

We Print
EVERY
Week

But We're Daily Online!

NEWSLINE

Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage

Find Us Online!



VOLUME 5 ISSUE 28

Dec. 22, 2023 - Dec. 29, 2023

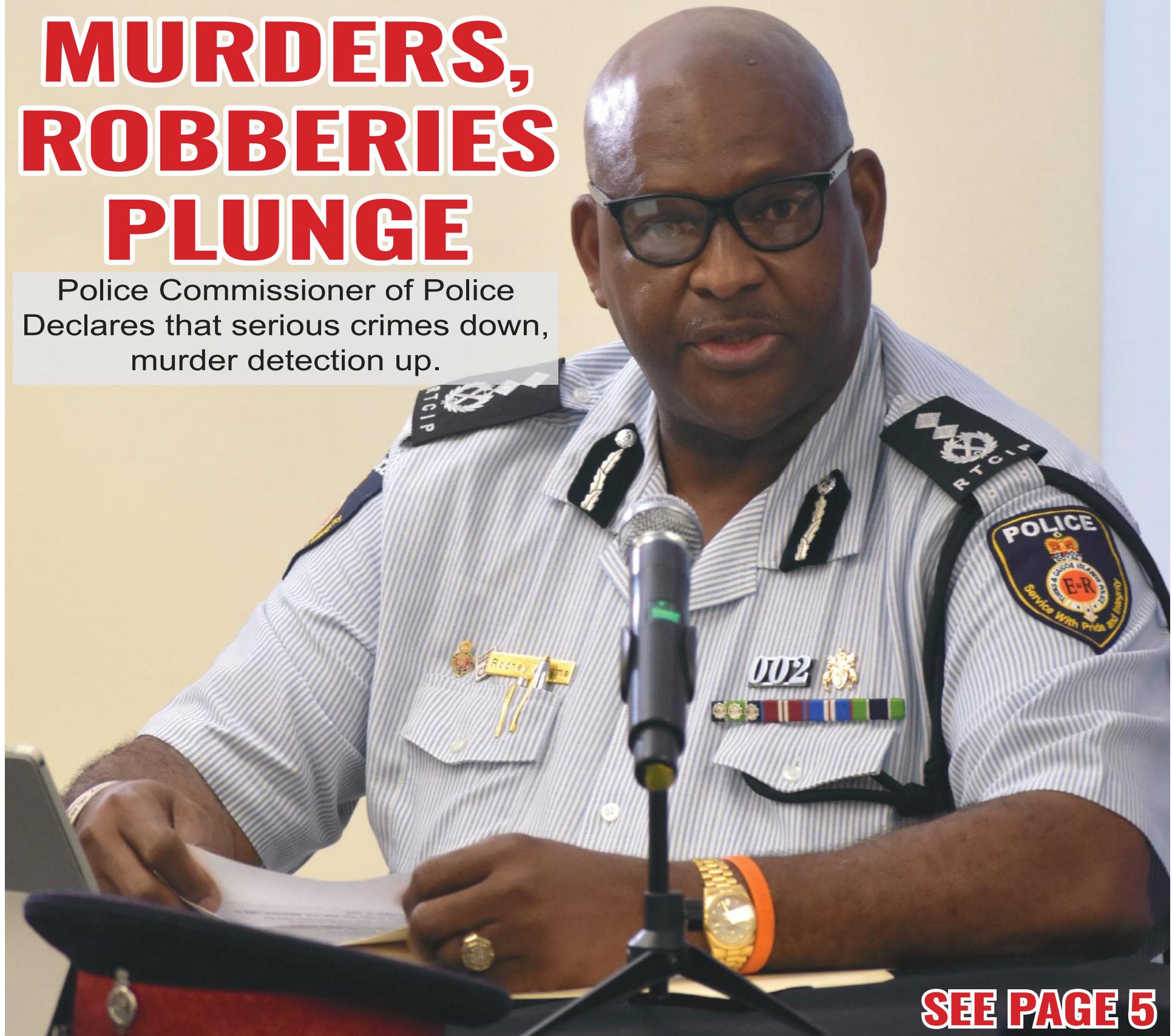
**'Squatters
Have No
Rights' PG4**

**Massive TCICC
Enrollment
Jump PG7**

**Housing
Committee
Approves First
Batch Of Home
Improvement
Applications PG8**

MURDERS, ROBBERIES PLUNGE

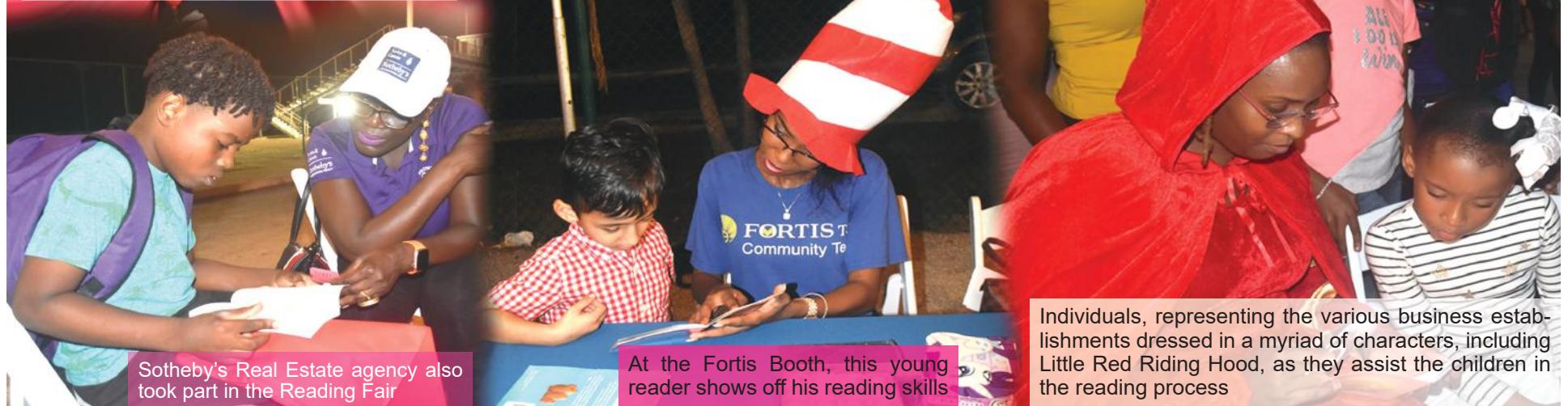
Police Commissioner of Police
Declares that serious crimes down,
murder detection up.



SEE PAGE 5

United Way TCI Reading Fair

United Way Turks and Caicos staged its Annual Reading Fair recently at the National Stadium, which saw more than 500 primary school children taking part. The Fair saw strong support from Corporate Turks and Caicos, whose representatives carried out the assessments of the young readers. NewslineTCI was at hand to cover this significant event.





Stay Alert to your surroundings;

Do Not leave children in the vehicle while shopping;

Do Not leave your vehicle idling while shopping;

Avoid carrying large amounts of cash;

Pay with a cheque or credit card when possible;

Avoid using ATMs at night.

The public is being asked to contact 911, the closest police station or call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-8477 and anonymously give information on illegal activities.

'Squatters Have No Rights'



Head of the Informal Settlements Unit, Justice Carlos Simons

Head of the Informal Settlements Unit, Justice Carlos Simons is reminding those who seek to squat on government land that the law does not give them rights to such land no matter how long they live on it.

Simons, in an interview with the media recently, declared that there is no such thing as 'squatters rights', and so, no matter how long one squats on government saying he could never own that land legally.

"The law does not permit you acquire Crown Land by squatting. There is no such thing as 'squatters rights'. You could have been there 50 years. The structure could have been built by your grandfather...you could never acquire title to it, and when the time comes, it will be reclaimed for the Crown," Simons asserted.

However, he stressed that circumstances could allow the individual to get regularized and eventually pay to own the land, stating that the Informal Settlements Unit was not in the business and bulldozing structures, especially if they comply with the Planning code.

"Now, that doesn't mean that if you have a substantial structure that otherwise com-

plies with the Planning Laws that is going to be demolished. We are not in the business of demolishing structures that comply with the planning laws of the Islands," he said. He added that government could also reclaim the land with the structure on it from the squatter, as anything on the land would include the structure on it.

"There are ways that we are considering of regularizing those types of positions. The Crown would be in a position to claim the land back and the building because land includes whatever is permanently constructed on it.

He added: "And I would imagine that there would be conversations between the persons who have constructed these buildings and representatives of the Crown as to (1), whether the person who is undertaking the construction position to pay the cost of the land because otherwise, he would be getting an advantage that other people have not had, and, or whether there be some use to which the Crown can put that structure.

"One of the usages to which the Crown might be able to put that structure would

be to accommodate such persons until appropriate accommodation can be redeveloped on land they have been removed from.

"The point I want to make at this stage is that the work of reclamation on Crown Land will continue."

He said so far, the Crown Land Unit was yet to reclaim properties on which people live, pointing out it has recovered only land on which unfinished structures are built. However, he said that might change in the future, and squatters who live in dwellings constructed on Crown Land could begin to be forcibly removed.

"The Crown Land Unit has not reclaimed so far on which there are occupied structures.... only lands on which the structures are at foundation level up to belt-beam level... no roof. So, no one has been displaced from Crown Lands so far....and I said, 'so far', because the time will come when we have to address illegal occupation of Crown Lands...that day has not arrived as yet," he said.

Simons stated that while squatters can never own Crown Land based on the length of time they live on it, the same is not true for privately own land. He said if a squatter lives on a private land undisturbed by the owner for 20 years, he can apply for ownership.

"Private landowners are entitled to possession of their properties. And every day that they are kept out of possession by people who unlawfully occupy their lands is a day more of the trespass it constitutes," Simons pointed out.

He pointed out that as a result, the Informal Settlements Unit has thrown its weight behind private landowners, who express a desire reclaim their land.

"And so, the Unit has lent its assistance to private landowners, seeking to reclaim their lands. To reduce the incidence or the opportunity for confrontation, and potential violence, the Unit has at its disposal the resources of the police, Planning authorities, Social Services...all of those agencies that can help to ease the flow of these difficult exercises.

"And you can just imagine that if a private landowner doesn't know these people or who are settled on his land...if he turns up one Saturday morning and say, 'Move or I am going to push your house down', what is the reaction going to be?

"It is not going to be friendly, and that is not the situation that we want to contemplate, or encourage, or give the opportunity for," Simons noted.

Murders, Robberies Plunge

By Vivian Tyson Editor-in-Chief



From left: Commissioner of Police Rodney Adams; Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police Darron Williams, Superintendent of Police Dean Holden - Head of CID, Safeguarding and Public Protection, and Superintendent of Police Mat Newton.

Serious Crimes in the Turks and Caicos Islands have taken a significant plunge over 2023, according to Acting Commissioner of Police Rodney Adams.

Speaking at news conference at the Police Headquarters in Providenciales on Friday, Commissioner Adams said the reduction in serious crimes was due to hard work of Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force members, together with increased support from members of the public.

According to Acting Commissioner Adams, from January to now murders have decreased by 30.3 %, pointing out that Robberies have seen a 47.1% percent drop over the period. He also pointed that discharge of firearms have decreased by a whopping 54.8 %.

Acting Commissioner Adams pointed out that the murder detection rate has seen a significant increase. Last year's detection rate, according to Adams, was in single digit, but according to him, this year's detection rate has seen a significant vault.

"Moreover, while last year, the detection rate for Homicide stood at 6%, this year, our detection rate is 39%. An increase of 33%," Adams told reporters. "I pause here to offer condolences to the families and friends of those who lost loved ones during the period of these senseless killings. This time of year, will be particularly difficult as families try to unite. May the Almighty God continue to strengthen you during your grief and pain."

Adams revealed that 27 guns have been seized during the course of 2023, 16 of which were confiscated within the last six months. He pointed out that legislations tackling gangs has also reaped much success, with the police nabbing individuals

suspected of being involved in gang activities.

"The Anti-Gang Ordinance of 2022 has played a vital and crucial role in addressing gang-related offences. To date, five suspected gang members are before the courts charged with various offences under this Ordinance. We have had significant seizures of drugs this year and will continue in our relentless efforts to tackle drug-related offences," Adams stated, telling members of the media that the force was encouraged by recent statistics and are committed to improving them even further. Adams asserted that the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force will leave no stone unturned in bringing those murderous individuals to justice. He however, pointed out that in order for the police be successful in bringing those responsible to justice, the community will have to play key role, in telling the police what they know anonymously. "There are many of you out there who can bring closure and comfort to these hurting families, and we encourage you to be your brother's keeper. If you know something, say something. Crime Stoppers remains available and is only interested in the tip, not who you are," emphasized.

He added: "We know many of you are fearful and even feel that what you may know or have seen is insignificant, but I appeal to you to share it and let the authorities determine its usefulness or not. This is the season of giving, peace and love; let us do what we can to bring peace and show love to many homes seeking closure."

Boat Landing

On the matter of illegal entry of boats most from Haiti, the top cop said his men will be most vigilant. He pointed out that since January of 2023, a record 33 confirmed interceptions were made

by the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force Marine Branch.

"The entry of irregular migrants puts the TCI at the most significant risk. Our Marine Branch and law enforcement partners – TCI Regiment, TCI Border Force, and our international partners have been doing a stellar job intercepting irregular migrants seeking to enter the TCI.

"Protecting the TCI border remains a high priority for the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force and its partners. This year, there has been a record 33 interceptions. This remains a costly exercise, and we welcome tips that alert us before boats enter our space.

Road Safety

In the meantime, Adams said his charges will be vigilant on the thoroughfares of the Turk and Caicos Islands.

"The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force remains resolute in enforcing the law that helps to keep you and the public safe and makes it more difficult for criminals to move about or roadway undetected.

"However, there appears to be a concerted effort by lawbreakers to continue having illegal tints, no license plates, no vehicle insurance, and no driver's license. The law is clear, yet some drivers are not adhering to it. We will continue our zero-tolerance approach in the coming days," Adams promised.

Joining Adams in the News Conference were Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police Darron Williams, Superintendent of Police Dean Holden - Head of CID, Safeguarding and Public Protection, and Superintendent of Police Mat Newton.

Guyana-Venezuela border dispute driven by geopolitics and wealth

Guyanese and other regional supporters who back Guyana in finding a peaceful solution to the current conflict can now breathe a sigh of relief, albeit temporarily.

Venezuela's recent actions have caused local and regional jitters. The consultative referendum of December 3 has been seen as giving Nicolas Maduro ammunition to resort to unilateral measures to 'resolve' the controversy, should he wish to do so, by formally annexing and integrating into Venezuela the Essequibo territory.

Some commentators see the referendum as a blank cheque to Maduro which he can at any time, at his discretion, initiate or use to engage in any kind of border clash of a military nature in the Essequibo territory.

It should be clear, however, that this border dispute, which was first raised in 1841, was settled by the arbitration award of 1899. Ironically, the United States (US) is supporting Guyana today. They were the driving force in the 1890s forcing Britain to settle the border dispute with Venezuela. The US almost went to war with Britain for violating their unilateral 1823 Monroe Doctrine, according to which European powers were obligated to respect the Western Hemisphere as the United States's sphere of interest.

The Dutch had ceded the colonies to the British in 1814 but the treaty did not define a western boundary. The British commissioned Robert Schomburgk, a surveyor and naturalist, to delineate that boundary. The 1835 survey resulted in the Schomburgk Line, a boundary that effectively claimed an additional 30,000 square miles for Guiana. The 1899 arbitration hearing focused on the Schomburgk Line and the occupation and control of the territory stretching from east of the Orinoco to west of the Essequibo rivers.

During the oral arguments and cross positions at the tribunal, Venezuela unsuccessfully tried to ride on the wings of the Spanish explorations and discovery of this part of the world for its title; Venezuela failed to demonstrate its occupation and control of the territory claimed or to convincingly disprove occupation and control by the Dutch. On January 10, 1905, the British-Venezuelan Mixed Boundary Commission submitted a report signifying the final delineation of the boundary, and a map of the entire border, both of which were accepted by Britain and Venezuela.

That said, why did Venezuela suddenly challenge the 1899 award? Many of us would like to believe that it was instigated by the Mallet-Prevost memorandum of 1944, posthumously published in 1949. It is my firm conviction that the driving force was the United States's geopolitical and economic concerns as well as Venezuela's greed for

wealth.

While the Mallet-Prevost memorandum claims that the award was a 'deal' brokered by Britain and Russia, the Venezuelan 1962 challenge to the 1899 award cited two different reasons: (1) the 'no Venezuelan judge on the arbitration panel' and (2) the application of 'prescription based on 50 years' occupation led to its loss of territory'. It should be noted that Venezuela had almost two years from the signing of the Treaty of Arbitration to challenge the clause that stated the requirements of prescription for 50 years would suffice at the arbitral hearing.

On reflection, the timing of this claim raises several questions regarding why Venezuela remained silent through the years 1899 to 1962. Why were the claims not officially raised before 1962, given that the Mallet-Prevost memorandum was published in 1949? Venezuela has questioned the selection of judges for the 1899 tribunal but there is nothing in the records to show its disapproval of any member of the tribunal. Further, Mallet-Prevost alleged that there was a "deal" between Great Britain and Russia but no one has been able to point out what Russia had gained. It behoves me to mention at this point that in January 1944, the same year the memorandum was supposedly written, Mallet-Prevost was decorated with Venezuela's highest distinction, the Order of the Liberator.

The timing of the memorandum and the honour award has left analysts pondering whether this decorative honour had influenced the penning of the memorandum, or vice versa. Note, too, that an article published in the 1950 issue of the American Journal of International Law pointed out several inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the said memorandum.

In light of these questions it is reasonable to infer that there were other factors at play. Indeed, the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) declassified documents revealed several pieces of information that can be attributed to the Venezuelan 1962 resurrected border claims.

At that time, Guyana's Premier Cheddi Jagan's socialist-Marxist ideology, which began in the late 1940s, became a major issue. The US determined in 1962 that Cheddi Jagan would not be desirable as the head of Government in Guyana. Thus, the CIA was instructed to provide guidance and support to the Opposition political parties — the People's National Congress (PNC), and the United Force (UF) — in the 1964 election campaign.

Again in 1967, the CIA was instructed to support the PNC and the UF in the 1968 elections. It was also revealed that Prime Minister Forbes Burnham later received CIA funding of US\$5,000 per month, with the understanding that the payments could be terminated if the PNC failed

to make satisfactory progress in keeping Cheddi Jagan out of power.

It should be noted too that the 1940s and 1950s saw huge American investments about 90 miles up the Orinoco River, approximately 100 miles from the Guyana-Venezuela border. These conglomerates and multinationals were investing in various mineral ores such as iron, manganese, and gold, among others. With Marxist-oriented Cheddi Jagan at the helm, Guyana was seen by the Kennedy Administration and the US as another Cuba in the region — and this would have been anaemic to US interests. It should be clear that US geopolitics and economic concerns, as was the case in the 1890s, were at play again in the 1960s.

Further, one of the factors that drove the initial dispute was the discovery of gold in the 1870s, which led to a boom in British Guiana; as evidence, gold and other mineral wealth were mentioned by the Venezuelan team at the 1899 hearings. In addition, since the 1960s Venezuela has undermined any attempt by Guyana to attract investments in the Essequibo region. About 15 years ago there was a 'gold shout', and indeed numerous prospectors flocked to Guyana and invested in mining activities. It led to a windfall for Guyana in terms of production and price. The discovery came as the world was entering a depression and investors sought rescue in gold. During that period the price of gold moved from around US\$380 to about US\$1,800 per ounce. At every opportunity and forum Venezuela has mentioned the wealth of the Essequibo, the most recent being Guyana's offshore oil discovery. Many believe that this may have been the impetus for Venezuela's most recent actions, including the referendum.

Venezuela's current agenda could mean only one thing: It has seen the writing on the wall, ie, the ICJ would rule in favour of Guyana. It was opined that the referendum may have signalled an intent to follow Russia's example in Ukraine and invade Guyana.

Indeed, Venezuela has taken steps by initiating policy and legislation to facilitate such actions. Lending credence to this assertion, an article in Forbes magazine saw the referendum as a pivotal development, intentionally timed between concurrent crises in Ukraine and Israel to avoid the international spotlight. Notwithstanding the geopolitical and wealth-driven agendas, the time has come to put an end to this dispute. Notwithstanding the geopolitics and wealth considerations, or whether it's a political gimmick to regain internal support or an international distraction, we look forward to an end to the impasse via a peaceful solution.



NEWSLINE TCI
Journalism of Accuracy, Balance & Courage

NEWSLINE TCI is located at
1085 Leeward Highway,
Providenciales,
Turks & Caicos Islands, BWI.

Our numbers are:
1649 348-9587
1649 242-6695

You can email us at
contact@newslinetci.com or
viviantyson@newslinetci.com

Vivian Tyson – Editorial Department

Massive TCICC Enrollment Jump



Minister of Education Hon. Rachel Taylor

The Turks and Caicos Islands Community College (TCICC) is reporting a significant and remarkable 29% increase in enrolments for the upcoming academic year 2023/2024.

This surge in enrolment, the institution said in a statement, has nearly doubled the college's projected target of 15%, showcasing its dedication to delivering quality education and training in the region.

The achievement, the college said, is attributed to the collaborative efforts of its dedicated team of staff and faculty, who have worked tirelessly to ensure a positive and enriching educational experience for students. The success is also credited to the active engagement of the community members and an effective marketing strategy that resonated well with prospective students.

This notable accomplishment, the TCICC said, underscores the college's commitment to its vision of becoming the institution of first choice for education and training in the Turks and Caicos Islands and beyond. The institution recognizes the progress made but acknowledges the continued journey ahead, expressing determination to provide top-tier education to students. Minister of Education Hon. Rachel Taylor, commended President Candice Williams and her team for their efforts in promoting TCICC as the Institute of Choice, saying that the government's commitment to human capital development and the investment in the local tertiary institution were highlighted, emphasizing the significance of tertiary education in fostering growth and reducing poverty.

The Minister encouraged people to take advantage of the opportunity for free tuition and recognized the strides of lifelong learners in upskilling and retooling.

Dr. Barbara Ambrister, Chair of the Board of Governors, sees the enrolment increase as a positive signal that individuals are leveraging the free tuition and various programs offered. The college aims to establish itself as the first choice in higher education for residents, focusing on student-centered learning, innovative learning strategies, and collaboration with private partners for growth and development. Plans include introducing unique courses and workshops to address skills gaps and gaining recognition from regional and international accrediting bodies.

Dr. Suzette Creary, Dean of Academics and Student Services, emphasized that the increase in enrolment reflects the college's commitment to providing quality education and supporting students in their academic journey. The surge not only speaks to the appeal of academic programs but also demonstrates the college's role in addressing the evolving needs of the community. President Dr. Candice Williams expressed that this achievement is a testament to the college's continuous pursuit of excellence and its unwavering commitment to providing quality education and training. The TCI Community College looks forward to welcoming both new and returning students for the upcoming academic year, aiming to become the institution of first choice in education and training in the Turks and Caicos Islands and beyond.

HOUSING COMMITTEE APPROVES FIRST BATCH OF HOME IMPROVEMENT APPLICATIONS UNDER PROGRAMME TWO

Hon. Jamell Robinson, Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure Development



The Housing Committee is pleased to announce that on 7 December 2023, it has concluded its deliberations on the first batch of applicants who submitted for home improvement under Programme Two.

Out of the twelve batches of applicants, the initial group has been approved for home improvement works, marking a significant step in enhancing living conditions within our community.

These essential home improvement works, valued at a total of US\$50,000.00 per applicant, are set to commence in the upcoming new year. This significant investment is not only a boon for the selected applicants but also marks a positive

development for the entire community.

The Housing Committee recognises the importance of this initiative, not only for the homeowners but also for local contractors who will benefit through the Framework Agreement for Programme Two. The approved works are expected to generate numerous job opportunities throughout the islands, contributing to the economic growth of our community.

Results Summary:

The following list of applicants was approved by the Housing Committee under batch one for each island.

Refusals: Unfortunately, seven applicants did not pass the home inspection, and as a result, their applications for home im-

provement have been refused.

Deferrals: In addition, three applicants were deferred due to the condition of their homes. Repairs alone may be insufficient, and further evaluation is needed to determine the appropriate course of action.

Key Points:

Approved Works: The first batch of home improvement works, totaling US\$1,950,000.00, has been approved by the Housing Committee.

Commencement Date: The approved works are scheduled to commence in the new year, bringing tangible improvements to the selected homes.

Community Impact: This investment not only enhances the quality of living for the selected homeowners but also positively impacts the local community through job creation.

Next Steps:

As we celebrate the commencement of works for the first batch of Programme Two, we are gearing up for the next phase. Home inspections for batch two are scheduled to begin early in the new year. Individuals selected under batch two will be contacted by the Housing and Community Renewal Department to schedule a convenient date and time for their homes to be inspected.

For Programme Three: Community Renewal and Infilling, 14 applicants were selected for home inspections. In early January, the Department will be contacting homeowners to schedule a home inspection at their convenience.

The housing programmes initiative aligns with Department commitment to fostering a better living environment for all residents. These programmes are aimed to enhance the quality of life for families and contribute to the overall development of our community whilst fostering economic opportunities for local contractors.

We express our gratitude to all applicants for their interest and patience in this process. The Housing Committee remains dedicated to the successful implementation of Programme Two and looks forward to the positive transformations it will bring to our community.

For further information on Housing Programme Two: Home Improvement for Existing Homeowners, or Programme Three: Community Renewal and Infilling, please contact the Housing and Community Renewal Department at 649-338-2220.

TCI needs a Vacation Rental Management Association – Angel Host COO

"Having a vocational rental management association would definitely help because most property rental companies."



Veronique Lalonde, Co-founder and COO of the international Vacation Rental Management company Angel Host, believes that the establishment of a Vacation Rental Management Association in the Turks and Caicos Islands could greatly benefit the local property rental industry.

Angel Host, as an international Vacation Rental Management company, offers services to property owners and management companies, ranging from those with one to 100 properties.

Lalonde, speaking with NewslineTCI, empha-

sized the positive impact such an association could have on professionalizing the industry, fostering collaboration among property management companies, and addressing common challenges.

According to Lalonde, many property rental companies in the region operate independently, managing a few properties and gradually expanding. However, the lack of a centralized association can hinder their ability to access resources and attend industry conferences, such as the Orlando Vacation Rental Conference, due

to budget constraints and limited time.

"I can tell you that having a vocational rental management association would definitely help because most property rental companies, they do their own thing, they started with managing one, two, three, four properties and then they grow slowly but surely. But by having an association, you can professionalize that industry," she said.

Lalonde suggests that a local association would provide a platform for property management companies to share experiences, discuss challenges, and exchange knowledge. This collaborative environment, she believes, would enhance the overall quality of the industry by promoting best practices and adherence to high standards.

"And so, if you are a property management company that manages say 10 properties, maybe you don't have the resources or budget to go to the Orlando Vacation Rental Conference that happen yearly. And you don't have the budget or the time. So, by having local associations you can share the experiences, share the challenges, share knowledge and make the industry even better," she said.

Lalonde explains that, in a partnership with Angel Host, the company evaluates the client's portfolio, creates or optimizes property listings, establishes pricing strategies, and oversees day-to-day backend operations. This approach allows property management companies to focus on providing a positive guest experience on the ground while Angel Host handles the backend tasks.

"So, let's say you are property management company, and you reach out to Angel Host and say, 'I would like to partner with you, can you help me? What Can you do for me?' The first thing we are going to do is to look at your portfolio. Let say you operate 10 properties, we would create 10 brand new listings, or we are going to take your existing listings and optimize them and improve them.

"Once the listing is very well optimized, following best practices, following the high standards that we have for our listings, they we are going to create a pricing strategy. We are going to have a revenue manager look at the strategy, and then we are going to look at day to day operations, and everything that is done from the backend. So, we take care of people who want to book.

"When the guest arrives at the property, they it is local team...our client that have to take care of the guest experience once they are on the ground. But we take of everything that is being done form the backend," she said.

Lalonde emphasizes that a Vacation Rental Management Association in the Turks and Caicos Islands could significantly contribute to the growth and professionalism of the local property rental industry. By fostering collaboration and sharing expertise, property management companies can collectively elevate industry standards and enhance the overall experience for both property owners and guests.

TCI Welcomes Silver Airways From Ft. Lauderdale



Silver Airways touches down at the Howard Hamilton International Airport on Monday, December 18.



Steve Rossum (right), CEO of Silver Airways addressed the audience at the news conference to signal the beginning of service between Providenciales and Ft. Lauderdale. Looking on from left are Devon Fulford – CEO of the TCIAA; Minister of Immigration and Border Service Hon. Arlington Musgrove; Wesley Clerveaux – Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and Fisheries; and Esmond Johnson, Regional Manager for Silver Airways.

With its world-leading immaculate sun-kissed beaches and alluring properties, the Turks and Caicos Islands has snared yet another airline.

On Monday, December 18, the Howard Hamilton International Airport welcomed Silver Airways, to fly between the TCI and Hollywood Ft. Lauderdale. Following the water cannon salute, signaling the arrival of an inaugural flight, a welcome news conference was held at the departure area of the airport, and was attended by Minister of Immigration and Border Services Hon. Arlington Musgrove; Minister of Health Hon. Shaun Malcolm; Wesley Clerveaux, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, and who represented Minister Hon. Josephine Connolly; Steve Rossum, CEO of Silver Airways; James McAnally, President of the Turks and Caicos Hotel

and Tourism Association; and Raquel Brown, Change Manager and Interim CEO of Experience Turks and Caicos, and who also chaired the event.

Silver Airways is scheduled to fly between Ft. Lauderdale and the Turks and Caicos Islands twice weekly- Mondays and Fridays.

Esmond Johnson, Regional Manager for Silver Airways, and who is based in the Bahamas, said by flying to the Turks and Caicos Islands, Silver Airways provides the TCI with greater connectivity. He said the introductory ticket price starts at \$129, adding that the flight time will be two hours on its ATR Turboprop aircraft.

For his part, Musgrove pointed out the Silver Airways would further open the Turks and Caicos Islands to the world thereby creating greater employ-

ment opportunities for Islanders.

"The Turks and Caicos is a destination of unparalleled beauty with white sandy beaches, crystal clear turquoise waters and a vibrant culture that captivates all who visit our shores. Now, with the arrival of Silver Airways, our islands are set to become even more accessible, allowing us to further share our slice of paradise," he said.

He added: "With increase in activity we can attract more tourists and hence (further) economic growth and create new employment opportunities for our people. As we embark on this new partnership with Silver Airways, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the airline's leadership and TCIAA (Turks and Caicos Islands Airports Authority), who worked tirelessly to make this partnership a reality."

Clerveaux, who read Connolly's remarks, said she wanted to be at the event, but other pressing issues had kept her away.

"This marks a positive step for the Turks and Caicos Islands as we continue to enhance our growth in the tourism sector. As an island nation, we recognize that increased accessibility is fundamental to the development of our beloved TCI.

"While we take pride in being a sought-after destination for discerning travellers, we also understand the importance of providing affordable travel options not only for our visitors, but for our people alike. It is our belief that a diverse range of travel options contributes to the growth and sustainability of our island nation," Clerveaux said.

He pointed out that more affordable flights would not compromise the luxurious brand of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Clerveaux urged Silver Airways to maintain the high standard of travel that the visitors to these shores and residents have come to expect.

"We have every confidence that Silver Airways will rise and surpass the challenges and contribute to the continued success and global recognition of the Turks and Caicos Islands as a world-class destination," Clerveaux pointed out.

Devon Fulford, Acting CEO of the Turks and Caicos Islands Airports Authority described the event as a very special day. He expressed confidence that the partnership between the TCIAA and Silver will blossom into a mutually beneficial endeavor. He also commended Silver Airways' commitment to excellence and safety.

Rossum said he was overly excited about the new partnership with the Turks and Caicos Islands, especially because "The Turks and Caicos Islands has a rich tradition of treating people well, resulting in people coming back year after year."

He also affirmed that the captivating beaches, dive sites, shopping experience and the wonderful culture makes the Turks and Caicos Islands a pulling card for tourism.

Rossum pointed out that Silver Airways has always forged synergistic relationships with every destination that it services.

"We not only do we bring our reliable brand and our friendly customer service, but we also bring partnership with United Airlines, JetBlue Airways, American Airlines and Delta Airways," Rossum said.

Angel Host Stages Inaugural Forum in TCI to Boost Local Vacation Rental Industry



Eduardo Mandri, Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer for Angel Host.

Angel Host, a prominent Canadian technology-driven marketing and guest communication company specializing in serving property owners and managers in the short-term and vacation rental industry, recently organized its first forum in Turks and Caicos.

The event, held at the Blue Haven Resort Conference Room on Tuesday, December 12, garnered significant attendance from property owners, rental company representatives, and real estate agents.

Eduardo Mandri, Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer for Angel Host, highlighted the company's mission of helping property management companies worldwide maximize their sales.

"At Angel Host, we help property management companies worldwide maximize their sales. We have a good number of clients here in the Islands, particularly in Provo. And we seek to bring some of that knowledge that we learn in different parts of the world in conferences in the US, Europe and other places, organize a forum where we could share with local property managers and with local real estate people about some of those best practices," Mandri said.

With a significant client base in the Turks and Caicos Islands, particularly in Providenciales, Mandri emphasized the unique appeal of the local tourism market, characterized by high Average Daily Rates (AVRs) and diverse properties attracting visitors globally.

"The Average Day Rates, we call them



Robert Been Jr. (left), one of the vacation rental owners, who attended the Angel Host Forum evokes laughter from his fellow panelists Veronique Lalonde, COO of Angel Host (centre) and Kaizer Woods, also a vacation rental owner.

AVRs are very high here in Turks. There are so many different properties in the area that attracts tourists from all over the world. And the type of tourism and the type of revenue that Turks and generation compared with other islands on a per capita basis is incredible," Mandri further noted.

He added: "We bring to the table knowledge in pricing, optimization, and guest services to benefit local property management companies who understand the market."

The forum, the first of its kind for the country, aimed to share best practices that Angel Host learned from conferences worldwide, fostering collaboration among local stakeholders. Mandri expressed the intention to organize similar events in the future, underscoring the strategic importance of the Turks and Caicos market for Angel Host.

For his part, Robert Been Jr., a local organizer for the event, highlighted the six to eight months of preparation that went into making the forum a reality. Been stressed the necessity for local property managers to gain detailed insights into market functioning and praised the valuable information shared during the event.

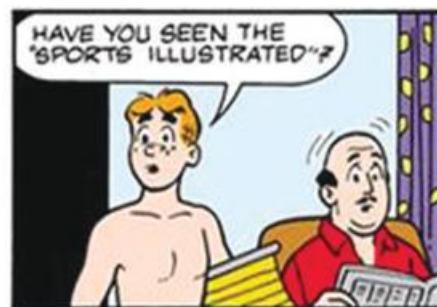
"There was a lot of information that was delivered here today, and I am sure that many of the attendees here today, including myself, would have walked away with a lot of information today. I got a

lot of information that would assist me in going forward to promote my brand," Been said.

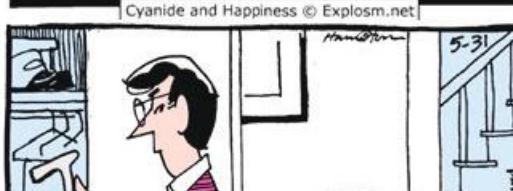
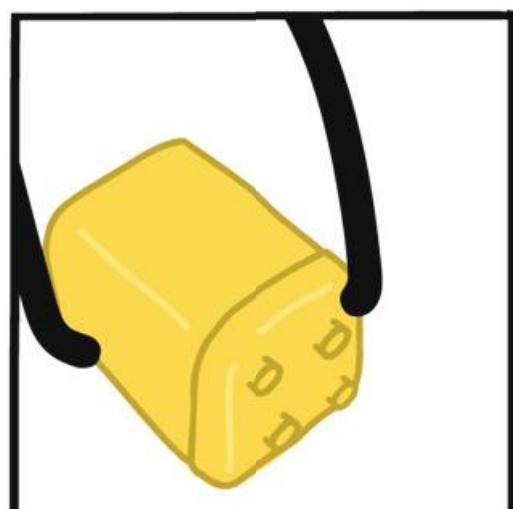
He said among the key takeaways from the forum, attendees learned about proper product structuring and service delivery. Been also emphasized the significance of partnerships and networking, encouraging collaboration with other vacation rental owners and property management companies. He highlighted the importance of outsourcing certain roles, to enhance the overall guest experience.

"When you speak of partnership, people always think about shares or offering a certain percentage. But this instance it is partnering with other vacation rentals, owners, other property management companies, and also outsourcing certain roles in our property, whether it be transportation, cleaning services, bookings and so on.

"A lot of people tend to lose business because they don't know that they can offer additional amenities that the hotel would offer. You don't have a receptionist at the front, but when you partner with organizations such as Angel Host, and you have a guest 1 or 2 o'clock (a.m.) that is complaining about an issue and you are in bed asleep, you have somebody else working around the clock that can respond to emergencies or assisting (guests) with entering the property...that goes a long way," he said.



NEWSLINETM
COMICS



"MY DAD? HE TOOK A SICK DAY. HE'S GOT AN APPOINTMENT WITH HIS DOCTOR ON THE GOLF COURSE."

TURKS head cactus

NEWSLINE
A Tradition of Accuracy, Balance & Coverage



The Turks head cacti (*Melocactus intortus*) is a variety of small barrel cactus. A reddish cap tops the cacti, and it's easy to see where the cacti got its name as this cap resembles a Turkish fez hat. The Turks head cacti appears on both the Turks and Caicos flag and coat of arms. Due to the lack of competition, the Turks head cacti is typically found in exposed and dry regions. In the Turks and Caicos, these areas are usually natural eroded limestone bedding landscapes, or in some cases, hard sandy dunes. Unfortunately, the cacti has largely disappeared from the main populated islands. The majority of existing plants are located on East Caicos and Big Ambergris Cay, with small clusters on Middle Caicos and a select few other cays.

ALMI Christmas Production

On December 10, the Abundant Life Ministries International church held its annual Christmas Production on the church grounds. The audience were treated to poetry, dance, singing, a Christmas skit and the Christmas Story, read by pastor for the Church, Bishop Coleta Williams III. The following are photo highlights of the event.





Kenya Jones Appointed Deputy Director of Environmental Health Department



Robert Been Jr. (left), one of the vacation rental owners, who attended the Angel Host Forum evokes laughter from his fellow panelists Veronique Lalonde, COO of Angel Host (centre) and Kaizer Woods, also a vacation rental owner.

The Office of the Deputy Governor has announced the appointment of Ms. Kenya Jones as the Deputy Director of the Environmental Health Department within the Ministry of Health and Human Services.

Ms. Jones' academic journey led her to excel in the field of Environmental Science with Business Management, culminating in her Bachelor of Science degree from Queen Mary University of London. She furthered her expertise by completing postgraduate studies in Water & Waste

Engineering at the University of Loughborough in the UK.

Her professional trajectory began in the private sector, where she spent five years at the Grand Turk Cruise Center, starting as the Assistant HESS (Health, Environment, Safety, and Sustainability) Manager. Recognized for her exceptional skills and dedication, she ascended to the role of HESS Manager. Her forte lies in ensuring environmental compliance and upholding stringent health and safety standards, marking her commitment to preserving environmental integrity while prioritizing public health.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Ms. Jones demonstrates a profound commitment to community service. As an active member of the Rotaract Club of Grand Turk, she has served in various capacities, including Community Service Director, Treasurer, and President.

Expressing humility and gratitude for the opportunity to serve in the Turks and Caicos Islands Public Service, Ms. Jones attributes her success to the support of her family, friends, and church community:

"I am humbled and grateful to God for this opportunity to serve within the Turks and Caicos Islands Public Service as the Deputy Chief Environmental Health Officer (Providenciales). I would like to express gratitude to my family, friends and church family for their continued

support.

In approaching my new role, I am guided by Colossians 3:23, "and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men". I am excited to do my best in this position and make a positive impact. I eagerly anticipate playing a part in furthering the Environment Health Department's mission, which is to safeguard and improve the health and well-being of the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands."

Deputy Governor and Head of the Turks and Caicos Islands Public Service Her Excellency Anya Williams in extending congratulatory remarks to Ms. Jones stated:

"It gives me great pleasure to officially congratulate Ms. Kenya Jones on her appointment as the new Deputy Director of the Environmental Health Department and to welcome her to the Turks and Caicos Islands Public Service.

Ms. Jones, who will be assigned to our Providenciales office, joins Ms. Crivanne Adams who was recently appointed as well to the Grand Turk office, as our two new deputies in the Environmental Health Department.

She brings with her a strong educational background, a wealth of experience and we are certain will be an asset to this department.

I wish her well in her new role and hope that she has a most productive and rewarding public service career.

Wymara Resort + Villas Announces Partnership with Turks and Caicos Reef Fund



L-R: Elisha Jennings, Director of Owner Relations - Wymara; Shelley Rincon, Chief Executive Officer - Wymara; Alizee Zimmermann, Executive Director - TC Reef Fund; and Laureen Debrosse, Director of Operations - Wymara.

Wymara Resort and Villas has announced a partnership with the Turks and Caicos Reef Fund, which will provide an avenue for its valued guests to contribute to the preservation efforts of the island's reef system - the third largest in the world.

According to a news release from the resort, Wymara declared that it is furthering its commitment to environmental sustainability and conservation. From November 2023, guests of

Wymara Resort and Villas are being given the opportunity to donate \$2 per night of their stay to the TC Reef Fund, an anticipated annual contribution of \$50,000.

The TC Reef Fund is a non-governmental organization whose primary focus is the protection of the ecosystem around the islands. Since 2010, the organization has worked tirelessly to preserve, protect, and restore the marine environment of the Turks and Caicos Islands through

education, research, advocacy, and inclusion.

"We are grateful for the team at Wymara who have joined other resorts and companies in supporting our conservation efforts. It takes a village to create tangible and equitable change for the better and we are so thankful that Wymara has joined ours," commented Alizee Zimmermann, Executive Director of the Turks and Caicos Reef Fund.

"Wymara is proud to facilitate such a sizable contribution toward the conservation of the reef, ensuring that future visitors and residents alike will be able to enjoy the 'Beautiful by Nature' reefs and beaches that are synonymous with the Turks and Caicos experience," says Shelley Rincon, Chief Executive Officer at Wymara Resort + Villas. She continued "It is important for all of us to play our part and Wymara is leading the charge, ensuring that our guests are educated about the importance of the reef and take an active role in its protection".

Wymara Resort + Villas' sustainability program was launched officially early 2021 and has included eliminating the use of all single use plastics and introducing environmentally friendly, cruelty-free products in all areas of the operation. Wymara Resort and Villas says it is committed to giving back to the Turks and Caicos Islands.



FEATURED CHURCH

This week on Newsline Featured Church, we shine the spotlight on the Church of God of Prophecy, located in Blue Hills, Providenciales. The church is led by pastor Andrew Stone. There are at least six opportunities for worship during the week. On Sunday at 9:30a.m. is Sunday School. On Sunday 11a.m. is Divine Sunday Morning Service. On Sunday at 7:30p.m. is Evening Service. On Tuesday at 7:30p.m. is Prayer Meeting. On Wednesday at 7:30pm is Bible Study, and on Friday at 7:30pm is Youth Ministry. For further about any of the worship opportunities, contact 1 649-941-3438.

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY, BLUE HILLS



LIFE LINE CHURCH DIRECTORY

Looking for a worshipping house to praise God and fellowship with members of the body of Christ, here is a list of some of the available sanctuaries you can attend throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Christ is the Answer Ministry,
George Alley Off Aviation Drive,
Providenciales
Tel: 241-8030

One Nation Empowerment Center
Church Ministry, Suite #12 Alliance
Business Center, Princess Drive, Grace Bay,
Providenciales. Tel: (649) 244-6194.
Email: apostleyoung1952@yahoo.com.

Touch of Love Ministries International
Center
Industrial Park, Five Cays, Providenciales
Tel: 941-4903 Fax: 941-7731

Abundant Life Ministries International
P.O. Box 696 Christian City, Leeward
Highway, Providenciales
Tel:941-941-4750 Fax: 941-4755

Anglican Church Rectory Grant
Turk,
Front Street, Grand Turk Tel:946-2289

Bethany Baptist Church,
Blue Hills, Providenciales
Tel:941-4803 / 941-5632 / 941-5118

Church of God of Prophecy,
Lower Bight, Providenciales
Tel: 941-8854

Bible Study Ministries, Grand Turk
Tel:946-1866

Calvary Baptist Church,
South Caicos
Tel:946-3212

Church of God of Prophecy,
Providenciales Tel:941-3438

Roman Catholic Church,
Providenciales, Tel: 941-5136

Faith Tabernacle Church of God,
Providenciales, Tel:946-4073

New Testament Church of God,
Orea Alley, Grand Turk Tel:946-2175

New Testament Church of God,
South Caicos Tel:946-3631

Methodist Church,
Grand Turk Tel:946-2352

Healing Waters Ministries,
Blue Hills Providenciales Tel: 941-5867

House of Prayer Church of God,
Long Bay Road Providenciales Tel: 941-8309

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses,
Darrell Road, Grand Turk Tel:946-2727

Mount Mariah Baptist Church,
Conch Bar Middle Caicos Tel:946-6205

New Beginning Harvest Ministry,
Pond Street, Grand Turk Tel:946-1759

New Testament Church of God
Orea Alley
P.O. Box 495 Blue Hills, Providenciales
Tel: 946-1255
Airport Road, South Caicos
Tel:231-2402

Paradise Baptist Church,
Five Cays, Providenciales
Tel:941-4349

Revival Faith Center,
North Backsalina, Grand Turk
Tel:946-2349

Salem Baptist Church,
Mission Folly, Grand Turk
Tel:946-2565

Solid Rock Apostolic Ministries
International,
Discovery Bay Providenciales
Tel: 946-5181

St. Monica's Anglican Church
P.O. Box 866 Cheshire Hall Providenciales
Tel: 946-4046
Fax:946-4046;941-8499

Turks and Caicos Mission of Seventh
Day Adventists,
P.O. Box 803, Providenciales

United Pentecostal Church,
Brown's Plaza, Leeward Highway,
Providenciales Tel: 956-5852

Wesleyan Methodist Church,
Blue Hills, Providenciales
Tel: 946-4075; 941-4223; 941-3596

Editor's Note: If your Ministry is not listed and/or you would like for it to be part of the NEWSLINETCI Church Diary, contact us at:contact@newslinetc.com

Natural Hair Care Tips

Use A Sulfate-Free Shampoo

You may find that many shampoos contain chemicals such as ammonium lauryl sulfate, ammonium laureth sulfate, or sodium lauryl sulfate. And they tend to cause dryness and breakage for your natural hair. It's recommended that you use a sulfate-free shampoo (and conditioner) weekly to add more moisture to your hair, while also being more gentle to your scalp. You can use the Jamaican Black Castor Oil shampoo with shea butter and apple cider vinegar, which strengthens and restores your kinky curls.

Use Protective Styles

Just like its name implies, protective styles help prevent your hair from breakage, shedding, or damage. Protective afro hairstyles you can use include wearing wigs, weaves, buns, bantu knots, braids, or twists. In cases where you make braids or twists, ensure that your hairstylist eases up on your edges too in order to reduce tension on your scalp.

Oiling Your Hair Frequently

Naturally, kinky hair needs an oil, lots of it. Oils should be part of your everyday natural routine. Oils play a key role in maintaining and ensuring that your natural hair stays healthy.

Trim Your Hair Regularly

One of your bad habits would probably be, allowing your hair to grow with all its split ends. Part of the natural hair journey is having to trim your split ends regularly. Split ends indicate hair damage and if left unattended to will continue splitting and damage the healthiness of your hair.

Sleep With A Satin Scarf Or Bonnet

Never go to bed without a satin scarf or bonnet on. It keeps your hair from tangling and breaking while you sleep. Also, invest in a smooth satin or silk pillowcase.



Island Dream Fantasies Presents an Extravagant Outdoor Movie Night for a Cause

Island Dream Fantasies, the epitome of outdoor cinematic luxury, invites everyone to a magical evening under the stars at The Salvation Army Church grounds on Friday, January 5, 2024, starting at 4:00 pm on Leeward Highway, Providenciales.

This exclusive event promises an unparalleled cinematic experience while supporting the commendable efforts of The Salvation Army in the community.

Patrons will be given the opportunity to indulge in the following lavish features during this enchanting evening:

Weather-Resistant Inflatable Screen: Immerse yourself in the world of cinema with robust and weather-resistant inflatable screen, ensuring a seamless viewing experience regardless of the elements.

Opulent Green Grass Backdrop: Bask in the elegance of an opulent green grass backdrop

that adds a touch of sophistication to your outdoor movie night.

State-of-the-Art Sound System: Experience impeccable audio quality with state-of-the-art sound system, delivering crystal-clear sound that enhances every cinematic moment.

Enchanting Bubble Blower: Elevate the ambiance and add a touch of magic to the night with enchanting bubble blower, creating a whimsical atmosphere for all to enjoy.

High-Definition Projector: Witness stunning visuals with high-definition projector, bringing movies to life under the starlit sky for an unforgettable cinematic experience.

Professional Setup and Tear-Down Services: Enjoy the epitome of convenience with professional setup and tear-down services, allowing you to relax and relish in a stress-free and unforgettable movie night with your cherished companions.

Island Dream Fantasies is committed to crafting a cinematic masterpiece, ensuring every technical detail is seamlessly handled for an enchanting and entertaining event that transcends ordinary movie nights. But this event is not just about luxury and entertainment; it's about making a positive impact in our community.

Join us in Supporting The Salvation Army:

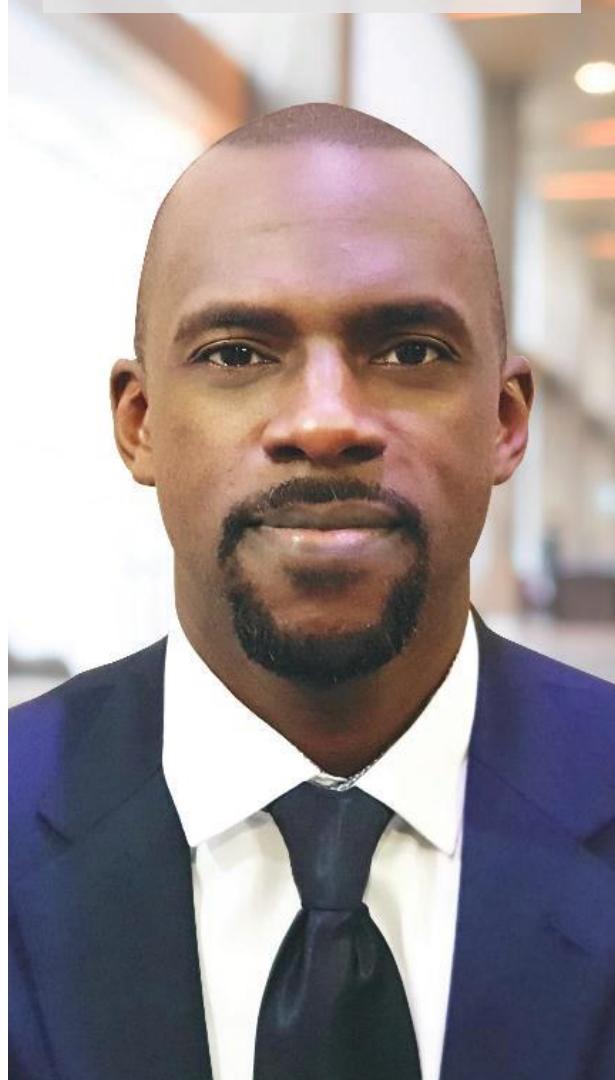
The collective goal for this evening is to raise funds to support and encourage the remarkable efforts of The Salvation Army in the community.

"We extend a warm invitation to families to come out and enjoy the movie. Your presence and support are key to making this event a success and showcasing our community's spirit," the organisers said in a news release.

For those who wish to RSVP, the contact number is 1649342-7639.

Legislation will help to stabilise TCI Energy Cost – Utilities Commissioner

Delano Arthur, the new Energy and Utilities Commissioner



The Energy and Utilities Department (EUD) of the Turks and Caicos Islands, today reminds the public that the comprehensive Renewable Energy Legislation is currently before the House of Assembly and that the Legislation not only addresses the existing challenges posed by fuel price volatility but also lays the foundation for a sustainable and resilient energy future for the TCI.

In a recent press release, FortisTCI cited global factors such as production cuts and increased demand for fuel, leading to a surge in market prices. The EUD acknowledging these challenges thanks our power supplier for its proactivity when it comes to informing consumers of any changes in the cost of electricity. Further, the Government of Turks and Caicos wants residents and guests to know that it is committed to taking proactive measures that will transform the energy landscape through robust Renewable Energy Legislation.

In that vein, Delano Arthur, the new Energy and Utilities Commissioner looks forward to working with FortisTCI in the upcoming days to find innovative and collaborative solutions to reduce the cost of Fuel and Energy in the Turks and Caicos Islands. This initiative aims to not only mitigate the impact of volatile fuel prices but also secures a sustainable, reliable and affordable energy future for all of us.

Key components of the Renewable Energy Legislation include:

Integrated Resource Plans: A formal planning process to prioritise renewable energy in ad-

dressing evolving energy needs.

Competitive Tendering Process: Government-run initiatives to promote healthy renewable energy competition, achieve low-cost energy, and meet Paris Agreement goals.

Administrative and Regulatory Measures: Establishing clear processes and responsibilities for all players who are in the renewable energy market.

Licensing and Safety Standards: Comprehensive licensing provisions to ensure accountability and safety standards for renewable energy systems.

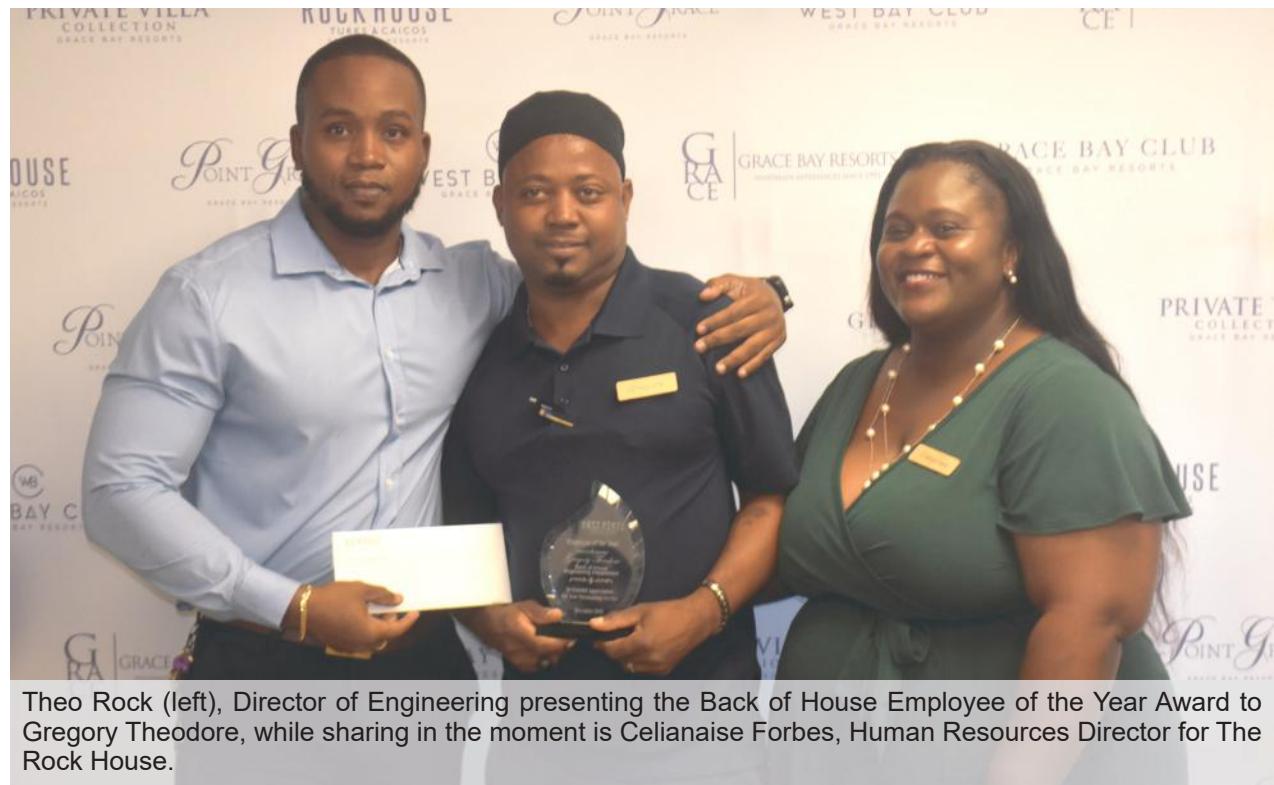
Net Billing Program: Allowing building owners to self-generate and sell surplus electricity back to the grid.

The Renewable Energy Legislation serves as a mitigation against volatile fuel prices. By transitioning to cleaner energy sources and fostering a diverse renewable energy infrastructure, these Islands aim to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. The competitive tendering process introduced in the legislation ensures the selection of the most cost-effective renewable energy solutions, contributing to energy affordability and stability.

As the Islands invest in renewable energy, the increased share of clean, locally produced electricity provides a stable alternative to fluctuating fuel prices. The Net Billing Programme further incentivises distributed energy generation, offering a predictable path for building owners to contribute to the grid and receive compensation, thus reducing reliance on traditional fuel sources.

Alen Francois, Robert Siffard and Gregory Theodore

Rock House Resort's inaugural Top Employees



Theo Rock (left), Director of Engineering presenting the Back of House Employee of the Year Award to Gregory Theodore, while sharing in the moment is Celianaise Forbes, Human Resources Director for The Rock House.



Franck Chantoiseau (right), Resort Manager for Rock House and Almando Rigby (left), Director of Rooms, presents Alen Francois - the Assistant Housekeeping Manager – with the Leader of the Year Award.



Robert Siffard (centre), Pool & Beach Supervisor is all smiles as he accepts his prizes for Front of House Employee of the Year at the Rock House Resort, from Woodens Corvil (left) and Celianaise Forbes, Director of HR.

Alen Francois, Robert Siffard and Gregory Theodore have been voted top performers at The Rock House Resort's inaugural Employee and Leader of the Year award, held on Wednesday, December 13 on the grounds of the property.

Alen Francois, the Assistant Housekeeping Manager was voted Leader of the Year. Other nominees for that category were Darius Coakley, Gregory Simpson and Widlin Tima.

Siffard, the Pool & Beach Supervisor, walked away with the Front of House employee of the year award. Other nominees in that category were Jeph Alce, Junior Telesma, Tiffany Tate, Berlandie Dormevil, Kiandre Fulford, and Vaughn Forbes.

Theodore, the Lead Technician for the property, took home the Back of House Employee of the Year Award. The other nominees in that category were Dilex Benjamin, Elizabeth Aracena, Francois Garcovil, Jhon Dorismond and Jean Claudio.

Among the prizes that all three received were a New York Trip and hotel accommodation with spending money. The Leader of the Year also won a stay at a local resort.

There was also a category called 'Race for the Gold.' The prize in that sector was given to the employee with the most Trip Advisor mentions and was won by Jonathan Jean. He received 53 mentions on Trip advisor.

Celianaise Forbes, Human Resources Director for Rock House, told the media that the staff have been exceptional over the 12 months that the resort was open. She noted that based on the exemplary performance of the staff in general, it would only be fitting to allow them to know that they were being appreciated. "It is very important to recognize our team. At Grace Bay Resorts, our number one pillar is outstanding employees delivering exceptional service. And as such, at the end of the year it is always a great time to recognize all of our employees for their outstanding service day in and day out, and we are super proud of their accomplishments and their achievements throughout the year and for their consistent hard work as well," she said.

TCIG Hosts National Cyber Risk Assessment Workshop



Participants of the National Cyber Risk Assessment Workshop



Deputy Premier Hon. E. J. Saunders

In a proactive approach to cyber security on a national level, the TCI Government, in collaboration with the UK Government, hosted a National Cyber Risk Assessment (NCRA) Workshop on Wednesday, 6th December 2023, at the Shore Club in Providenciales. Acknowledging the ever-changing nature of the global cyber threat landscape, TCIG recognises the imperative of sector awareness to ensure that TCI keeps pace with advancements, ensuring the compatibility and protection of vital systems. The objective of this workshop was to establish a foundation for understanding the current cyber risk environment in TCI and define the parameters for charting TCIG's national cyber security repositioning in line with future national aspirations. The Honourable Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance, E.J Saunders, delivered the Keynote address, assuring that the TCIG

fully supports a national approach to cyber security. The Minister, whose responsibility includes TCI's technology and innovation, added, "As the Turks and Caicos Islands continue to grow as a global hub for tourism (and finance in the future), the need for a robust, national cyber security strategic plan has never been more paramount." The workshop saw representation from various critical IT sectors, both government and private: Banking, Tourism, National Security & Emergency Services, Health, Utilities & Fuel, Telecommunications, Private Security and Transportation, and emphasised the need for a robust cyber community amongst all stakeholders, with continued engagement aimed at building the envisioned national cyber security posture. This assessment is the first phase in a series of initiatives towards building a cyber-safe TCI.

NEWSLINE[®] & Chill

Spring Word Scramble

URLMLBAE

TSFUELTERIBL

REFWOSL

SNUYN

UTISLP

NHSIUNES

LSBMOOS

BAORIWN

NICPCI

GENRDA

9. Picnic 10. Garden

5. Tulips 6. Sunshine 7. Blossom 8. Rainbow

1. Umbrella 2. Butterflies 3. Flowers 4. Sunny

Brain Teaser

I can be short and sometimes hot. When displayed, I rarely impress. What am I?

Answer: Temper

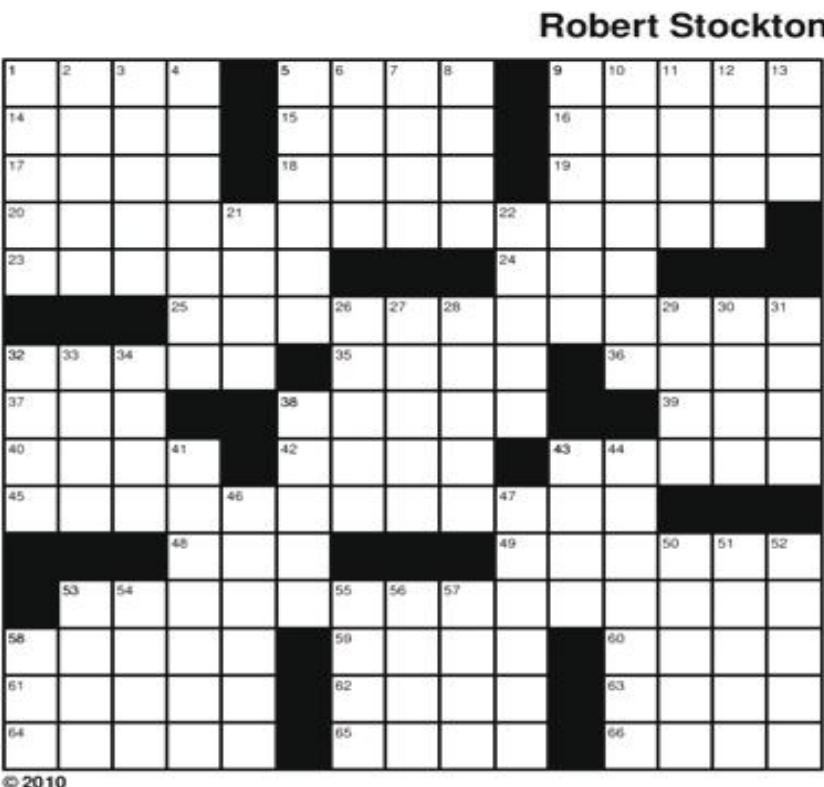
The Wrath of....

ACROSS

1. He may cross the line
5. Literary Finn
9. Divide
14. Desire
15. Eye with desire
16. Desire
17. Made mad
18. "Kaboom!"
19. Loosen up
20. CON
23. Affirm at the altar
24. Liza Doolittle's dwelling
25. CON
32. Drilled
35. Domain of Eos
36. Put to flight
37. Hollywood Gardner
38. Stan's comedic pal
39. Former fort near Salinas
40. "99 Luftballons" singer
42. Freshman, typically
43. Dates with a Dr., perhaps
45. CON
48. Word with go or by
49. Recited in rhyme, perhaps
53. CON
58. Tartan garment
59. "Night Sins" author Tami
60. SASE, typically
61. Dancer's support
62. Fit
63. "Dollhouse" heroine
64. Jerk
65. Mexican sauce
66. Eye affliction

DOWN

1. Sends to stores
2. Jazz Chick
3. Rich Little's trade
4. Place for a glasses case
5. Rub elbows
6. Unpleasant-sounding citrus



© 2010

7. They may have their own tartan
8. 1996 VP candidate
9. Cut corners
10. Factory configurations
11. "Mission: Impossible" composer Schifrin
12. "Meatballs" director Reitman
13. Popular cowboy nickname
21. Was laid low by a high?
22. Broadcasting pioneer Arledge
26. Jung contemporary
27. Yarns
28. "Dallas" family name
29. "Breakfast for Dinner" eatery
30. _____ cloud (home for comets)
31. Assents
32. "Kaboom!"
33. Out's partner
34. Punjabi princess
38. SNL alum, Cheri
41. Surreptitious romances
43. Love personified
44. Jazz-men Ellis and Russell
46. Type of bicycle
47. High point
50. Color lightly
51. Like wool sweaters, for some
52. Daphnis's love
53. Response to a rake
54. Legal opening?
55. Imitation
56. Bindlestiff
57. Eden event
58. NOVA network

Birds Seen In TCI

Warbler
Hummingbird
Vireo
Gnatcatcher
Osprey
Gull
Tern
Cattle egret
Dowitcher
Mangrove cuckoo
Bananaquit
Brown pelican
Stilts
Sanderling
Green heron

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

J of the JOKE WEEK

I went down the street to a 24-hour grocery store. When I got there, the guy was locking the front door. I said, "Hey! The sign says you're open 24 hours." He Said, "Yes, but not in a row!"

SUDOKU

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

6	8			1		3	9
1				9	2	5	
9	5		2			8	
3	9	1			8		
8	1		2	9			
2		9				1	
5		2	9	8			
3	8	1		5			

Health risks of unhealthy eating habits



CHILDREN WITH poor eating habits do not get the right amounts of nutrients they need for healthy growth and development. Children's food preferences and eating habits are formed early in life, and the time that they spend in their early years provides an ideal opportunity to shape healthy behaviours.

It is evident that young children's diets are providing more energy than they need, and consumption of fruit, vegetables, oily fish and fibre are still lower than recommendations.

Children who are overweight or obese in childhood are more likely to become obese adults; this often leads to long-term health issues, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

A UNICEF report, The State of the World's Children 2019, found that at least one in three children under five, or over 200 million, is either undernourished or overweight. Almost two in three children between six months and two years of age are not fed food that supports their rapidly growing bodies and brains. This puts them at risk of poor brain development, weak learning, low immunity, increased infections and, in many cases, death.

As children begin transitioning to soft or solid foods around the six-month mark, too many are introduced to the wrong kind of diet, according to the report. Worldwide, close to 45 per cent of children between six months and two years of age are not fed any fruits or vegetables. Near-

ly 60 per cent do not eat any eggs, dairy, fish or meat.

As children grow older, their exposure to unhealthy food becomes alarming, driven largely by inappropriate marketing and advertising, the abundance of ultra-processed foods in cities, but also in remote areas, and increasing access to fast food and highly sweetened beverages. For example, the report shows that 42 per cent of school-going adolescents in low- and middle-income countries consume carbonated, sugary soft drinks at least once a day and 46 per cent eat fast food at least once a week. Those rates go up to 62 per cent and 49 per cent, respectively, for adolescents in high-income countries.

As a result, overweight and obesity levels in childhood and adolescence are increasing worldwide. From 2000 to 2016, the proportion of overweight children between five and 19 years of age doubled from one in 10 to almost one in five. Ten times more girls and 12 times more boys in this age group suffer from obesity today than in 1975.

Children who are poorly nourished tend to have weaker immune systems, which increases their chances of illness. They are more likely to develop certain long-term health problems. These include:

- Bone thinning (osteoporosis) in later life;
- Heart and blood vessel (cardiovascular) diseases. Eating foods high in fat, sugar, and salt as

a child can increase the risk of high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and hardening of the arteries (atherosclerosis) in adulthood;

- Type 2 diabetes. In children, this disease is linked to being overweight, being physically inactive, and having a family history of type 2 diabetes;

- Certain breathing problems, such as asthma in children who are overweight.

Being overweight puts children at risk for:

- Liver problems;
- Problems with bone growth in the legs or hip development;
- Gallstones;
- Early puberty;
- Polycystic ovary syndrome. This is a hormone imbalance that can cause problems with a girl's periods and other health problems.

According to Dr Rivane Chybar-Virgo, medical doctor and health and wellness coach, to improve children's nutritional status, especially in early childhood, both the child's relationships with their caregivers and the provision of a suitable environment around them are important.

"Youth have diverse calorie and nutrient needs based on age and patterns of growth, development, and physical activity. As guardians and health professionals support children to incorporate healthy eating strategies at home, it is important to reinforce the impact of early dietary behaviours on future life stages," Dr Chybar-Virgo said.

US, Venezuela swap prisoners



Venezuelan President Maduro, right, receives Alex Saab at Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday, December 20, 2023. The United States freed Saab, who was arrested on a US warrant for money laundering in 2020, in exchange for the release of 10 Americans imprisoned in Venezuela, US officials said Wednesday.

The United States freed a close ally of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in exchange for the release of 10 Americans imprisoned in the South American country and the return of a fugitive defence contractor known as "Fat Leonard" who is at the centre of a massive Pentagon bribery scandal, the Biden administration announced Wednesday.

The deal represents the Biden administration's boldest move yet to improve relations with the major oil-producing nation and extract concessions from the self-proclaimed socialist leader.

The largest release of American prisoners in Venezuela's

history comes weeks after the White House agreed to suspend some sanctions, following a commitment by Maduro to work toward free and fair conditions for the 2024 presidential election.

The release of Alex Saab, a Maduro associate long regarded as a criminal trophy by Washington, is a significant concession to the Venezuelan leader.

US officials said the decision to grant him clemency was difficult but essential in order to bring home jailed Americans, a core administrative objective that in recent years has resulted in the release of criminals who have once been seen as untradeable.

The 10 Americans released include six who have been designated by the US government as wrongfully detained. "These individuals have lost far too much precious time with their loved ones, and their families have suffered every day in their absence. I am grateful that their ordeal is finally over," President Joe Biden said in a statement.

The agreement also resulted in the return to US custody of Leonard Glenn Francis, the Malaysian owner of a ship-servicing company who is the central character in one of the largest bribery scandals in Pentagon history. But the exchange, a major US concession, angered many hard-liners in the Venezuelan opposition who have criticised the White House for standing by as Maduro has repeatedly outmanoeuvred Washington after the Trump administration's campaign to topple him failed.

In October, the White House eased sanctions on Venezuela's oil industry following promises by Maduro that he would level the playing field for the 2024 election, when he's looking to add six years to his decade-long, crisis-ridden rule.

A November 30 deadline has passed and so far Maduro has failed to reverse a ban blocking his chief opponent, María Corina Machado, from running for office.

Biden told reporters earlier in the day that, so far, Maduro appeared to be "keeping his commitment on a free election." Republicans, echoing the sentiment of many in the US-backed opposition, said Saab's release would only embolden Maduro to continue down an authoritarian path. "Disgraceful decision," Republican Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, posted on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter.

The US sanctions remain suspended as part of the deal announced Wednesday.

It also requires Maduro's government to release 21 Venezuelans, including Roberto Abdul, who co-founded a pro-democracy group with Machado more than two decades ago, and dismiss three arrest warrants.

Church of England blesses same-sex couples for the first time, but they still can't wed in church



Reverend Catherine Bond, left, and Reverend Jane Pearce react after being blessed at St John the Baptist Church, in Felixstowe, after the use of prayers of blessing for same-sex couples in Church of England services were approved by the House of Bishops, in Suffolk, England, Sunday, December 17, 2023. Known as prayers of love and faith, the blessings can be used as part of regular services from Sunday, after they were approved by the House of Bishops just days earlier. (Joe Giddens/PA via AP)

LONDON (AP) — Church of England priests offered officially sanctioned blessings of same-sex partnerships for the first time on Sunday, though a ban on church weddings for gay couples remains in place amid deep divisions within global Anglicanism over marriage and sexuality.

In one of the first ceremonies, the Reverend Catherine Bond and the Rev. Jane Pearce had their union blessed at St John the Baptist church, in Felixstowe, eastern England, where both are associate priests.

The couple knelt in front of Canon Andrew Dotchin, who held their heads as he gave "thanks for Catherine and Jane, to the love and friendship they share, and their commitment to one another as they come before you on this day."

The church's national assembly voted in February to allow clergy to bless the unions of same-sex couples who have had civil weddings or partnerships. The words used for the blessings, known as prayers of love and faith, were approved by the church's House

of Bishops on Tuesday and used for the first time on Sunday.

The compromise was struck following five years of discussions about the church's position on sexuality. Church leaders offered an apology for the church's failure to welcome LGBTQ people, but also endorsed the doctrine that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. Clergy won't be required to perform same-sex blessings if they disagree with them. The blessings can be used in regular church services. The church's governing body has also drawn up a plan for separate "services of prayer and dedication" for same-sex couples that would resemble weddings, but it has not yet been formally approved.

Public opinion surveys consistently show that a majority of people in England support same-sex marriage, which has been legal since 2013. The church didn't alter its teaching on marriage when the law changed.

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has said he won't personally bless any same-sex couples because it's his job to unify the world's 85 million Anglicans. Welby is the spiritual leader of both the Church of England and the global Anglican Communion of which it is a member.

Several Anglican bishops from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific said after the February decision that they no longer recognise Welby as their leader.

Joseph, Powell land lucrative contracts



The 27-year-old Joseph, who has made 115 international appearances across all three formats, was bought by Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) for US\$1.3 million following a bidding war with Chennai Super Kings, Delhi Capitals, and Lucknow Super Giants.

Fast bowler Alzarri Joseph fetched a record million-dollar deal while his Twenty20 Captain Rovman Powell also picked up a lucrative contract, to be among four West Indies players sold

in the Indian Premier League auction here Tuesday.

The 27-year-old Joseph, who has made 115 international appearances across all three formats, was bought by Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) for US\$1.3 million following a bidding war with Chennai Super Kings, Delhi Capitals, and Lucknow Super Giants.

Powell, appointed to lead the regional side earlier this year, was the first player sold in the auction when he was snapped up by Rajasthan Royals for US\$892,000 following a tussle with Kolkata Knight Riders over his services.

The 30-year-old right-hander is currently leading West Indies in the fourth T20 International against England at Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Trinidad.

Powell and Joseph were joined by West Indies One-Day International Captain Shai Hope and left-hander Sherfane Rutherford, who also found success in the auction.

Hope, an elegant, 30-year-old right-hander, was bought by Delhi Capitals for US\$90,000 in his first-ever IPL deal, while Rutherford heads to Kolkata Knight Riders for US\$181,000.

Surprisingly, there were no deals for leading West Indies all-rounder Jason Holder who featured last season for Rajasthan Royals, taking four wickets in eight matches, while the likes of left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein and all-rounders Keemo Paul and Odean Smith also went unsold. Joseph's deal came as a surprise, especially af-

ter the six-foot, foot-inch Antiguan entered the auction at a base price of US\$120,000.

However, once bidding began his price climbed rapidly before RCB finally clinched the deal, Joseph going as the second most expensive West Indian in an IPL auction, following Nicholas Pooran's US\$1.9-million deal in 2022.

"He's got lots of attributes and strengths that we're excited about" said RCB's Director of Cricket Mo Bobat.

Joseph has previously turned out for Mumbai Indians and Gujarat Titans, the latter for whom he took seven wickets in as many games for last season.

Powell, meanwhile, found his services in demand and this eventually boosted his US\$120,000 base price.

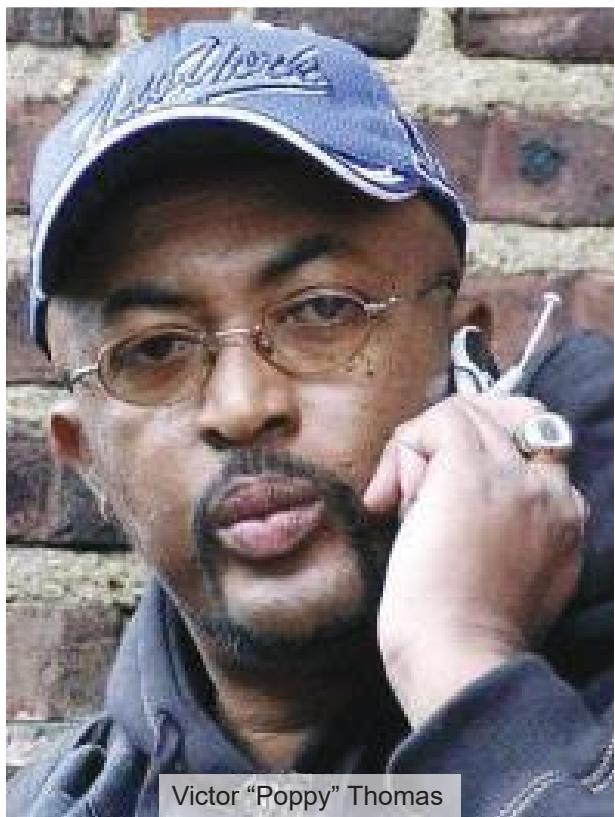
The right-hander, who has played 66 T20 Internationals and 51 One-Day Internationals, will now turn out for his third franchise in as many seasons after representing KKR in 2023 and Capitals last year.

"When we did our sweep of the spots available, Rovman Powell was the highest-ranked player for the spot we had in terms of our batting line-up," said Royals' Director of Cricket Kumar Sangakkara.

Powell joins West Indies teammate Shimron Hetmyer who had been retained by the franchise.

The IPL is expected to bowl off in March next year.

Jamaican 'Poppy' Thomas inducted in athletics hall of fame



JAMAICAN Victor "Poppy" Thomas was on Tues-

day inducted into the US Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCA) Hall of Fame at their annual convention held in Denver, Colorado.

Thomas, who has been the head coach at Lincoln University in Missouri for over 22 years, was one of six coaches inducted into the hall of fame that started in 1995 and which "recognises coaches who have brought great distinction to themselves, to their institutions, and to the sports of cross-country and track and field".

"This year's class increases the number of all-time inductees to 223 coaches from the club, high school, and collegiate ranks," the USTFCCA website said.

Thomas is the first Jamaican to get the honour. The former coach at St Andrew Technical led Lincoln to 14 national team titles in NCAA Division II women's track and field as well as to more than 140 individual national titles and 950 All-America honours.

"Whether it is athletically or academically, Thomas has had plenty of opportunities to celebrate. Since taking over the men's and women's track & field programmes at Lincoln in 2002 at least one of his squads has finished in the top

10 at the NCAA DII Championships indoors or outdoors — every year but one," the site said. "The lone exception being 2020, a year whose national track & field championships were not held due to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Among his list of achievements, Thomas's charges at Lincoln have finished in the top 10 nationally as a team 66 times, with 52 of those being in the top five.

His squads have been named USTFCCA NCAA Division II Scholar Team of the Year seven times, and four athletes — Nandelle Cameron (2008), Sedeekie Edie (2016), Ryan Brown (2019) and Kizan David (2021) — have earned Scholar Athlete of the Year honours.

Thomas — who has been named USTFCCA National Coach of the Year six times and Regional Coach of the Year on 11 occasions, with 11 conference Coach of the Year honours as well — coached for two years at Gardner-Webb, where he guided David Lloyd to the NCAA DII crown in the 400-metre hurdles.

He has been inducted to the Drake Relays (2012) and Missouri Sports (2021) halls of fame, the latter joining his Lincoln track & field programme being inducted in 2013.

National Female Goalkeeper Toast of WIS Awards



First Lady Delthia Russell-Missick (left) congratulates Athlete of the Quarter Eridania Medina Ortiz, Senior Women's National Football Goalkeeper

National Senior Goalkeeper Eridania Medina Ortiz was the toast of the 9th Annual Women In Sports Gala and Awards function held in at the Govcernor's House on Grand Turk last Saturday, December 16.

Six women, including Eridania were honored in various Sporting disciplines for their



Honoree Gertrude Forbes accepting her Award from President of WIS Sharon Simons

outstanding contribution to the development and advancement of Sports in various Sporting disciplines.

The young football custodian, who was also named Sports Personality of the Quarter, was honored for her outstanding skills between the sticks during especially international competitions with the TCI National Female Team.

Eridania's gifts included a plaque sponsored Russell and Associates, a gift basket from Women in Sports and a gift card from Graceway IGA.

The Turks and Caicos Islands Football Association was elated at the awarded bestowed



Cora Gordins' father and daughter accepting on her behalf.

on the budding goalkeeper and was happy to share on their various social media accounts.

Other individuals honored were Morgan Luker and Jill Swann for their role in Swimming; Cora Williams-Gordon and Heather Lightbourne in Softball; and Gertrude Forbes for being a Sports and Youth Ally. TCI Women in Sports, which is celebration of 10 years as an organization has been established to empower and recognize the outstanding achievements of women and girls in Sports.

As always, the night was filled with glitz and glamour, depicting the theme: 'Christmas in Hollywood.' The evening began with the usual Opening Remarks and invocation by the charismatic, Nixon Dickenson.

President of Women in Sports Ms. Sharon Simons welcomed the gathering, remarks were brought by Permanent Secretary in the



Honoree Morgan Luker accepting her award from Founding Member, Rita Gardiner

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Mrs. Cheryl-Ann Jones, Mrs. Rosalie Ingham-Hall, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Games Association, Ms. Nandina Hislop, Media and Communications Specialist with the TCI Sports Commission, Mr. Delano Williams, TCI's First Olympian and founder of the Delano Williams Foundation.

The Eliza Simons Primary School perform a Christmas rendition that set the Christmas mood with the crowd with their dancing and singing skills.

One of the highlights of the evening was an insightful and inspiring speech from the Guest Speaker, Mrs. Judith Robinson who was introduced by WIS long time member, Mrs. Shanta Lewis.

There were many door prizes given out to attendees, but the most exciting was the



Honorees Heather Lightbourne accepting from Rita Gardiner



Jill Swann accepting her award from President Sharon Simons



Eridania collecting her awards from Sharon Simons

lined-up of women and men vying for best dressed male and best dressed female, that honor was bestowed on Mrs. Gertrude Forbes and Zarek Brian Swann both receiving gift baskets sponsored by Goldsmith. The vote of thanks was moved by Mrs. Florence Jarret, one of Women in Sports Founding Members.

Women in Sports has issued a thank-you to the following sponsors and donors for making this event another success: TCI Sports Commission; Ministry of Sports; Premier's Office ; Commonwealth Games Association; Delano Williams; Foundation (DWF); Graceway IGA; Faboutique Fashions; Goldsmith; GQ Men's Wear; Osprey Beach HOTEL; Claudia Smith; Fulford Service Station; Carlos Ariza; H.J. Robinson Primary School; Eliza Simons Primary School; Paradise Events; and Fantastic Tours and Sally Rampersad.



National Female Goalkeeper Toast of WIS Awards