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Premier's Privy Council Statement

Privy Council Judgement decision right for same sex couples to marry

By Premier Hon. G. Wayne Panton, MP, JP

The Privy Council on Monday released its judgement in relation to the appeal by Chantelle Day and Vickie Bush against the decision of the Court of Appeal of the Cayman Islands on the question of whether the Bill of Rights of the Cayman Islands supported a right to same sex marriage.

The substance of the appeal originated in the decision of the Grand Court in 2019 that the Marriage Act was in conflict with the Bill of Rights and that it was necessary to amend the Marriage Act to comply with these obligations.

The Government successfully appealed the decision of the Grand Court to the Court of Appeal and it is that decision that was the substance of the appeal to the Privy Council.

The Privy Council is the highest court of appeal for the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories and this decision makes it clear now that the Constitution (inclusive of the Bill of Rights) of the Cayman Islands

does not confer a right to same sex marriage. Specifically it does confer a right for "every unmarried man and woman of marriageable age freely to marry a person of the opposite sex and found a family".

This decision also makes it clear that the Privy Council agrees with the Court of Appeal that the interpretation of the Bill of Rights as reflected in their ruling "does not prevent Parliament [in the Cayman Islands] from introducing legislation to recognise same-sex marriage".

Following the passage into law of the Civil Partnership Law, 2020, both same sex and opposite couples may be united in a civil partnership, which affords the functional equivalence of marriage. Unfortunately, the enactment of this Act is being challenged by way of a judicial review. Should that succeed, Government will be in breach of its obligations to provide a mechanism for a union with functional equivalence to marriage and will be required to respond. This is clear from the decision of the Court of Appeal in 2019.

The issue of same-sex marriage is an emotive one in our Islands, with strong views held by those in support of and those against same sex marriages. As we process the Privy Council's ruling, we must remember to conduct ourselves with respect and civility.

While there are those Caymanians who believe in the traditional definition of marriage, I recognise that times are changing. Many of the younger generations of Caymanians have different views on the issue of marriage and this may become an issue of social justice in time to come.

In the meantime, as Premier I have an obligation under the law to ensure that all people, especially any minority group, are treated fairly and without discrimination. The constitution provides clear guidance on the matter of non-discrimination and the Civil Partnerships Law Act provides for legal recognition of same sex unions.

No matter your view on the issue of same sex marriage, I ask that you discuss your views respectfully and with due con-



► Premier Hon. G. Wayne Panton, MP, JP

sideration to the feelings and emotions of others.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the men and women who made arguments on both sides, and to express my appreciation for the work of the Privy Council.

Statement on The Privy Council Ruling on Same-Sex Marriage

The Privy Council's ruling regarding same-sex marriage in the Cayman Islands has settled several significant constitutional issues. That is:

- The Privy Council agreed with the 2019 Court of Appeal decision that the

Constitution, supported by the Marriage Law, denotes marriage as being between opposite-sex persons. As such, there is no right to marriage for same-sex couples. This follows what has also been determined by international case law.

- The Privy Council further agreed with the Court of Appeal that same-sex couples are entitled to legal protection, which is functionally equivalent to marriage, under the Constitution and international law.

- The ruling of the Privy Council confirmed the Civil Partnership Act passed into law by the Governor in 2020 did provide the necessary legal protections to same-sex couples.

- And by extension, the ruling has again clarified the interpretation and ability of the court to amend laws and put itself in the place of the Parliament. If a law is determined by the Courts to contravene the Constitution, then it should be for Parliament to have the opportunity to fix it.

In July 2020, the Progressives-led Government brought the Domestic Partnership Bill to the Parliament to provide the necessary legal protections to same-sex couples and satisfy the Government's legal obligation. It should be noted that the Court of Appeal, in its 2019 ruling in favour of the Government, also stated that "This court is an arm of Government. Any constitutional settlement requires the executive and the legislature to obey the law and to respect decisions of the court. It would be wholly unacceptable for this declaration to be ignored."

The events unfolded as they did, and the Domestic Partnership Bill failed pas-



► Hon. Roy McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition & Political Leader of the Progressives

sage in Parliament by one vote. Regrettably several members of the present PACT Government vehemently opposed the Domestic Partnership Bill and voted against it. However, all members of the current Progressives Opposition voted for the Bill. The introduction of the Domestic Partnership Bill was the right thing to do as a society that values each and every person within it, regardless of race, creed, gender or sexual orientation.

It was our view then and is still our view, that in voting down the Bill, Parliament, in full knowledge of what would likely follow, abdicated its responsibility under the law and did so in contravention of an explicit declaration of the Court of Appeal to pro-

SEE PRIVY COUNCIL STATEMENT, Page 5



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Pension Holiday Gets Final Extension to June 2022

By way of Cabinet Order, in accordance with section 1(3) of the National Pensions (Amendment) Act 2020, the national pension holiday has received a final extension through 30 June 2022.

“While it has been helpful to individuals and businesses to suspend the pension requirement during the past two years, we are now at a point in time where it is in the best interest of employees, to resume the funding of their pensions. It is the responsible approach to adopt given the improving economic environment and the Government is providing advance notice of this to allow employees and businesses to prepare for the resumption of these payments starting July 1st, 2022,” said Premier Hon. Wayne Panton.



The pension holiday, in place since April 2020 as a COVID-19 relief measure, exempted employers, employees, and self-employed individuals from making mandatory contributions to pension plans.

The rationale behind the pension holiday was that companies would have had more cash available to cover expenses such as payroll and health insurance contributions while employees would have more funds available to assist with their individual living expenses during the pandemic.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Labour Hon. Chris Saunders said, “The pandemic created challenges for both employees and employers as well as those currently seeking employment. With the relaxation of some travel restrictions, the resumption of commercial airline flights and the upcoming reintroduction of cruise tourism, the decision to extend the pension holiday for another three months was made to allow additional time for businesses to grow to full strength as the country reopens.”

As with the previous pension holiday periods, Government Owned Companies and Statutory Authorities are excluded from the Order, and therefore must continue to make pension contributions to their respective plans.

The Department of Labour & Pensions reminds the public that voluntary pension contributions can be paid into pension funds. Either the employee or the employer may opt to pay voluntary pension contributions, however, the other party is not required to contribute as well.

Contact dlp@gov.ky for further information.

Celebrating Women at CUC



Joy Oremule and Mechon Evangelista-Ebanks

Congratulations Joy and Mechon

Congratulations to **Joy Oremule** and **Mechon Evangelista-Ebanks** who were recently promoted to Manager Human Resources & Employee Development and Manager Financial Services respectively.

Joy joined the Company in 1997 as an Accounts Clerk in the Financial Services Department and was promoted to Supervisor Revenue & Payables in 2000. In 2007, seeking new opportunities in a different field, Joy joined the Human Resources Department as Supervisor Human Resources (HR) Operations where she has been involved with all aspects of HR affairs and strategy.

Joy has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Management from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Human Resources at the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI). In addition to balancing a very heavy workload, she recently completed the Leadership Cayman programme and ILM Level 5 Leadership Training programme.

Mechon joined CUC in 2012 as a Senior Control Assurance Specialist in the Internal Audit & Risk Management Department where she was responsible for evaluating business processes to determine adequacy of controls, compliance with policies, procedures and best practice solutions.

In January 2020, Mechon joined the Transmission & Distribution (T&D) Operations Department as Supervisor T&D Operations, where she spearheaded the strategic design and implementation of the Company's vegetation management programme and its automated workflows.

Mechon has a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from the University of the Philippines and obtained her Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation in 2003. Mechon also obtained the Certified Internal Auditor (CIA) designation in 2015 and the Certification in Risk Management Assurance (CRMA) in 2018. In February 2020, Mechon completed the ILM Level 5 Leadership Training.

The Company is thrilled to welcome Joy and Mechon to its Management Team.



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Cayman Islands Government Net Assets Reach CI\$2 Billion

Earlier today (Tuesday, 15 March) Deputy Premier and Minister for Finance & Economic Development, Hon. Chris Saunders, presented the Cayman Islands Government's unaudited financial report for the two-month period ended 28 February 2022 to Cabinet. He noted that for the first time in the Islands' history the Net Assets reached the CI\$2 billion mark. This was achieved with total assets of CI\$3 billion and total liabilities of CI\$1 billion.

Included in total assets were Property, Plant and Equipment valued at CI\$2.0 billion, and bank balances of CI\$542.2 million at 28 February 2022.

Bank balances comprised of CI\$367.6 million in operating bank balances, which Government can use freely for its day-to-day operations, and CI\$174.6 million held as Reserve and Restricted deposits – the use of which requires authorisation by Parliament or its Committees (such as Finance Committee).

The two most significant components of Reserves and Restricted balances are General Reserves and the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF).

The Islands' General Reserves have grown from CI\$99.2 million in February 2019 to CI\$104.8 million at 28 February 2022. The EPF stood at CI\$58.2 million at 28 February 2022.

Government's debt has decreased steadily from CI\$417.4 million at 28 February 2019 to CI\$227.8 million at 28 February 2022. The Islands' debt-to-GDP ratio is less than 5% - making it enviably one of the lowest debt ratios in the world.

Also included in the report to Cabinet was the overall year-to-date (YTD) performance for the two-month period to 28 February 2022 which detailed the following:

- Revenues of CI\$355.4 million, which were CI\$2.7 million better than the budgeted projection of CI\$352.7 million; an increase of CI\$44.9 million over the same period in 2021; and CI\$55.0 million better than the same period in 2019 – which is the last pre-pandemic year on record.

- Operating Expenses of CI\$146.1 million, which were CI\$9.1 million better

than the budgeted estimate of CI\$155.2 million.

- An Operating Surplus of CI\$209.3 million, which was CI\$11.8 million better than the budgeted forecast of CI\$197.5 million.

The positive variance in revenues compared to the 2022 budget was largely due to better than expected performance in:

- Partnerships fees: CI\$4.0 million;
- Mutual fund administrators licence fees: CI\$3.4 million;
- Private fund fees: CI\$3.2 million; and
- Work permit fees: CI\$2.4 million.

The positive variances in the above categories were able to offset the following areas which experienced less revenue in 2022 compared to budget:

- Exempt Companies: CI\$2.4 million; and
- Tourism accommodation charges: CI\$1.9 million.

The Operating Expenses of Core Government were CI\$9.1 million below budget largely due to savings in Personnel Costs of CI\$5.5 million and Supplies and Consumables of CI\$9.8 million. These savings were offset by higher than expected Transfer Payments of CI\$6.7 million, which reflects the enhanced level of monetary assistance made available to individuals and businesses to cope with the adverse economic and financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Deputy Premier noted that he was happy with the trend for the first two months of 2022 compared to the first two months of 2021 where revenues increased by 14.4% and expenses by 10% thus creating "positive jaws" (where percentage growth in revenues is greater than percentage growth in expenses). This reverses the "negative jaws" effect that occurred between 2021 and 2020 where revenues increased by 8.6% and expenses by 21.4% for the first two months of the year.

However, he sounded a note of caution when it came to the amount of cash held by Government at the end of February 2022.

Deputy Premier Saunders said, "While the year-to-date numbers for the first two months of the year are positive compared



► Deputy Premier and Minister for Finance & Economic Development, Hon. Chris Saunders

to the prior year, the Government is nonetheless mindful of the cash balances at the end of February 2022 being CI\$53.8 million less than the prior year and CI\$179.4 million below the same period in 2019. This clearly illustrates that we are still feeling the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Government's management of cash for the first two months of the year reflects a high level of prudence, as for the first time in three years the Government actually increased its cash position during the respective two-month period by CI\$27.6 million in 2022 versus previous combined decreases of CI\$123.3 million (CI\$47.5 million in 2021, CI\$22.2 million in 2020, and CI\$53.6 million in 2019) over the same period in the last three years. We will continue to monitor cash, while prioritising expenses and minimising borrowing. Although Government does have the authority to borrow at this point, we are only interested in borrowing as and when it is absolutely necessary in order that we keep interest expenses down."

Premier Hon. Wayne Panton said, "I would like to thank, the Hon. Minister of Finance, my other colleagues in Cabinet and the many hardworking civil servants for their contributions to these results without compromising delivery of services to the public. While this is a significant milestone in the achievement of Net Assets of CI\$2 billion dollars, it could not have been achieved without the contributions of many past administrations. The PACT Government remains committed to exercising prudence and good judgement in managing our finances and will continue to prioritise projects and initiatives that are in the best interest of our beloved Cayman Islands. The Government remains cognisant of the global challenges remaining from the pandemic, which are further compounded by the events in Ukraine. These factors have challenged Ministers to prioritise expenditures without compromising initiatives that are important to the public."

| GOVERNMENT OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION | | | | | | |
| As at 28 February 2022 | | | | | | |
| All figures are stated in CI\$ 000s | | | | | | |
| Restated As at 28 February 2019 | Restated As at 29 February 2020 | Restated As at 28 February 2021 | | As at 28 February 2022 | As at 31 January 2022 | Change |
| 2,615,085 | 2,291,323 | 2,560,139 | Total Assets | 2,984,988 | 2,764,683 | 220,305 |
| 1,004,946 | 873,909 | 859,297 | Total Liabilities | 978,630 | 1,006,257 | (27,627) |
| | | | Net Assets | | | |
| 165,328 | 175,163 | 171,935 | Reserves | 174,591 | 174,591 | - |
| 490,257 | 490,968 | 490,968 | Revaluation Reserves | 894,464 | 405,685 | 488,779 |
| 200,123 | 176,922 | 178,108 | Surplus/(Deficit) for the period | 207,314 | 167,730 | 39,584 |
| 754,431 | 574,361 | 859,831 | Accumulated Surplus | 729,989 | 1,010,420 | (280,431) |
| 1,610,139 | 1,417,414 | 1,700,842 | Total Net Assets | 2,006,358 | 1,758,426 | 247,932 |

► Summary of Financial Position – Core Government

New CMEA Executive Committee selected

On Sunday 6th March 2022, the Cayman Music and Entertainment Association held its AGM and a new President, Steve Reid, was confirmed.

The TEAM is new and is looking for-

ward to working for and with all musicians of the Cayman Islands. President Steve Reid is excited and honored as he takes the helm: "I'm honored to have been chosen to lead the CMEA with a

team that their wealth of experience is invaluable to the association. We have lots of exciting initiatives planned and we welcome all musicians and entertainers to join us."



► The continuation of the AGM extended to Sunday 13th March 2022, whereby the CMEA Executive Committee were selected, from left, Blake Hurlston (Assist Treasurer), John Henry (Secretary), Burmon Scott (Vice President), Steve Reid (President), Fred Sambula (Treasurer) and Sean Clarke (Assist Secretary)

Statement on The Privy Council Ruling on Same-Sex Marriage

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

vide same-sex couples with necessary protections. Failing which the Court of Appeal said that the UK Government should act.

With the Parliament abdicating its responsibility, the Governor, with the instruction of the UK, was then obligated to bring into law the Civil Partnership Act 2020, using the power provided under Section 81 of the Constitution. As did the Domestic Partnership Bill, the Civil Partnership Act provided the required legal protections for same-sex couples that are functionally equivalent to marriage.

The other unfortunate result of Parliament's failure to carry out its legal obligations was to give the UK Government reason to not proceed with the agreed change to our Constitution to remove the ability of an unelected Governor, under section 81 of the Constitution, to make laws. That provision was hard-won during our Constitution negotiations with the UK, and regrettably it was lost.

With this ruling, I pray that the Civil Partnership Law will be accepted by the entire community as the law of the land and will end the harmful rhetoric that has unfortunately characterised some of the public debate.

I suspect that, as has happened in the UK and elsewhere, over time most Caymanians may come to accept same-sex marriage. Should this be the case then it would be right for the Parliament to bring this about and not a court of law.

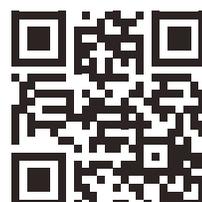


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Cayman Islands Government



► His Excellency the Governor, Martyn Roper OBE, the Premier, Hon. Wayne Panton, Hon. Speaker McKeeva Bush OBE, JP, Cabinet Ministers, MPs, uniformed services representatives, and other government officials attended the ceremony



► Celebrating Commonwealth Day all three flags raised

Celebrating Commonwealth Day

The Cayman Islands observed Commonwealth Day today, Monday, 14 March 2022, by raising the Commonwealth flag outside the Government Administration Building during a brief ceremony at 9:45 a.m.

The event was part of the international 'Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth' initiative. This year's special theme for Commonwealth Day was 'Delivering a Common Future'. His Excellency the Governor, Martyn Roper OBE, the Premier, Hon. Wayne Panton, Hon. Speaker McKeeva Bush OBE,

JP, Cabinet Ministers, MPs, uniformed services representatives, and other government officials attended the ceremony.

President of the Royal Commonwealth Society (Cayman Islands Branch), Mr. Lemuel Hurlston, CVO, MBE, JP, gave the opening remarks and delivered a message from the Commonwealth Secretary-General, The Right Honourable Patricia Scotland QC. Born in Dominica, she is the second Secretary-General from the Caribbean and the first woman to hold the post.

A representative from Girlguiding Cayman Islands, young Imogen Howe, read the Commonwealth Affirmation. His Excellency the Governor and The Hon. Premier hoisted the Cayman Commonwealth flag, promptly at 10:00 a.m.

Commonwealth flags were also raised throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, UK Overseas Territories, and Commonwealth countries at 10:00 a.m. to mark Commonwealth Day.



► The Premier, Hon. Wayne Panton hoisting the Cayman the Commonwealth flag



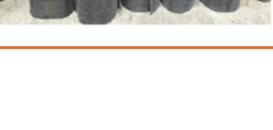
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BAYTOWN PLAZA, WEST BAY ROAD



► An RCIPS helicopter in flight



► (L-R) Inspector Mohammed, Captain Miller, AC McLean, and Mr. Fitzgerald

RCIPS Spotlight: Air Operations Unit Continues to Develop Staff & Capabilities

The RCIPS Air Operations Unit continues to develop its staff and capabilities in contribution to the Service's goals of securing the Cayman Islands, ensuring safer communities and delivering a professional police service. The last few months have seen the Unit conduct two overseas deployments to the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI), the promotion of one of the Unit's key staff members, and the continued training of the Unit's first aspiring Caymanian pilot.

Read more about these developments below:

RCIPS Police Helicopter Conducts Successful Deployments to Turks & Caicos Islands

During 2021 - 2022, the RCIPS Air Operations Unit (AOU) completed two successful deployments of an H145 police helicopter and crew to the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI), where they provided security and stability support to the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RTCIPF) in countering unlawful migration.

The deployments, which lasted for two weeks each, were conducted from 1 to 15 December 2021, and 5 to 19 January 2022, respectively. Over the course of the four weeks, the two crews flew 41 flights, with a total of 75 hours of flying time, and covered an area of 6,500 nautical miles. Most of the operations focused on the southern approaches of TCI and routes to neighbouring Haiti.

"Notably, over the seven-week period, there were no recorded arrivals of any unlawful migrants in TCI," says Steve Fitzgerald, head of the AOU. "It is clear that the presence of the RCIPS helicopter, which was heavily publicised, successfully served as a deterrent."

In addition, during the second deployment, the AOU crew provided support for ground operations in TCI, including two firearm operations with the purpose of detaining dangerous suspects.

"This is the first time we have deployed an extended overseas operation, whilst also maintaining full cover in the Cayman Islands," adds Mr. Fitzgerald. "During the

deployments, our crews in Cayman were also able to fully support key operations locally, which just shows the versatility that having the two aircraft allows. And the feedback from our RTCIPF colleagues has also been very positive."

The deployments were funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Cayman Islands and United Kingdom Governments in December 2018 to support Overseas Territories disaster management and security, and were approved and endorsed by the Premier and HE The Governor.

Deputy Head of RCIPS Air Operations Unit Promoted to Rank of Inspector

Former Police Sergeant Neil Mohammed, who has served as Training Officer and Deputy Head of RCIPS Air Operations since March 2010, has now been promoted to the rank of Police Inspector.

Inspector Mohammed was one of 11 RCIPS Inspectors who successfully progressed in the promotion process and were officially confirmed in rank during a ceremony on 1 February.

Inspector Mohammed's current duties with the AOU include managing staff and contracted entities that operate and maintain the RCIPS helicopters, ensuring that the requirements of the Police Air Operations Certificate are met as directed by Cayman Islands Civil Aviation Authority, and overseeing the selection, training, and welfare of Unit staff.

Having started with the RCIPS as a Special Constable in 1996, Inspector Mohammed became a full police Constable in 1998. Since then he has served in various departments, from front-line shift, to Criminal Investigations, to the Drugs Task Force. He was selected to assist in the development of the Air Support Unit, now the Air Operations Unit, and has completed Police Aviation training courses, including his Tactical Flight Officer certification, in the US, UK and Ireland.

He continues to develop and maintain relationships with other agencies both



► Inspector Neil Mohammed

local and international, and his relationship with National Helicopters Trinidad was instrumental in bringing AC Darren McLean's secondment with the company to fruition.

Inspector Mohammed will be bringing his knowledge and experience to the role of Head of Air Operations later this year, when the current head of the Unit, Mr. Steve Fitzgerald, is set to retire following over a decade of service to the Cayman Islands.

"I am committed to the maintenance and further development of the Air Operations Unit's high professional standards, set by Steve as the current Head of Air Operations," says Inspector Mohammed.

"Having been part of the unit from its birth through its infancy and maturity, I am aware there will be many challenges ahead, and I am ready to face these as I continue on with my development through a very comprehensive mentoring program with Steve, who continues to share his wealth of experience, gained over the course of his 49 years in law enforcement, 29 years in police aviation, and

12 years with the RCIPS," adds Inspector Mohammed. "I also look forward to bringing to fruition the development and placement of our own first Caymanian Police helicopter pilot, Darren McLean."

"I am quite proud to see Neil promoted to the rank of Inspector," says Mr. Fitzgerald. "Although it is bittersweet to be retiring after all these years, I know that the Air Operations Unit will be in good hands with Neil at the helm, and I look forward to his continued development over the next few months."

AC Darren McLean Set to Return to Trinidad & Tobago to Commence Final Leg of Helicopter Pilot Training

A young Caymanian RCIPS employee is moving even closer to achieving a significant first for the service.

Having spent the holiday season in Cayman with his friends and family, RCIPS Auxiliary Constable Darren McLean is

RCIPS Spotlight: Air Operations Unit Continues to Develop Staff & Capabilities

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

heading back to Trinidad and Tobago in April to commence the final leg of his journey to becoming the first Caymanian pilot in the RCIPS Air Operations Unit (AOU).

Darren has been on secondment to a helicopter pilot training program with National Helicopters in Trinidad and Tobago since early 2019. During that time he has received his First Officer Bars, and commenced flying as a co-pilot servicing contracts to the very demanding oil and gas industry.

For Darren, this is all part of a journey which began when he took his first flight in a helicopter many years ago. He had always known he wanted to be a pilot, but it was then he realised that flying helicopters would be his future.

Darren joined the RCIPS AOU in 2017 and was soon certified as a Tactical Flight Officer on the crew of the police helicopter. He had already obtained a commercial pilot's license for rotorcraft, but he would need further training in order to meet the requirements to fly for the RCIPS.

Over the past three years, Darren has had the opportunity to obtain this training through a unique arrangement between the RCIPS, Cayman Islands Government, and National Helicopters.

"Darren is working for National Helicopters as part of their training program, flying and learning on helicopters even larger and more complex than what the RCIPS currently operates," says Inspector Neil Mohammed, one of Darren's supervisors in the AOU. "Darren has been conducting various types of flights under very strict parameters. As well as oil and gas industry flights, he has also been doing medevacs and casevacs (casualty evacuations), providing VIP support, and supporting law enforcement."

With this arrangement Darren is able to consistently gain experience and hours, while National Helicopters adds another talented pilot to their ranks for an extended period of time.

"The team at National Helicopters is full of praise for Darren, who they say is one

of their best trainee pilots," adds Inspector Mohammed. "They say he is a pleasure to work with and very capable and competent, just as he was when he was working with us in the AOU."

However, the program has not been without its setbacks, particularly the effects of COVID-19. The emergence of the virus in early 2020 meant that the flight operations of the company were significantly scaled back. This meant that the number of hours Darren could fly during the period were also limited, a challenge that was not limited to National Helicopters, but which did result in a delay from the original timeline.

The COVID-19 situation also meant an even longer period away from friends and family in the Cayman Islands, as travel was limited and the borders were closed.

"It's always hard being away from home and my family, but being on my own having to deal with COVID, all the lockdown restrictions, and knowing that I couldn't fly as much, was pretty difficult," says Darren. "But I'm just thankful that even though I couldn't be with them, I still had their support the whole time, so I never felt like I was truly on my own."

Eventually the restrictions on flights eased and Darren was once again back to flying every day. Nevertheless, the situation prompted a review of Darren's training plan and the timeline for his completion, and Commissioner of Police Derek Byrne reached out to the Civil Aviation Authority Cayman Islands (CAACI) for their expertise in helping determine the best option for the completion of Darren's training.

CAACI Flight Operations Inspector Captain Adrian "Rex" Miller, who has trained several young Caymanian pilots over the years, offered his feedback to the team on Darren's current progression and his trajectory, and it soon became clear that National Helicopters remained the best option due to the intensity, quality, and scope of their training program. Even with the COVID-related delays, they also remained able to provide Darren with



► Inspector Neil Mohammed wearing his AOU flight suit

far more hours than he would be able to receive in Cayman. With the full endorsement of the CAACI, CIG, the Commissioner, and Darren's supervisors in the AOU, the decision was made for Darren to continue on his current path.

"We've stayed in regular contact with Darren throughout his time in Trinidad and Tobago," says Steve Fitzgerald, head of the Air Operations Unit. "We know that there have been ups and downs over the course of his journey. However, we always make sure to offer whatever mentorship we can as his training continues. We also get regular reports from National Helicopters, and can see the continued progress he's making, so we know he's well on track to reaching his goal."

That goal is for Darren to complete his training and return to working full time with the AOU as Cayman's first Caymanian police helicopter pilot. But while he will be the first, Darren doesn't plan to be the only one. When he returns, he and the team will be developing the position of Train-

ee Pilot, in order to create a path for the next aspiring Caymanian helicopter pilots who will partake in the program.

"We want to have a process in place, so that others can follow in Darren's footsteps," says Mr. Fitzgerald. "But they will have to prove themselves, work hard, and show they have the aptitude and the dedication."

"I want to inspire someone else to see what I'm doing and want to do the same," says Darren. "They should know that even though it's hard, it's not impossible."

"To be successful as a pilot you really need to be a leader, and have the discipline to come to work and do what you're supposed to do," says Captain Miller. "The thing I've learned as a trainer, is that you can always tell who the leaders are. That's why I have no doubt that Darren will continue to be successful in his journey."

"We wish Darren all the best when he returns to Trinidad and Tobago and know that he will continue to do the service and his country proud," says Commissioner Byrne. "As I have previously said, Darren has a very bright future with the RCIPS Air Operations Unit."

We also want to thank the Cayman Islands Government for their continued support, and the CAACI for lending us their expertise. This is truly a collaborative initiative that goes beyond just the RCIPS."



► AC Darren McLean

THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Small businesses key to successful reopening



He said special attention is being placed on those businesses to help them adjust to the new realities as the economy reopens.

“When you hear about the training that we’re doing; when you hear about the advocacy, it’s really on behalf of those businesses that wouldn’t have a lot of admin staff, that wouldn’t have a lot of revenues, and would bear a lot more pain when we reopen, and that’s what we as a Chamber are doing; advocating and making sure that the government can also meet us halfway to help businesses to reopen.”

The small business sector in Cayman has been amongst the hardest hit by the economic contraction caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

With Cayman now poised to reopen, revitalising that core segment of the economy is set to receive even more attention from the Chamber of Commerce, according to incoming Chamber President Shomari Scott.

Small and medium-sized enterprises have already been the recipients of several government initiatives to tide them over during the downturn over the past year and a half.

Now, Mr Scott says the Chamber will be making more resources available to the sector as Cayman emerges from the impact of Covid-19 with all eyes on the reopening on 20 November 20.

The small business sector, largely comprised of locally-owned companies, is a vital and dynamic component of the Caymanian economy operating across several industries ranging from grocery stores, boutiques and salons, restaurants, night-clubs, transportation, landscaping, a variety of professional services.

“A lot of times when people hear to Chamber of Commerce, they think big business,” Mr Scott says. “Actually, of the 632 companies that are registered Chamber members, 73% are businesses that have over 20 employees, and 40% are businesses that have under five employees. So, it’s really small business that we are representing,” the next-in-line Chamber president points out.

Appearing on the Caymanian Times discussion programme, The Panel, Mr Scott explained that one of the initiatives that the Chamber is embarking on for its membership that is especially targeted at small businesses is a special focus on the mental wellbeing of business owners.

“There are certain types of mental issues that persons would have with not being able to make their salary and not being able to make ends meet, and now as we get closer to the borders being open, and you have positives popping up left, right and centre, there’s another aspect in regards to mental health with the fear of what’s going to happen with Covid,” he said.

Mr Scott said safeguarding and supporting small businesses alongside the cohort of established major enterprises is crucial as they all transition back into some semblance of normal commercial activity picking up from where they left off last year.

“When you have a small business that has five employees or less, it becomes hard for the business owner to continue footing the bill, especially when you have businesses that haven’t made the revenue over the past two years based on borders being closed.”



► Chamber President Shomari Scott

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REGISTRATION NOTICE

section 13(2)

TAKE NOTICE that –

- (a) Every person who is entitled to be registered as an elector in the **Cayman Brac East and Cayman Brac West & Little Cayman** electoral district(s) and who wishes to have his/ her name placed on the Register of Electors for the three month period commencing on the **1st day of July, 2022** shall, unless already registered in the current Register of Electors, apply in writing in Form 4 for registration as an elector, which duly completed form must be received by the registering officer for the said electoral district(s) on or before the registration date, namely the **1st day of April, 2022**.
- (b) Every person not disqualified on any of the grounds set out in the next paragraph of this notice is qualified to be registered as an elector in the said electoral district if he or she –

Qualifications of Electors

- 90(1) Subject to section 91, a person shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in one electoral district only, but he or she shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector for elections to the Legislative Assembly unless—
- (a) he or she was, on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Constitution, entitled to be registered as an elector; or
- (b) he or she –
- is a Caymanian; and
 - has attained the age of eighteen years; and
 - is resident in the Cayman Islands at the date of registration; and
 - has been resident in the Cayman Islands for a period or periods amounting to not less than two years out of the four years immediately preceding the date of registration;
- or
- (c) on the day of the issue of a writ ordering an election, he or she is otherwise qualified under paragraph (b) but has not attained the age of eighteen, but he or she will attain that age on or before the polling day at the election.

Disqualifications of Electors

- 91(1) A person shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector in any electoral district who—
- (a) subject to subsection (2) is serving a sentence of imprisonment (by whatever name called) exceeding twelve months imposed on him or her by a court in any country or substituted by competent authority for some other sentence imposed on him or her by such a court, or is under such a sentence of imprisonment the execution of which has been suspended;
- (b) is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in the Cayman Islands; or
- (c) is disqualified for registration as an elector by any law in force in the Cayman Islands relating to offences connected with elections.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a)—
- (a) where a person is serving two or more sentences of imprisonment that are required to be served consecutively he or she shall, throughout the whole time during which he or she so serves, be regarded as serving a sentence exceeding twelve months if (but not unless) any one of those sentences exceeds that term;
- (b) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed as an alternative to or in default of the payment of a fine; and
- (c) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed by a court outside the Cayman Islands other than a sentence on conviction of an offence constituted by conduct which, if it occurred within the Cayman Islands, would constitute an offence punishable under the law of the Cayman Islands by imprisonment of twelve months or any greater punishment.
- (d) A revised list containing the names, street address and occupation of all persons qualified to vote in the said district –
- whose names appear in the current Register of Electors; or
 - who have submitted to the registration officer a duly completed and signed application for registration in Form 4 will be available at the Elections Office in George Town, the District Administration Office in Cayman Brac and the Post Office in Little Cayman for a period of twenty-one days beginning on the **22nd day of April, 2022**.
- (e) copies of Form 4 may be obtained at the following places –
- any post office or sub-post office;
 - the registering office for any electoral district; or
 - the Elections Office
- (f) The registering officer for the electoral district(s) is **Ellen Lazzari**.

18th March, 2022

DATE

Ellen Lazzari

REGISTERING OFFICER

TAKE NOTICE that –

- (a) Every person who is entitled to be registered as an elector in the **North Side** electoral district and who wishes to have his/her name placed on the Register of Electors for the three month period commencing on the **1st day of July, 2022** shall, unless already registered in the current Register of Electors, apply in writing in Form 4 for registration as an elector, which duly completed form must be received by the registering officer for the said electoral district on or before the registration date, namely the **1st day of April, 2022**.
- (b) Every person not disqualified on any of the grounds set out in the next paragraph of this notice is qualified to be registered as an elector in the said electoral district if he or she –

Qualifications of Electors

- 90(1) Subject to section 91, a person shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in one electoral district only, but he or she shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector for elections to the Legislative Assembly unless—
- (a) he or she was, on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Constitution, entitled to be registered as an elector; or
- is a Caymanian; and
 - has attained the age of eighteen years; and
 - is resident in the Cayman Islands at the date of registration; and
 - has been resident in the Cayman Islands for a period or periods amounting to not less than two years out of the four years immediately preceding the date of registration;
- or
- (b) on the day of the issue of a writ ordering an election, he or she is otherwise qualified under paragraph (a) but has not attained the age of eighteen, but he or she will attain that age on or before the polling day at the election.

Disqualifications of Electors

- 91(1) A person shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector in any electoral district who—
- (a) subject to subsection (2) is serving a sentence of imprisonment (by whatever name called) exceeding twelve months imposed on him or her by a court in any country or substituted by competent authority for some other sentence imposed on him or her by such a court, or is under such a sentence of imprisonment the execution of which has been suspended;
- (b) is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in the Cayman Islands; or
- (c) is disqualified for registration as an elector by any law in force in the Cayman Islands relating to offences connected with elections.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a)—
- (a) where a person is serving two or more sentences of imprisonment that are required to be served consecutively he or she shall, throughout the whole time during which he or she so serves, be regarded as serving a sentence exceeding twelve months if (but not unless) any one of those sentences exceeds that term;
- (b) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed as an alternative to or in default of the payment of a fine; and
- (c) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed by a court outside the Cayman Islands other than a sentence on conviction of an offence constituted by conduct which, if it occurred within the Cayman Islands, would constitute an offence punishable under the law of the Cayman Islands by imprisonment of twelve months or any greater punishment.
- (d) A revised list containing the names, street address and occupation of all persons qualified to vote in the said district –
- whose names appear in the current Register of Electors; or
 - who have submitted to the registration officer a duly completed and signed application for registration in Form 4 will be available at the Elections Office in George Town, the District Administration Office in Cayman Brac and the Post Office in Little Cayman for a period of twenty-one days beginning on the **22nd day of April, 2022**.
- (e) copies of Form 4 may be obtained at the following places –
- any post office or sub-post office;
 - the registering office for any electoral district; or
 - the Elections Office
- (f) The registering officer for the electoral district is **E. Patricia Ebanks**.

18th March, 2022

DATE

E. Patricia Ebanks

REGISTERING OFFICER

TAKE NOTICE that –

- (a) Every person who is entitled to be registered as an elector in the **East End** electoral district and who wishes to have his/her name placed on the Register of Electors for the three month period commencing on the **1st day of July, 2022** shall, unless already registered in the current Register of Electors, apply in writing in Form 4 for registration as an elector, which duly completed form must be received by the registering officer for the said electoral district on or before the registration date, namely the **1st day of April, 2022**.
- (b) Every person not disqualified on any of the grounds set out in the next paragraph of this notice is qualified to be registered as an elector in the said electoral district if he or she –

Qualifications of Electors

- 90(1) Subject to section 91, a person shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in one electoral district only, but he or she shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector for elections to the Legislative Assembly unless—
- (a) he or she was, on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Constitution, entitled to be registered as an elector; or
- (b) he or she –
- is a Caymanian; and
 - has attained the age of eighteen years; and
 - is resident in the Cayman Islands at the date of registration; and
 - has been resident in the Cayman Islands for a period or periods amounting to not less than two years out of the four years immediately preceding the date of registration;
- or
- (c) on the day of the issue of a writ ordering an election, he or she is otherwise qualified under paragraph (b) but has not attained the age of eighteen, but he or she will attain that age on or before the polling day at the election.

Disqualifications of Electors

- 91(1) A person shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector in any electoral district who—
- (a) subject to subsection (2) is serving a sentence of imprisonment (by whatever name called) exceeding twelve months imposed on him or her by a court in any country or substituted by competent authority for some other sentence imposed on him or her by such a court, or is under such a sentence of imprisonment the execution of which has been suspended;
- (b) is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in the Cayman Islands; or
- (c) is disqualified for registration as an elector by any law in force in the Cayman Islands relating to offences connected with elections.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a)—
- (a) where a person is serving two or more sentences of imprisonment that are required to be served consecutively he or she shall, throughout the whole time during which he or she so serves, be regarded as serving a sentence exceeding twelve months if (but not unless) any one of those sentences exceeds that term;
- (b) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed as an alternative to or in default of the payment of a fine; and
- (c) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed by a court outside the Cayman Islands other than a sentence on conviction of an offence constituted by conduct which, if it occurred within the Cayman Islands, would constitute an offence punishable under the law of the Cayman Islands by imprisonment of twelve months or any greater punishment.
- (d) A revised list containing the names, street address and occupation of all persons qualified to vote in the said district –
- whose names appear in the current Register of Electors; or
 - who have submitted to the registration officer a duly completed and signed application for registration in Form 4 will be available at the Elections Office in George Town, the District Administration Office in Cayman Brac and the Post Office in Little Cayman for a period of twenty-one days beginning on the **22nd day of April, 2022**.
- (e) copies of Form 4 may be obtained at the following places –
- any post office or sub-post office;
 - the registering office for any electoral district; or
 - the Elections Office
- (f) The registering officer for the electoral district is **Leisa V. Welcome**.

18th March, 2022

DATE

Leisa V. Welcome

REGISTERING OFFICER



REGISTRATION NOTICE

section 13(2)

TAKE NOTICE that –

- (a) Every person who is entitled to be registered as an elector in the **West Bay North, West Bay West, West Bay Central and West Bay South** electoral district(s) and who wishes to have his/her name placed on the Register of Electors for the three month period commencing on the **1st day of July, 2022** shall, unless already registered in the current Register of Electors, apply in writing in Form 4 for registration as an elector, which duly completed form must be received by the registering officer for the said electoral district(s) on or before the registration date, namely the **1st day of April, 2022**.
- (b) Every person not disqualified on any of the grounds set out in the next paragraph of this notice is qualified to be registered as an elector in the said electoral district if he or she –

Qualifications of Electors

90(1) Subject to section 91, a person shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in one electoral district only, but he or she shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector for elections to the Legislative Assembly unless—

- (a) he or she was, on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Constitution, entitled to be registered as an elector; or
- (b) he or she—
- is a Caymanian; and
 - has attained the age of eighteen years; and
 - is resident in the Cayman Islands at the date of registration; and
 - has been resident in the Cayman Islands for a period or periods amounting to not less than two years out of the four years immediately preceding the date of registration;
- or
- (c) on the day of the issue of a writ ordering an election, he or she is otherwise qualified under paragraph (b) but has not attained the age of eighteen, but he or she will attain that age on or before the polling day at the election.

Disqualifications of Electors

91(1) A person shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector in any electoral district who—

- (a) subject to subsection (2) is serving a sentence of imprisonment (by whatever name called) exceeding twelve months imposed on him or her by a court in any country or substituted by competent authority for some other sentence imposed on him or her by such a court, or is under such a sentence of imprisonment the execution of which has been suspended;
- (b) is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in the Cayman Islands; or
- (c) is disqualified for registration as an elector by any law in force in the Cayman Islands relating to offences connected with elections.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a)—
- (a) where a person is serving two or more sentences of imprisonment that are required to be served consecutively he or she shall, throughout the whole time during which he or she so serves, be regarded as serving a sentence exceeding twelve months if (but not unless) any one of those sentences exceeds that term;
- (b) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed as an alternative to or in default of the payment of a fine; and
- (c) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed by a court outside the Cayman Islands other than a sentence on conviction of an offence constituted by conduct which, if it occurred within the Cayman Islands, would constitute an offence punishable under the law of the Cayman Islands by imprisonment of twelve months or any greater punishment.
- (d) A revised list containing the names, street address and occupation of all persons qualified to vote in the said district –
- whose names appear in the current Register of Electors; or
 - who have submitted to the registration officer a duly completed and signed application for registration in Form 4 will be available at the Elections Office in George Town, the District Administration Office in Cayman Brac and the Post Office in Little Cayman for a period of twenty-one days beginning on the **22nd day of April, 2022**.
- (e) copies of Form 4 may be obtained at the following places –
- any post office or sub-post office;
 - the registering office for any electoral district; or
 - the Elections Office
- (f) The registering officer for the electoral district(s) is **Bethany Powery**.

18th March, 2022
DATE

Bethany Powery
REGISTERING OFFICER

TAKE NOTICE that –

Every person who is entitled to be registered as an elector in the **George Town North, George Town West, George Town Central, George Town South, George Town East, Red Bay and Prospect** electoral district(s) and who wishes to have his/her name placed on the Register of Electors for the three month period commencing on the **1st day of July, 2022** shall, unless already registered in the current Register of Electors, apply in writing in Form 4 for registration as an elector, which duly completed form must be received by the registering officer for the said electoral district(s) on or before the registration date, namely the **1st day of April, 2022**.

- (a) Every person not disqualified on any of the grounds set out in the next paragraph of this notice is qualified to be registered as an elector in the said electoral district if he or she –

Qualifications of Electors

90(1) Subject to section 91, a person shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in one electoral district only, but he or she shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector for elections to the Legislative Assembly unless—

- (a) he or she was, on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Constitution, entitled to be registered as an elector; or
- (b) he or she—
- is a Caymanian; and
 - has attained the age of eighteen years; and
 - is resident in the Cayman Islands at the date of registration; and
 - has been resident in the Cayman Islands for a period or periods amounting to not less than two years out of the four years immediately preceding the date of registration;
- or
- (c) on the day of the issue of a writ ordering an election, he or she is otherwise qualified under paragraph (b) but has not attained the age of eighteen, but he or she will attain that age on or before the polling day at the election.

Disqualifications of Electors

91(1) A person shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector in any electoral district who—

- (a) subject to subsection (2) is serving a sentence of imprisonment (by whatever name called) exceeding twelve months imposed on him or her by a court in any country or substituted by competent authority for some other sentence imposed on him or her by such a court, or is under such a sentence of imprisonment the execution of which has been suspended;
- (b) is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in the Cayman Islands; or
- (c) is disqualified for registration as an elector by any law in force in the Cayman Islands relating to offences connected with elections.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a)—
- (a) where a person is serving two or more sentences of imprisonment that are required to be served consecutively he or she shall, throughout the whole time during which he or she so serves, be regarded as serving a sentence exceeding twelve months if (but not unless) any one of those sentences exceeds that term;
- (b) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed as an alternative to or in default of the payment of a fine; and
- (c) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed by a court outside the Cayman Islands other than a sentence on conviction of an offence constituted by conduct which, if it occurred within the Cayman Islands, would constitute an offence punishable under the law of the Cayman Islands by imprisonment of twelve months or any greater punishment.
- (d) A revised list containing the names, street address and occupation of all persons qualified to vote in the said district –
- whose names appear in the current Register of Electors; or
 - who have submitted to the registration officer a duly completed and signed application for registration in Form 4 will be available at the Elections Office in George Town, the District Administration Office in Cayman Brac and the Post Office in Little Cayman for a period of twenty-one days beginning on the **22nd day of April, 2022**.
- (e) copies of Form 4 may be obtained at the following places –
- any post office or sub-post office;
 - the registering office for any electoral district; or
 - the Elections Office
- (f) The registering officer for the electoral district(s) is **Kathryn Myles**.

18th March, 2022
DATE

Kathryn Myles
REGISTERING OFFICER

TAKE NOTICE that –

Every person who is entitled to be registered as an elector in the **Newlands, Savannah, Bodden Town West and Bodden Town East** electoral district(s) and who wishes to have his/her name placed on the Register of Electors for the three month period commencing on the **1st day of July, 2022** shall, unless already registered in the current Register of Electors, apply in writing in Form 4 for registration as an elector, which duly completed form must be received by the registering officer for the said electoral district(s) on or before the registration date, namely the **1st day of April, 2022**.

- (b) Every person not disqualified on any of the grounds set out in the next paragraph of this notice is qualified to be registered as an elector in the said electoral district if he or she –

Qualifications of Electors

90(1) Subject to section 91, a person shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in one electoral district only, but he or she shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector for elections to the Legislative Assembly unless—

- (a) he or she was, on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Constitution, entitled to be registered as an elector; or
- (b) he or she—
- is a Caymanian; and
 - has attained the age of eighteen years; and
 - is resident in the Cayman Islands at the date of registration; and
 - has been resident in the Cayman Islands for a period or periods amounting to not less than two years out of the four years immediately preceding the date of registration;
- or
- (c) on the day of the issue of a writ ordering an election, he or she is otherwise qualified under paragraph (b) but has not attained the age of eighteen, but he or she will attain that age on or before the polling day at the election.

Disqualifications of Electors

91(1) A person shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector in any electoral district who—

- (a) subject to subsection (2) is serving a sentence of imprisonment (by whatever name called) exceeding twelve months imposed on him or her by a court in any country or substituted by competent authority for some other sentence imposed on him or her by such a court, or is under such a sentence of imprisonment the execution of which has been suspended;
- (b) is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in the Cayman Islands; or
- (c) is disqualified for registration as an elector by any law in force in the Cayman Islands relating to offences connected with elections.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a)—
- (a) where a person is serving two or more sentences of imprisonment that are required to be served consecutively he or she shall, throughout the whole time during which he or she so serves, be regarded as serving a sentence exceeding twelve months if (but not unless) any one of those sentences exceeds that term;
- (b) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed as an alternative to or in default of the payment of a fine; and
- (c) no account shall be taken of a sentence of imprisonment imposed by a court outside the Cayman Islands other than a sentence on conviction of an offence constituted by conduct which, if it occurred within the Cayman Islands, would constitute an offence punishable under the law of the Cayman Islands by imprisonment of twelve months or any greater punishment.
- (d) A revised list containing the names, street address and occupation of all persons qualified to vote in the said district –
- whose names appear in the current Register of Electors; or
 - who have submitted to the registration officer a duly completed and signed application for registration in Form 4 will be available at the Elections Office in George Town, the District Administration Office in Cayman Brac and the Post Office in Little Cayman for a period of twenty-one days beginning on the **22nd day of April, 2022**.
- (e) copies of Form 4 may be obtained at the following places –
- any post office or sub-post office;
 - the registering office for any electoral district; or
 - the Elections Office
- (f) The registering officer for the electoral district(s) is **Kerry Nixon**.

18th March, 2022
DATE

Kerry Nixon
REGISTERING OFFICER

Ministry of Culture & Heritage Goes Into High Gear With Brac Bonanza

Cayman Brac is in for a busy weekend from Friday, 18 March as The Ministry for Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage (MYSCH) hosts four events this coming weekend.

"We are looking forward to sharing a lot of the energy and momentum within the Ministry's portfolios with Cayman Brac residents," said "MYSCH Minister, Hon. Bernie Bush.

The Ministry's first-ever Youth Forum, to be held the Friday at Aston Ratty Civic Centre, is designed to allow youngsters from both sister islands to share and discuss issues affecting them and their interests. The feedback received from Friday morning's event will further inform youth-related policies and initiatives to be undertaken by the Ministry and the youth development efforts of youth organisations in the public and private sectors.

The Ministry will then host its second 'Caymanian Proud: Memories of Her Majesty' events on Friday afternoon as part of the year's Queen's Platinum Jubilee pro-

ceedings. The two sessions will involve panelists discussing memories of the 1983 and 1994 visits, with the second part opening up the floor to the public.

Saturday afternoon will see Protocol Office and MYSCH co-host the Cayman Brac National Heroes Day Awards Ceremony. The first National Heroes Day award ceremony for the sister islands will take place at Aston Ratty Civic Centre in the company of His Excellency The Governor, Martyn Roper; Speaker of the House, Hon. McKeeva Bush; Minister for District Administration, Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Conolly; MPs; honourees and special guests.

This invite-only ceremony will see awardees receive recognition under this year's theme of 'Honouring our Uniformed Services'.

The Ministry will then finish its Brac activities with a free Cayman Islands Folk Singers concert on Saturday evening. Rescheduled from January, the show partly funded by MYSCH will tap into folk traditions, songs and dances of Cayman's past.



► Cayman Islands Folk Singers

Applications Sought for Island Heritage's CharityDrive

Island Heritage Insurance Company, Ltd. ("Island Heritage" or "the Company") is seeking applications for its annual CharityDrive, set for the 11th, 12th and 13th of May.

Three charities will have the chance to win up to CI \$10,000 with the opportunity to earn up to an additional CI \$5,000 based on social media support.

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 holds a financial strength rating of "A (Excellent)" by A.M. Best, along with a proven track record of customer service excellence throughout the Caribbean. Island Heritage is part of the BF&M group of companies - like-minded organizations with one goal in mind: providing insurance the way it should be.



► File Photo Island Heritage CharityDrive

These amounts are made up of Island Heritage donating \$1 for every car that drives past the Island Heritage Roundabout (located on the Esterley Tibbetts bypass) and for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram support for the selected charity. Each charity selected will each have

a dedicated day to encourage the community to drive past the Island Heritage Roundabout or show support on social media.

This is Island Heritage's 10th CharityDrive. It was established as a creative and exciting way for the public to support their

favorite charities and the company has donated more than CI\$300,000 to 26 different local charities.

The deadline for applications is Monday, 4 April 2022. The application form is available online at <https://charitydrive.ky/apply-here/>.

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Junior tennis players hit competitive note (slug)

Competitiveness and determination were much in evidence at the Cayman Islands Tennis Club last weekend (ie weekend of 12/13 Mar), as junior players did battle in 2022's second PwC-sponsored tournament.

"We witnessed lots of great matches in four age groups: U10, U12, U14 and U18," commented tournament director and CITC head pro Alejandro Vial.

Shri G Shibu emerged victorious in the U10s, with Jackson Shambaugh taking the runner-up spot.

In the U12s, Aaron S Rajamohan fought his way to the top spot, with Ava Pierre coming in second.

Daniel Suico was the champion in the U14s, with Mico Samson in second place.

And in the U18s, Albert Berksoy put in strong, solid play to claim the winner's prize, with Abi Anderson as the runner-up.

About 20 youngsters in total took part in the event's hotly-contested matches.

PwC tournaments are run by the Tennis Federation of Cayman Islands, a non-profit, and all juniors, whether beginners or more advanced, are welcome to play; membership of a club is not necessary.



More information can be found at www.tfci.ky. Those wishing to join the TFCI mailing list for

future tournament information and updates are asked to email admin@tfci.ky.



Spring Squash Tournament

The Spring Squash Tournament is the 1st Individual Tournament of the year. 45 Squashers will battle it out on court through a cross section of 6 different divisions comprised of the Platinum division, Men's A, Men's B, Women's B, Men's C/D and Women's C/D. Matches will be played every night this week, Monday March 14th – Friday 18th 2022 and starting at 6pm each night. Friday night will be the finals night for all divisions.

The Spring Tournament is an opportunity for players to put their practice into competitive play.

SSSC is committed to facilitating more competitive play through frequent Tournaments throughout the year.

We anticipate we will be entertained with some classic and adrenaline filled matches this week, especially with the Platinum group. The Platinum group will showcase 4 of our top National players vying for 2 spots in the Individual tournament play at the upcoming FPS Championships to be held in Guatemala, April 1- 10th.

The Links International Junior Squash Tournament will follow closely behind on the 25th & 26th March.

For more information on South Sound Squash Club, visit www.squash.ky

For more information: Marlene West, Manager, South Sound Squash Club, mwest@squash.ky

CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE – WEEK – MARCH 21 - 25



TOTAL SHIPS – 6
TOTAL PASSENGERS – 19,600

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| Disney Magic | | Carnival Sunrise | Celebrity Apex | Emerald Princess |
| | | Carnival Paradise | Carnival Glory | |
| Total Passengers |
| 2,700 | 0 | 6,617 | 7,191 | 3,092 |

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Education Council Local Scholarship applications

Ongoing until 30 April - The Ministry of Education (MOE) is now accepting Cayman Islands Government (CIG) Education Council Local Scholarship applications for the 2022/2023 academic year. Scholarships are open to Caymanian students who have been accepted to pursue tertiary studies at a local institution. These include the Truman Bodden Law School (TBLS), University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI), International College of the Cayman Islands (ICCI) and UWI Open Campus. For information on local scholarships, email the Scholarship Secretariat Unit at scholarships@gov.ky. Applications close at 11:59 PM on Saturday, 30 April.

Caymanian Proud: 'Memories of Her Majesty' - Cayman Brac

18 March - The Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage (MYSCH) is hosting a Platinum Jubilee Caymanian Proud event, Caymanian Proud: 'Memories of Her Majesty' at the Aston Rutty Civic Centre, Cayman Brac on Friday, 18 March, 12 noon - 2 p.m. For further information, email:

YSCH-Events@gov.ky. Seat is limited at both venues and masks are required. Live streaming will also be available on CIGTV, the Cayman Islands Government FB and on YouTube. The general public and schools are invited to log in, watch, learn and enjoy.

Cayman Documentary Festival - The Great Disconnect

18 March - As part of HWM, all are invited to the Cayman Documentary Festival screening of The Great Disconnect at 6:30pm at the cinema at Camana Bay. This will be followed by a panel about mental health in association with the Alex Pantou Association. Tickets are \$25. For more information about all the documentaries to be aired, head to frc@gov.ky.

Sister Islands Heroes Day Ceremony for Uniformed Services

19 March - The Sister Islands Heroes Day Ceremony for Uniformed Services is March 19th at the Aston Rutty Center from 1 to 3pm.

STEM Girls' Camp

19 March - As part of Honouring Women's Month (HWM), there will be a STEM Girls' Camp aimed



► Cayman National Choir & Orchestra

at empowering young girls to be passionate about Science. This is an all-day interactive camp. For more information, call Family Resource Centre at 949 - 0006 or email frc@gov.ky

March Services of Holy Communion - St. Alban's Church of England, Shedden Road

20 March - A Service of Holy Communion will be held on March 20th at 9:30am. Morning prayers will continue on alternate Sundays at 9:30am as usual.

Chamber of Commerce - Communication Skills

22 March - Communication is one of the most fundamental skills that contributes to our success. This workshop is focused on making you aware of your communication style, the impact it has and how

you can improve this fundamental skill for maximum effectiveness and success. This half-day course is for everyone who is interested in developing their communication skills in person, via phone, email, and online platforms. For the time and cost of this workshop, go to www.caymanchamber.ky/events-training/training-centre/ or call 949 - 8090.

Mosaic of Music - Cayman National Choir & Orchestra

1 April - The Cayman National Choir and orchestra present "Mosaic of Music". Described as "a truly eclectic tapestry of music showcasing favourites from cultures and genres from around the world, stage and screen", this concert takes place on Friday 1 April beginning at 7:30pm at the Harquail Theatre. Tickets are \$10 for

under 18's and \$30 for adults and are available on eventpro.ky.

Tea & Croquet - Cayman Brac

2 April - The Brac Branch of CIHS Saturday is having Tea & Croquet on April 2 from 1:00 pm to 4.30pm at the West End Park, Cayman Brac. General admission is \$15 and includes Croquet Activities & Refreshments. Raffle Tickets will be on sale at \$5 each or 3 for \$10 (need not be present to win). The winner will be announced at 4pm. For tournament information, call Doug Ross at 924-6412. Tournament players must pre-register & arrive at 8.30am. Benefits support Veterinary Clinic for Sister Islands.

Send your community events to wendy@caymaniantimes.ky

SO close!

There is one reason why most people haven't yet reached their goals, and it's a simple one. It's something that I've struggled in the past, and it just may be the one thing that's holding you back from your big breakthrough.

That one thing is consistency.

Think about it. The difference that separates a fitness star from a couch potato is the consistency with which the former applies to their diet and exercise routine. That's it!

Look, I know you can exercise and eat right. You've done it before! But a fitness plan only works when you consistently stay with it. You start, stop, start again, take a few days off, then get back on track. This haphazard effort will never lead to a dramatic body transformation!

What if I told you that you're 5 feet from gold? That if you simply dug in a little deeper, and stuck with the program with consistency, you'd finally achieve the big

results that you've been hoping for all along.

You are 5 feet from gold; don't stop now!

The fact is that anyone can stick with a fitness and diet plan for a little while. Anyone can complete a challenge. Anyone can finish a 30-day program. Anyone can put in 2 weeks of solid effort.

It's those who click into consistency that see the big changes and experience the joy and triumph of real accomplishment. I want this for you.

I know that you see how valuable consistency is, and you want to do it, BUT you get off track time and time again. How do you tap into the consistency you need to make a real improvement in your life? Use these three steps...

See it: Define exactly what it is you want to be consistent on. For example, instead of saying that "I'll start exercising," say that, "I'll do the 5am session on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays." And in-

stead of, "I'll start eating healthy," say that, "I'll eat XX number of calories per day divided into 5 small meals." The more specific the better!

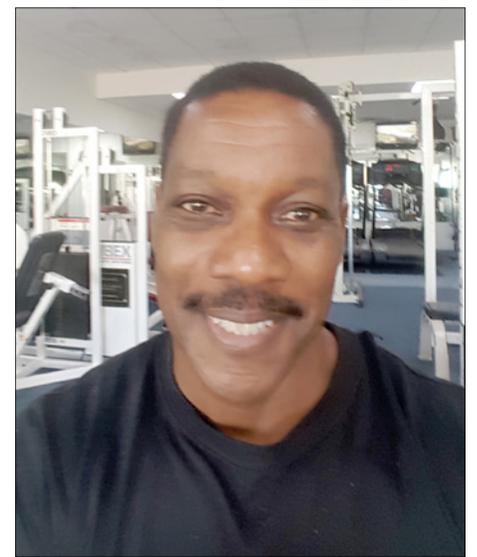
Keep in mind that you are defining your actions - not your outcome. Don't use this step to determine what size jeans you want to fit into. That outcome is a byproduct of you consistently doing the actions. Just clearly define the actions that you need to be consistent on.

Feel it: Now that you've determined the actions needed, let's think about that outcome and clearly define it. Be specific! What will you look like? What will that new body feel like? How will your friends and family respond to the new you?

It's time to get your emotions all tied up in your quest. Daydream about getting to that outcome, feel it, emotionally take ownership of the idea of owning it.

Do it: You're clear about what you want. You feel invested in getting the results. Now go about the business of taking consistent action toward your goal.

Yes, this sounds simple, and it is simple. Be consistent and you'll soon strike gold.



► Ernest Ebanks

Want accountability? I'd love to help you! Give me a call at Body Shapers Personal Training Fitness Studio 325-8696 or shoot me an email bodyshaperscayman@gmail.com and let's get you on track to shed some major fat before summer!

Let's do this together.

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WEEKLY WEATHER FORECAST

| Friday | Saturday | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 30° / 26° | 30° / 26° | 29° / 26° | 29° / 26° | 27° / 26° | 27° / 26° | 27° / 26° |
| Sunny; breezy in the p.m. | Mostly sunny | A t-storm around in the p.m. | Partly sunny and breezy | Breezy; a morning shower | Plenty of sunshine | A couple of morning showers |

Jehovah's Witnesses Increase!

Virtual Meetings, Ministry, Conventions Keep Congregants Active and Safe

Dennis and Penny Dobbins would rarely go more than a few days without knocking on a door, or visiting a Bible student, as part of their volunteer ministry. In early 2020, things suddenly changed! The pandemic struck and brought about major adjustments to the public ministry and meetings for Jehovah's Witnesses world-wide—including Grand Cayman.

This couple, like the other 269 congregants in the islands, was confident that the change to Zoom for virtual contact would reap positive results. This was all very new to them, as for decades, they were accustomed to going from door to door and meeting together in person at the Kingdom Hall twice weekly.

Now two years later what has been their experience? Has their enthusiasm waned?

"This has been a real boost to our ministry," explains the Dobbins who have served as missionaries in the islands for over 40 years. They, like others, have found their ministry now to be more efficient and productive. They can reach the other islands, more frequently, via telephone. Penny, now engages in a weekly Bible discussion with an interested person in Cayman Brac.

"Staying active in our ministry while remaining safe has had a powerful preserving effect on our congregants and communities," said Robert Hendriks, Branch wide Spokesman for Jehovah's Witnesses. "The wise decision not to prematurely resume in-person activities has united us and protected lives while comforting many people



in great need. The results speak for themselves."

Last year, the international organisation reported all-time peaks in the number of people participating in their volunteer preaching work, increased attendance in Zoom meetings and more than 171,000 new believers baptised. In the past two years, more than 400,000 have been baptised worldwide.

Kaydia Gouldbourne, describes her initial reaction to going virtual, as "happy but nervous"; she had to, "pray about it". Now she has more flexibility with her time. Her 7-year-old daughter, Abigail has adjusted quite nicely and is learning how to comfort her neighbors by writing letters and making telephone calls. "She really loves it," she says, smiling. Citing other benefits of the virtual space, Kaydia mentions that it keeps her closer touch with her friends, discern their needs and render assistance.

Eighteen-year-old Diandra Smith, has had a similar experience. "I was very nervous," she admits. Now, she is using her

time to share comfort from the Bible with her Spanish speaking neighbors, by means of letters and telephone calls. Additionally, she has been able to form more friendships via Zoom. "It feels like getting into a car and we are all talking and laughing at the same time." She advises other teenagers: "Don't live in the past. Use the experience you gain to focus on your present assignments."

Reflecting on the virtual way of worship Dennis sums it up nicely: "As 'iron sharpens iron', we are able to strengthen and help one another to become more effective."

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the in-person activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. Two years later and they are yet to return to how things were in the pre-COVID era. Yet these circumstances have resulted in new opportunities to carry out their core activities spiraling growth and a more united brotherhood.

To start an online Bible study course, receive a visit or attend a virtual meeting locally, visit jw.org.

MOMENTS OF INSPIRATION

AN AMAZING LOVE - Malachi 1: 1-10

The final, major historic acts of the Old Testament are described in Ezra and Nehemiah as God allowed the people of Israel to return from exile and settle in Jerusalem. The City of David was repopulated, a new temple built, and the wall repaired. And that brings us to Malachi.

This prophet, who was most likely a contemporary of Nehemiah, brings the written portion of the Old Testament to a close. "I HAVE LOVED YOU," it says. Marvellous!!!!

This is amazing. Isn't it? Their history had proven God's faithfulness, yet after hundreds of years in which God continually provided for His chosen people in both miraculous and mundane ways, they wondered how HE COULD LOVE THEM SO. Yes! No matter your condition, how far away from God you are, HE LOVE YOU. Jesus' death on the cross is the culmination of this AMAZING LOVE. Have you experienced it. Accept Jesus as your Saviour. HIS LOVE PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING.

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The family of the late **Samuel Lester Ebanks** regret to announce his passing on 10 March, 2022.



A Memorial Service will be held 5:00 p.m. at Bodden Funeral Service, 117 Walkers Rd. On Friday, 18 March, 2022.

Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page



The family of the late **Brenda Quin** regret to announce her passing on 5 March, 2022..



A funeral service will be held 4:00 p.m. at Bodden Funeral Service 117 Walkers Rd. on Thursday 24 March, 2022

Interment will follow at the North West Point Cemetery.

Condolences can be registered at boddenfuneralservice.com & Bodden Funeral Service Facebook page



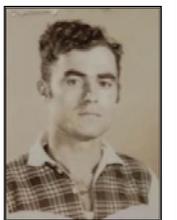
Churchill's

Funeral Home

We have been asked to announce the passing of John Walton who passed away on Monday, February 28, 2022.

A Graveside Service will be held at St. Mary's Garden of Rest Cemetery, Grand Cayman on Sunday, March, 20, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Viewing: 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.



Condolences can be registered at churchillsfuneralhome.com

Churchill's

Funeral Home

We have been asked to announce the passing of Mr. Frederick George Miller, who passed away on Monday, March 7, 2022.

A Graveside Service will take place at the Saint Mary's Garden of Rest Cemetery, Willie Farrington Drive, West Bay, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands on Saturday, March 19, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Viewing: 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.



In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Jasmine & Cancer Society. Condolences can be registered at churchillsfuneralhome.com

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

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

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Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty Level ★★ 5/05

Difficulty Level ★★★

5/06

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Ben Affleck film
 - 5 Rough guesses
 - 10 Inclines
 - 12 Witching group
 - 13 License
 - 14 Last letter of hopper
 - 15 Aussie
 - 16 Critic's concern
 - 18 Wee bite
 - 19 Mason of movies
 - 21 Phoenix team
 - 22 Washables requiring special care
 - 24 Justice Kagan
 - 25 Commits
 - 29 Confession list
 - 30 Hollywood bunch
 - 32 Got together
 - 33 Slip
 - 34 Morse bit
 - 35 City on the Mohawk River
 - 37 Nimble
- DOWN**
- 39 Happen again
 - 40 Relocation expert
 - 41 Stews
 - 42 Ivy League school
 - 1 Warning sound
 - 2 Do a musketeer's job
 - 3 In excess
 - 4 Lennon's love
 - 5 Paisley person
 - 6 Huck's friend
 - 7 City way
 - 8 Sets in
 - 9 Loses it
 - 11 Language in which "lion" is "simba"
 - 17 Indy auto
 - 20 Some coasters
 - 21 Declare
 - 23 Cone, for once
 - 25 Calorie counter
 - 26 Lead on
 - 27 Salad green
 - 28 Hot
 - 29 Blue character
 - 31 Boat back
 - 33 Head features
 - 36 Edit out
 - 38 Dems.' foes

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

Yesterday's answer

Word Search

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

- Algeria
- Corsica
- Crete
- Cyprus
- Egypt
- France
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Israel
- Italy
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Majorca
- Malta
- Monaco
- Morocco
- Sardinia
- Sicily
- Spain
- Syria
- Tunisia
- Turkey

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



Have fun with
**CAYMANIAN
TIMES**

CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley



THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN

By Stan Lee



JUDGE PARKER

By Woody Wilson & Mike Manley



CARIBBEAN BRIEFS

Cubans with dollars are hated

Cubans fortunate enough to own American dollars are enjoying preferential treatment island which is causing resentment and even violence from Cubans who only have local currency, the pesos.

Cubans with access to foreign currency, through tourism or remittances, can buy everything from diapers, refrigerators and car parts at well-stocked but pricier dollar stores, known as “MLC shops” in Cuba.

Everyone else waits in line at basic markets that accept the national currency, the Cuban peso. “I’ve been here since midnight and I still haven’t shopped,” Michel Lopez said, noting he had no choice without access to dollars. “It’s crazy.”

Cuba’s cash-strapped communist-led government says the MLC shops are necessary to raise much needed foreign currency to import food and underwrite social programs at a time of crisis. But the shops are increasing resentment and ha-

tred between Cubans, stoking anger in a socialist country that has long prided itself on equality.

During widespread anti-government rallies last year, the largest since Fidel Castro’s 1959 revolution, protesters hurled rocks at MLC shop windows and even looted some, chanting “Down with MLC stores.”

“The stores are a palpable example of inequality,” said Cuba-based economist David Pajon. “They have become a source of discontent.”

Dollar shops were revived in 2019 after a 15-year hiatus, but the current economic predicament is different, said Pajon. The Cuban dilemma is salaries are paid in ordinary pesos, and average just \$20 a month, even though the cost of survival runs around \$50 a month, and must be paid for with Cuban pesos at government stores that, until now, accepted nothing else. As



► Cuba’s dollar stores are well equipped



► Long queues for basics in Havana

crazily inefficient as the existing two-currency system appears, it has allowed the government to maintain near-total dominance of the economy

At the MLC stores, Cubans use special cards loaded with foreign currency to purchase goods marked in dollars. But a tourism industry hurting from the pandemic and US sanctions that restrict remittances have made dollars hard to come by.

That leaves many with no option but the black market, said Cuban economist Oscar Fernandez. Many basic products, from powdered milk and cooking oil to toilet paper, can be often be found only in hard currency.

The government does not sell dollars at banks or exchange houses. Cubans who trade pesos to dollars on the black market face jail sentences of up to five years.

“So if I earn in pesos, and I want to go to an MLC store, there is no way to do so. It

is illegal,” said Fernandez. “That is a very strong source of discrimination.”

The Cuban government did not respond to a request for comment.

Economy Minister Alejandro Gil said in February he understood Cubans’ “genuine concern” over the MLC shops, but warned the alternative was worse.

The stores aim to capture remittances from abroad, he said, then use that hard currency to buy much needed goods ranging from fuel to the food sold at reduced prices in peso shops.

“We ask for understanding, because right now, (MLC shops) are a lifeline,” Gil said on state-run television.

Last year, \$300 million from the hard currency shops helped the government stock the shelves of peso shops, Gil said. This year Cuba expects 23 percent of hard currency sales to help subsidize an estimated 77 percent of sales in pesos.

Trinidad forms gambling watchdog

Trinidad and Tobago has established its Gambling Control Commission (GCC) that will monitor and govern gambling activities across the twin island nation.

Finance Minister Colm Imbert announced the appointment of the GCC’s first board of directors on Monday, chaired by Stephan Tang Nian.

A sweeping reform of gambling in Trinidad and Tobago is expected to take place because of the rising concerns of

private member clubs providing casino-style games to the club members.

Tang Nian is a former senior government advisor on banking and auditing. The GCC’s board members are experts in gambling, business, IT and law.

Last summer Trinidad and Tobago’s Upper House approved the passage of the Gambling Control Bill that ordered the government to establish a commission/board.



► Trinidad is monitoring its gambling problem

Ex-Honduras top cop on drugs charge

A former Honduras police chief has been arrested and is expected to be extradited to the United States over suspected drug trafficking which could lead to him giving explosive evidence in the case against recently-detained former president Juan Orlando Hernández, who is accused of drug crimes by the US government.

Juan Carlos Bonilla Valladares, the former director of Honduras police better known as “El Tigre,” was arrested at a toll booth outside the capital city, Tegucigalpa, on March 9. He faces extradition to the United States, where prosecutors accuse him of participating in a state-sponsored drug trafficking conspiracy implicating top Honduras officials, including Hernández. It comes just weeks after Honduras police arrested the former president, also wanted for extradition on drug trafficking charges.

US prosecutors first charged Bonilla with drug trafficking and related arms offences in April 2020. The Justice Department accuses the former police chief of abusing his position within Honduras law enforcement to protect cocaine shipments



► Juan Carlos Bonilla Valladares

on behalf of the former president and his brother, Juan Antonio “Tony” Hernández Alvarado – a convicted drug trafficker now serving a life sentence in the US. American prosecutors later submitted an extradition request for Bonilla in May 2021. But Bonilla was already in hiding. He has previously denied the accusations made by US attorneys.

Hours after his arrest, Honduras police paraded Bonilla before press handcuffed at the wrist and ankles, emulating scenes from just weeks earlier when authorities detained Hernández in shackles outside his home in Tegucigalpa.