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Sunwing's Demands "Beyond Bounds"

The Ministry of Tourism is very disappointed that Sunwing Travel Group decided to discontinue flights from Canada and the U.S. (operating as Vacation Express) into Grand Bahama Island. In a statement issued yesterday, the Minister of Tourism Dionisio D'Aguilar said Sunwing's demands of the government are beyond bounds.

He said, "while we appreciate investments Sunwing made locally in Grand Bahama, the Ministry of Tourism more than matched their efforts to support these programs. Sunwing received a multi-million dollar, airlift



▶ Minister of Tourism Dionisio D'Aguilar (File photo)

■ See BEYOND BOUNDS / page 2...

Opposition disappointed in Sunwing's decision

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Opposition Leader Philip Davis has expressed his disappointment in Sunwing's decision to pull out of Grand Bahama next year.

In an exclusive interview with the Bahama Journal, Mr. Davis said it was particularly unfortunate considering the travel group brought some 30,000 tourists to that island.

While he admits that it wasn't enough to keep Grand

Bahama's economy afloat, it was at least a step towards revitalizing that economy.

"It is sad that it appears that there is an issue with the government that has driven this decision in the sense that they have reached an impasse with the government.

"Although they didn't go into details about what the impasse is or what caused them to be in that position, I would have thought that hav-

■ See OPPOSITION / page 2...

Eleuthera Group Says "Disney's Proposal Is Real"

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

The Eleuthera Community Support Group, the group of Eleuthera residents in support of Disney's proposed development in South Eleuthera said that there are still some missing keys on financing in Lighthouse Point Partner's last-minute revised proposal plan submitted to the government.

As a result, they failed to

■ See ELEUTHERA / page 8...

Minister asks for community assistance



▶ Minister of Social Services, Frankie Campbell (File photo)

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
 Journal Staff Writer

The Minister of Social Services, Frankie Campbell says although some programmes have been discontinued, the Ministry wants to keep its commitment to assisting the Bahamian people, as well as working more closely with Urban Renewal. "The ministry is one min-

■ See MINISTER / page 2...

PM Holds Town Meeting in the Berry Islands



▶ BERRY ISLANDS - Prime Minister, Dr. Hubert Minnis addresses a Town Meeting in the Berry Islands on economic developments, Saturday, October 13, 2018 at R.N. Gomez All Age School, Bullock's Harbour. Pictured seated along with the Prime Minister are MP's Carlton Bowleg (centre) and Mark Humes. (BIS / Yontalay Bowe)

Press Club to Honour Ten

BY LEAH COOPER
 Journal Staff Writer

The Bahamas Press Club is set to host its annual Media Awards Ceremony under the theme "Celebrating 45 years of Bahamian media."

The press club intends to honour the industry's brightest minds and pay tribute to those that paved the way.

It has been announced that 10 individuals employed in the media, at the time of independence, will receive a pin designed to reflect on the years 1973 to 2018.

The Lifetime Achievement honouree this year will be veteran broadcaster Mr. Charles Carter.

Mr. Carter has been on the air since the 1960's hosting the "Young Bahamians Show" on ZNS Radio.

With the advent of television, he hosted a series entitled "Focus".

■ See PRESS CLUB / page 7...



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Bahama Host Celebrates 40 years of Excellence



▶ **LONG ISLAND** - Governor General, Her Excellency the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pindling hosted a Bahama Host 40th Anniversary Awards Ceremony and Reception at Government House on Thursday afternoon, October 11, 2018. The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, which conducts Bahama Host for Bahamian residents both directly and indirectly involved in the Tourism industry, celebrates the importance of the training programme, which began in 1978. Some 50,000 participants have utilized the Hospitality and Tourism-focused training and development initiative geared to producing a superior visitor reception and hosting team, nationwide. The programme's Founder, Sir Clement Maynard, and Directors and Managers of Bahama Host through the years were recognized. The Governor General (seated centre) presented awards. Minister of Social Services and Urban Development, the Hon. Frankie Campbell (seated second left) brought congratulatory remarks on behalf of Minister of Tourism & Aviation the Hon. Dionisio D'Aguiar. Also pictured are Director General of Tourism Joy Jibrilu (seated at right) and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation Charles Albury (seated second right). (BIS Photo/Letisha Henderson)

Sunwing's Demands "Beyond Bounds"

Continued from / PAGE 1...

subsidy annually from the Ministry of Tourism. The Sunwing Travel Group also received subsidies and concessions from the Government of The Bahamas for Memories Resort and Spa in Grand Bahama.

"Sunwing Travel Group had the particularly valuable advantage of operating a suite of integrated businesses including a travel agency, airline and hotel, which all expected would ensure that they could rebuild tourism on Grand Bahama Island sustainably rather than requiring increasing support and concessions.

"The government of The Bahamas allowed Sunwing great latitude to lower the net airfare to the island through the packaging of airfare and hotel that they were in a unique position to do. The net effect of The Bahamas millions of dollars of investment in this partnership was actually multiplied by these operating concessions.

Sunwing's further demands for restoration of the \$250 instant air credit and exemption from requirements that protect Bahamian labour and employment are simply beyond the bounds."

The statement said, "successive governments partnered with Sunwing Travel Group - with an abundance of goodwill - to lead a concerted effort to re-build tourism to Grand Bahama Island in a sustainable way. Under a Heads of Agreement (HOA) with Sunwing for the management of the Memories Resort, the government provided very robust financial support to ensure the success of Spring/Summer flights from various U.S. cities to Grand Bahama Island," said Minister of Tourism and Aviation, Dionisio D'Aguiar. "We do not negotiate with partners in the public domain," said Minister D'Aguiar, "but we will continue to value Sunwing's partnership and to be very transparent in our dealings."

In addition to the subsi-

dies, the Ministry of Tourism invested thousands of dollars for television, radio, out-of-home, digital and social media advertising that was specifically tagged to promote these flights in Toronto, Vancouver and U.S. cities. Many other activities were conducted to promote the Sunwing service including:

- travel trade show participation;
- consumer travel and adventure shows;
- special advertising inserts in wedding, family travel and groups publications;
- webinars to train travel agents on Grand Bahama Island;
- sales calls to travel agents;
- e-newsletter features on Grand Bahama to BMOT's travel agent database;
- familiarization trips for top sales agents;
- deals and offers promoted broadly via e-mail; and
- live remote television

broadcast with top Canadian morning show. The Minister said, "the Government of The Bahamas and the Ministry of

Tourism extended generous support to Sunwing in an effort to help them reach the agreed goal in terms of visitors delivered to Grand

Bahama Island. Grand Bahama Island remains a priority as we rebuild the tourism product and create demand."

Opposition disappointed in Sunwing's decision

Continued from / PAGE 1...

ing invested \$65 million of the Bahamian people's money into acquiring the Grand Lucayan property, that every effort would have been made to attempt to at least get airlifts to bring people into the island," he said.

In Sunwing's statement they said its decision to sever ties with Grand Bahama is due to an impasse with the government.

According to the opposition leader, this speaks to the Minnis administration's lack of creativity, innovation and inability to do what is neces-

sary to improve the lives of Grand Bahamians.

"The Grand Bahama economy has been in a free fall since hurricane Matthew and it has been exhilarated by this recent announcement.

"There is no doubt that something has to happen very quickly to fill this gap, otherwise Grand Bahama will just become a ghost town," Mr. Davis said.

The opposition leader invited the government to consider a few things to boosting Grand Bahama's economy.

He said, "if there's one thing I would recommend to them to do would be to

embrace the memorandum of understanding that was left in place by our administration.

"This is where each of the major stakeholders in Grand Bahama, in the port area had to come up with a plan of developing their property and investing in their property otherwise any concessions that they would be entitled to under the Hawkbill Creek agreement would be held back. This will spur some economic activity," said Mr. Davis.

Sunwing has operated in Grand Bahama for 6 six years, investing tens of millions of dollars in the process.



NOTICE Addendum

The Royal Bahamas Defence Force invites bids to the Tenders Board for insurance coverage for The Royal Bahamas Defence Force's Patrol Crafts. In addition, the coverage must include the vessels transiting the Caribbean and the East Coast of the United States.

2. Specifications and schedules of assets can be obtained from the Ministry of Finance, Monday through Friday between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm.

3. The quotes must be itemized to show the following:

- a) The Hull and Machinery
- b) War Risk
- c) Increased Value
- d) Protection and Indemnity

4. In providing quotations, in respect to the Patrol Crafts for the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, the date for commencing coverage is the 31 October 2018 to 30 31 2020. The final date for submission is Tuesday 16 October, 2018.

5. All submissions are to reach the Ministry of Finance by 10:00 am on or before the above-mentioned date and to be addressed to the:

Financial Secretary
Cecil Wallace-Whitfield Center
P.O. Box N-3107
West Bay Street
New Providence, The Bahamas

Launch of Second Annual GB Technology Summit

Minister of State for Grand Bahama, Senator Kwasi Thompson, one of the pioneers of the Grand Bahama Technology Summit, said during the second such summit, focus will be on showcasing education programs and highlighting the efforts and achievements of government and the Grand Bahama Technology Hub Steering Committee over the last year.

"In particular, we will highlight the Ministry of Education's ICT plans for our schools, which recently signed a deal for technology upgrade and provision of tablets for teachers and students across the nation," said Minister Thompson.

"We will also highlight BTVI's ICT courses and certificates, which are now offered to Bahamians free of charge. And we will see the first ICT trained high school students who completed the first phase of their summer certification course, and our new programme with the YMCA to provide coding certification to 100 young Grand Bahamians."

The Minister's remarks came during an official launch of the Second Annual Grand Bahama Technology Summit in a grand affair press conference at Pelican Bay resort on Wednesday, October 10, 2018.

The Tech Summit is slated to take place in Freeport, Grand Bahama, November 14-16, 2018 at the Grand



► Minister of State for Grand Bahama, Senator Kwasi Thompson, was the keynote speaker at the launch of the Second Annual Grand Bahama Technology Summit, on Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at Pelican Bay resort. The conclave is set for November 14-16 at the Grand Lucayan. (File Photo)

Lucayan.

During the press conference, Minister Thompson noted that one of the most exciting aspects will be the unique opportunity for registered participants to take part in certificate courses offered by high-level international technology companies.

Availability for these courses will be limited based on prerequisite training, as well as class size capacity.

"We will be hosting executives from tech giant CISCO Systems, which is another global technology company with over 70,000 employees," said Minister Thompson. "We will have the benefit of CISCO Networks Academy Training Modules which will provide training in the area of Networks and Programming."

"In addition, we will also have a team from CompTIA

which is the Computing Technology Industry Association, a non-profit trade association, issuing professional certifications for the information technology (IT) industry. It is considered one of the IT industry's top trade associations. They will be providing Training modules in Corporate Digital Transformation and Cyber Security.

"We are further pleased to

partner with local title sponsors ALIV and GIBC, Our special innovation partner sponsor Grand Bahama Power Company, and our gold sponsor the Grand Bahama Port Authority."

Exhibitors expected to be at this year's convention include FowlCo Logistics, Buckeye Bahamas Hub, Hutchinson Ports, Freeport Container Port, Grand Bahama Airport Company,

Freeport Harbour Company, Seagrape Inc. (Nassau) and Unified Technologies (USA).

Minister Thompson said he was particularly pleased to note that during the summit, he, along with all Grand Bahamians, will get to hear from one of the summit's innovation partners, GB Power Company, which will unveil its renewable energy plan for Grand Bahama and will highlight and showcase the use of electric vehicles on the island.

"We are also hoping to hear how Grand Bahama Power will bring down the cost of electricity on Grand Bahama," quipped Minister Thompson. "So I'm sure that everyone in Grand Bahama will be attending the Second Annual Tech Summit."

In addition to the impressive line-up of international speakers expected at this year's summit, Minister Thompson said, there will also be a lineup of well-versed, professional Bahamians in the field of technology from around the globe who will also be presenters.

Registration for the Second Annual Grand Bahama Technology Summit is now opened, and interested persons can log on to grandbahamatechsummit.com or visit the official Facebook Page, Grand Bahama Technology Summit, to register.

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GOVERNMENT NOTICE INVITATION FOR BIDS: SALE OF TUGBOATS

The Government of The Bahamas is inviting bids on the following vessels owned by the Port Department, Ministry of Transport & Local Government.

-Sale of the Tugboat "Snapper" and Tugboat "Amberjack"
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Interested parties may view the said vessels at the following location from 24 September 2018 to 5 October 2018 between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday thru Friday:

Port Department
Prince George Dock
Nassau, The Bahamas
Telephone No. (242) 322-8832

Bids are to be submitted in triplicate (3) in a sealed envelope marked "Bid for the Sale of Tug Snapper and Tug Amberjack, addressed to:

The Chairman
Tenders Board
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 12th day of October, 2018.

Bids will be opened at 10:00 am on the 16th October, 2018 at the office of the Tender's Board, Ministry of Finance.

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

E. Raymond King, EdD
Commander, RBDF
Port Controller (Acting)
Port Department

Bahamas signs MOC with GSU

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
Journal Staff Writer

Following more than a year of discussions, the Ministry of Education and Georgia State University (GSU) came to the table last Friday with great news for those students hoping to pursue higher education abroad.

Building on the strong legacy of previous relationships, the two signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC), that gives Bahamian students more opportunities to attend GSU.

"This agreement opens up

a new chapter in our relationship," said Associate Provost, Wolfgang Schloer.

"Georgia State looks forward to a strong partnership with The Bahamas and we look forward to partnering with your efforts to strengthen your higher education as well," he added.

"Georgia State is a research university that has made a name for itself by focusing its priorities on student success.

"I believe we have a lot to offer to your students and we also look forward to receiving your students to help increase the international diversity on our campus."

Education Minister Jeffery Lloyd said the MOC ensures both parties explore and encourage mutually beneficial, scientific, technological and educational relations among others.

"Georgia State will host the Organization of American States scholarship recipients at their two campuses," he said.

"Georgia State with relationships in sports research and field of education will expand its engagement with our Ministry of Education, to include human resource and the capacity development, which is one of the ministry's priority focus

areas over the next four years," he added.

"State and the ministry will explore recruitment retention and graduation co-curricular and articulation programmes, and dual degree and graduate programmes."

Minister Lloyd said the MOC articulates GSU's willingness to offer matching scholarships in the form of out of state tuition waivers to Bahamian students, in particular high achieving first generation Bahamian students, supported by the government's own scholarship programmes.



► Minister of Education, Jeffery Lloyd (File photo)

The Pointe, Key to Nassau's Redevelopment Says PM



► Ribbon Cutting signalling the opening of The Pointe Entertainment Center on Thursday, October 11, 2018 pictured from left: The Very Reverend Harry Bain, Dean of Christ Church Cathedral; Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, His Excellency Huang Qinguo; Prime Minister, Dr. the Most Hon. Hubert Minnis; China Construction America (CCA) President, Tiger Wu; CCA Executive Vice-President and President of The Pointe, Daniel Liu; and CEO of Margaritaville Holdings LLC, John Cohlan.

At a Topping Off Celebration of The Pointe Residences and the Grand Opening of The Pointe Entertainment Center, Dr. the Most Hon. Hubert Minnis, Prime Minister, said his government sees total completion of The Pointe as a vital step in Nassau's redevelopment. The Prime Minister delivered remarks at ceremonies on Thursday evening, October 11, 2018.

"These activities mark the significant progress you have made on the path to the realization of the completion of this important and impactful investment project," the Prime Minister told the developers.

He observed that the journey began a few years ago with the signing of a Heads of Agreement on June 15, 2015. The agree-

ment provided for the development of a \$200 million hotel condo and marina resort that included renovations to the existing Hilton Hotel, construction of condominiums consisting of 142 hotel units and three beach villas, restaurants, theatre and garages among other amenities.

The Prime Minister said he is advised that the Entertainment Center contains a variety of activities including Virtual Reality, bowling, pool, a 50-room movie theatre, and a venue for social events which will add to cultural life of the city.

"The center is strategically located as thousands of visitors and residents traverse this path every day," he said. "I am sure both visitors and residents alike will be attracted to this facility,

enriching their travel and entertainment experiences."

A multi-sectoral team of the government recently conducted a site visit to the project.

"The team reported that they were pleased with the progress and intend to continue regular consultations to ensure that the project proceeds in compliance with the Heads of Agreement, which is mutually beneficial," the Prime Minister said.

He then congratulated Strategic Property Holdings Ltd., and New World One Bay Street on their achievements, to date.

"We enthusiastically look forward to its completion which will be another significant step in the transformation of the city of Nassau," the Prime Minister said.

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Letter to the Editor

DA NEW BEGINNING DUN END

Dear Editor:

As I prepared to write this letter I serendipitously clicked on one that was written in May 2017 which expressed the sense of optimism and anticipation I felt for the new beginning following the election that, sad to say, has been short lived. That 2017 positive energy is draining away - I am so fed up of being fed up when one gubment tends to be as disappointing as the last!

I have asked myself why this is so, and reckon it is due to several reasons, the main being that we continue to use the same formula of relying solely on foreign direct investment - a form of beholden servitude - and expecting a new result. It won't happen - we are still stuck in the rut of same story, different day!

I applaud Leonard Sands, the former President of the Contractors' Association, who continued to question the discrepancies in the employment ratio of foreign workers to Bahamians at The Pointe, about which I expressed concern in several letters to the press over the year. Although my voice was being lost in the wilderness, he was the only one who spoke out on a consistent basis, also to no avail, since the Residences opened this week and Margaritaville is moving right ahead into the sea!

The Disney debate/debacle has stirred up more 'bogglement'. I have never been a fan of the cruise ship industry that takes way more than it gives. They dictate to the gubment and the gubment lets them which I find pathetic! Who is in charge of our country? Who is looking out for our country and for the greater good of our people? Even though the statistics show, and the gubment quotes, the significant discrepancy between the cruise ships' low spend versus that of the stopover visitor - we continue to encourage them to come here and we bend over backwards, lackeys that we are, to accommodate their every wish.

Disney is building more ships and bigger ships - would they be making that type of investment if they are not raking in big money? Furthermore, the recent articles on the destruction of destinations due to 'over tourism' (i.e. too many visitors) that is happening all around the world, strengthens my aversion to the cruise industry even more. But we are just going to let them cruise along and buy our islands and take them over to do as they

wish, whilst offering a few menial jobs to 'the natives'! Has anyone visited the many Bahamian islands that the cruise ships now own and seen what type of money they pay Bahamians and spend with Bahamian companies? What types of jobs do Bahamians hold, how many high paying Bahamians do they employ? Cruise Ships = plenty, Bahamas = nuttin!

Why are we continuing to sell off, or lease for a ridiculous pittance - our precious land, including crown lands, which should be fiercely protected as our birthright and our children's children inheritance - to foreigners in the first beginning? It's a crying shame and a disgrace that the skewed laws of this land, the lawyers, the real estate agents, and the gubment, allow this to happen over and over again!

Let me ask about the recent 'town meeting' in South Eleuthera: where did the pro-Disney t-shirts come from - who paid for them, and who designed and paid for the skewed survey? Added to this, we are so stupidly conditioned to 'begging for one job' that we can't even see how pathetic that is, when we end up being a mere low level employee for a couple days working for the 'name brand' company, instead of becoming self employed, self sufficient, and independent. Our ancestors did it - why then in this 21st century, when we should have more sense and opportunity, can't we?

Entrepreneurship and the small and medium sized businesses are what make any country develop and grow. Bahamians abound with creativity and natural talent that only needs the opportunity to grow and flourish. This is where government's focus and energy should be placed - to facilitate the flourishing of this sector instead of kowtowing to the foreign direct investor. Balance the playing field and do the right thing, gubment!

Where is that government with the testicular fortitude to speak from a position of strength, to own our own with pride, to protect our heritage, and look to the future for the greater good of our people instead of going to 'massa with money' and begging them 'please sir, may I have some more of my own tings'?

What a disappointment!

Yours sincerely, Pam Burnside

Dear Editor:

The proposal by Disney for Light House Point should and must be approved by the Minnis administration post haste. Fisney has had a very long touristic and personal experience within The Bahamas and tens of thousands of Bahamians have traveled to the USA where we all, over time, enjoyed the amenities of Disney's properties, especially Disney World over in Orlando, Florida. For decades it has also owned and operated a 'private' island here in our nation where it hosts its cruise ship passengers, providing hundreds of well paying jobs for a lot of Bahamians. Disney, indeed, is no stranger to our wonderful country.

It is trite knowledge that I am not a supporter of the Free National Movement even though I voted it into office in 2017 in the personage of the Hon. Minister of National Security. The administration is too heavy and there are too many cabinet members; parliamentary secretaries and board chairpersons. This, of course, is tantamount to cabinet dominance of the legislature and the executive. This combo may well be toxic and a blockage to the FNM achieving real progress on the ground.

Most right thinking Bahamian would agree that Minns and his team came out of the political gates limping like an old half way dead mule. It wagged its short tail and twittered its long ears but it still brayed like its close cousin, the Jack Ass. Oban looks like it has flamed out. Our Lucaya is a work in progress and I seriously 'doubt' that the board which was appointed by Dr. Minnis with much

fanfare is aware of what the hell it is doing, so far. I hope that they do, of course.

The Pointe had a soft opening the other day. Great but keep in mind that that was a project started under the Christie led PLP administration. Governments, however, are successive so I have no problem with shameless Minnis and crew taking 'credit' once scores of Bahamians are employed down there. The Ginn proposal at West End, historically, has produced more big talk than actual shovel in the ground. Disney's deep pocketed proposal is the best thing to have dropped into the PM's lap since his fateful election to high office.

Some suggest that 'the fix' is in whatever that means. The fact that the MP for South Eleuthera, the Hon. Hank Johnson, is agitating on behalf of his constituents to have Disney come is perfectly appropriate and legal. That is one of the reasons why he was elected to parliament. He is merely doing his job and if it means putting 'the fix' in, I, for one could care less.

I, therefore, call on Rip Van Wrinkle 2.0 to approve Disney's proposal post haste and lets get on with bringing hope and help to all Bahamians but especially those over in Eleuthera and the surrounding cays and islands. To God then, in all things, inclusive of Mickey Mouse and Minnie, in all things, be the glory.

Ortland H. Bodie, Jr. Business Consultant & Talk Show Host

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The Bahama Journal Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

Wendall K. Jones Publisher/Chief Executive Officer

Kimaley P. Jones Vice President/Operations

EDITORIAL

Embrace These Ideas

Every now and then, people with the means to help make some things happen find themselves in that sweet spot where fine idea, requisite will and resources come together.

As one investor recently framed one such winning idea: "... Specifically, we would be interested in being a part of the proposed community-driven plan that would preserve most all of this magnificent, one-of-a-kind property for predominantly public benefit use..."

For our part, then, we shout out that: At long last, finally, the current administration now has on its hands a counter-proposal to the one put on the agenda by Disney.

What is most interesting about the proposal that has been put forward as a possible counter to Disney's suggestions is not only its Bahamian rootedness, but also for what appears to be the stated desire to see to it that whatever is done is Bahamian and Bahamas-focused, eco-friendly and sustainable.

We support this iteration of what can and should be done not only for Eleuthera, but for the wider Bahamas.

Surely, the time is now for Bahamians who wish their country well and who also have access to requisite capital and market-savvy to put their shoulders to the wheel.

Indeed, if the truth be known, such a foray on the part of the current administration would bode well for the entire Bahamas.

By the same token, failure to support Bahamians who are willing and able to make a difference that matters would -all things considered-amount to resorting to that same old tired dependency on foreigners, a mode and a model that surely needs some much needed refurbishment.

In truth and in fact, then: As in the case of so very many other nationalistically-oriented Bahamians, we have yearned for the coming of that day when Bahamians with the means and the requisite will would invest in not only their country, but also in the well-being of their fellow-Bahamians.

Whilst, this has been the case in our Bahamas, the reality is surely that many of our more privileged brothers and sisters who could have done more did less.

We make this point as we look in on how

the so-called 'debate' and discussion as regards Disney, the Government of The Bahamas and the people who live in south-Eleuthera, with especial reference to live concerns to Lighthouse Point and the wider environment.

Of especial interest to us is a proposal that has been put by prominent Bahamian developers Mark Holowesko and Benjamin Simmons who [as we learn] have expressed support for the Lighthouse Point Partnership, made up of the One Eleuthera Foundation and the Leon Levy Foundation, among others, and its proposed development for the Lighthouse Point beach.

As they frame the issue at hand: "... This letter represents our interest and enthusiasm in joining the discussion led by the Leon Levy Foundation surrounding the development of Lighthouse Point, Eleuthera. We would be interested in presenting a proposal for the expansion of the Island House brand with the development of a second eco-conscious boutique platform within the Lighthouse Point reserve..."

Of especial note, we also learn that: "In letters of support, both groups said they support the sustainable development of the 800 acres of land that comprise the scenic beach site, which is located at the southern tip of Eleuthera..."

Their reference to sustainable development is most welcomed.

As these investors remind: "We had previously shown an interest in expanding into Eleuthera but had not found a suitable location. Through the collective efforts of the Leon Levy Foundation, the Bahamas National Trust and One Eleuthera, Lighthouse Point would be an ideal location for a natural reserve supported by the commercial offerings of eco-conscious development in conjunction with a farming program to reestablish the great farming history of Eleuthera and provide significant job creation."

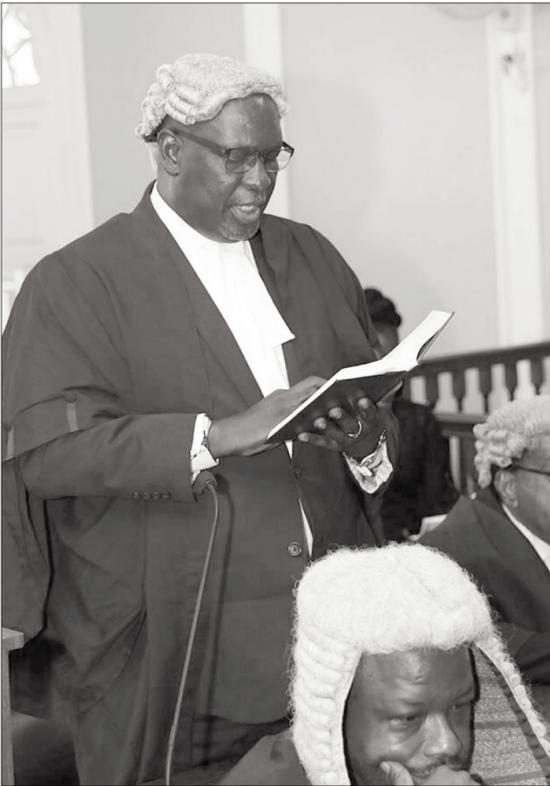
This is most admirable.

The sum of the matter is this: As opportunity knocks its sweet once, the current administration should embrace these ideas, lock, stock and barrel!

Advertisement for The Bahama Journal featuring a collage of newspaper front pages with headlines like 'Four Bodies Claimed', 'Brush Fire Scorches Acres of Land', and '22ND MURDER VICTIM Identified'. The ad includes the text 'THE BAHAMAS Sun, Sand, Sea ... and the The Bahama Journal' and 'NO BETTER READING'.

Special Sitting of the Supreme Court to Mark the Passing of Chief Justice Stephen Isaacs

► A Special Sitting of the Supreme Court to Mark the Death of the Hon. Mr. Stephen Gerard Isaacs, Chief Justice of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, was held on Friday morning, October 12, 2018. During the Sitting, President of the Bahamas Bar Association Mr. Kahlil D. Parker gave an Address; Mr. Wayne Munroe, QC, the Hon. Mr. Justice Milton Evans, and the Hon. Mme. Justice Estelle Gray Evans gave Condolences and Tributes; and the Hon. Mme Vera S. Watkins, Acting Chief Justice, gave Remarks. There was also a Scripture Reading by Mr. Roger L. Minnis. And, there was a Moment of Silence. **(BIS Photos/Raymond A. Bethel, Sr.)**



ADVANCED TRAINING FOR PHA MEDICAL CODERS

Some twenty employees of the Public Hospitals Authority have commenced advanced training in medical coding and billing through an ongoing partnership between the PHA and Healthcare Associates Training & Temp Centre. The 2nd phase of the program, which began in September, will run for 12 months and result in successful participants being certified through the American Academy of Professional Coders.

Coding of medical records is critical for generating information for hospitals, and more importantly, national statistics for local and international

reporting. The absence of coded health records significantly hampers the PHA's ability to obtain information for strategic planning and reporting purposes; and it constrains revenue collection which would be used to maintain and upgrade existing hospital services as required.

Earlier this year thirty-five employees from the Princess Margaret Hospital and Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre completed ten weeks of introductory training in Medical Coding and Billing principles and practices (in accordance with AHIMA international standards). From that number twenty have been

selected for advanced training, reflecting the PHA's commitment to address a longstanding shortfall of medical coders within the country. Prior to the implementation of this initiative there were less than fifty certified medical coders in the entire country, with only two working in the public sector.

It is anticipated that the successful completion of this training will afford the PHA the ability to improve capacity for timely and effective patient billing for revenue enhancement; and strengthen organizational ability for production of quality clinical and management information.

Minister asks for community assistance

Continued from / PAGE 1...

istry, it's the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development," he said.

"We want one side to be fully aware of what the other side is doing," he added.

"I give you an example, imagine someone goes to the Fox Hill Urban Renewal Centre and expresses the fact that he/she is hungry. If the Urban Renewal Centre is not aware of what social services is offering, that person may be sent away.

"But if he is aware, he can say we have no food here at Urban Renewal, but if you walk just across the

park, our social services department is able to offer you some emergency food assistance.

"And so with that kind of collaboration, working together as a team, one unit, I think we're better able to serve the people that we care about, because in fact they're the same people."

However, Mr. Campbell said the Ministry of Social Services cannot do it alone.

"We continue to look for and reach out to non-governmental organizations who are willing to partner with us.

"Partner with us with projects for at risk boys,

projects for empowering young women, projects for protecting and appreciating older persons, projects for addressing the community with disabilities, we're looking to partner with anyone who's willing to partner with us," he continued.

"And so we invite suggestions, recommendations, we invite persons who want to come and sit down and have a talk. Let's do this together, let's engender a spirit of community."

Minister Campbell's comments came as the Senate recognized International Day of the Girl Child on Thursday.

Press Club to Honour Ten

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Now, some years later, he is now the owner of his own station.

Given that he will not be able to attend the festivities on November 10th, he gave brief remarks this past Saturday.

He said, "I got into broadcasting as a result of a General Manager by the name of Rusty Bethel, who along with another gentleman that came in from England, were trying to develop the Broadcasting Cooperation of The Bahamas and bring in new voices."

He said he heard the ad and his grandmother suggested he take a break from studying law with his uncle and give broadcasting a try.

He added, "I went up to

ZNS, they gave me an opportunity, and I started the next day, and its been love ever since that."

Mr. Carter said he also realized that his love for the profession pushed him to want to do things far greater than him, adding that he hopes the younger generation of media is inspired to do the same.

He said the reason he did the Young Bahamian Show was because there was an abundance of talented young Bahamians in the country that needed a platform.

He said that from that more and more Bahamians began to realize how talented they really are, also taking credit for the popularity of The Beginning of The End's "Funky Nassau".

Mr. Carter also expressed

his view that Bahamians do not tell their own stories as well as they should, suggesting that Bahamians ought to make room for more heroes in the country, no matter where they are in the world.

He said, "there are Bahamian abroad who are doing very well from Academia to Hollywood. They are doing everything!"

He added, "We used to be so proud of our roots and that's when we created roots that made us proud. We must nurture the future generations of our country or we're going to lose our country."

The Bahamas Press Club Media Awards, a black tie event with all the trimmings, kicks off on November 10th in the Governor's ballroom, at the British Colonial Hilton.



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GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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ROAD TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

P.O BOX N-1615

THOMAS A. ROBINSON NATIONAL STADIUM

NASSAU, N.P. BAHAMAS

The Road Traffic Department would like to remind all Franchise Holders – Taxi, Tour, Public Schedule, Private Schedule, Private Charter, Livery, Self-Drive Cars and Scooters that we are now accepting registration documents for the Bi-annual inspection period of October 2018 to May 2019.

The Following documents are required:

1. Passport/Voters Card and N.I.B Card (for holders not registered in the new system)
2. Up to date Franchise Receipt
3. Up to date Business License
4. Inspection Slip/Copies of expired Inspection Discs
5. Completed Inspection Forms for Companies with five (5) or more Vehicles that require On-site Inspection (forms Can be picked up at the Road traffic Department Franchise Unit).
6. Up to date Insurance Certificates
7. Vehicle Color and right/left hand drive (for new vehicles)

All Franchise Holders with a fleet of five (5) or more vehicles are invited to submit their packages to the Road Traffic Department, Franchise Unit Section 3 Eastern Grandstand of the Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium. All Packages will be processed on a first come first serve basis.

Please note that the Department will only receive payments in the form of:

- a. Certified cheques payable to the Public Treasury (No personal or company cheques)
- b. Visa, Master, Debit, Credit Cards
- c. Cash

Controller

Road Traffic Department



NOTICE Addendum

The Royal Bahamas Defence Force invites bids to the Tenders Board for insurance coverage for The Royal Bahamas Defence Force's Patrol Crafts. In addition, the coverage must include the vessels transiting the Caribbean and the East Coast of the United States.

2. Specifications and schedules of assets can be obtained from the Ministry of Finance, Monday through Friday between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm.
3. The quotes must be itemized to show the following:
 - a) The Hull and Machinery
 - b) War Risk
 - c) Increased Value
 - d) Protection and Indemnity
4. In providing quotations, in respect to the Patrol Crafts for the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, the date for commencing coverage is the 31 October 2018 to 30 31 2020. The final date for submission is Tuesday 16 October, 2018.
5. All submissions are to reach the Ministry of Finance by 10:00 am on or before the above-mentioned date and to be addressed to the:

Financial Secretary
Cecil Wallace-Whitfield Center
P.O. Box N-3107
West Bay Street
New Providence, The Bahamas

EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE SPONGING INDUSTRY IN THE FINAL PHASE



▶ **ABACO** - Two young men with their sponge on display as the island sponging industry is making its comeback. (File photo)



▶ **LONG ISLAND** - Deral Wells Sr. from showing off some of the unrefined sponge on that island. Spongers on Long Island are looking to create their own association to guide the industry. (File photo)

The IDB-sponsored and BAIC-executed project to revitalize the sponging industry in the Bahamas now moves into the full implementation phase with spongers throughout the country energized to rejuvenate the lucrative industry.

"We have planted seeds in most of the islands where sponging happens and equipped spongers with the expertise to bring this industry back," said BAIC Sr. Deputy General Manager Debbie Strachan. "Andros now has a processing plant and we have met with

spongers on Andros, Long Island, Abaco and other islands to pledge our support."

The project to revitalize the industry is sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank and The Bahamas Government, and managed by BAIC along with support from IICA (Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture), The Bahamas National Trust, The Department of Marine Resources and BCSA board members.

On Long Island, project manager met with spongers

who said they were interested in not only forming their own association to guide the industry but also taking advantage of training opportunities.

When project managers met on Abaco the spongers there expressed some of their concerns including supply chain issues but were ready to move forward with making sponging a high priority.

"On Abaco, those spongers said they didn't want to get stuck with a shed full of sponge with no supplier," Ms. Strachan added. "With us having the process-

ing plant and the expertise in Mangrove Cay Andros solves that problem for them and the rest of the spongers concerned about this problem."

The project with a \$1.1 million price tag was designed to increase income for spongers by providing them with a larger share of the revenue from this industry. A major component of the project is the formation of the Bahamas Commercial Spongers Association to centralize the processing of the sponge and help to link local spongers with international

markets directly. One aspect of increasing local revenue for local spongers was adding value for the spongers on the front line on the various islands.

"Having that processing plant in Andros solves that problem as well," Strachan added. "Spongers not only get to have their sponge processed there but also can add even more value by packaging for final sale. This cuts out all of the middle men and get full value to the spongers."

According to The Inter-American Development

Bank project documents, the project hopes to empower local spongers who "do not have access to higher-value markets because they are not organized and do not have the skills to process and market the sponges, and thus earn a low-income." Many spongers harvest the sponge and sell it at a low price not realizing the full economic value of their work. Therefore, through additional education and increased sustainable harvesting practices, spongers through the country should see their incomes increased.

Eleuthera Group Says "Disney's Proposal Is Real"

Continued from / PAGE 1...

explain disproportionate increases in economic impact and provide no plan for generating consistent business.

In a statement released this past weekend, Denny Rankine said, "despite claiming that it is presenting 'A Shared Vision for South Eleuthera,' the newest plan submitted to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of the Government of The Bahamas by the Lighthouse Point Partners (LPP) has not been seen by the very community it is expected to affect. The new, For Bahamians, By Bahamians: Sustainable Development Plan for Lighthouse Point, has finally reached Eleutherans, but at the 11th hour."

The group added that during the entire debate regarding the Lighthouse Point property they have been on the ground working with residents to gather a better understanding of their needs.

In addition, for the last six months Disney executives have been working closely with area residents, altering their plans to meet resident's needs.

"We were only able to see what is in the revised proposal by the LPP on Friday, after LPP's last minute pitch to the government. Even with such short

notice, we have grave concerns about their development plan.

"Primary among these concerns is the Lighthouse Point Partner's financial capabilities. The LPP has listed its partners as funders of their initiative while providing only "letters of interest" from other possible partners, including all-too-familiar names like "Holowesko". "They then promised to "seek" global eco-tourism hotel brands to build out the hospitality-focused parts of the development.

"Through an unclear mixture of existing funding and grants, along with the vague mention of "developer partners," the LPP claim that they can come up the \$23 million necessary to fund their development.

"However, this still does not include the cost of land acquisition—private land that is already under contract for sale to Disney Cruise Lines.

"This is the same private land on which the One Eleuthera Foundation claimed they made an offer. Upon further investigation by the media, it was revealed that beyond a verbal discussion, no such offer was made," he said.

The statement added that just last week The Bahama National Trust which has always been a strong proponent of Disney's project and a key member of LPP

claimed that "\$10 million in annual operating costs for the nation's national parks and the \$25 million needed for infrastructure upgrades meant it had no choice but to partner with the ultra-exclusive community of Albany to develop a beach club and restaurant in the middle of the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park.

"The Leon Levy Foundation, in its support letter, did not indicate the amount it was willing to donate to the project. The OEF itself has only raised \$6.4 million—not half of its projected costs, which does not include the cost of land acquisition," said the statement.

Mr. Rankine added that after a decade of being on the market, the LPP has still not yet secured all the necessary funds for the development.

"Interestingly, despite all the noise in the market about stopping foreign interests, the LPP's plan is still reliant on "global eco-tourism brands" to make their project a success, which they have promised to see but have also not yet secured.

"We are also concerned by the many the economic impact claims being made by the OEF in the revised plan. For example, the original proposal, dated March 2018, claimed that 200 permanent jobs would be created with one-time economic contribu-



▶ **ELEUTHERA** - Several Eleuthera residents ready to embrace the Disney brands new development plan during a town hall meeting hosted by the Prime Minister (File photo)

tions including \$2.1 million in earnings and \$9.5 million in economic output annually.

"Without explanation, the revised plan, dated September 2018, suggests that there will now be 350 jobs created with one-time economic contributions including \$11.25 million in earnings and \$16.9 million in economic output annually.

"These new numbers represent a 75 per cent increase in the estimated job creation, a 436 per cent increase in earnings and 78 per cent increase in economic output annually—without explanation. In the same vein, in the LPP's March proposal, the average salary for workers

hovered around \$18,300 annually.

"In the September proposal, that number has increased to about \$39,900 annually—again, with no explanation. Despite the increase, there is no mention of the possibility of overtime or health benefits," Mr. Rankine said.

He stated that in their brief review of the revised plan, they became very worried about the promises made regarding jobs and ownership opportunities. Not only has there been an unexplained 75 per cent increase in the estimated job creation, but also no plan for maintaining these jobs

through consistent business has been laid out in the proposal.

He added that although this is an entirely new development, marketing is mentioned only once in the entire September proposal, and there does not seem to be a budget or plan for marketing internationally to ensure a steady flow of visitors.

Mr. Rankine noted that One Group supports Disney's development of Lighthouse Point because they believe it is real. This he said is because Disney has consulted them in every step of the way for the past six months and has addressed their concerns.