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The Bahama Journal

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WEDNESDAY - JANUARY 2ND, 2018

75 CENTS

Valley Boys, New Year's Champions

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

The results for the 2019 New Year's Day Junkanoo parade indicate that The Valley Boys Group gained bragging rights for the entire year.

The group which is celebrating its 60th anniversary as an organization impressed the Judges and spectators with the theme, "We Give God Thanks and Total Praise."

The Valley Boys accumulated a total score of some 86.95 points, beating roots by just .48 points

The group won best music, scoring some 93.89, best choreography, with a score of 93.07, and best overall performance with a score of 89.80.

The unofficial results of the A category also indicate that the Roots came in second with a score of 86.47, with the theme, 'Religion- Hope for Mankind.' The group also won best banner, best overall costume, best off the shoulder, best lead

See page 8...



Image shows Valley member participating in the New Year's Day Parade.

CLERGYMEN NAMED PERSONS OF THE YEAR 2018

The management of Jones Communications Network has chosen two clergymen as the recipients of the annual Person of The Year Award for 2018.

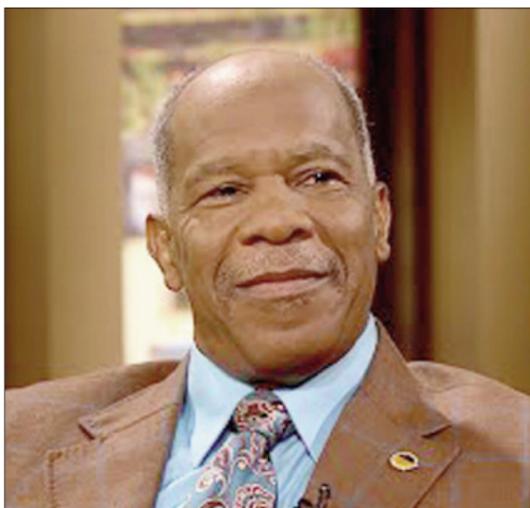
The prestigious award goes jointly to two outstanding Bahamian religious leaders who have been elected to international positions, the Reverend Doctor Timothy Stewart and Doctor Leonard Johnson.

Rev. Dr. Stewart has been installed as President of the Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc. USA during the 57th

Annual Convocation this year. He now heads a Baptist denomination headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with an estimated membership of 2.5 million people.

A statement from JCN said, "Dr. Stewart as Pastor of the historic Bethel Baptist Church for 36 years has been an inspiration to clergymen and members of the community of faith in The Bahamas and the Americas. He is an exemplar of Bahamian excep-

See page 6...



Reverend Doctor Timothy Stewart (File photo)



Doctor Leonard Johnson (File photo)



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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

Canadian Remanded On Heroin Charges

BY LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

A Canadian man traveling to The Bahamas from London, was remanded to the Bahamas Department of Corrects for alleged drug possession.

Reginald Merritt's intended stay in the

Bahamas was interrupted after he was arrested for possession of dangerous drugs at the Lynden Pindling International Airport last Thursday.

Merritt was charged before the Magistrate's Court on Monday.

The 54 year old Montreal resident was arraigned on four counts

related to the incident.

Appearing before Magistrate Samuel McKinney, it is alleged that Merritt on December 27 had in his possession dangerous drugs with the intent to supply, namely Heroin. The weight of drugs was 9 pounds 5 ounces.

He was further

charged with importation of dangerous drugs. It is alleged that on the same date, Merritt did import heroin into the country.

As for the third count, the Canadian was charged with conspiracy to possess dangerous drugs with the intent to supply. It is alleged that

between December 19 and 27 being concerned with another, did conspire to possess a quantity of dangerous drugs with intent to supply.

Merritt was further charged with conspiracy to import dangerous drugs namely heroin.

It is also alleged that between December 19

and December 27 being concerned with others did conspire to bring in to the country dangerous drugs.

He pleaded not guilty to all charges and was subsequently remanded to the Bahamas Department of Corrections until February 5, 2019.

MORE ILLEGAL HAITIAN MIGRANTS APPREHENDED

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) officers stationed at South Beach Pools apprehend several Haitian nationals attempting to make it to

shore in waters east of the area around 1 a.m. yesterday.

Upon further investigation by RBDF, police, and immigration personnel, discovered a wooden sloop in shallow waters about a quarter-mile

off shore.

An expanded search of the coastal area was also carried out by officials, which led to the apprehension of 16 Haitian nationals.

The total number of migrants aboard is

unknown at this time; however, search is ongoing in the nearby area.

This past Monday, 116 Haitian migrants flooded a courtroom before Magistrate Cara Turnquest-Deveaux after their 40 foot sloop was

intercepted by RBDF patrol craft P-124 approximately 8 miles south of New Providence.

Of that 124, 116 of them were adults and he remainder children.

All 116 pleaded guilty

to illegal landing, and 12 of them were found to be repeat offenders.

The 12 repeat offenders were subsequently fined \$600 or six months at the Bahamas Department of Corrections.

2018 Was Good Year For Tourism

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
Journal Staff Writer

Tourism officials said 2018 has been a very good year for the country as air, sea, and stop over visitor arrivals continue to increase.

Tourism Minister, Dionisio D'Aguilar last Friday gave members of the press an update on the state of the tourism industry for the year ending 2018.

The minister acknowledged what he called a healthy upward trend in international arrivals.

"Air arrivals to The Bahamas have continued

its trend upwards since the last quarter of 2017 and have been consistently up by 15 percent since May 2018.

"Sea arrivals to The Bahamas have shown a 2 percent increase for 2018.

"Stopover visitor arrivals to the destination between the months of January to October year to date 2018 are up from all of the major markets of The Bahamas.

"USA up by 7 percent, Canada up by 12 percent, Europe up by 3 percent, Caribbean up by 13 percent, Latin America up by 4 per cent, and even the rest of the world up by 3

percent," the Minister said.

"Canada, with its 12 percent increase is by far our best performing market in 2018," he said.

There is also the added fact that new and expanded airlift from major U.S. carriers like Delta and American Airlines, have strengthened connections to key markets of New York, Miami, Charlotte, Atlanta and Chicago.

Hotel gross bookings have also increased.

"In October, Expedia reported greater than 30 percent increase in room night sales and hotel

gross bookings also increased by greater than 25 percent year-over-year from January throughout October," he said.

"New and revitalized product is helping to drive tourism growth.

"Atlantis, Paradise Island has debuted a fresh, new brand and renovations reconnecting with its Bahamian roots," he added.

"Baha Mar is now fully open, with three distinct properties welcoming visitors, and business is strong," said Mr. D'Aguilar.

The minister admits robust marketing efforts

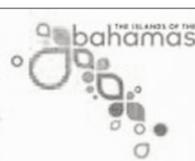
were a catalyst to the growth of visitor arrivals.

"We look forward to building upon the success and tourism growth from 2018 as we forge ahead with exciting new programs, partnerships and initiatives planned for the year ahead," he said.

"We are supporting and encouraging the development of new resorts throughout our islands that appeal to millennials and their desire for authentic experiences on vacation, and that appeal to consumers of all ages with particular passions and lifestyles," he added.

"We will continue to work to reach millennials as well as repeat visitors seeking authentic vacation experiences and the natural beauty of all our islands through strategic partnerships and promotions, media relations and attractive programs for travelers.

"Our priority will be in continuing to position the Islands of The Bahamas as a premiere travel destination, evolving our branding to appeal to new visitors and promoting the distinct offerings across each of our unique islands," said the Minister.



CONGRATULATIONS
BAHAMAS FOR WINNING
THE CARIBBEAN TRAVEL AWARDS
DESTINATION
OF THE YEAR

Also Congratulations to The Minister of Tourism & Aviation
Dionisio D'Aguilar for Winning Caribbean Tourism Minister of the Year!

2018

JAPANESE GRANT 1.8 MIL IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT EQUIPMENT TO NEMA



► Following donation of equipment by the Government of Japan to aid The Bahamas' disaster management programme, training sessions on use of the equipment were held December 17-20, 2018 at NEMA on Gladstone Road. Pictured far left is Director of NEMA Captain Stephen Russell along with Japanese training instructors and participants. (BIS Photo/Patrick Hanna)

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is pleased to receive the remainder of equipment which is part of the \$1.8 million Japanese Grant Aid project to The Bahamas in support of the country's disaster management programme. The equipment includes four balloon lights, eight water pumps, 40 VHF base radio stations, and 200 hand-held radios.

Some 25 staff from NEMA, personnel of the Royal Bahamas Defence

Force, the Royal Bahamas Police Force and the Ministry of Works underwent training, December 17-20, in basic operation and maintenance of the equipment.

Expert trainers were Derrick Holder and Ronald Alleyne from Barbados, and Takuro Nagai, Manager of the Technical Department and Hiroshi Ohbo, Manager/ Service and Maintenance Section of COMFORCE Japan.

In October 2018, the Government of The

Bahamas through NEMA during an Official Handover Ceremony accepted from the Government of Japan a wheel crane, a tractor head truck, along with two 40-foot trailers, two freezer containers and two flatbed cargo trucks.

Over the next six months, NEMA, in collaboration with its public and private partners will aim to install a base radio and a number of hand-held radios in each of the Family Island-designated Emergency Operations

Centers (EOC), to support the local Disaster Consultative Committees with their emergency communications.

The water pumps and balloon lights will be strategically placed among the three Emergency Relief Warehouses in Grand Bahama for the Northern Bahamas, New Providence for the Central Bahamas, and Great Inagua for the Southern Bahamas to be readily available for use in those areas, as neces-

sary.

"Again the National Emergency Management Agency is pleased to see this programme successfully executed," said Director of NEMA Captain Stephen Russell.

The programme commenced in April 2016 with the signing of a Grant Agreement, the formation of a local committee for the product selection and specifications, the tendering process and production of goods in Japan, and the eventual shipping to The

Bahamas. This also included the support of two local companies -- Five Stars Brokers and Four K's Cargo -- in clearing the shipment and delivering them to NEMA on Gladstone Road.

"The equipment and training should tremendously enhance the country's disaster preparedness and response mechanism, particularly in the areas of inter-island communication, logistics and transportation," said Captain Russell.



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.

(For) Controller of Inland Revenue/
Chief Valuation Officer

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Officials Say Country Is safe Despite Swine Flu Cases

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
Journal Staff Writer

Cases of swine flu in the Bahamas have tourism officials in damage control mode.

Tourism Director General, Joy Jibrilu, told reporters last Friday that they are monitoring the situation.

"We actively monitor whenever there's an outbreak.

"I mean if you think about it, it was chikungunya, it was zika, it's

always something that you have to be on top of.

"And we have established a wonderful relationship with the Ministry of Health and all the necessary bodies, so information is fed," she said.

"We monitor not just daily, almost hourly, what is being written throughout the various social channels to see if there's having an impact.

"But sending messages out, the country is safe, safe from a health perspective. If there is a

notice, whatever comes out from Ministry of Health we would share that," she continued.

"But it's a constant monitoring and making sure that you are ahead of it and that you're responsive as soon as anything hits."

According to the Director General, at this point, there's been no adverse publicity.

Swine flu has been blamed for one death in The Bahamas.

There are another two reported cases.



► Tourism Director General, Joy Jibrilu

Sexual Offender's Registry Slated For Early 2019

BY BERTHONY McDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

Minister of National Security Marvin Dames says The Sexual Offender's registry is on schedule for the first quarter of 2019.

He said his ministry is looking at the regulations for the registry and hopes

to take this before cabinet in January.

The Minister pledged back in March of last year that this would be a reality by the end of 2018.

"We've basically completed everything we needed to from our end; as far as the alert is concerned. As you know, we have been running some

tests on that and that are going extremely well. So you can expect to see that in early January.

"You can expect to see some positive movements on that because we've done a lot of work on it and we are now pleased with where we are with respect to it.

"I hope to take that to

cabinet in early January so that we can make that a reality for the first quarter of next year," he said.

Mr. Dames added that he intends to engage in wide scale consultation with stakeholders before the registry is brought to the cabinet.

"I know previously that that was done and we

will continue to do that. I know my ministry for example has been doing some things with certain corners of the community to get their feedback and get their views as it relates to the registry.

"However, I'm anxious to see this move and I've been putting a considerable amount of pres-

sure on my team to move it quickly so that we can get this behind us," he said.

The plan for a sex offender registry was introduced in 2013 with an amendment to The Sexual Offences Act after the murder of 11-year-old Marco Archer by a serial child predator.

ABACO NEEM FARM IMPRESSES INDIAN RESEARCHER

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

The owners of Abaco Neem, Nicholas and Daphne Miaoulis recently returned from the first annual "World Neem Organization" (WNO) summit and educational trip to Bangalore, India,

after impressing researchers.

At the summit, 21 companies were in attendance from 7 countries outside of India -- The Bahamas, Bangladesh, Kenya, Australia, Canada, Paraguay and Portugal.

The use of Neem originated in India almost 5000

years ago and has been used as a popular medicinal herb as part of traditional remedies for anti-viral and anti-bacterial, along with being a powerful immuno-stimulant.

During their 2 week Bangalore trip, Abaco Neem CEO Mr. Miaoulis and COO Mrs. Miaoulis

learned about the latest industry developments, shared their knowledge, met some of the leading researchers and producers, and showcased their Neem oil.

At the exhibition, they had an opportunity to demonstrate what they describe as the "the superi-

or quality, colour, scent and taste of the Abaco Neem oil that is a result of their organic farming and harvesting methods".

Dr. Joaquim Morgado, founder member, chief scientific coordinator and regional director, of WNO is interested in the work of the Miaoulis team and

plans to visit the Abaco neem farm and factory in February 2019.

For the past 25 years, Dr. Morgado studied Neem for sustainable medical applications and is close to a major breakthrough using Neem as a treatment for oral and prostate cancer care.

ESTELLE GRAY EVANS BEING SWORN IN AS ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE



► The Hon. Mme. Justice Estelle Gray Evans (left) was sworn in as Acting Chief Justice of the Supreme Court by Governor General, Her Excellency the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pinling at Government House, December 27, 2018. (BIS Photos/Patrick Hanna)

Eneas Files

By Godfrey Eneas

Are We In A New Reality?

The Bahamas attained Majority Rule on January 10th, 1967 thereby denoting, essentially, fifty years of Pindling governance: 25 years with Sir Lynden O. Pindling as Prime Minister himself and 25 years of his proteges, Hubert Ingraham and Perry Christie, who sat in his Cabinet.

In the 50 years since Majority Rule, we have arrived at a point where we are in a different dispensation. Dr. Hubert Minnis as Prime Minister did not have the experience of the Pindling proteges, therefore he begins a new dispensation with a different modus operandi. The important question is whether or not our country is entering a new reality as we approach a new year at this juncture of the 21st Century.

Most of the members of our Parliament were not involved in the Quiet Revolution, hence there is an unawareness of the struggles the revolutionaries encountered on their march to the New Bahamas. The present Parliamentarians inherited a transformed Bahamas and some take the achievements of the struggle for granted. It is this fact that distinguishes Pindling's governance approach to the post-Pindling period of Ingraham and Christie -- in essence this new dispensation. The present generation of Parliamentarians is bringing a new governance approach to Bahamian politics.

The Pindling years of governance reflected a strong commitment to the socio-economic re-engineering of The Bahamian society. This re-engineering highlighted initiatives to provide secondary education for all Bahamians and the eventual establishment of tertiary education (College Of The Bahamas) leading to the University of The Bahamas. Further, the Pindling government ensured the placement of infrastructure throughout the archipelago that enhanced the quality of life and standard of living inclusive of the low-cost housing subdivisions throughout New Providence and several Family Islands thereby eliminating the blight of "yards" in Over-the-Hill communities. A priority was building a social and health safety net via National Insurance and, in 1984, the introduction of a National Health Insurance Scheme in conjunction with the expansion of healthcare facilities. These are some of the initiatives that transformed The Bahamas in the second half of the 20th Century and created a new sustainable middle class which today has been threatened with the possibility of being diminished in the first two decades of the 21st century.

The Bahamas became a socially and economically upwardly mobile society as thousands became professionals as accountants, doctors, lawyers, engineers, hotel executives, senior public officers, educators, clergy, entrepreneurs etc. The Pindling years had built an economic framework and formulated a policy atmosphere that encouraged foreign direct investment along with the integration of Bahamians into all spheres of the economy including

greater Bahamian ownership of the economy, promotions to executive management positions of multinational corporations (oil companies, hotel chains) and international banks (local and offshore).

Pindling expanded the economy and diversified the Stafford Sands Model as follows:

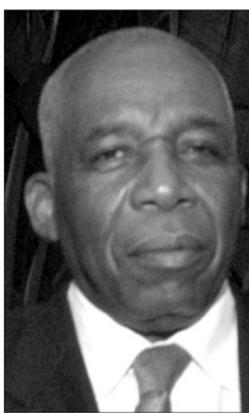
Tourism Sector: With Sir Clement Maynard as Minister of Tourism ('68-'71), ('84-'86) and ('87-'90), tourism stamped itself as the economic engine of The Bahamian economy by achieving the billion dollar mark in tourism expenditure in the country in 1986. For the first time tourism was a billion-dollar industry 33 years ago. Where are we now?

Financial Services Sector: One of the pillars of the Stafford Sands Model was The Bahamas gaining the reputation as a Tax Haven. This nomenclature did not bode well for The Bahamas as a jurisdiction where Americans and Europeans could avoid paying taxes under the umbrella of not paying taxes to their countries. The Pindling government created a Financial Services Industry along the lines of Switzerland. This industry blossomed to the point where the Sector represented 15-20% of the economy from time to time. In the late '90s, the Sector came under the assault by various governments and groupings like the US, EU and OECD and was black-listed.

Light Industry and Manufacturing Sector: In order to develop and enhance this into an economically viable Sector, the strategy was to link it to tourism (handicraft and souvenir items), household commodities for the local consumer and products to be assembled etc. The Soldier Road Industrial Park was the site for this initiative. **Constructor Sector:** A burgeoning construction industry was in process during the '70s as Bahamians began to move into suburban communities like Nassau East, Imperial Park, Stapledon Gardens, Highland Park and others. There was a boom in the construction of three bedroom, two bath middle class homes. There was a lot of work for small building contractors.

BTVI would be the manpower training and development centre for technicians and tradesmen for light industry, manufacturing and construction.

Agriculture and Marine Resources Sector: In 1978 the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) conducted the first Census on Agriculture. It revealed that there were almost 80,000 acres of land in food production. The Pindling government responded by improving the marketing infrastructure with the erection of Packing Houses in Eleuthera (3); Long Island (2); and one in North Andros, Cat Island and Exuma respectively. In conjunction with this, an agricultural manpower development scholarship programme was introduced to train Bahamians in a variety of disciplines connect with the agricultural and marine sciences. Food production was a prior-



ity item on the Pindling economic diversification agenda as an Import Substitution Policy was seen as a key incentive in the expansion of the Agricultural Sector. Later, the Christie government would pivot to the global agenda of a Food and Nutrition Security Policy. BAMS! was the response.

Liberalization Policy: In the late '90s, the Ingraham government embarked on a policy to liberate aspects on the economy. Globalization had become the norm of the global economic development agenda as the World Trade Organization (WTO) was driving the process. The implications would be far reaching for The Bahamas as the government earmarked the Agricultural and Marine Resources and the Light Industry and Manufacturing Sectors for its Duty Reduction Policy (DRP) which negatively impacted the growth and development of these two sectors.

The airwaves and telecommunications were liberalized as licenses were granted to commence the ownership of private radio and television stations, the introduction of Cable Bahamas and the sale of BaTelco to Cable and Wireless. BTC became BaTelco's successor.

Major Initiatives: There were several initiatives that spanned both the Ingraham and Christie governments:-

- Redevelopment of Paradise Island into Atlantis (Ingraham)
- Redevelopment of Cable Beach into Baha Mar (Christie)
- Albany
- National Stadium (Christie/Ingraham)
- Elevation of COB to UB (Christie)
- Critical care Unit
- New Road System (Ingraham)
- LOP International Airport (Christie/Ingraham)
- BAMS!(Christie)
- VAT Introduction (Christie)
- \$200 million purchase of Defence Force Vessels (Christie)
- Arawak Cay Freight Terminal (Ingraham)
- The Pointe (Christie)

This is essentially The Bahamas which was left in place by three Prime Ministers -- Pindling, Ingraham and Christie. The Pindling era lasted from 1967-92 - 25 years. The other two Prime Minister had 25 years combined with 15 years for Ingraham and 10 years for Christie. In 1967, the population of The Bahamas was about 160,000 and by 2016, it was approaching 400,000. Over the past 50 years, the country has produced a quarter million new Bahamians.

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E D I T O R I A L

WARNING SHOT



By Jerry Hutchinson

Murders: The Tip of the Crime Iceberg

By Jerry Hutchinson

"Murder is unique in that it abolishes the party it injures, so that society has to take the place of the victim and on his behalf demand atonement or grant forgiveness; it is the one crime in which society has a direct interest"

W.H. AUDEN, *The Dyer's Hand*

In the Bahamas today, the incidence of murder is not seen as the heinous, destructive crime that it once was. That is, until the families of the privileged and connected is affected. Then, the gloves come off and every organ of the state is mobilised to find the culprits. In contrast, the murders of the underclasses, the "others", whilst not directly condoned is dismissed by gratuitous statements such as: "prolific offender"; "known to police"; "he/she was being monitored by police" "he was suspected in other murders" or most recently "the murder was gang related" etc. No matter which form the demonization of a murder victims take, the reality is that a citizen of the Bahamas has had his or her life taken away unlawfully. In the waves of disgust associated with the nearly daily murders in our country, it is easy to forget that no citizen, no matter how unsavoury or egregious his past or current behaviour, has protection under our constitution from having his life taken unlawfully.

So, when a murder victim is demonised, not only is his murder trivialised but, the citizenry is left with the impression that the victims "got what they deserved"; the implication therefore is that the solving of the murder will not robustly be pursued. This approach totally ignores the shock, horror, sense of loss and grief experienced by the surviving family and friends of the victims. And, it also conditions Bahamians to expect more murders and crimes beforehand.

We also conveniently forget that: "While the immediate effect of crime is usually felt by the individual upon whom the crime was committed, the community at large is also affected by criminal activity. High crime rates may lead to population reduction as able individuals move away to avoid victimization. Members who remain in crime-filled areas may feel unsafe in general, particularly if they witness crime. Additionally, crime rates create a negative impression about a community to those who live outside it".

We have seen the effect of crime on the Bahamas first hand. This includes, the numerous crime warnings issued by the United States, Canada and Europe, as a result of crimes committed against their citizens visiting or residing in the Bahamas. These countries are major sources of the tourists whose spending drives our economy. How long can we expect them to ignore the crime threat to their citizens while we try to down play the cancer of crime at all strata of Bahamian society through *voluntario ignorantia*?

While we obfuscate, dissemble, play the blame game or otherwise ignore the ravages of crime on our society and, its effects on visitors to our shores, the reality is that unless and until the current levels of all criminality, repeat all crime is reduced, the OECD and the IMF may be the least of our concerns. It is perhaps useful to remember how we got here. From 16 murders in 1973, we have managed to double down and achieve an average of 100 murders annually in the Bahamas since then; remember, I said average.

Murder has had a pernicious effect on the lives of Bahamians, visitors to our shores, men, women, and children and their extended families. Each of these categories have been victims of murder. Add to this attempted murders, serious assaults, rape, sexual assaults, incest, arson, thefts, theft of public funds, burglary, break-ins, incivility on the streets, increasing numbers of hit and run incidents and you begin to see the scale of societal disintegration in our country. Murders although important, is not the only

measure of crime.

So, you may ask, how did we get here. The answer to this originates as do all problems in this country; with the politicians. At some point, politicians began to see crime especially murder, not as a societal problem but as a political opportunity. If murders increased under an administration then, lets ignore its effect on Bahamian society and keep count! Afterall, their supporters especially in law enforcement, assured them that given the chance they would solve the problem if given the opportunity.

Just promote me chief and, all this crime stuff will magically go away. The problem with this approach is that these were the same persons presiding over the current decay and rampant crime. Now, politicians from successive administrations and law enforcement are engaged in a dance of the damned! The crime rate has increased; solutions are few and far between and any ideas which infringe on current crime prevention thinking is ignored. Political interference has also played a part in the formulation of ineffective crime strategies and the blame game (for crime and other issues) is always lurking in the shadows; in this we are not alone. In fact, the current public tension between the Jamaican Police Commissioner and its National Security Minister neatly encapsulates our current situation. The Jamaica Observer opined:

"We cannot ignore the fact that one of the problems we have had in this country for too long is that of political interference in the police force. We find it amusing almost that politicians in Opposition will criticise the Government about this behaviour, only to do the same when there is a change of Administration".

The Jamaica Observer, Wednesday, January 10, 2018

This observation is important when you consider that in *policing culture*, police come in two very distinct forms; "Street police and Office police" If, a minister seeks to interfere in policing operations he must have solid street policing credentials, i.e. "street cred". Let me give you a real example. I spent nearly 23 years in CID. During that time, I did all sorts of things along with other police officers. Did I have "street cred"? the answer is no; I was a *police reservist* so, whether I have "street cred" was determined by serving police officers not me. Thus, a Minister of National Security for example, either has "street cred" or not; his subordinates determine that, not him. If he does not then, he might think his directives are being carried out with great enthusiasm but, street wise police will see them for what they are, dangerous and foolish. In our current crime fight, the winning of which I see as existential, there must be less politics and more realisation that we are all in this together; we all win or lose.

So, we are where we are because we have ignored the fact that the murder of any citizen is an assault on the rule of law, Bahamian society and its institutions. We have sacrificed the long-term stability of Bahamian society for short term political gain. It is said that the truth is stubborn; try as we might we it will manifest itself in other forms.

Its current form is murder, mayhem and incivility in the Bahamas on an industrial scale and no amount of victim demonization, and no amount of blaming, dissembling and wilful ignorance will change that reality.

CLERGYMEN NAMED PERSONS OF THE YEAR 2018

Continued from / PAGE 1...

tionalism, a leader who has used intellectual ability to reach tens of thousands with the gospel and motivated them to improve their quality of life." Dr. Leonard Johnson is an outstanding Seventh-Day Adventist Pastor who is the first Pastor from an English-speaking territory to become Executive Secretary of the Inter American Division of Seventh-Day Adventists. The JCN statement said Dr. Johnson's elevation made all Bahamians proud. "During his many years in ministry,

his preaching has been a feast for the theological mind and for those who earnestly seek to know the Christian God at more than a surface level. His new position is testimony of the high esteem in which he is held by his colleagues in Ministry and of the adulation of followers of the Christian faith." The two clergymen will accept the awards in a ceremony on Friday, 18th January, 2019 in the JCN Media Centre on University Drive.

EDITORIAL RESOLVE TO REDUCE VIOLENCE

The New Year 2019 started with a shooting incident where a young man was shot in the head. Mercifully, he is still alive. In a matter of days, we believe, we will start counting the dead bodies again of young people who are being slaughtered on our streets and in our heartland communities.

Sadly, there are people in our country who routinely flout the law of this land.

They do so not only when they do their retaliation killings, but also when they reach out and intimidate citizens who know them.

This is part and parcel of a far deeper process which –if left unattended-will undermine the legitimacy of the State Authority.

This is precisely why today, we insist: No matter the spin put on crime statistics and for that matter on the incidence of murder on this island and throughout the country, the fact remains that there are men and women ‘out-there’ who routinely set up their own kangaroo courts and from which death sentences are tendered certain street-level thugs.

In this regard, recently two men, one of whom was being electronically monitored by police, were found shot to death in Jubilee Gardens early two weeks ago.

These killings came shortly after a man and his fiancée had been shot dead during a morning ambush at Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre.

Gunshots were reported in the Jubilee Gardens community sometime after 11.45pm that Tuesday; responding officers later discovered the bodies of two men with injuries in a car parked in the driveway of a residence in that neighbourhood; EMS personnel were called to the scene to give assistance, but were unsuccessful in reviving the two men; and then [as we learn] the two men were pronounced dead at the scene a short time later.

The two men were reportedly cousins. When –as it were- their paths cross, what happens next is invariably packaged in with that ominous phrase; dead at the scene.

All Bahamians in this new year should take note about what seems a war going on out-there between men and women

who are armed, angry and intent on wreaking havoc on each other.

In evidence, we need only cite the cases of two sets of killings which, for as much as we can guess, are directly related to how certain street-level disputes are settled.

There are any number of people whose business dealings routinely expose them to having their matters dealt with where – they who would exact their feral kind of justice- routinely turn to guns, their deadly report and for them, instant gratification!

To say, the least, this is intolerable, posing as it does a direct threat to the perceived legitimacy of the work done by state authorities like the police or their Defence Force counterparts.

We understand that one of the men was Hastings “Tweety” McQueen, 28, and the other was his cousin, “Sheddy” Bain.

McQueen was reportedly out on bail for a serious offence and was being electronically monitored.

Of some interest is that factoid which shows that in 2012, McQueen was charged with the murder of Owen Hanna. To date, the outcome of that case is unclear.

And in addition, we have information [perhaps emanating from deep within the murk of some of our crime-ridden heartland communities that Hanna was shot dead near his home in the Redland Acres Subdivision in August of that year, 2012.

And thus it would appear that –as in the world of legitimate state authorities- the hand of that law which governs in those dark realms, reaches far and deep!

And as is to be expected in the circumstances, we need only rest as we wait for the baying crowd to shout their demand for even more killing, by way of state-sanctioned capital punishment!

In this regard, we know that as this barbarous cohort froths and bays for its share of blood – the troubles on our streets, in our homes and in our minds shall continue apace.

In truth and in fact, then, capital punishment is no panacea for the ills we face. If this nation needs one resolution for the New Year, it should be to reduce the level of violence.

Talk Shows Hosts have a “Higher Calling” to lift Level of National Debates

The freedom of expression which we welcome and are now free to enjoy here in The Bahamas must cause us to lift the level of debates on crucial national issues. Most right-thinking people would agree that we are losing sight of civility and humanity in our national debates and dialogue.

Even though we all should maintain a level of decency during debates, I would proffer that some professions have an even higher calling to do so. For example, some talk show hosts and those with similar social platforms engender verbal destruction, vitriolic anger and political tribalism rather than encourage objective and intelligent discussion.

Progress and freedom of expression at

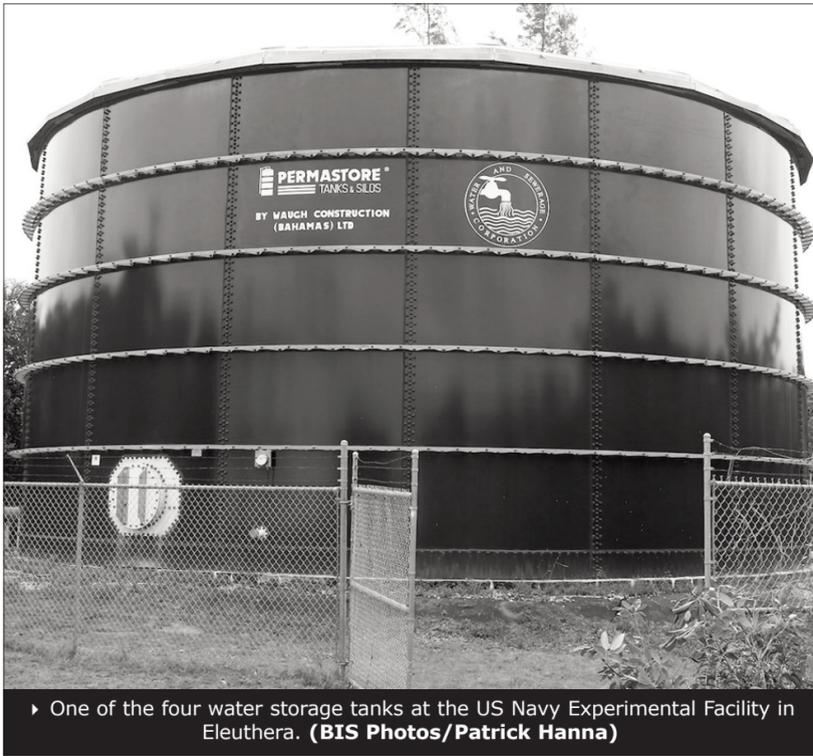
the national level, cornerstones of our development, are hammered out on the anvil of intelligent discussion, debates and even dissent.

Only “mental midgets” viciously and vociferously degrade a person who has a different opinion from theirs.

I continue to try to live by the creed that although I may disagree with you, I will defend to the death your right to your own opinion. I implore talk show hosts and others with a national platform to engender to live by a similar doctrine.

27th October 2018
Bishop Simeon B. Hall
Senior Pastor Emeritus
New Covenant Baptist Church

WSC Officials Toured Water Plant at Old Naval Base in Eleuthera



► One of the four water storage tanks at the US Navy Experimental Facility in Eleuthera. (BIS Photos/Patrick Hanna)



► Officials view the water storage plant at the US Navy Experimental Facility in Eleuthera. Shown from left: Thomas Desmangles, Distribution Operations Manager; the Adrian Gibson, WSC Executive Chairman; Cyprian Gibson, Assistant General Manager; and Elwood Donaldson, General Manager. (BIS Photos/Patrick Hanna)

ELEUTHERA, The Bahamas – Officials of the Water and Sewerage Corporation (WSC) inspected the water plant at the site of the former US Navy Experimental Facility in Eleuthera, Friday, December 21, 2018.

The plant supplies water for the settlements of Gregory Town, Hatchet Bay, James Cistern,

Governor's Harbour, Palmetto Point and Windermere Island. The facility holds four water tanks. Two are currently in operation. The purpose of the visit was to ensure that the plant is operating at its maximum capacity.

Adrian Gibson, Executive Chairman, WSC, said one of the tanks is in operation, one was recently refurbished, con-

sideration is being given to refurbish a third tank and there are plans to demolish the fourth tank.

"We are exploring costs and the possibility of completely bringing in a new tank. Two will carry the island. Each has a capacity of 420,000 gallons. If water shuts off for 2-3 days, Eleuthera would be good," said Mr. Gibson.

"The first tank was

recently done at a cost of \$220,000. This one [second tank] remains in operation and we're looking at some point to decommission it to do some restorative work, realign and refurbish it all together. It has some leaks at the base.

"We are going to demolish the fourth tank and use the space for something else. We are exploring the cost to repair

the third one and possibly bringing a new tank at a cost of \$400,000. We don't necessarily need a third, but it would be good to have because Eleuthera is expanding."

The present water storage capacity at the old navy facility is approximately 800,000 gallons. Water can be supplied for 4-5 days if there is an emergency; formerly it

was 1-2 days.

The corporation has plans to conduct similar inspection exercises in other Family Islands.

Elwood Donaldson, General Manager; Cyprian Gibson, Assistant General Manager and Thomas Desmangles, Distribution Operations Manager were also a part of the team who toured the water plant at the old naval base.

"Let's be transparent in 2019 On Oban," Says Darville

The Chairman of Save The Bays, Joseph Darville says, "with much consternation, we are learning that an EIA for the proposed Oban Industries has been completed, but will not at this time be made public for scrutiny. This, in itself sounds most fishy. Even an idiot, without the least understanding about our marine ecosystems, would realize that even the minimum incursion for establishing an oil refinery, storage facilities and mega ships birthing, even with the most sophisticated and modern machinery, would wreak havoc on some five ecosystems comprising the proposed areas. Presently, those areas are home to a multitude of varieties of sea life; all will all be wiped out with the very first application of dredging machinery."

Mr. Darville asked: "Why are we even enter-

taining any discussions related to such activity, when worldwide we are seeing dramatic departure from digging into the belly, bosom and breasts of Mother Earth to bring up outdated and damaging sources of energy? We should instead, like wise and sensible small nations are now doing, utilize the natural resources daily available to us to not only obtain energy for our own consumption, but also be in a position to supply it to other entities in the region.

"If we are in the very least concerned about leaving an environmentally sound and safe country for future generations, we must cease forthwith from selling their birthright for the proverbial pot of porridge. It would take one accident, explosion or oil spill to further destroy the area, as well as the entire extent of the south

shore of Grand Bahama. The putrid smells from the refineries will forever create health problems, resulting in deaths, across the entire island," he said.

"Finally, why are we venturing into the destruction of our natural protections against ever increasing and dramatic climate change effects by damaging or destroying the very first barriers against storms and rising seas? We tout the serious consequences on small island nations at the United Nations, yet at the same time we are inviting entities to come in and obliterate protections that they cannot impinge upon in other places. Greed and avarice bring these entities to our shores and we fall prey to their dangling trinkets and magnified false promises of great wealth. It simply must stop," said Mr. Darville.



GOVERNMENT NOTICES

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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

Valley Boys, New Year's Champions

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costume, and best step down.

Coming in third in the New Year's Day parade is the Shell Saxon Superstars with a score of 86.43.

The Saxon's theme was 'Join Da Party-Let's Celebrate your Festive Occasion!' The Saxons also took home best free dance and best Shirley Street Performance.

This group place fifth in the Boxing Day parade.

In fourth position is One Family with an overall score of 85.27. Genesis came in fifth place and received a penalty of 20 points.

The Music Makers and the Prodigal Sons did not participate in yesterday's parade.

The unofficial results also indicate that the winner in the B category is Colours with an overall score of 76.47. This group also won the Boxing Day Parade as well.

Colours Entertainment received a penalty of 0.20 points.

Colours' theme was 'Festivals of The Bahamas.' The group also won best overall costume, best Shirley Street performance, best choreography, best lead costume, best music, best free dance and best performance.

Coming in second in the B category is the Original Congos, with a score of 74.17. The Original Congos came down Bay Street with the theme, 'The World of Communication.'

The Original Congos won best banner, and best step down.

In third is the Fancy Dancers with the theme 'The Western Frontier' scoring some 71.46 points.

The Redland soldiers came in fourth place with a score of 67.04.

The Chipping Knights and The New Vikings were disqualified from this year's parade.

Dion Johnson, a Valley Boys supporter and Marshall

expressed his excitement with this year's win.

"We are elated about the Valley Boys victory here tonight. We worked hard in the shack and it is a tribute to our past leader Gus Cooper, because he worked hard and instilled a work ethic in us to make the Valley Boys what they are today.

"At the End of the day, between Boxing Day and New Year's is just seven days. They get to celebrate for seven days, but The Valley Boys get to celebrate for a year. Seven days between Boxing Day and New Year's, but The Valley Boys are the champions for the entire year.

Despite the turn out for the 2019 New Year's Day parade being not as impressive as that of the 2018 Boxing Day parade, Minister of Youth Sports and Culture Lanisha Rolle said that she is still satisfied with the turn out.

"There is always less for the New Year's parade, Boxing Day is the main parade, but tonight I am very pleased to see the amount of persons that are here compared to last year.

"I think last year we had some rain as well for New Year's, but the turn out you see is very good here in Rawson Square and straight along; so we're really getting the support, we just need to keep that energy going and we need to continue to be innovative, I believe," said the Minister.

"We're going to look at improving in cooperation with the JCNP whatever regulations to make sure the parade continues to flow smoothly and we would get more people to come out and simply support, but I am very pleased with the turn out here today," Mrs. Rolle said.

According to JCNP officials, the official Boxing Day results will be released within 48 hours.



Images show various groups and costumes displayed during the New Year's Day Parade

