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WEDNESDAY - JANUARY 24TH, 2018

75 CENTS

TWO MEN KILLED BY POLICE



▶ Two Men in their 30's fatally shot yesterday by police in a police involved shooting off Cowpen Road, west of Baillou Hill Rd. **Photo: ONIKE ARCHER/ Journal Staff Writer**

BY ONIKE ARCHER
Journal Staff Writer

Two men in their thirties were killed by gunfire as a result of a police involved shooting which occurred west of Baillou Hill Road yesterday.

According to Assistant Commissioner of Royal Bahamas Police Force, Clayton Fernander, Officer in charge of crime, police authorities acted on information.

"Shortly after 2pm this afternoon, acting on information, officers responding to this general area off Cowpen Road where they saw a suspicious vehicle.

■ See MEN KILLED / page 2...

LABOUR MINISTER SAYS UNEMPLOYMENT WILL DECREASE BY END OF YEAR



▶ Minister of Labour, Dion Foulkes (Journal file photo)

BY ONIKE ARCHER
Journal Staff Writer

Minister of Labour, Dion Foulkes says he is optimistic there will be a decrease in unemployment throughout the country by the end of this year.

Speaking to the media he said, "we are optimistic that when the reports come out towards the end of the year, around October, November, that you will see a decrease in unemployment throughout the country.

■ See END OF YEAR on PAGE 4...

"BAHAMIANS TOO HARD ON THEMSELVES", SAYS TOURISM MINISTER



▶ Minister of Tourism, Dionisio D'Aguilar (Journal file photo)

BY C. JILLIAN GRAY
Journal Staff Writer

The Minister of Tourism, Dionisio D'Aguilar is assuring the public that The Bahamas is a safe place to travel to. This comes in the wake of another travel advisory issued against the Bahamas.

The advisory issued by the Canadian government spoke of muggings, home invasions, armed robberies and sexual assaults targeting tourists in New Providence and Grand Bahama.

It also spoke of opportunistic crime, spiked food and drinks, road safety and robberies in cruise ship terminals as well as in and around popular resorts.

Despite this being the second time an advisory has been issued for the year, Minister D'Aguilar said Bahamians may just be too hard on themselves.

■ See SAYS TOURISM MINISTER / page 2...

Androsians Want Remains For Closure

BY LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

Although Civil Aviation may have called off the search for remnants of the plane which crashed off Mastic Point, Andros, Androsians are keeping the faith that they will find more remains of the

six victims on board that flight to bring some sort of closure.

Speaking with the Journal yesterday, the member of Parliament for North Andros, Carlton Bowleg said that although the official investigative team has ceased their search efforts, volunteers of the community of North Andros continue to search

for anything associated with the crash.

"When you don't have any closure as far as remains are concerned, with a body, it keeps the pain very much alive.

"The people of Andros have basically accepted the fact their loved ones are deceased, but they still

want some kind of closure; some body or remains to bury and to bring closure and start the healing process.

"North Andros is very huge, but it's small when it comes to the people, because it's very close knitted.

"The Civil Aviation Department has concluded that they have enough evidence to go on to bring closure to

their case, because they found what they call is an investigator's dream. They found the log book that identifies and confirms that it was the plane that went down, so from their standpoint they have closed it," Mr. Bowleg said.

■ See REMAINS FOR CLOSURE / page 2...

New Schools And Upgrades For New Providence

BY LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

Schools across the country are expected to see some major upgrades and teachers of primary schools in Southern New Providence can look forward to welcoming smaller class sizes in the new year. According to Minister of Education Jeffery Lloyd plans are underway to construct a new school in the

southern district.

Speaking with reporters yesterday, the Education Minister said that plans have already been approved for the construction.

"We have approved the drawings, for that school and we are now in the process of possibly engaging a Public Private Partnership to see how it will be constructed in the shortest possible time.

"The commitment is that

school is obviously urgently needed and will be constructed so that it can relieve the pressures on those primary schools in that area that are bursting at the seams with population that exceeds their capacity," Mr. Lloyd said.

Mr. Lloyd confirmed that the former Oakes Field Primary School, now called the Eva Hilton Primary School will also receive a much needed upgrade.

"You will also know that the Eva Hilton is going to benefit from a significant upgrade.

"That is approximately ready to go. The Cabinet has concluded that is to be done," Mr. Lloyd revealed.

He stated that an aggressive plan of action is set to take place for the school system across the country.

"We are looking at an aggressive construction and

upgrade program for the school system and within a very short time there is going to be some great relief and

great benefit to the teaching staff as well as to the students in these respective schools," Mr. Lloyd said.

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TWO MEN KILLED BY POLICE

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"Two male occupants on seeing the police exited (their vehicles) with handguns and engaged the officers," Mr. Fernander told reporters.

Fernander said that officers were in fear of their lives and the people in the general area, so the officers returned fire. Both men were fatally shot.

The matter is now in the hands of the coroners who will continue the investigations.

Mr. Fernander expressed that he wanted the public to be assured that the RBPF is up and about in the communities.

"I want to ensure that Bahamian people and

visitors alike are safe. We just want them to continue to pray for us as you know that it's not an easy task and as we leave home and leave our families, we don't know if we will return.

"So we are just asking members of the public to continue to pray for their police officers and for guidance that the good Lord will guide and protect us as we execute our duties on a daily basis," Mr. Fernander said.

The men were driving a green Honda Accord. Police reportedly recovered two illegal firearms inside the vehicle. It is unknown at this time if the vehicle was stolen or not.

The men were known to police for previous crimes; one of the men had on an ankle monitor.

"BAHAMIANS TOO HARD ON THEMSELVES", SAYS TOURISM MINISTER

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"I personally think that we are very hard on ourselves when it comes to crime. May I remind the public that 6.3 million foreign visitors come to our shores each and every year and yes there are going to be a number of them that are victims of crime, but when I go to places like London, Paris and even New

York I probably have just the same likelihood of being a victim of crime, but you know what we don't have here, terrorists," D'Aguiar said.

He added that when you look at the millions of people that come to the Bahamas, one or two incidents are likely to happen.

The minister said the Bahamas must look at what's good and stop sensationalizing the one or two crime events that occur, adding that the conversation tends to linger on crime too long, instead of talking about the thousands of persons that come to the Bahamas and have a wonderful time.

Minister of National Security Marvin Dames also responded to the advisory.

"It's always concerning;

however it's not the first time. We will continue to do what we must do to bring those crime figures down and make people feel safe," Dames said.

Also making the extensive list of concern for the Canadian travel advisory was the concern over safety during water sports.

The authorities hit out at jet skis in particular, stating that tourists have been seriously injured using them and other watercraft due to a poorly regulated water sports rental industry.

The Canadian travel advisory comes just two weeks after the U.S. State Department issued a similar advisory warning its citizens about crime at the Arawak Cay Fish Fry and over the hill communities.

Androsians Want Remains For Closure

Continued from / PAGE 1...

As for finding the remains of any of the victims of that flight, Mr. Bowleg said that persons are still searching.

"We still have individuals out there who are volunteering to and they are doing their part. We have widened our search to go beyond South Mastic Point, further south, because of the wind direction and we are still finding parts of the aircraft.

"We found other personal items from individuals on that were on that aircraft," Mr. Bowleg confirmed.

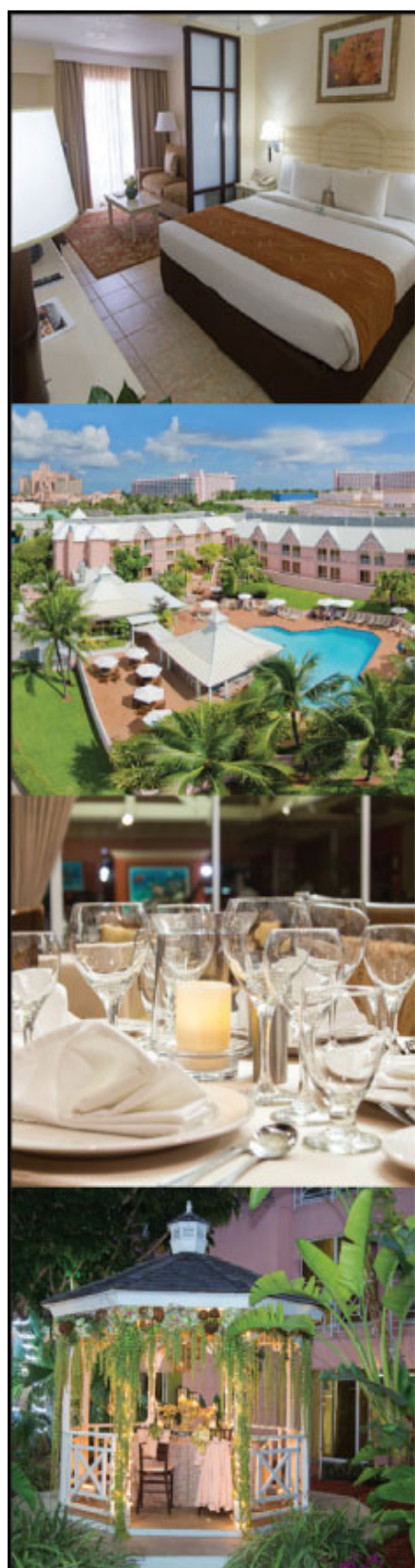
"We have councilors on the ground, they arrived there this morning [Tuesday] to start hitting those schools. Mastic Point, Nicholl's Town, and Lowe Sound; and as much as they can start to bring some kind of relief to the kids.

"We are going to have councilors that are going to go down as of Thursday to really start dealing with the families.

"The councilor that is there will give an assessment as to what recommendations we should go to from there," Mr. Bowleg said.

He also indicated that local island councilors were also there to give support where needed.

See REMAINS FOR CLOSURE / page 4...



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► The Bahamas investment delegation to Texas met with senior executives of the Port of Houston today to discuss possible linkages with ports in The Bahamas, particularly ports in Grand Bahama. The initial connection was made and dialogue will continue to pursue mutual benefits for both parties. Senator the Hon. James Kwasi Thompson, Minister of State for Grand Bahama, led the delegation and was accompanied by His Excellency Sidney Collie, Bahamas Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Joshua Sears, Senior Policy Advisor, and Mrs. Linda Mackey, Consul General, Miami, Florida. (Photos/Yontalay Bowe/OPM Media Services)



PM Minnis 'Excited' by discussions during Austin (Texas) trip

BY MATT MAURA
Bahamas Information Services

AUSTIN, Texas – Prime Minister, Dr. the Hon. Hubert A. Minnis Tuesday described his stopover visit to Austin, Texas, as being “very productive” after meeting with State, technology and business officials from a number of major U.S. companies operating there.

The Austin visit is part of the Minnis Administration’s plan to establish Grand Bahama as the technology hub of the region, and follows on the heels of Grand Bahama hosting its first major Technology Summit in Freeport, in November 2017.

Austin is considered the “Silicon Hills” of Texas because of the cluster of high-tech companies in the Austin metropolitan area including Dell, Hewlett Packard, Google, Samsung and Cisco Systems, among others.

Its name “Silicon Hills” refers to the hilly terrain on the west side of Austin. The area employs more than 2,000 persons from major corporations like Apple and Microsoft. The city also has a booming bio-tech industry with more than 8,000 employees.

Prime Minister Minnis, who departed New Providence on Sunday (January 21) for Austin – the first stop on a visit to the State of Texas which includes a stopover in Houston – also met with Governor Greg Abbott “in order to establish a relationship between the Governor

of Texas and the Prime Minister with the expressed purpose of identifying foreign investment and business opportunities that would benefit The Bahamas.”

Prime Minister Minnis and his delegation also met with officials from the Austin Technology Council (ATC). Since 1992, the Austin Technology Council has been the “informed opinion leader and unifying voice” of technology in Austin and Central Texas and is the region’s largest tech industry organization.

“We had a very productive day in Austin where we met with the Austin Technology Council,” Prime Minister Minnis said. “I made a presentation on doing business in The Bahamas and creating a technology hub, especially in Grand Bahama. I further spoke about the great benefits of Grand Bahama and all of the infrastructure already present. I spoke of the Port, of our stable government, and after completing that we had a very productive lunch meeting with Governor Greg Abbott and quite a number of business leaders.

“We are now in a digital revolution and it is essential that The Bahamas gets on board and moves with that revolution. We must not get left behind. We can be the technology hub in the region and be the leading technology centre for the Caribbean,” the Prime Minister added.

■ See PM MINNIS ‘EXCITED’ BY / page 6...



GOVERNMENT NOTICE INVITATION FOR TENDERS

The Government of The Bahamas is inviting tender for the following Contracted Services for the Port Department, Ministry of Transport & Local Government.

1. General Repairs to the Exterior of the Port Administration Building, tower and other ancillary repairs
2. General Repairs to the eastern exterior of the Festival Place Building

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Tenders are to be submitted in triplicate (3) in a sealed envelope marked “Tender for the General Repairs to the Exterior of the Port Administration Building, tower and other ancillary Works, & the General Repairs to the Eastern exterior of the Festival Place Building, addressed to:

The Chairman
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Ministry of Finance
Cecil V. Wallace Whitfield Building
Cable Beach
P. O. Box N-3017
Nassau, The Bahamas
Telephone No. (242) 372-1530

No later than 5:00 pm on the 29th day of January, 2018.

Tenders will be opened at 10:00 am on the 30th January, 2018 at the office of the Tender’s Board, Ministry of Finance.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL TENDERS.

Jurors May Be Eradicated

BY LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

Minister of State for Legal Affairs, Ellsworth Johnson says that the government may be looking to move The Bahamas to a point where jurors may not be needed.

Stressing that it is only something that they may be considering, Mr. Johnson made these remarks, with no shortage of feedback about the addresses of potential jurors being publicized on social media.

“I know one of the things that the Attorney General has discussed in the past is whether or not The Bahamas will move, where in certain matters we don’t have the need to use juries as it occurs in South Africa, and that may be something that may be considered,” Mr. Johnson said.

Speaking with reporters yesterday, Mr. Johnson also said that the decision to publish the jury list is nothing new, while acknowledging the fears of many Bahamians. “Crime is a very serious matter, and no doubt my gov-

ernment takes it very seriously.

“The information that has been disclosed is no different from what is being disclosed from over the years.

“I know that there is an issue of witness security and that may also may include persons who sit on the jury, and we take that very seriously. But it’s no different from the information you would find in the Voters Registry.

“Sometimes you would post names in the newspaper, it’s just simply it’s now by way of social media,” he said.

Amidst the outcry from many Bahamians regarding the recent publication of the 2018 jury list with the addresses of those selected for jury duty, Mr. Johnson said that it is important however, for all Bahamians to play their role in progressing the country.

“When matters are heard, they are heard publicly. Anybody can sit in the gallery and view the persons that are sitting on those matters.

“One of the things we

have to do as we progress to build this country, we have to play our roles.

“I have left private practice and I’ve come into public service and I’ve decided that I’m going to stand for my country and do what’s necessary.

“But I do understand the concerns that are expressed by members of the public, but it’s no different, it’s just a different way or medium of disclosing that information,” Mr. Johnson said.

Former Attorney General, Allyson Maynard-Gibson too said that the “effective ways to combat crime is for potential criminals to know that justice in The Bahamas is swift and sure.

She suggested that the Attorney-General and the Supreme Court educate Bahamians about the precious court time that is wasted, because of delays caused by of the inability to empanel a jury, as well as to educate Bahamians about their role in combating crime, by serving on juries, so that trials can take place in a timely manner.

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LABOUR MINISTER SAYS UNEMPLOYMENT WILL DECREASE BY END OF YEAR

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Remaining hopeful, there will be an increase in numbers in the job market by time reports are available as early as the summer.

Baha Mar has taken on some additional two thousand persons, based on what they've already done and the one thousand that is coming on for Rosewood.

Also Grand Bahama is going to experience a drastic increase in employment as a result of what we're doing at Our Lucaya hotels and two other major projects in Grand Bahama," the Labour minister told reporters.

During the 2017 General Election, many more people were employed and the former administration boasted that they contributed to the decrease in the unemployment rate, after hiring thousands.

Mr. Foulkes dismissed the PLP gloating by highlighting that those same thousands of workers were not permanent workers, but only contractual workers.

There was a lot of employment generated by the general election, which after the election those short term workers, their contract had

come to an end.

"Also, Carnival played a major role in the last report. The period of employment is three to six months to be counted in the employment figures, so all of those jobs would've fallen away, because they were temporary jobs.

There is no Carnival going on during this period from the summer to February, those jobs would not be in existence," said the Minister.

He said "all of the persons to my knowledge who have been not working in the public sector, their contracts came to an end.

"For example, the 52 weeks program came to an end. It was the terms of that contract. Now, we do not want to let anybody go because Bahamians are suffering, there are a lot of people having problems paying their bills and we want to keep people employed.

But, if you want to keep people employed, and if you sign a contract for specific time and that contract comes to an end, that is the end of the contract," said Mr.

Foulkes.

The Labour Minister emphasized that depending on the health of the economy, people will be afforded to keep their jobs or have a more permanent status and not just contractual.

Moreover, Mr. Foulkes mentioned that Exuma and Abaco are experiencing almost full employment and Bimini World Resorts began two days ago, to fully engage all people who were temporarily laid off.

"Some one hundred plus persons have already begun to receive telephone calls to come back to work.

"So, they will be up to their full complement at about five hundred employees.

"Also, in Chubb Cay, the thirty six construction workers who were temporarily laid off will be returning back to work," Mr. Foulkes informed the media.

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis will be addressing the public about plans for the economy during his first National Address for the year on Monday, January 29th.

GOT NEWS?
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Journal's News TIP
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Androsians Want Remains For Closure

Continued from / PAGE 2...

Mr. Bowleg stated that in particular, councilors are expected to visit the school of 10-year-old Destinique Wilson who was on that flight with her mother Desiree Russell.

"We do look to send someone down to Destinique's school which is in Bowen Sound, South Andros, who will do their part to help those students to deal with the loss of a classmate," Mr. Bowleg said.

According to the MP, a memorial service is scheduled for Friday at 10:00am at the Cathedral of Mount Olive in Morgan's Bluff, Andros, where he anticipates the families will get full support from parliamentarians.

"On Friday, we are looking to have our island wide memorial service, in which we are looking for some of my colleagues, or basically all of my parliamentary colleagues to come and show support, and to show the families that the nation mourns with them and that we are there to support them in their time of bereavement," Mr. Bowleg said.

The twin engine Piper Aztec took off from San Andros early last Wednesday morning en-route to New Providence. It crashed in waters off Mastic Point soon after, killing all on board including pilot Darren Clarke, Margaret Adderley, Destinique Wilson, her mother Desiree Russell, Valentino Cardinal Knowles, and Carter Campbell.



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ONE FACTOR OF SUCCESS: BELIEVING NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

The 2018 series salutes fashion mogul Peter Nygård's Golden Jubilee detailing his rags to riches story and incredible business success over these past fifty years. The Clifton Review will take an inside look at how he did it.

When you believe that nothing is impossible, everything becomes possible. Imagine the levels of success in every society if each individual approached life with certain attitudes or ways of thinking and behaving that guaranteed their success.

For fashion mogul Peter Nygard, nothing is impossible to achieve. That belief is born out of the Finnish principle of 'sisu'.

Sisu represents the ability to withstand a great disadvantage and yet overcome through sheer determination. Sisu is described as representing the Finns national character. Sisu spurs a Finn on to be brave, resolute and determined to fight against all odds.

As stated by Peter Nygard, "The most important asset I have is enormous energy and staying power, and my training from past history from my parents who gave me the strength for never quitting—we call that in Finland 'SISU' staying with it right to the end!"

As a little boy, Peter Nygard watched his father demonstrate this principle.

Not long after emigrating, Peter's father Eeli found himself unemployed with a family to feed. He became determined to find a new opportunity as a baker, but he had a challenge. He didn't yet speak English.

Still, Eeli made his way to Winnipeg to seek new work. It was 302 kilometers away or 180 miles from Deloraine. While walking down the street looking for work, Eeli spotted a bakery truck making deliveries. Without hesitation, Eeli took off after the truck running as fast as he could to keep up. Naturally, he was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, Eeli made a note of the last street he saw the truck on and the time the truck had passed.

The next day, Eeli returned to that street and waited for the bakery truck making its deliveries to show up to that spot. Once again he took off after the bakery truck until he lost it. In true sisu fashion, this action was repeated each day until Eeli successfully ended up in front of the bakery. He then walked into the bakery, and with his broken English declared, "Me strong. Me want work."

With the help of a reference letter from the ever-helpful Reverend Harvey of Deloraine, Eeli was able to land a job at the bakery working evenings. It was a three-month job that turned into a fifteen-year job.

THE CLIFTON REVIEW

By P. J. Malone

The Clifton Review is a bi-weekly column that examines the question of the Clifton project along with the evolution of the war between two billionaires, the links to unsavory characters, the use of the courts for personal agendas, the involvement of the Government opposition party (the FNM), and the attacks on the Government of The Bahamas.

Now that's sisu! And what better lesson can there be for a boy hearing of his father chasing down a truck to learn the principle that nothing is impossible?

Peter Nygard also had the example of Grandpa Nygård—who was missing both legs and one arm—to learn from. Grandpa Nygård is described in the book *The Child From Lamposi: The Inspiring Story of Hilikka Nygård*, 2015:

When gangrene caused by diabetes had attacked his leg many years before, his legs had been amputated, one just above the knee and the other slightly higher. He had custom made leather covers that served as shoes for his stumps, and he shuffled about on these holding canes in each hand.

When gangrene later attacked his fingers he was without medical help nearby; but knowing what had to be done to prevent the spread of the gangrene and save his life, he had performed his own amputation, cutting off his finger as deftly as any surgeon. Eventually most of one whole arm was affected and its final complete amputation, thankfully, was performed in a hospital.

Grampa Nygard was amazing. Disabled? Not in his opinion. Complain? Not that anyone ever heard. With his one good arm and leather pads on the stumps of his legs, he walked, climbed stairs, drove horses and did his work. (page 82)

Grandpa Nygard drove a horse drawn flat board trailer on a regular basis to sell his wife's homemade items in nearby communities. When Peter and Liisa were living at the farm, they would accompany him on these sales trips.

With a father and grandfather demonstrating such sisu spirit to Peter Nygard while he was growing up, is it any wonder that nothing is impossible to this self-made man?

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The Bahama Journal
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Kimaley P. Jones
Vice President Operations

E D I T O R I A L

THIS DREAD TRAGEDY!

Extant brute facts on the ground show, tell and confirm the loathsome realities of decay, blight, social cankering, rot and crime-endemic and with Death triumphant riding high on the hoof, we are now all sufferers some from the glut of things which now consume them and far too many others who are struggling to make do with a pittance!

This is the context we reference as we look in on the 'newest' and most current version of the latest Over-The-Hill-Clean-Up [your environment Project/Initiative which by way of our calculation is nothing but a palliative applied in a time when large sustained clean and cleansing action [island-wide for New Providence].

Such an undertaking should be total! And thus, the urgent need for ACTION NOW for the health and well-being of the people are to be attained any time soon.

Piece-meal action [phased or not] is no longer acceptable.

Palliatives are just not good enough! Since we are – each and every one of us – tied together either symbiotically or parasitically, we must – as a people – work together for the achievement of the common good.

And thus today, we strongly recommend that the current administration would do itself and the Bahamian people a world of good were it to work with its social partners – business and civil society alike – to find the means sufficient to the task of cleaning up all of New Providence.

Our guess is that at the end of the day, things will remain as they are; which is to suggest that – as time flows inexorably in its own direction: We shall learn and re-learn that difficult lesson which demonstrates and reveal the deep truth hidden in the maxim which advises 'many hands make a burden light'.

There is no denying realities such as the ubiquity of noise pollution, earth-poisoning, mounds upon mounds of the detritus left behind in the guise of used up appliances and most of all, that sordidly sad plethora of damages, sicknesses, ills and diseases [inclusive of gun-violence running amok] which now vitiate life itself as so many of our people.

This is a tragedy; and thus we now have on our

hands a situation where – ironically and as fate would have it the current administration is now set to continue in the time-trodden paths of their political opposites in the honorable House of Assembly and its Senate auxiliaries in law-making for the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

The reference we make pertains to yet-again-another stab at 'cleaning' up Bain Town and Grant's Town.

The cleanup will be conducted in phases and will focus on the removal of white waste (e.g. refrigerators, washers, and dryers), furniture, lot clearance and derelict vehicle removal.

The cleanup will also identify abandoned and or dilapidated buildings with the objective of assessment by the Ministry of Works. Rodent control activities will be integrated into the cleanup to reduce rodent populations.

Any effort dedicated to doing anything really-real about this dread crisis, must be done in such a way where the 'solutions' applied must also be so real that at the end of the day, we are ALL better off and moving in a really-real right direction.

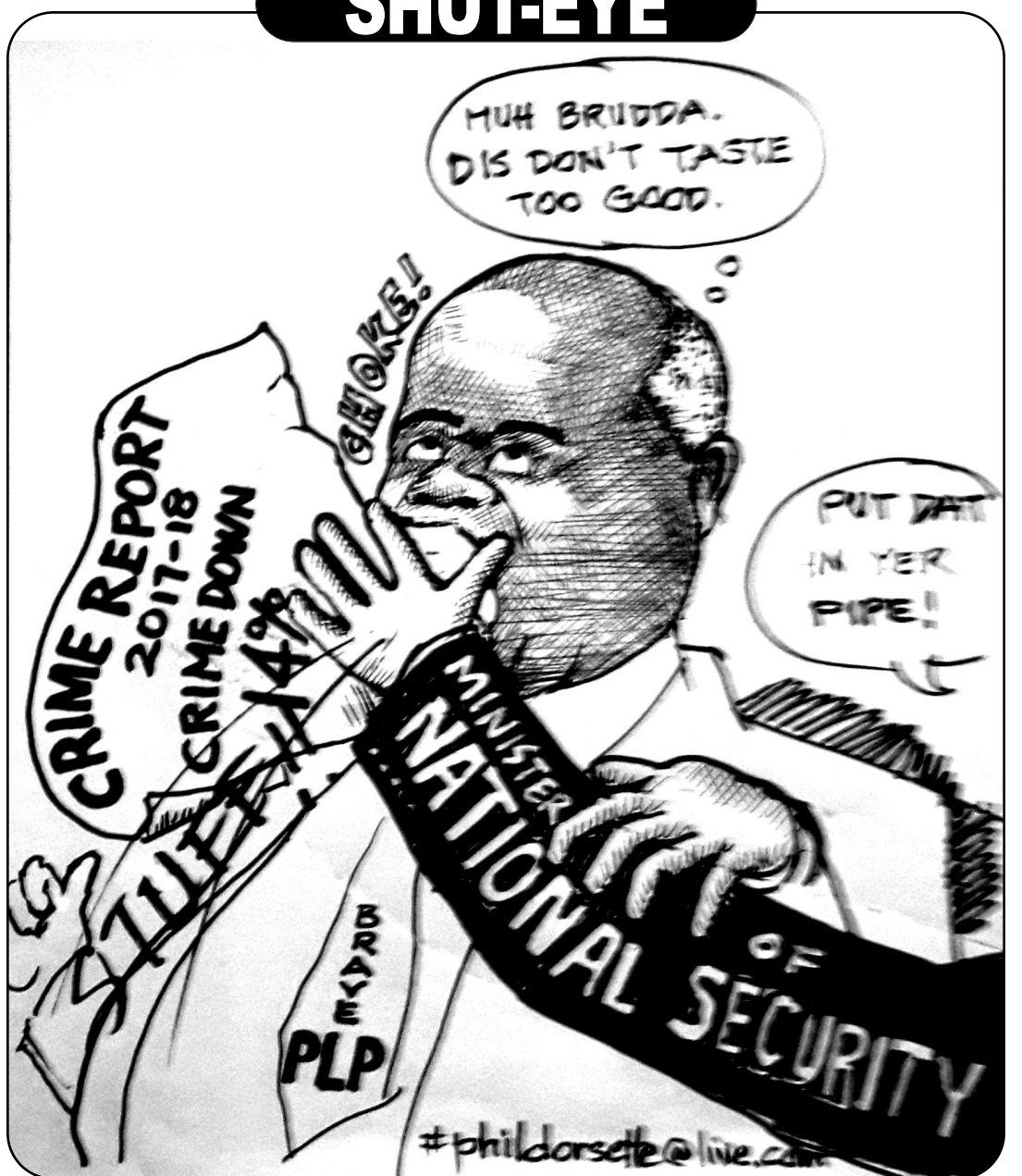
Evidently, such an initiative would demand the supply of hundreds of large garbage disposal bins for every community and with the need for the hiring of hundreds of men and women who would clearly [by way of their sweated paid-for-labor] become real nation-builders.

Such a re-conceived initiative would [by definition] require input and resourcing from corporate Bahamas and from so-called ordinary citizens and [of course] the Government of The Bahamas.

Nothing of any real value can ever happen for any of our people if and as long as the so-called masses are treated as if they are the types who are so retarded they need either the state or other agencies in society to show them how and why they should the way they should keep 'their' environments clean.

Indeed, let it also be noted, agreed upon and taken to heart: When the earth is befouled, we all suffer, when some of us are in distress, everyone is affected; and thus, if we are to ever make life more commodious for the many who are now hurting, we must understand how we are – when it is said and done: We are connected in the totality of life.

SHUT-EYE





RDBF Arrests Haitian Nationals aboard Sailing Yacht

RDBF Arrests Haitian Nationals aboard Sailing Yacht Coral Harbour Base, 22 JAN. '18 (RBDF): A group of Haitian migrants are on the way to the capital

after they were apprehended in Bahamian waters on Monday evening by the Royal Bahamas Defence.

While on routine patrol, the Defence Force's aircraft

P-68 piloted by Chief Petty Officer Gregory Storr spotted the sailing vessel early Sunday morning. Shortly after 5:00 p.m. Monday evening, a US Coast Guard helicopter from the Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos (OPBAT) spotted the 40-ft Sailing vessel approximately 8 nautical miles east of Wemyss settlement in south Long Island and alerted Defence Force patrol craft, HMBS ROLLY GRAY, which was also searching for the vessel under the command of

Lieutenant Commander Granville Adderley.

Further investigations resulted in the apprehension of 70 undocumented Haitian migrants aboard the sailing vessel, "ISLAND GIRL." The migrants were detained by HMBS Rolly Gray and will be taken to the capital.

The Commander Defence Force, Commodore Tellis Bethel, commended the vigilant efforts of Defence Force, as well as US Coast Guard members, who had conducted an extensive joint operation to capture

the vessel.

This incident is the first migrant apprehension for the year. Last year, the Defence Force apprehended or assisted in apprehending some 1,300 migrants including 14 foreign nationals from five countries aboard a motor yacht off Fort Montagu late last year. The vessel was believed to have been involved in a migrant smuggling operation. The case is ongoing before the court.

Last week, Defence Force divers assisted local

authorities in North Andros with the search and recovery of victims of a plane crash in nearby waters. Also, the vigilant search for Mr. Samuel Moss Jr., who was reported missing since 15th January is also ongoing. Mr. Moss departed Bimini for New Providence in a white 21 foot single engine Angler small craft, and has not been heard from since.

The Royal Bahamas Defence Force is committed to protecting the territorial integrity of The Bahamas.

PM Minnis 'Excited' by discussions during Austin (Texas) trip

Continued from / PAGE 3...

Prime Minister Minnis said that meeting involved discussions surrounding business opportunities for Bahamians and businesses opportunities between the State of Texas and The Bahamas.

"We also spoke about the educational opportunities for our students as you know we have a large student population here. We will continue those meetings."

The Prime Minister and his delegation, which includes Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Darren Henfield; Minister of State for Grand Bahama in the Office of the Prime Minister, Senator the Hon. James Kwasi Thompson; His Excellency Sidney Collie, Bahamas Ambassador to the United States of America; His Excellency Joshua Sears, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister; His Excellency Cornelius A. (C.A.) Smith, Non-Resident Ambassador-designate for Central American States and Mrs. Linda Mackey, Bahamas Consul-General, Miami, also toured the Dell Headquarters where presentations were made.

"I met with and spoke with their Chief Commercial Officer on possibilities of future ventures, and that will be followed up especially by State Minister Thompson with respect to creating such a hub in Grand Bahama," Prime Minister Minnis added.

The Prime Minister and his delegation traveled to Houston to meet with Television Evangelist Joel Osteen and members of the Bahamian Diaspora, including the Bahamian student population in Texas.

DELEGATION HOSTED TO LUNCH BY THE GOVERNOR OF TEXAS



Official Group Photo. Front row, from left: Prime Minister, Dr. the Hon. Hubert A. Minnis; 48th Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott; and the Hon. Darren Henfield, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Standing, from left: Cornelius (CA) Smith, Non-Resident Ambassador-designate for Central American States; Linda Mackey, Consul General, Miami FL; HE Sidney Collie, Bahamas Ambassador to the United States; Joshua Sears, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister; Lynden Rose, Honorary Consul, Houston, Texas; Senator the Hon. Kwasi Thompson, Minister of State for Grand Bahama; and Rolando B. Pablos, Secretary of State, Austin, Texas. [Photo/Yontalay S. Bowe/OPM Media Services]

<p>Coast Evaporated Milk Kellogg's Campbell Soup Co. Kimberly-Clark Durkee Spices Tang Kool-Aid</p>	<p>Alaska Evaporated Milk Kraft Foods Mott's Juices CadburyAdams Wise Potato Chips S.C. Johnson ConAgra Foods International</p>	<p>Purex Laundry Detergent Pillsbury Green Giant V8 Fusion V8 Splash Post Cereals Keebler Cookies</p>
<p>Nestea Purity Flour Dial Soaps Dole</p>	<p>Arm & Hammer Products Oscar Mayer Riceland Rice Tone Soap</p>	<p>STP-Armor All Nabisco Cookies Zephyrhills water Meteor Corned Beef Pepperidge Farm</p>

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29th International Customs Day Celebrations in Grand Bahama

BY SIMON LEWIS

long service:

FREEPORT, Grand Bahama -- The World Customs Organization (WCO) has over 177 Customs Administration members of which Bahamas Customs has been a member since 1974 and has benefited from technical expertise and advice.

Gregory Jones, Assistant Comptroller of Customs with responsibility for the Grand Bahama District, said "This year we will celebrate our International Customs Day, under the theme "A Secure Business Environment for Economic Development.

"According to the World Customs Organization Secretariat, 'secure' means an environment that is enabling, safe, fair and sustainable, all wrapped into one.

"Members of the WCO are encouraged to look at how they can create an environment for businesses that will foster their participation in cross-border trade, and ultimately, how they can best serve the people, and empower entrepreneurs."

In Grand Bahama, the Customs Department will host the 3rd Northern Bahamas Long Service Awards and World Customs Organization Certificate of Merit Awards Ceremony, which will be held on Wednesday 24th January 2018, at 7pm at A Social Affair Convention Center off East Sunrise Highway, Freeport, Grand Bahama.

Among invited guests will be Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the Hon. K. Peter Turnquest, and Comptroller of Customs Dr. Geanine Moss.

Topping the list for World Customs Organization Certificate of Merit Awards 2018 are:

Chief Customs Revenue Officer
– **Deborah Bootle**

Cashier – **Joan Scott**

Topping the list of 16 Officers and Non-Uniformed Staff who will be honoured for

Senior Customs/Revenue Officer
– **Pamela Williams – 30 years**

Senior Customs/Revenue Officer
– **Miriam Fernander – 30 years**

Senior Customs/Revenue Officer
– **Renia Predelus – 30 years**

Senior Customs/Revenue Officer
– **Carnetta Farrington – 30 years**

Senior Customs/Revenue Officer
– **Robert Julian – 30 years**

Senior Customs/Revenue Officer
– **Linda Brown – 30 years**

Customs/Revenue Officer II
– **Ellarese Thompson**

Customs/Revenue Officer II
– **Terence Ferguson**

Customs/Revenue Officer II
– **Verdell Russell**

Senior Customs Guard
– **Herbert Rahming**

Senior Executive Officer
– **Cheryl Whyms**

Executive Officer
– **Ann Francis – 30 years**

Chief Registry Clerk
– **Gwendolyn Henfield – 30 years**

Customs/Revenue Officer I
– **20 years Janell Heild**

Customs/Revenue Officer I
– **20 years Keva Powell – Williams**
Telephonist I – **20 years**

Other activities will include: 28th January – Church Service at Calvary Temple, Clive Avenue at 10am.

Jan. 29th – Feb. 2nd -- A Customs Digital

Exhibition will be held in the foyer of C. A. Smith Complex from 10am – 3pm.

16th February – Customs Staff will engage in Community Services by donating cleaning supplies and provide lunch and interact with the Senior Citizens at Home Away from Home Center for the Aged, located on 30 Amberjack Street, Caravel Beach between 11am – 2pm.

19th February – second community service will be at the Genesis Academy Trip Circle between 11am - 11pm where some of the male officers will assist with mentoring the young men there, and Customs Revenue Officer II Wenito Bootle will give a brief motivational speech. Other visits will follow.

"To ensure that our staff speak with one voice as they relate to the customs laws we will engage our staff in seminars and frequent briefings," said Assistant Comptroller Jones.

"Further, to enhance our relationship with our stakeholders, particularly, the couriers and licensees, we will commence with two fora and others as needed.

February 28th 2018 – Sessions for Couriers and Shipping & Airline Agents, Customs Brokers, 4pm-6pm, Room #3 C.A. Smith Complex.

March 1st 2018 – Session with licensees who are Contractors, Manufacturers/or Custom's Brokers associated with them.

Mr. Jones noted: "According to the WCO Secretariat, Evidence-based research, recognized internationally, clearly shows that Customs can contribute to making the business environment more "enabling", or in other words, more stable and predictable by, for example, streamlining procedures, tackling corruption, enhancing integrity and facilitation of legitimate trade."

Mr. Jones said Bahamas Customs is also

mindful of the need to ensure safety within the business environment. "But some threats come from within the trade itself, such as shipment of illicit goods, invoice fraud and smuggling of goods into the country to evade customs and taxes.

"Despite some of the challenges, concerns and criticisms that may come from our stakeholders, the Customs Department remains committed to resolving problems that may arise. After all we want to partner with our stakeholders to ensure that customs laws, regulations and policies are explained and understood before implementation," he stated.

He concluded: "On behalf of the Comptroller of Customs, the Executive team and entire staff of Grand Bahama and Walker's Cay, we take this opportunity to thank all of our stakeholders including members of the public for their support and the media for their presence and coverage of this occasion and the other activities to follow."

Mr. Jones also offered special thanks to the committee that is responsible for organizing the Customs International Day Celebrations namely:

Chief Customs Revenue Officers
Marsha Stubbs

Customs/Revenue Officer II **Equianna Johnson**

Customs/Revenue Officer II **Keva Dames**

Customs/Revenue Officer II **Latonia Cash**

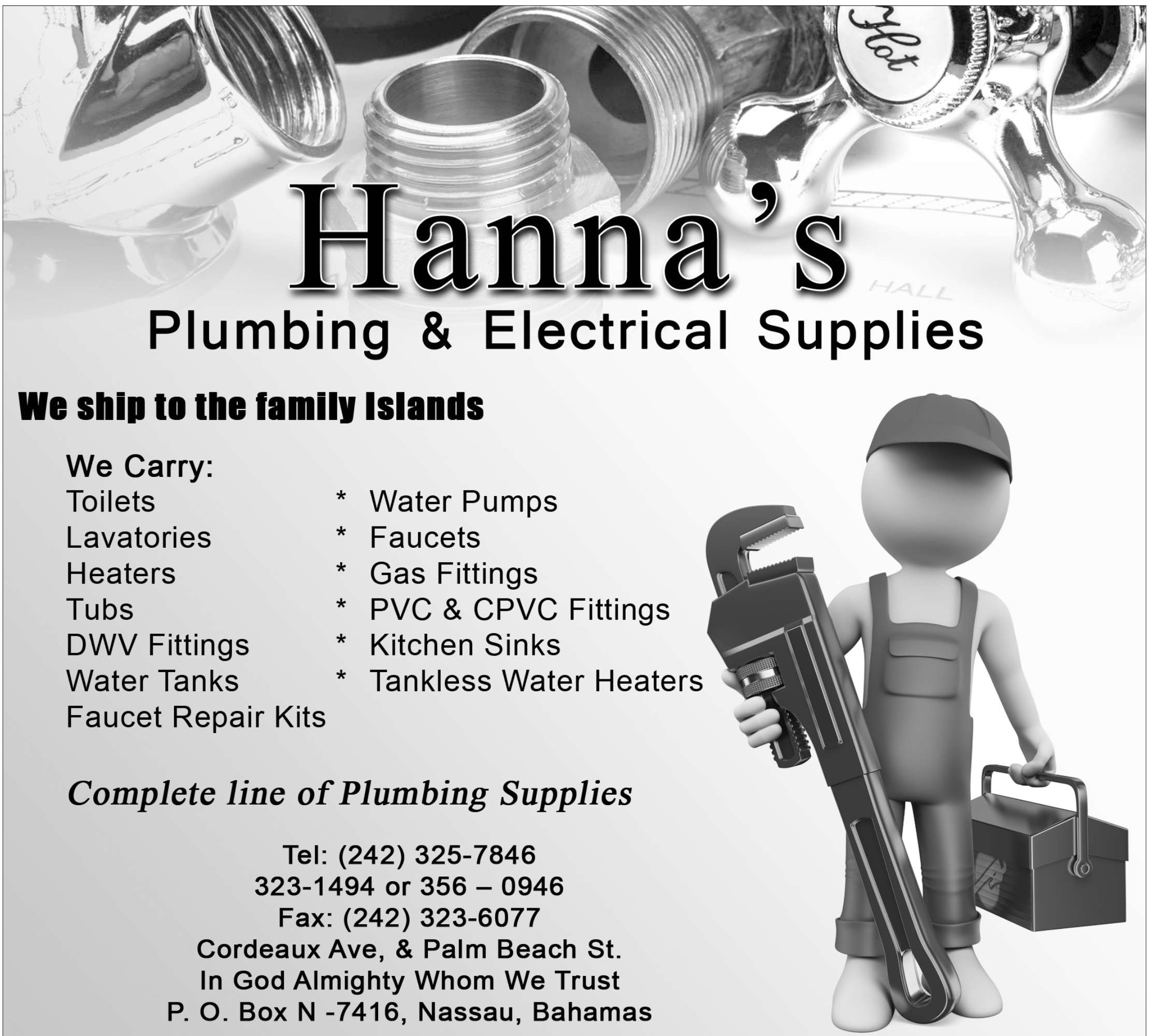
Trainee Customs/Revenue Officer
Alexander Burrows II

Senior Accounts Clerk **Monique Rampersad**

Register Clerk **Karon Deveaux**

Assistant Cashier **Claudine Lightbourne**

"Once again we thank all of you and we pray that 2018 be a great year for the Customs Department and our stakeholders," he said.



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