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75 CENTS

"A CASE BUILT ON SAND"

"They have built their case on the sand," that summed up the argument of lead Defense Attorney, Keith Knight QC, who sought to drive home a no case submission last Friday in the ongoing extortion and bribery trial of former PLP MP and ex- Public Hospitals Authority Chairman, Frank Smith.

Defense attorneys insisted that there is insufficient evidence to convict Frank Smith of the 13 counts of extortion, one count of attempted extortion and one count of bribery.

The allegations stem from what allegedly took place between Smith and Magic Touch Cleaning Company Owner, Barbara Hanna, between April 2016 and April 2017.

It is alleged that during that period, Smith solicited a monthly fee of \$5,000 from Mrs. Hanna after having assisted her in securing a cleaning contract for the critical care block of the Princess Margaret Hospital.

According to Attorney

See page 2...

Two Religious Leaders Receive JCN Person Of the Year Award



► Jones Communications Network (JCN) 'Persons of the Year,' Rev. Dr. Timothy Stewart and Pastor Leonard Johnson were honoured in ceremonies at JCN on Friday, January 18, 2019. In group photo, showing plaques from left: Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis; Rev. Dr. Timothy Stewart; Governor General, the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pindling; Pastor Leonard Johnson; and JCN CEO Wendall Jones. (BIS Photos/Raymond A. Bethel, Sr.)

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Many government officials and religious leaders of the nation were in attendance on Friday two

witness two outstanding Clerics receiving the Jones Communications Person of the Year award for 2018.

Accepting the prestigious awards this past

Friday in ceremonies in the JCN Media Centre after being elected to international leadership positions were President of the Progressive National Baptist

Convention Inc. USA, the Rev. Dr. Timothy Stewart and Dr. Leonard Johnson, a Seventh Day Adventist Pastor and the first pastor

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Union Lawyer Goes To Privy Council

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Trade Union Congress President Obie Ferguson has applied for leave to appeal to the London-based Privy Council over a ruling made in The Court of Appeal on December 27th concerning over time and holiday pay for Atlantis workers.

See page 2...

Second Traffic Fatality In Two Weeks

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Police investigating the second traffic fatality in New Providence for the month of January after a male was ejected from his car early Sunday morning on John F Kennedy Drive.

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WILLIAMS ADVISES INVESTMENT IN TECHNOLOGY TO FIGHT CRIME

BY LEAH COOPER
 Journal Staff Writer

Former BTC Chief Executive Officer Leon Williams says the Bahamas should better use technology to fight crime. He expressed his concerns yesterday while appearing as a guest on the Love 97 Radio programme Jones and Company.

According to Mr. Williams, the advance-

ment of technology plays a huge role in the progression of a nation.

He said, "you want to fight crime. We don't have the resources in The Bahamas to buy enough vehicles, and put policemen on road. Crime has to be fought using technology."

He added, "go to Estonia, go to Singapore, and go to South Korea.

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► Former BTC CEO, Leon Williams (File photo)

GB Police Search For Wanted Suspects



BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Grand Bahama police need assistance in locating two men that they consider extremely dangerous.

Police say 43 year old Tavares Demonte

Beckford aka "foe" and 32 year old Tony Jamal Smith, aka Jamal Penn, aka "fool" are both wanted by the Central Detective Unit.

Beckford aka "foe" is wanted for questioning in

See page 4...



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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

DNA CONCERNED ABOUT CYBER CRIME

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

Democratic National Alliance (DNA) spokesperson for Information Technology Samuel Strachan has expressed concerns surrounding recent reports of a cyber-attack on the Broadcasting Corporation Of The Bahamas (BCB).

He noted that just last week, an individual caused the encryption of the BCB's digital library and other data and is

attempting to extort funds in the form of bitcoins as a condition for decryption and restoration.

BCB Chairman Mike Smith, confirmed that international hackers originally requested \$50,000 incremental payments of bitcoins which was eventually negotiated down to \$18,000 by staff.

However, he added, "the Bahamian people remain in the dark on the overall strategy or course of action that the govern-

ment has adopted to bring regularity to the BCB's operations.

"The recent ransom request also raises serious concerns about the business continuity and disaster recovery framework of the BCB. The board and management of the BCB must immediately disclose whether a robust Business Continuity Plan (BCP) exists for the organization and its effectiveness," he said.

In the absence of such a framework, he added

that the BCB should move swiftly to draft and implement a BCP and Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) which "articulates a contingency plan for cyber-attacks and other operational disruptions".

Mr. Strachan said, "such a plan may also call for the update of computer and operating systems, installation and updates of anti-virus and anti-malware software, or conversely installation of artificial intelligence software, regular backup of important files, proper

vetting of vendors and their approach to cyber security as well as relevant insurance coverage among other things."

He added, "as a further precaution, we recommend that training sessions are held for staff to alert them to the instance of phishing tactics included in malicious attachments that may come via email or other sources."

Additionally, the party suggested that information technology policies be implemented, and

that "address email and internet usage inclusive of blocking non-work-related sites that may be prone to spreading viruses."

He said, "we call for the commissioning of a comprehensive vulnerability and penetration test to ascertain the areas of weakness within the BCB's IT systems.

He said the recommendations arising from such a test conducted by competent professionals must be implemented without delay.

"A CASE BUILT ON SAND"

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Knight, there is insufficient evidence that Smith and Hanna met prior to 2016.

This he said, cannot simply be proven, because of her word and that Hanna had her dates wrong.

Knight argued that Hanna's testimony proves

she knows of the procedures of the tender documents and that after submitting that is the end of a role.

He further stressed that Hanna and Smith would have had to meet before the tender was submitted, but that there is no evidence to support this, adding that it doesn't make sense to meet

before, so it would have had to happen after.

Mr. Knight said, "the question is did the conversation take place at all."

He said the logic of it all is that it never did.

In a further attempt to dismantle the prosecution's case, Mr. Knight said had it been their case, the call log between Smith and Hanna would have

started before 2016.

He said no reliance can be placed on the prosecution's evidence to establish Hanna and Smith's first meeting. They cannot infer that it was 2016, and even if this were the case, Hanna was not called to clarify her dates of whether it was in fact 2015 or 2016.

The crown had earlier

attempted to prove that there was evidence of Hanna being under Smith's extortion, explaining that Hanna paid Smith's lending company, Poulard instead of NIB. There was no dispute of phone contact between Smith and Hanna; that National Security Minister, Marvin Dames, and Health Minister, Dr. Duane Sands

equally, did not interfere as Sands documented his approval of her contract in a transparent manner.

Lead Crown Counsel, Edward Jenkins QC, added that Hanna's character and demeanor must be taken into account.

Chief Magistrate Joyann Ferguson-Pratt will give her ruling on February 1.

Two Religious Leaders Receive JCN Person Of the Year Award

Continued from / PAGE 1...

from an English-speaking territory to become Executive Secretary of the Inter-American division of Seventh-Day Adventists.

Speaking at the event JCN Chief Executive Officer Wendall Jones said, "our survival and upward mobility depend on an understanding of our common humanity and how we are to be able to get our fellow men to in The Bahamas to follow the Christian faith.

"This is why as a media organization we are pleased to draw attention to the Rev. Dr. Timothy Stewart and Dr. Leonard Johnson.

"They are Bahamians

who are extraordinary in providing leadership on the global stage," said Mr. Jones.

Attending the ceremony was last years recipient, Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis who said it was essential to honor persons in society who help to develop the Bahamian society.

"Public recognition helps to ensure that their contributions do not fade from our national memory, it also helps nurture a strong sense of unity and national pride.

"It sets a good example for others and offers young people a source of inspiration. Thank you, Mr. Jones, for seeing the value in recognizing citizens who make a difference," The Prime

Minister said.

Dr. Johnson in accepting his award said he did so being cognizant that he was doing so on behalf of the church.

"Firstly, the Baptist denomination where I had my early beginning and significantly the Seventh Day Adventist church since 1976, when I became a member.

"This church that accorded me the privilege to serve at just about every single level in the church and to travel and traverse so many places throughout the world.

"So today, I stand as a member of this church and I give this honor to my church for what it has done for me and through me," he said.

In his acceptance

address the Rev. Dr. Stewart said, "I want to thank God for being a part of this Bahamian community at this pivotal juncture in history where the best and the brightest are being sought and called forth in order to contribute to the tremendous areas that this country needs so badly," he said.

Assisting in the presentation of the awards was the Governor General, Dame Marguerite Pindling. Also in attendance was the leader of the official Opposition, Philip Davis.

The ceremony was also attended by several persons who received the award over the last 18 years.

Union Lawyer Goes To Privy Council



Trade Union Congress President, Obie Ferguson (File photo)

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"We have to be the legitimate guardian for the working people of this country. If we don't do it, we will find that all of our gains will dissipate and we cannot afford that," said Mr. Ferguson.

He argues that Bahamian workers should not have to fight for over time pay and public holidays.

"An issue arose where if they work on a public holiday, according to the Fair Labour Standard Act, they are entitled to be paid double the rate of

wages for the work performed, that's according to act.

"The act also says where there is a holiday that falls within the week, your total hours for the week is reduced by eight hours, but you are paid for the entire week, as though you actually worked," Mr. Ferguson said.

The union chief insists that should the Court of Appeal's ruling stand, all workers would be affected.



Jones Communications Network (JCN) 'Persons of the Year,' team were pleased to have Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis; and Governor General, the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pindling in attendance. (BIS Photos/Raymond A. Bethel, Sr.)

BAIC Pop up market returns

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

After a long Christmas break, the Bahamas Agriculture and Industrial Corporation's (BAIC) Pop Up Market went back at its Gladstone Road locations this past Saturday.

Confirming this was BAIC Chairman Michael Foulkes who told reporters that BAIC is looking forward to providing families with high quality fresh Bahamian grown produce.

The BAIC Chairman noted that last year just under 100 farmers were active in the pop up market and proudly stated that 73 per cent of BAIC's expenses last year were payments made to the farmers.

He added that this number is expected to increase in 2019.

"Every month last year they received a check from BAIC, in total, almost \$200,000 in 2018."



Executive Chairman, Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation, Michael Foulkes announced that the Pop-Up Farmers Market will commence again at the Gladstone Road location, Saturday, January 19, 2019 during a press conference at the Corporation's headquarters Friday, January 18, 2019.
(BIS Photo/Kristaan Ingraham)

We anticipate that those payments will increase by about \$60,000 in 2019. For the most part, those would be direct payments to our Family Island farmers and their families.

"In fact, there is one farmer in Eleuthera to whom we paid almost \$45,000 between January 2018 and December 2018.

"Imagine that, and let us not forget there was a

time when the Department of Agriculture at most paid each Bahamian farmer a subsidy of \$9,000 per annum and that was it," Mr. Foulkes said.

The BAIC Chairman also confirmed that the

pop up market will be in Grand Bahama this month. He further opined that the plan is to pop up in other family islands as well.

"We are looking at doing that this year, as we

have had a number of request. We have had a request from Abaco, we have had a request from Long Island and frankly, the one that we get a lot of request for is probably the most difficult to do because of the shipping and the time it takes to get the produce there.

"However, we have had a lot of people calling from Inagua and they really want us to bring some of this wonderful fresh fruits and vegetable there," said Mr. Foulkes.

"We know the climate isn't best for growing fruits and vegetable in Inagua, it's very dry, so we're going to see how we can accommodate them sometime in 2019.

"We are going to do our best perhaps to do it as a collaborative effort because the cost of shipping to Inagua and also the produce needing to be refrigerated," he said.

The pop up market hours of operation is from 8am to 3pm every Saturday.

WILLIAMS ADVISES INVESTMENT

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Find out what they are doing."

Mr. Williams shared that cybercrime is expected to become a six

trillion-dollar industry by the year 2021.

He also noted that the Ministry of Tourism, the Central Bank, and ZNS have all fallen victim to hacking at some point

over the last 20 years.

With this in mind, Mr. Williams urges the country to pay special attention and invest in the advancement of technology.

He said that in a society,

where more cellular devices exists than humans, there is still no concentration in the Caribbean region for the advancement of information

Communication Technology (ICT), as important as it is to the economy of The Bahamas.

He added, "Barack Obama appointed a telecommunications Czar

to look after the interests and make sure that the United States would be number one getting to 5G. Do you hear anybody espousing that in The Bahamas?" he asked.



MINISTRY OF FINANCE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND REVENUE REAL PROPERTY TAX NOTICE for 2019

In accordance with the Real Property Tax Act, Chapter 375 as amended, the Chief Valuation Officer hereby gives notice:-

- that copies of the assessment lists are available as required by Section 7 subsection 7 of the Act, and may be inspected at the Office of the Chief Valuation Officer;
- that a notice of assessment addressed to each owner of property liable to tax under the Real Property Tax Act is available at the Valuation Office, located at rear of the shops at Carmichael Plaza, Carmichael Road and may be collected therefrom by or on behalf of the owner of such property during normal working hours;
- that pursuant to subsection (3) of Section 7 of the Act, upon the expiration of five days after the publication of this notice, a notice of assessment shall be deemed to have been served on every owner of property liable to tax under the Act;
- that without prejudice to the provision of subsection (3) of Section 7 of the Act, the Chief Valuation Officer may at any time after the publication in the Gazette of this notice send by post, a notice of assessment addressed to any owner of property liable to tax under the Act;
- that pursuant to Section 11(1) of the Act, any person aggrieved by a notice of assessment deemed to have been served under this Act may object thereto by serving on the Chief Valuation Officer within thirty days after the date on which the notice of assessment is deemed to have been served, a notice in writing of such objection stating the grounds upon which he relies;
- that pursuant to Section 18 of the Act, the tax is due and payable by the owners of property not later than sixty days after the date on which notice of assessment is deemed to have been served. Accordingly, it is the duty of each taxpayer to ensure that he receives a Notice of Assessment;
- that the exemption has been allowed for 2019 on those which have been declared as owner-occupied residences, and have satisfied the conditions. However, under Section 43 of the Act, the owners are required to disclose to the Chief Valuation Officer any change in the circumstances which does not entitle the property for the exemption allowed;
- that pursuant to Section 10 of the Act, every owner of property shall not later than the thirty-first day of December in each year, make to the Chief Valuation Officer in the prescribed form a return of such particulars of that property as may be prescribed, for the purpose of enabling that Officer to compile and maintain accurate assessment lists, and such owner shall declare to the correctness of such return before an authorized person.

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Second Traffic Fatality In Two Weeks

Continued from / PAGE 1...

This latest traffic fatality followed the death of a Royal Bahamas Defence Force Officer who succumbed to his injuries following a motorcycle acci-

dent two weeks ago.

According to the police reports, shortly after 3:00am yesterday, a male was travelling in the southern lane, west on J.F. Kennedy Drive, in a 2009 Nissan Skyline, when he

lost control of his vehicle and crashed into a utility pole.

The lone occupant of the vehicle was ejected from the vehicle and became unresponsive. Paramedics were called to

the scene and confirmed that the male had succumbed to his injuries.

Traffic Department Officers are investigating this incident.

Police in New Providence are also inves-

tigating a shooting incident, that occurred on Friday, which left an adult male with injuries.

Police say shortly after 9:00pm, a male was walking through a track road off Dumping Ground Corner,

when he heard multiple gunshots and realized that he had been shot. He was transported to hospital by Paramedics and is listed in stable condition.

Investigations are ongoing.

GB Police Search For Wanted Suspects

Continued from / PAGE 1...

an attempted murder incident and is considered extremely dangerous.

He is described as standing at 5'7", weighing 134 lbs. with medium brown complexion and is slim built.

Beckford's last known address is Zimbabwe Avenue, New Providence and number 8 Frobisher Circle, Grand Bahama.

Smith aka "Jamal Penn" aka "fool" is wanted by the Central Detective Unit for possession of an Illegal Firearm and is considered armed and extremely dangerous.

He is described as standing at 5'7", weighing 188 lbs. with medium brown complexion and is average built. His last known address is 50 Kelly Lane (off Johnson Road) New Providence

and Tarry Town, Grand Bahama.

If you have any information on the whereabouts of Tavares Demonte Beckford "foe", you are asked to contact the Central Detective Unit in Grand Bahama at telephone numbers 350-3107 thru 12, 911/919 or call your nearest police station.

In other crime news from Grand Bahama: Police are investigating a shooting and stabbing incident that has left two males hospitalized in serious condition.

Police say on Sunday, shortly after 1:00pm, two males were at a residence on Adventurers Way, when an altercation between them occurred.

The altercation resulted in one of the males receiving gunshot wounds about the body. He was taken to the Rand Memorial

Hospital via Emergency Medical Personnel.

The other male, according to the police received a stab wound to the head, he was taken to the Rand Memorial Hospital by private vehicle. Both were seen by doctors and are listed in serious condition. Police are actively investigating this matter.

Also while on mobile patrol, Drug Enforcement Unit officer uncovered an illegal firearm on Saturday shortly after 7:00pm, on Pioneer's Way and Livingston Drive area when they observed a suspicious male, who upon seeing the police fled the area.

Officers searched the area and discovered a black and silver pistol with two rounds of ammunition.

No arrest was made and investigations continue.

GOT NEWS?
Please call The Bahama Journal's News TIP LINE at 356-7254 and let us know!



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Martin Luther King, Jr.

By: Rev'd Dr. Philip A Rahming

America celebrates the birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, former Pastor and Civil Rights Leader on January 21th. Completing his studies in the North, he and his wife opted to return to the South to serve their people. They refused the grand offers to serve in the North that they may be located in the south to be readily available to accept and to serve. Dr. King was called to the pastorate of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. The church was known as the big folks church. Even before King got into his role as the new leader there, the Rosa Parks incident on the bus came up. Parks refused to get up out of a seat for white folks on the bus. That incident led into he Montgomery bus boycott. Martin Luther king was quickly elected to lead the boycott. He accepted the challenge quietly and got to work. The Rose Parks incident on the bus was in December, 1955. The writer met Rosa much later and asked her why she did not get up out of the seat. She looked at me and simply said: My feet were tired. Looking back, we can thank God for those tired feet of Rosa.

With Pastor King as leader the church had its role in the struggle of liberation for the black man in America. The role of the church beginning in the south was to become the liberative voice of the oppressed as well as the oppressor. For whereas the oppressed needs release from the oppressor, the oppressor needs liberation from that culture which made him treat the poor as sub-humans.

In early April, 1968 the Southern Christian Leadership Conference staff in Atlanta delegated Dr. King to travel to Washington for the poor people's campaign and directed him to travel by

way of Memphis. King's stop in Memphis was to assist the garbage collectors who were demanding recognition of their union and a sixty (60c) cents per hour pay raise.

There at Memphis, king planned a series of rallies in the city. The first and only one was held on the evening of April 3, 1968 at Mason Street Temple. It was a rainy night in Memphis but some 2000 spirited followers were present. The time came when the civil right leader was to give his address. Dr. King entered the pulpit. He entered it that time for the last time. There, he said that it did not matter to him anymore, for He had gone to the mountain top and had seen the Promised Land. He said he would not get there with those who would, but he wished them to know they will get there. King said that He was happy and was not worrying about anything. He was not fearing any man. Then the Civil Rights Leader thundered out the words that his eyes had seen the coming of the glory of the Lord. The meeting eventually come to a close. The next day April 4th 1968 at 7:05pm Martin Luther King Jr. Pastor and Civil rights leader was pronounced dead by Dr. Jerry Francisco, Memphis coroner. The civil rights leader fell by an assassin's bullet.

As a child, daddy King said Martin would tell his wife and him that he wanted to be like Jesus. Sam Donaldson on his programme, Nightline interviewed king's father on August 25, 1963 some five years before the death of his son. Daddy King told Donaldson that his son would tell his father and mother that when he grew up he would change the world and that he wants to be like Jesus.

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The Bahama Journal

Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

Wendall K. Jones
Publisher/Chief Executive Officer

Kimale P. Jones
Vice President/Operations

EDITORIAL

The Vice-Grip of Poverty

Over the last several days, Social Media was abuzz with tales of woe of the dismal economy of the Bahamas and that of Freeport, Grand Bahama in particular.

In one of the recordings circulated, a woman who claims to be a pastor of a church in Grand Bahama, related a story on how she intervened in an incident of horror. She told how she received a telephone call from a desperate mother of several children who was attempting suicide.

The Pastor said she was able to keep the distraught mother on her cell phone until she arrived at the woman's home. Once there, when the lady opened her door, the pastor said she saw blood on the woman's wrist.

Telling the pastor of her dilemma, she said that she had no food for her children and invited the pastor to inspect her cupboard. The clergy woman said she found the cupboard to be empty with just a small bag of flour and that the mother stated that he was only able to make pancakes for her children without any sugar.

This "Good Samaritan" Pastor said she also discovered that the woman's pre-teen daughter's "health was on", but the little girl had no sanitary pads to use. She claimed that a shirt was cut-up and used for the girl. The pastor stated after giving the woman some \$150, she went to a convenience store to purchase grocery items for the family.

She related that while all of this was in process, there was a second report of another Grand Bahama woman who while attempting suicide, took a handful of pills, because she lamented that she could not "take the distress of living anymore".

These incidence underscore the desperate state of many families in Grand Bahama. These stories now ramify throughout New Providence too, as many proud Bahamian families find themselves in a vice-grip of poverty.

While statistics reveal that poverty in the Bahamas is on the increase, many of the nation's politicians in government are either in denial or are so disconnected that they give speeches suggesting that the economy is improving. It is not. At best the economy has been stagnant for several years, with unemployment remaining at 15 per cent and discouraged workers increasing, with little hope to find jobs.

Speaking at the annual Business Outlook Forum in New Providence last Thursday, Prime Minister Doctor Hubert Minnis claimed that "for the first time in 12 years and for the first time since the great recession of 2008, the country enjoyed projected growth of more than two per cent for two consecutive years.

Dr.Minnis said, "this is a milestone. Growth means more jobs, improved family income and better opportunities for more Bahamians across the board."

If the economy has grown, it is definitely not being felt. Indeed Economists have always insisted that real growth can only be felt when it is four per cent or higher in any economy.

We believe that a real stimulus package for the private sector is needed, or the government has to rethink its fiscal policies and decrease taxes to encourage growth. In the absence of these adjustments and with a lack of significant foreign direct investment in the country, the tales of human suffering will abound.



THE BAHAMAS

Sun, Sand, Sea and the

The Bahama Journal

NO BETTER READING

The Nassau Music Society Celebrates its 50th Anniversary Season

Founded by the legendary E. Clement Bethel, the Nassau Music Society is celebrating its 50th Anniversary Season with an exciting programme of concerts and events that continues its tradition of musical excellence while highlighting its historical roots and becoming even more relevant and connected to the local community.

NMS is a non-profit,

charitable organization, and its founding mission statement still rings true now: "To promote and encourage the art of music by organizing concerts and other musical activities, and to provide financial and other assistance to students of music." Since then, with support from its membership, corporate sponsorship and private donations, NMS has consistently presented

world class concerts, offered hundreds of free masterclasses by visiting artists, extended its education and outreach initiatives, and provided scholarships and grants to many Bahamian music students for study abroad as well as at the University of the Bahamas.

The 50th Anniversary concert series showcases a diverse program of musi-

cians and genres, ranging from a night at the opera and a jazz café, to classical flute and piano four hands. In recognition of one of its past presidents, NMS participated in The Bahamas National Youth Choir's tribute to Mr. Cleophas Adderley on the 26th of October. In November, they presented a documentary film screening in partnership with The Bahamas

International Film Festival (BIFF). A special concert for 400 primary school children sponsored in part by The Charitable Arts Foundation and a jazz concert in the gardens of the Bahamas National Trust (BNT) round off the anniversary season. Each visiting artist generally performs 2 concerts. Concerts at St Paul's Church Hall are generally classical and

traditional, while The Current: Baha Mar Gallery & Art Center features more contemporary and slightly alternative performances. Many top Bahamian musicians feature in NMS programming, with talented students opening each concert and local professional musicians collaborating and performing alongside our visiting international artists.

LOCAL COMPANY ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO HELP PUT STOP TO 'TRASHING OUR TREASURE' WITH ANNUAL POSTER CONTEST

Every piece of trash that makes its way into the ocean threatens the life of the animals that call it home and in a country with more than 3,400 km of coastline, that trash known as marine debris, also threatens the Bahamas' livelihood.

To cultivate awareness of the importance of properly disposing of all garbage and encourage Bahamians to reduce, reuse and recycle, the Dolphin Encounters Project BEACH 19th Annual Marine Education Poster contest challenges kindergarten through grade 12 students to creatively depict the topic "Marine Debris - Trashing our Treasure."

"With our emphasis here at Blue Lagoon Island on protecting the environment and taking care of marine animals, it's only fitting that we use this year's poster

contest to further educate young Bahamians on the role we all play when it comes to keeping the ocean that surrounds us clear of trash," said Te-Shalla Clarke, Education Supervisor at Blue Lagoon Island. "We are a tourist destination that relies on sun, sand and sea, so while it is critical that we keep our oceans clean so that marine animals have a safe environment to live in, doing so also ensures that we remain a place that tourists want to visit and that we as Bahamians can enjoy living in for generations to come."

The most common types of trash that make their way into the waters surrounding the Bahamas are cigarettes, food wrappers and fast food containers, cups, lids, and straws, plastic bottles and utensils, aluminum cans, glass bot-

tles and fishing nets. The debris is mostly a result of garbage being left behind by beachgoers and people who enjoy their lunch along the shore, however the Bahamas' narrow islands mean that garbage not properly disposed of inland can also end up in the ocean.

Some trash - particularly plastics and fishing line - can last up to 600 years in the ocean, meaning countless mammals like dolphins and whales, as well as turtles, fish, crustaceans and even seabirds die as a result of entanglement or ingestion.

Students compete in four age group categories - kindergarten - grade 2; grade 3 - grade 5; grade 6 - grade 8 and grade 9 - grade 12. A panel of judges who are recognized for their work in the marine environment will select the

top three entries in each grade category.

National Prizes for winning entries include passes to exciting activities at Blue Lagoon Island, including Swim with the Dolphins, Sea Lion Encounter, Stingray Encounter, Beach Day, Segway Safari and even the Seaventure Summer Camp. This year, to recognize the importance teachers play in educating and encouraging students on these critical topics, Dolphin Encounters Project BEACH will award the teacher of each first place student a choice of four (4) Blue Lagoon Island Beach Day Passes or two (2) adult only VIP Beach Passes.

Another exciting addition to the Marine Education Poster Contest is the chance to compete internationally for a trip to Cancun,

Mexico. The original artwork of the qualifying finalists (ages 6-15) will be entered in the International Festival of the Oceans Drawing Contest hosted by Delphinus in Mexico. Winners of the international poster contest will win a free trip to Cancun

The deadline for entry is March 1 and is open to kindergarten through grade 12 students throughout the Bahamas. National Winners will be announced March 8, 2019 and hosted at an awards ceremony on Blue Lagoon Island on March 30.

Entries must be the student's original freehand artwork and must represent this year's theme - "Marine Debris - Trashing our Treasure". Entries must be submitted on 11x17 sized paper and designed using only pens, pencils, coloured pencils

markers, crayons, watercolours or paints. Charcoal, pastels, chalk, glitter, sand or paste-ons are NOT permitted. Stencil, tracing and computer graphics are also not permitted. Student names, ages and schools are not to be written on the artwork and instead, a completed application form must be attached to the back of the entry poster.

The 2019 Marine Education Poster Contest fact sheet and entry form can be downloaded from <http://www.dolphinencounters.com/education-programs/marine-education-poster-contest/>. Teachers can also call Blue Lagoon Island Education at 363-7180 extension 303; or e-mail education@dolphinencounters.com. Entry forms can also be picked-up at the Dolphin Encounters booth located at the Paradise Island Ferry Terminal

THE BAHAMAS
Sun, Sand, Sea ... and the
The Bahama Journal
NO BETTER READING

The advertisement features a collage of newspaper front pages from The Bahama Journal. The main headline on the collage is "Four Bodies Claimed" with a sub-headline "Haitian Burials Imminent". Other visible headlines include "Brush Fire Scorches Acres of Land", "22ND MURDER VICTIM Identified", "Debris Hinders Business For Ferry Operators", and "Alleged Election Fraudster A No-Show in Court". The collage also shows various smaller articles and advertisements, including one for "MODERN Men Boutique" and another for "Deans Building Supplies". The background of the advertisement is a scenic view of a beach with waves crashing onto the shore.