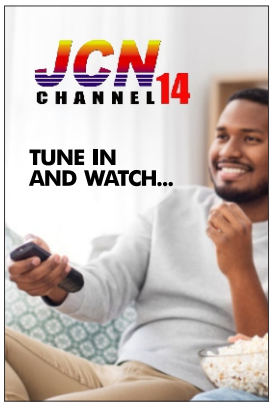




The Bahama Journal

Quo Vadis, Bahamas?



VOL.36 NO.6

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75 CENTS

UNCERTAINTY ABOUNDS

There is great consternation in the public service over the proposed reshuffle of the Cabinet of The Bahamas. In addition to the movement of some Ministers, there is also uncertainty on how Permanent Secretaries would be affected.

In time for the opening of a new session of the Parliament in early October, Prime Minister Philip Davis is expected to reassign some Ministers and Permanent Secretaries to reset his government to carry it into general elections.

A source close to the Prime Minister told the Journal, "Mr. Davis is reacting to significant complaints from stalwarts of the governing Progressive Liberal Party and the disillusionment in the general population over the activities of Ministries and their day-to-day administration."

The Ministries to be most affected by the reshuffle are Works and Utilities, Labour and Immigration, Agriculture and Local Government, Housing and Foreign Affairs and the Public Service.

It is now well known that Minister Alfred Sears will be moved to Immigration from the Ministry of Works. While Sears has fulfilled some promises made in that Ministry, it is believed that he is uncomfortable with the operations at the level of civil servants.

"That Ministry needs to be cleaned up," said the source.

There is no doubt that the Immigration portfolio is being taken away from Keith Bell mainly because of the faux pas made relating to presenting citizenship papers to a Haitian family at a funeral. While Minister Bell did not break any law, it was a bad judgment, which he has reportedly acknowledged.

Story Cont. Pg. 2

Reported Toddler Abduction Not True

50 year-old was Armed for Alleged Abduction

LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

Police issued another stern warning to Bahamians and residents regarding false reports being made to the police on serious matters. For the second time in a week, police have had to report that incidents reported to them were in fact not as reported.

On Tuesday, August 29, what was reported as the quick thinking and actions of a mother of a two-year-old girl, to thwart an attempt by a 50-year-old man to abduct her child turned out not to be the case.

The accused man was arrested by police shortly after 9 a.m. at a plaza in Southwestern New Providence, a police report indicated.

Police said the mother and her daughter were at a local supermarket, when the man, unknown to them, attempted to push the cart, that the child was sitting in, away from the mother and remove the little girl. However, the mother was able to hold onto her child and drew the attention of the store's security who alerted authorities.

But police on Wednesday evening reported that "the investigations into the alleged attempted child stealing of a two-year-old female toddler that was reported to police on Tuesday, August 29, 2023 has been completed.

Story Cont. Pg. 2



Cynthia "Mother" Pratt

Mother Pratt Becomes New GG

KEILE CAMPBELL
Journal Staff Writer

From Over-the-Hill to Mount Fitzwilliam, the life of Cynthia "Mother" Pratt has been an inspiration for many and today she's expected to be sworn-in as the 12th governor general of The Bahamas. The swearing-in ceremony will be held at Government House on Mount Fitzwilliam at 9:00 a.m.

Prime Minister Philip Davis announced recently that Mother Pratt will become the new Governor-General and he recommended her for the role as "endowed with service" – particularly the 15 years of dedication, serving the constituents of St. Cecilia.

In an interview with The Bahama Journal, Mother Pratt shared her emotional and spiritual response upon discovering she would become the next Governor-General.

"I just want to help to build lives. That has been me all these years. I haven't changed and I'm too old to change now. And so, I believe that since I've been around in your generation, the generation prior to you and I'm in this generation, I think I know pretty much the pulse of my people," former Deputy Prime Minister Cynthia 'Mother' Pratt said.

Story Cont. Pg. 4

BGCSE Results Decline

Poor Performance shows learning loss and long-standing issues

KEILE CAMPBELL
Journal Staff Writer

The results of the 2023 Bahamas Junior Certificate (BJC) and Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) national examinations have been released and despite improvements in some areas, only 10.9 percent of Bahamian students who took the BGCSE exams got a 'C' grade or above in five subjects, while only 5.62 percent received a 'C' grade or above in critical subjects such as Math, English and Sciences.

This was revealed during a press conference on Wednesday held by the Ministry of Education and

Technical and Vocational Training and the statistical data of results was released.

According to Education Minister Glennys Hanna-Martin, the examination performance showed the direct effects of the learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic which was compounded by long-standing issues with the education system.

"Yes, it is very concerning, and it would be interesting to see what the performance has been in the last 10 years, 15 years. Only a percentage attain these BGCSEs," Minister Hanna-Martin explained.



Education Minister Glennys Hanna-Martin

Story Cont. Pg. 4

Dengue Cases Increase

DESTINY JOHNSON
Journal Staff Writer

In less than a week, cases of dengue fever in The Bahamas have gone up to 21, with one of those infected a child.

Just last Thursday, Health and Wellness Minister Dr. Michael Darville, during a press conference at the Ministry of Health, told reporters that there were 16 cases of dengue confirmed in New Providence with a suspected case in Abaco awaiting test results.

At the time, the minister, also noted that three cases were in hospital with one person in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

Dr. Darville, in an update Tuesday, said this is a different strain of dengue from what the country experienced in 2011.

"Of the 21 cases, what is concerning the Ministry of Health is 16 of those came back serotype positive for Type 3 Dengue," he told reporters.



Health and Wellness Minister Dr. Michael Darville

"In 2011, we had a situation where we had Dengue and mainly it was serotypes one and two.

"We are concerned because if you had Dengue in the past and you have Dengue

with serotype 3, there's a strong possibility that you would have a more severe reaction and possibly result in hospitalization and that's why the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the Department of Environmental Health, are working so diligently to ensure that we educate the general population on precautionary measures and to ensure that we stop the breeding in those areas where cases have been identified."

He said cases have been confined to the southern and eastern areas of New Providence with now five dengue patients in hospital.

"We spoke at our press conference about brackish water, but we realized that the majority of complications and spread potential by the vector is basically in the environment," he added.

"So, protection is the key element for us to protect our environment, to ensure that we do not have these breeding sites around our homes, to reduce the spread as a result of overbreeding of the Aedes aegypti mosquito.

"Yes, at the last report indicated that one person was an ICU.

Story Cont. Pg. 2

Dengue Cases Increase

Story Cont. Pg. 1

“That one person is now on the medical ward, thank God.

“But I also want to report that we have five cases in hospital now.

“Of the five, one is a pediatric case. We’re monitoring all of them closely and none are in the intensive care.”

Dr Darville encouraged residents to practice preventative measures to reduce breeding of these mosquitos.

“Yes, fogging will continue, but the environmental experts made it very clear that fogging is only one element, fogging basically addressing the mosquito that is airborne”, he said.

“But if we still have breeding, if we fog today and we do not address the breeding sites, we end up having the same situation the following day.

“So, it’s important for residents to walk around the home to look for areas of potential breeding ground.

“Turn over those empty containers. Make sure that you have insect repellent and try to protect yourself with long sleeve as well as long pants.

“We know that the mosquito is very active from dusk to dawn, but it can be active during the day, but they are the most indicative signs of when you can get a potential.

“Again, the Bahamian population needs to understand the importance of protecting our own environment to reduce the breeding of this mosquito, which is the mosquito responsible for the spread as the vector of dengue fever.”

Symptoms of dengue fever include headache, fever, nausea, vomiting, rash, aches and pains such as eye pain – typically behind the eyes, muscle, bone and joint pain.

Persons experiencing fever and two or more of these symptoms should see a healthcare provider.

Reported Toddler Abduction Not True

Story Cont. Pg. 1

A thorough investigation, coupled with the use of surveillance footage from the immediate area of the reported incident, confirmed that the incident is NOT as reported," the police report said.

Just last Thursday, police had to issue a similar report after a 12-year-old girl in the Coconut Grove area alleged that while on Fourth Street, she was approached by a light skin, bald head male, dressed in a blue hooded jacket, who attempted to lure or abduct her.

The reports from the pre-teen caused a raucous as residents in the area assumed it was the recently released sex offender Sidney Cooper and descended at his

residence on Fifth Street with weapons in hand.

Police had noted on the day in question that the alleged perpetrator was NOT Sidney Cooper, whom police also said was taken from his residence, escorted by police, into protective custody.

A day later, police reported that "after a thorough investigation, coupled with the use of advance technology and surveillance from the immediate area of the reported incident, it has been concluded that the incident is NOT as reported."

Police also advised parents to pay close attention to their children at all times and to seek the assistance of a responsible adult when unable to watch or accompany their children.

Air Conditioning Issues Delayed Uriah McPhee’s Reopening

KEILE CAMPBELL
Journal Staff Writer

Uriah McPhee Primary School was expected to reopen on Thursday for the new school year after reopening was postponed because of issues with air conditioning and environmental sanitation, according to Acting Director of Education Dominique McCartney-Russell.

“It is expected, I haven’t gotten an update yet, but it is expected that school will open for Uriah tomorrow [Thursday]. Staggered, of course because we want to orient the children and particularly the newer ones into the environment. So, hopefully by tomorrow we will have those issues addressed,” Director McCartney-Russell said during an interview.

“Well, what we were told by the contractor is that some of the issues that we thought were dealt with, were not dealt with. They discovered some other things, and so that meant that they had to do some work in the preschool area, but they also discovered that one of the A/C units was not working.

“The A/C unit was actually on order, one

of the contractors said. But while the structural contractor was working, whatever he did, it was a lot of dust. It created some issues in terms of the cleanliness of the environment, and then of course, as a result of the A/C not working, it was also very hot. And so, they would’ve used the two days to clean and then he’s mitigating the issues with the A/C unit.”

It was reported that as dispute between teachers at Uriah McPhee and Deputy Director of Education Janice Moss concerning the school not being prepared for reopening, according to Bahamas Union of Teachers (BUT) President Belinda Wilson, teachers, she said, were against Ms. Moss’ suggestion of staggered learning where students come in batches.

She added that the deputy director of education should not interfere with what the administration and teachers had planned to do.

A statement from the Ministry of Education and Technical and Vocational Training issued an apology to parents, students and teachers for being unable to accommodate students.

Most school throughout The Bahamas reopened earlier this week.

Budding Meteorologists Selected to Attend COP28

KEILE CAMPBELL
Journal Staff Writer

Though the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference, otherwise known as COP28, is a few months away, two of the top performing male and female meteorology trainees of the Niccolo P. Small Meteorology Cadet Programme discovered during the closing ceremony of the summer-long program that they will be joining the traveling party from The Bahamas expected to attend COP28.

Donnell Saunders – recipient of the Kenneth Lightbourne Award and Kendell Isaacs – recipient of the spirit of Donna Duncombe award, expressed their feelings in the moment.

“Man, it feels good. It feels good. My hard work really paid off, and now we’re going to Dubai,” said Kendell.

“It was great learning something new and going off to Freeport to see the meteorology center.

You know, just to know these things – especially in an area where we actually do get very severe weather, like hurricanes and stuff like that, it’s great to know these things now and I can also make this into a career.

“I really just needed something new to do in the summer, honestly, and I did grow to like it right away.”

Donnell, a teacher herself who signed up for the program after a co-worker recommended it, said, “The program was very exciting. Our lecturer, Mr. Basil Dean, presented information to us in a way that was so exciting and that he piqued our curiosity. The field trips that he took us on even made things more personable.

You know, it was not something we just saw on TV, we got to interact personally with the personnel in those different areas; the Met Office in Grand Bahama, the Air Traffic Control Office here in New Providence and in Grand Bahama.”

“I am very grateful and honoured that they saw it fit to bestow this award upon me, which got me an invite to the climate conference in Dubai with the Prime Minister, so that is something to look forward to,” she added.

During his address to the budding

meteorologists, Prime Minister Philip Davis warned that it may be sooner than they might think when they put their expertise to use.

In an interview, he gave a preview of what he plans to address the world with world leaders and revealed that though he has many ideas, he will first converge with other Caribbean leaders so they may go to COP28 with one voice and message.

“Carbon footprints are not being lessened, in fact, to me it seems to be increasing. I think penalties have to be exacted on oil producing countries or oil producing companies. Maybe a 2 percent tax can go into a fund to help our Small Island Developing States to fend itself from the consequence of climate change.

For example, we may need to consider whether or not legal action can be taken against what I call, the ‘huge emitters,’ industrialized countries, and or their multinational corporations and are contributing to carbon monoxide in the air and the discernment, whether there’s some liability there. At the moment, we are awaiting an advisory advice from the International Court of Justice to see whether or not we can make countries responsible for emissions,” Mr. Davis said.

The prime minster listed a litany of other matters he wanted to bring to the world stage, particularly access to climate disaster funding and how countries qualify for this funding.

“There are a lot of other issues dealing with mitigation, adaptation, losses and damage, liability, in respect to that, climate financing, ensuring that a proper architecture for accessing funding is crafted so that countries like ours will not be shut out from financing because from what they deem to be, we are a ‘graduated’ country because [of] our per capita income is such that we are considered a middle-income country and therefore, we don’t have access to grants and the kind of concessionary lending and the fight is to change that model to have more emphasis on the country’s vulnerability rather than it’s per capita income.” COP28 will take place in Dubai from November 30 to December 12.

UNCERTAINTY ABOUNDS

Story Cont. Pg. 1

The Minister of State for Public Service Hon. Pia Glover Rolle is expected to be promoted to a substantive Minister and could also take the Ministry of Labour. She has worked under the present Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Public Service Hon. Frederick Mitchell for the past two years. However, most observers know that she was given full authority there as Mitchell has been extremely busy and engaged in Foreign Affairs matters. It is clear to all and sundry that Mitchell has reestablished The Bahamas as a big player in multilateral matters in the Caribbean and the Americas.

The source says that Minister of

Transport and Housing Jobeth Davis is to be given the portfolio of Aviation now held by Deputy Prime Minister Chester Cooper who is also Minister of Tourism and Investments.

The State of the Environment is of major concern to the Prime Minister, according to the source. How that Ministry will be affected by the reshuffle is not known, but there is aggregation for decisive action to bring about the improvement in the maintenance of the environment in New Providence in particular.

“There are intercessory prayers going on in many Ministries among public servants for the removal or reassignment of a number of Permanent Secretaries. The Prime Minister is aware of some of them who are obstructionists and mean spirited and who are holding back progress,” said the source.

There are a number of Permanent Secretaries who are at the age of retirement or past that age who still wish to remain in the service.

Over the next several days many of them will know their fate.



PUBLIC NOTICE

The Parliamentary
Registration Department
(Voters Registration)

will resume on Monday
28 September, 2023
from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
& Saturday’s 10:00 am
to 4:00 pm.

Acting Parliamentary Commissioner

Social Services Helps Students Prepare for Back to School

DESTINY JOHNSON
Journal Staff Reporter

As most children are back in the classroom, the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development is continuing to ensure students are ready for the classroom.

Minister of State for the Social Services Lisa Rahming said school assistance is a yearly commitment for the ministry.

“As we always do, you know, persons were given uniform assistance,” she said. “Of course, that and of course the I would speak to the Urban Renewal part of it.

“Every day they are in the schools helping with the kids, crossing the street, talking to the teachers and ensuring that they’re safe and they’re usually there during the whole day.

“We have police officers from Urban Renewal and so our job is to ensure that the kids are going to school and that they’re getting the proper care that they need in terms of supplies and books.

“We have everything that we have distributed to them, and so yes, and we’re looking forward for a fruitful happy first year back to school.”

She asserts that the Department of Social Services will continue to assist until all students are equipped with all the materials they need.



Minister of State for the Social Services Lisa Rahming

PM’s Wife Explains Warning Signs of Domestic Violence

DESTINY JOHNSON
Journal Staff Writer

As reports of domestic violence and violence against women and girls are on the rise in the country and around the world, Wife of the Prime Minister Anne-Marie Davis explained the signs of an abuser during a rally on Saturday.

The South Bahamas Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists Women’s Ministry Department held a motorcade and rally under the theme: “Wolves in sheep’s clothing, one voice, end it now.”

Mrs. Davis was the keynote speaker during the event and warned attendees to pay attention to the patterns of domestic violence.

“Domestic violence follows a pattern. Remember the word a pattern?” she said. “The pattern of physical or emotional abusive behaviors, which is done to maintain control over an intimate partner or even a family member. They often abuse us.

“They use fear, guilt, shame, intimidation, techniques to keep victims under control. Abusers often

escalate from verbal abuse and threats to physical violence. The beatings. Stressing you out making you sick. Beatings escalating all the time until sometimes you die.”

Mrs. Davis also expressed her concerns about teenage relationship abuse that she said is also on the rise.

“So, I would specifically look at teen violence and teen relationships and indicators that you could use to spot these wolves in sheep clothing,” Mrs. Davis said.

Story Cont. Pg. 4



Wife of the Prime Minister Anne-Marie Davis



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BGCSE Results Decline

Poor Performance shows learning loss and long-standing issues

Story Cont. Pg. 1

“We have had ongoing issues and signals about performance in our schools. What is different this time, I believe, is that we have determined to go to the fundamentals of learning at preprimary, primary, the interventions at junior high, at senior high. So, if you have a student at grade 10 and he did BJs and didn’t get it, we will do interventions with that student if there are literacy issues, he might be special ed, we don’t know. And so, what we are doing now is bringing a significant and specific eye to individual student performance.”

Minister Hanna-Martin explained that the purpose for the learning loss assessment testing and the collaboration with Renaissance Learning was to see the status and severity of learning loss of every student at every level in the public sector.

She expanded on what is being done to a matter that she has commonly referred to as a “crisis.”

“What we seek to do now is to intervene. So, where there’s a learning loss issue, which is a phenomenon, then we will seek to close that gap. Sometimes the gaps are just historic passing [a student] through the system. And that’s happened a lot in education. So, we want to put a stop to that. We don’t want a 17-year-old leaving school and saying, ‘I can hardly read,’” Minister Hanna-Martin said.

Mother Pratt Becomes New GG

Story Cont. Pg. 1

“Some time ago it had been rumored, and I think the fact that, I’ve been around for some time and I know people, when you, when they start talking about things, they must have heard it somewhere. But it was a little while ago. And even then, I thought about it and I wanted to know whether, if it happens, do you think you can make a difference? And I thought of the many concerns that I faced when I was a member of parliament and so there’s much need, and so, you have to take it one step at a time.”

Prime Minister Davis, in his communication to Bahamians when he announced the recommendation of Mother Pratt for the role of governor general, said her appointment will be accepted as a representation for all Bahamians.

Mother Pratt, who came from humble beginnings, said this new role sent a message to the next generation.

“I would like to think that it’s a motivator for our young people, particularly the masses, who are still down there and giving them hope, that they believe that if it happened for Mother Pratt, it can happen for me. That’s so important, because today, we hardly see people whom you can” she added.

“So, you’ve been working among your people for some time, you know the pulse of them, you know the needs, and so I’m able to address those needs. And this was during the time I was a member of parliament, and so even when I moved on up the ladder, I was able to deal with the people because I had already knew what to expect and what not to expect.”

Recognized as the first appointed female deputy prime minister as well as the first female minister of national security during her career as a frontline politician, Mother Pratt sees herself drawing from those experiences in fulfilling her new role.

“You know, you learn a lot through politics, representing the people for so many years, because what made it easier for me in a sense is that the people here where I live, is who I represented. And so there were people who I know most of them, I know their needs, so I can address those needs, you see, I know what to do, particularly to our young men, and that’s where my heart really is with our young men. Because if I can reach them, I know that’s half the problem solved. And so that’s why I believe being a person who deals with people as a whole,” Mother Pratt said.

Upon having heard officially about her appointment, Mother Pratt said she gave thanks to God, believing that “He is the one who sets up and He takes down.” She also expressed her gratefulness and appreciation to the prime minister as well as the Bahamian people.

“We are intervening at every step of the way, to ensure as best we can. It’s a Herculean task what’s ahead of us. It’s huge, because we have historic educational deficiencies and now the learning loss issue. So its huge, but we have committed, we will put the resources there, the charge has been given to teachers, we’ve brought in special ed teachers for the remediation.”

She also revealed that not every student is going to be academically-inclined, but that is not a negative indictment on them.

“Not every child in this is going to get a BGCSE in physics, or we’d like them to get least get English and Maths, but not every child is what we may call ‘academic’ in that way,” Minister Hanna-Martin said.

“So, what we seek to do is to find the talents and strengths of that child to ensure that they are given the appropriate training and certifications. So, they can go out into the workplace and probably make plenty, plenty money, because they do, but they’re able to realize their potential and their gifts and their talents.”

Data revealed by Acting Director of Education Dominique McCartney-Russell showed, far as Bahamian students who took BJs and students who took BGCSEs, levels are returning to what they were pre-pandemic, with 39,954 candidates awarded BJC grades, an increase of 12.85 percent from last year.

The number is short, however, of 2019 when 40,701 grades were awarded.

With regard to BGCSE, the case was the same in that though gradually the education system is returning to pre-covid levels, with 18,716 candidates awarded grades, this is a 6.59 percent increase from 2022 when 17,559 candidates were awarded BGCSE grades, however, falls greatly short of 23,810 grades awarded in 2019.

Pm’s Wife Explains Warning Signs of Domestic Violence

Story Cont. Pg. 3

“Does he criticize what you wear? Does he criticize what you do? Does he criticize your friends? Does he act jealous when you talk to others? Does he act jealous when you talk to your friends. Trying to control who you talk to. Does he control who you go out with? Does he get angry or violent very easily.”

“Young people, listen, these are the warning signs. Get out. Get out. OK, now.”

Senate President J. Lashell Adderley, who is a practicing Seventh Day Adventist, was also in attendance.

She said it is essential for civic organizations to get involved with important causes.

“Oh, it’s exceptionally important to denounce all forms of violence in The Bahamas,” she said.

“We live in a country where violence against women and girls in particular continues unabated and there is exceptional need for the church to take a lead in issues such as this.

“It’s a complex issue. I know it’s a multifaceted issue. I know, but it’s vitally important that the church steps out and the church advocates. The church brings awareness to this issue and to ensure that our women and our girls and people generally live in a very safe society.”

Senator Adderley said she hopes more denominations will get involved in the cause to end violence against women and girls.

PM’s Wife Explains Warning Signs of Domestic Violence

Story Cont. Pg. 3

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Senator Adderley said she hopes more denominations will get involved in the cause to end violence against women and girls.

She asserts that the Department of Social Services will continue to assist until all students are equipped with all the materials they need.

Former Corrections Officer Granted \$20K Bail

LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

A retired corrections officer was granted bail in the sum of \$20,000 on Monday after his attorney Bjorn Ferguson made an emergency bail application to the Supreme Court.

Sixty-six-year-old Jeffrey Sherman was arraigned in the Magistrate’s Court after he allegedly shot his 62-year-old girlfriend Bridgette Ingraham during a domestic dispute last Thursday.

According to police reports, sometime around 10:30 p.m. on August 24, Sherman and Ingraham, while at Ingraham’s home on Sapodilla Boulevard, Pinewood Gardens, got into a verbal altercation; subsequently Sherman produced a firearm and shot her to both arms. He then left the home and fled the area in an unknown direction. Ingraham was transported to

the hospital via EMS.

When he appeared before Magistrate Racquel Whymys, Sherman was charged with

two counts of attempted murder as during the ordeal he also allegedly attempted to shoot Ingraham’s son Sean Pugh; he was also charged with possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life.

Sherman was not required to enter a plea and although the Magistrate denied him bail during the arraignment, Justice Cheryl Grant Thompson granted bail in an emergency hearing. Sherman must sign in at the Carmichael Road Police Station before 6 p.m. three times a week – Monday, Wednesday and Friday. He will also be electronically monitored.

Sherman returns to court on October 31 where he will be served with a voluntary bill of indictment which will fast track his case to the Supreme Court.



PUBLIC NOTICE

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL PLANNING

The public is hereby notified that an application for Preliminary Support of Application Approval (PSA/83/2023), on behalf of Eslette G. Kerr C/O Higgs and Johnson Counsel and Attorneys-at-Law, is presently being reviewed by The Department of Physical Planning for presentation to the Town Planning Committee.

The applicant is seeking planning approval to rezone portions of Lots 12 and 13 in the Ocean Beach Colony Subdivision from Multi-family residential to Commercial. The site is located on the southern side of Coral Boulevard in the Coral Harbour neighborhood. The site is approximately 25,000sq.ft and a residential building currently exists on the site. The applicant proposes to rezone the site to Commercial for the use of a professional/medical office.

A public meeting will be held 21st September, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Hearing Room of the Department of Physical Planning, JFK Drive, for all interested parties to discuss and address planning issues related to the proposed Commercial development.

Preliminary plans for the proposed development are available for viewing at the Department of Physical Planning, located in the Aventura Plaza on John F. Kennedy Drive, during working hours of 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Interested persons and organizations are invited to review the information on file and provide written comments prior to the meeting. Comments should be directed to the Director of Physical Planning within twenty-one (21) days of the date of this notice. Submissions can be made via P.O Box N-1611, Nassau Bahamas. Further inquiries can be made to the Director via Tel. (242) 322-7550/1/1 OR (242) 328-3202 or DEPTPHYSICALPLANNING@BAHAMAS.GOV.BS

Signed
Charles B. Zonicle, Director
Department of Physical Planning

@departmentofphysicalplanning

ENEAS FILES

TRANSFORMING FROM A FISHING VILLAGE TYPE ECONOMY TO A 21 ST CENTURY SERVICE ECONOMY - PART I



By Godfrey Eneas

After World War II, The Bahamas started to maintain official tourism data in 1949 and recorded 32,000 visitors. From the second half of the 20 th Century to the first two decades of the 21 st Century, The Bahamas visitor arrivals are expected to escalate to eight million. By 1986,

Tourism had become a billion-dollar industry and by 2003 it represented 51% of the Bahamian economy. Today, it has mushroomed to 60%.

The growth and development of the industry has increased over the years because of the leadership in the public and private sectors. Public policy has established the environment of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The foundation of a rejuvenated tourism industry commenced when Stafford L. Sands who was later knighted and became Sir Stafford, became Chairman of the Bahamas Development Board which was established in 1914.

During 1900s, Tourism had been identified as a potential economic development tool from as early as 1851 when the House of Assembly passed the Tourism Encouragement Act, which was followed by a second Act in 1854. Getting visitors to the island was a challenge during that time so the government entered a relationship with Cunard Cruise Line in 1859 and two years later (1861) commissioned the construction of the Royal Victoria Hotel.

During the early 1900s, there were numerous initiatives to kick start tourism, i.e. Henry Flagler's Hotel Colonial which was the first beachfront hotel and later became the British Colonial Hotel.

In the 1920s, the Hotel Fort Montagu was built.

Between the 1850s and 1930s, the colony of The Bahamas had to face economic setbacks like blockade running in the 1860s, a decline in export agriculture with demise in the production of cotton, pineapples, sisal, tomatoes and citrus; rum running in 1920s - the Prohibition Era; an economic shock like the Great Depression and the collapse of the sponge industry in 1938.

In the burgeoning years of Tourism Development, airlift became a major issue. Chalk's seaplane service started in 1919 and Pan Am in 1929. Both airlines inaugurated flights between Florida and The Bahamas.

The Sir Stafford Sands and UBP Tourism Era When Sir Stafford took over the reins of Tourism, the industry was essentially a three-to-four- month seasonal activity which appealed primarily to wealthy Americans from the New England states and Europeans. In conjunction with Tourism, the government decided to exploit the wealth opportunities which would emanate from a Post World War II economy and entered the world of Financial Services.

The task facing Sir Stafford was developing a sustainable tourism industry that could evolve into a year-round economic activity. The post World War II tourism product was centered around sun, sand and sea, with the eventual addition of casino gambling in Nassau and Freeport. Land development played a significant role as land developers were responsible for substantial amounts of foreign direct investment and real estate companies like H.G. Christie were able to attract investors/developers like:

- Sir Harry Oakes - Oakes Estates, New

Providence

- E.P. Taylor - Lyford Cay Development/New Providence Development Company
- Wallace Groves - Grand Bahama Port Authority/Hawksbill Creek Agreement, 1955
- Billy Butlin - West End, Grand Bahama
- Austin Levy - Eleuthera Properties, Hatchet Bay
- Arthur Vining Davis - South Eleuthera Properties.

The UBP was now set to launch a new tourism product as well as launch The Bahamas as the "Switzerland of the Caribbean" for wealth management. In order to revitalize the product, the government embarked on an infrastructure program commencing with the relocation of the Produce Exchange to Potter's Cay along with the creation of a freight and passenger terminal to facilitate shipping from the Family Islands.

The slaughter and ice houses respectively were moved to Oakes Field. A modern abattoir was built in order to improve sanitary conditions in slaughtering animals. The Department of Agriculture, which was situated at the second story of the Fish Market was moved to East Bay Street. The straw vendors who occupied the Public Market were temporarily settled in Rawson Square, at Woodes Rodgers Wharf and elsewhere until a new Straw Market could be built after the Public Market was destroyed by fire.

During this early re-entry into Tourism, the model projected a cultural oriented product as Bahamian music was a big part of the product with night clubs on Bay Street (Spider Web, Dirty Dick's, Big Bamboo) and Over-the-Hill (Cat and the Fiddle, Silver Slippers, Zanzibar, and Conch Shell) featuring Bahamian entertainers like Freddie Munnings, Peanuts Taylor, Blind Blake, George Symonette, and Paul Meers.

Another feature of the product was the environment, as Americans would tour in horse and carriages to view the colonial structures which depicted the government offices, forts (Montagu, Charlotte and Fincastle) and various residences on Shirley Street and around Downtown Nassau along East and West Hill Streets.

The Bahamas was the only locale in the Caribbean where British Royalty had a presence. The Duke and Duchess of Windsor resided here when the Duke was appointed the Royal Governor after abdicating from the British throne as Edward VIII.

This was the tourism product which the Sands Development Board was able to present to the world. With an advertising program that featured Bahamian entertainers and the Royal Bahamas Police Force Band on European promotional tours, the world bought The Bahamas as a destination. Year-round tourism became a reality and in 1968, and The Bahamas welcomed its one millionth visitor.

The United Bahamian Party (UBP) era came to an end on January 10 th , 1967 when Lynden O. Pindling led the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) to victory in the general election.

(Next week we will continue with Part II -- The Pindling Years).

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The Bahama Journal
Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

Kimaley Jones
Chief Executive Officer

Kristy Stubbs
Chief Operating Officer

E D I T O R I A L

The Transfer of Inefficiency

The impending announcement of a Cabinet reshuffle in The Bahamas has become a table topic throughout the country. Whenever it comes and wherever a sitting Minister is shuffled to should make a difference in the overall scheme of things.

Two years ago, when the Davis administration came to office, the composition of the Cabinet seemed fine to most political observers. Then we saw missteps and bad judgments on the part of just a few Ministers.

Now Prime Minister Philip Davis is reacting to public demands to make some changes. However, he has to show that the reshuffle is not just musical chairs, but about a committed effort to bring about new ideas for governance and policy changes which could resonate positively in The Bahamas.

Given the Prime Minister's easy-going manner and his inability to create division in the ranks of the Cabinet, no one will be fired. The electorate though, is hoping for a heavier hand or for the leader to demand a higher level of performance on the part of some Ministers.

There is no doubt that a few have dropped the ball and created unnecessary embarrassment for the administration. While Ministers are not supposed to be micromanaging in their portfolios, they must insist that the policies of the government are carried out in an efficient and effective manner.

There are far too many instances where issues can be addressed and resolved with a Minister insisting on a higher level of productivity on the part of some civil servants.

It is our view that a Cabinet reshuffle would not make any fundamental difference if an ineffective or incompetent Minister is sent to another Ministry.

The policies of the Government should be implemented with speed and clarity no matter where the Ministers are assigned.

We cannot condone the transfer of inefficiency. You either have the capacity to perform or you don't.

If a Minister does not have what it takes to get public officers in his/her Ministry to deliver, those officers must be removed from their positions in the public's interest.

The Bahamian people want some simple things: streets that are clean, potholes fixed on a timely basis, hospitals and clinics that deliver good services, schools that work, affordable electricity, telecommunication services that are reliable, a reduction in the cost of living and the maintenance of law and order which brings about the reduction in crime.

In addition, Bahamians want Ministers who are responsive and not those who duck and dodge the mundane issues that must be attended to.

There is the popular complaint that some Permanent Secretaries and senior officials do not respond to or acknowledge letters, frustrate the public by not accepting telephone calls and are disrespectful to taxpayers who pay their salaries.

While the Prime Minister has an excellent record of accountability and transparency and is trusted by the general public, a few Ministers, after two years, have not shown that they have the capacity for the tasks at hand.

There is a need for continuity in governance in The Bahamas. The present administration is no doubt up to the task. However, we invoke the words spoken by Sir Lynden Pindling in 1970: "If you can't fish, cut bait or get the hell out of the boat." Prime Minister Davis might well use the same lines to some of his colleagues.

We certainly hope that the changes in some of the portfolios would give the government a boost in confidence by the people who matter, the voters of The Bahamas.

VISION
By Lester Turnquest



REALLY??!!

Abortion has been an emotional and controversial issue for all of our lives. I cannot help but chuckle at those pastors who have opposed it with such vehemence. They cannot

get pregnant or face the challenges and effects of the same. They will never be faced with having to choose pregnancy, or university, pregnancy or career, pregnancy or a deformed

or sick baby. I would not want to abort my baby, but it is not my call!! To arrogate to us men control over a woman's body relegates them to second class citizens. They know what they want and can decide what is best for them.

First, we must note that at home, and abroad, the anti-abortion charge is led by men. MEN!!

None of whom has ever been pregnant, nor can they ever become pregnant. It is the height of arrogance and presumptuousness for us to tell women what to do with their bodies.

Women are not cattle, nor are they chattel. Women should choose how they would wish to live, and ought to be free to choose whether, (or not) they would seek to abort a fetus. Clearly there would have to be guidelines, so that viable babies are not deprived of life. I do not believe that life begins at

conception, however.

Of course, The Bahamas can hold a plebiscite so that the political directorate can seek guidance on the issue. Anyone who asserts that rape victims cannot have an abortion is completely off the reservation and gives up any semblance of common sense or credibility. How could it make sense to decree that a rape victim carries her rapist's child; or indeed carry to term a pregnancy resulting from incest?

We are populated with amazing women who are perfectly capable of steering the community on the issue of abortion. I fear that those men who are braying that they know best for women, are going to incur the wrath of our women. A perilous space to occupy. Are those guardians of morality going to feed, and care for unwanted children? I think not! Please let it make sense. It is, after all, a matter of choice.

Ministry of Works Gets New Equipment

DESTINY JOHNSON
Journal Staff Writer

The Ministry of Works have acquired new heavy-duty equipment for continued road maintenance and flood mitigation for the first time in over 20 years.

Minister of Works and Utilities Alfred Sears said the road equipment cost a total of \$400,000.

"This is the first time in 20 years I'm advised that the ministry has gotten a large inventory of tools to deal with road repair, road redevelopment and behind me, we have a 426 backhoe, a 375 air compressor as well as a skid steer, and these are vital tools," he said on Monday.

"Currently, the ministry relies on a number of contractors, but there needs to be the capacity within the ministry itself so that it could be more nimble.

"It can respond to emergency needs much more quickly and efficiently, as well as utilizing the road contractors."

In addition to the machines, the ministry has also hired 25 additional staff for road construction.

"Young people, who will have an opportunity to pursue a career in road construction and they are currently deployed, working with our engineers who are present, such as Mr. Francis Clark and also Mr. Moxey, with respect to the flood mitigation area, so this is a critical turning point in terms of building the capacity of the ministry in this in these two important areas," he said.

In terms of flood mitigation, the ministry has also invested \$700,000 into pumps for low lying areas prone to flooding.

Senior drainage engineer Henry Moxey said the pumps can move 1,000 to 1,500 gallons of water per minute.

"What I must note, is that this is the first in a very long time that we have actually made such an acquisition as it relates to pumps, you would see here in the background," Mr. Moxey said.

"If I may point out, this is one of seven pumps that were procured with the intent

on addressing some of the flooding concerns that we have here on the island of New Providence.

"We're hopeful that with this acquisition and with the use of them here on New Providence that this similar process would be actually replicated on the Family of Islands."

Mr. Moxey said his department is seeking to target areas like Pinewood Gardens, The Grove, South Beach, and the East Bay Street area.

These pumps will be in full operation as early as next week, but he emphasized that they are only a temporary fix.

"So, we have been looking at new systems in place just a few that we've already been looking at along Bay Street," Mr. Moxey said.

"Bay Street has its attached directly to the ocean, so whenever you have a tidal impact, it actually brings water back into the system.

"So, what we have here on that truck to the back is a system that we have begun to implement in areas that are prone to flooding so that we won't have to be impacted by that.

"What I have here in my hand is what you call a whopper valve. It's a title backflow valve. What this does it allows storm water to not pass through and come up into our drainage infrastructure.

What this does is it suppresses the high tide, but it allows storm water that is already in the drainage infrastructure to pass out and out fall where it ought to go back into the sea or whatever drainage out fall point that we have.

"So, we've begun to use them in areas like the Pinewood Gardens, we've installed some in the Gleniston Garden area, in the West Grove and in the Over the Hill Grove area."

Mr. Moxey asserted that this new equipment has been thoroughly researched and they are proving quite effective in the areas where they are already installed.

Study Reveals Married Women More Likely to Have Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse

DESTINY JOHNSON
Journal Staff Writer

A new study from the University of The Bahamas (UB) has found that married women are more likely than single women to have experienced non-consensual sexual intercourse.

The peer reviewed research paper, led by Associate Professor Dr Niambi Hall Campbell-Dean, is entitled 'In The Bahamas she must give it up: Sexual abuse of women in heterosexual relationships by their intimate partners' and is based on data collected from 464 married and 1,264 single women in intimate relationships with men.

The study also finds that married women who disclosed being victims of non-consensual sexual intercourse with their husbands were more likely to have suffered physical harm at the hands of their partners compared to those who had not experienced such abuse.

The data also highlighted higher incidents of psychological abuse among married women in

comparison to unmarried women.

That said, as the government is still in talks regarding amendments to the Sexual Offenses and Domestic Violence Act to include marital rape as a crime, Minister of Social Services and Urban Development Obie Wilchcombe said the findings of UB's study are disturbing.

"It's troubling. It's difficult to accept, but again, the legislation is but one step," he told reporters.

"We need many more things to be happening to be dealing with the issues, why we have to understand and get to the root of the problems and what's causing these issues in our country.

"We've seen a number of issues that's obviously troubling and obviously causes us tremendous pain because we all have mothers, have sisters.

"We have friends who are women, so we want nothing to happen to any, but we want to go through the process as we have and the law Reform Commission has been doing the work and at the appropriate time, I think we'll bring it to the Bahamian people for final decision."

More School Resource Officers Added to Increase Safety

Delvarado Emmanuel
Journal Staff Writer

The Ministry of Education and Technical and Vocational Training, in conjunction with the Royal Bahamas Police Force, added 27 new School Resource Officers (SRO) to school campuses following a graduation ceremony last Friday at the Paul Farquharson Conference Center, police headquarters.

Coordinator of School Policing and Officer in charge of the South-Central Division Chief Superintendent Chadwell Hanna said since the resource officers have entered, schools' safety has improved.

"We see a decrease in the fighting," he said.

"Particularly after school, and you know, we've put in place the school busing system. We have students who catch bus after school.

"They could be picked up right off the school campus to avoid the opportunity to get themselves into these fights after school and the SROs are in those classrooms, preventing incidents before something happens.

"What happen if they get worried of something brewing? They intervene and prevent it. from happening.

"We are happy to see that the indicators are showing that school safety is indeed improving and one of the main reasons for that is the partnership, not only the SROs, the principals, the teachers, the other security officers [and] all members of the school environment working together to ensure that school is safe and we were happy, what we see so far."


Chief Supt. Hanna said this cohort is very diverse as officers have come from all islands to help expand the protection of the students while on school campuses.

"As I said, in addition to the indicators, you know these kids are looking up to these SRO officers as mentors," he said.

"Some of them, they don't have a father figure in the home, which we understand is important.

So, these kids look at these as our rules as mentors, positive role models. So, it's all about preventing, as I said earlier, you know, too many of the crime victims and crime suspects are young people, teenagers, young teenagers.

"And now, if we could intervene and divert them from the junior and senior high, in some cases, the primary school level where we see those red flags, we could prevent, divert them from getting into a life of crime and this is why school policing program is so important to reducing crime.



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Letters To The Editor

“What Is One Thing You Would Change?”

Dear Editor:

We believe the Commonwealth of The Bahamas is in need of a cultural shift. We do not refer to Junkanoo, rake and scrape, regattas, or any colourful ways Bahamians express our heritage.

However, we do suggest that the mentality of our people is in need of a course correction.

Our long-standing spirit of community is unfortunately disappearing; instead of thinking about what is best for all of us, too many prefer to ‘watch the road’ and stay in our own lanes, and place emotional and humanitarian blinders on those in need.

The growth of social media has highlighted the separation we feel from each other as human beings. Our social ills are displayed daily as the latest viral video, this morning’s headline and tomorrow’s office gossip.

Violence against women/girls and between young men is steadily on the rise, which is particularly troubling for our organization.

Though we did not live through “the good old days”, we are repeatedly told this is not how things always were in The Bahamas. If we can change our culture,

perhaps we will see these things change as well.

We need strong Bahamians, persons of strong character who can uphold moral principles, act ethically, and display honesty, and compassion in all endeavors.

A people of strong character are disciplined, hard-working, charitable, and the envy of the world.

By cultivating individual character, we benefit ourselves and contribute to a society that stands on a foundation of trust and respect.

In our pursuit of a cultural transformation, we must recognize that change takes time. We must each do our part. We envision a future where our nation’s people are highly regarded for their best qualities and not an avid display of shortcomings.

It’s not about erasing our past or discarding our identity; it’s about evolving our mindset to fulfill the true spirit of our national anthem.

“See how the world marks the manner of your bearing!”

Sincerely,
Torchbearers Youth Association

Study Reveals Married Women More Likely to Have Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse

Story Cont. Pg. 6

The Secretary General of the Commonwealth Patricia Scotland also chiming in on her views on marital rape.

She said this is an issue of human rights.

“When you see that one in four women in the United Kingdom was subjected to domestic violence, we made an estimate that was costing the country £23 billion a year in terms of economic cost, but the cost in lives was much greater than the cost economically,” Scotland said.

“And abuse, whether in or outside

marriage, is abuse, and we certainly took the view that women needed to be protected and they have been protected.

“Every country, of course, has to have its own debate, have to come to its own decision, but this is really an issue of human rights and whether a woman is entitled to have control over her body and be able to consent to who has access to that body.”

UB’S research is set to be published in the upcoming 29th volume of the International Journal of Bahamian studies (IJBS) in October.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

Dear Editor:

Before I delve into the primary reason for writing this letter to the Editor, I want to acknowledge that many civil servants, both past and present, have selflessly sacrificed to make The Bahamas what it is today. There are too many to mention who have gone far beyond the call of duty to provide outstanding service. Let us applaud them; we must not hesitate to show our appreciation while they are still with us. Many have already gone unnoticed. To overlook their contributions would indeed be a grave oversight.

The pressing issue at hand is that the level of

public satisfaction needs to improve. People often feel disheartened when dealing with many ministries. Members of the public deserve to be treated professionally and with utmost respect.

Some who are in charge of signing documents engage in childish behavior, stalling clients to solicit a tip before expediting the process.

There is a prevailing culture in the public service where some expect remuneration to get things done. The move towards cashless transactions has disrupted this practice.

Ministers make suggestions to technocrats who often feign agreement. They deliberately slow down the process to show their disdain for ministers interfering in daily operations. People sent

by ministers to receive services they rightly deserve soon realize that the public servant ultimately has the final say.

The traditional way of operating has kept The Bahamas delivering third-world service. This outdated mindset persists, but we can replace these inefficiencies with prompt, courteous service.

On another note, some individuals aim to undermine the ministers, and even the prime minister, for their own reasons, often political. Their goal is to hinder the “New Day” government.

A few in sensitive positions are intent on causing disruption. Classified information gets leaked more often than it should.

The government cannot achieve its objectives if those responsible for implementation are setting up barriers. This gives the impression that the government is not as competent as it claims.

The stark reality is that the government needs to remove any obstacles that hinder its mission of ensuring a better quality of life for Bahamians.

Petty jealousy and envy when someone new joins the team needs to cease. Progress is marked by the accommodation and acceptance

of new and innovative ideas. We must evolve. No one owns a position permanently.

I would urge everyone to revisit the first paragraph before reacting strongly to my opinion.

True courage lies in making decisions for the greater good, even if they are unpopular.

Now is an opportune time for a thorough house cleaning to create a better environment where all Bahamians can feel a positive change.

Let’s not forget that even Jesus couldn’t please everyone. Despite his good deeds, in the end, some of those he aided still shouted, & Crucify him!

So, as a devout Methodist, I conclude with a quote from John Wesley: Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.

Sincerely,
Ivoine W. Ingraham



VACANCY FOR SOCIAL WORKERS MINISTRY OF SOCIAL SERVICES & URBAN DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES)

Applicants are invited from suitably qualified Bahamians to fill the position for the post of Social Worker, Scale W14, within the Department of Social Services.

Requirements for the Post:

- Applicants must possess a Bachelor’s degree (from an accredited institution, approved for The Bahamas Government’s purpose) in Social Work,

OR

- A Bachelor’s degree (from an accredited institution, approved for The Bahamas Government’s purpose) in a related Social Science, Sociology, Psychology, Counselling, Human Services, Criminology/Criminal Justice, Family Services, plus a Certificate in Social Work.

Note: This is the entry level for persons with a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work or Bachelor’s degree in a Social Science plus a Certificate in Social Work.

Specific duties of the post include:

- Investigation of allegations of neglect and abuse cases reported either by telephone or in person;
- Investigation of cases where children may require care and protection and act as necessary;
- Secure placement for children in a substitute home or in an institution for children;
- Complete intake interviews and assess the needs of clients to determine required service;
- Conduct domicile and home visits to monitor and follow up on cases;
- Maintain accurate case records of assessment, activities and plans;
- Prepare case summaries, social history reports, letters and memoranda as necessary;
- Prepare court documents (court reports, care orders, Affidavits, search and production orders);
- Attend Court to assist with matters and provide testimony as necessary; and
- Liaise with other professionals, for example police, child guidance counselling centres, physicians, nurses and other contacts to assist children.

The salary of the post is in **Scale W14, \$27,450 x \$600 - \$39,450 per annum (July 2023 Scales)**. Starting salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Interested serving officers must apply through their Heads of Departments.

Application forms may be obtained from the Department of Social Services, Baillou Hill Road, New Providence, or online at www.bahamas.gov.bs. They must be returned, completed with original qualifications and documentary proof of relevant experience, so as to reach the Secretary, Public Service Commission, Poinciana Hill Complex, Meeting Street, not later than **29th September, 2023**.

Gina Thompson (Ms.)



Permanent Secretary

VACANCY FOR ASSISTANT SOCIAL WORKERS MINISTRY OF SOCIAL SERVICES & URBAN DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES)

Applicants are invited from suitably qualified Bahamians to fill the position for the post of Assistant Social Worker, Scale W17, within the Department of Social Services.

Requirements for the Post:

- Applicants must possess a Bachelor’s degree (from an accredited institution, approved for The Bahamas Government’s purpose) in a related Social Science area (Sociology, Psychology, Human Services, Family Services, Counselling, Criminology/Criminal Justice).

Note: Officers in this scale will receive no further advancement until they meet the requisite requirements for the post of Social Worker.

Specific duties of the post include:

- Maintain acceptable standards of professional practices in the assigned area;
- Investigate all cases requiring assistance from the various programmes of the Division;
- Secure information on physical and social factors contributing to client’s situations;
- Assess the clients’ needs thoroughly and make the necessary recommendations;
- Provide counselling and intervention through casework and or group work to clients and families;
- Complete intake and social history reports in a timely manner;
- Ensure that all relevant information is documented on casework activities and that files are maintained in a professional manner; and
- Liaise and coordinate services with relevant social agencies in order to avoid duplication while supplementing services not available by the Community Support Services Division.

The salary of the post is in **Scale W17, \$23,000 x \$600 - \$36,800 per annum (July 2023 Scales)**. Starting salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Interested serving officers must apply through their Heads of Departments. Application forms may be obtained from the Department of Social Services, Baillou Hill Road, New Providence, or online at www.bahamas.gov.bs. They must be returned, completed with original qualifications and documentary proof of relevant experience, so as to reach the Secretary, Public Service Commission, Poinciana Hill Complex, Meeting Street, not later than **29th September, 2023**.

Gina Thompson (Ms.)
Permanent Secretary

Ongoing Learning Loss Assessment Post Covid-19

Students will be pulled from classes an hour a day for literacy and numeracy sessions

LICEC BASITAN
Journal Staff Writer

During her annual back to school national address on Sunday evening, Education and Technical and Vocational Training (MOETVT) Minister Glenys Hanna-Martin said “there is a lot of ground to cover and recover” in the 2023/2024 academic school year and education officials do not intend to just go with the status quo.

“Education is a human right and is critical to the future of our nation. It dictates how our young people will enter the future and what our country looks like in the years to come,” Minister Hanna-Martin said.

For the second academic year, post Covid-19, students have returned to face-to-face learning in the public school system. Minister Hanna-Martin said officials within her ministry are “determined to pause and take a critical look” at the country’s educational system, “assess past outcomes, measure current results and research, and study strategies for reform and progress” as students and educators continue to struggle with the impact of learning loss.

“All of the research globally, in both developed and developing countries, has shown massive learning loss suffered by students at all levels, but with children from poorer communities being hardest hit. These countries are themselves grappling with how to redress these deficits,” the minister said.

“It was mandatory that The Bahamas have a full understanding of how our own children and young people have been affected so as to stave off what has been forecasted as being potentially catastrophic to many young people all over the world and to their respective countries.

“In light of what we seek to achieve, we therefore cannot simply accept the status quo.

We have clearly envisioned what our public-school students must manifest and therefore much work is underway to revise, test, analyze and research strategies and approaches to assure the greatest effectiveness for achieving these goals and objectives. A component of this process is nearing completion and we expect imminently a preliminary report to be delivered to the ministry from the University of The Bahamas.

“This preliminary report emanates from research commissioned by the ministry to investigate factors which impact the learning of our children in The Bahamas and will assist in the formulation of new strategies and a review of policies so as to maximize student attainment based on empirical research.”

Studies completed by education officials at the start of 2023 to assess the learning challenges faced as a result of the pandemic, indicated substantial learning loss.

Minister Hanna-Martin revealed that over 40,000 children at all levels in public schools across the country including pre-primary were tested.

“This testing has yielded empirical data which every teacher can access for every child in his or her class. The results of the universal standardized testing have revealed that nationally 44 percent of our students require intervention. This is a significant finding which requires intense and sustained interventions for all students affected,” Minister Hanna-Martin said.

“Remediation efforts by the ministry, started as early as May of this year in some schools; with ongoing assessments being completed to mitigate gaps and foster solutions. The ministry will provide personalized, self-paced, targeted support to address the learning gaps. We will also provide training for parents so they can assist children at home. Students will be pulled out of classes for an hour every day for literacy and numeracy sessions.

“I urge parents to position themselves on the frontline of their children’s education, closely monitor their progress and interact more with their teachers. On our part, we will do all that is necessary to help your children, our children, recover and catch up, stabilize and get back on track.”

With English and Math being core subjects, Minister Hanna-Martin said her ministry is “commissioning a comprehensive mathematics study which will analyze teaching methods and learning patterns” additionally, at the start of this school year, all grade one students, during this first term, will concentrate on literacy and numeracy solely.

“This is to ensure that the curriculum at the lower primary level is realigned to meet the critical needs of students to promote mastery of foundational skills. We will

monitor the performance of every student with a view of providing targeted support.

‘Every Child Counts’, and ‘NO child will be left behind!’” the minister said.

“Further, as part of the commitment to track and intervene as necessary, new protocols have been implemented for the GLAT exam.

“Beginning with this year’s results which have already been shared with schools, a communication strategy will be deployed to ensure information flow with all

stakeholders, especially with the relevant teacher and parent. Appropriate responses will promptly follow, which will identify students at all levels of performance and where necessary create interventions which will include pull-out sessions and the monitoring and tracking of students’ progress as they move into succeeding grades.

We will not accept a state of affairs where children are simply moving through the system feeling ‘lost’ and frustrated with

diminished self-esteem in what may feel like an ‘alienating environment.’

“The dedicated team of the Ministry of Education is working extremely hard. Our administrators are working hard, our teachers are working hard. We will not accept mediocrity; we will not contemplate defeat. We believe in our young people and have high expectations of their success. We will fight for the future of our children. In this, there can be no compromise.”



PUBLIC NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS
New Providence
City of Nassau

IN THE MATTER OF THE PLANNING AND SUBDIVISION ACT, 2010
AND

IN THE MATTER OF SUBDIVISION & DEVELOPMENT

APPEAL BOARD RULES, 2011

The below listed APPELLANTS and interested members of the PUBLIC are hereby notified of a Sitting of the Subdivision and Development Appeals Board on Friday the 8 th day of September, 2023 commencing at 9:30 a.m. in the afternoon at the Hearing Room/ Main Meeting Room, located in the Aventura Plaza on Bethel Avenue and John F. Kennedy Drive, New Providence. The Intended Sitting will be subject to there then being no prohibition against the said hearing taking place under any Emergency Powers (Covid-19 Pandemic) Order then in force.

Subject also to postponement in the event of the issue of any Bahamas Government Hurricane Alert for the Island of New Providence.
The following APPEAL will be heard:-

1. APPEAL NO. 8 of 2022 – being an Appeal by Edward Hoffer
By Notice of Appeal dated 29 th day July A.D., 2022 .

APPEALING the decision of the Town Planning Committee made on the 12 th day of July, 2022 under Town Planning Application Number PSA/34/2022 to granting Approval for Condominium Buildings, West Bay Street, New Providence to Goldwynn/Wynn Development .

2. APPEAL 2 OF 2021 – being an Appeal by Valentino Gardiner – by Notice of Appeal dated the 21 st day of December 2020

APPEALING: the decision by the Town Planning Committee on the 14 th day of March 2017 under Town Planning Application Number PSA/106/2016 – Refusal of Rezoning for Phoenix Markets – Lot 1, Block 1, Bamboo Boulevard, South Beach Estates

3. APPEAL NO. 6 OF 2019 – being an Appeal by Annmarie Glington-Rolle
By Notice of Appeal dated 15 th September 2019

APPEALING: the decision (refusal) of the Town Planning Committee made on the 11 th day of September 2019 under Town Planning Application Number PDA/28/2019 refusing an application by Annmarie Glington-Rolle to establish a pre-school and nursery facility to be called “It Takes A Village To Raise a Child” at Kemp Road, Eastern District, New Providence.

4. APPEAL NO. 6 OF 2023 – being an Appeal by Sean Farrington/Simone
Gibson/Diamond Consultant Group
By Notice of Appeal dated the 3 rd May 2023

APPEALING: the decision by the Town Planning Committee made on the 20 th day of March 2023 under Town Planning Application Number PSA/37/2023 – refusal for re-zoning of Lot 6, West Place 2, Atlantic Drive, New Providence from Single family to Multi-family

5. APPEAL NO. 6 OF 2020 – being an Appeal by Perez Lambert Moss T/A Eldicas
Restaurant

By Notice of Appeal dated 1 st October 2020
APPEALING: the decision by the Town Planning Committee made on the 17 th day of September 2020 under Town Planning Number REF:20190045545 – Rejection being incompatible land use

CURRENT HEALTH PROTOCOLS INCLUDING SOCIAL DISTANCING
SHALL BE ENFORCED.

PARTIES MAY CONTACT Ms. Carol E. Martinborough, Secretary to the Board, for a schedule of proposed hearing times for the respective appeals and to collect Appeal Records or for other information at the Subdivision & Development Appeal Board Office located at Aventura Plaza, Bethel Avenue & John F. Kennedy Drive, Nassau, Bahamas. Telephone : 242 422 3427 or e-mail: carolmartinborough@bahamas.gov.bs.

Dated the 18 th day of August, 2023.

MR. R. DAWSON MALONE
CHAIRMAN
SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT APPEAL BOARD

SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT APPEAL BOARD
Aventura Plaza
Corner of Bethel Avenue & John. F. Kennedy Drive
Nassau, Bahamas

Wilchcombe: “We Must Listen to Women”

DESTINY JOHNSON
Journal Staff Writer

The issue of abortion has been a hot button topic in the country following a 40-year-old mother being charged with aborting her 11-year-old daughter's baby after the child was allegedly raped by the mother's 45-year-old boyfriend.

Minister of Social Services Obie Wilchcombe weighed in on whether the government is minded to changing the abortion laws in the country.

He said it is something the government must think about instead of just reacting.

“The truth is, globally, other countries have had to take the same course of action and they've had to make some decisions”, he said.

“It cannot be right if somebody is raped to have to endure the pregnancy. There has to be some issues and we have to look at that. It's very difficult when you consider circumstances that could affect somebody's life forever. And we have to think about that because you're thinking about the nine-month period if it lasts that long.

“But there's a psychological impact and everything else is related. So, we have to think about it, you know. Sometimes we make reactionary responses as opposed to understanding the depth of the issue. And so, we have to look at it and we cannot ignore it.”

He went on to say that there are many issues that are just coming up that can only be addressed if women are listened to and understood.

“When I became minister responsible, so many things I never heard about, never even discussed, he told reporters.

“Now it's in the forefront, now we're discussing it. So, we have to find ways to, you know, get to resolutions. And it's about thinking about the issues. What are the issues facing women? What are the issues that women have to deal with?”

“Do you know that in the tourism industry, [it] was revealed today by Joy Jibrilu that men are paid more, 24 percent more than women are paid in the tourism industry. There's something not right about that, but that's something we never talked about, never even discussed it.

“So, we're hearing a number of things and we're realizing a number of things we have to deal with. Glennys Hanna-Martin made a strong argument today about needing women and she said something today that was quoted later in the program which was that who feels it knows it.

“I think that's powerful.

“Because we're men, we don't know it, but yet we want to answer for women. I don't think that's correct. I think women have to speak for women, and we should be listening to women.”

Last week, Prime Minister Philip Davis gave contradictory views when asked if the government would consider changing the abortion law in the case of rape.

He said the laws are on the books.

“Abortion is still a crime; rape is still a crime, and carrying very hefty, hefty penalties,” the prime minister said.

He went added that he does not know what other mischief the law does not cover.

When pressed on the matter again, he said abortion is a personal choice, adding that changing the law so someone who is raped can get an abortion is a “medical matter” he “would have to consider.”

Man Stabbed to Death on Royal Palm Street

Two Homicides Hours Apart

Less than 12 hours after a young man, out on bail for at least four murders and several other serious offences was gunned down on Sunset Drive, Sunset Park last Wednesday morning, police launched investigations into another homicide Wednesday night.

A 49-year-old male has been arrested and is being questioned by police, with reference to the stabbing which resulted in the death of a 43-year-old male of Royal Palm Street.

Preliminary reports indicate, that sometime around 8:18 p.m., while in the

area of Royal Palm Street, the victim was involved in a physical altercation with another male, who produced a knife resulting in him being stabbed multiple times about the body.

The suspect fled the area in an unknown direction while the victim was subsequently transported to hospital via EMS, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Due to quick response by police, the suspect was apprehended in the area of Wilton and Mackey Streets.

Investigation continues into this matter.

Sex Offender in Protective Custody

12-Year-Old Girl Almost Abducted

Liccc Bastian
Journal Staff Writer

Sex offender Sidney Cooper is in protective custody after residents in the Coconut Grove area descended at his residence on Fifth Street with weapons in hand following reports of a 12-year-old girl almost being abducted in the Coconut Grove area last Thursday.

A video circulating social media showed where Cooper was seen purportedly being arrested and escorted to a police vehicle by a police inspector. But it was not what it seemed as police confirmed shortly after the video that he was escorted from his residence without incident.

In the video, recorded by a male resident of Coconut Grove, is heard in the background spewing derogatory comments at Cooper, as he alleges that Cooper, who was only just released from the Bahamas Department of Corrections this past Friday and added to the Sex Offender Registry, was presumed responsible for an incident that occurred Thursday morning.

Police however, confirmed with reporters that for his safety, Cooper was taken from his residence, escorted by police following suggestions that he may have been responsible for the alleged attempted abduction.

Police are, in fact, seeking the public's assistance in locating a tall, bald headed, bright male, who attempted to abduct the child.

“Preliminary reports indicate that shortly before 9:00 a.m. the child was walking on Fourth Street, Coconut Grove when she was approached by the male, who was wearing a blue hooded jacket.

“Residents, assuming the culprit was Sidney Cooper converged at his residence on Fifth Street, Coconut Grove, armed with rocks, bottles and cutlass,” a police reported stated.

Police said the perpetrator involved is NOT Sidney Cooper.

Police are aggressively searching for suspect and are requesting members of the public to remain vigilant and on the alert.

Additionally, if the suspect is seen, you may contact the Grove Police Station at 325-8431/2, the Southern Police Station at 322-3337/323-8270/3560228 or CRIMESTOPPERS@328-TIPS.

The British High Commissioner paid a Farewell Courtesy Call on the Governor General



His Excellency Tim Hartley, British High Commissioner, left, paid a Farewell Courtesy Call on Governor General His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Cornelius Smith at the Office of the Governor General on Tuesday, August 29, 2023. (BIS Photos/Letisha Henderson)

Remilda Rose Designs pays a courtesy call on the Governor General



Dr. Gillian Curry-Williams and ladies from Remilda Rose Designs called upon Governor General His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Cornelius Smith at the Office of the Governor General on Tuesday, August 29, 2023. Pictured from left: Marissa Maycock, Deborah Nesbitt, Ruth-Ann Minus-Rolle, Willistene Curtis, Dr. Gillian Curry-Williams, H.E. Sir Cornelius Smith, Dr. JoAnn Callender, Dale Ferguson-Joseph, Sharnette Thompson-Mckinney, Sonovia Butler and Yvette Charlton. (BIS Photo/Letisha Henderson)

Another Juvenile Shot 8-Year-Old Girl Shot in Leg

Liccc Bastian
Journal Staff Writer

In less than a week, another juvenile has become a victim of gun violence. An eight-year-old girl was in hospital this week with injuries to the leg after a gunman, indiscriminately opened fire on a group of persons in Flamingo Gardens, off Carmichael Road.

According to preliminary reports from police on Monday, August 28, “The victim, along with family members, was sitting on the front porch of a residence situated on India Drive when a male occupant exited a white Japanese vehicle and opened fire on them, resulting in the child being shot.

“The suspect returned to the vehicle and fled the area, making good his escape.

emergency medical technicians were summoned to the scene and transported the victim to the hospital, where she remains stable.”

For the past several months, gun violence has wreaked havoc on New Providence.

Just last Thursday a four-year-old boy was shot to the left leg in a triple shooting on Rupert Dean Lane and Ferguson Street. Two other victims, both 25-year-old males, received multiple gunshot injuries to the upper body.

They were all transported to hospital

where one of the victims, whom police identified as 25-year-old Dario Dawkins, a resident of Rupert Dean Lane, succumbed to his injuries.

In late July of 2022, four-year-old Kenton Seymour Jr. died in hospital after he was shot by stray bullets while with his parents in the area of West and Fleming Streets.

Prime Minister Philip Davis has lamented over the issue of gun violence in the country and called for the “heinousness of the acts that's being committed on our streets” to stop.

The prime minister, earlier this year at the “Violence as a Public Health Issue” symposium in Trinidad and Tobago, urged United States lawmakers to solve the gun trafficking issue wreaking havoc on the Caribbean.

“We do not manufacture guns in the Caribbean. We have asked the U.S. government and U.S.-based gun manufacturers to cooperate with CARICOM member states when it comes to identifying weapons purchased in the U.S., as a part of a wider effort to hold weapons dealers and traffickers accountable for the many lives lost to gun violence each year,” he said.

Back in June, State Minister for Social Services and Urban Development Lisa Rahming called for a two-week gun amnesty as part of the Urban Renewal and Police Force's “Say No To Guns” campaign.

The Bahama
Journal

Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

Blue Lagoon Island Partners With Breef And The Island School To Provide Hands On Learning For Bess Scholars



Noah, one of the young dolphins at Blue Lagoon Island practiced his cheek kiss on BREEF BESS Scholar Maya Lindeman as part of his daily training sessions.

As her peers settle into their college dorms, Windsor School's class of 2023 graduate, Maya Lindeman, has chosen a distinctive path. Instead of heading straight to college, Maya has embarked on a transformative gap year to gain practical experience—a decision she believes will significantly enhance her college journey.

She was one of two students to be named a Bahamas Environmental Stewards Scholar (BESS) program awardee. The year long program is offered in partnership by the Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation (BREEF) and The Island School in Eleuthera.

Maya has her sights set on a degree in Environmental Policy and Law and is

confident that the hands-on experience gained during her gap year will provide her with an invaluable foundation for her ambitious academic pursuit.

The 18-year-old is spending two weeks working side by side with the educational and zoological teams at Blue Lagoon Island, learning about marine species, husbandry, which is the care of animals, animal training and the company's sustainability practices.

BESS scholars spend a semester at the Island School and participate in a paid four-month internship with BREEF. As part of the internship, scholars spend two weeks working alongside organizations including Bahamas Marine Mammal Research Organisation, IDEA Relief and Blue Lagoon Island.

"I've always had a strong passion for the environment, and I know I want to work in the field. These weeks at Blue Lagoon Island have been amazing as it really pulls me into the physical aspect of what it is I've been studying all along," she said of her immersion at Blue Lagoon Island.

The Blue Lagoon Island immersion is led by the company's education supervisor Te-Shalla Clarke. She explains that the partnership with BREEF and The Island School is a natural one for the company.

"We all have the same mission – to educate and protect our natural marine environment. One of the best ways to accomplish this is by exposing our youth to the importance of taking care of our incredible marine habitat. At Blue Lagoon Island we have a strong internship programme, so it is a natural link for us to host the BREEF BESS scholars, she said.

Clarke was particularly excited to work with Maya, given her academic and career goals.

"We are governed by environmental policy and law, our accreditations are based on all of that, so having a Bahamian focus on that would be incredible," she said, "it's a great opportunity for Maya to have this sort of practical experience as she works towards her career goals."



Blue Lagoon Island Zoological Supervisor Alfonso Parker shows BREEF BESS Scholar Maya Lindeman some of the husbandry behaviors performed daily on young dolphin Noah.

BESS Scholars spend a day working with each of the different types of animals and their trainers as well as a day with the veterinary team at Blue Lagoon Island during their first week, and the second week they work closely with Clarke to decide which aspect of the business they would like to focus on.

Maya was excited to spend time getting a better understanding of the company's sustainability initiatives after spending a week learning about the company's dolphins, sea lions, stingrays and nurse sharks, getting tips on how to tell the dolphins apart, assisting with meal prep in the fish kitchen and participating in program training sessions with some of the young dolphins.

"Living in the Bahamas you can see right in front of you what you're fighting for, and the impact hurricanes and climate change have on our islands, so it's such a great opportunity for me to see first-hand what a company like Blue Lagoon is doing to help protect our environment and operate in a sustainable way."



BREEF BESS Scholar Maya Lindeman assists Blue Lagoon Island Education Supervisor Te-Shalla Clarke with a wellness check on Bonnie the sealion.

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Special Needs Students Get Equitable Focus

LICEC BASTIAN
Journal Staff Writer

Parents of children with special needs will be happy to know that greater emphasis will be placed on special education this academic school year, according to Education Minister Glenys Hanna-Martin.

As education officials embark on curriculum reform, which is central to the goals the ministry seeks to accomplish, Minister Hanna-Martin said, "I am proud that we are bringing equitable focus to our children with special needs."

"This year, the ministry has also recruited more speech pathologists, guidance counsellors and school psychologists to give support to our students and to help them progress and thrive," Minister Hanna-Martin said in her back-to-school message this

past Sunday.

The Ministry of Education and Technical and Vocational Training (MOETVT) has designated classrooms in schools across the country for integrating children with special needs; enabling education officials to eliminate a waiting list for placement of students with special needs.

Back in December of 2022, MOETVT signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Barry University which offered scholarships to teachers for the preparation of Master Teachers in the area of special education.

Minister Hanna-Martin, at the time of the signing, said it was a "very important" initiative as it would help to address the "critical" shortage in special education.

"Once we begin to extend and build capacity, this will have tremendous impact on so many young people who we

have to say are falling between the cracks. We don't want our children to fall between the cracks. We want them to have every opportunity, humanely possible, in our country to develop their full potential," Minister Hanna-Martin said during the signing.

"We believe that within 18-24 months we will begin to see the roll out of special needs teachers who will be dispatched nationwide and be able to provide instruction to children who may be at this moment off the radar for us.

"Twenty-two new Special Education teachers have been recruited and are now being posted in schools throughout the country. An additional 14 teachers are near completion of the Master's Degree Program in Special Education with Barry University.

"Some of the teachers posted will start self-contained programs where the need

exists."

Minister Hanna-Martin also revealed that a wellness program in the public schools started back in May of this year.

"That was spearheaded by a dynamic committee of personnel at the ministry to address the needs of the whole child, by introducing a national health and wellness

initiative to augment the work of the guidance and counseling department; with a goal

to provide psycho-social help for students and staff," Minister Hanna-Martin said.

"We are governed by the philosophical commitment that 'Every Child Counts' and so

far, as is humanly possible and given the necessary resources, we will assure that each

child is given a fair opportunity to develop his or her potential."

BTC BOLSTERS ITS TECHNOLOGY TEAM

**GOT NEW?
CALL OUR OFFICE AT 356-7254**



Drexel Woods has been appointed as its new Director of Technical Operations

BTC has announced that Bahamian, Drexel Woods has been appointed as its new Director of Technical Operations (DTO) effective September 1st.

BTC CEO, Sameer Bhatti said, "I am confident in Drexel's ability, and I am certain that we have made the right decision for the business. We are pleased to welcome Drexel back to The Bahamas and to the BTC business. BTC continues to evolve with its unstoppable fiber network, and our technology team is at the heart of that evolution. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that we have strong leadership to guide and direct the business."

Woods most recently served as the Head of Technical Operations for Flow in the Cayman Islands, where he enjoyed a glowing stint driving key network initiatives, including the deployment of its fiber network. Prior to that, he served as the Acting Senior Manager for Access Networks for BTC. He is a veteran in the field and has more than two decades of experience in technology and numerous certifications under his belt including Cisco Networks, Calix GPON, and FTtx by Etai. He has also studied Technical Management at DeVry University and recently completed his MBA from Keller Graduate School of

Management of DeVry University.

"Over \$1.13 billion has been invested since 2017, while rolling out next generation technologies such as fiber and 4G in many islands. We went from 30 megabits per second internet speeds in 2016, to 1 gigabit per second in 2023.

This significant investment has contributed to the country's digital development," Bhatti continued.

An excited Woods said, "This is an honor and a privilege. I am happy for the opportunity to serve in this role. I enjoyed leading technology operations in the Cayman Islands, and I look forward to working with such a strong and diverse team here in The Bahamas."

BTC is evolving its technological structure to a fiber fast network to meet the ever-changing needs of its customers and the business. Woods has responsibility for overall technology operations across the country and will be stationed in New Providence.

The company remains focused on upgrading its infrastructure and delivering best-in-class fiber to the home services for all residents. The company is still on track to complete its mission to "fiberize" New Providence and Grand Bahama this year.

13th WAMM Encourages Global Liberation of Women

DESTINY JOHNSON
Journal Staff Writer

The 13th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (WAMM) is now in the history books as the meeting wrapped up last Wednesday evening at the Atlantis resort.

During the three days, 56 countries made of small island states and Small Island Developing States discussed equality towards a common future for women and girls.

Minister of Social Services and Urban Development Obie Wilchcombe said these meetings are the first step towards change in the world.

"It was so informative. We learned the commonalities. We learned the common issues that we face and we heard recommendations. How do we get beyond one thing that was very clear to us all is that we need a global effort to make a difference," Wilchcombe said.

"If we can, in fact, cause that to happen, we can make the changes required and cause the true liberation of women in the global community.

"The objective is to ensure that we get to that place where women globally are liberated. Where women with disabilities are treated equally as any other person. Where women and girls don't have to worry about the violence.

"What do we do and how do we do it? We have to think about women in business taking leadership roles, not only in politics, because we have a tendency to believe it's just politics. It's women in business. Globally, it's women in trade.

"In fact, we heard some statistics today about women in trade. And then we heard some wonderful initiatives from the Commonwealth Secretary that we are going to adopt and we're going to bring into fruition here in the Bahamas."

Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations Patricia Scotland congratulated the country on an amazing meeting which she said every Bahamian should be proud of.

She went on to laminate commitments made in the meetings by all countries.

"How you build gender sensitive policies?" she said. "How do you

implement gender appropriate responses and the Commonwealth have produced a number of training materials and templates, toolkits, in order to assist our member states?

"We've also created an assessment, the economic assessment, for domestic violence to help our member states. And we've created the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub to try and get money into the hands of our member states in a way that will make the difference.

"And with just \$6 million, the Commonwealth has already delivered \$310 million into the hands of our member states and there's another \$500 million in the pipeline."

When asked when the public can see the results of the meeting come to fruition, the secretary general said the work is beginning from now.

"Well, the roadmap is now being populated," the secretary general explained. "We're looking at the needs of all of our countries [and] doing an audit of what they already have.

"And then doing a gap analysis to say, 'okay, this is what you need, this is what you have, how do we fill the gaps, and by when.'

"So, we will want to report to Commonwealth Heads of Government every two years. The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting takes place every two years and the next Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting is going to be in October in Samoa in the Pacific.

"So, we will be preparing a roadmap from now until October 2024 and we'll look at all the four headings that we've identified and then look at what we can realistically deliver by way of improvements between now and then.

"So, it's quite a short period because we're talking about one year. So, we will be looking at three months, six months, nine months, 12 months. Looking at the fact that we've made a commitment in the secretariat to equalize the law."

The next WAMM is anticipated to take place in one of the countries in the commonwealth Asian Region but until then The Bahamas will remain the chair.

The Bahama
Journal

Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

Seabreeze MP Miller Brice Hosts Back to School Jamboree

Hundreds of young students who live in the Sea Breeze constituency received back to school gift bags, thanks to Member of Parliament Leslia Miller-Brice and her team. In addition, more than 40 educators who live in the area also received back to school gifts, as their MP wanted to "thank them for being amazing and a true inspiration to the children".

Miller-Brice hosted the Sea Breeze Back to School Jamboree to motivate the youth to start school on a high note, while providing them with some of the necessities for back to school. The event was free for all residents of Sea Breeze and included bouncing castles, face painting, kids paint area, egg and spoon races, basketball three-point shootout, hoopla, tug-a-war, balloon pop, musical chairs and more.

"The Sea Breeze Back to School Jamboree was amazing," Miller-Brice exclaimed.

"What a day of non-stop fun, laughter, and unforgettable memories! From awesome activities to exciting gifts and prizes, both the kids and adults had a blast."

"Shoutout to the incredible Seabreeze vendors and Team LB for their efforts in making the event a success. A heartfelt thank you to Sea Breeze – your unwavering support and infectious enthusiasm made this day truly magical!"

The Sea Breeze Back to School Jamboree was held at the Charles Carter Park on Saturday, August 19 from 4pm to 7pm.



From left to right in the picture are Scott Adams (British Foreign Office), Russell Crane (British Foreign Office), Giles Cooper (Director, Chelsea Vintners), Steven Boon representing Bassetts, Marche Mackey (Acting Bahamas High Commissioner), Anthony Stuart (Bahamas Tourism Director).



Students Explore Androsian Mangroves & Coral Reefs at BREEF Kamalame Cay Summer Camp

BREEF held a successful 2023 Sea Camp in Andros. Twenty-two students aged 8-14 years from North Andros participated in the annual Kamalame Cay Sea Camp where they engaged in an immersive outdoor learning experience.

Sea Camp is an empowering, educational event in which students embrace the natural environment while having fun. The outdoor classroom is used as a teaching tool, helping students to understand the value of protecting and caring for the ocean.

Attendees had a chance to understand the critical roles that mangroves and coral reefs play in the Bahamian environment—especially for fisheries, tourism, and shoreline protection. Enlightening presentations about local sea creatures were followed by snorkels and boat expeditions where students were able to identify the marine areas and organisms they learned about during presentations. They also learned about threats facing our marine environment including warming waters that especially affect our fragile Bahamian coral reefs.

A key component of Sea Camp is teaching children practical water skills that inspire them to be environmental stewards. BREEF and Kamalame staff along with volunteers showed students how to maneuver in the outdoor environment as they snorkeled through mangroves and around corals while learning about the value of the underwater world around them.

Camper Dwayne Munnings age 10, shared his thoughts about the hands-on educational excursions students participated in.

"I had a lot of fun learning about the mangroves and fish; and I found lots of interesting things in the ocean," he said.

Another camper, Stevenique Johnson, age 10, said that she enjoyed snorkeling with others and learning about new types of fish she had never seen before.

"When we went into the mangroves I didn't know there were so many fish that live there, I found a lot of interesting things that my teacher told me all about," she said.



Students at BREEF Summer Camp 2023

Leading camp activities, BREEF Outreach Assistant, Heather Brockbank said her goal was to ensure that students get the opportunity to interact with our marine environment.

"We really like to engage kids from other islands, we want them to snorkel and see what's under the water and feel comfortable while they are doing it."

Brock bank continued, "If young people are exposed to the environment they will care more about it and spread the word, not only to their parents but to the community, and use that opportunity to make a difference for the future."

BREEF Executive Director, Casuarina McKinney-Lambert noted "95% of the territory of The Bahamas is underwater. There is such a tremendous opportunity to use the underwater world as a living classroom and expose children to career opportunities connected with the ocean."

BREEF extends their gratitude to Kamalame Cay who hosted camp, and to all the BREEF volunteers who assisted during the duration of the camp.



Camper Stevenique Johnson finds a shell during mangrove snorkel