere) and will certainly not be a year that will soon be forgotten.

But 2022 beckons - and with it, the challenges carried forward from 2021, its own tests that it will bring for Cayman, but also the opportunities that it will make ...or that we will have to create.

## THE PANDEMIC

We predict that COVID-19 will continue to influence and even define the direction Cayman takes in 2022.

Whether it morphs into an endemic that we'll just have to live with, the impact of COVID-19 and whatever further mutations evolve from it will continue to determine how we live our lives and function as a community.

It could very well take the effect of COVID-19 to bring about much of what has been preached about to get our society

to the state where we can claim equality of opportunity in our micro-state 'first-world haven' surrounded by other third-world realities of our neighbours in the Caribbean Sea.

It's an obvious position to be in but Cayman's 'gilded era' could be at risk of unravelling by the sheer immediacy of a pandemic of which we didn't pay a part in how it was unleashed on the world.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

That immediacy is even more potent than that other crisis which we also have had little to cause but are no doubt feeling its effects - climate change.

Truth be told, unless we take more care in how we balance the demand for 'developments' with protecting our environment, we could very well be contributing to our own downfall.

More severe hurricanes and 'out of season' weather events are now becoming more commonplace, and our low-lying little dots in the comparative vastness of the Caribbean Sea, are extremely vulnerable to even 'less-than-extreme' weather events.

## THE ECONOMY

That brings us to the fabric that has made Cayman what it is - a first-world economy financial services mini-metropolis and tourist paradise.

We're not stupid, we know it's the economy.

But decades since the economy not just rapidly expanded but veritably exploded

and firmly placed Cayman on the global economic map, the question remains - and becomes more pronounced with each passing day: a paradise for whom?

This issue repeatedly came up during the various editions of the Caymanian Times new panel discussion The Panel, launched in 2021.

So, to borrow from a well-known gospel song; how do we complete that circle and ensure that it is strong enough to be unbroken.

## CAYMANKIND

If the economy (and its key pillars) is the fabric that had made modern Cayman, Caymankind is the mosaic on which it is painted and defined.

In 2022 that unique mosaic built on the effort of around 130 nationalities has an equally unique opportunity to bridge the known gaps in our society (we don't need to spell them out there).

If we don't, we could end up with the kind of Cayman that no one really wants.

## CAYMAN CAN

The economic challenges facing the world in 2022 will be particularly felt in Cayman both as a financial centre, tourist haven, and an almost totally import-de-

pendent, high-cost-of-living society... glossy images notwithstanding.

It's an opportunity to put differences that divide aside; be they political, financial, cultural or otherwise, and bring our strengths together for the good of Cayman.

From the jobs market including skills and training for professional advancement, business opportunities, to putting further measures in place to alleviate the cost of living, protecting the environment, and practical steps on how to best live with COVID, we at Caymanian Times are convinced that 'Cayman can'.

So let's do it because we can achieve it with Caymankind.

2022. Bring it on!

*\*(Quō vādīs? is a Latin phrase meaning "Where are you marching?". It is also commonly translated as "Where are you going?" or, poetically, "Whither goest thou?").*



Happy Holidays!

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# Giving BIG at Christmas

By Christopher Tobutt

Big Brothers Big Sisters, Cayman's mentorship program, delivered 40 big hot cooked Christmas meals to the families of the "Littles," (the "little brothers and little sisters") They were delivering the meals from Fosters Airport and Fosters Camana Bay. "The Goal the vision for Big Brothers Big Sisters is for all children to kind of achieve their potential, and really that goes along with have exposure of a positive adult in their lives that they can count on, and that will be a responsible friend for them," said, Big Brothers Big Sisters' Programmes Manager, Erin Kaufman, "We are catering to children between the ages of six and sixteen, and when they get matched (with the 'Big') we see improvements like increased self-esteem, increased self-confidence, more interest in school, and better family relationships just by them having the opportunity to spend time with a responsible adult."

"The meals are being sponsored by Rotary Central, and Resilience Cayman and all of the gifts today that have been going so each child and all the siblings in their home, and they are being delivered to families of Big Brothers big sisters across the island today by all of our volunteers. Thanks to Jeep 345 which has donated all of the gifts that are going to the homes today as well."

Before each of the 'Bigs' is matched to a 'Little,' they have to go through a training programme, Ms Kaufman said. Part of the training includes 'Darkness to Light - Stewards of Children,' "It's a child sexual abuse prevention training but we use it as the standard child safety training here in Cayman," Ms Kaufman explained, "It's to make sure that our adult volunteers are going to be safe with the children, and they understand what the law is when it comes to abuse and neglect, so that they establish safe practices when spending time with children. They learn how to recognize signs of abuse, and be able to respond appropriately and responsibly."

Evan Lindsay has been a Big Brother for a year-and-a-half. "I'm delivering a meal to the two littles that I hang out with. One of them is 12 and the other one is 16. It's



► Big Brothers Big Sisters and other volunteers get the food ready for delivery. Left-to-right, Holly King, Erin Kaufman, Kaili Keppler, and Gabrielle Myren.

been good to just get exposed to different parts of the Island get to see how different people live, and really get to know them and just get to spend time with them....for me, it's been really nice and really rewarding to just get to know them." Another volunteer with the programme, Gabrielle Myren said, "I was born and raised here, and I really wanted to give back to my community and do it in a way that would affect the next generation."

Outside in Foster's parking lot, a pretty grey Jeep, all decorated for Christmas was waiting full of gifts for the 'Bigs' to take to their 'Littles.' Trinette, of Jeep 345, said, "We are a community-oriented group of Jeep owners and we are teaming up today with Big Brothers, Big Sisters. We have done a toy drive through the Jeeps, and Big Brothers Big Sisters have arranged food."



► Jeep 345's Trinette, with Big Brother Evan Lindsay



► Big Brother Evan Lindsay with Erin Kaufman



# Over 600 Participate in NiCE Winter Project

Some 600 hundred Caymanians and spouses of Caymanians have participated in the three-week National Community Enhancement (NiCE) project, which ends today, December 23.

The participants have been working across districts to clear beach accesses, clean beaches and cemeteries, improve road markings, support solid waste management, and help the elderly in their yards. The workers are also providing support to several Government departments and public authorities including Facilities Management Department, Agricultural Society, Mosquito Research and Control Unit, National Roads Authority, Public Works Department and the Department of Environmental Health.

Minister of Infrastructure Hon. Jay Ebanks has thanked the participants and

organisers for their work to ensure that all Caymanians benefit from a healthy environment. "I want to encourage everyone across our Island to continue to maintain the clean and pleasant environment that the NiCE crew have started," he said.

Minister Ebanks further commented, "the Ministry looks forward to continued partnerships with the public and private sector in delivering this important programme as we build stronger communities and support the most vulnerable".

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, participants in the NiCE project were required to undergo rapid lateral flow tests throughout their involvement in the programme.

The NiCE winter project started on December 6.



► Team members engaged in recycling at the Department of Environmental Health



► Crew members at Smith Barcadere beach in George Town



► Before and after cemetery clean-up in North Side



## CUC's New Year's Closures

On Friday, December 31, our Customer Service Centre at our Administrative Offices on North Sound Road will close at noon for New Year's. This office will reopen for business on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

Gift Certificates from CUC that can be used towards paying electricity bills are available in denominations of \$25, \$50 and \$100 from our Customer Service Centre.

Visit [www.cuc-cayman.com](http://www.cuc-cayman.com) for a complete list of our online bill payment options. Bill payments can be made at our remote payment locations across Grand Cayman during their respective holiday hours.

*Warmest wishes for a safe and happy New Year!*



Contact 911 in the event of an electrical emergency



# Tide Gauge Stations installed to measure tide levels

*Public asked not to 'tamper' with the equipment and invalidate the data collected*

The Ministry of District Administration and Lands advises that four tide-gauge stations have been installed at Gun Bay Public Dock in East End, Royal Watler Cruise Terminal in George Town, Customs Dock in Cayman Brac and at Bloody Bay Dock in Little Cayman. Funded by the UK Government, the data collected will record tide levels to update the accuracy of tidal predictions for a particular area. The public is asked not to touch or tamper with the equipment in any way.

Commenting on the importance of the tide gauges, Minister for Sustainability

and Climate Resiliency and Premier G. Wayne Panton explained, "The global sea level record from tide gauges is an important indicator of the evolution and impact of climate change. The data collected locally from these gauges will provide significant information to the Cayman Islands Government that will inform our risk mitigation measures, as we build a resilient infrastructure for our islands.

The gauges have two sensors, one being a "float" in a tube that goes up and down with the water level. The other sensor is a radar gauge measuring height of the water

from the sensor. The gauge will be surveyed into the local land datum to enable understanding of its precise location (latitude, longitude and height).

"Investments such as these are very valuable and important for improving our way of life. I strongly urge members of our community, not to tamper with these tide gauges and risk invalidating potential data which will support the prosperity of our Islands," encouraged Minister for Lands, Honourable Julianna O'Connor-Connelly.

The collected data

shall be used to better understand:

- Vessel navigation within the waters to understand where and when they can transit certain areas or enter a port safely;

- Port and harbour operations, dredging, surveying etc;

- Sea level change over time to understand climate change impact;

- Impact on tides during extreme weather events such as high/low barometric pressure, storm surges;

- Influence of tides on coastal ecosystems;

- Improvement of links between vertical reference frames;

- Reduction of seabed mapping data to define datum

Minister O'Connor-Connelly further explained, "The data provided by the tide gauges will not only improve navigational safety but feed into a great understanding of tides within the wider Caribbean region."

The Department of Lands and Survey has also advised their intent to provide the data into the International Oceanographic Commissions Global Sea Level Observing System, which supports a wide range of

data use and feeds into the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE-EWS).

For more info on the Ministry of District Administration and Lands: visit [www.gov.ky/lands](http://www.gov.ky/lands)



► Example of caution signs that will be affixed to tide gauge housings



► One of the tide gauges installed at the Gun Bay Public Dock in East End

## Holland America Cruise Call Cancelled

The Cayman Islands Government has approved the cancellation of the Holland America Nieuw Statendam cruise ship that was scheduled to call on Grand Cayman on 28th December 2021.

The decision to cancel the cruise call is in line with the recently implemented policy requiring all travellers to be tested the day prior to their departure to the Cayman Islands. While strict embarkation protocols are in place for passengers prior to boarding the ship, the day prior testing

requirement for disembarkation in Grand Cayman unfortunately could not be accommodated.

The objective of the single cruise call was to stress test the safety protocols and policies that are in place to minimize the spread of COVID-19. The Ministry of Tourism and Transport had worked in collaboration with representatives from the Holland America Line and its parent company Carnival Corporation, to ensure that passenger capacity was reduced to

a maximum of 1600 and that Grand Cayman was the first port of call on the ship's itinerary. Additionally, all passengers and crew disembarking in Grand Cayman had to be fully vaccinated.

Acting Minister for Tourism Hon. Dwayne Seymour stated that "the Cayman Islands Government does not take this decision lightly and the inconvenience to all concerned, including the

cruise line, cruise businesses and passengers is regretted. While uncertainties persist regarding the spread of the virus, adopting a cautious approach is the right thing to do. The cancellation of this single cruise ship call will ensure that the Cayman Islands is better able to protect our people and we look forward to welcoming cruise tourism business in 2022 when it is safer to do so."



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# CIG Giving Tree fulfills Christmas wishes

Civil and public servants, members of Cabinet and Caucus, and members of the public came together and fulfilled over 300 Christmas wishes by purchasing and placing gifts and vouchers under the Cayman Islands Government Giving Tree this year.

His Excellency the Governor Martyn Roper and the Deputy Governor Hon. Franz Manderson handed over the items on Wednesday, 15 December, to representatives of the Department of Counselling Services, Department of Children and Family Services, and the Needs Assessment Unit. The items will be distributed to the agencies' clients.

The hand-over was the culmination of a drive in which the Departments placed tags naming specific items that persons could provide as gifts. The call then went out for government staff and the wider community to select a tag and fulfill that wish. Individuals responded and, in some cases, pooled together to provide the items.

Governor Roper expressed his delight at being present for the hand-over, and to see the response: "This is a truly wonderful initiative organised by the Civil Service," he said. "It's a wonderful thing we can all do at this time of year to help those people who are most in need in our society. To look at this now you can see there's a huge number of different presents plus gift vouchers, which I'm sure will brighten the lives of people over this festive period, so my congratulations to everyone involved in organising this initiative."

Mr. Manderson said: "Again, I'm so proud to see how the Civil Service and the wider Public Service have responded to an opportunity to give persons, who otherwise may not have a merry Christmas, a very merry Christmas by giving back, by giving something."

He stressed, "It means a lot to me to see the generosity here this morning."

The Needs Assessment Unit's Deputy Director Melissa Smith commented on the positive sig-



► Deputy Governor Franz Manderson (centre) and representatives from the Department of Counselling Services, Department of Children and Family Services, and the Needs Assessment Unit show some of the packages received through this year's Giving Tree initiative (Photos by GIS)

nal the initiative sends: "This is an excellent initiative. It is one that lets our clients and the most vulnerable persons in our community know that not only our Unit but the Government on a whole, and the community, also provide support to them, also care about them. This initiative shows that we are committed to making the lives of those we serve better."

Department of Counselling Services' Clinical Supervisor Charmaine Miller explained the role that the Giving Tree donations play in the Department's programming: "The gifts that have been received this time around are specifically targeted at our at-risk mothers. Our Young Parents Programme targets vulnerable moms between the ages of 13 and 25 who access the programme for employability, and mainly for parenting support so that they can develop healthy bonds with their newborns. We do a lot of self-discovery work with them, so we're really excited about this initiative."

"It's a great opportunity to support them, especially during such difficult times. The fact that our young mothers

can have this and not have to be concerned about purchasing gifts or trying to figure out how to financially support their newborns and other kids that they may have, this is really easing off some of that financial pressure that they may be experiencing right now. A lot of our moms are unemployed, they're currently seeking employment and need this kind of financial assistance. We're really excited that this initiative has been able to meet that need."

Davin Barrett, Finance Manager of the Department of Children and Family Services, explained: "Our clients have a plethora of needs, from financial needs, from basic necessities. So, our focus for gifts this year was on the children of our clients."

He added: "Generosity is not something that comes naturally; it's something we learn from others. So, we at the Department are extremely grateful for the generosity that has been displayed this year with the myriad donations that we have received. We thank the community, we thank the donors, for their contribution to this drive. Our clients will be extremely appreciative and grateful."



► Governor Roper ceremonially hands over one of the gifts for Department of Children and Family Services clients to Programme Support Worker Lovella Anderson. Giving Tree organiser Jennifer Ahearn observes.

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# Christmas Message from Hon. Chris Saunders, Deputy Premier and Minister for Finance, Economic Development, Border Control & Labour

My friends,  
I hope that this message finds you and your loved ones in the best of health.

Today, I want to wish you a Blessed and Merry Christmas, and a Bright and Prosperous New Year.

2021 continues to be a challenging year with the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting our community and economy on a larger scale, and each of us individually on a personal level.

We have had losses this year, which have impacted the hearts and minds of us all.

But as is always the case with this wonderful life of ours, there has also been much joy and accomplishment in 2021 as well.

Earlier this year, the people of the Cayman Islands voted for hope and change - which has allowed me and my colleagues in the PACT Government the opportunity to reinforce and celebrate our Caymanian qualities of resilience and strength that are embedded in the DNA of our people.

While we as a people have at times been challenged, we have never been defeated. We have not only the spirit and charac-



ter to survive in the face of adversity but, the spirit to prevail. We were all born to manifest the Glory of God and there is no

better way to prosper and flourish than to live a life of purpose, in which we serve others.

With the advent of the Christmas season, we are in a period of reflection and thanksgiving which allows each of us to determine our path and our own special purpose in life.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank the tireless and dedicated medical personnel, our men and women in uniform, and countless other public servants and private volunteers who have made a difference in all of our lives throughout the year. They come to work every day with a dedication and commitment to protect and keep us safe - even as they themselves have their own personal challenges.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, and bring the Christmas spirit of love, good will, and service to others into our hearts, I wish you all the peace and clarity that this special time brings to our souls.

I encourage you all to remember those who may be in need and where possible, to give generously and joyously.

There is no better gift than that of giving.

From my home to yours, I wish you a blessed, safe and happy Christmas and the best for 2022.

May God continue to bless these Cayman Islands that we call home.

# Christmas Message from Hon Roy McTaggart JP, MP, The Leader of the Opposition and Political Leader of the Progressives

As we enter the Christmas season, the story of the birth of Jesus plays a prominent part in our church services and our personal reflection.

At its heart, Jesus' birth is a story of love - the love of Joseph and Mary for each other and for God. And, of course, God's love for us.

During his lifetime, and even at his death and resurrection, the theme of love was at the centre of everything Jesus said and did. And he constantly reminded us to love each other just as he loved us.

This Christmas, as we take time to relax and spend time with those we love, please remember those less fortunate than we are. Many in our Islands are struggling this Christmas and could do with a little bit of compassion and care. Many are still suffering, financially and mentally, from the effects of the pandemic.

So, look around your neighbourhood and reach out as best you can to someone facing a bleak Christmas. It does not have to be financial help, the gifts of caring and time are often the best gifts of all.

Perhaps a neighbour has lost a loved one, and a kind word or in-

itation to join you for Christmas lunch would help bring some respite from their grief.

Perhaps they are in hospital over the Christmas, and a visit or a phone call to let them know you care would be a massive lift to their spirit.

Or perhaps they are financially strapped - a supermarket gift card could be of immense help in putting a meal on the table.

These may seem like small things, but they are gifts of love and caring, and nothing is more important to the human spirit.

Keeping our collective spirit and determination strong is an absolute necessity as we continue fighting the virus and rebuilding our lives and livelihoods.

We started this year hoping to move away from the pandemic quickly. I certainly recall hoping that with God's grace and with the vaccine that our lives would be much better by this Christmas.

On the surface, it might not seem that we have made progress. Yes, we have undoubtedly had setbacks in recent months, but despite that, there is much to be hopeful for this Christmas.

Last Christmas, the hope of the vaccine was still then only a 'hope'.



As the year began, we had access to one of the best vaccines available. And for that, we must never forget the help of the United Kingdom in providing us with the much-needed vaccine doses.

The last government and the present one ably supported our excellent health professionals who did phenomenal work getting our people vaccinated and protected. I thank our Health professionals and the more than 56,000 people who have

received both doses of the vaccine to date. Thanks too to the 13,000 or so who have taken up the boosters.

These historic efforts will protect our people and our country. That's why I encourage you with all my being, for more of you to do your part and get both doses of the vaccine; and as soon as you can, please get your booster.

We continue to see new variants of the virus emerge. Whilst we are just starting to understand the full

impact of the Omicron strain, its confirmed presence here along with the Delta variant should make us all very wary. The double vaccine dose and the booster, together with maintaining a healthy immune system, are still our best weapons against the worst of COVID-19.

A high vaccination rate, including a high rate of booster shots, is critical as we continue to open to



# Health Insurance Premium Payment Assistance Programme (PPAP) extended through March 2022

The PACT Government has approved another round of health insurance premium payments assistance to displaced Caymanian workers; specifically those in the tourism and hospitality industries for the period January to March 2022.

“As everyone is painfully aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented persons and businesses with very challenging and unexpected difficulties”, said Hon. Sabrina Turner, Minister for Health & Wellness. “I am happy we are able to offer this assistance once again to those suffering from job loss in partnership with the Health Insurance Commission (HIC)”.

During the period May to December 2021, the Ministry of Health & Wellness in conjunction with HIC assisted approximately 7,981 persons who needed help paying their health insurance premiums at a cost of approximately \$860,949.

“The HIC has consulted with the eight Approved Insurers to obtain their agreement and willingness to continue offering the programme. Once applications have been vetted and confirmed, the Approved Insurers will submit their invoices to the Ministry of Health & Wellness via the HIC for coverage to be affected for the successful applicants.

“The Ministry of Health will have 45 calendar days after receipt of the monthly invoices to settle amounts due with each Approved Insurer,” Mr. Mervyn Conolly, Director, Department of Health Regulatory Services and Superintendent of Health Insurance, explains.

Mr Conolly stated, “I am very pleased that we are able to once again extend this invitation to persons who need assistance with their health insurance coverage.”

Persons applying for the PPAP must be:

- Caymanian currently residing in the Cayman Islands, presently unemployed or no longer working fulltime in the tourism and hospitality industries

- Able to provide information on their current or most recent health insurance plan, including the premium rate that was paid for the plan.

Premium payment assistance will be considered to provide coverage to the level of the Standard Health Insurance Contract. Once the applications are verified and approved, the Ministry of Health will then plan for the direct payment of the health insurance premium to the health insurance provider.

Persons may contact the Health Insurance Commission via email to [hic@gov.ky](mailto:hic@gov.ky)



or by phone on 946-2084 for additional details. Applications and additional information may be downloaded from the Commission’s website at [dhrs.gov.ky](http://dhrs.gov.ky). Hard copies of the application are also available at the Health Insurance Commission counter on the ground floor of the Government Administration Building.

**The deadline for receipt of applications is Wednesday, 29 December 2021 to effect coverage commencing 1**

**January 2022. All recipients of the assistance must renew their applications on a monthly basis throughout the programme, which ends 30 March 2022.**

“The Ministry of Health & Wellness thanks the Department of Health Regulatory Services for carrying out the assessment of the applications and the Government for making this assistance available to those in need”, said Ministry of Health & Wellness Chief Officer Nellie Pouchie.

## Government pensioners receive extra payment for Christmas

Government pensioners will be receiving a \$150 ex-gratia payment for Christmas.

The Cabinet approved the one-off payment at a special meeting on Tuesday, 21 December 2021.

Deputy Governor and Head of the Civil Service Hon. Franz Manderson expressed his gratitude to the Government for approving this payment: “I thank my Cabinet colleagues for supporting our public service pensioners in this way. Many of them have served our beloved Islands for decades and could easily be described as the backbone of our society. We are happy to

be able to give this token to them during the festive season.”

Minister for Finance and Economic Development Hon. Chris Saunders also welcomed the move, saying, “I am pleased that our government pensioners will be receiving this extra payment at Christmas; we recognise the valuable contributions that they have made during their time in the Public Service. We were able to fund this payment through budgetary savings.”

The payment will be disbursed to pensioners who are part of the Public Service Pensions Plan. It will be deposited to recipients’ accounts today, 23 December.



## Hon Roy McTaggart Christmas Message

CONTINUED FROM Page 8

visitors as well as to control the community spread of the virus.

Christmas for me is a time of reflection and being grateful for the blessings of the past year. Despite the pandemic, our blessings are many.

Family too, is important to me, and in July I was specially blessed with the birth of my third grandchild, Mary Jessica. The title ‘grandpa’ is one of the proudest titles that I wear.

Public office is hugely rewarding and brings blessings in many unexpected ways. So, I am grateful for the re-election of myself and my Progressives colleagues at the general elections early in the year.

On a personal note, this will be my third term serving as a Member of Parliament and I thank the constituents of George Town East for their continued confidence in me. It is an honour that I take seriously.

Members of Parliament perform many important duties but amongst the most solemn is attending the funerals of our

people. We often spend time with families and share in their grief. Though painful, it is an honour to be asked to participate in a family’s farewell to a loved one.

This year, we have lost so many of our people, and on Christmas day there will be many empty chairs at dinner tables across our three Islands. Let us take a moment to remember those friends and loved ones who have passed on, and let us also pray for those that they left behind and who are grieving.

In closing, my colleagues and I, and our families, wish every one of you a joyous and blessed Christmas. And I implore you to be careful and follow public health protocols as you celebrate the festive season. The pandemic is still very real. And let us not forget our many first responders who have worked tirelessly to provide the best of care and keep us all as safe as possible.

Merry Christmas to you – and may God continue to bless our beautiful Isles and our wonderful people.

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► Cayman Islands Coast Guard Commander Robert Scotland with members of the National Security Council during a tour of the Coast Guard Compound. Premier Wayne Panton is pictured left, Attorney General Samuel is 2-left. Ministry of Border Control and Labour Chief Officer Wesley Howell is seen in the background.



► (L-R) Coast Guard Deputy Commander Leo Anglin, Deputy Governor Franz Manderson, Cabinet Secretary Samuel Rose inside Coast Guard HQ. (Photos Courtesy Office of the Premier)

# National Security Council Visits Coast Guard Compound

Members of the National Security Council (NSC) got an inside look at the work of the Cayman Islands Coast Guard (CICG), during a tour of the organisation's compound last week.

Commander Robert Scotland, who hosted the group, provided the NSC with a briefing of how the CICG is structured. Commander Scotland outlined the work of the various operational detachment. He



► Minister of Health & Wellness Sabrina Turner was fitted with a life jacket before the visiting National Security Council Members headed out on the water on the special purpose vessel Protector II.



► During the National Security Council visit to the Coast Guard compound, Commander Scotland spoke to the group about the Coast Guard's achievements over the past year, including assisting 25 vessels in distress, and recovering more than 3000 pounds of ganja.

also spoke about current maritime risks facing the Islands, especially those resulting from rapid growth of commercial and recreational marine activity, as well as plans for training and resource development in 2021.

The Commander also shared with the visitors that from January to November of this year the Coast Guard had assisted 25 vessels in distress, recovered more than 3000 pounds of ganja, and conducted more than 200 checks of our Wildlife Interaction Zone (WIZ), among other achievements.

Deputy Commander Leo Anglin also took council members out on the water on the 44 ft. special purpose vessel, Protector II. The craft has a multi-mission role that includes search-and-rescue as well as the detection and disruption of illicit maritime activity.

The National Security Council is a constitutional body that provides direc-

tion on matters of national security to His Excellency The Governor. Membership consists of the Governor, the Premier, Cabinet Ministers and the Leader of the Opposition, as well as the private sector.

The Cayman Islands Coast Guard, whose mission is "saving lives, protecting borders", was established in 2018 to ensure the safety and security of commercial and recreational activity in Cayman Islands waters.

Premier, Hon. Wayne Panton, in whose Ministry the Coast Guard resides, said: "It makes me very proud to see this new agency coming into its own. Its work is integral to the present and future safety of our community which is dependent on the sea for so much. At the same time the Coast Guard themselves enshrines one of our oldest and most embedded national traditions; a love of the sea."



**POLICE NEWS**



# RCIPS Recruits Join the Traffic & Roads Policing Unit During the Holidays

The 23 Police Constable trainees of the current RCIPS Recruit Class, who were officially sworn-in on 22 November, are joining the wider police service this holiday season, in order to increase police visibility, boost resources for operation Winter Guardian and provide invaluable experience to the members of the class.

The majority of the recruits, 16 of whom are young Caymanians, will be working alongside experienced traffic officers in the Traffic & Roads Policing Unit (TRPU), and will gain first-hand knowledge in the use of equipment such as the speed radar machine, tint machine and the breathalyzer machine. They will also be observing officers while they execute tasks such as issuing tickets, investigating collisions and making arrests for various traffic offenses.

"The officers with whom the recruits will be working during this time are some of our very best and most experienced officers in the unit," says Inspector Dwayne Jones of the TRPU. "When they return to the Training & Development Unit they will be able to compare their continued lessons in policing theory with what they experienced first-hand while out with our team."

During their patrols the recruits will have the opportunity to practice their skills of observation, especially during the night time, looking out for suspicious activity and behavior, recording the things that they observe, and learning the gener-

al ins-and-outs of policing in the Cayman Islands.

Some of the recruits will be stationed with other RCIPS Units, including the Community Policing Unit, the Custody Unit, and at the Central Police Station. In addition, six members of the class, who are currently serving as Auxiliary Constables, will be returning to their previous duties across the service during this period.

"We are happy to be able to provide this type of one-on-one hands-on training for our recruits," says Superintendent Adrian Seales with the Training & Development Unit. "They are now able to experience field work and make contacts before they go off, and this will benefit them in their studies when they return."

We are also happy that members of the community will have the opportunity to meet the new recruits as they work in the field this holiday season, prior to their official start as trained police officers in the new year."

The RCIPS wishes these new recruits well during their time with the wider service. We know that they will do an excellent job of keeping the Cayman Islands safe during the holidays.

For more information on the 2021 RCIPS Recruit Class, please see this press release <https://www.rcips.ky/rcips-launches-2021-recruitment-training-26-november>.



**COMMUNITY NOTICE**

# DEH Temporarily Hold on Intake of Scrap Metals and Derelict Vehicles

The Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is advising the public that the George Town Landfill will not be accepting scrap metals and derelict vehicles from December 25, 2021 until January 4, 2022.

"We have temporarily suspended the reception of these items into the landfill. The contractor who safely manages the depollution, processing and removal of derelict vehicles and scrap metal from the George Town Landfill will be standing down over the Christmas and New Year holiday period", explained DEH Assistant Director Solid Waste, Michael Haworth.

Members of the public will still be able to deposit small amounts of scrap metal

at the landfill drop off facility which remain in operation 24 hours a day over this period.

The DEH apologizes for any inconvenience caused by this temporary measure and that acceptance of scrap metals and derelict vehicles will resume on Tuesday, January 4, 2022, as normal.

For additional information, please contact the DEH at 949-6696, email us at [dehcustomerservice@gov.ky](mailto:dehcustomerservice@gov.ky), visit the DEH's website at [www.deh.gov.ky](http://www.deh.gov.ky) or message our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Department-of-Environmental-Health-Cayman-Islands-Government-335107266641072>.



## Landfill Advisory

### Intake of Scrap Metals & Derelict Vehicles



to resume on Jan. 4, 2022

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## CARIBBEAN BRIEFS

# Cubans frantic to leave the misery

Cuba is experiencing a new wave of citizens so desperate to leave that they are endangering their lives to cross the Florida Straits in inadequate vessels to get to the United States and some are even flying to countries thousands of miles away to seek refuge with the intention of getting to America.

A boat full of desperate Cubans found aboard a dinghy after the makeshift vessel was intercepted by the United States Coast Guard near the Florida Keys were deported back to the Communist-run nation last week.

The 18 migrants were sent back Tuesday following their arrest four days earlier

about 15 miles off Duck Key. The Coast Guard's Sector Key West was alerted after a container ship crew spotted the group crammed aboard the 15-foot rustic vessel.

The migrants were medically assessed, fed and processed for their expulsion to the economically-ravaged island.

The US deported 838 Cubans who were stopped at sea in the year up to September 30 - the highest total since nearly 1,500 were sent back in 2017. The US Department of Homeland Security data shows Coast Guard crews have already stopped 462 Cuban migrants in the current fiscal year.

The spike in Cubans fleeing the island over the last two years has been primarily driven by the scarcity of basic goods, restrictions on civil liberties and the mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic as residents have taken to the streets in the first mass demonstration since before former leader Fidel Castro came into power.

US Border Patrol arrested 37 Cuban migrants who landed in the Florida

Keys on Saturday after they made the cross Atlantic voyage on two wooden boats.

Cubans fleeing the socialist regime had been allowed to remain in the US under President Bill Clinton's 'wet foot, dry foot' 1995 policy which revised the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act. The law granted them eligibility to become residents within a year. President Obama stopped that immigration policy in January 2017, signing an executive decision as he left office.

Cubans caught in the sea by US authorities are now returned to Cuba or the country from where they originally departed under United States policy.

Russia is one of a handful of countries that does not require Cubans to obtain a visa to travel there, so some Cubans use the route as a way to cross into other countries in Europe, with the ultimate goal of eventually reaching the US.

But in recent weeks, Russia has begun to crack down on Cubans using the visa exemption to travel to third countries.

A month ago, a group of 71 Cubans were denied entry to Russia and sent back home. Pictures posted on social media by members of the group showed them huddled and sleeping in the bathroom of the Moscow airport as they awaited the return flight.



► Cuban boat people risk their lives to get out

Meanwhile, the US has condemned the "politically motivated trials" of hundreds of Cubans who were involved in unprecedented anti-government protests in July. Cuban authorities are seeking prison sentences of up to 25 years for some of the protesters.



► Protesters are being persecuted now

## Rowley threatens Trinis over vaccine

Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley has given government employees a choice of being vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus or staying home and lose their salaries. This ultimatum has caused mass outrage.

Rowley set a deadline of mid-January for unvaccinated workers to get inoculated or they will not be allowed to return to work nor allowed to work remotely.

Rowley made the announcement following record COVID-19 daily deaths and infections.

December is on pace to become Trinidad and Tobago's deadliest infectious month of the pandemic.

A record 33 COVID-19 deaths were reported last Saturday as well as 956 cases, the second highest number of new infections reported in one day.

The second deadliest day of the COVID-19 pandemic was also recorded this month on 15 December, with 32 deaths. November's record of 462 deaths and 14,032 total cases looks likely to be surpassed. Tobago has recorded 166 deaths and 1,304 cases.

Rowley said: "We have come to the point where the Government will have to take certain actions. The government being the largest employer of labour, so the government's workplace will have to change." He said those who choose not to be vaccinated will still be employed, but will not be paid.

The Joint Trade Union Movement (JTUM) met with Attorney General Faris Al-Rawi but with little sign of consensus. Accusing the PM of being "unilateral, high-handed, dictatorial" JTUM head An-



► Dr Keith Rowley's decision is controversial

cel Roget urged him to withdraw the vaccine mandate. "We are encouraging our members to be vaccinated. But we are pro-choice," Roget said. "I myself took the vaccine, I myself believe in the science. But I believe it is the right of any individual to accept or reject and that belief is shared across the board by all members of JTUM."

Al-Rawi, in reply, said: "The Government is not in a position to withdraw its policy statement." He said the fact that the high number of deaths and the prospect of mass burials, and the doubling of Omicron infections every 2.5 days meant it was essential to act quickly.

"The normal process of collective bargaining does not apply in a pandemic," the Al-Rawi. Associations for police, prisons and fire are seeking incentives for their members to be vaccinated such as extra pay and/or healthcare prioritisation.

Opposition Leader Kamla Persad-Bissessar in her Christmas message said: "I urge everyone to continue to follow the health protocols and to please consider getting vaccinated."

## Safer Jamaica is magnet for Americans

Jamaica has been downgraded from level three to level two on the United States Centres for Disease Control & Prevention's (CDC) travel recommendations ranking system. The decision comes in recognition of efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19.

This new classification places the destination in a risk category lower than more than 70 percent of countries worldwide. Jamaica Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett said it will increase the number of visitors from the United States during the winter tourist season.

"We are extremely proud that the CDC has once again lowered its COVID-19 travel recommendations ranking to a level two ranking, indicating that COVID-19 contraction level is moderate," he said.

Under the CDC update, US citizens should be fully vaccinated before traveling to destinations which have the level two designation. Unvaccinated travellers should abstain from unnecessary travel to these locations.

The latest development caps a successful month for the Jamaica tourism industry, with the World Travel Awards having honoured the destination with a number of top titles.

At the same time, the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre



► Martha Brae rafting is a great experience

(GTRCMC), founded by minister Bartlett, was recognised with the unique trophy for World's Leading Tourism Initiative.

Jamaica's top attraction is Negril Beach, also known as Seven Mile Beach. It is one of Jamaica's most beautiful stretches of white sand and aqua sea, overlooked by the famous Negril Cliffs. Second most popular attraction is rafting the Martha Brae - especially for couples. At Martha Brae Rafters Village, visitors glide down a picturesque stretch of the river on bamboo rafts poled by local guides.

Third most popular attraction is a fun outing at Dunn's River Falls and Bob Marley's Nine Mile tour. This tour stops by the village of Nine Mile, birthplace of Bob Marley, and then heads over to the Dunn's River Falls for a guided hike up to the falls and a slide or swim in the natural pools.



# 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

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

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### Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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Difficulty Level ★★★

4/16

## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS** 43 Espresso

- 1 Hotel desk order fixture
- 5 Viking of the comics
- 10 Benefit
- 12 Speculate
- 13 Positive-thinking
- 14 Some turns
- 15 Strange
- 16 Try for a pin
- 18 Get snug
- 20 Stiller of films
- 21 Helps out
- 23 Gallery fill
- 24 Ride the waves
- 26 Price holders
- 28 Engine sound
- 29 Beige
- 31 Sphere
- 32 Mortar's mate
- 36 Bridge support
- 39 Crayon makeup
- 40 Like haunted houses
- 41 Native group

**DOWN**

- 1 Burger topper
- 2 Stay clear of
- 3 Comes to earth
- 4 Pot topper
- 5 Bagel feature
- 6 Galoots
- 7 Wrapping paper alternative
- 8 Stag's pride
- 9 Bristle at
- 11 Blighter superior
- 17 Cardinal
- 19 Paving goo
- 22 Block sur-rounders
- 24 Dreamlike
- 25 Author Eco
- 27 Switz. neighbor
- 28 Travel stops
- 30 PFC's
- 33 Binding need
- 34 Record company
- 35 Bring to bear
- 37 Locale
- 38 Course needs
- 42 Flock father

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

### Yesterday's answer

## Word Search

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

- Ball
- Bench
- Carousel
- Children
- Enjoyment
- Frisbee
- Grass
- Hopscotch
- Jungle Gym
- Ladders
- Laughter
- Monkey Bars
- Nannies
- Pail
- Parents
- Sand Box
- Seesaw
- Slide
- Smiles
- Spring Horse
- Sun Hat
- Swing

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		

8-5



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**CAYMANIAN  
TIMES**

### CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley

### THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN

By Stan Lee

### JUDGE PARKER

By Woody Wilson & Mike Manley



# Curry is hottest tip for MVP

Stephen Curry has won the MVP twice and looks set to grab his third even though the NBA season is not even half way through yet. He is the undisputed 3-point champion now too.

At 33, Curry is assembling one of the best seasons of his career, and he has helped position Golden State atop the Western Conference as they await the return of Klay Thompson.

Curry scored 33 points in their 116-107 victory over the Phoenix Suns on Christmas Day. Curry carried most of the load, overcoming a mediocre shooting night to crack 20 points for the first time in nine Christmas games. Chris Paul had 21 points and eight assists for Phoenix. Deandre Ayton finished with 18 points in the Suns' third loss in 28 games.

Playing on Christmas is nothing new to the Warriors. This was their ninth straight Christmas Day game and 11th in 12 seasons. The Suns, once regulars on the Christmas schedule, were in their first since 2009.

Golden State arrived in the desert short-handed, missing three of their top four scorers to health and safety protocols: Andrew Wiggins, Damion Lee and Jordan Poole. It didn't really matter as Curry filled the void impressively.

He has been sensational this season averaging 27.1 points per game on 39.6 percent shooting from the three-point range. For 13 NBA seasons, Curry has been racking up scores for Golden State, and last Tuesday, he became the NBA's most prolific 3-point shooter, sailing past Ray Allen's career record. The record-breaking shots came early in the first quarter against the New York Knicks at Madison Square Garden, with Allen in attendance and the crowd buzzing every time Curry touched the ball.

Curry reached a career 3-point-milestone of 2,977 in 789 games. Allen's previous record had come in 1,300 games. Curry will soon pass the 3,000 mark and continue amassing those incredible numbers.

But beyond the gluttonous figures is the artistry of an athlete



► Steph Curry is in outstanding form again

capable of producing jolts of electricity whenever he lines up a long-distance shot.

At this stage of the season, the MVP race is becoming clearer. Kevin Durant is the other outstanding contender but he is injured presently. Giannis Antetokounmpo and Nikola Jokic are having fantastic seasons too and are also in the mix.

The Warriors are now the top team in the west, and have the best record in the entire NBA, thanks mainly to Curry. After a two-year hiatus from the league's upper echelon that threatened to become a

permanent condition, the Warriors have regained their place at the pinnacle. There were plenty of reasons to believe that while their dynastic run included three championships and five straight Finals appearances, the Warriors seemed in decline. They were an ageing team seemingly fading gracefully out of the spotlight.

Though they lost Durant to the Brooklyn Nets on free agency in 2019, and still rely heavily on their senior players, the Warriors don't look like a team that's been disrupted in the least by the harsh realities of basketball mortality.



► Kevin Durant is making an impact for the Nets

## Harper pays the price for Windies failure

Roger Harper has been sacked as West Indies' chairman of selectors with Cricket West Indies opting not to extend his two-year contract which ends on Friday.

Fellow selector Miles Bascombe, 35, was sacked too. Head coach Phil Simmons will temporarily take on selection responsibilities alongside team captains Kraigg Brathwaite (Test) and Kieron Pollard (limited overs).

Harper took up the position in 2019 with high expectations after years of Windies inconsistency. The 58-year-old Guyanese was a brilliant West Indies all-rounder and was briefly the team coach. His appointment was seen as a turning point in the team's fortunes. But West Indies won only five out of 16 Tests, 11 out of 21 one-day internationals, and 14 out of 39 Twenty20 Internationals.

Cricket West Indies said it will begin looking for a new lead selector in January. CWI Director of Cricket, Jimmy Adams, will oversee the process.

Disgruntled West Indies fans were on Harper's case for months. They became even more miserable when the squad for the ICC T20 World Cup in the United



► Roger Harper, right, with Windies limited overs skipper Kieron Pollard

Arab Emirates and Oman was named in September, featuring ageing players like Dwayne Bravo, Ravi Rampaul and Chris Gayle. Their fears were confirmed by the players' poor performances. And when as defending champions West Indies managed only one win in five matches for a painful exit, Harper's fate looked inevitable.

West Indies play Ireland next in a series of T20s, then England, then India, all at home.

## Rodgers surpasses Favre's record

Quarterback Aaron Rodgers became the Green Bay Packers' all-time leader for passing touchdowns with his 443rd scoring pass on Saturday.

The record came with an 11-yard pass to Allen Lazard in the first quarter against the Cleveland Browns. It saw him move past the legendary Brett Favre in the team records. Favre threw 508 touchdown passes during his Hall of Fame career, 442 of them with Green Bay. Favre sent a message to Rodgers in a video that aired on the Lambeau Field scoreboard after the record-breaking touchdown pass. "Hey, 12, congratulations, man, on passing my touchdown record," Favre said. "I have one request. Go get us another Super Bowl. Congrats."

Rodgers, 38, went on to complete 24 of 34 passes for 202 yards and three scores in the 24-22 win. "I'm very fortunate to have played with the guys I played with and to be coached by the men I was coached by over the years," he said.

Rodgers, who threw two touchdown passes to Davante Adams in the second quarter to finish the game on 445, set the



► Aaron Rodgers beat Favre's record in fewer games

record in his 17th season and 211th game in Green Bay, while Favre set the previous Packers record in 16 seasons over 255 games.

Tom Brady holds the record for the most touchdown passes, with 617 for the New England Patriots and his current team, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The victory saw the Packers improve to 12-3 and stay in control in the race for the top seed in the NFC play-offs.

Meanwhile, the Arizona Cardinals failed to clinch a play-off berth for the third week in a row, falling 22-16 to the Indianapolis Colts.

Carson Wentz threw two touchdown passes and Jonathan Taylor ran for 108 yards for the Colts, who have won three straight games and six of their last seven.