



Caymanian Times



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PROGRESSIVES CALL FOR ACTION ON TOURISM STIPEND

The opposition Progressives party has called on the PACT government to “to commit to meaningful help for all involved in the tourism sector” saying “action and not lip service is needed.”

Citing recent mainstream media reports - including Caymanian Times - highlighting of the situation surrounding stipend payments, a press release by Progressives leader Roy McTaggart, takes the government to task over its handling of the issue.

Now that the borders are fully open (except from cruise traffic) the PACT administration has said that the CI\$1500 per month paid to inactive tourism workers is under review with a decision expected by next month.

But the opposition has called foul on that, accusing the government of prioritising ministers’ pet projects over the needs of the furloughed workers and their families.

“We have been saying to the Government, over and over, that tourism would be very slow to return. We implored them to continue with the Government’s support of Caymanian families and businesses struggling with the absence of any real and sustained return of tourism. We asked that Government prioritise such assistance for families and businesses. The money is there if Government would put people ahead of Ministers’ pet projects,” the statement said.

It also referred to ministers’ response to questions from the media, saying: “The Government stated that they are ‘aware of the extent of the issues facing the sector’ and are ‘in the process of determining the level, conditions and duration of additional support that will be required this year.’”

But the Progressives counter the PACT administration by arguing that “there



► Progressives leader Roy McTaggart

is no reason for last-minute policy decisions. The Government just passed their first budget, and the support for tourism workers and businesses should have been ‘cemented in.’

Quoting extensively from the two national papers to make their point, the Progressives say: “This need has been evident for months. We have certainly been beating the drum that continued, and improved support was necessary.”

The press release adds: “This PACT Government first tried to cancel support for tourism workers, and now it is late to again woefully understand the apparent needs of the industry as a whole. In contrast, we have been proposing better support for tourism workers and ongoing support for businesses from the start.”

The Opposition says: “It is time for the Government to commit to meaningful help for all involved in the tourism sector – action and not lip service is needed.”

And it concludes: “As has seemingly become the norm, I suspect that once the Opposition speaks, the Government will listen - and hopefully act.”

EDITORIAL

WHITHER BARBADOS?

By Basil Springer

The snap election in Barbados is now history. Notwithstanding many issues which were raised to postpone the election, the people have spoken.

We must (1) congratulate Prime Minister Mia Mottley and the Barbados Labour Party (BLP); (2) urge the dynamic and charismatic Mia Mottley to become the leader of a larger more viable Caribbean; (3) use Mia’s international image and popularity to garner support and raise funds for Caribbean development; (4) nurture new leaders of the BLP and the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) to build a strong parliamentary democracy; and (5) train young Caribbean talent to systematically build strong political parties by adapting existing international training programs.

Congratulations to the BLP on their massive 30-0 victory, twice in less than four years, thus extending their mandate until at least 2027. This victory is no surprise to me. I previously wrote that a snap election was a brilliant move because it was going to take some magic from the DLP to energize a wave (swing) to begin to systematically topple BLP seats won in the last election.

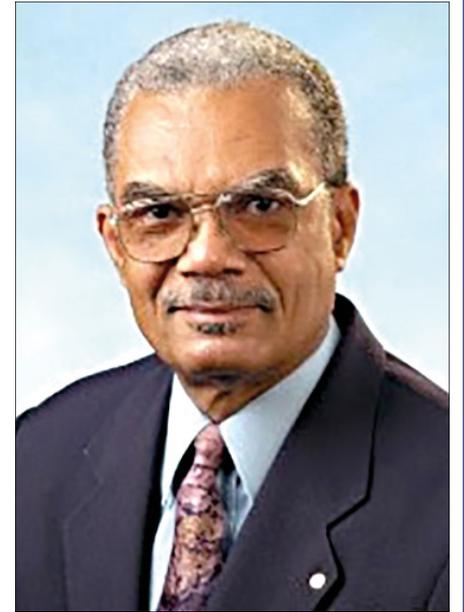
The DLP must now rebuild to achieve a semblance of parliamentary democracy by the time the next election is called.

In this column, on November 15, 2021, I shared my view that Mia is a brilliant, outstanding, exemplary Caribbean leader “who cares”, the likes of which is a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

I stated recently on Irwine Clare’s IRIE JAM RADIO show in New York that “she is fearless and forceful and often quotes The Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, the first Prime Minister of Barbados: ‘We’ll be friends of all (and) satellites of none.’” The world is her oyster.

What if we could design a model as to how Mia’s intellect and charisma could be used to mobilize the talents of the wider Caribbean in their best interests?

In the Irwine Clare interview we discussed the impact of her international image at COP26 in Glasgow at which she eruditely and comprehensively analyzed the issues and made succinct proposals for addressing the funding required to address climate change. At that meeting she charged that if immediate action were not taken it would accelerate the demise of the most vulnerable states,



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

including the Caribbean. Can this thrust not be extended to garner funds for regional development?

Mia hinted in her victory speech on the morning of Thursday, January 20 that she entered politics in Barbados over 30 years ago and that this election victory could signal the beginning of her last term in party politics.

It is a stressful business, if you take it seriously, especially if there is no god-parenting country to provide a safety net in the event of a natural disaster. She will be 61 years old at the end of this term (Deo volente) and must be often reminded of the life span of her predecessors David Thompson (48), Tom Adams (53) and Errol Barrow (67) who each died in office well before the expected three score and ten.

She would be best advised to select a successor and nurture him or her to take over whether or not she opts for a regional assignment in a non-party political space.

The DLP has been decimated and must find a young leader around which to rebuild.

Political parties are at the core of our democracy, and we must systematically engage in skill set change, mindset change and cross-cultural communication change, if we are to build strong political institutions around the Caribbean. We should not ignore training modules already developed elsewhere to train parties in internal democracy, communications, governance and transparency.

Dr. Basil Springer GCM is a Change-Engine Consultant. His email address is basilgf@marketplaceexcellence.com. His columns may be found at www.nothingbeatsbusiness.com/basil-springer-column/ and on www.facebook.com/basilgf.



• Congratulations BLP – build sustainable economy
• Mia’s intellect and charisma – lead wider Caribbean
• Mia’s international image – garner funds for regional development
• New political leadership – BLP (fill void when Mia goes), DLP (rebuild)
• Build political parties – train for internal democracy, outreach, transparency



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All of the lonely people: Changing our perspective to communicate with others

By Dr Erica Lam

Loneliness is a state of mind that causes people to feel empty, alone, and unwanted. It results when one perceives a gap between one's desires for social connection and the actual experiences of it. Even people who are surrounded by others throughout the day or in a relationship may still experience a deep and pervasive loneliness. Research suggests that loneliness poses serious threats to well-being and is associated with social isolation, poor social skills, introversion, and depression.

How we perceive our peers when we're lonely

The state of loneliness can lead to heightened anxiety and turn on the "threat brain", making you more hyper-vigilant as a way to protect yourself from perceived threats. This increases the risks of misreading your peers' neutral expressions as being hostile. The prolonged exposure to this state of hyper-vigilance and "threat brain" will desensitise the stress system, making you more prone to anxiety and mood dysregulation difficulties.

How we perceive our peers when they're lonely

In turn, a person might start to interpret an anxious person's isolated feelings as

them being cold or defensive, and therefore may struggle to connect or engage with that person. This can lead to a vicious cycle of feeling rejected and rejecting others, maintaining the state of fear and loneliness.

Staying present and patient

While good-intentioned, checking in or asking "are you okay?" may lead to misinterpretations of your concern as hostility. Instead, young people have recommended reaching out by initiating conversations about present and everyday topics, by asking questions like: "Who made you laugh today?"

Other ways to begin a conversation are by asking a classmate: "How did you find the homework for yesterday? Did you have a hard time with that math problem, too?" Or offering to assist a colleague with: "Can I help out on that project in any way? I would love to get involved." Or placing the onus on yourself by asking for help: "Hey, can I sit here with you for a moment? I don't want to eat alone."

Breaking the ice with someone to discuss topics unrelated to their well-being establishes a connection for a lonely person to confide in you later on.

Reframing our perspective

Similarly, we encourage young people to try reframing their perspective when they believe someone dislikes them or



► Dr Erica Lam, Clinical Consultant, Alex Panton Foundation Clinical & Education Committee Chair

they read someone as unapproachable. Ask yourself: are they actually mad at me? Or am I projecting my fears and misreading their expressions and non-verbal cues? Check in with yourself to assess if you are using your "threat brain" or your "rational brain" to read the situation.

Neither person's expressions or responses make them at fault, though. Rather, simply being aware of these unique perspectives allows us to better understand each other and to reflect on our assumptions of other people.

For more information, contact info@alexpantonfoundation.ky.

Reopening Plan: Phase 5

Easing Travel Restrictions for Children

Who Can Travel

- ✓ All vaccinated travellers (securely and non-securely verifiable)
- ✓ Unvaccinated Caymanians, Residents and Work Permit Holders
- ✓ Unvaccinated visitors who have close ties to the country (Persons who own local properties and businesses, or who are a spouse, civil partner, parent, step-parent, child, grandchild, step-child, or grandparent of a Caymanian or Resident)
- ✓ Unvaccinated children under the age of 12 years old

Who Cannot Travel

- ✗ Unvaccinated tourist visitors (including unvaccinated tourist visitor children age 12 years and over) who do not have close ties to the country
- ✗ Unaccompanied tourist visitor children
- ✗ Cruise travellers

Travel Arrangements

- ✓ All travellers are required to apply on the Travel Cayman Portal and will be issued with a travel certificate which is required for entry (apply no less than five days prior to departing for the Islands)

Pre-Arrival COVID-19 Testing

- ✓ All incoming travellers age 5 years and over must provide a negative result from a PCR or certified antigen-detecting rapid diagnostic test (LFT) taken no earlier than the day before departure

Quarantine Period

- ✓ 10 days: Unvaccinated travellers (age 12 years and over) along with all unvaccinated members of their household
- ✓ 10 days: Unaccompanied unvaccinated children who travel from a country with a vaccination rate below 60% for the first dose of the vaccine quarantining with unvaccinated persons
- ✓ 7 days: Unaccompanied unvaccinated children who travel from a country with a vaccination rate below 60% for the first dose of the vaccine quarantining with vaccinated persons
- ✓ 7 days: Travellers with non-securely verifiable vaccination records who travel from a country with a vaccination rate below 60% for the first dose of the vaccine

Vaccinated household members are not required to quarantine but will be required to undergo a daily LFT for 10 days.

Children

- ✓ Unvaccinated children under the age of 12 years old will assume the vaccination status of their adult travel companions
- ✓ Unaccompanied unvaccinated children under the age of 12 years old will be subject to the 60% rule for rate of vaccination of the country from which they are travelling
- ✓ All children age 12 years and over are required to be vaccinated to be exempt from quarantine

Unaccompanied tourist visitor children are not permitted to enter.



► Rendering of the future pedestrianised Cardinal Avenue that includes new street lighting, furniture and landscaping

George Town's Cardinal Avenue Begins Transformation into Pedestrianised Street

Phase one of the Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure's Cardinal Avenue enhancement project starts on Monday, 31 January, as part of the ongoing George Town Revitalisation Initiative.

This first phase includes the pedestrianisation of the section of road between Seafarers Way and Albert Panton Street, which

will see the existing asphalt replaced with colourful concrete pavers. Enhancements will also be made to the eastern section of Cardinal Avenue; however, this section of road will remain accessible to one-way vehicular traffic via Albert Panton Street.

Further enhancements to the avenue include installing additional street lighting,

landscaping and mature vegetation, plus new street furniture. At the same time, the underground infrastructure will be updated with new water mains and relined sanitary and storm sewers.

Robson Construction is leading the works with support from long-standing partners of the revitalisation project, the

National Roads Authority, Caribbean Utilities Company and Apec Consulting Engineers Limited.

In preparation for the project's kick-off, George Town Manager Colin Lumsden and key members of the project team met with Cardinal Avenue landowners and building tenants this week. Mr Lumsden noted that the main objectives of the enhancement works are to improve the aesthetic and character of the downtown area.

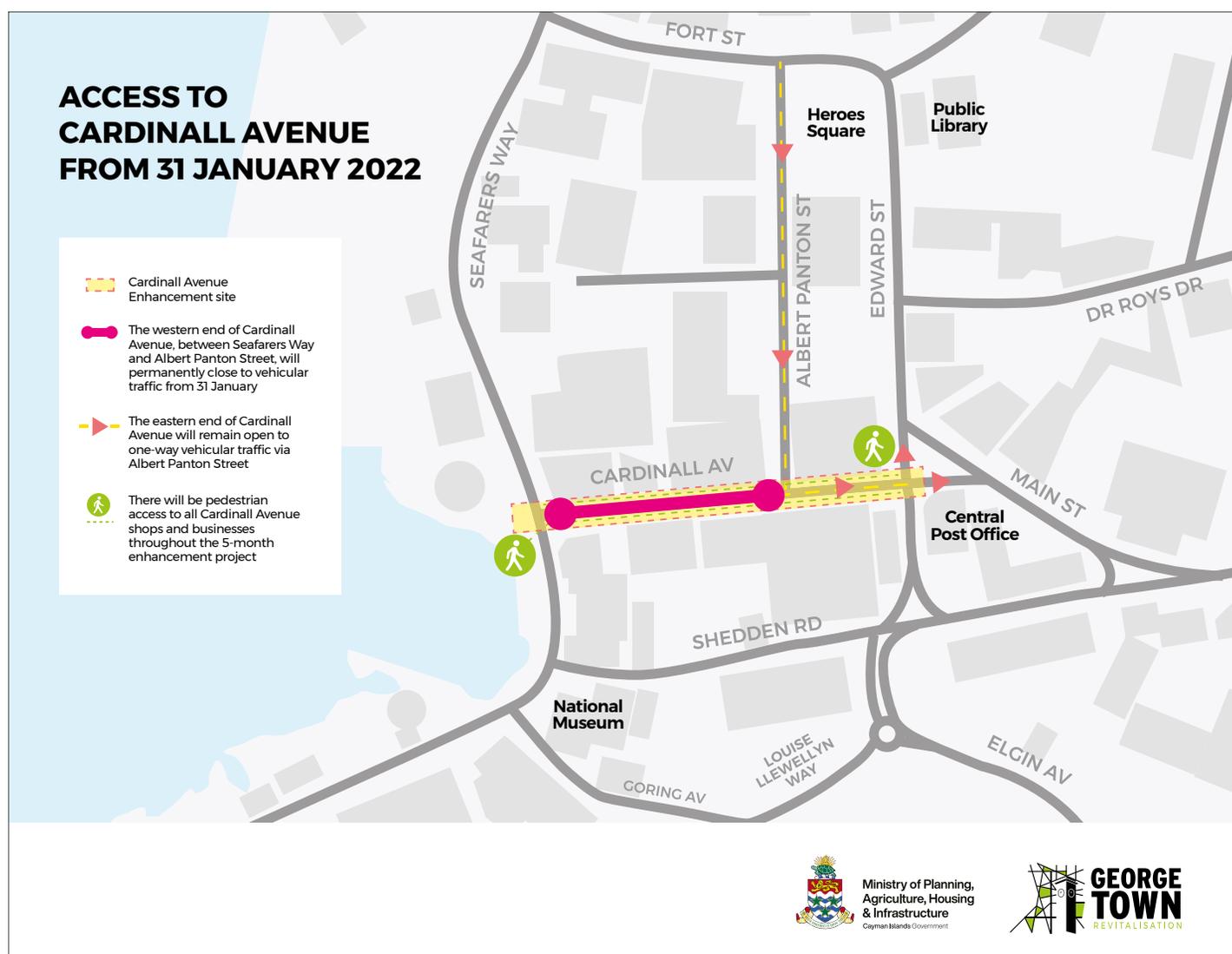
"The goal of the George Town Revitalisation Initiative is to create opportunities for increased activity by locals and tourists in our capital by developing public open spaces adjacent to businesses that enhance the experience for visitors," he says.

From 31 January, there will no longer be general vehicular access to Cardinal Avenue from Seafarers Way. Traffic will be rerouted from Seafarers Way into town by way of Mary Street, Fort Street and Goring Avenue, as well as access the eastern end of Cardinal Avenue, between Albert Panton Street and Edward Street, via Albert Panton Street. Cardinal Avenue will remain open to foot traffic for access to shops, cafes and businesses, which will continue operations as usual.

"This new pedestrian-friendly area in the centre of town marks a big milestone in the George Town Revitalisation Initiative master plan. We are confident the result will create a significantly enhanced experience for the public and local businesses," Mr Lumsden says.

The project is expected to take place over five months.

Follow the George Town Revitalisation Initiative on Facebook (facebook.com/GTRevitalisation) and Instagram (instagram.com/gtrevitalisation/) for real-time project updates.



HSA improves resiliency with on-site oxygen generator

The Health Services Authority (HSA) is pleased to announce the successful installation of a new on-site oxygen generator at the Cayman Islands Hospital. The oxygen generator provides a discharge flow rate of 2,100 lbs. per day (or 500 li-



tres per minute) of medical grade oxygen and is expected to save the Authority over \$150,000 per annum.

HSA's CEO Lizzette Yearwood said, "Medical oxygen has become one of the most important life-saving commodities in the fight against COVID-19. Statistics show that approximately 20 percent of patients who are treated for symptoms of COVID-19 will require oxygen therapy to prevent respiratory failure. Pure oxygen is also an essential resource in our operating room for procedures requiring anesthesia and in the intensive care and neonatal units."

The installation of this generator mitigates a potential national security risk



associated with insufficient local medical oxygen caused by disruptions to international supply chains. The emergence of COVID-19 has led to global shortages, instances of price gouging and an increase in black markets. This has created scarcity and delayed access in many jurisdictions.

Prior to the installation of the new oxygen generator the HSA sourced medical grade oxygen through a local vendor.

HSA's Board Chairman, Osbourne Bodden stated, "The global COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the pressing need for the Cayman Islands, as an isolated geographic location, to ensure self-sustainability in the delivery of uninterrupted patient care, operational efficiency and financial sustainability. The installation of this oxygen generator builds further resiliency in the operation of our main hospital and will help to keep our people safe."

The manufacturing company has a long waiting list of states and countries seeking to procure their own oxygen generator. Due to the fast and proactive actions of the HSA and its partnership with several local and overseas agencies, it



► The newly installed oxygen generator will produce medical grade oxygen for the HSA

was able to secure the plant and ensure it was delivered on island and installed in a timely manner.

RETHINKING TOURISM LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Countries that rely on tourism as a key economic pillar will need to rethink how they manage the sector as the world adapts to living with COVID-19.

The advice from the United Nation's World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) comes as countries such as the Cayman Islands seek to rejuvenate the vital sector as it emerges from the economic slowdown caused by the pandemic.

The UNWTO says it has been constantly assessing the impact of the pandemic, and working hard to help kickstart the industry on behalf of millions of people but also putting safety for travellers at the forefront.

Referring to the "disparate policies and regulations" being introduced by tourist destination countries, the head of the UNWTO said, "We are doing this to support

safe return of travel...and are working with member states and industry partners to create the first global code for the protection of tourists."

The outline has already been approved by the UN General Assembly.

Ms Urosevic further stated that "the coming years are going to be very crucial because we know that investment is going to be very necessary to undertake that transformation."

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Here in Cayman, coinciding with the PACT government's declaration that the country had reached the threshold for re-opening Hon. Tourism Minister Kenneth Bryan took to social media to reiterate his plan to not only recapture but reform tourism in Cayman.

In a commentary that saw some parallels with the position being adopted by the UNWTO, Mr Bryan referenced a 'light at the end of the tunnel' analogy similar to that posed by Caymanian Times at the recent government press on the Phase 5 reopening.

Urging Caymanians to have "a positive attitude about the future," he said there was reason to be hopeful as "there is light at the end of this tunnel."

The tourism minister said: "The first month of the year going into the season things are looking good. I've got some good feedback from the industry about numbers and within a month or two we may start to see a lot more people here."



RETHINKING TOURISM

And it's that balance that will define the future of tourism for Cayman, especially for the cruise sector.

equally protected and the likelihood of a further outbreak is minimised.

Saying that past experiences saw Cayman "overwhelmed" by the sheer volume of cruise traffic, Mr Bryan said a rethink of how the sector is managed here was overdue.

"We're working closely with the President of the Florida Caribbean Association (FCC), who's in charge of all these cruise ships who come to the Caribbean. On February 2nd, my ministry Premier and some others are going to sit with them and let's lay the land out and say 'listen, this is the way we want to go.'"

He said there are no plans to return to the way things were "because it was kind of chaotic", adding that, "I think we all agree that it was so much that it overwhelmed us. And that's what this discussion is about; it's quality over quantity and how do you find that balance."



► Mr Bryan on the beach



Cayman has deferred a decision of allowing cruise ships to return citing the need to ensure that both passengers/visitors and the resident population are

Officials explain delays in quarantine exiting

By Lindsey Turnbull

The media were able to get some answers from health officials about a number of issues troubling people with regard to the Covid pandemic during a special Zoom meeting on Tuesday. The most frequent worry facing the public is the issue with not receiving prompt results following an exit PCR and the subsequent delay in release from quarantine.

Incorrect details

Chief Nursing Officer Hazel Brown said there were a couple of reasons why people were not receiving timely results of their exit PCR tests.

“Sometimes it’s the lab that has to re-run these tests. Sometimes its incorrect email addresses. Sometimes we have no email addresses. There are times when we have no contact details. We have many instances when we are calling the phone numbers that are given us they are no longer in service or we have reached the wrong person, so there are a number of issues with us contacting persons,” she advised.

LFTs “a waste”

While acknowledging their worry about not only the inconvenience but also the dangers of isolation, particularly with re-

gard to people’s mental health, Nurse Hazel said the use of the lateral flow testing in order to decide if someone was infectious or not (in order to be released from quarantine) was a waste of precious resources and not environmentally friendly.

Such a use of the lateral flow test was not its preferred use because lateral flow tests were designed to pick up early infection, but could not be used to monitor the progress of the infection, she advised.

“Long after the lateral flow test is negative, the person may remain infectious and that is something that I’m really struggling to get people to understand,” she stated. “Once you get a positive lateral flow and you’ve done your PCR, you wait for your PCR. It’s really and truly a waste of that lateral flow test because, first of all, it doesn’t change the outcome, and the PCR is the requirement for exit legally once you are positive.”

Nurse Brown said she was concerned for the environment as well.

“As you know, these lateral flow kits are plastics and we don’t have any way of recycling. We are looking at the dump as well,” she said.

Nurse Brown asked the media to help them get the public to understand the correct use of the lateral flow and put it into the context of conservation as well as the value that it brought to the outbreak.



► Chief Nursing Officer Hazel Brown and Jonathon Smellie

The HSA’s molecular biologist Jonathon Smellie advised that the processing of PCRs took a considerable amount of work and that was one reason for the long delays some people may be experiencing with this current huge increase in outbreaks of Covid-19. He said that each test went through 35 separate steps. Public Health also had a number of tests that it had to do before it reached the lab, Nurse Brown added.

“A lot of those steps are repeated because we have to have two qualified persons review each sample before they leave the lab,” Mr Smellie advised.

Nurse Brown went on to say that it was a “dangerous practice” to allow people back to work only when they were LFT-negative, because they were “probably still positive” and, with the resurgence of the Delta strain taking place which may cause more serious hospitalisations, it was “of great concern”, but she acknowledged it was a reality and she did believe it was happening.

The moment they heard of such breaches they immediately act upon it, she advised.

US/UK approach

The United States and the UK both take a different approach to the Cayman Islands when it comes to quarantine. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that concentrations of

Covid-19 infection in upper respiratory specimens decline after onset of symptoms. Infectiousness peaks around one day before symptom onset and declines within a week of symptom onset, with an average period of infectiousness and risk of transmission between 2-3 days before and 8 days after symptom onset, they explain on their website.

“The likelihood of recovering infectious virus is very low after 10 days from onset of symptoms, except in people who have severe Covid-19 or who are moderately or severely immunocompromised,” the CDC says.

In the UK, the government regulations require a positive person to isolate for five full days and if they have two negative lateral flows on consecutive days people can end isolation, or after ten full days without negative results. Isolation begins when people show symptoms, not when they get a positive test.

“Your self isolation period includes the day your symptoms started or the day your test (LFT or PCR) was taken if you do not have symptoms,” the www.gov.uk website advises.

The UK Government website also states: “If both your LFT tests were negative, it is likely you are not infectious at the time the tests were taken.”

Both the CDC and the UK Government website state that the likelihood of being infectious after 10 days isolation is low.

Cases and rates	
Table 1: COVID-19 case numbers (16 January 2022 – 22 January 2022) Data as of 18-01-22	
	Total
Total cases to date	13,788
Total Omicron to date	To be added
Total number of PCR tests conducted (Jan 16 - 22, 2022)	6,886
Total number of new ¹ positives (Jan 16 - 22, 2022)	2,739
Daily average of new positives (Jan 16 - 22, 2022)	391
Case Rate	3,852
Percent of known positive cases against population	6.44%
Total number of cases monitored by Public Health	6016

Island Heritage sponsors Light up the Night Beach Walk

Founded in 1996 in the Cayman Islands, Island Heritage Insurance Company, Ltd. (“Island Heritage”) is a leading provider of personal and commercial insurance, including property, casualty, motor and yacht. In 2018, the Island Heritage Retirement Trust Company was approved as a Cayman-registered pension plan provider.

Island Heritage is part of the BF&M group of companies, of which the parent company is BF&M Limited.

Island Heritage Insurance Company, Ltd. (“Island Heritage” or “the Company”) announced today that it

has partnered with the Breast Cancer Foundation to be the title sponsor for the Light up the Night Beach Walk for the next five years. Island Heritage will donate CI \$60,000 over the five-year period.

For the past 25 years, Island Heritage has been dedicated to giving back to the Cayman community through various initiatives, including the popular annual CharityDrive. Caroline Mills-White, Island Heritage’s Group Chief Underwriting Officer, said: “We are thrilled to be the title sponsor for the Light up the Night Beach Walk in support of the outstanding work of the Breast Cancer Foundation. The Walk raises awareness about breast cancer and provides financial assistance for those who are unable to afford their treatment. Supporting this cause is

dear to our group of companies. Our Bermuda office recently celebrated 25 years of its BF&M Breast Cancer Awareness Walk.”

Commenting on the partnership, the Breast Cancer Foundation’s Director, Kim Lund said: “We are so grateful to have Island Heritage as the Title Sponsor to our annual Light Up the Night fundraising event. Island Heritage have been loyal supporters to the BCF for a great many years. We very much appreciate their tremendous support with this sponsorship and the financial assistance this will provide to those we are striving to help”.

Now in its 12th year, the Light up the Night Beach Walk will take place on March 5th 2022 starting at 7pm on Public Beach.



► (L to R) Island Heritage’s Group Chief Underwriting Officer, Caroline Mills-White, Breast Cancer Foundation’s Chief Administrator, Janette Fitzgerald, Breast Cancer Foundation’s Wellness Coordinator, Pam Laurenson and Breast Cancer Foundation’s Wellness Program Coordinator, Marina Rogers.

CAYMAN BANKS ON SCIENCE FOR FINAL REOPENING PHASE

In a move that it says based on science and trends with the Omicron variant of COVID-19 the PACT administration has shifted Cayman into Phase 5, the final level of its reopening plan.

Changes to the travel and arrival protocols and quarantine durations underpin the transition to what indicates a full reopening of the borders and economic activity - except for cruise travel at this stage.

The decision comes despite little change in the rate of infections from the highly contagious but comparatively less severe variant. At the time of Thursday's announcement, there were 17 people hospitalised with varying levels of illness from the disease including the Hon. Minister for Education Juliana O'Connor-Connolly.

A question by Caymanian Times publisher Ralph Lewis addressing the timing of the move to Phase 5 at a time when the COVID-19 situation remains acute was referred to the Interim Chief Medical Officer Dr Aulia Newton who underscored that the decision was based on medical science and current trends with the Omicron virus.

"Omicron is in Cayman like it is everywhere. And what it does because it spreads better than the previous strain Delta, you do see this very high spike of cases. So that's nothing unusual. We were expecting to see that" she explained.

One of the key factors in the reopening plan is the change to the quarantine protocols.

According to the updated regulations, isolation measures will decrease from 10 days to seven days for all securely verified passengers who are travelling from a country with less than 60% vaccination rates. Quarantine for all unvaccinated travellers is also reduced from 14 days to 10 days. Travellers in quarantine may exit via a certified LFT test and not a PCR test after being contacted by Travel Cayman and vaccinated occupants of a residence where a traveller is allowed to quarantine will not be required to quarantine.

It also stipulates that all children, Caymanians, residents or visitors, arriving as travellers, will now take on the vaccination status of the adult they are travelling with, resulting in no need to quarantine for the majority of travellers. The children of unvaccinated parents will now only be required to quarantine for 10 days instead of 14.

Interim CMO Dr Newton said the change in regulations and scaling down of restrictions to activate Phase 5 are scientifically based.

"What we have done in reducing the duration of the quarantine is based on science. And this is based also on the fact that many other countries have done exactly the same thing. So we know that the person is highly infectious, one or two days before symptoms that and then two, three days after the symptoms are static. So the vast majority of people by seven days from



the day one symptoms, they are no longer contagious."

She also outlined that, "on top of that, we know also that we are testing them so that we are sure that when we release them in the community, they are not infectious. So the measures are not being had not been taken lightly or because we weren't thinking that it was a good idea or anything like that. They are based on evidence and information. Which is available at the international level."

In its new weekly reporting format on the extent of COVID in Cayman, the Health Services Authority(HSA) shows a total of 3,967 active cases with an average of 314 new cases per day between January 9th and 15th. Of the total cases, 1,361 are new Omicron cases confirmed during that period.

There was still no indication of the number of people currently in isolation although that was previously regularly included in the daily updates. Towards the end of last year over 4,000 people were isolating at one stage with the resulting concern over staff shortages and the wider implications for the economy.

For his part Hon. Premier Wayne Panton, though optimistic in response to a question about the proverbial 'light at the end of the tunnel', remained philosophical.

"It's hard to say. It depends on what you mean by light at the end of the tunnel. Now, we think that we are going to have to continue managing COVID going forward for some time, but without a crystal ball it's impossible to say when that may be."

Mr Panton however feels that the success of the vaccination programme to date is a key element. Cayman's vaccination rates remain among the highest in the

world but have recently stalled at 81 per cent for first doses, 83 per cent for second and 23 per cent for boosters. Officials continue to urge the unvaccinated to get their doses.

"I think our experience has indicated to us that what we have achieved in terms of vaccination rate, has put us in a very strong position to minimise our impact on our health services," The Premier stated.

"We want to continue to monitor that very carefully. But at this point, I think given the changes that we have made, life should be getting better and we are learning to live more effectively. I think, with the current scenario, hopefully, we don't have the introduction of any other variants that that throw us any sort of curveballs, but that's always possible. I think we're learning to live with this a bit better. I think the impacts are going to reduce. So in that sense, yes, there is. There is some light at the end of the tunnel. But is it going to go away anytime soon? I don't think so."

Premier Panton expanded on his response to the issue raised by Caymanian Times publisher Ralph Lewis by pointing to the expectations for a turnaround in the economy, especially the tourism sector.

"We are in a position now given the changes we have implemented that we will have a much better potential outcome in terms of the continued improvement in our tourism industry. So overall from an economic perspective, from a social perspective, from a business perspective, things should be improving. But we still have to manage this carefully and make sure that we keep an eye on the health of our people and the ability of our health services to serve their needs."

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COVID-19 schedule & vulnerable 5-11 vaccine clinic

The Public Health Department has released the latest COVID-19 vaccination clinic schedule until February 12, 2022. This includes the introduction of the COVID-19 vaccine for vulnerable children 5 – 11 during an appointment-only clinic offered 9:30am – 3:30pm Saturday 29th January in the Public Health Clinic at the Cayman Islands Hospital.

Appointments can be made by contacting the Public Health Clinic at 926-8152. Please bring along the child’s immunisation record.

A physician letter in support of their patient receiving the vaccine **will be required** for any administration to this age group. Vulnerable or high-risk children aged 5 – 11 and those on the same age group living with vulnerable or immunocompromised individuals will qualify. This includes children 5-11 years old who have:

- Chronic respiratory disease
- Chronic heart conditions
- Chronic conditions of the kidney, liver or digestive system
- Chronic neurological disease (ie: Down’s syndrome)
- Endocrine disorders
- Immunosuppression (ie: those undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy, solid organ transplant recipients, bone marrow or stem cell transplant recipients)
- Asplenia or dysfunction of the spleen
- Serious genetic abnormalities that affect a number of systems

The Cayman Islands has approval from the UKHSA (previously Public Health England) to administer the COVID-19 vaccine to vulnerable, high-risk children ages 5 – 11, which will take place at dedicated clinic times.



“The administration of the childhood vaccines is done by specially trained Public Health nurses with extensive experience in immunization of children,” said Dr Hazel Brown, HSA Chief Nursing Officer.

“Based on the demand for the vaccine, additional clinics will be added as needed.”

As a reminder, the childhood vaccines **will not be administered** at the regular COVID vaccination clinic.

For children who would be eligible for this in the Sister Islands, please contact Faith Hospital to schedule an appointment 244-7643



COVID-19 Vaccine Schedule – JAN/FEB 2022 (v1)

The COVID-19 vaccine (dose 1 & 2) is available to ALL persons 12 years and over. Boosters (3rd Dose) at 131 Centre are available in alphabetical order to 18+ years old and clinically vulnerable (see criteria below)* **ALPHABETICAL ORDER APPLIES TO PERSONS SEEKING BOOSTERS ONLY. PERSONS FOR DOSE 1&2 CAN ATTEND ON ANY DAY.**

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR OWN FACE MASK



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JANUARY 24	25	26	27	28	29
NO CLINIC	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	PROSPECT COMMUNITY OFFICE (#33 Marina Drive) 4pm - 7pm	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	131 CENTRE** 1pm – 4pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)
	SURNAME O - Q (boosters)	SURNAME R - T (boosters)		SURNAME U - Z (boosters)	SURNAME A - C (boosters)
				SISTER ISLANDS ASTON RUTTY CENTRE 2 – 4pm	
31	FEBRUARY 1	2	3	4	5
SAVANNAH & NEWLANDS MLA OFFICE 4:30pm – 8pm (#8 Homestead Crescent, behind Wendy’s)	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	NORTH SIDE HEALTH CENTRE 4pm – 6pm	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	131 CENTRE** 1pm – 4pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)
	SURNAME D & E (boosters)	SURNAME F - H (boosters)		SURNAME I – L (boosters)	SURNAME M & N (boosters)
				SISTER ISLANDS ASTON RUTTY CENTRE 2 – 4pm	
7	8	9	10	11	12
131 CENTRE** 3pm – 7:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	BODDEN TOWN PUBLIC BEACH 5pm – 8pm	131 CENTRE** 12:30pm - 4pm 5:30pm – 8:30pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)	131 CENTRE** 1pm – 4pm (*131 MacLendon Drive, next to DHL, behind Foster’s Airport)
SURNAME O - Q (boosters)	SURNAME R – T (boosters)	SURNAME U - Z (boosters)		SURNAME A - C (boosters)	SURNAME D & E (boosters)
				SISTER ISLANDS ASTON RUTTY CENTRE 2 – 4pm	

Cayman's FATF Progress Also Addresses Expected EU Listing

By progressing to completion the Financial Action Task Force plan, thereby addressing remaining AML issues with our regime, the Cayman Islands intends to be removed from the list of jurisdictions the FATF is monitoring for AML effectiveness; and from an expected listing by the EU, as a non-EU country considered to be at high risk for AML. The EU is expected to finalise its list within a few weeks.

The FATF sets the global regulatory standard for AML (anti-money laundering, countering the financing of terrorism, and countering proliferation financing). In March 2019 the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, which provides regional support for the FATF, recommended 63 actions for the Cayman Islands to complete in order to further strengthen its regime. By February 2021, the Cayman Islands had completed 60 of these actions; however, the FATF placed it on its monitoring list and gave it an action plan to complete the remaining three items.

During its October 2021 plenary, the FATF acknowledged the Cayman Islands' progress in completing the plan.

In December 2021, in their respective 2022/23 budget contributions, Attorney General the Hon. Samuel Bulgin, QC; and Minister of Financial Services the Hon. André Ebanks explained the link between the FATF and EU lists: When the FATF lists a country, the EU automatically will add it to theirs.

The Attorney General oversees the Islands' AML regime as Chair of the Cayman Islands Anti-Money Laundering Steering Group. The Ministry of Financial Services and Commerce is the group's Deputy Chair, as it has Governmental responsibility for financial services, the industry that primarily implements the AML standard.

In accordance with the Alternative Investment Fund Managers Directive (AIFMD), an EU listing currently would not affect Cayman Islands investment funds from being marketed in the EU. However the Cayman Islands Government is aware of the EU's proposed AIFMD amendments which, if enacted as expected in 2024, would prevent Cayman Islands funds from being marketed in the EU.

At this time EU listing will, in accordance with the EU Securitisation Regulation enacted in 2021, prohibit EU financial institutions from using Cayman Islands entities for securitisations. Minister Ebanks is in direct contact with the Cayman Islands' leading industry practitioners in this sub-sector to provide appropriate updates and guidance.

An EU listing also will require EU financial institutions to conduct enhanced due diligence on business relationships and transactions involving non-EU listed jurisdictions. This may include obtaining additional information on customers, beneficial owners, and the source of funds and wealth; and selecting patterns



► Minister of Financial Services the Hon. Andre Ebanks

of transactions that need further examination.

To be delisted by the EU, any actions it may add on top of the FATF action plan would need to be completed. However, a FATF delisting should substantially, if not fully, assist with an EU delisting.

The FATF plan required the Cayman Islands to demonstrate

effective and dissuasive sanctions for AML breaches, and also for beneficial ownership filing breaches, by January this year; and to demonstrate AML prosecutions by this May. While it does not affect the FATF delisting, the Cayman Islands also is now either 'compliant' or 'largely compliant' with all 40 FATF Recommendations.

Unlike an EU listing, the FATF does not prescribe sanctions against jurisdictions on its list.

To determine the timeline, and any necessary additional actions, for an EU delisting, Minister Ebanks and Ministry officials continue to engage with EU officials, including those they met either face-to-face or virtually in November and December 2021.





2 days per week (Wednesday & Friday)

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

Enterprise Cayman - The Cayman Islands Business Design Competition

Ongoing until 31 January - Do you have a creative business idea or exciting side hustle that you've been dreaming of getting off the ground? It's time to turn that vision into reality. We're inviting all problem solvers, big thinkers and go-getters to take part in the Cayman Islands Business Design Competition. Enterprise Cayman is on a mission to develop engaging programmes that provide individuals and growing businesses with the support and opportunity to develop new products, services, and business. We're providing a platform where innovators can connect and offering a welcoming business environment that fosters innovation — a place where individuals, local businesses, and global ventures can thrive! Successful applicants will take part in training sessions and workshops based on Design Sprint exercises. Competitors will then have one month to streamline their project and work with professional project advisors before presenting their final project to a panel of judges at the beginning of April 2022. For more information and to register, go to enterprise.cayman.ky

Plastic Free Cayman - Barefoot Beach Cleanup

29 January - Join Plastic Free Cayman for their monthly cleanup. January's cleanup will take place at Barefoot Beach, Northside starting at 8am. All are welcomed

and don't forget hat, sunscreen, reusable water bottle and gloves.

Switch A Plate

29 January - The Department of Vehicle and Drivers' Licensing (DVDL) is urging motor vehicle owners with temporary licence plates to switch them for permanent ones during the month of January. The DVDL's Crewe Road location will open on Saturday 29 January from 9am to 2pm to facilitate this.

Centre for Theological Leadership Training (CTLT) Seminar - Biblical Law and Law of the Land

29 January - The Centre for Theological Leadership Training (CTLT) presents a seminar on "Biblical Law and Law of the Land" via Zoom on Saturday 29 January from 10am to 11:30am. The guest speaker

is the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kevin Donlon of Tampa. The Zoom meeting ID is 2485559547 and the passcode is 5SZPSI. All are welcomed.

Change for Change Coin Drive

28 & 29 January - Meals on Wheels Change for Change Coin Drive is on January 28 and 29. Donate your loose coins for a great cause. Volunteers are also needed to fill 2hour spots on both days. Go to meals-on-wheels.ky for more information.

National Gallery - Music in the Gardens

29 January - Enjoy the performance of professional cabaret singer Caryn Caffarell, accompanied by Jonathan Taylor on piano, as she takes audiences through her "MO-Mufactured: Made Better through Motherhood" show. Showtime is 7pm and the cost is \$25 for adults and \$5 for children. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 922 - 5550 or email enquiries@caymanartsfestival.com

Unified Stride Against Cancer

30 January - Stride Against Cancer is organized by the Cayman Islands Cancer Society and is the organization's largest fundraising event it takes place on Sunday January 30th, 2022. The funds raised will help finance the Society's many programmes and activities. There are over 1300 participants and more than 100 volunteers between the walk/run in George Town and the one in North Side. Both events are non-competitive. For more information or to register, go to caymanactive.com/event/stride or cics.ky

St. Alban's Church of England - Services of Holy Communion

30 January - There will be a Service of Holy Communion on Sunday January 30th at 9:30am at St. Alban's Church of England on Shedden Road. Morning prayers will continue on alternate Sundays at 9:30am as usual.

Chamber Workshop - Microsoft Excel Beginners 1: Understanding the Basics

1 February - This workshop is the first of a two-part Beginner course for persons who are new to Excel, who need to gain an understanding of how Excel works. This workshop can also help those who are familiar with Excel but want a detailed review of its powerful building blocks. For more information on pricing and registration, call 949 - 8090 or go to www.caymanchamber.ky/events/

Cayman Islands Astronomical Society - Public Stargazing at Sunset House

3 February - Enjoy amazing views of stars, planets, galaxies, nebulae and more at our return to public stargazing! The awesome colors and moons of Jupiter, the details of our thin crescent moon, and the distant glow from the Andromeda Galaxy will all be amazing to see in the western skies. Moreover directly above we'll see the beautiful "seven sisters" of the Pleiades as well as the Orion constellation. A new system will be in place to allow the views from the telescopes to be seen straight into a phone screen - helping to promote everyone's safety. All are welcome and please check our facebook page and website at www.cias.space for the latest updates as we may need to cancel if the weather is not cooperative.

Send your community events to wendy@caymaniantimes.ky



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Never Give Up

Feeling stressed? Most people are these days.

The past couple of months have been filled with new levels of stress as we've all dealt with the coronavirus pandemic.

But you don't have to let stress get the best of you.

When stress is getting you down, you need something that makes you feel good and is good for you.

I'm talking about exercise!

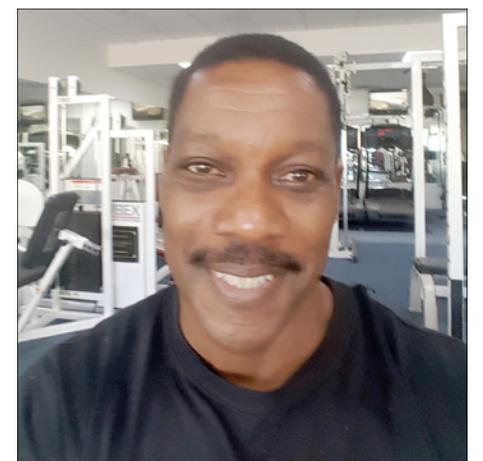
Every time you exercise you increase your body's production of endorphins.

In case you have forgotten, endorphins are responsible for those good moods you get into after a race and the pleasure you feel while chomping down on a piece of chocolate.

However, before you grab a piece of chocolate and skip your workout, remember the end result of each and choose which one will help you battle stress in the long run.

(Hint: It's not the chocolate.)

Any and all exercise you do helps you fend off the effects of stress, in addition to all the other benefits of exercise: including but not limited to burning fat, increasing energy, reducing joint pain, regaining a youthful appearance...the list goes on.



► Ernest Ebanks

My mission is to help each and every one of my clients achieve the body that they desire in addition to a low stress lifestyle.

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UK Minister to visit the Cayman Islands

The Right Honourable Amanda Milling MP who is the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Minister responsible for the Cayman Islands and other Overseas Territories will be visiting Cayman for the first time this week.

Arriving on the evening of Wednesday 26th January, the Minister will be meeting a wide variety of people during a three-day visit including the Premier, Cabinet members, the Leader of the Opposition and senior stakeholders working in government, industry and civil society.

His Excellency The Governor said: "I am delighted to welcome Minister Milling to Cayman - her first visit to an Overseas Territory since her appointment on 15 September last year. Due to Covid this is the first UK in person Ministerial visit for over two years. Such visits enable us to deepen relationships and mutual understanding. It will enhance our already strong relationship. I am certain we will be able to give the Minister a very favourable impression of our wonderful islands and community."

Ahead of the visit Minister Milling said: "The UK and its Overseas Territories have a deep and special bond. I am therefore very pleased to be visiting the Cayman Islands this week. The UK and Cayman

Islands have a very strong relationship based on mutual trust and respect. I look forward to following up on the actions of the successful Joint Ministerial Council held last November, and seeing first-hand how the Cayman Islands has responded to the pandemic. I am keen to deepen our partnership."

Premier Hon. G. Wayne Panton said the Cayman Islands is proud that Minister Milling chose to visit his home country.

"Minister Milling has responsibility for all of the British Overseas Territories and singled out the Cayman Islands for her visit to the region. We look forward to discussing with her the way the United Kingdom Government can work with the Cayman Islands Government to further enhance our relationship with the UK to the benefit of our country and our people."

A busy programme has been put together for the Minister. She will hear first-hand about Cayman's covid response including our impressive vaccine roll-out and our ability to detect variants of concern.

She will meet various Cayman Youth Groups and learn how they are working to raise awareness of the impact of climate change on Cayman's low lying islands and the importance of protecting our biodiversity. On a visit to Little Cayman, she will



► UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Minister Honourable Amanda Milling MP

see the work of the Department of the Environment to conserve indigenous species, tackle invasive species and deal with the impact of Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease. The Minister will also tour the Central Caribbean Marine Institute's Field Station and hear about their coral restoration efforts.

Visits to meet members of the Cayman Islands Coast Guard, Cayman Islands Regiment and Royal Cayman Islands Police Service Air Operations Unit are also on the agenda to see how these organisations play their part in the security and protection of Cayman.

MCTAGGART ACCUSES PACT OF DITHERING ON KEY BRUSSELS REP

With reports of a looming threat of Cayman again being placed on a European Union watchlist over tax regulation compliance, the PACT government is being lobbied to expedite setting up an office in Brussels to make the case for Cayman directly.

The call comes from the opposition Progressives party which address its concerns over news that in the coming weeks the Government is expecting the Cayman Islands to be placed on yet another EU list of countries at high risk from money laundry.

While the Progressives claim that this was not unexpected, the party recalls that while in

government it faced many such threats "and despite bumps in the road we successfully manoeuvred through them."

Noting that it has been known for some time that Cayman would continue to face these threats, it presses the case to have a representative in Brussels "to develop relationships with the European Union and the various representatives of the EU states, and to argue our case daily."

The party says that while in government it had started the process of establishing such a presence in Brussels, and accuses the current administration of dragging its feet on it despite

committing to having a Cayman representative at the seat of EU decision-making.

"It was on that basis that the last Government, after consulting with the Financial Services Sector, developed plans for an overseas office in Brussels as a priority, with another one in Washington DC to follow, and finally an Asian Office in Hong Kong, or failing that perhaps in Singapore. The main role of the Brussels and Washington Offices would be to defend our financial services businesses."

But the Progressives leader, Roy McTaggart says, "Despite our warning that dithering would likely be problematic, the PACT



► Progressives leader Roy McTaggart

Government delayed the opening of Overseas Offices, including the important Brussels Office."

While he acknowledged that the current administration "did give some commitment to having an office in Brussels and Washington in place before the end of 2021," he said to date that has not been done.

"Well, 2021 has ended and the much-needed Brussels office has still not yet opened. Perhaps now

that there is a threat of being listed this, and I suspect pressure from the Financial Services sector, will drive the Government to finally act," Mr McTaggart said in the release.

In appealing to the PACT administration to appoint the representatives, especially in Brussels, he said: "For the sake of the country and our financial services business I hope that they do act and do so quickly."





► Members of the government lead the guests in applauding the selfless work of Cayman's uniformed services



► A contingent of the RCIPS

National Heroes Day honours uniformed services



► Trevor Carmola Jr. receives a special citation for bravery, after rescuing an elderly man from a blazing home. Left to right, Hon Bernie Bush, Teresa Echenique, Trevor Carmola Jr, Hon. Wayne Panton

By Christopher Tobutt

National Heroes Day was much-reduced in size, owing to caution over Covid, so that 500 honorees who normally receive their awards onstage at Heroes Square could not do so this year, but will have to wait until later in the year instead. The conch-shell which heralds the official beginning of the celebrations, was blown by Miss Arianne Ebanks. The Master of Ceremonies was Hon. Franz Manderson, MBE, Cert Hon JP.

During his opening Remarks Hon. Bernie Bush, MP, Minister for Home Affairs, Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage, said, "This year's observance honours the uniformed services. Growing up in a small community like ours, Caymanians and residents over the years have come to regard uniformed services personnel as our very own local heroes, mainly because their job often requires them to perform heroic acts. The men and women of the

uniformed services literally save lives, whether by rescuing boaters gone adrift, pulling people from burning buildings, and cars, conducting search and rescue operations after a disaster and collectively supporting national efforts to secure our Cayman Islands. Thanks to the uniformed services members' historic willingness to engage with the community, a significant number have over the years come to serve as beacons of safety and order to our community. Today we pay tribute to them all."

Premier, the Hon. Wayne Panton, said, "The theme for this year's National Heroes Day, 'Honouring our Uniformed Services,' is most fitting for a time such as this. We recognise the contributions of our courageous men and women in our Fire Service, Police Service, Customs & Border Control, Prison Services, Cadet Corps, Coast Guard, and the Cayman Island Regiment. I thank all

SEE NATIONAL HEROES DAY, Page 13



► Hon Franz Manderson was master of ceremonies



► Zerah Allen & Miss Zanai Bush



► The Cayman Islands Scouts



► The Girls' Brigade

National Heroes Day honours uniformed services

CONTINUED FROM Page 12

the dedicated persons who have helped make this National Heroes Day particularly special, including the Ministry of Culture, the Protocol Office, our uniformed services and many volunteers and service providers."

heroes Day stage, resplendent in his smart red Cadets' uniform to receive his award from Hon. Wayne Panton, Hon. Bernie Bush. It read, "For exceptional courage in keeping the Cayman community safe for all citizens. We salute your spirit."



► Premier, Hon. Wayne Panton

Two young members of Cayman Islands Girls' Brigade, Zerah Allen & Miss Zanai Bush, then read out brief descriptions of the each Cayman Islands' ten national heroes, James Manoaah Boddan, William Warren Conolly, Thomas William Farrington, Sybil Joyce Hylton, Sybil lone McLaughlin, Dr. Roy Edison McTaggart, Ormond Lauder Panton, Leila Elberta Ross-Shier, Desmond Vere Watler, and Mary Evelyn Wood.

Writer of Cayman's National Song, 'Beloved Isle Cayman', The Honourable Leila Elberta Ross-Shier (16 November

Ms Teresa Echenique announced a special Citation for Bravery, for Trevor Carmola, Jr. Trevor noticed an elderly gentleman in distress as fire swept through his wooden home in Boddan Town during April last year, when he was just 14. His training with the Cayman Cadets helped him spring into action, helping the gentleman from his home to safety. Trevor came onto the He-

1886 - 26 September 1968) is the newest addition to Cayman's pantheon of national heroes, and a bust of her was unveiled during the ceremony. Ms. Ross-Shier was a gifted librarian, who used to help children with their reading and writing. She was a prolific writer, composer, accomplished musician, and imaginative poet, singer and storyteller.



► The Cayman Islands Cadet Corps



► Premier, Hon. Wayne G. Panton and the family of Cayman's newest National Hero unveil the ceremonial bust of Hon. Leila Ross-Shier, Cert. Hon., during the National Heroes Day 2022 ceremony at Heroes Square. (Photo by Elphina Jones)



► Minister for Home Affairs, Youth, Sports, Heritage & Culture, Hon. Bernie Bush gives the opening remarks at the National Heroes Day 2022 ceremony in Heroes Square. (Photo by Elphina Jones)



► Minister for Tourism, Hon. Kenneth Bryan lays a wreath for national builders from the Sister Islands at the National Heroes Day 2022 ceremony in Heroes Square. (Photo by Elphina Jones)

PACT REJECTS OPPOSITION CRITICISM OF BOND PLAN

By Staff Writer

Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance Hon. Chris Saunders has rejected criticism from the opposition Progressives party over the government's borrowing plans.

Defending the PACT administration's plans to explore the possibilities of securing a \$400 million bond issue to finance government projects, Mr Saunders hit back at the Progressives charging them with hypocrisy.

He issued a statement on Wednesday to 'reassure the public about the "Refinancing Government debt and borrowing to finance much-needed capital projects is exactly what it says on the label. Nothing more. It has absolutely nothing to do with borrowing to fund the Government's day-to-day expenses or the creation of a welfare state as claimed."

The Finance Minister said the government is investigating refinancing options, "including but not limited to a bond offering, to ensure we are paying less interest every year and to invest in our Islands' long-term future."

SPENDING PLAN

Listing several urgent projects that are awaiting completion, he said: "Regardless of how the borrowing is structured, any funds raised will enable vital infrastructure projects such as the completion of the Long-term Mental Health Facility; the East-West arterial and other new roads; a new undersea data cable to ensure our continued connectivity to the world; and finally completing the delayed and mismanaged high school construction project, which was started over 14 years ago by the Opposition."

Mr Saunders also said that funds raised through borrowing would also be used to provide equity injections to vital public services, mainly, the Health Services Authority, Cayman Airways, and a fund to a reverse mortgage product to allow elderly homeowners to use the equity in their homes to support themselves now in their time of need.

Regarding home mortgages in particular, he said, "The idea of reverse mortgages is to reduce government pay-outs for social assistance to the elderly. It is not fair or sustainable for the government to be assisting the elderly when they are equity-rich but cash poor. Letting our seniors access their cash when they need it now, means they can live in dignity without being a strain on the public purse."

According to Mr Saunders, the funds raised would also benefit the National Housing Development Trust and the Cayman Islands Development Bank to support Caymanian homeownership including \$28million of borrowing for equity injection for the National Housing Development Trust and the Cayman Islands Development Bank to assist in the home-financing.

"While the Opposition may not support this initiative, we as a Government recognise that shelter is a basic human right and homeownership is a dream for many Caymanians."

The Finance Minister also disclosed that the government is also looking into underwriting loans above 30 years to give young people an opportunity to access loans where the monthly repayment is affordable on condition that once they have enough equity built up, they can access funding from the traditional banks.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Mr Saunders, who is also the Deputy Premier accused the Opposition of "hypocrisy" regarding the refinancing of existing public debt and future borrowing, given the prior administration's borrowing history.

He said, "I am aware that the Opposition Leader has issued a statement on this issue and while he is entitled to his own opinion, he is not entitled to his own facts. Under his leadership, the Hon Roy McTaggart as then Minister for Finance secured in September 2020 a US\$403 million line of credit at a rate of 3.25% that expires in June of this year."

The statement referred to a September 2020 press briefing



Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance Hon. Chris Saunders

by the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Roy McTaggart where it was stated that the borrowing was sufficient for the "short to medium term" and that provision had been made for up to CI\$170 million in further borrowing in the future, which would "give whoever is occupying the Cabinet in 2021, it would give them that authority to borrow money if it becomes necessary."

Regarding that, Mr Saunders stated, "The PACT government now occupies the Cabinet and believes that with interest rate at its lowest, this is the best time to explore all available options."

He referred to the example of the Isle of Man which has a similar credit rating as the Cayman Islands, and secured a 30-year £400 million bond at a rate of 1.625%, which he said was half the rate the previous Progressives had negotiated for Cayman.

SCRUTINY

He assured that no decisions would be made outside of the public arena, despite what he termed the Opposition's apparent surprise over the Govern-

ment's request for information on a potential bond issue.

The information about the PACT government's bond issue was first reported from a posting on the government's website.

Minister Saunders clarified, "The request on the government procurement site is for information only to enable us to review all the options available to refinance the public debt. We are investigating multiple opportunities and will choose the option(s) most beneficial to the people of the Cayman Islands, present and future."

He assured that "whatever proposal we choose will be debated in Parliament, where each Member will be able to have their say on the matter - on both the Government and Opposition benches. If necessary, we also hold public meetings for the public to have their say. The PACT Government is committed to transparency, and to being people-driven first and foremost."

Finance Minister Saunders also rejected suggested that borrowings would be used to cover the government's operational ex-

penses, pointing to an improvement in public finances since the PACT Government took office in April 2021.

Minister Saunders was also critical of what he described as the previous administration's disregard of looming social welfare liabilities, and he rejected suggestions that the continuing COVID-19 support being taken over by the PACT were 'hand-outs', calling the Opposition hypocritical.

"When they were doing it, it was considered a necessary hand-up...We are seeking to ensure that displaced Caymanian tourism workers are hired first by the hospitality industry and find it ironic that this is now being criticised as hand-outs!"

He said the PACT government was committed to addressing the high cost of living in Cayman and has already introduced programmes and waived duties to alleviate it and is working to grow the economy and empower the people by introducing "programmes and opportunities that will grow our shrinking middle class."

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WEEKLY WEATHER FORECAST

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
82° / 74°	79° / 66°	74° / 70°	77° / 73°	77° / 76°	80° / 76°	81° / 77°
Partly sunny with a shower	A t-storm; windy in the p.m.	Cloudy with winds subsiding	Areas of low clouds; breezy	Breezy with a stray t-storm	Showers around in the morning	Mostly sunny

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Churchill's Funeral Home

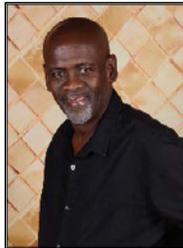
We have been asked to announce the passing of Mrs. Rose Fagan, who passed away on Wednesday December, 29, 2021. A Thanksgiving Service will be held at Church Of God Chapel, Bodden Town, Grand Cayman, on Saturday, Jan 29th, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. Viewing: Closed Casket Interment: New Pease Bay Cemetery This Service will be livestreamed on the Churchill's Funeral Home Facebook page starting from 1:45 p.m. it will also be in accordance with Government mandated limits of 100 people.



Condolences can be registered at churchillsfuneralhome.com

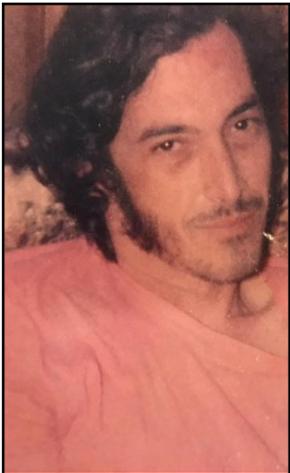
Churchill's Funeral Home

We have been asked to announce the passing of Lincoln Randolph Harris who passed away on Monday, January 17, 2022. A Thanksgiving Service will be held at the First Assembly of God Church, 195 Old Crewe Rd, Grand Cayman on Sunday, January 30, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. Viewing: 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Interment: Prospect In Lieu of flowers donations can be made to Feed our Future, Meals on Wheels and C.I. Food Bank. Mourning colours optional



Condolences can be registered at churchillsfuneralhome.com

The family of the late **Herbert Dolan Hunter** AKA #1 From The Brac, regret to announce his passing on January 15, 2022.



A funeral service will be held 12:00 p.m. at Calvary Baptist Church, 191 Walkers Rd. George Town, Saturday, January 29, 2022.

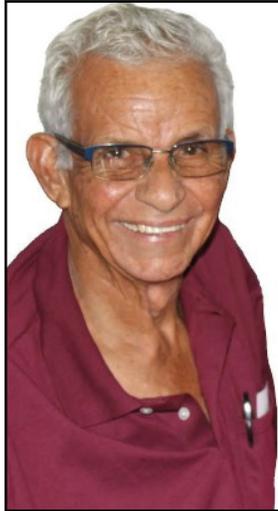
Viewing will be held from 11:00 a.m. prior to the service

Interment will follow at the Prospect Cemetery.

All Covid 19 precautions will be observed. Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page

Bodden Funeral
"A source of comfort in a troubled time"

The family of the late **George F. Manderson Sr.** regret to announce his passing on the 18th of January 2022.



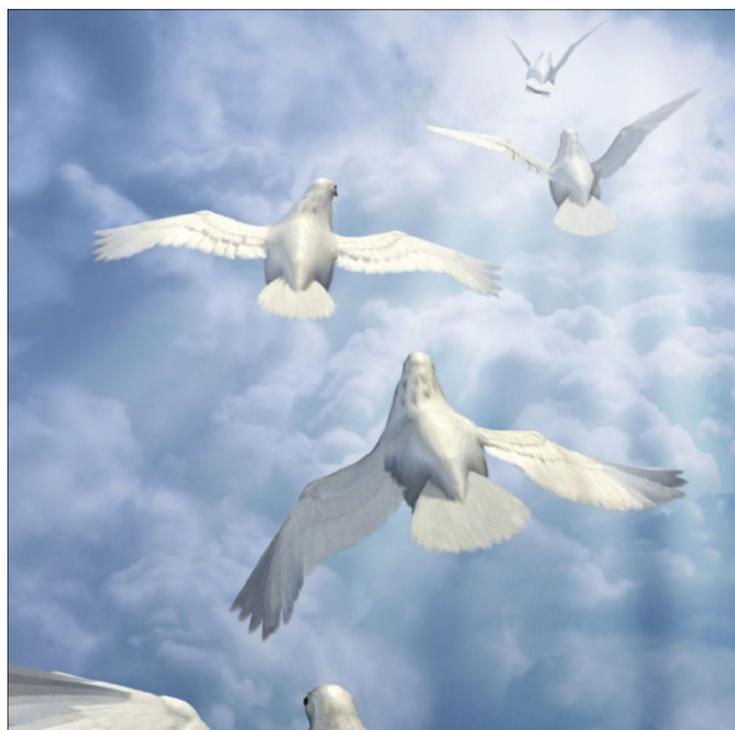
A funeral service will be held 1:00 p.m. at Church of God Chapel on the 5th day of February 2022.

Viewing will be held from 12:00 – 12:45 p.m. prior to the service

Interment will follow at the Prospect Cemetery.

All Covid 19 precautions will be observed. Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page

Bodden Funeral
"A source of comfort in a troubled time"



The family of the late **Jewel Arguile Smalldon nee Ebanks**, regrets to announce her passing on, Wednesday, January 12, 2022.



A Funeral Service will be held at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Selkirk Drive, Red Bay on Saturday, 29 January at 11:00 a.m.

A private cremation will follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Heart Foundation.

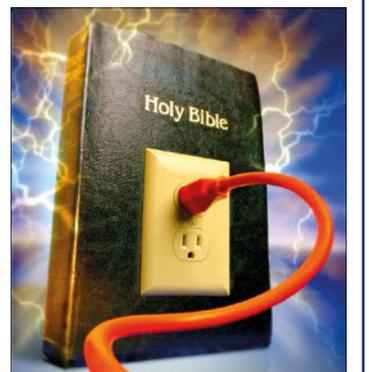
All Covid 19 precautions will be observed. Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page

Bodden Funeral
"A source of comfort in a troubled time"

MOMENTS OF INSPIRATION

OUR TRUE POWER SOURCE – JOHN 15:5

Many times I would be working on my laptop when it suddenly dies. Even on my phone at times. Most times when I check, sure enough the other end of the cord wasn't plugged in fully into the wall. If we are not plugged into the true source of power we'll run out of power. In the physical.



Spiritually, Jesus taught this lesson to His disciples using the imagery of the vine and branches.

A branch by itself on the ground is just a stick because it is disconnected from its source of power and life. Once connected to source of power it is alive and flourishing. The lesson here is simple. If you are not plugged in to Jesus you are dead for He is the true source of power to us.

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SUDOKU

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

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

4/23

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 40 TV's
 - 1 Stately home "Uncle Miltie"
 - 6 "Great!"
 - 11 Conductor Seiji
 - 12 Goofy
 - 13 Home run, in slang
 - 14 Cate-gorizes
 - 15 Yale rooter
 - 16 Print units
 - 18 Skill
 - 19 Summer sign
 - 20 Like Pride parade participants
 - 21 Spike of film
 - 22 Open shoe
 - 24 Ran, as color
 - 25 Lacking luxury
 - 27 Skilled
 - 29 Glorifies
 - 32 Afternoon break
 - 33 Fire proof
 - 34 Light touch
 - 35 One-million link
 - 36 Island ring
 - 37 Penny prez
 - 38 Victim of Corday
- DOWN**
- 41 Tibia's end
 - 43 Having tattoos
 - 44 Surgery tool
 - 45 Lab work
 - 1 Travel stops
 - 2 Flowering bush
 - 3 Saguaro and Sequoia
 - 4 Need to pay
 - 5 Neon, for one
 - 6 Spacek of "Carrie"
 - 7 One, in Italia
 - 8 Practices for one's license
 - 9 Menu choice
 - 10 Took it easy
 - 17 Blue-gray cat
 - 23 Expected
 - 24 Lingerie buy
 - 26 Museum show
 - 27 Zoo resident
 - 28 Split start
 - 30 Laptop's kin
 - 31 Spirited horses
 - 33 Modify
 - 39 Pub stuff
 - 41 Hydrocarbon suffix

ROBOT		FIATS						
ABODE		ANNOY						
NIXON		UNDER						
		CRAWLS						
APU		BET		NAP				
RETOLD		AUTO						
INTHE		GUTTER						
STEM		INABIT						
EAR		JET		UNO				
		BASALT						
CAROM		MATTE						
AMAZE		EVEN		S				
TYPOS		DARTS						

Yesterday's answer

- 7 One, in Italia
- 8 Practices for one's license
- 9 Menu choice
- 10 Took it easy
- 17 Blue-gray cat
- 23 Expected
- 24 Lingerie buy
- 26 Museum show
- 27 Zoo resident
- 28 Split start
- 30 Laptop's kin
- 31 Spirited horses
- 33 Modify
- 39 Pub stuff
- 41 Hydrocarbon suffix

Word Search

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

- Aunt
- Belle
- Bride
- Coed
- Damsel
- Daughter
- Debutante
- Frau
- Girl
- Grandma
- Lady
- Lass
- Madame
- Maiden
- Matron
- Mistress
- Mother
- Niece
- Senorita
- Sister
- Spinster
- Wife
- Woman

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

- 25 Lacking luxury
- 27 Skilled
- 29 Glorifies
- 32 Afternoon break
- 33 Fire proof
- 34 Light touch
- 35 One-million link
- 36 Island ring
- 37 Penny prez
- 38 Victim of Corday

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				

8-13



Have fun with
**CAYMANIAN
TIMES**

CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley

THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN

By Stan Lee

JUDGE PARKER

By Woody Wilson & Mike Manley

FREE FOOD

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FAMILY
DAY!**



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Brent McLean: 926-4040
Lloyd (Stoocka) Ramoon:
Neil Murray
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