

1
958931436521

Caymanian Times

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Issue No 742

www.caymaniantimes.ky

Sports page



See on Back Cover

50¢

MORE HELP
COMING FOR
DISPLACED
TOURISM
WORKERS

Page 3



OPPOSITION
WELCOMES
COVID CHANGES:
CHALLENGES
STIPEND
REVIEW

Page 10

Cayman welcomes back American Airlines



See story on page 2 >>

Cayman joins international powerboat racing

Cayman's 345Racing will be riding the waves and churning up tons of excitement as powerboat racing and promotion for the jurisdiction come together.

"So pleased to release 345Racing sneak-peak of our major sponsor and design for the race boat....and the official announcement of the locally owned race team competing in this upcoming C1 powerboat season," Caymanian businessman and powerboat racing enthusiast Mario Rankin has announced.

Mr Rankin and his partner in the venture Jason Butcher are leading a new drive to place Cayman amongst the elite

in the high-profile international powerboat racing.

Ultimately, the goal is to bring the excitement of the fast-paced and high-stakes sport with its global network of fans and teams to the waters of the Cayman Islands.

345Racing has already scored big by securing a place in this year's Union Internationale Motonautique Class 1 World Championship at several venues in the United States.

The team is also creating quite a stir in the powerboat racing fraternity and fans



► Designer vision of Cayman Islands branding on Power Boat

SEE POWERBOAT RACING, Page 6

Cayman welcomes back American Airlines

By Christopher Tobutt

Owen Roberts International Airport was very busy on Thursday 17 February, and one of the main reasons was the return of American Airlines.

It was a significant indicator showing that Cayman's tourism industry is on the road back from the slowdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

That was also evident in the buzz of travel activity at the airport.

On hand to welcome back the main carrier on the vital US route were senior tourism officials, including Hon. Minister of Tourism Minister Kenneth Bryan, and Director of the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, Rosa Harris, as well as Parliamentary Secretary Dwayne Seymour.

AA's return to Cayman follows less than a week after a similar welcome back for United Airlines.

"I'm pretty excited, even more excited than I was last week," Mr Bryan said.

"It's an exciting day for tourism and the Cayman Islands from a job perspective, more and more of these major airlines are returning and that is going to mean we'll be in pretty good standing in a couple of months."

The good news of the airlines' return has coincided with a significant easing of Covid protocols for visitors.

On the issue of maintaining a balance between the needs of the economy and the

needs of public health, Mr. Bryan said, "The good news is that the world, along with Cayman, is learning to live with covid in the midst. The science behind it is improving, so I'm excited about that because it helps us to move forward.

Director of Tourism Rosa Harris said, "It's wonderful to see American Airlines return today. We have kept them updated on our reopening strategy, all of our decisions and our incremental progress to reopening the borders. It is so important to have their service for the island's sake. Cayman is dependent on their service, not just American Airlines, but all of the airlines including our national airline, Cayman Airways. Airlift is our oxygen and we need this service to keep our economy going.

Parliamentary Secretary Seymour commented: "I am very pleased because American Airlines was supposed to come back

in April, and now they are coming back in February. This shows that a lot of the decisions that the government is making in terms of protocols and lifting them as we see fit has now given the airlines confidence to come back to these beautiful Cayman Islands. We thank them for agreeing to be long term partners."

Mr Seymour who was health minister in the previous government also observed

that "Covid-19 is probably going to be around us for a long time and we need to learn how to live with it. The longer we restrict our country from getting back to some kind of normal, the worse our economy will become. It's a balancing act and obviously we'll assess as we go along, month by month to see how things are going in terms of the safety of our people here in this country."

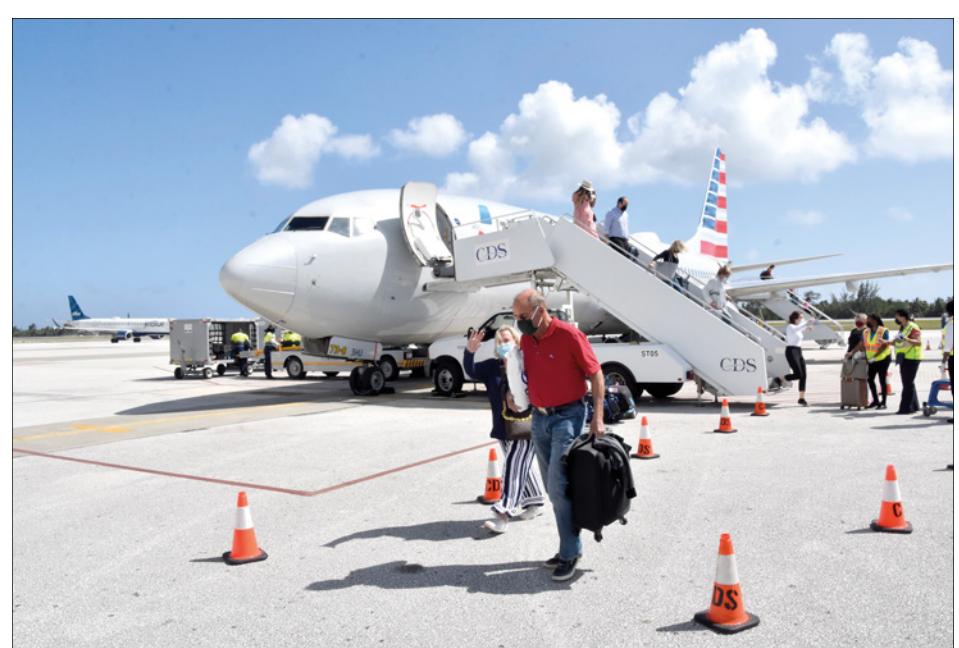


► Hon Kenneth Bryan, Stran Bodden, Sir Turtle and the Cayman Parrot all join forces to give American Airlines a huge welcome

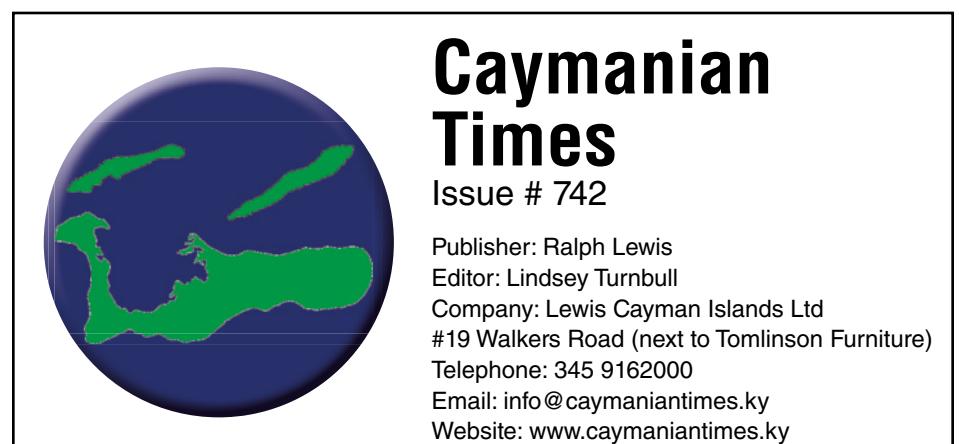


Employee of the Quarter

The Pines Retirement Home would like to offer congratulations to Ms. Edith Watt for receiving the award for Employee of the Quarter, for the quarter ended 31st December 2021. Ms. Watt has been an excellent employee over the years and there is no doubt that she deserves this recognition for her hard work, passion, and dedication shown to our residents. Ms. Watt is now in the running for Employee of the Year 2022.



► The passengers liked the welcome



**Caymanian
Times**
Issue # 742

Publisher: Ralph Lewis
Editor: Lindsey Turnbull
Company: Lewis Cayman Islands Ltd
#19 Walkers Road (next to Tomlinson Furniture)
Telephone: 345 9162000
Email: info@caymaniantimes.ky
Website: www.caymaniantimes.ky

MORE HELP COMING FOR DISPLACED TOURISM WORKERS

By Staff Writer

Tourism workers whose current earnings are still well below pre-pandemic levels are being considered for another uplift to help them 'make ends meet'.

Hon. Minister for Finance and Labour, Chris Saunders, gave that indication during a government press conference on Thursday afternoon, just hours after it was announced that the current programme was itself being extended for another two months.

"We do recognise that it will take some people a while to catch back to where they were," he said referring to workers whose earnings are normally supplemented by tips and gratuities.

Mr Saunders explained that even though some have returned to work, the tourism industry has not yet picked up to the point where their pay is on par with their previous earnings, despite working the same number of hours.

"As such, we are prepared at this point to go back to the Finance Committee and say to the Members of Parliament that it will need additional funding for especially for people in the cruise industry which will not be back at 100% of where it was," he stated.

The amount of that uplift is still being assessed.

QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONED

The announcement came as the government reported earlier on Thursday that it had reversed a previous decision that would have effectively suspended the stipend programme.

Mr Saunders explained that the way a previous questionnaire evaluating the scheme was worded might have led to incorrect outcomes.

"When people say that they were full time, what we found out in many cases their income, especially those in tourism who received gratuities was not the full-time level. That's when we realised the question (and answers) could have been a little bit different. That's the reason and we corrected it."

According to the subsequent government statement - issued prior to Thursday's press conference, "Following a thorough review of the stipend programme, over 600 former recipients of the Displaced Tourism Employees Stipend have returned to gainful employment and they will now automatically transition to the newly created Tourism Recovery Grant programme which will provide them with two months of financial support at a reduced rate of CI\$1,000 for February and CI\$750 for March."

The delayed February payments under the recovery grant programme will now be made this Friday February 18th.

The stipend programme has benefitted 2,400 tourism industry workers and 625 recovery grant participants, according to the statement.

Responsibility for administering the tourism stipend programme moved from the Ministry of Tourism & Transport to the Ministry of Border Control & Labour on 1 January 2022. Since then, recipients

were asked to respond to a survey seeking to determine their employment status and other vital information "in order to better serve existing needs", the statement said.

It added that in March, all recovery grant participants will be asked to answer a questionnaire on their current status to find out if they can transition out of the grant programme or if further support is needed.

ABUSING THE SYSTEM

One issue of concern that has arisen with the stipend programme in its original form has been payments made to persons who would not have qualified for the scheme.

Addressing that matter, Finance and Labour Minister Saunders confirmed that there has been abuse of the system.

The scheme was previously administered by the Ministry of Tourism.

"What we have found since being transferred to the Minister of Border Control and Labour, is that there have been abuses within the system. When the stipend started more than 18 months ago, at the time we were in full lockdown, so some people's financial situation would have changed since," Mr Saunders stated.

"For example, we are following cases where employers who have active work permits are submitting work permits for non-Caymanians, paying the work permit fees and actually getting stipends," he disclosed.

"If you can afford the cost of a work permit, to hire a non-cayman national, I don't see why you should be on the stipend," Mr Saunders added, qualifying that by saying "that's just me speaking."

While he applauded those persons who have voluntarily come off the stipend, Mr Saunders reiterated his displeasure with those who had abused the system.

"Some people have been fully employed back to pre-pandemic levels in terms of income, and they're still pushing to get the stipend. I think that is really immoral. I think it is wrong because there are (other) people who genuinely need help."

Stressing that the vast majority of people were legitimately in need and abided by the rules, the Labour Minister went on to state:

"We are hunting those who would have been a little bit fraudulent within the system. We have people who have already left the island that are still basically getting stipend. We people who are fully employed, we have people who have since joined the civil service, but they are still in the minority."

It was however indicated that in the present circumstances the government is unlikely to aggressively pursue some of those who would have defrauded the scheme.

"I do recognise that people have their own personal challenges," Mr Saunders stated, "It is a hardship situation and we do recognise that. The whole idea that government will go hunting people like that, it really isn't worth it. We just want to ask them to do the right thing. It is a small



► Hon. Minister for Finance and Labour, Chris Saunders

community. The last thing we want to do is name and shame anyone."

MAKING IT WORK

In the previous press statement, Wesley Howell, Chief Officer in the Ministry of Border Control & Labour said the new Tourism Recovery Grant programme, came out of the awareness that some formerly displaced tourism workers will require financial assistance to make ends meet given potentially reduced hours with the tourism industry not being back to its full speed.

He also acknowledged the situation of self-employed tourism business owners who are back to work and considered fully employed but are not operating at their usual capacity, with a significant reduction in revenues.

"We fully understand that being back to work and fully employed does not mean

that people are back to their former level of income. It is understood that people will still need some support. To underscore that these people are no longer considered to be displaced workers but are instead part of the industry's post-pandemic recovery, this support is going to be provided via the Tourism Recovery Grant programme, which will not be solely a financial assistance programme but will also offer training and other employment and business support."

Tourism stipend recipients who did not complete the original survey sent out in early February have been advised that they will not be processed for payment this week, and have been encouraged to complete the survey at their earliest opportunity, in order to ensure that they have provided their most accurate and up-to-date information to the Ministry of Border Control & Labour.



NOTICE

THE ELECTIONS OFFICE WISHES TO ADVISE THAT, AS THERE HAVE BEEN NO CLAIMS OR OBJECTIONS FILED WITHIN THE PRESCRIBED PERIOD IN RELATION TO THE REVISED LISTS PUBLISHED ON 21st JANUARY 2022, THE REVISING OFFICER WILL NOT BE SITTING IN ANY OF THE NINETEEN ELECTORAL DISTRICTS FOR THIS QUARTER

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS



► Permanent Secretary for Culture & Heritage Mr. Isaac Rankine, MP; The Cayman Islands National Museum's (CINM) Director, Dr. Peggy Leshikar-Denton, CINM's Graphic Designer Mr. Brian Watler and Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage Ms Teresa Echenique discuss the history of the Wreck of the Ten Sail Wednesday, 16 February 2022.



► Cayman Islands National Museum's Graphic Designer Mr. Brian Watler live streams the guided tour given by CINM Director Dr. Peggy Leshikar-Denton while Permanent Secretary for Culture & Heritage Mr. Isaac Rankine, MP and CINM Board member Ms Sharon Hinds view the Wreck of the Ten Sail monument, East End on Wednesday, 16 February 2022.

Wreck of the Ten Sail Tour Celebrates Historic Twin Anniversary

The Cayman Islands National Museum (CINM) continued its contribution to Platinum Jubilee celebrations by hosting a tour of the newly-upgraded Wreck of the Ten Sail Park in East End Wednesday, 16 February.

The event, live streamed on CINM's Facebook page, coincided with both the 28th anniversary of the opening of the Wreck of the Ten Sail Park by Queen Elizabeth II (27 February 1994), and the 228th anniversary of the actual wreck, which happened 8 February 1794.

informative and educational experience. What I previously knew about the Wreck of the Ten Sail was more folklore than anything else. The site is a wonderful resource for teaching people and especially school children more about Caymanian history.

"As one of the Cayman Islands oldest and most famous attractions, the Wreck of the Ten Sail and its park are important parts of our heritage. The site is a unique part of both our maritime legacy and tourism product, which continues to attract locals and international visitors, he added.

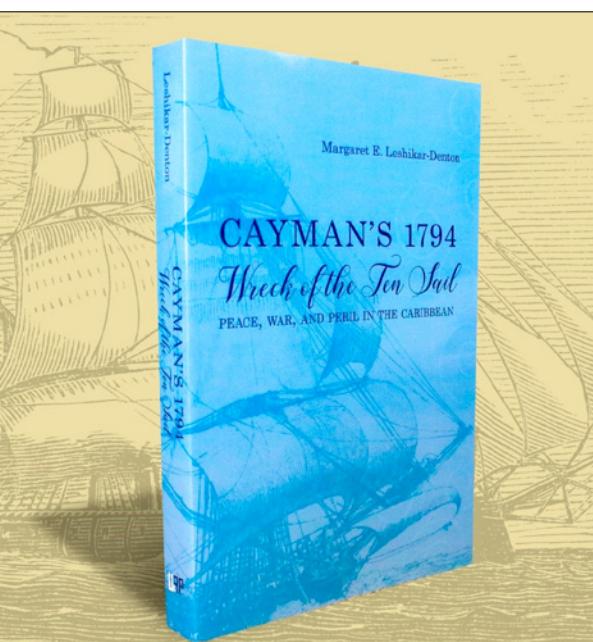
Fitted with an accessible walkway, the naturally landscaped coastal park, now includes new signage, a cabana and at the entrance a gift shop, which will open later in the year where district artwork will be sold. As well as taking in the site's recent enhancements, the group was given a detailed history of the wreck by the museum Director, which included the assistance given by East End locals to the shipwreck survivors.

Following the guided tour, Dr. Leshikar-Denton said: "The Wreck of the Ten Sail is the foremost of Cayman's many wrecking tales. HMS Convert and nine merchant ships sailing in a convoy of 58 vessels were bound from Jamaica to Great Britain when they were lost on the jagged

East End reefs of Grand Cayman. Caymanians came out in their canoes and heroically saved many lives."

The Director will discuss the Wreck of the Ten Sail with CINM's Wray Bunker and Sterling Dwayne Ebanks on this Friday's 'See Wha ah Saying?!" segment of Radio Cayman's Talk Today show from 12:15 p.m.

Copies of Dr. Peggy's book "Cayman's 1794 Wreck of the Ten Sail: Peace, War and Peril in the Caribbean" are available at the CINM gift shop.



► Dr. Leshikar-Denton's book about the Wreck of the Ten Sail.

Led by CINM's Director Dr. Peggy Leshikar-Denton, who did a doctoral dissertation and wrote a book on the wreck, the tour was taken by Parliamentary Secretary for Culture & Heritage, Mr. Isaac Rankine; Ministry for Youth, Sport, Culture & Heritage's Chief Officer, Ms Teresa Echenique; accompanied by CINM's Deputy Chairperson of the Museum Board Ms Susan Arch-Parsons and CINM board member Ms Sharon Hinds.

On taking the guided tour East End MP Mr. Rankine said: "The tour was a very



► The Cayman Islands National Museum's Director, Dr. Peggy Leshikar-Denton (5th left), gave a guided tour of the Wreck of the Ten Sail Park in East End, Wednesday, 16 February 2022. She was accompanied by (L-r) CINM's Graphic Designer Brian Watler, Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage (MYSCH) Policy Analyst Ms Tunisia Barnes, Ms Sharon Hinds CINM Board member; MYSCH Chief Officer Ms Teresa Echenique; Permanent Secretary for Culture & Heritage Mr. Isaac Rankine, MP; and CINM Board Deputy Chairperson Ms Susan Arch-Parsons. (Photos by Elphina Jones, GIS)



► Cayman Islands National Museum's Director, Dr. Peggy Leshikar-Denton gave a guided tour of the Wreck of the Ten Sail Park in East End, Wednesday, 16 February 2022.

MIN. SAUNDERS STEPS UP JOB ADVERTISING AS ECONOMY REBOOTS

Now that the borders have been reopened and more COVID-19 restrictions are being relaxed, a corresponding drive is underway to ensure that Caymanian workers are prioritized in the jobs market.

The effort is being led by the Ministry of Labour jointly with the Ministry of Tourism and private sector organisations.

Key to this is streamlining the government's jobs and careers agency - Workforce Opportunities and Residency Cayman (WORC) - with additional resources.

The WORC department was set up in 2018 "geared towards restructuring the country's labour market", according to an official statement then.

The agency with its accompanying website, Jobs Cayman, is now being upgraded and supplemented to cope with the demand.

One of the main decisions taken in this regard by Hon. Minister for Labour Chris Saunders is a newly launched campaign of newspaper advertising with job vacancies once again prominently featured in the local press including the Caymanian Times.

ATTENTION CAYMANIAN JOB SEEKERS!

Check out the current listings of jobs available by occupation printed in the Friday's Cayman Compass and Caymanian Times newspaper centre spread.

Pick up your copy and visit [WORC.ky](#) to register on the JobsCayman portal to apply for the job online!

In encouraging residents seeking employment to pick up their copy of the papers, Mr Saunders said the aim is to maximise the chances of Caymanians filling available vacancies.

"We're going to be doing that on a weekly basis because jobs are available here," Mr Saunders declared.

He reported he was meeting with private sector stakeholders to address the issue in combined steps to fill vacancies locally while balancing that with tighter management of the work permit system.

Just recently, one of the things that we have noticed is that last year for example, of the roughly 35,000 decisions that the department of WORC dealt with, more than 15,000 (almost half) were for temporary work permits," the Labour Minister stated.

He said the government was looking at a policy leading to changes in the law aimed at blocking a loophole in the system where there's an excess of requests for temporary work permits.

Mr Saunderson pointed out that even though there might be a set number of jobs listed as vacant, the actual figure could be higher when the request for short term work permits are factored in.

"People are using that as a kind of loophole," he stated.

"There are definitely more jobs available and we want to tighten up on that regime. We do recognise that there are some challenges within the temporary work permit system and right now the government is looking at a policy, making the legislative changes where any temporary work permit over 30 days (would have to be advertised on the Jobs Cayman/WORC portal), so at a minimum we'll have more jobs available."

Reporting on discussions he's been having with the Chamber of Commerce on the matter, Mr Saunders said



We're looking for the brightest minds

Applicants invited to apply for a CUC Scholarship

As an employer of choice, and one of the largest employers of Caymanians, CUC is committed to attracting, developing and retaining high potential employees by providing opportunities for Caymanian students to succeed in the electric utility industry.

CUC is proud to offer a scholarship to an accredited university for students who are interested in completing an Associate's or Bachelor's degree in related fields of study, which represent areas important to CUC including engineering, electrical technology, mechanical maintenance, information technology, occupational safety, health and the environment, regulatory and sustainability, corporate governance, finance, human resources and customer service.

Applicants must:

- ▶ have already obtained, or expect to obtain, during the current school year, adequate academic qualifications to be accepted by a university;
- ▶ be Caymanian or hold Caymanian Status;
- ▶ have a current GPA of 3.5 or higher;
- ▶ have a minimum of seven (7) GCSE/CXC/IGSE passes including English, Mathematics and Science(s) or the equivalent in the American educational system. Preference will be given to students with higher level passes (A level, AP, IB, etc.) in Mathematics and Science(s).

The successful applicant(s) will have an opportunity during school holidays to gain hands-on work experience and may be offered full-time employment with CUC upon completion of his/her studies.

To review the General Rules and Guidelines and apply, visit the "Scholarships" page under the "Careers" tab on CUC's Home Page (www.cuc-cayman.com). Click on the "Apply Here" link, complete the appropriate online form and follow the instructions. Applications must be submitted not later than **Monday, February 28, 2022**. Hard copies will not be accepted.

For more information on these and other scholarship opportunities, please contact CUC's Human Resources & Employee Development Department via e-mail at careers@cuc.ky.



Cayman joins international powerboat racing

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

by being profiled in leading publications such as international powerboat racing promoter Powerboat P1 and Speed-on-the-Water.com.

"International powerboat racing promoter Powerboat P1 announced today that 345 Racing, a new Cayman Islands team owned by Mario Rankin and Jason Butcher, is going to compete in this year's

Union Internationale Motonautique Class 1 World Championship," they reported.

With Cayman's 345 area code prominently emblazoned on the hull of their high-speed racing craft, promotional attention for Cayman is already guaranteed.

And while they won't be physically at the helm in the races, Rankin and Butcher are driving the investment, management, promotion and logistics with a team of professionals.

Experienced American powerboat racer Alex Pratt will be on the throttles alongside driver Miles Jennings, the United Kingdom-based offshore racing veteran whose career spans five decades.

The team and boats will be based in Florida and will make their inaugural splash in the first of a series of races in Cocoa Beach, Fla., May 19-22.

Articles by Powerboat P1 and Speed-on-the-Water.com profiling 345Racing say Pratt joins the team with tons of enthusiasm, adding that the 27-year-old can't wait to start testing the 42-foot Victory Team-built catamaran—the former Zabo boat—that is powered by twin Mercury Racing 1100 Competition engines.

"Oh wow, I can't even tell you how excited I am to go racing," said Pratt, who expects to get in the boat with Jennings starting in April in preparation for Thunder On Cocoa Beach and the rest of the season.

"It's going to be so much fun racing in Class 1. It should be an interesting year

with the international teams returning, the two new Huski team boats and Miles and I teaming up. I have a feeling this is going to be a lot of fun. This is a great class, especially with the Mercury Racing 1100s."

Sponsorship is key, and the principal team sponsor is going to be XINSURANCE, a business that was established more than 40 years ago to provide customized specialty insurance for ever-changing risks and issues such as specialty liability, property and casualty insurance.

The XINSURANCE brand will also be a high-visibility promotion on the hull of the powerful boats.

Cayman's 345Racing is already booked for six events in the 2022 Class 1 calendar:

- Cocoa Beach: May 19-22
- Sarasota: July 1-3
- Michigan City: August 4-7
- St. Petersburg: September 2-4
- Clearwater: September 30 - October 2
- Key West: November 6-13

A NEW QUEEN WILL RISE



Are you the next Miss Cayman Islands Universe?

APPLY NOW

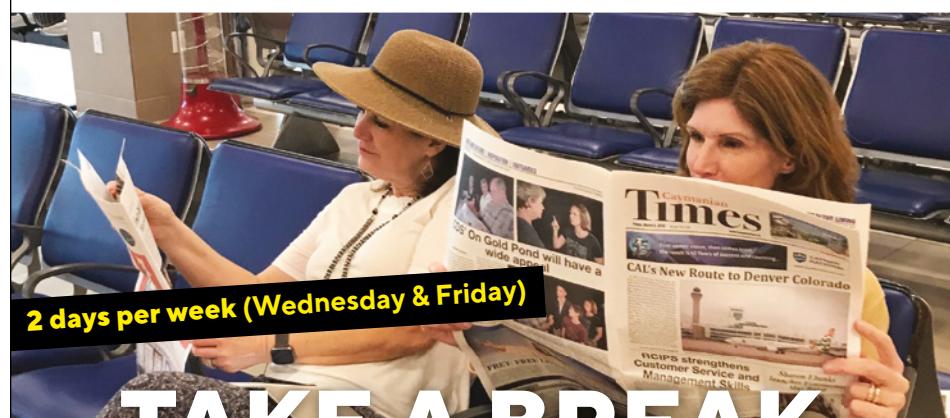
misscaymanislandsuniverse.com/apply-now

DEADLINE **March 31, 2022**

MUST BE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 27

For more information contact: 345-936-7724 | misscaymaninfo@gmail.com

Caymanian Times 



2 days per week (Wednesday & Friday)

TAKE A BREAK

READ A NEWSPAPER

Local News • Public Notices • Business Showcase
 International News • Death Announcements • Election Watch
 Regional News • Job Advertisements • Community Voice

Pick up your FREE copy at over 60 locations
 Supermarkets, Gas Stations, Pharmacies, Banks and more

For more Information email info@caymaniantimes.ky
 Call 9162000 / 9458463

Restrictions lifting: no arrival LFTs for vaxxed travellers

By Lindsey Turnbull

Amendments to Covid-19 regulations come into effect tomorrow, 18 February, that will see a lifting of the requirement to take lateral flow tests on day 2, 5 and 7 for fully vaccinated travellers with a verifiable vaccine who travel to the Cayman Islands. The pre-arrival requirement to test within 24 hours of travel via either LFT or PCR testing still remains, however.

At a press conference on Thursday 17 February, Premier Wayne Panton also advised that government was lowering the quarantine time for unvaccinated travellers to Cayman from 10 days to seven. A new exit regime would also be put in place for unvaccinated travellers, whereby they could conduct certified LFTs on day 6 and day 7 and, provided they were both negative, the person would be free to go on day 7. They could also choose to undertake a PCR on day 7 if they wished, the Premier said.



► Premier Wayne Panton

In addition, restrictions were being lifted with regard to inter-island travel and now only the unvaccinated would be required to show a negative lateral flow result should they wish to travel between the islands. Such testing would not be required for fully vaccinated people.

Restrictions on the numbers of people gathering both indoors and outdoors were also being relaxed and, as from Friday 18 February, gathering limits indoors would increase from 100 to 500 and outdoors, up to 1,000 people could meet, an increase on the original 250 maximum. Masks would not now need to be worn by either spectators or participants in sporting activities outdoors. The passenger maximum for boats (depending on the vessel's load restrictions) would now be 500 people. Test restrictions on gyms would also be lifted.

The lifting of the restrictions would provide a serious boost to Cayman's tourism industry, the Premier said, paving the way for a proper uptick in arrivals.

"The two main issues were the gathering limits which impacted the size of groups that hotels could get in and secondly the day 2,5 and 7 LFT testing regime," the Premier advised. He said upon the announcement of the lifting of the restrictions in this regard, significant stakeholders in the tourism industry were already thanking him for the moves.

SEE RESTRICTIONS LIFTING, Page 8



Scholarships to pursue A level Studies

Students invited to apply for a CUC Scholarship

CUC is proud to offer a scholarship for Caymanian students seeking to pursue Advanced Level (A level) studies at a local high school.

Applicants must:

- ▶ have already obtained, or expect to obtain, during the current school year, adequate academic qualifications to be accepted into Advanced Level (A level) studies or equivalent;
- ▶ be Caymanian or hold Caymanian Status;
- ▶ be involved in school and/or volunteer activities;
- ▶ provide references.

The scholarship will also provide an opportunity to gain hands-on work experience and develop further skills, which will benefit the successful applicant in their studies and a possible future career with CUC.

To review the General Rules and Guidelines and apply, visit the "Scholarships" page under the "Careers" tab on CUC's Home Page (www.cuc-cayman.com). Click on the "Apply Here" link, complete the appropriate online forms and follow the instructions. Applications must be submitted not later than **Monday, February 28, 2022**. Hard copies will not be accepted.

For more information on these and other scholarship opportunities, please contact CUC's Human Resources & Employee Development Department via e-mail at careers@cuc.ky.



RCIPS Officers Advance Through New Promotion Process

On Tuesday, 1st of February 2022, 34 officers successfully advanced in the RCIPS promotion process to the rank of Inspector and Sergeant at a ceremony held at the Westin Resort on Seven Mile Beach.

The Commissioner of Police Derek Byrne, along with his senior leadership team congratulated the newly promoted officers at the event and briefed them

on the importance of their roles as leaders within the RCIPS, not only to supervise, mentor and coach new officers joining the organisation, but in setting the tone and standard expected of the police service, whereby professionalism, integrity, and service to the community are at its core.

Of the 34 officers, 10 were candidates for Inspector and 24

were candidates for Sergeant. "It is pleasing to see the hard work and dedication of these officers pay off, and the recognition they have each received through respective appointments", says Commissioner of Police, Derek Byrne.

Of special note is the significant number of female officers that have successfully advanced: two to Inspector rank and five to

Sergeant rank, which is a move in the right direction to improving gender balance in RCIPS leadership positions.

This is the first promotion round following the development of a new policy put in place in 2021 that established a competency based promotion framework, where officers are put through a rigorous and competitive process in working towards

achieving promotion. These officers have completed the competitive phases and as part of their continued development, they will each complete training and leadership programmes over the coming 12 months. This final phase is a work-based assessment segment during which they will be assessed for substantive promotion based on their performance in their new roles.

MIN. SAUNDERS STEPS UP JOB ADVERTISING AS ECONOMY REBOOTS

CONTINUED FROM Page 5

he is taking a partnership approach to ensure that Caymanians are not overlooked for available jobs, but also recognising that the needs of the private sector at met.

"This is a partnership. That's why I met with the Chamber of Commerce and said just as how you will expect us to protect your business from foreign competition or foreign influences or unfair competition, you will also have to expect from me as Minister of Labour that I will also want to do the same thing in the sense of also protecting our people from especially the cheap labour that is there."

He emphasised: "The main thing for us right now is actually getting our people back to work. Our people want to work and that's really what it comes down to. This is who we are."

Restrictions lifting: no arrival LFTs for vaxxed travellers

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

Premier Panton said that the amendments were being put in place to support the economy and also enable people to live safely with Covid-19. He said government was taking a "balanced and pragmatic view" and the loosening of restrictions were taking place in light of the reduction of the number of positive tests currently within the community.

Good news for tourism

Lifting restrictions on things like arrival testing and gathering numbers was good news for tourism, the Tourism Minister Kenneth Bryan said.

"These changes will improve our attractiveness to international visitors and will boost our ongoing efforts by my Ministry and others to increase stayover visitation. Feedback received from the industry partners highlighted the LFT testing regime was presenting

major hurdles for visitors. Many were not happy with having to line up three different days during their vacation to take a certified test," he said. "I'm certain that the industry is breathing a collective sigh of relief hearing the announcement today."

Minister Bryan said that, in addition to the dropping of the testing regime, bars and nightclubs had been granted the approval to return back to normal licensing hours. This change would enable local businesses to cater to more patrons for a longer period, he said.

He added that it was important to think of local bars as a draw for tourists, as tourists were often looking for more authentic activities which brought them in closer contact with Caymanians, so local bars fitted that bill. He also believed that now that the restrictions on numbers meeting had been eased, hotels would see increases in book-

ing of events and conferences, which would then have a positive knock-on effect on the wider local business community, such as transport, tours, food and beverage.

Vaccines for children

At the press conference, health Minister Sabrina Turner said that, at the time of the press conference, Cayman was expecting 2,000 pediatric formulation vaccines to arrive via the British Airways flight. She said some parents were eager to know when they could get their child vaccinated while others were wary about whether it was a good thing or not. Minister Turner said that the government was not mandating child vaccinations of children age five to 11, however she strongly suggested that parents get their children vaccinated, to protect their child and their education, their family and their country. Public Health would be announcing a programme of vaccinations for children next week and it was also working alongside private pediatric practices, district clinics and schools to ensure availability of the vaccine.

Youth Ambassadors invited to participate in Caucus

By Lindsey Turnbull

Having heard the Alex Panton Foundation's Youth Ambassadors speak eloquently and passionately about youth mental health at last Saturday's Mental Health Symposium, Premier Wayne Panton announced at the event that they would be invited into government's decision-making process.

Premier Panton, who had begun the Alex Panton Foundation with his wife Jane (who is the Chair of the Foundation) following the suicide of their son Alex, said that in previous years he had held back in obvious involvement with the Foundation for fear of it being seen as political. But now that he was Premier, he was able to allow the voices of the people in the country to count and, in particular, allow the voices of young people in the country to count, he said.

"I know we have had some incredible speakers here today you have been amazing...Among all the incredible voices that I've heard, the ones that I find very compelling and most instructive to myself and my colleagues are the young people, because, as a government, we are here to represent the interests of everybody," he stated.

The Premier said that the government was also looking forward, because nobody wanted to be in politics except to leave a very positive legacy and to leave a positive impact on the future of the country and the future of the young people of this country.

"That's what motivates me with politics," he confirmed.

As a result, he said he was inviting the members of the youth ambassadors programme to government's Caucus meeting, a meeting at which government - both front and back bench members - discussed the policies that they would be taking forward. This was a move that the Premier said he had never seen before in government.

"We are going to have the young people represented by the Youth Ambassador programme come in and talk to the policy makers of this country about the issues that affect them today. They can talk about how they feel about what's happening in their country and what their priorities are from their perspective, that we should be taking forward to make their lives better today, and to make a future for them and their children tomorrow," the Premier advised.



► Governor Martyn Roper (left) and Premier Wayne Panton (right) at the Mental Health Symposium

Governor and Speaker wish Queen Elizabeth speedy Recovery

On Monday, HE Governor Roper wished The Queen a speedy recovery from Covid.

On his FB page he posted "I know I speak for everyone across our three islands in wishing Her Majesty The Queen a speedy recovery from Covid. Buckingham Palace has announced that Her Majesty has mild symptoms and is undertaking light duties. Our very best wishes to Her Majesty from all of us in the Cayman Islands.

I similar fashion on his FB account the Speaker noted "Wishing Her Majesty the Queen well, and a speedy and full recovery on behalf of the people of West Bay West all Members of Parliament and my family and my self.

God save the Queen!

UK Media reports on Sunday stated that The queen may have contracted



the virus from her eldest son and heir, Prince Charles, who tested positive for the second time earlier this month and has been in recent contact with the queen. Charles' wife, Duchess Camilla, tested positive for COVID last week.

The queen is fully vaccinated, according to BBC. It was announced on Jan. 9, 2021 that she had received her first shot.

**OFFICE SPACE
FOR RENT**

#19 Walkers Road

**Ideal for a Small Professional Business
Board Room Facilities and
Wifi available
\$600 per month plus utilities**

**Contact Ralph at 916 - 2000
for more information**

OPPOSITION CHALLENGES STIPEND REVIEW

The opposition Progressives party has called on the government to review its decision to reduce the stipend payments to tourism workers.

Leader of the Progressives, Roy McTaggart, has urged the PACT administration "to reconsider and do the right thing for over 600 Caymanian families and assess their situation individually before making any reductions."

Under the revised scheme announced on Thursday, the government said over 600 former recipients of the Displaced Tourism Employees Stipend have returned to gainful employment will now automatically transition to the newly created Tourism Recovery Grand programme.

"That will provide them with two months of financial support at a reduced rate of CI\$1,000 for February and CI\$750 for March. The previous stipend was CI\$1500 monthly," it stated.

Hon. Minister for Finance and Labour, Chris Saunders, explained during a government press conference on Thursday that in the process of evaluating the scheme, several discrepancies were uncovered in a previous questionnaire that stipend recipients were required to complete. Hence, the decision to adjust and extend the programme which was on the verge of being suspended after being in operation since early 2020.

NOT IMPRESSED

But the leader of the Progressives, former finance minister, Roy McTaggart, is not impressed by the government's handling of the matter.

"I suppose this revised plan is better than the initial one to cut people off entirely with

no chance for even an assessment. But it is hardly fair," he argued in a press release.

"I would have preferred that the Government take the opposite approach and assess the 600 plus recipients to determine their individual circumstances before making random cuts. No one would want the Government to provide a stipend to someone who is now fully employed in a regular job and making sufficient money to care for their families and pay their mortgage and other commitments. We can agree that."

But he went on to make the point that "the review process must be correct, and it must be fair to ensure that Government is doing right by people whose lives have been turned upside down."

The Progressives leader recalled that "less than a month ago, I lamented that the Government was failing Caymanian families and businesses in the tourism sector. At the time, both newspapers reported on public doubts about the continuation of stipend assistance for families and the financial support for small businesses struggling with a slow tourism recovery. Members of the Opposition were also receiving calls of concern. And so, I spoke out. The Government said we were wrong."

But according to Mr McTaggart, "Yet on Tuesday and Wednesday this week, members of the Opposition received several messages from constituents telling us that their tourism stipend was being stopped. Apparently, after completing another tourism stipend survey, they were now deemed to be in 'full-time employment' and no longer qualified as a displaced tourism worker. Without the stipend assistance, they said they would struggle to support their families."



► Leader of the Progressives, Roy McTaggart

He said he is sure that the elected Government members received similar calls and messages of alarm, adding that "I understand that there were concerned and angry constituents at the Government Administration Building on Wednesday."

Further questioning the PACT government's abrupt change of plan to extend rather than terminate the stipend programme, Mr McTaggart noted:

"And so, one day later, on Thursday, February 17th, there is a press release from the Deputy Premier backtracking and promising the over 600 persons impacted that he would not cut them off entirely as he had planned. Rather than receiving the usual monthly stipend of \$1,500 they will receive \$1,000 in February and \$750 in March. After which, they will be assessed yet again."

circumstances warranted the continuation of a stipend payment."

Mr McTaggart also insisted that the Government should provide the statistics from the updated Tourism Stipend Survey, as was done in August of 2021.

"Let the public, including the stipend recipients, understand what the changing circumstances are. The Government may ignore our request to reconsider their approach and be fairer to the tourism stipend recipients, but they will continue to hear from the Opposition whenever we believe that they are failing our people," the Progressives leader added.

ONE DECISION WELCOMED

Meanwhile, despite its strident disapproval of the PACT government's handling of the stipend issue, the Progressives party has welcomed the decision to further reduce the COVID-19 travel restrictions.

An accompanying statement by Moses Kirkconnell, former tourism minister and the Opposition's Shadow Minister for Tourism said: "I am happy to note our support for the Government's recently announced amendments to the COVID-19 Regulations that removed the requirement for verified vaccinated travellers to do post-arrival lateral flow tests. The increased gathering limits are also very welcome."

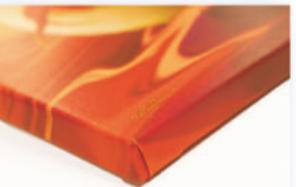
Mr Kirkconnell, who is also the MP for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman also welcomed the removal of testing for vaccinated persons travelling between the Islands.

"All these recent changes will make it easier to travel to the Islands from overseas and to ease travel between the Islands. We are hopeful that the reduced restrictions will help to further jumpstart our stay-over tourism recovery," Mr Kirkconnell said.



► Moses Kirkconnell, former Minister for Tourism

CUSTOM PHOTO PRINTING & FRAMING
CANVAS AND FINE ART PAPERS



LOTS OF
READY-MADE
FRAMES
IN STOCK



OPEN TUES-SAT @10AM-5PM
CATHY@CATHYCHURCH.COM

WORLD FAMOUS
CathyChurch's
Photo Centre
AT SUNSET HOUSE 949-7415

Cellular World



PHONES • ACCESSORIES • REPAIRS
BAYTOWN PLAZA, WEST BAY ROAD

CARIBBEAN BRIEFS

JA moves to digital economy

Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness has announced that the Bank of Jamaica plans to roll out its central bank digital currency (CBDC) after its successful pilot last year.

The Bank of Jamaica said in December that it completed a pilot project that issued JA\$230 million (US\$1.5m) of the new currency, an effort that comes after a similar project launched by a group of Eastern Caribbean nations.

Holness said: "This will serve as a foundation for Jamaica's digital payments architecture and will facilitate greater financial inclusion, increase transaction velocity while reducing the cost of banking for the Jamaican people."

Jamaica's upcoming CBDC follows the lead made by China, Nigeria, and Venezuela that have deployed CBDCs. Meanwhile,

the European Commission has disclosed it will be unveiling a digital euro bill in 2023, and the Federal Reserve is researching its own CBDC project.

Bank of Jamaica worked with National Commercial Bank on its CBDC pilot and a limited number of wallet providers. Jamaica's central bank issued \$230 million worth of the CBDC on 9 August. Holness expects more than 70 percent of the Jamaican population to adopt the CBDC in five years.

Sabrina Cooper, vice-president of retail banking at Sagicor Bank Jamaica, told Jamaica Observer that the CBDC wallet will not be just for leveraging the CBDC.

"Your digital wallet is not just the CBDC, you can have debit and credit cards," Cooper said. "If you look at what's happening globally, the wallet is going to look just like your physical wallet in your pocket or in your handbag. It's going to have your CBDC or some kind of digital currency cash equivalent, credit cards or even prepaid cards."

Customers sign up for a digital wallet, where they can deposit funds in exchange for digital currency that can then be used in transactions. Other benefits for the public include immediate settlements in comparison to the typical automated clearing house and real time gross settlement



► Jamaica's digital currency will boost its economy

transfers. There will also be little to no processing delays and cheaper payments as it will have little to no fees in comparison to credit/debit card payments. It will also be beneficial to the central bank and government as well, due to its centralised nature. The government claims it will be able to decrease money laundering, financing of criminal enterprises, locate tax evaders more efficiently, calculate the exact amount of money in circulation, and have a stronger grip on monetary policy.

Jamaica's digital currency follows a similar program by a group of Eastern Caribbean nations launched last year called DCash. Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines are now using DCash. In 2020, Bahamas was the first country in the region to issue digital currency.

Sceptics in Jamaica fear potential privacy, ethical, rights, and infrastructural issues.



► The Jamaican dollar has wilted in value

US wants Hernandez over drug trafficking

The United States has requested Honduras to arrest former president Juan Orlando Hernandez for his eventual extradition to the US over drug trafficking issues.

National police and soldiers surrounded the neighbourhood around Hernandez's home on Monday night.

Honduras's foreign affairs ministry initially said via Twitter that it had notified the country's Supreme Court of Justice that the US Embassy had formally requested the arrest of a Honduran politician for the purposes of extradition.

The ministry did not identify the politician. But the country's current vice president, Salvador Nasralla, confirmed that request names Hernandez.

Hernandez left office on 27 January with the swearing in of president Xiomara Castro. The same day Hernandez left office he was sworn in as Honduras's representative to the Central American Parliament.

With a weak and co-opted Honduran justice system, Hondurans' hope for jus-



► Juan Orlando Hernandez is wanted in a New York court

tice had rested for years with US federal prosecutors in New York, where a string of revelations against Hernandez being closely followed back home.

Speculation had swirled for months over whether Hernandez would be charged when no longer president, because US prosecutors repeatedly implicated him in his brother's 2019 drug trafficking trial, alleging that his political rise was fuelled by drug profits. Hernandez strongly denies any illegal activities.

Royal tour to keep Queen relevant

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge will be on a royal charm offensive in the Caribbean next month hoping to shore up support for the monarchy in the region, but overwhelming feeling is that it will be a futile attempt.

William, 39, and Kate, 40, will tour the Bahamas, Jamaica and Belize hoping to prevent more nations from removing the Queen as head of state and become a republic.

The visit - the couple's first major joint overseas tour since before the pandemic - also coincides with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The Duke of Cambridge served in Belize, in Central America, with the Welsh Guards. Other stops will include Coral Vita in the Bahamas, a coral farm focused on reef restoration that was last year named one of the five £1 million (KY\$1.29m) winners of the Duke's inaugural Earthshot Prize.

A visit from two of the most glamorous Royals will give crucial support for the Monarchy in the region but won't have a significant impact.



► The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge will tour the Caribbean

In November, Prince Charles visited Barbados for a ceremony to mark its historic decision to remove the Queen as head of state. Jamaica, Antigua & Barbuda and a few other Caribbean countries are debating breaking away too. Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Dominica already have their own heads of state.

Last year, John Briceno, the Prime Minister of Belize, did not rule out his nation following suit, saying: "We need to find what fits Belize best."

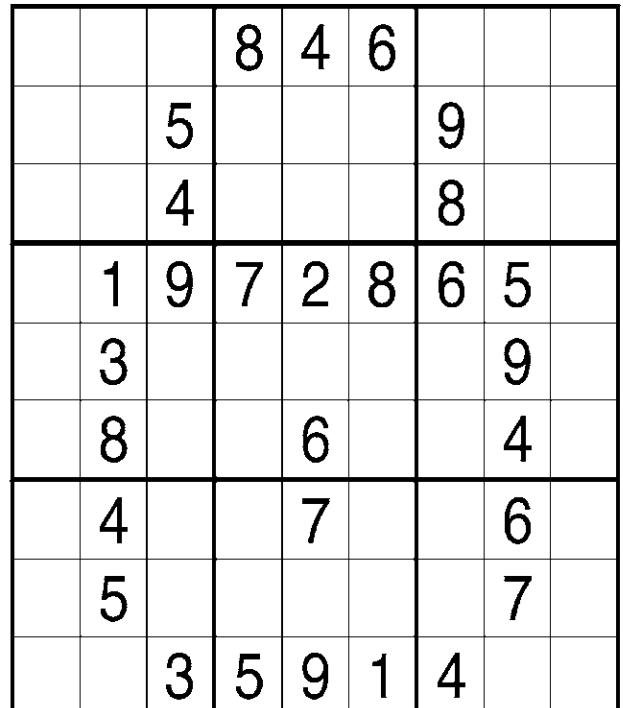
The last high-profile Royal visit to Belize - as well as the Bahamas and Jamaica - was made by Prince Harry in 2012 to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

SUDOKU

Conceptis 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.

By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★

©2020 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

4/29

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

4/28

Word Search



Bookends
Boots
Clogs
Cufflinks
Earrings
Gateposts
Gauntlets
Gloves
Leggings
Mittens
Sandals
Shoes
Skates
Slippers
Sneakers
Socks
Spats
Spurs
Stockings

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



Have fun with
**CAYMANIAN
TIMES**

THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN

By Stan Lee



STAN LEE
LARRY LIEBER
8-20

©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley



8-20

JUDGE PARKER

By Woody Wilson & Mike Manley



MARCHIANO + MANGI 8/20

©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

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

Yesterday's answer

30 Conclude
33 Pancake's kin
34 Novelist Oz
35 Less than any
37 Oodles
39 Flamenco cry
41 Bruins legend
42 Dissenter's vote

Sprint queen Elaine eyes records

Jamaica's sprint queen Elaine Thompson-Herah, continued her sizzling form from last year when she won an indoor race in England on Saturday.

In her first international race since winning at the Wanda Diamond League final in Zurich, the five-time Olympic gold medallist won the 60 metres at the Birmingham Indoor Grand Prix in 7.08 seconds to kick start a busy schedule.



► Flo-Jo's records have stood for 34 years

Back in the arena where she ran her personal best of 6.98secs in 2017, the 29-year-old - who now sits second on the world all-time lists for 100m and 200m thanks to respective personal bests of 10.54secs and 21.53secs ran last year - held off Britain's Daryll Neita (7.11secs) and Switzerland's world 200m bronze medallist Mujinga Kambundji (7.13secs).

"It's a good win and although I wanted to go under seven seconds, I'm good," said Thompson-Herah, who competed at the Copernicus Cup World Indoor Tour Gold meeting in Torun, Poland on Tuesday. "It's part of my training process and I'm still thinking about the World Indoors." The Birmingham run was her first indoor race in three years. The 60m indoor world record stands at 6.92secs, set by Irina Privalova in 1993.

Thompson-Herah claimed gold medals at the Tokyo Games in the 100m, 200m and 4x100m and is using the indoor season to sharpen her speed for an attack on the outdoor records later on. She is so determined to maximise her potential both commercially and competitively that she is now being represented by Andisportsmanagement. She was previously represented by agent Adrian Laidlaw.

Andisportsmanagement, run by Jamaican Olympian Marvin Ander-



► Elaine Thompson-Herah is determined to break world records

son, also represents Andre Ewers, Natasha Morrison, Jaheel Hyde and Christine Day. Thompson-Herah also recently parted ways with coach Stephen Francis and the MVP Track Club which had guided her career since 2014.

She explained her reason for the split. "I've outgrown the environment at MVP pretty much enuh. What I want for myself and to better myself, that was not provided so I have to find ways to get it. I want to be better, to be the greatest female sprinter of all-time."

Thompson-Herah is focused on breaking Florence Griffith-Joyner's 34-year-old 100m world record of 10.49secs. "It gives

me the drive to get up in the morning to do what I've got to do," she said. "But the work has to go in. To get that record you have to be in perfect shape, have perfect weather and a good line-up."

"I will not put pressure on myself, but when that day comes I will nail it. I'm going to nail it. Whenever I get that race, I've just got to get it right."

She is undecided on whether to compete at next month's World Indoor Championships in Belgrade. "I want to go below my PB of course and if I could get the world record, no problem," she added. "But I'm not putting myself under any pressure. I'm using these races to see where I'm at right now."

Windies set for IPL, then the Dutch

West Indies' postponed ODI series in the Netherlands will start on May 31, immediately after the Indian Premier League.

Against the Dutch they hope for better results after West Indies were defeated 3-0 by India in the just concluded T20I series in India. They lost the third one on Sunday by 17 runs in Kolkata. Suryakumar Yadav top-scored with 65 off 31 balls to fire India to 184 for five in 20 overs. In response, West Indies ended at 167 for nine after another sublime knock from Nicholas Pooran (61 off 47) went in vain.

The three ODI Super League fixtures will take place at the VRA Cricket Ground

in Amstelveen on May 31, June 2 and June 4.

Seventeen West Indies players are due to play in this season's IPL - the most from any country other than India - and CWI confirmed on Sunday that they would be "fully available" for the full season, as per a guarantee to players in their retainer contracts.

West Indies players in the IPL: Andre Russell (Kolkata Knight Riders), Nicholas Pooran (Sunrisers Hyderabad), Jason Holder (Lucknow Super Giants), Shimron Hetmyer (Rajasthan Royals), Romario Shepherd (Sunrisers Hyderabad), Kieron Pollard (Mumbai Indians), Sunil Narine (Kolkata Knight Riders), Odean Smith (Punjab Kings), Dwayne Bravo (Chennai Super Kings), Rovman Powell (Delhi Capitals), Alzarri Joseph (Gujarat Titans), Evin Lewis (Lucknow Super Giants), Dominic Drakes (Gujarat Titans), Sherfane Rutherford (Punjab Kings), Fabian Allen (Mumbai Indian), Obed McCoy (Rajasthan Royals) and Kyle Mayers (Lucknow Super Giants).



► Nicholas Pooran is in fine form

LeBron: I'll play with son soon

LeBron James has spoken again about his intention of playing alongside his son and a return to the Cleveland Cavaliers as he contemplates the final stages of his career.

The 37-year-old's two-year, \$85 million contract with the Los Angeles Lakers expires next season, meaning he would be a free-agent heading into the 2023-24 season. James started his career with the Cavaliers, who are based a short drive from his hometown of Akron, in 2003 and returned for a second stint in 2014, winning the NBA title in 2016.

"The door's not closed on (a return to the Cavaliers)," James said. "I'm not saying I'm coming back and playing, I don't know. I don't know what my future holds. I don't even know when I'm free."

One point James was more certain on was his oldest son. Bronny James is a 17-year-old point guard for Sierra Can-



► LeBron James will take a pay cut to play with Bronny

yon School in Chatsworth, California and is one of the country's best prospects in his age group. He would be eligible for the NBA draft in 2024 when his father will be 39. "My last year will be played with my son," James said. "Wherever Bronny is at, that's where I'll be. I would do whatever it takes to play with my son for one year. It's not about the money at that point."