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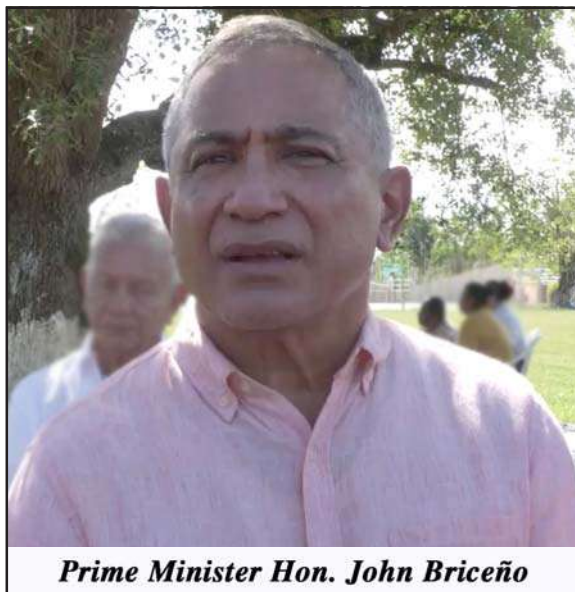
## BSCFA agrees to one year interim agreement

After days of arduous discussion between BSI/ASR and BSCFA, no significant headway was made for the signing of a new commercial agreement. Recommendations have been made by BSI/ASR to revert to the terms of an interim agreement that was signed prior to the last crop. BSCFA met with its membership today to finalize a decision.

by Marco Lopez

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. Dec. 22, 2022

The days-long mediation carried out between the Belize Sugar Industries Limited (BSI) and the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) has yielded no progress in the resolution of the rift between the two entities. In light of what appears to be a failure in the mediation process, and with additional revenue being foregone with each day that



Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño

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## \$5 minimum wage set for January 1

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. Dec. 22, 2022

Today, the Ministry of Labour announced in a press release that amendments have been made to the Wages Regulations in Statutory Instrument No. 169 of 2022 and No. 170 of 2022 to set the stage for an official increase in the minimum wage that is to be put into effect on January 1, 2023. It is a fulfillment of a pledge made to the Belizean public by the PUP in the party's manifesto, Plan Belize (prior to the 2020 general elections), to increase the minimum wage to \$5 hourly. Prime Minister John Briceño,



Oscar Requeña, Minister of Labour

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## John Saldivar allowed to contest February BMP convention



Hon. Moses "Shyne" Barrow



John Saldivar

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. Dec. 22, 2022  
John Saldivar, former UDP Minister of National Security, who was designated several weeks ago as "significantly corrupt" by the US State Department, and whose political career seemed to have come to an end following a decision by a UDP Special Committee on December 2 to prohibit

him from representing the party as a standard bearer, is now expressing loads of gratitude after the UDP's National Party Council (NPC), in a Zoom meeting held on December 17, overruled the Special Committee's decision. That reversal paved the way

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## GOB meets with Joint Unions

by Kory Leslie (Freelance Writer)

BELIZE CITY, Belize, Tues. Dec. 20, 2022

On Tuesday, the Prime Minister, Hon. John Briceño; and the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Cordel Hyde, accompanied by the Minister of Education, Hon. Francis Fonseca;

Minister of Public Service and Constitutional Reform, Hon. Henry Charles Usher, and Financial Secretary Joseph Waight met with the representatives of the Joint Unions. It was a meeting that the unions had been urging the government to hold

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## JR Smith freed of charges for Wabinaha club shooting

by Charles Gladden

DANGRIGA, Stann Creek District, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022

John Roy Smith, 43, a Canadian military veteran who was allegedly the driver of a vehicle in which three men fled after a mass shooting at a Hopkins nightclub that caused two deaths, has been freed of murder charges after appearing yesterday, December 20, in the Dangriga Magistrate Court, where he and his attorney, Richard "Dickie" Bradley, were told that there was insufficient



JR Smith, acquitted

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## BSCFA agrees to one year interim agreement

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passes without the commencement of sugar-milling, the mill and the government have been scrambling to have an interim agreement signed in order for the Sugar Industry Control Board to officially gazette the start of milling for this season. BSI/ASR, in a release issued on Monday, suggested that an interim agreement—similar to the one signed last year to pave the way for the start of the last crop—be signed for a period of two years, until a final commercial agreement can be agreed upon.

Doing so, stated the BSI release, “would provide time for further consideration of alternative approaches and to ensure BSCFA farmers are able to deliver their cane and avoid any further delays to the crop and damages to the economy.”

The BSI release further noted, “Every day that passes is a lost opportunity for the industry and the national economy, recognizing the important role of the sugar industry in supporting the livelihoods of so many people and the benefits it brings to the national economy, including the provision of 15% of Belize’s electricity needs from renewable energy.”

The leadership of the BSCFA, has, however, claimed that they were blindsided by that proposal, since it was never brought up in the mediation session. The chairman of the association’s management committee, Alfredo Ortega, stated. “We didn’t expect that they would put out a release, and we see once again the dirty game they are playing, because this that they took out in the document isn’t anything we discussed during the mediation that we had. So in reality we didn’t think that this would have happened.”

The members of the BSCFA met today to vote on whether or not they will agree to sign onto an interim agreement again, and prior to that meeting the Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Jose Mai, told reporters that the leadership of the association had indicated its willingness to consider signing the agreement for a period not longer than one year. Mai said that while mediation did not yield the desired outcome, the milling of the crop harvested in this new season has to begin, and the SICB, following an emergency meeting on Saturday afternoon, December 17, set December 27 as the tentative date for the start of milling—provided that BSCFA and BSI/ASR sign an agreement.

Hon. Mai pointed out that the board does not intend to begin the crop if the largest sugar cane association does not have a signed agreement with the mill. While three other smaller sugarcane farmer associations—which together produce about 50 percent of the cane milled by BSI—have signed agreements and may be ready to begin the delivery of sugar cane, in his view, to begin the crop without the BSCFA would lead to chaos.

When interviewed yesterday, Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño emphasized that both sides must reach a compromise in the short term to ensure that the crop begins by next Tuesday.

He said that his administration has been doing what it can to encourage the process, but the parties have not been able to find a common ground. In reference to BSI’s proposal that a 2-year interim agreement be signed, he said that he shares the BSCFA’s view that two years may be too long a period of duration for an interim agreement, and that he believes the company and association can sign an agreement that lasts one year.

He has said that Cabinet will hear submissions from both the BSCFA and BSI/ASR in sessions to be held next year, but insists that the starting of this year’s crop is of vital importance to the country.

“I don’t think they need two years. I think BSI wants to have some sort of certainty for the next two years while they work out a new pricing formula. I don’t think it is necessarily a tactic to hold back things. I think that they want to make sure they have enough time, I believe that if we sit down seriously and put everything on the table, the cards, what are your expenses, how it is that you are ... because all of this came because the farmers believe that the Net Strip Value, the amount that is being used to get the Net Strip Value is too high, so if BSI can come to the table and say ‘these are my expenses’, then it is something that can be worked from there backward coming to the formula,” Prime Minister Briceño remarked.

While the government has demonstrated its willingness to facilitate the negotiations between the two parties, PM Briceño noted that they “have to be the honest broker” and “walk the thin line” to avoid litigation from either party.

The SICB has given the parties some additional time to work to reach an agreement, and Minister Mai expressed his belief prior to the BSCFA meeting that the association’s membership would concede to signing a one-year agreement, but he refused to refer to such a contract as an “interim agreement”.

“For some reason or another, when you use the word ‘interim’, it makes belief that it is only a little shimmy agreement, and maybe that is the reason why FairTrade premiums were withheld from BSCFA, which is unfair,” Mai pointed out.

He expressed hopes that the signing of this agreement, which by all accounts would be the same interim contract that governed the last sugar crop, will be honored by the persons responsible for the disbursement of Fair Trade premiums to the association.

Today, it was announced, following a meeting of the BSCFA members in Orange Walk, that the farmers who belong to the association have agreed to sign onto a one-year interim agreement with the mill, BSI/ASR. While the two-year duration of the agreement that was proposed by the company was not accepted, this indication of the BSCFA’s willingness to once again sign on to the interim agreement is good news for the sugar industry, and will likely lead to the starting of this year’s crop as soon as that agreement is signed between the

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## Hemophiliac, 25, dies two weeks after police beating

by Charles Gladden

SANTA CRUZ, STANN CREEK DISTRICT, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022

A Belizean man from Santa Cruz village who reportedly suffered from hemophilia reportedly died at the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital shortly before midday on Tuesday, December 20, allegedly as a result of a beating inflicted on him by police officers in Santa Cruz Village, Stann Creek, over two weeks ago.

Reports have indicated that Andrew McDougal, 25, was standing in front of a restaurant in the village and had almost finished smoking a marijuana joint, when police officers who spotted the small piece of marijuana, confronted him.

It is being alleged that McDougal resisted arrest, that he hurled profanities at the officers, and that he even hit one officer and broke the back glass of the police mobile after stomping on the vehicle’s tailgate. That is what police have claimed, and they have said that this made it necessary for police to use force when detaining him.

But there is another version of what happened. A version this is bolstered by amateur video footage that has surfaced that shows McDougal, 25, who was in handcuffs, being manhandled by the officers and forcefully flung into the pan of the mobile, where there was a bicycle.

McDougal’s family also believes that he was beaten by the officers at the Independence police station, to which he was taken. And the injuries he suffered were particularly severe because of a genetic disorder that McDougal suffers from: hemophilia. It impairs the body’s ability to form blood clots, which causes individuals to bleed more excessively and for a longer time after an injury.

McDougal’s family believes that his injuries worsened, and his limbs started swelling from the excess blood as a result of the beating, and that he thus died from internal bleeding.

McDougal’s girlfriend, Myrna Alonzo, told 7News that when she got to the Independence Police Station with his mother, he was badly beaten



Andrew McDougal, deceased



Andrew McDougal being treated before he pass away

and bleeding.

“When we reach Independence Police Station, we ask to see him, because of his sickness, and my mother-in-law went in and gave him his medication, because he cannot walk, and he was beaten [badly] and he was bleeding, and then we gave him his medication and we rushed him to the polyclinic in Independence,” she said.

Alonzo mentioned that McDougal told her what happened to him and said that three years prior he was harassed by police who had injured one of his legs.

“He never would be in this situation if they didn’t beat him up and yes, he died because of the injuries he had because he had internal bleeding in his head. They didn’t [have] to beat him like an animal, because he is not an animal,” she lamented.

## \$5 minimum wage set for January 1

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in a recent interview, estimated that 30,000 workers in Belize are receiving less than this hourly wage, and he said that his government, by means of the new legislation, is attempting to remedy that inequality.

The Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), however, has expressed concerns about the impact such an abrupt increase in the wage bill could have on businesses and has estimated that the private sector could be facing an additional \$200 million in wage expenditure, which could result, the BCCI says, in layoff of workers and hikes in the prices of goods and services in order

to offset the additional costs. The Chamber is thus urging the government to take a phased approach to the implementation of the wage increase.

When asked by reporters about his view of the BCCI’s position, Briceño said, “Don’t think its overnight, because we’ve been telling them. It was in PlanBelize, and we were telling them over and over this is coming. The minimum wage has not increased in 10 years, and we have the issue of inflation, and then you have poor people making \$3.30 an hour. I’m just appealing to the private sector for them to do their part. They are going to benefit, you know, because the more

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# PM: PBL cargo upgrade is a must

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. Dec. 22, 2022

Prime Minister John Briceño has reiterated that an upgrade of the capacity of the facility at the Port of Belize Limited to load and unload cargo must take place. Lord Michael Ashcroft, chairman of Waterloo Investment Holdings Limited, which is reportedly involved in the



management of the facility, had stated that no cargo expansion would take place without the approval of the cruise terminal component of a project proposed by the company. The National Environmental Appraisal Committee (NEAC) and Department of the Environment have decided not to grant environmental clearance for that project. Yesterday was the deadline for the submission of an appeal by Waterloo to the Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management. There is no indication if that appeal was submitted.

When asked yesterday if new investors have been mulling the possibility of a takeover of PBL yesterday, the PM shied away from a direct answer, and simply stated, “we’re not there yet.”

“Up to today, I think the Port of Belize, or Waterloo, has time to appeal the judgment, and so we want to wait

and see what will happen, but certainly we cannot keep the status quo at the Port of Belize, and investment has to be done,” PM Briceño said.

The PM emphasized the fact, however, that upgrading the cargo capacity of PBL is not a matter of “if” but “when.”

“It has to be done, either by the receiver, or a new set of investors would come in, or if government someday may... [inaudible] we are not there. The important thing is that we need to finish off the process,” PM Briceño said.

AMANDALA reached out to the CEO of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Kenrick Williams, in an attempt to find out if an appeal was lodged in time by Waterloo Investment Holdings Limited, but has not yet received a reply. The appeal, if submitted, would trigger the formation of a tribunal that would review the matter.

# Man found in shallow grave near Hattieville

by Charles Gladden

HATTIEVILLE, Belize District, Thurs. Dec. 22, 2022

At about 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 21, word began to spread that a body had been found buried in a shallow grave at Mile 15 of the George Price Highway near the Hector Creek Bridge. Before noon, the deceased person was identified as Leroy Mckoy Fuller, 51, a resident of Hattieville who was a father of four, and who, according to his mother, struggled with drug addiction.

Fuller’s hands were reportedly sticking out of the ground in some bushes when passersby came upon the grave, and his slippers and pants, on which there were reportedly some blood stains, were found several yards away. It is still not known what caused his death, and who placed him in the grave, but residents of the village believe he was fatally shot, since a number of them reportedly heard the sound of a single gunshot earlier in the week (on Monday night), just before Fuller’s disappearance became known.

The mother of Fuller, Radiance Mckoy, told local reporters that her son had no previous run-ins with the law, despite his addiction to drugs, but that there had been one individual who had expressed some animosity toward him.

“Timba goes over the bridge, because he smokes crack. He borrowed my son’s bike Monday night and brought it back, and when he did smoke, he went



Leroy Mckoy Fuller, deceased

back again, and right there they dodged him and shot him... His son was telling me about a young man whom he went to go work with who said ‘your pa da wa [expletive]’ because his son went to paint for a man and he was to pick up him Sunday and [hasn’t] went back. I don’t know who would want to kill Timba,” she said.

Mckoy added that her son was a good-natured, hardworking individual who only left his home when he had work to do or to buy drugs.

The area in which Fuller’s body was found is known to be extremely dark at night, and Fuller’s mother had reportedly warned him about wandering in that area before he was allegedly shot.

“I told Timba to keep off of that road at night, but maybe when the crack is in his head, he doesn’t want to listen. He did me something small, and I said, ‘In

# Rear Admiral Bennett: Sapodilla Cayes are key to country's defense

by Kory Leslie (Freelance Writer)

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Dec. 19, 2022

When Senator Eamon Courtenay (Minister of Foreign Affairs) announced in the Senate in October of this year that Belize would be signing on to the Pact of Bogotá so that Honduras’ claim to the Sapodilla Cayes could be submitted to the International Court of Justice for adjudication in tandem with the Guatemalan claim to Belize, many Belizeans became aware of a claim that they had known nothing about, but that has been in Honduras’ Constitution (Article 10) since 1982. In fact, prior to that announcement, many Belizeans knew very little about those cayes, which are located about 40 miles offshore of Punta Gorda in the Toledo District and are said to be “home to the most concentrated area of beaches in all of Belize”. And even fewer were aware of what the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Rear Admiral Elton Bennett, revealed this week: that the Sapodilla Caye Range, which has been claimed by both Honduras and Guatemala for decades, has actually been of great strategic importance in the country’s national defense, and that



Admiral Elton Bennett

this has been the case “since the British were here”.

For decades, one of the 14 islands that form the Sapodilla Caye Range (Hunting Caye) has been the location of the official operating base of the Belize Coast Guard — providing members of that law enforcement agency a vantage point from which they can view areas of Belizean territory that intersect with the marine areas of Guatemala and Honduras. (The range also includes such islands as Tom Owens Caye, and Lime Caye, as well

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the name of Jesus, go away from here and don’t come back here again. From Monday, we saw him when he came here, and from there we haven’t seen him again,” she said.

A post-mortem examination will be conducted to determine the cause of Fuller’s death. He leaves behind 4 children: a 26-year-old daughter, and 3 young sons.



## John Saldivar allowed to contest February BMP convention

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for Saldivar to participate in an upcoming Belmopan UDP convention on February 5 in an effort to once again become the UDP's Belmopan standard bearer. He is also expected to reclaim his posts as interim caretaker of Belmopan and Western Regional leader for the UDP.

Following the Special Committee's decision to disallow Saldivar's candidacy, UDP leader, Hon. Moses "Shyne" Barrow had stated in a social media post, "I categorically support the Special Committee Decision to disallow the Candidacy of John Saldivar in the best interest of the UDP."

After it was announced, however, that Saldivar had appealed the decision and that a meeting of the National Party Council, the second highest decision-making mechanism within the party besides the national convention, had been scheduled, the finality of that decision became less of a sure thing—especially due to the support given to Saldivar by the UDP Caucus for Change, to which reportedly 20 constituency caretakers belong.

And on December 17, the National Party Council voted 43 to 39 in favor of allowing Saldivar to seek to represent Belmopan as standard bearer. He will thus be one of three candidates to seek to be elected at a UDP Belmopan convention on February 5.

Despite his earlier statements, Hon. Barrow has seemingly accepted the NPC decision. "As Party Leader I am bound to yield to the Democratic majority of the NPC," he said.

UDP chairman, Michael Peyrefitte, in reference to Barrow's stance, told *7News*, "... like he made very clear to the National Party Council afterwards that he took a position, but the decision of the NPC is a decision of the NPC, and nobody is bigger than the NPC and sometimes you take positions and you are outvoted by the majority..."

Questions have surfaced, however, about how that process was carried out on Saturday, December 17, via Zoom, and whether it was fair and inclusive. Public statements by two elected UDP area representatives—Hon. Tracy Panton (Albert area rep), and Hon. Patrick Faber (Collet area rep)—have cast light on what they allege was inappropriate conduct during that meeting. Panton made reference to a hostile atmosphere at the meeting and claimed that her chairperson and secretary weren't allowed into the meeting. Faber said that he was kicked out of the meeting and that he was blocked from re-entering. He even posted a screenshot to show that he was denied entry.

There have been additional reports that other persons who were to have participated in the voting were not able to join the meeting.

When *7News'* Jules Vasquez mentioned the allegations of Panton and Faber, who as a member of the National Assembly should have had a seat on the NPC, and the possible impact of the apparent shutout on the outcome of the meeting, he said, "Like I said, the meeting was carried, the decision was made, and we move on."

Peyrefitte, when asked by Vasquez whether there was "misconduct or a less than inclusive and optimal behaviour in

the management of that zoom NPC", gave a one-word response: no.

He would later insist that "there was nothing wrong with the meeting" and that the persons claiming otherwise "tend to make allegations every single day". "After a while you don't simply have time to entertain all of them," he said.

In reference to Hon. Panton's assertions that there was an absence of cordiality at the meeting, he said "there were hard words throughout the meeting and it was about 2-3 hours, and I don't think that we ever don't have harsh words during a UDP meeting. We are not monolithic; we're a democratic party and the constitution encourages harsh words and back and forth. That's the medium where you do it."

When further prodded by Vasquez about the possible misconduct during the meeting, he stated, "Well, you see, Jules, you hear about court, then they hire lawyers, then the whole press conference with prominent attorneys in the middle explaining violations of the constitution. I have to keep my words to myself in the event we end up in court."

Ultimately, Peyrefitte said, in regard to whether the outcome of the meeting could negatively impact the party, "Time will tell. That is up to the people of Belmopan and that is up to the people of Belize for them to make that decision. That's not up to a designation by the US."

Saldivar, on the other hand, has expressed much jubilation and goodwill in his social media posts since the NPC decision.

"There are certain principles by which we live that are fundamental to a just society. The principle of innocent until proven guilty is one such. From the bottom of my heart, I thank all those members of the National Party Council who stood bravely in upholding justice. No matter how others may interpret it, your bravery has saved our Party and it will prove in the months and years to come. I put all that has been said and done behind me and challenge all who love our Party to move beyond this past and let's chart a new way forward for our Party leaving no one behind," Saldivar posted in his Christmas message on Facebook.

He pledged "unwavering support" for UDP leader Hon. "Shyne" Barrow and said he felt compelled to call for the inclusion of Patrick Faber, as well as Tracy Panton and other elected area representatives.

"I also call on those leaders to respect and support our Party Leader. Let us draw a line and cease the hostilities. Let us hover around each other and treat everyone with respect," he stated in his post.

On February 5, 2022, Saldivar will be seeking to be selected at a Belmopan convention to be the UDP's standard bearer for that constituency. Two other candidates who will be vying for that post at the convention are George Lovell, who is a former BDF soldier and also served as CEO in the Ministry of National Security while Saldivar was the National Security Minister; and Emil Torres, According to reliable sources from Belmopan, Saldivar and Lovell are also in-laws.

It's worth noting that former Belmopan mayor Khalid Belisle, who had also been seeking to serve as UDP Belmopan

## GOB meets with Joint Unions

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for months — since the administration, during the negotiations in 2021 that culminated in the implementation of a 10% reduction of the salaries of public workers, had committed to meeting with the unions periodically to update them on fiscal progress made by the government and on what benefits the government would be able to reinstate for those workers. Matters that were reportedly discussed at the meeting on Tuesday included fiscal transparency and the unfreezing of increments due to public officers during the upcoming fiscal year.

In regard to GoB's adherence to Fiscal Transparency and the Responsibility Regulations outlined in 2010, Prime Minister Briceno reportedly told the union reps that until his administration took over the reins of government, the regulations were not being enforced by former Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Dean Barrow. Briceno reportedly told the reps that his administration has been more forthcoming with information and has remained adherent to the law where supplemental bills are concerned. Financial Secretary Waight likewise committed to providing any additional information requested, and in the format outlined in the 2010 regulations.

The GOB reps also informed the joint unions that the proposed insurance scheme for public officers for 2023 is "unlikely to be implemented". However, they noted that with the launch of the NHI program in Orange Walk, Belize City and Cayo next year (at a date to be determined), public servants will have the needed access to primary and preventative care.

Next on the agenda was the current increment freeze that has been in place since 2021. Hon. Briceno informed the joint unions that the freeze will remain in place and that the possible resumption of the disbursement of increments will be contingent on pension reform. Minister Usher reportedly interjected to add that the appraisal system for the officers needs to likewise be reviewed to more effectively ensure that increments are performance-based. In response to this, the union reps argued that the appraisals are "already performance-based, and it was the persons responsible for doing/supervising the appraisals who have skewed the process." The unions also asserted that there needs to be tax reform to accompany the discussions of pension reform. PM Briceno responded by stating that this reform would be considered separately, as the GOB is intending to phase out the existing Pay as You Earn (PAYE) System by the end of the year. Pension reform is slated to be implemented in April of 2023, with consultations on the matter scheduled for January of next year.

Other matters discussed at the meeting included a proposal to have public officers play a role in the reporting of price gouging and any failure of local businesses to issue receipts following purchases. The proposal was reportedly welcomed by PM Briceno, who said that he will urge the Price Control Unit to review it. Also, the Joint Unions inquired about the

standard bearer, sent a letter to the Secretary General of the UDP, Juliet Thimbriel, in which he signaled that he would be withdrawing his candidacy and returning to life as a private citizen.

GOB's position on having senior career public officers act as accounting officers within specific ministries. The PM advised that he is awaiting recommendations from the People's Constitution Committee (PCC), following which the GOB and Joint Unions would be able to make recommendations on the matter to the PCC. When asked about the formation of a Tax Recovery Unit, Hon. Briceno stated that the unit had already been formed and that "of the 496 million dollars in outstanding taxes, 399.3 million has been written off as uncollectible". Of the remaining \$69.8 million deemed collectible, \$725,000 has been collected, and the department is collecting \$75,000 monthly in arrears, he said.

The matter of Good Governance, a frequent focal point in the unions' activism efforts, was also tabled for review. Both Ministers Fonseca and Usher were able to shed some light on draft bills that are under review. The Whistleblowers Act, which was first read in the House of Representatives in June of 2021, is reportedly still under evaluation by the House Committee. Regarding the Civil Asset Recovery and Wealth Order Bill and the Campaign Finance Act, the U.S. Embassy is offering assistance by providing a Draft Expert to assist the Attorney General's Ministry with these legislations, the government reps told the unions.

Another pressing issue which was discussed is the amending of the Teachers Pension Act. PM Briceno told the union reps that the government is not in favor of mandating that church-state schools pay the required 30% of teachers' pensions, as this could "possibly bankrupt the delinquent institutions". For the time being, the government will continue to pay the 70% pension contributions, but the PM has committed to further consideration of the matter and promised to provide the unions with an update in July of 2023. Following pushback from the president of the Belize National Teachers Union (BNTU), Senator Elena Smith, the PM then conceded to a shorter timeline and promised to have an update by March of next year.

The final matter outlined in the briefing was the discussion of a Collective Bargaining Agreement that is to be signed between BAHA (Belize Agricultural Health Authority) and the Public Service Union (PSU). The PM reported that he was not aware of the situation; however, the president of the PSU, Dean Flowers stated that he sent a letter to the Minister of Agriculture and the Managing Director and Chairman of the board of BAHA and did not receive a response. Minister Usher said he was aware of the matter and was informed that the senior management of BAHA conducted the negotiations instead of the board, but questioned how senior managers could negotiate on their own behalf. Flowers clarified that an information sheet dated 2003 specified that senior managers could not form the bargaining unit of the union. The PSU also has records that show that all managing directors, acting managing directors and senior managers have been reporting progress to the board after all negotiation sessions.

Minister Usher said that he will be meeting with the Managing Director of BAHA in January to gain more clarity and "chart the way forward".





## Damn the BCCI: adelante with minimum wage increase

In its 2020-2025 manifesto, the PUP pledged to the people of Belize that if the party won the general elections, it would increase the minimum wage, from BZ\$3.30 per hour since 2012, to BZ\$5.00 per hour. How much research the PUP did to arrive at \$5/hr. as the minimum wage for Belize isn't known, but CSSPAR, the think tank spearheaded by Ambassador David Gibson, has noted that back in 2003 the NTUCB had carried out a study which led the organization to propose \$4.50 to \$6.80 per hour as the minimum living wage, which is the amount one would have to earn to cover their basic needs.

In normal times Belize's inflation rate is about 1% per year, but that has increased dramatically, catastrophically, these past two years, since the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world in 2020, and Russia sent its forces into Ukraine in February this year. Some experts estimate an increase of 20 to 30 percent in the cost of building a house since the pandemic began.

Things were bad in our economy when the PUP came to power in 2020. Instead of signing the minimum wage increase into law then, the PUP went in the opposite direction and forced a 10% wage cut on its employees, something that had never been done before, and maintained the increment freeze that the previous government (UDP) had, under duress, implemented when the pandemic began. The PUP said when it came into office that our country was borrowing one million dollars each day, and the only alternative to the wage cut was the more dreaded retrenchment.

It has taken the government two full years to feel we are in a good enough place for it to deliver on its manifesto promise. But the BCCI (Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry) would describe the projected

minimum wage increase in January next year as "force ripe." The BCCI says it supports a wage increase, that it understands that the present minimum wage isn't a living wage, but it doesn't think our economy can handle a full \$5/hr. minimum wage for all workers. The BCCI has cited the slow recovery of businesses from the worst of the pandemic, and the ongoing war, as reasons why some of its members are not in a position to handle the minimum wage increase at this time.

Since the government announced earlier this year that it was setting up a task force to guide the process, the BCCI has said that the minimum wage increase should be ushered in, like the 2012 increase was, in phases. The BCCI is saying that if \$5 becomes the minimum wage in January, many businesses might have to lay off workers, or increase the cost of the goods and services they provide to recoup the additional funds they will have to pay out. The group has also cautioned about a domino effect: workers who are presently earning \$5/hr. wanting/expecting more pay from their employers.

Not all employers own businesses. Homeowners who hire domestic helpers and people to clean their yards will have to

pay more. Of all the entities that will have to pay a little more to their workers come January, business folk really have the least to complain about. That's because they will be in the front of the line to benefit from the increased earnings of the lowest-paid Belizeans. In the immediate, the increase will hurt a few businesses, but it won't take long for this minimum wage increase to yield benefits for those in the business sector.

The more money in circulation, the wealthier people become, if they spend it right. Speaking on the advantages of money over barter trade, the global edtech company, *BYJU'S Learning*, which can be found at the website byjus.com, says "money evaluates every commodity and service with a convincing value; a person who doesn't want anything in exchange will also be ready to work for someone for money; money is a durable thing and lasts many years, even if kept unused", and "money makes the economy grow faster."

The GoB isn't about creating new money, but if it increases the minimum wage, more of it will be in the hands of poorer people, and that group just happens to be the ones who spend. This minimum wage increase is about getting people closer to a living wage, and it is also about stimulating the economy. The same money that businesses dole out to workers for the increase will come back to them, along with the earnings of other workers, when they turn up at their shops to purchase their goods and services. This spending will cause the economy to grow; thus, more money will flow into their cash registers.

But it is important, even critical, for us to spend our money on the right things. Our people must use this little increase with the aim to multiply it. We must spend our money in-country. We must show a preference for Belizean products. Spending on the tools of production increases wealth; when spending on luxury goods, we must not go overboard.

Hopefully our business folk will follow the lead of government, and stay far away from retrenchment. There will be changes in January. Workers who are earning the bare minimum have to feel especially good about the extra money they'll be receiving for their labors. And business folk can look forward to their cash registers ringing more as the increased earnings of workers help to grow the economy.

### *A merry and safe Krismos to all*

Not all Belizeans are Christians, but this weekend it will be hard to find anyone who isn't caught up in the celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus, the *Anointed One*, the *Messiah*, the *Christ*, in a manger in a little town called Bethlehem around 2,000 years ago. While there are those who say He was "just" a prophet, no one questions His message of hope, the lessons He gave about love, and the beauty of the life He lived.

He is worthy of celebration, and in Belize we know how to do it. We do it with "blackberry" wine, and cashew wine, and rum popo. We do it with ham and turkey and trimmings. Our government joins the Salvation Army to make sure all our children get some special gift, and that those of us on down times have all the food we can eat.

Some complain that the season has become too commercialized, but much of the spending is on beautifying homes, and on clothing, footwear, lotions, kitchen utensils, tools, home appliances—things that have value throughout the year.

We eat, we drink a little, and we play di music, the songs of Christmas that are enjoyed all over the world; the songs of Cleveland Berry, Wilfred Peters, Tony Wright, Coolie Rebels, Super Furia, Martha Weatherburn, Heights of Vibes, and other local heroes; and the songs of our ancestors who came home for a short break, came home to bram with family and friends after spending months in the forests cutting down mahogany and bleeding sapodilla.

A merry and safe Krismos to all!

**AMANDALA**  
Belize's leading newspaper

(estb. 1969)

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## NOTICE

**NOTICE:** I, Richard Westby, state that I have lost my original vessel registration certificate. Name of Vessel: Lil BUP Registration number: SC0491

## LIQUOR LICENSE NOTICE

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Catarina Ah** is applying for a Malt and Cider Liquor License to be operated at Catarina Grocery Shop, #93 Old Well Road, Lords Bank, Ladyville, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Julio Manuel Matus** is applying for a Liquor License to be operated at Sam's Mini Mart, 90 E Collet Canal, Belize City, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Lennox Stevens** is applying for a Publican Special Liquor License to be operated at Stephen's Place, 76 Jaguar Avenue Fabers Road Ext., Belize City, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Wendell Humes** is applying for a Restaurant Liquor License to be operated at Mayan Sunrise Restaurant located at Altun Ha, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Barefoot Caye Caulker Hotel/The Tootsie Footsie Bar** is applying for a Publican Special Liquor License to be operated at Barefoot Caye Caulker Hotel/Tootsie Footsie Bar, Avenida Hicaco, Caye Caulker, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Emilio Romaldo Rodriguez** is applying for a Restaurant/Bar License to be operated at The Point At Placencia, #2 Old Wives Street, Placencia Village, Stann Creek, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Gabriela Salgado** is applying for a Liquor License to be operated at Smokeez Seaside Restaurant & Bar, 63 Seashore Drive, Belize City, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Laurence**

## LIQUOR LICENSE NOTICE

**W. Clarke** is applying for a Restaurant Liquor License to be operated at Garden of Eden Eco Lodge, Boston Village 23 Miles, Old Northern Hwy., under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Damian & Nisha Grieco** are applying for a Hotel Liquor License to be operated at The Coconut Husk, Hopkins Village, Stann Creek, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Elvis Robinson** is applying for a Restaurant Liquor License to be operated at NiceTime Restaurant, Slim Lane, Belmopan, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Victoria Fernandez** is applying for a Hotel License to be operated at Valley Stream Development, Mile 32 Hummingbird Highway, Cayo, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Angel Daniel Galdamez** is applying for a Publican Special License to be operated at D-Valley Restaurant, Penner Road, Valley of Peace, Cayo District, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Jose Luis Aldana** is applying for a Shop Beer License to be operated at Aldana Mini Vegi Shop, #36 Calle Las Americas, Belmopan, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **RICHARD DESPORTE** is applying for a Publican Special Liquor License, to be operated at Mahogany Hall Resort, Paslow Falls Road, Bullet Tree Falls Village, Cayo District, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Victor T. Perdomo** is applying for a Restaurant Liquor License, to be operated at Tibbz Fast Food, 34/36 Cardinal Ave., under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Island Adventures Campground** is applying for a Hotel Liquor License, to be operated at Island Adventures Ltd., SouthWest Caye, Glovers, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Tobacco Caye Paradise Cabins** is applying for a Hotel Liquor License, to be operated at Tobacco Caye Paradise Cabins Ltd., North Tobacco Caye, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance

*Memoriam*  
**IN NEVER FADING  
MEMORY OF**  
**Mrs. Eva Swift  
and  
Mr. John Swift**



**Who departed this life on December 20, 1998 and  
December 2, 2008, respectively.**

**We have given quiet encouragement to each other.  
We have shared our fondest memories and our regrets,  
Whilst raising our hopes for brighter tomorrows.**

**It has been many years since they left us.  
But, still we think of them both.  
And this time of year,  
Their conversations, jokes, smiles and laughter,  
Especially at this time of the year.**

**Looking back with memories fond  
Upon the path they trod  
We cherish each hour they spent with us  
And have left the rest to God.**

*The late Mrs. Eva Swift is fondly remembered and missed by her  
children, grandchildren and great grandchildren; her son, the late  
John R. Swift, will never be forgotten by his brothers, sisters,  
children, grandchildren and great grand children*

Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Joel Raymundo** is applying for a Publican Special Liquor License, to be operated at Jaqueline's Bar, Saint Margaret Village, Cayo District, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Kenny Hegar** is applying for a Malt and Cider Liquor License, to be operated at Buccan Grill Restaurant, 27 Joyce Blaire St., Benque Viejo, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Timothy & Arcelita Rutter** are applying for a Restaurant Liquor License (food and alcoholic beverages), to be operated at Sauce and Ice, Southern Highway, Hicattee Village, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Osmin Figueroa** is applying for a Liquor License, to be operated at Savannah View, Hopkins, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Osmin Figueroa** is applying for a Liquor License, to be operated at Hopkins Service Center Limited, Hopkins, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Salvador Luis Marin** is applying for a Night Club

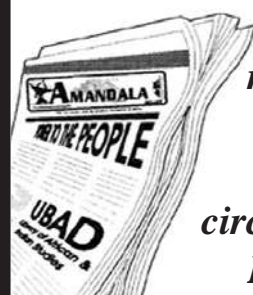
Liquor License to be operated at I and I Reggae Bar and Night Club, Luciano Reyes Street, Caye Caulker, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Mr. Yaqoov Vaknin** is applying for a Publican Special Liquor License to be operated at Belize Daiquiri Ltd., #8 Fort Street Tourism Village, Belize City, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **John Casciato and Leilainia Caton** are applying for a Restaurant/Bar Liquor License to be operated at Wine Yard & Bistro, Front Street, Caye Caulker, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**LIQUOR LICENCE NOTICE:** Notice is hereby given that **Greta Martha Williams** is applying for a Publican Special Liquor License to be operated at Martha's Cafe, 10 Fort Street, Belize City, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Revised Edition 2000.

**AMANDALA**  
*the  
newspaper  
with the  
greatest  
circulation in  
Belize!*





*Benny's* would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you our customers for your continued support throughout 2022.

We hope your Christmas Holiday and New Year is filled with happiness and prosperity and we look forward to serving you in 2023 and beyond.

# Seasons Greetings

from the management and staff of *Benny's*



Tel: 2-BEN-BEN (223-6236) | [www.bennys.bz](http://www.bennys.bz)

## MERRY Christmas HAPPY NEW YEAR

It is with deep gratitude that The Board, Management & Staff of Caribbean Shipping Agencies, Ltd. & HYDE Shipping Corporation take this opportunity to thank all our Customers for the dedicated support throughout the year.



We wish all *Joy* at Christmas; *Peace & Prosperity* as we sail into the New Year!







## Al carajo con la BCCI: adelante con el aumento del salario mínimo

En su manifiesto 2020-2025, el PUP prometió al pueblo de Belize que si el partido ganaba las elecciones generales, aumentaría el salario mínimo, de BZ\$3.30 por hora desde 2012, a BZ\$5.00 por hora. Cuánto investigó el PUP para llegar a \$5/hr. como el salario mínimo para Belize se desconoce, pero CSSPAR, el grupo de expertos encabezado por el embajador David Gibson, ha señalado que en 2003 el NTUCB había llevado a cabo un estudio que llevó a la organización a proponer \$ 4.50 a \$ 6.80 por hora como salario mínimo digno, que es la cantidad que uno tendría que ganar para cubrir sus necesidades básicas.

En tiempos normales, la tasa de inflación de Belize es de alrededor del 1 % anual, pero ha aumentado de manera espectacular y catastrófica en los últimos dos años, desde que la pandemia de Covid-19 golpeó al mundo en 2020 y Rusia envió sus fuerzas a Ucrania en febrero de este año. Algunos expertos estiman un aumento del 20 al 30 por ciento en el costo de construir una casa desde que comenzó la pandemia.

Las cosas iban mal en nuestra economía cuando el PUP llegó al poder en 2020. En lugar de convertir en ley el aumento del salario mínimo en ese momento, el PUP tomó la dirección opuesta y obligó un recorte salarial del 10 % a sus empleados, algo que nunca se había hecho antes, y mantuvo el congelamiento de incrementos que el gobierno anterior (UDP) había implementado, bajo presión, cuando comenzó la pandemia. El PUP dijo cuando asumió el cargo que nuestro país estaba tomando prestado un millón de dólares cada día, y que la única alternativa al recorte salarial era el más temido despido colectivo.

El gobierno ha tomado dos años completos para sentir que estamos en un lugar lo suficientemente bueno para cumplir con su promesa del manifiesto. Pero la Cámara de Comercio e Industria de Belize (BCCI) describiría el aumento del salario mínimo proyectado en enero del próximo año como prematuro. La BCCI dice que apoya un aumento salarial, que entiende que el salario mínimo actual no es un salario digno, pero no cree que nuestra economía pueda manejar los \$5 completos por hora en salario mínimo para todos los trabajadores. La BCCI ha citado la lenta recuperación de las empresas de lo peor de la pandemia y la guerra en curso, como razones por las cuales algunos de sus miembros no están en condiciones de manejar el aumento del salario mínimo en este momento.

Desde que el gobierno anunció a principios de este año que estaba creando un grupo de trabajo para guiar el proceso, la BCCI ha dicho que el aumento del salario mínimo debe iniciarse, como con el aumento de 2012, en fases. La BCCI dice que si \$5 se convierte en el salario mínimo en enero, muchas empresas podrían tener que despedir trabajadores o aumentar el costo de los bienes y servicios que brindan para recuperar los fondos adicionales que tendrán que pagar. El grupo también ha advertido sobre un efecto dominó: trabajadores que actualmente ganan \$5 por hora queriendo/esperando más paga de sus empleadores.

No todos los empleadores son dueños de negocios. Los propietarios de viviendas que contratan personal doméstico y personas para limpiar sus jardines tendrán que pagar más. De todas las entidades que tendrán que pagar un poco más a sus trabajadores a partir de enero, la gente de negocios es la que menos tiene de qué quejarse. Eso se debe a que estarán al frente de la fila para beneficiarse del aumento de los ingresos de los beliceños con salarios más bajos. En lo inmediato, el aumento perjudicará a algunas empresas, pero este aumento del salario mínimo no tardará en rendir frutos para quienes están en el sector empresarial.

Cuanto más dinero hay en circulación, más rica se vuelve la gente, si lo gastan bien. Hablando sobre las ventajas del dinero sobre el comercio de trueque, la compañía global de tecnología educativa, BYJU'S Learn-

ing, que se puede encontrar en el sitio web byjus.com, dice que “el dinero evalúa cada producto y servicio con un valor convincente; una persona que no quiere nada a cambio también estará dispuesta a trabajar para alguien por dinero; el dinero es una cosa duradera y dura muchos años, incluso si no se usa”, y “el dinero hace que la economía crezca más rápido”.

El Gobierno de Belize no se trata de crear dinero nuevo, pero si aumenta el salario mínimo, habrá más en manos de las personas más pobres, y ese grupo resulta ser el que gasta. Este aumento del salario mínimo se trata de acercar a las personas a un salario digno, y también se trata de estimular la economía. El mismo dinero que las empresas repartirán a los trabajadores por el aumento volverá a ellos, junto con las ganancias de otros trabajadores, cuando se presenten en sus tiendas para comprar sus bienes y servicios. Este gasto hará que la economía crezca; por lo tanto, fluirá más dinero a sus cajas registradoras.

Pero es importante, incluso crítico, que gastemos nuestro dinero en las cosas correctas. Nuestro pueblo debe utilizar este pequeño aumento con el objetivo de multiplicarlo. Debemos gastar nuestro dinero en el país. Debemos mostrar preferencia por los productos beliceños. Gastar en herramientas de producción aumenta la riqueza; cuando gastamos en artículos de lujo, no debemos excedernos.

Esperemos que nuestra gente de negocios siga el ejemplo del gobierno y se mantenga alejado de la reducción de personal. Habrá cambios en enero. Los trabajadores que ganan lo mínimo deben sentirse especialmente bien con el dinero extra que recibirán por su trabajo. Y la gente de negocios puede esperar que sus cajas registradoras suenen más a medida que las mayores ganancias de los trabajadores ayuden a hacer crecer la economía.

### Una feliz y segura Navidad para todos

No todos los beliceños son cristianos, pero este fin de semana será difícil encontrar a alguien que no esté involucrado en la celebración del nacimiento del niño Jesús, el Ungido, el Mesías, el Cristo, en un pesebre en un pequeño pueblo llamado Belén hace unos 2.000 años. Si bien hay quienes dicen que Él fue “solo” un profeta, nadie cuestiona su mensaje de esperanza, las lecciones que dio sobre el amor y la belleza de la vida que vivió.

Es digno de celebración, y en Belize sabemos cómo hacerlo. Lo hacemos con vino de “mora”, y vino de marañón, y rompopo. Nosotros lo hacemos con jamón y pavo y guarniciones. Nuestro gobierno se une al Ejército de Salvación para asegurarse de que todos nuestros niños reciban un regalo especial, y que aquellos de nosotros en momentos de inactividad tengamos toda la comida que podamos comer.

Algunos se quejan de que la temporada se ha comercializado demasiado, pero gran parte del gasto se destina a embellecer las casas y a comprar ropa, calzado, lociones, utensilios de cocina, herramientas, electrodomésticos, cosas que tienen valor durante todo el año.

Comemos, bebemos un poco y tocamos música, las canciones navideñas que se disfrutaban en todo el mundo; las canciones de Cleveland Berry, Wilfred Peters, Tony Wright, Coolie Rebels, Super Furia, Martha Weatherburn, Heights of Vibes y otros héroes locales; y las canciones de nuestros antepasados que llegaban a casa por un breve descanso, regresaban a casa para una celebración festiva con familiares y amigos después de pasar meses en los bosques talando caoba y sangrando chicozapote.

¡Una feliz y segura Navidad para todos!

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# GoB gives land to 54 Valley of Peace residents

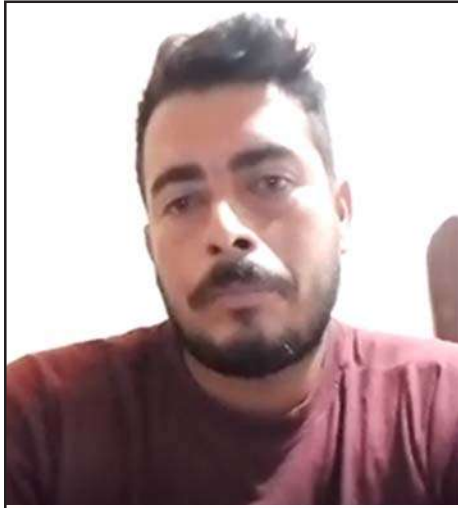
by Kory Leslie (Freelance Writer)

CAYO DISTRICT, Mon. Dec. 19, 2022

Over the weekend, land titles were presented to 54 Valley of Peace residents at a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño; the Minister of Natural Resources, Hon. Cordel Hyde; and the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Development, Hon. Julius Espat, who is the area representative of Cayo South, in which the Valley of Peace is located.

During his remarks at the ceremony, Minister Hyde commented on the strategic importance of the handover of land at this juncture in the country's development:

"Construction is happening at a pace that we have never seen before. But the challenge for this government is how do we transform that and transfer all those beautiful things into the lives of ordinary people. What is the point of having all this beautiful statistics — and



**Ever Blandon, Chairman of the Valley of Peace Farmers Association**

the country is glowing, and the economy is blooming, if ordinary people lives are not being improved for the better? And this is what this is about. This is a first step. To get your land. To make sure that you can build your house, you can borrow money to start your business



**(l-r) Prime Minister John Briceño, Deputy Prime Minister Cordel Hyde, Hon. Julius Espat and Land title recipient**

or go to school. There's nothing more empowering than getting a piece of land. And so, it's a really, really proud moment for us," he said.

Minister Espat similarly drew attention to the importance of the Briceño administration's distribution of

land, and then made reference to an ongoing effort by the government to tie land distribution with the construction of houses for Belizeans, which is an initiative, he said, that has been gaining momentum.

Notably, the farmers in Valley of Peace have been seeking the government's intervention in an ongoing land dispute between the Valley of Peace Farmers Association, and American-owned agribusiness Valley of Peace Farms Ltd. — a dispute which can be traced to Valley of Peace Farms' acquisition of titles for over 11,000 acres of land in the village in 2020, under what was then a UDP administration. Local farmers, however, quickly came forward to assert their rights to hundreds of acres of farmlands within the territory that was sold to the principals of VP Farms. Attempts were made by the two parties to seek the assistance of the Ministry of Natural Resources that was in place under the Barrow administration in an attempt to resolve the matter out of court. But there was no such resolution, and since the general elections in 2020, the dispute has been a series of knots that a new administration, and a new Natural Resources Minister (Hon. Hyde) must disentangle.

Chairman of the Valley of Peace Farmers Association, Ever Blandon, told local reporters that it is the Lands Department (under the previous Barrow administration) that caused the conflict by duplicating the land titles, and that the department is thus responsible for remedying the situation. He noted that a meeting was held between the Natural Resources Ministry and the two parties in early 2021, but that there has been no further formal engagement among the parties since then. Mr. Blandon also shared a letter dated December 9<sup>th</sup> that was sent to Minister Hyde and the Lands Commissioner in a subsequent attempt by the farmers to seek redress. Blandon said the dispute has made it challenging for farmers to respond to growing challenges associated with climate change and to acquire the financing necessary to continue their operations.

"One of the importance to us is, if you have a title, it gives you more opportunities to have loans to continue farming. That's one of the reasons. We are in possession of the land; we are not letting go to one of the farms — that has to be clear. We are in the possession of the land. We are not squatting on the land of Valley of Peace





Press Release  
20 December 2022

**DIGIWALLET LTD. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UNICEF IS  
MAKING FINANCIAL INCLUSION A REALITY**

DigiWallet and UNICEF Belize signed a contract to introduce a ground-breaking shift in the disbursement of financial assistance in the sum of seven hundred and twenty thousand (BZ \$720,000) to nine hundred (900) migrant children and families as part of Belize's Social Protection Program. The partnership was forged to provide essential social assistance services to vulnerable beneficiaries in the form of four (4) cash transfers of two hundred dollars (BZ \$200) each. The beneficiaries of the program are located in the Cayo and Stann Creek districts, areas with a high percentage of irregular migrant populations and were identified through a joint vulnerability assessment conducted with The Belize Red Cross. Signing the contract on behalf of the parties were Ms. Melanie Blake, General Manager of DigiWallet, and Ms. Alison Parker, UNICEF Representative to Belize, at an official signing ceremony held on Friday, 16 December 2022.

"We will be able to leverage our robust digital payment platform to quickly and efficiently distribute cash to those in need. Our platform allows for fast and secure transactions, ensuring that the funds reach the intended recipients quickly and without any loss or theft," stated Melanie Blake, General Manager of DigiWallet Ltd. She added, "Recipients will be able to purchase essential goods, pay their utility bills and much more with DigiWallet. We are thrilled for the opportunity to partner with UNICEF to support migrant communities in Belize."

Ms. Alison Parker, UNICEF Representative for Belize shared that "This innovative approach of digital payment is a breakthrough in advancing the social protection system in the country. It allows us to reach the most vulnerable children, at no cost to beneficiaries, especially in emergency situations. By establishing this partnership with DigiWallet, UNICEF will be able to support the Government's timely response to social and economic shocks, and to use technology, in the most effective way, to provide their immediate needs".

This partnership and support to migrant children and families was made possible by the generous funding from the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of the U.S. Department of State. Belize is one of the countries to benefit from this program through UNICEF, with significant investments dedicated for improvements of social service delivery for migrant communities in Belize. Both DigiWallet Ltd. and UNICEF expect to expand the scope of the partnership in the future.



Also in attendance at the official signing ceremony was Mr. Ivan Tesucum, Chief Executive Officer at Digi; Dr. Osmond Martinez, Chief Executive Officer at the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment, and other officials from the Government of Belize; Ms. Lily Bowman, Director-General of The Belize Red Cross Society; and other representatives from DigiWallet and UNICEF.

— END —





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Belize City, Belize

The position is to:

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- Monitor and report key performance indicators and financial performance by analyzing actual results in comparison with forecasts.
- Drive process improvement and policy development initiatives that impact the function.

The position requirements are:

- Bachelor degree in Business Accounting/Finance or other related field
- Experience with financial and accounting software applications
- Ability to work with little to no supervision

**Application Deadline: December 30, 2022**

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted for interviews. If you are not contacted three (3) weeks after the application deadline, we welcome your application for any other vacancy.

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Apply: [bowen.bz/resources](http://bowen.bz/resources)



**BELMOPAN COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL**

VACANCY exists for the following post at the Belmopan Comprehensive School, for the school year 2022/2023:

- 1 Information Technology/Math Teacher - Temporary (6 Months)**
- 1 Information Technology Teacher - Fulltime**

**Teaching qualifications:** A Bachelor's Degree in the subject area with educational component. An Associates Degree with teaching experience may be considered.

Applicants for teaching post should forward:

- Letter of application
- Curriculum Vitae
- Certified copy of Qualifications
- Certified copy of Teaching License
- **Original** Transcript
- Copy of Social Security
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- **Original** Police Record – no later than 3 months
- Certified Medical Form – a medical assessment completed within the last two months
- Two letters of recommendation (1 each) from most recent supervisor or colleague - no later than 1 year

Deadline: **Wednesday January 4, 2023**

Address to: **Secretary  
Board of Management  
Belmopan Comprehensive School  
Ring Road  
Belmopan**



## Sales Centre Holiday Hours

# DECEMBER 2022

*Continued from Page 9*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				01 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	02 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	03 Sales Centres 8 AM – 12 NOON Regular Routes
04	05 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	06 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	07 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	08 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	09 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	10 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes
11	12 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	13 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	14 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	15 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	16 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	17 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 3 PM Regular Routes
18	19 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	20 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	21 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	22 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	23 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes Corporate 8 AM – 1 PM	24 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 3 PM Regular Routes
25 <b>MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	26 <b>BOXING DAY</b> <b>CLOSED</b>	27 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	28 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	29 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	30 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes Corporate 8 AM – 1 PM	31 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 3 PM Regular Routes
01 <b>HAPPY NEW YEAR</b>	02 <b>NEW YEAR HOLIDAY</b> <b>CLOSED</b>	03 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	04 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	05 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	06 Sales Centres Open Through Lunch 8 AM – 5 PM Regular Routes	07 Sales Centres 8 AM – 12 Noon Regular Routes



# If you win the Lotto you don't want everyone to know

by Colin Hyde

We all know what happened in the life of Lord Rhaburn when he went from poverty to wealth, after someone started a rumor that he had won the lottery. He got swamped. Everyone who knew him, from acquaintances to friends to faamli, turned up with their hands out, to receive. Hmm, I'm not certain that Rhaburn did win the lottery.

Downstairs of where I grew up on West Canal lived a man named Heath, and his wife. Mr. Heath was a painter, and his clothes told the full story of his profession. He painted houses, so most of the glory went to, ehm, "lily white" (the popular color for the walls outside), "battleship grey" (for the steps), "canary yellow" (for the windows, to chase away the mosquitoes), and "fire engine red", for the roofs. Not completely lost on his smock were some pastels, pink and baby blue, used in the bedrooms, the first for the girls and the second for the boys.

One would have thought that Heath and his wife were total loners, if one judged by the few visitors that came by. But wait 'til Heath's contract, 10, played in the Sunday lottery. My dad says that at Hunting Cay the tide comes in with a rush, not like on the coast where it comes in at a snail's pace. When Heath's contract played on Sunday, he and his wife's friends, faamli, and acquaintances didn't come over like tide on the coast; they came over in a sprint, like the tide at

Hunting Cay. In a matter of minutes, di yaad full!

Ah, for a very good reason not everyone wants their names and photos splashed all over when they come into some lottery winnings. I understand why they run and hide. It's for the same reason I disappear when I luck into a succulent boneless bukut.

## A UDP vote between a rock and a hard place

Give the UDP a point for transparency, thanks to which we have just witnessed the juiciest vote ever of their National Party Council (NPC). Apparently, it wasn't a leak that enabled Vaughan Gill to share the vote-by-vote report, constituency by constituency, and my, this is a story loaded with more intrigue than a spy thriller or an afternoon soap.

Maybe it's because it was done, maybe had to be done by Zoom, why the UDP didn't wrap a cloak around it. You know that ever since the communists took over in Russia, there is no respect for the sanctity of confidential correspondence. In Belize it might be the modern Israelites that ended secrecy. Remember they gifted that vehicle with the white globe, the one they said gave the government the scope to listen in to any conversation anywhere. You know this world we live in has flat out gone to hell. What manner of man listens to another man's conversations or reads their mail?

The individuals who voted to decide on the eligibility of John Saldivar to participate in the UDP's standard bearer convention in February next year had to know that a no vote for John was a yes vote for Shyne, and vice versa. But while all the votes John got were solid in support of him, not all who voted for the Big Deal to stick to pibil are in Shyne's corner. I said it's a story of intrigue.

The UDP is in a spot with these two. Putting aside all his other baggage as a leader of our people, this Shyne panders to the worst of what the US is. He is a pawn for sorts like the Dulles Brothers, who overthrew Arbenz in Guatemala. There's serious, painful history here. Belizeans love the US, but we will, must speak our truth to that power.

John doesn't seem to grasp the core of this US story. The Americans didn't ostracize him over his ideology. If they had, the people of Belize might choose to back him up. The US has ostracized him for receiving money they say belongs to the American people and government. Whatever he used the money for, and he has said it was all altruistic, is of no consequence to them. It's long past apologies time for your bad friendships, Braa. Do it and get over it. Down the road, who knows?

## Henry Young saw it

Fonso of Wave and *Guardian* said it was Brother Henry Young who hooked

up a couple generators to a band on a truck and turned the 10<sup>th</sup> September parade into a street dance. Before Henry Young's genius, Belizeans marched to the Imperial Band, the Majorettes, the Minorettes, and other brass bands, and it was a good show. The Imperial Band especially is iconic, a unique and beautiful sound that is as identifiable as a trumpet blown by the immortal Louis Armstrong.

I'll leave it to you to decide if Henry Young is sinner or saint. Some of you heard John Saldivar pandering to Louis Wade with this tale that he was against the decriminalization of weed. Hn, I thought how you voted in Cabinet was classified. You lost a lot of points with that anti-weed vote, John, but I bet you won a pastor.

You know that decrim weed was another of Henry Young's babies. That man had lived in New York, and that partly explains his worldliness. Henry Young, CB Hyde, and I believe Compton Fairweather, got the weed inspiration from a shock of sea breeze while they were sipping whiskey on Henry's Bird's Isle. I've told you I don't like whiskey, that the ones who drink it are different people. But I have to give those old fellows their points, for rejecting jail time for brothers who smoke a little weed.

Now, when you're an entrepreneur, you're an entrepreneur. It was Henry Young, as minister of tourism in a UDP

Please turn to Page 12

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## Holiday Hours

St John's Credit Union Ltd advises its member-owners that our offices will be closing at

**1:00 p.m. on Friday,  
December 23rd and 30th 2022**

Our Board of Directors, Officers,  
Management & Staff wishes everyone a

*Merry Christmas  
& Happy New Year*

**NOTICE**  
BELIZE CITY  
Estate of WILLIAM J. FITCH, deceased.  
STATUTORY NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Pursuant to Section 36 of the Administration of Estates Act, Chapter 197 of the Laws of Belize, **NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that all creditors and other persons having any claims or demands upon or against the Estate of WILLIAM J. FITCH, late of Independence Village, Stann Creek District, Belize are required to send particulars in writing of their claims or demands to **GAVIN H. COURTENAY**, the Administrator of the said estate, c/o Courtenay Coye LLP, Attorneys-at-Law, 15 "A" Street, Belize City, Belize and to send such particulars no later than the 19<sup>th</sup> day of March 2023, **AND NOTICE IS HEREBY ALSO GIVEN** that at the expiration of the last mentioned date, the Administrator will proceed to distribute the assets of the said WILLIAM J. FITCH, deceased, amongst the parties entitled thereto, having regard only to the claims or demands of which particulars have been delivered and the Administrators will not be liable for the assets or any part thereof so distributed to any person or persons of whose claims or demands it shall not then have had notice.

DATED the 19<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022.

COURTENAY COYE LLP  
Per: Gavin H. Courtenay  
Attorneys-at-Law

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**Have a wonderful holiday season and a very Happy New Year. We look forward to serving you again in 2023.**



# PRESS PREDICTIONS

The sports psychic speaks

## BOLEDO

“Press” Predictions: 46-99-00

Boledo stats thru 23rd to 30th Dec. 2022

In Boledo news, 25 is a Christmas number, played 6 times now. These are my lucky numbers for this week: 46-99-17-00-29-35. These are my lucky Jackpot numbers: 2876-8103-9650. These are my lucky PICK-3 numbers: 984-709-352-101-636. Get ready, Belize! Some dinero will be coming our way for the Christmas. 47 is still out for over 1 year 8 months exact, 00 is still out for over 1 year 3 weeks and 5 days now, 18 will complete 1 year the 29th of December. Doubles have played some 45 times already. 22 and 33 played 9 times, 68-88-74 and 52 played some 7 times each. There are 7 numbers that played 6 times already, 07-19-42-25-97-70; then there are 5 numbers that played 5 times each, 11 numbers played 4 times each. The seventies series plays the most on Sundays; 74 and 33 played 4 times each on Sunday. The nineties series has not played on a Sunday for 41 straight Sundays, from the 27th of February when 6499 played. Good luck to all buyers! Remember to read your Psalms: 91-63-72. Merry Christmas to all Boledo buyers and a Happy New Year! Next week. more stats.

## CYCLING

Byron Pope will be a favorite to win this Classic

The 32nd Krem Cycling New Year's Day Classic

In cycling action, the 32nd Krem Cycling New Year's Day Classic is just one week away, the second biggest race in the year. But this race attracts over 100 cyclists in 4 different categories. The Elites start at the border to Mahogany Street. Then the Juniors,

the Females and Masters start in Orange Walk. The Classic has the most \$1,000.00 station prizes in 8 of them. The race will be very fast and furious. Byron Pope will be a favorite to win it all. Oscar Quiroz for Team BTB 501 Valvoline will also be a favorite to win the race. There will be some foreigners from the USA and Mexico. Enuff respect to Money Mike and the sponsors, biggest to my Mayor Bernard Wagner and his driver Mr. Jason Barrera! Enuff respect to Mr. Evan X Hyde, the real boss at the Kremandala Compound. Next week, more predictions; and the following week, the results.



Byron Pope

Sacramento Kings are playing very well at the fifth spot. The Portland Trailblazers are at sixth spot; Damian Lillard is their best player. The Warriors and the Lakers are out of the playoff picture right now, but the season still has over 50 games left. In the East, the Milwaukee Bucks have the best record at 22-9. The Boston Celtics are 23-10. Jason Tatum is playing very well at an MVP level. The Philadelphia 76ers and Joel Embiid are at 18-12. The Orlando Magic beat the Boston Celtics by some 6 points. The New York Knicks are 17-14; they are playing well. The Miami Heat are struggling, but they will make a run anytime now. The Atlanta Hawks are at the sixth spot. The Brooklyn Nets lost to the Detroit Pistons; they are struggling also. Next week, more stats.



Zion Williamson

## NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

Ja Morant and the Memphis Grizzlies are leading the West

NBA results and predictions and update

In NBA action, the Memphis Grizzlies and Ja Morant blew out the Milwaukee Bucks by some 35 points. They are now 21-10. The New Orleans Pelicans and Zion Williamson are at the second spot with a record of 20-11. The Denver Nuggets and Nikola Jokic, the 2-times MVP, are at the third spot; the Phoenix Suns and Devin Booker at the fourth spot. The



Ja Morant

## World Cup FOOTBALL

Argentina won after 36 years - with Lionel Messi

The World Cup Finals in Qatar 2022 results

In the World Cup Finals, Argentina and Lionel Messi won after 36 years. Angel Di Maria scored one of the goals; Lionel Messi scored 2 goals. Kylian Mbappé got a hat trick for the second time in World Cup history. Argentina won in penalty shootout, after a 3 to 3 draw after 2



Lionel Messi



by Gilroy "Press" Cadogan

hours of football. Argentina has now won 3 World Cups, in 1978, 1986 and now 2022 in



Ángel Di María

Qatar in the most expensive World Cup ever at over 229 billion dollars. Brazil still leads with 5, Italy and Germany at 4 each, Uruguay and France with 2, then England and Spain one each. There were 172 goals scored in this World Cup, a new record; 171 was the record previously. The next World Cup will consist of 48 countries. There will be 3 countries involved in hosting the World Cup; 20 games will be played in the USA, 10 games in Mexico, then 10 games in Canada. Congratulations to the champions, Lionel Messi and Argentina! Next 3 and a half years.

# If you win the Lotto you don't want everyone to know

Henry Young saw it

Continued from Page 11

government between 1993 and 1998, who brought a gay ship to Belize, back when it was against the law to do that thing, even in a closet. This new story on that thing, I wouldn't have found out about it if I hadn't checked in on the young Channel Seven Sun Up crew. They were all gaga over this report from the Caribbean, from Barbados, where a court there had voted to give gays full rights to the closet. The AP story I read said that the law in Barbados could have demanded "a life sentence for gay men found guilty of having sex." Boy, gay people are always blowing up stories. I don't believe a word about any life sentence.

Anyway, the story I want on this, ehm, affair comes from the GLOBETRENDER, which says that Caribbean countries are depriving themselves of US\$4.2 billion a year because of our discriminating against gay tourists. I'm pointing out that our Henry Young, saint or sinner, saw it all, way back in the 1990s.

Wow, that's a lot of loot to have to spread on vacations, folk. How did this group get so rich? Did it have to do with a plot for them to buy their way into

Please turn to Page 26

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Closed at 1pm

*Wishing you the gift of faith, the blessing of hope & the wonder of this holiday season at Christmas & in the New Year.*





# THE FRAUD of CHRISTMAS



Continued from page 6 of Tuesday  
online issue #3612, Tuesday,  
December 20, 2022.

by Hart Tillett

Back in Belize, Jesse pondered their predicament. They had to set the record straight with Houston. Problem was, he was right about how Santa Claus had been portrayed in the media, although the origins of the story were accurate. It was time to go and cut the Christmas tree, and the prospect of the Santa Claus thing popping up during the long drive made him decide to address it immediately. Hazel wanted him to get something from the supermarket, so he took Houston, who needed to go to the ATM, along—just the two of them.

They were silent for the short drive, the radio in the car the only link between them as it poured out the songs of the season. In the parking lot, they separated, and when Jesse entered the store he still had no way to broach the problem at hand. At the cashier's cage, Houston joined him. The sticker on the can of pineapple he bought said "\$19.45", and he gave the cashier a \$20.00 note.

"That's \$22.45, Sir," said the cashier, waiting expectantly.

Jesse checked the printed sticker again.

"It says \$19.45< right there, ma'am," Jesse challenged, showing her the bottle which clearly proved he was right. It was at that moment he realized he had found the opening he hoped for with Houston. The boy was bright and would catch on fast. He beckoned him to his side.

"That's not the price in the system," the cashier said stubbornly.

"And whose fault is that?" Jesse held his ground.

The man behind him was getting impatient.

"Can't be right," he mumbled.

"I really don't think I should be charged a price that's different from what the sticker price says," Jesse insisted.

"I only collect the money, Sir," sang the weary-looking young woman. "I don't set the prices."

The line had grown longer, and patrons were getting restless.

"Pay the price or leave them with their stock," hooted someone down the line.

"Call the manager," shouted another.

Jesse glanced down at Houston, and when their eyes met, he could tell that the lad was fully attentive to what was unfolding. Behind her glass cage, the cashier waited with obvious impatience. Someone coughed suggestively. Another noisily cleared his throat. Jesse reached for his wallet and paid the balance. He pocketed his change, then thanked her.

"Let's go," he said to Houston.

As they were leaving a lady in the line said, "I like how you handled that,

Mister, even though you were right."

Jesse could not have scripted the scene better.

"Being right is not always the answer," he grinned, bunching his shoulders.

Back in the car, Jesse hoped Houston would ask about the incident, but he remained silent. "Fine", thought Jesse. *The boy was thinking and perhaps sorting out his feelings.* After he parked the car he turned to Houston.

"You want to know why I didn't argue with the clerk, don't you?"

prompted Jesse. "See, that young woman's mother and I are coworkers, and she was telling us how excited her daughter was with her job at the supermarket. Her first since graduation. I didn't want to come down too hard on her, knowing the situation." He paused before adding, "Even though I was right!" Houston still said nothing.

"Now, about this Santa Claus conversation you had with Juds. You were right about Santa not being real. But think of the hurt it caused her when you said that about Santa," he then told Houston.

"I didn't know," he said with a deep sigh. "I just spoke my mind. Guess I'm sorry!"

"Sorry you hurt her or something else?" asked Jessie vacantly.

"Both, I guess."

"Would be nice if you told her that, Houston." At that they both smiled and Houston reached over and rested a hand on Jesse's arm.

"You're a good man, Uncle!"

"I knew I wed a saint, Jesse Broaster," Hazel lilted, brushing his hair tenderly with her hand after he related this to her. After a moment she asked: "Now, when will my saint take us to cut that Christmas tree?"

Two days later they piled into their car and headed out of town.

The ride was uneventful, and none of the challenges which Jesse had feared, surfaced. Christmas music streamed from the radio, and there was humming, hand-clapping and some sing-a-long in response. Even when Doris Day belted her well-known "SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN", no one said anything. Jesse discreetly nudged Hazel.

Luckily the tree was still there, and Jesse and the boys quickly brought it down, wrapped it and made it secure on top of the car for the ride back to town. The aroma of pine resin followed them into the car.

"Oh, the smell of freshly-cut pine," sighed Hazel as the men settled into the car. "Christmas seems incomplete without it." Her enthusiasm was contagious.

"Same here," grunted Jesse agreeably.

"Smells great," said Houston. "Like my dad's after-shave." This time it was Hazel who did the nudging. Not

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## UNIVERSITY OF BELIZE



## JOIN OUR TEAM

### ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

#### SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Assistant Registrar is an administrative post charged with assisting the Registrar with providing leadership and supervision of the unit and managing the office to deliver effective, timely, accurate and responsive customer service.

#### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage Workload assignments, ensure procedures are followed accurately, and that students/alumni/colleagues are responded to professionally, efficiently and effectively.
- Provide leadership, supervision, and direction for assigned staff and deal with student grievances. Assist in the planning, implementing, revising of policies and procedures and monitoring and evaluation of staff.
- Maintain integrity of student records and comply with the University policies, deadlines, and procedures related to student enrollment.
- Assist in maintaining, troubleshooting, and enhancing the University's data management and related systems.

#### JOB QUALIFICATIONS

- Minimum of a Master's degree; at least 3 years of experience that is directly related to the duties and responsibilities specified;
- A Doctoral Degree with relevant experience would be an advantage;
- 3-5 years proven record of successful supervisory experience in a people-oriented environment;
- Direct experience in university or junior/community college preferred;
- Demonstrated understanding of the application of technology to deliver Records and Registration services.

#### COMPENSATION AND TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

The President will be engaged on contract for a period of five years. Compensation and terms of engagement will be competitive with those for similar posts held at universities in the region.

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#### Deadline to Apply

January 27, 2023

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

### DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH

#### SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Research is a senior member of the University's administration and is responsible for the Research Function of the University of Belize. The Director assumes responsibility for the development and management of the Office of Research including seeking research opportunities for UB faculty, coordinating research projects of UB faculty, generating research proposals, and managing the UB research budget.

#### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide leadership on developing research strategies and policies;
- Development of a Research Agenda that identifies research priority themes based on faculty interests, university needs and national priorities, capacity building, research funding needs, and public policy;
- Responsible for the development and implementation of the Research Strategy in alignment to the University's strategic plan;
- Responsible for research-related policy development, grant proposals, project preparation and oversight
- Development and implementation of institutional research and find ways to motivate faculty to be heavily engaged in research to assist professional development
- Responsible for administering research grants and encouraging the formation of thematic research groups/networks of faculty
- Responsible for the Budget and Inventory;

#### JOB QUALIFICATIONS

- Ph.D. in a relevant subject area and experience in academic administration and research.
- An excellent command of the English Language for research at the University level.



## LETTER TO THE Editor

### Henry Young goes Shakespeare on Hon. John Saldivar

I would like to remember the Hon. John Saldivar for the many good things he has done for Belize as an area representative. However, those are going to be interred with his bones. His failure, his refusal to accept the unwritten rule in politics that perception is reality, will live after him.

Paraphrasing Shakespeare, you came into this world, grew up, and you performed on the stage of life. Now you've finished your recitation, exit, before they stone you off the stage with tomatoes.

Sadly,  
Henry Young, Sr.

## Morehouse College students embrace Belize history and culture



by Auzzy Byrdsell, Contributing Writer

BELIZE CITY, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022  
From climbing the Mayan temples to

exploring the inner city of Belize City and celebrating the Garifuna culture, young Black American students have been immersed in the rich Belizean culture.

Twenty-two students, faculty and staff from Morehouse College, traveled throughout Belize in a study abroad experience that began on December 10. During the course of 11 days, we had an array of experiences that shaped our perspectives about the life and culture of people in this beautifully complex country.

This trip was part of the Morehouse Pan-African Global Experience, otherwise known as MPAGE II. Because Morehouse is a historically Black college, we annually orchestrate a study abroad trip to a country that was impacted by slavery. This gives students a rare chance to gain firsthand familiarity with other African descendants, and it often provides them

with their first international opportunity. Since 2016, MPAGE II has visited Cuba twice, Ghana, Ecuador and Mexico.

Kevin Booker, a 1991 Morehouse graduate, is vice president of student services and the dean of the College. He traveled with students on the majority of the MPAGE II trips.

"It's understanding the culture of the region that we're visiting; understanding the African Diaspora culture within that culture," Booker said, explaining the program's significance.

I am a junior kinesiology major and journalism minor who has frequently traveled abroad, however, I just participated in my first MPAGE II trip. After flying into Belize City, our group of 15 students from all-male Morehouse, one student from its all-female sister school Spelman College, and six Morehouse faculty/staff members explored Belize's culture, history and cuisine all over the country.

One of the biggest impacts of slavery was that people of African descent have reached almost every part of the globe, but somehow we all still face some of the same hardships in the form of oppression, economic inequity and blatant racism. However, we often become blind to the fact that we are all connected through these experiences.

Fortunately, Booker and other MPAGE II leaders made it their priority to expose students to the realities of Belize, including the gentrification, cultural suppression and colorism that plague it even today.

With Belize native Jerry Enriquez, who organized the itinerary and coordinated the activities, we have explored Belizean media and traditional Garifuna, Creole, and Maya culture. This included their history, music, dance, cuisine, and healing practices. To do that, we traveled by bus to Belize City, Bermudian Landing, Belmopan, San Ignacio, the Spanish Lookout Mennonite Community and Hopkins Village, and by boat to Caye Caulker Village.

"I organized the activities to expose the students to the traditional African and indigenous experiences in Belize," Enriquez said. "[It was important] so that the students become more aware of the interconnectedness of the issues affecting these groups in Belize and several other countries."

Among the 16 students, there were majors in economics, finance, journalism, physics and more, and everyone who wants to can contribute to a media project we are creating about what we have experienced.

Steven Adams II, a senior economics major, is one of those students. The real estate struggle in Belize related to his experience facing gentrification in Washington, D.C. This and his economic studies will help him put together a great article.

We applied our knowledge and curiosity consistently in each of our activities. We discussed the power dynamics in Belize's never-ending struggle for land ownership, the Mennonites' domination of the food supply, efficiency in oil extraction, solutions for clearing waste, and new



# Atlantic Bank

# Happy Holidays!

from our Board of Directors,  
Management & Staff

**Christmas Holiday  
OPENING HOURS**

**December 23, 2022**

**All Branches and Drive Thrus  
close at 3:00 PM**

**December 30, 2022**

**All Branches and Drive Thrus  
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Friday, December 23, 2022.

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# 48 beekeepers complete training

by Charles Gladden

CAYO DISTRICT, Mon. Dec. 19, 2022

A graduation ceremony was held at Hode's Place in San Ignacio, Cayo District, to mark the completion by 48 local beekeepers of training that equipped them with the skills needed to improve the quality of the honey they produce and to increase their honey exports. The training was a component of the Honey Production Redevelopment Support Project under the Ministry of



one, standards, and the other [is] certification. It means now we have to have traceability in place, we have to have good manufacturing practices, we have to have good standards in place if we're going to tap into the export market."

Mai explained to local media that the beekeepers learned about day-to-day beekeeping management as well as how to use various types of equipment.

One of the participants in the training, Ofelia Chiac, told reporters, "Beekeeping is something that interests me from the beginning, because my father

Agriculture, Food Security, and Enterprise, which is financed by the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF).

In November 2018, the Government of Belize and CDF signed an agreement that established a budget of USD 281,959 to improve and expand the beekeeping industry in Belize.

The beekeeping graduating class consisted of 48 students who are mainly young adults and women from southern Belize and the Cayo District. To date, by means of the project, 100 persons have gained the skills needed to become beekeepers, and 42 beekeepers have been able to enhance their previous skills.

"We realize that the honey industry is a viable industry in Belize to a certain extent, so way back in the '80s, the production of honey fell. It fell so low that there was barely any production," said the Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Jose Mai, when he spoke to reporters at the graduation ceremony.

He added, "... as we expand, you see today we have new beekeepers, we have new production coming in, we have to look at the export market now. That means two things: it means

and my grandparents were beekeepers. But when I realized I didn't have anything to do during the pandemic. I was at home, find myself at home and that's when I realized it was something, and the idea came from my son who was also with me. And that is when we just started going in by just capturing bees, everywhere that we could find bees and we started with capturing bees. But we didn't know how to keep them, and most of them ran away... Then at the same time, the Minister of Agriculture said that there would be a beekeeping training, so we decided to apply for it and we got accepted."

"It's always been a dream of ours as a family, since my family is a family that was, we grew up on agriculture, so it was necessary to have bees on the farm because the bees offer necessary pollination services to the fruits which also then increases our production, which also results in increased profits for the family," Chiac further said.

At the end of the training, the graduates received pieces of beekeeping equipment that they can use to launch their honey-production ventures.

## NOTICE

BELIZE CITY

Estate of **STEPHAN THOMAS ODLIVAK**, deceased.

STATUTORY NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Pursuant to Section 36 of the Administration of Estates Act, Chapter 197 of the Laws of Belize, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all creditors and other persons having any claims or demands upon or against the Estate of **STEPHAN THOMAS ODLIVAK**, late of No.1 Colgate Drive, Smithtown Town, New York, U.S.A., are required to send particulars in writing of their claims or demands to the Administrator of the said estate, **KIMBERLY CHRISTINE HANSON** of Bermuda Beach D7, San Pedro Ambergris Caye, Belize District, Belize, c/o **COURTENAY COYE LLP**, Attorneys-at-Law situate at 15 A Street, Belize City, Belize, and to send such particulars not later than the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023, AND NOTICE IS HEREBY ALSO GIVEN that at the expiration of the last mentioned date, the Administrator will proceed to distribute the assets of the said Stephan Odliak, deceased, amongst the parties entitled thereto, having regard only to the claims or demands of which particulars have been delivered and the Administrator will not be liable for the assets or any part thereof so distributed to any person or persons of whose claims or demands it shall not then have had notice.

DATED the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

  
Courtenay Coye LLP  
Attorneys-at-Law

# MADISON'S

AUCTIONS AND APPRAISALS LLP

## PUBLIC AUCTION

BY ORDER of the Supreme Court of Belize, Sylvano Guerrero will sell the following property with a reserve price on **Thursday, January 5, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. onsite.**



Registration Section	Block	Parcel
San Pedro	7	3841 (H51)

All that piece or parcel of land being strata lot with Parcel I.D. 7-42-3841(H51) containing 1461 square feet (Unit Entitlement) situated in Royal Palm Villas, San Pedro, Registration Section, Belize District.

Condominium measures 41 feet by 41 feet and is situated on the ground floor and contains two bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, an open space as kitchen/dining/living areas, half bath, and a utility room. In addition, it has a covered balcony overlooking the Caribbean Sea measuring 7 feet by 34 feet (238 square feet).

The subject property is held by Land Certificate in the name of James Janmohamed.

For more information and pictures visit [www.madisons.bz](http://www.madisons.bz) or call 610-3916.

[www.madisons.bz](http://www.madisons.bz) TERMS: 10% DEPOSIT. BALANCE IN 14 DAYS

AUCTIONEER: SYLVANO GUERRERO  
TELEPHONE: +501-610-3916  
EMAIL: SG@MADISONS.BZ  
FACEBOOK: MADISONSAA

ALPHA BUSINESS CENTRE  
2118 GUAVA STREET  
BELAMA PHASE 1  
BELIZE CITY, BELIZE

## Predictions for 2023!

Donald Trump will be indicted and escape prosecution by fleeing to Saudi Arabia!

PM Briceño will declare Orange Walk the capital of Belize.

The ICJ will declare Guatemala's claim to Belize as null and void.

Evan X Hyde will be knighted by King Charles.

Putin will be removed as leader of Russia and become an orthodox monk.

Lord Ashcroft will donate his entire fortune to the poor people of Belize, a la Baron Bliss.

JC Arzu will run for mayor of Peini.

Joe Biden will announce that he will retire from politics in 2024.

Patrick Faber will stand trial for allegedly being mean to women.

Arnold Schwarzenegger will move to Belize and run for prime minister, and win.

China will become a Fourth World country.

Shyne will give up politics and return to his calling, as a rapper.

Donald Trump will be extradited back to America and face trial. He will be found not guilty and marry a woman of color.

Mexico will invade America, again. Honduras, Salvador and Guatemala

will invade Belize, again.

Bolsonaro will be tried and convicted in Brazil.

Iran will choose a woman president.

Dean Barrow and Said Musa will be in a wrestling match in Crooked Tree.

It will be a draw.

John Saldivar will seek asylum in Cuba.

All the gangs in Belize will surrender their weapons and Chester Williams will take the credit.

Belize will stop importing Dutch cheese and condensed milk.

Belize Breeze will be legalized and take its rightful place as the best weed in the world.

Maduro will lose power and seek asylum in Belize.

The Malvinas will declare themselves Argentines and make Messi their provincial governor.

Liz Cheney will declare her candidacy for president.

Politicians will stop lying.

Lawyers will work pro bono.

Belize's health system will improve.

Last but not least, this was fun and will never be printed.

Happy New Year...

Glen



# Russia's trade agreement with Venezuela remains in place



by Clinton Canul Luna

I am very grateful for the point of view of my dear brother, Colin Hyde, which was published in the *Amandala* on Friday, December 16, 2022 under the heading "Watch out for that disease called head tek". I also respect his point of view, but I would like to remind him that the only country in this world that has an average of 800 military bases in different countries is the United States of America. Washington's foreign policy has always been to extend its hegemony to all the countries of the world. This is nothing new. It has already been written in history. To date, no empire has been able to dominate the world. Washington has always intervened in the internal affairs of other countries because it has the power. So,

let me also remind you that Washington has always said that Venezuela is a threat to their national security and for such a reason they have imposed sanctions upon sanctions against such a nation with the intention to create a coup d'etat against Nicholas Maduro's government, and with that the U.S. would implement a puppet as president who would serve Washington's oligarchy. They tried to do so by not recognizing the last general elections in Venezuela and instead acknowledged Juan Guaidó as president, supported by 50 countries. Today we know that due to the changes that are taking place throughout the world, the United States needs oil and gas, and Venezuela has that. In my point of view, Washington is trying to flirt with

Venezuela, but that has consequences that was created by the sanctions imposed against Venezuela, where all countries that had trade agreements had to cancel their programs, except for one country who stayed and gave Venezuela their support. However, let me introduce you to the following information that has already become known throughout the world. It's nothing new, but I have a feeling that not all Belizeans know it. Even Americans are not aware of many of the things that the leaders of their own country do. So, I present to you the following which was posted by El Chapucero USA on YouTube on December 18, 2022 and was directed by Nacho Rodríguez and Gaby Lopez. It is as follows:

Africa. It is no longer thinking about this territory, no, it is crossing over to the other side of the world to Latin America and has reached Venezuela. According to Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak, for his part in those projects in which we participate, we are interested in increasing production, in timely settlements and in product realization. This was what the Venezuelans affirmed, not only confirming but asking that our Russian companies continue working with Venezuela. This senior official also explained that Moscow and Caracas have been cooperating in the energy sector for years and already have five joint oil projects. Today he said, "we are expanding this cooperation including the gas

Industry. We have two projects in the offing." Novak also recalled that "many companies previously worked in this Venezuelan market and among them some European and American companies were also involved, but we must remember that the latter country has dedicated its entire life to trying to prevent Venezuela from resurfacing, getting ahead and exploiting its economy as it should be due to all the sanctions that have been imposed against this country." However, after the implementation of sanctions against Venezuela, only the Russian companies remained. Everything that was the European Union and the United States was forced out by these same sanctions and Russia said, "Why am I going to leave when the whole place is already mine? I can take advantage of helping each other and our economies will grow..."

Unlike now, the European Union, which has no gas, no oil or anything, and cannot approach new nations that it rejected at the time. We saw it at the last G20 Summit as the president of France, Emmanuel Macron, literally approached with his tail between his legs to greet the Venezuelan president in a calm manner, as president of Venezuela when he was one of the countries that rejected his mandate, that they supported this opponent Juan Guaidó, recognizing him as almost the legitimate president, but that Maduro held office as such. Seeing that Juan Guaidó could not carry out any activity because he was not in control of absolutely anything, then all the countries remained silent, including the United States, and now that they need gas they need oil, well, yes, "Hello, Maduro, I was always your friend and always supported you." In turn, the Russian minister stressed that bilateral cooperation between the two countries remains stable. This despite the

**Nacho Rodríguez:** Right now the world needs oil, given the fact that it, OPEC, is producing two million barrels less of crude oil and, well, Russia is also producing less oil due to these sanctions against its oil that have been approved by the European Union and in the United States and well, now, many began to see that Venezuela could be a great oil producer with the understanding that it is the country with the largest oil reserves, but of course, very blocked by the United States and really with a production that is really very low. And well, for a few months now, the possibility has been mentioned that the United States will finally lift the oil blockade so that Chevron, which is an American company, could begin to produce Venezuelan oil but now, be careful: the Russians have begun to arrive, and it is that, well, curious, right?

The Venezuelan oil, the alliance, was with the United States to exploit crude oil, but now it is mentioned that the Russians could begin to arrive to extract all the oil that Venezuela has, of course, with an alliance with PDVSA, which is the Venezuelan state oil company. And that is super important, because the Russians are also coming to African countries like the Congo to develop oil and gas infrastructure in that country, and now they would also come to Venezuela. And it's not that there isn't, there are clearly productions of Russian companies in Venezuela, but it seems that this is going to be more than this; there is going to be a strategic alliance to really exploit all of this enormous oil treasure that Venezuela has and finally an oil power is committed, as it is not right now. Finally, right now it still has this level, but hey, in Venezuela it could be something super important, because it has the largest reserves in the world and it is unusual that due to the US blockade they cannot extract oil. Well, Gaby Lopez is going to tell us more. Hello, how are you? Buenas tardes.

**Gaby Lopez:** Hello, how are you, Nacho? And welcome everyone to El Chapucero International. Moscow is interested in increasing oil production in existing projects with another nation, and it was no longer thinking about

**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC UTILITIES, ENERGY,  
LOGISTICS & E-GOVERNANCE**

*Second Floor, West Block Building, Belmopan City*  
Phone: 822-0810/822-0401 Fax: 822-2394

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ENG/1/01/22 (90)

15<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**TO: ALL STAKEHOLDERS**

Dear Stakeholder,

The Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance is steadily progressing in updating Belize's National Energy Policy. This policy update comes at a critical time against the backdrop of the broader energy transition happening across the globe. Furthermore, energy security, economic opportunities, technological innovation, and environmental awareness are critical factors required to fuel an energy economy that will continue to enable Belize's sustainable development.

Throughout the process, this Ministry has ensured proper stakeholder sessions and liaising with you to garner participation and harness your expertise. This process occurs every few years and for its success, it is vital that your feedback be heard and addressed as we move forward with the development of National Energy Policy. This is a critical moment for you to contribute to ensure a robust policy that addresses Belize's national energy needs.

The Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance, through the Energy Unit, invites all stakeholders and the public to actively engage in this final round of call for comments. The draft Energy Policy can be found on the Energy Unit's website at <https://energy.gov.bz>.

You are asked to kindly submit feedback to [energy.secretary@energy.gov.bz](mailto:energy.secretary@energy.gov.bz) by 30<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

We thank you for your support and look forward to your continuous engagement in this process.

Sincerely,

**MR. JOSE URBINA,  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.**

Chief Executive Officer

Ministry of Public Utilities, Logistics and E-Governance  
Belmopan

Scan the barcode below to access the Belize Energy Policy web page and copied of policy documents.

Scan the barcode below to access the Feedback Form for the Energy Policy.



## Morehouse College students embrace Belize history...

*Continued from* ▶ Page 14

efforts to increase literacy among the Black and brown populations. We are learning where we can all play roles in transforming the world.

Jordan Coney, a senior physics major, has used his expertise in STEM to ask questions about how science is being used in Belize.

“What I thought was the most interesting was the pursuit of alternative energy sources and understanding the finality of fossil fuels and how they connect our ecosystem at large,” Coney said.

Joseph Ramirez, a senior finance major at Morehouse, was appalled when he saw how well the Mennonites live in comparison to their neighboring communities. He used his studies to help think of solutions for Belizean infrastructure and modernization.

“I believe the country should take an

approach and create non-governmental organizations dedicated to rebuilding and maintaining infrastructure,” he said. “Create jobs with higher pay, and prioritize infrastructure in the housing, food, healthcare and education sectors.”

Our versatility has taught us what kind of unity it will take for Black people globally to overcome the problems we all fight. Unity is much more than agreeing that we have an obstacle that deserves our focus. This is only the first step. We must also be receptive to each other’s knowledge and ideas.

This is the goal of the well-balanced students at Morehouse College. As we continue to make excellence a habit, we want to share this ambition with our people abroad and strengthen our global community.

To learn more about Morehouse College, our students and our culture, please [go to morehouse.edu](http://go.morehouse.edu) or [click here](#).

## Russia’s trade agreement with Venezuela remains in place

*Continued from* ▶ Page 17

pressure of the sanctions that the union and the United States are issuing against Russia. The governments of Venezuela and Moscow also signed several agreements, approximately eleven, of cooperation in strategic sectors as part of the sixteenth meeting of the high-level intergovernmental commission, held coincidentally in Caracas, the capital of the South American nation. Alexander Novak said that these 11 agreements were signed, in the fields of transport, industry, pharmaceuticals, energy and agriculture, among other areas, which are vital for bilateral cooperation. Novak, for his part, showed confidence in the growing strengthening of and support and solidarity with Venezuela that do not depend, he remarked, on the political situation. “We,” he said, “seek to build a more just, polycentric world, and we agree on our approaches

on most issues on the international agenda”.

So, it is not only Russia that is getting closer to the African countries, which should be noted, that they did more business with Russia than with the United States, that Anthony Blinken is still in their territory because they had a summit precisely to try to reach agreements. The only thing Biden said is, “We are going to help them in terms of support for women.” We are going to talk about some issues related to perhaps agriculture, but the energy issues which were what interested the United States the most were not able to be brought up to the table, above all, because previously Africa had already had a summit with the president of China, Xi Jinping, in which very good agreements were also reached on energy matters and before Xi Jinping, Russia had also coincidentally arrived to offer him a huge project to this continent. Obviously, the United States arrives empty-handed wanting to be the owner, believing itself to be the boss, and Africa has the opportunity to send him flying. Now Venezuela is coming, Russia is coming to this territory, to this Latin American country to also offer it great opportunities, above all, regardless of energy matters, in the general development of this country. Something that neither the United States nor the European Union has been able to do, and that is why we are now seeing the results. 11 good agreements between Russia and Venezuela that practically leave the United States, Biden, and what else can we say? Well, wish them good luck because most of the nations are already realizing that they are no longer the great powers, that now we have more and in this case China and Russia really want to support the growth of all countries. If you liked this video, don’t forget to like and share.

[fincasolan@gmail.com](mailto:fincasolan@gmail.com)

December 19, 2022

Finca Solana  
Corozal Town



### INVITATION TO CONSULTING FIRMS TO SUBMIT EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

#### Operation Data

Country: Belize  
Operation: Belize Integral Security Programme (BISP)  
Operation No: 2147

#### Consulting Data

Name of the Consultancy: Final Infrastructure Design Consultancy  
Selection Method: Quality and Cost-Based Selection  
Reference number: No. CABEI-CS 005-2147/2022

The Government of Belize has received financing from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration for the Belize Integral Security Program, and it is intended to use a portion of the funds for consulting services contracts.

The Consulting services ("the services") include: The Pre-Investment for the Final Infrastructure Design for the Belize Police Department and the Belize Defence Force:

#### The Belize Defence Force:

##### Fairweather Camp

- a) A Medical Centre;
- b) A Kitchen facility renovation;
- c) A Residual water system.

##### Camp Belizario

- a) Hurricane Shelter Reinforcement;
- b) A Battalion Headquarters;
- c) Renovation of one ablution structure and two bathroom blocks.

#### The Belize Police Department:

- a) Three Police Sub-stations;
- b) Two Police Stations;
- c) 911 Network Building.

The Ministry of Economic Development invites eligible consulting firms to express their interest in providing the requested services. Interested consultants shall provide information indicating that they are qualified to provide the services and may partner with other firms in the form of a Joint Venture (JV) or subconsultants to improve their qualifications. The criteria for shortlist selection are found within the respective Terms of Reference.

Interested Consulting Firms can obtain the Terms of Reference at no cost by requesting them by email: [procurementofficerii.bisp@med.gov.bz](mailto:procurementofficerii.bisp@med.gov.bz) or by accessing the electronic portal (<https://blz-cppnb.caricom.org> or <https://med.gov.bz>) before the deadline date indicated below. Consultants will be selected using the method of Quality and Cost Based Selection described in the Regulations for the Application of the Procurement Policy available at [www.bcie.org](http://www.bcie.org).

Interested consultants can obtain more information at the address indicated at the end of this invitation, during business hours of 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Expressions of interest package together with the information indicated in the Terms of Reference must be hand delivered at the address below, no later than **Monday, January 23, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.**

Elvis Requena  
Project Coordinator  
Belize Integral Security Programme (BISP)  
Programme Executing Unit  
1904 Constitution Drive 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Unit #3  
Belmopan City, Belize C.A.  
[projectcoordinator.bisp@med.gov.bz](mailto:projectcoordinator.bisp@med.gov.bz)

# KREM FM

can be heard  
on the following  
frequencies:

96.5FM in Belize  
City, Punta Gorda  
Town, Santa Elena,  
Cayo and Carmelita  
Village

91.1FM in Ladyville  
and Independence

101.1FM in  
Dangriga Town  
Camalote Village  
and Caye Caulker





*Happy Holidays!*

from the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of Belize Water Services

## Our Holidays Office Hours

Offices Close	Offices Re-open
Friday, December 23, 2022— 1:00 PM	Tuesday, December 27, 2022
Friday, December 30, 2022— 1:00 PM	Tuesday, January 3, 2023

**\*\*NB: The Belize City Office will be closed on Saturday, December 24, 2022 and Saturday, December 31, 2022.**

*Have a safe and blessed holidays!*





CENTRAL BANK  
of BELIZE

[www.centralbank.org.bz](http://www.centralbank.org.bz)

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

### **The Central Bank Deregisters Evangel Credit Union Limited**

**Belize City, 14 December 2022:** The Governor of the Central Bank of Belize (Central Bank), in his capacity as Registrar of Credit Unions, advises that pursuant to section 63 (2) of the Credit Unions Act, 2011, Chapter 314 of the Laws of Belize, Evangel Credit Union Limited has transferred its engagements to Holy Redeemer Credit Union Limited.

The public is hereby notified that effective 7 December 2022, Evangel Credit Union was dissolved, and its registration cancelled. Consequently, pursuant to section 20 (3) of the Credit Unions Act, Evangel Credit Union shall cease to exist as a body corporate effective 7 December 2022.

**- ENDS -**

ISSUED BY:  
THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
CENTRAL BANK OF BELIZE

1 GABOUREL LANE.  
BELIZE CITY, BELIZE  
T: +501 223 6194  
E: [communications@centralbank.org.bz](mailto:communications@centralbank.org.bz)

## **Statutory Notice to Creditors**

IN THE ESTATE of ROBERT BARTON HURLEY JR., Deceased, of Benque Viejo Road, Cayo District, Belize.

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Section 36 of the Administration of Estates Act, Chapter 197 of the Laws of Belize that all creditors and other persons including the beneficiaries and kin having any claims and demands upon or against the Estate of Robert Barton Hurley Jr., late of Benque Viejo Road, Cayo District, Belize, who died on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020 in whose Estate a **Grant of Administration** has been granted to **Cornerstone Trust Corporation Limited** on behalf of **Angela Carolyn Hurley** of # 16306 Camino Del Sol, Houston, Texas, 77083 U.S.A. to lodge any claims or demands in writing to **Reyes Retreage LLP** of #122 Eve Street, Belize City, Belize, Lawful Attorneys for the Administrator of the estate of Robert Barton Hurley Jr. on or before the expiration of three months from the first publication hereof and notice is also hereby given that the expiration of the said three months the said administrators shall proceed to distribute assets of the said Robert Barton Hurley Jr., deceased amongst the beneficiaries entitled thereto, having regard only to claims and demands of which they shall then have had notice.

Dated the 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022.

Aldo G. Reyes  
REYES RETREAGE LLP

Attorneys for Angela Carolyn Hurley  
Executor of the Estate of  
Robert Barton Hurley Jr.

## **NOTICE**

### **GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE TREASURY BILLS** **ISSUE NUMBER 1/2023**

Tenders are invited for an issue of Government of Belize Treasury Bills. The amount of the issue will be \$83,200,000.

The Bills will be issued in electronic form only evidenced by an electronic book entry in the Central Securities Depository of the Central Bank of Belize in multiples of \$200 and will be repayable at par 91 days after issue. They will be issued on Wednesday, 4 January 2023 and will be redeemed on Wednesday, 5 April 2023.

Each tender must be for \$200 or a multiple of \$200 and must specify to five decimal places the amount, which is offered for each one hundred dollars face value of the Bills sought.

Members of the public who wish to participate in the auction must submit their bid to the Central Bank of Belize electronically to [bids@centralbank.org.bz](mailto:bids@centralbank.org.bz) or at the designated drop off box no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, 30 December 2022.

The Auction in the Central Securities Depository System (CSD) will be opened from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on Wednesday, 4 January 2023.

Successful bidders should arrange to settle via the Automated Payment & Securities Settlement System of Belize (APSSS).

**Bank: Central Bank of Belize**  
**Account: GL1CORP0402627**

**The Government of Belize reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all tenders in whole or in part.**

**CENTRAL BANK OF BELIZE**

**Notices are placed on Central Bank of Belize Website**  
**([www.centralbank.org.bz](http://www.centralbank.org.bz))**

17 November 2022



# Belizean athlete, 18, gets scholarship to Idaho College

by Charles Gladden

BELMOPAN, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022

Mia Sylvester, 18, a Belizean athlete who resides in Belmopan, has received a full scholarship to pursue her Bachelor's degree in Exercise Science – Pre-Physical Therapy and Allied Health, at the University of Idaho.

Sylvester is a regionally renowned athlete who has represented Belize in numerous tournaments. Sylvester told us that she first participated in the 2016 Central American Athletics Championships with the U18 team in El Salvador, where she won gold in the shotput competition and placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the discus competition. She participated with the U16 team two months later, and won gold in both events.

She participated in this year's U-20 Central American Athletics Championships in Managua, Nicaragua. On Friday, June 17, she won two gold medals when she hurled the shotput 13.75 meters, setting a new Central American record, and earlier that day, she won another gold medal in the discus competition with a throw of 40.85 meters, surpassing her personal best (36.89 meters) by 3.96 meters.

Sylvester obtained the scholarship with the help of BK Sports Group, and she was able to secure a four-year full scholarship at the University of Idaho.

"I feel amazing that my hard work paying off at this time, and I can go and accomplish my future goals, further my education, and hopefully do well in the sport," she said.

She added, "We had many schools who contacted me, for example Virginia Commonwealth University,



**Mia Sylvester, scholarship recipient**

Howard, and when I spoke to the coach from the University of Idaho and saw their amazing programs and the opportunities, and I know it was the school for me. I was very excited when they wanted me to come to join their new program."

Also, she noted that she decided to pursue coursework in physical therapy with the hopes of opening her own sports club upon completion of her studies.

Sylvester is scheduled to depart the country in January.

# GoB gives land to 54 Valley of Peace residents

Continued from Page 9

farms. We are in the same place that we applied, within the same pegs. So, we are respecting the limits of our land. The thing is, with climate change farmers are struggling. So, we need to get financing. If you do not have a title, you cannot get a loan, so something that will help us is if we get a title for that land," he said.

The farmers are now reportedly in the early stages of planning a protest in front of the Ministry of Natural Resources' headquarters. Mr. Blandon said that although the association has tried to avoid becoming embroiled in legal proceedings and creating "too much scandal over a simple thing", they are prepared to take industrial action if the matter is not soon resolved.

Interestingly, it had been reported at the beginning of this year that early in the morning on New Year's Day, three men on motorcycles reportedly went to the cane fields on Valley of Peace Farms and started a fire that would ultimately burn 1,208 acres of sugarcane. According to a January 2022 issue of the AMANDALA, the General Manager of Valley of Peace Farms Limited, Gilbert Canton, Jr.,

had speculated that the dispute about land ownership might have led some farmers in the area to set the blaze. He had acknowledged, however, that there was no proof that any of the farmers were involved.

The AMANDALA article had further stated, "Canton, while being interviewed by local reporters, pointed to the likely motive for the fire — a dispute between the enterprise, which reportedly owns 11,000 acres in the area, and a group of 50 Valley of Peace farmers who are claiming that they own several hundred acres of that land. He said that there were attempts at resolution, since it appears that there might have been some duplication of land leases at the Lands Department. He also noted that there had been two legal rulings in August last year that were in the company's favor and that the United Nations High Commission for Refugees had stepped in as a mediator to resolve the matter, and that a memorandum of understanding was being formulated through which a little over 400 acres would have been passed over to the farmers, and it was perhaps farmers who were dissatisfied with that arrangement that might have set the fire."

**BELIZEPROPERTYAUCTIONS.COM**  
**COUNTRYWIDE PUBLIC AUCTION SALES: PROPERTIES**  
*Rumpoint, Beachfront Properties, Placencia, Stann Creek District*  
 BY ORDER of the Mortgagees Messrs. The Belize Bank Limited, Licensed Auctioneers Kevin A. Castillo and Christiana R. Castillo are selling ONLINE via [belizepropertyauctions.com](http://belizepropertyauctions.com) the following properties in one lot. Sale currently running and will expire **Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 at 10:00 am.**

**PLACENCIA BEACHFRONT: APPROXIMATELY 728 FEET**

REGISTRATION SECTION	BLOCK	PARCELS
Placencia North	36	931, 2294, 932

Parcel No. 931 - (Being 4033.922 square metres of BEACHFRONT property containing 2 buildings) + Parcel No. 2294 - (Being 6.3 acres of BEACHFRONT property that spans both sides of the of the Placencia Road containing a two-storey concrete building) + Parcel No. 932 - (Being 1.59 acres of vacant BEACHFRONT property) ALL situate at Rumpoint within walking distance of the Placencia Airstrip, Placencia Road, Placencia Village, Stann Creek District, the freehold property of Messrs. Millennium Holdings Ltd.)

**N.B. ALL THREE PROPERTIES WILL BE OFFERED IN ONE LOT.**  
**"FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & PHOTOGRAPHS PLEASE VISIT WEBSITE"**  
**TERMS: STRICTLY CASH**  
**KEVIN A. CASTILLO**  
**TELEPHONE 223-4488**  
 Website: [belizepropertyauctions.com](http://belizepropertyauctions.com)  
 E-mail: [kevinacas@yahoo.com](mailto:kevinacas@yahoo.com)  
 Facebook: [Belize Auctions](https://www.facebook.com/BelizeAuctions)

**JOIN OUR TEAM**

Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) is the primary distributor and the only licensed public provider of electricity in Belize. Our Mission is to deliver safe, reliable and sustainable energy solutions to enhance the quality of life and the productivity of enterprise and to support national development.

We are looking for a highly motivated, goal oriented, responsible and committed person to join our Company in the role of:

## ELECTRICAL TECHNICIAN I

in the Transmission & Substation Department of our Energy Supply Division in Belize City.

View details at [www.bel.com.bz](http://www.bel.com.bz) or scan QR code

Submit application to [career.opportunity@bel.com.bz](mailto:career.opportunity@bel.com.bz) by Friday, December 30, 2022



# THE FRAUD of CHRISTMAS

Continued from Page 13

knowing how to treat the remark, neither adult said anything. But Juds did.

“You don’t believe in anything,” she snarled, with not even a glance at him.

“Don’t matter what I believe,” Houston countered.

This time it was Hazel who did the nudging, and when the anticipated backlash about Santa being a fraud did not materialize, they both reacted with sighs of relief. But Juds sensed a chance to pounce, and with childlike heedlessness, did.

“You said you didn’t believe,” and here she paused for just a moment before adding, “in things. Didn’t he say that, you remember Junie?”

“You’re just a baby,” teased Houston before Junie could answer.

“And you’re mean,” she countered angrily.

“Well, I’m sorry, Juds.”

“Be quiet, you two,” cautioned Hazel in her gentlest tone.

A *camion* loaded with logs was overtaking them, and Jessie slowed for it to pass when he could reflect undistracted on what they had just heard. It was time, he felt, for him to come to his young daughter’s rescue.

“Ever done something like this before Houston?” he asked. “Cutting your own Christmas tree, I mean.”

“No sir,” he replied. It was said so quickly that Jesse thought the boy was waiting for the question. “Ours is from a box and no higher than the kitchen sink.”

“We do it every year.” He let his answer trail.

“Daddy knows where to find the prettiest trees for Christmas,” added Juds in a more companionable voice.

“Another thing we do as part of our tree-cutting outing is to play the season’s songs about the Christmas tree,” said Hazel. “Did you bring the CD, hon?” she asked, knowing that they had, but wanting to get everyone ready to listen to the songs.

For the next several miles, they listened to some of the traditional recordings of Christmas songs celebrating the magic of the Christmas tree. They sang, hummed along, and were like one big celebratory family. By the time they reached Ladyville, they were thirsty and hungry, so Jesse pulled off the highway and they headed into the crowded restaurant and more Christmas music. It was a treat to see a

video playing. It was about the German and allied troops on a wintry morning in Europe during the World War laying down their arms at the battlefield and toasting one another because it was Christmas Day.

A beggar greeted them as they emerged and asked for money. Jesse gave him the coins from his pocket and wished him merry Christmas. The man glanced quickly at the amount and looked up smiling through broken teeth.

“Thank you, sir, thank you, thank you,” he said, ecstatically. “And Merry Christmas to you too, boss.” As he pocketed the money, he looked up at the tree strapped to the roof of the car.

“Fine tree, boss-man, Miss,” he said bowing to Hazel. “Santa will be sure pleased.”

“The least we can do,” she responded.

The old man stepped away as they entered the car and drove off. Within a short time, all four kids were fast asleep, so Jesse turned off the radio and drove the rest of the way in silence. But both their thoughts swirled about the same question: *How was their young nephew affected by what he had seen and heard that day?* They would find out the following day as they sat at Sunday lunch.

“My Dad hates beggars,” said Houston. The message at church was not about beggars, nor was this related to anything they had been discussing. Puzzled, Jesse asked:

“Why’d you say that, Houston?”

“They’re trash, he said.”

No one said anything. But they waited for him to finish his revelation.

“What you did for that man last night,” he paused. “With your change, I mean. My dad wouldn’t have even looked at him.” Jesse remembered the exchange.

“And you liked the way we treated him, Houston?”

Without giving him time to disavow the kind act, Jesse pressed. “Well, it’s the Christmas season, isn’t it? The time of year when it’s easier than ever to be nice to others. Even to folk we may not know, including beggars.”

Juds jumped in then with childish magnetism for mischief.

“Santa Claus only comes to good boys and girls,” she lilted, looking fixedly at her plate.

“That’s right,” crooned Hazel. “And you’ve been good all year, Juds,” she added, caressing her crinkly brown hair.

A short silence followed. Jesse then prompted Houston regarding the question he had asked earlier.

“He seemed like a nice man,” he replied, noncommittally.

“Nice enough to be shown a bit of love?” Jesse pressed.

“Sure.” A single word, but Jesse realized that it was a big concession for Houston, the first crack in the mind-constricting cocoon into which he was nurtured.

“Well, Jim?” said Shirley after greeting him when he showed up for his next to final blast of radiation. “Is the tiredness getting any better?”

“I’m managing, I’m managing,” he smiled cheerlessly. “Don’t think I could handle another month of this, though.”

“You’ve been a great patient, Jim. I’m sure you’ll do well when you’re back home in Belize,” she said.

“Yes, we will. We will. What’s left of me anyways, now that you’ve barbecued the whole of my insides.”

Shirley liked the facile way this foreigner could banter. And that accent paired with the way he dropped letters and added them to words made a conversation with him always a delight. At times she mimicked the way he said a particular word just to let him know she noticed. This was one of them.

“The ‘ole o’ your *hinsides*?” her smile was engulfing. Jim gave her a frowning smile.

“At least I can say ‘moun-tain’ he punted. You all still can’t get it right, calling it a ‘mount’n.” Shirley put on a stern face then said:

“Enough! Still planning on coming to our Christmas pageant this Saturday night?”

“Couldn’t miss it.”

Unknown to her, Jim and Eileen had, out of pure curiosity, visited the Temple Mount Worship Center earlier on to see what the place was like, an academic pastime purely. They were not seeking salvation—*no need for that encumbrance* was the way they regarded worship. And they liked what they saw: a large auditorium, beautifully stained glass windows, soft lighting, softer-still padded chairs.

On the night of the pageant they arrived early and found seats. A curtain which they hadn’t seen on their reconnaissance hid the stage, theater style, while the orchestra ran selections from *The Messiah*. The program brief provided the name of the play:

THE THREE CHILDREN OF MYRA

“Ever heard of them?” Jesse quizzed Eileen.

“Not yet,” she answered. “I had expected something more akin to the season.” She paused then before adding, “This might even be entertaining.”

“This was your idea, remember?” he grinned.

“Yes, but you were pleased when I agreed to come,” she rallied.

Just then the lights dimmed and after a moment or two went out altogether. The curtains opened slowly. The effect was magical. The scene on the stage was right out of the Middle-Ages and depicted a decrepit wooden building with thick thatch and the unmistakable signs of poverty. It was winter and already getting dark. For a minute or so nothing moved, giving the audience time to take it all in. Eventually a man

entered, dropped an empty sack on the floor before sinking into an old rickety chair. When his wife emerged from the kitchen, they exchanged tired, weary stares, the sack on the floor evidence that the man had not found work. He handed her a bit of paper.

It was a notice from the burgomaster’s office ordering their eviction from the cottage after three days unless the arrears of rent were paid forthwith.

“What shall we do, Otto?” she asked fearfully. And for good reason. If they couldn’t pay the rent they would be put out, leaving them homeless and hungry. They knew their options, one of which was selling their three children into slavery. They would never see them again!

“We have to do it,” he groaned. “Otherwise we all perish.”

At that moment three young girls came rushing downstairs eagerly at the sound of their parents’ voices. When they saw the stony gazes on the faces of the elders, however, all three halted on the stairway, the hopeful smiles fading frozenly on their faces.

“Mama, Papa,” they cried out in despair.

In the small town of Myra, Turkey, word of the family’s predicament soon spread, reaching the ears of a priest named Father Nicholas. The plot took the audience back to his childhood; to the time he was orphaned when the plague that ravaged Europe claimed the lives of his philanthropic parents. He used his inheritance to help the poor and needy and followed this up with his early response to a divine call to service in the Church. When Nicholas heard of Otto’s quandary, he made further enquiries. During the night he dropped a bag of gold coins through an open window of their dwelling. Enough to pay their rent and protect their home.

After the curtain closed, the lead pastor went to the podium and in a few words ended the program.

“Now you may not believe in Santa Claus. But think of those three girls and what the gift from an un-named, unseen benefactor meant to them. What if he dresses up in a red suit and laughs funny? On Christmas Eve other children will be waiting for him. And he’ll not disappoint. Merry Christmas, everyone.”

The story had only a passing effect on Jim and Eileen. The cold wind howled as they made their way back to their car. Neither spoke until they were on the freeway.

“A Christmas story with a difference,” muttered Jim. “None of that ‘Baby-in-a-manger’ stuff, for a change.”

“Can anyone believe that things could get so bad that parents would even think of selling their children?”

But things were about to get really bad for them too. And Jim learned just how bad when he presented himself at the clinic the following Tuesday for his final blast of radiation. He sensed the tension as soon as he arrived. Shirley avoided eye contact with him and her voice was all business. He wanted to ask her about it, but held his calm. And then he was summoned to the business office.

*To be continued*

## BELIZE COMPANIES ACT, 2022 OF THE LAWS OF BELIZE

### NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the company **Development Advisors, Inc.** a private company with **Registration No. 000000605** has been dissolved with effect from the **15<sup>th</sup> December, 2022.**

GEORGETOWN TRUST, LTD. – Registered Agent





**MINISTRY  
OF  
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT  
AND  
HOUSING**



**INVITATION TO CONSULTING FIRMS TO SUBMIT EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

**Operation Data**

Country: BELIZE  
 Operation: Expansion and Rehabilitation of the Philip Goldson Highway  
 Operation No: Loan Agreement No. 2295

**Consulting Data**

Name of the Consultancy: Consultancy Services for Construction Supervision of the Expansion and Rehabilitation of the Philip Goldson Highway  
 Selection Method: Quality and Cost Based Selection  
 Reference number: PGHUP-CAB-001

The Government of Belize – Ministry of Infrastructure Development & Housing has received financing from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration for the Expansion and Rehabilitation of the Philip Goldson Highway, and it is intended to use a portion of the funds for consulting services contracts.

The Consulting services (“the services”) include: A two phased assignment. Phase #1, is to assist the GOBZ in reviewing the existing (November 2017) detailed design and make adjustments to its content and cost estimates reflecting conditions that have changed since its completion and current cost escalations due to various national and international factors. Phase #2, of this consultancy is to assist the GOBZ in providing project management of those road works, including contractor supervision and contract administration throughout the project implementation process, inclusive of the defects liability period.

The Government of Belize – Ministry of Infrastructure Development & Housing invites eligible consulting firms to express their interest in providing the requested services. Interested consultants shall provide information indicating that they are qualified to provide the services and may partner with other firms in the form of a Joint Venture (JV) or subconsultants to improve their qualifications. The criteria for shortlist selection are found within the respective Terms of Reference.

Interested Consulting Firms can obtain the Terms of Reference at no cost by requesting them by email: [peu@midh.gov.bz](mailto:peu@midh.gov.bz)

Consultants will be selected using the method of Quality Cost-Based Selection described in the Regulations for the Application of the Procurement Policy available in [www.bcie.org](http://www.bcie.org).

Interested consultants can obtain more information at the address indicated at the end of this invitation, during business hours.

One electronic copy of the Expression (s) of interest together with the information indicated in the Terms of Reference must be submitted to the address below. The file(s) containing each submission should include the name and address of the applicant and shall be clearly marked “**Expression of Interest - Consultancy Services for Contract Supervision of the Expansion and Rehabilitation of the Philip Goldson Highway**”) and shall be received by no later than **(10:00 a.m. local time on Monday 31 January 2023)**.

The burden of proving receipt of the e-mail will be on the applicant and will not be met solely by a read receipt or sent items report generated by the applicant’s computer. Confirmation of receipt can be requested at the address listed below.

Ministry of Infrastructure Development & Housing - Project Execution Unit

**Mr. Evondale Moody**

Engineering Coordinator

Ministry of Infrastructure Development & Housing  
 Power Lane, Belmopan, BELIZE Tel: +501-828-5220  
 Email: [peu@midh.gov.bz](mailto:peu@midh.gov.bz)





# SPORTS, SIN AND SUBVERSION



Ludwig Lightburn after he defeated New Orleans' Ralph Dupas, the no. 2 lightweight contender in the world, at New York City's Madison Square Garden in 1955. This was Lightburn's first nationally televised fight in the U.S. It was also seen in Mexico and Canada, and broadcast worldwide on shortwave radio. (The ring announcer is Johnny Addie.)

**Evan X Hyde**

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 www.myspace.com/sportssinandsubversion



Evan X Hyde



# Gilroy Usher rails at MIDH after cancelled house handover

**The Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing has been called out by the area representative for Port Loyola, Gilroy Usher, after the postponement of a home handover that will leave one single mother in a leaking house for the holiday. Minister Julius Espot calls Usher's claims "unreasonable."**



**Gilroy Usher, Port Loyola Area Representative**

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. Dec. 22, 2022

Whatever discord was possibly simmering beneath the surface in the relations between two members of the Cabinet — Hon. Gilroy Usher and Minister of Housing, Julius Espot — surged to the surface in a heated moment, when Usher, as he awaited the commencement of a ceremony yesterday for the handover of a starter home in his Port Loyola constituency, reportedly received a text message that notified him that no handover would be taking place on that day. After being informed that the homeowner, Apolinaria Choc, a single mother, would instead be receiving the home on December 29, and while he

stood in front of the home, festively adorned with blue balloons and flanked by white plastic chairs for the attendees at the event, Usher, probably without much contemplation of a possible fallout and probably stirred by embarrassment and disappointment, proceeded to engage in a rant about what he described as the Ministry of Housing's exclusion of the Port Loyola constituency from the ongoing house-construction process that's been taking place in the country. Notably, while he was speaking, ceremonies for the handover of two homes in other parts of the city were reportedly taking place.

The Port Loyola area representative, during his outburst, which took place as reporters stood nearby, called "on all those responsible to give completion of starter homes in Port Loyola an urgent priority". He pointed out that after two years of the current administration, only the first starter home in the constituency has been completed and is to be handed over, while between four and five households have received homes in other divisions. He claimed that his remarks were not intended to be a criticism of the current government, but an appeal for the Ministry of Housing to "end the excuses", and "get the starter homes built for the people of Port Loyola"

Over 50 persons need starter homes in his division, Usher said, but he expressed his conviction that the apparent oversight

by the Ministry of Housing, and its failure to give new homes so far to these Port Loyola residents will not affect his bid for re-election, since he's "always been championing the cause of the people" — a suggestion that any hesitation on his part to publicly comment on the Ministry of Housing's purported lack of action in Port Loyola would more likely diminish his prospects in the division.

"I'm saying publicly, Minister Espot, we thank you for the many homes that you've built throughout the country. Minister of Infrastructure, we thank you for the starter homes that you've built throughout the country, but it's time that tremendous effort, serious effort made to deliver on the starter homes in the Port Loyola division, and we do not want the houses three months or a year before the election. People want their houses as quick as possible, just as the other divisions. The people are tired of living in shacks and thing. The people want to experience the promise in the PUP constitution of better housing for all Belizeans, and so let us move forward as a government and get the houses built for the people of Port Loyola. We are tired of excuses. It's time for the government, for the Ministry of Infrastructure to work along with the people of Port Loyola, to get the starter homes built at a faster rate. We have the contractors, we have the lands; the lands are filled up, so what the continued excuse

with the delay? At this rate, one starter home in 2 years; at this rate in 5 years you will only have 2 and a half starter homes," Usher said.

But subsequent statements by Minister of Housing, Julius Espot, and the public relations manager in the Ministry, Marisa Alamilla have revealed what appears to have been a breakdown in communication between Usher and the Housing Ministry — with some messages that had been previously sent by the Ministry seemingly not being received by Minister Usher, and thus resulting in the fiasco yesterday morning.

According to Alamilla, following the final inspection of the home, the lead inspector had pointed to work that had yet to be done to the home to ensure it met the required standards before handover, and that information was relayed to the contractor recommended by Usher. "When I did the final inspection, I could not pass the house for handover, I informed the contractor that he needed to come back, our lead inspector, Mr Noel Harvey, informed the contractor of all the things that we needed to meet standard," said Alamilla. Since that remedial work had not been done by the contractor in a timely fashion prior to the date scheduled for the handover, the ceremony was postponed, said Alamilla. Alamilla further indicated that the Ministry

**Please turn to Page 30**



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BY ORDER of the Mortgagees, Messrs. National Bank of Belize Limited (NBB), Licensed Auctioneer Jonathan Mulligan, will be selling by way of Public Auction, the following properties:

**BELIZE DISTRICT**


REGISTRATION SECTION	BLOCK	PARCEL
Queen Square West	45	1523



Located at #1523 Margaret Williams Street, Faber's Road Ext., Belize City measuring 383.84 square meters. This property consists of a fully fenced, gated, two-level concrete house, which benefits from 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, and verandahs with stairways (upper & lower, back & front).  
**ON SITE** On Saturday January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 10:00am  
**TERMS: STRICTLY CASH**

**CAYO DISTRICT**

REGISTRATION SECTION	BLOCK	PARCEL
Kay Lay Out, Bullet Tree/ Cayo District	17	1



All that piece or parcel of land being 0.678 acres situate in Kay Layout Bullet Tree, Cayo District together with all buildings erections and developments standing and being thereon.  
**VIRTUAL AUCTION VIA ZOOM** on Friday December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 at 10:00am  
**TERMS: STRICTLY CASH**  
 Meeting ID: 886 8606 5276 | Passcode: SMEySJ



# Funds earmarked for repair of Sarstoon FOB

BELIZE CITY, Tues. Dec. 20, 2022

The government has provided funding to the Ministry of National Defence for the refurbishment of the forward operating base located on Sarstoon Island. The base was temporarily evacuated earlier this year due to severe beach erosion which compromised the stability of the structure which houses the base. That structure (the front stilts) has been partially submerged in water—a situation that sparked concerns for the safety of security personnel who were stationed at the base. Members of the Belize Defence Force (BDF), Coast Guard and Police Department who were assigned to patrol the area now take a 15-minute boat ride daily from a base in Barranco to the island, and leave in the evening, but the presence of Belizean security officials on the island has been a significant deterrent to would-be illegal fishers and encroachers, making the resumption of a 24-hour military presence on the base of vital importance.

Minister Florencio Marin, Jr., the

Minister of Defence, believes that the refurbishment of the FOB will be completed within an 8-week period and that thereafter the facility will once again be able to accommodate the 24-hour presence of BDF soldiers. He noted, however, that the funding that has been provided is sufficient only for remedial work to strengthen the structure, rather than the construction of a new base. He said that the main concern of the ministry at this point in time is to “buttress” the already existing base that is currently being engulfed by the sea, but that they are also seeking funds to cover the costs of building a new base.

“I don’t anticipate that to take more than eight weeks. At the same time, I don’t want to be held to a firm timeline, but there is a priority for us to get it operating again. It is a critical operating base for us to have operational. We think that it was built hastily in the past. Of course, climate change is here, and it is affecting the whole coast; the FOB is no exception” Hon. Marin said at a press

conference today.

The Commandant of the Belize Coast Guard, Rear Admiral Elton Bennett, has reassured the public, however, that members of his agency have been able to oversee the general area and launch operations from the base in Barranco.

“The base at Sarstoon suffered serious beach erosion, and we had to extract from that location, but we are currently located at Barranco, so there is a joint facility with the Belize Defence Force, the Belize Coast Guard, and the Belize Police Department, all at one facility. From there we can overlook the general area of operation and we can launch operations, whether that’s for fisheries enforcement, that’s military operations or counter-drug operations that’s done from Barranco. So we are still able to reach that location and perform our national security duties,” Bennett said.

He said that they have so far not observed any increase in illegal fishing or incursions into the Sarstoon area since the relocation of security



**Hon. Florencio Marin, Jr., Minister of National Defence**

personnel to Barranco.

The Sarstoon FOB, which was opened in 2015, has been in operation since then, but the coastline of the island has been significantly impacted by beach erosion.

**If you win the Lotto you don't want everyone to know**

**Henry Young saw it**

**Continued from** Page 12

acceptance? Poor Leviticus, no one is paying attention to him anymore. A way back, our ancestors were snaring ships laden with gold and other merchandize. Now we, their offspring, are after ships with another kind of cargo.

**World Cup excuses**

If you look in my columns, you will see a note about the importance of rest before a big game. Argentina had a full extra day to recover before the finals. That happened because of money. Both semi-final games should be played on the same day. On top of Argentina having extra rest, France was battling a virus before the game, and on top of that, three of France’s best players, their #2 player, Paul Pogba, their #3 player, N’Golo Kante, and their #4 player, Karim Benzema, were sidelined by injuries.

In the world of football, most Belizeans from my generation are for Brazil, but I switched my fanhood to France in 1982 because of Marius Tresor, of the Caribbean Island, Guadeloupe. Tresor was the sweeper of a French national team that featured the famous Michel Platini and Jean Tigana. In 1982 it wasn’t commonplace for European countries to have black players on their national teams, and France had two, Tresor, and Tigana from Mali.

There was no television in my world in 1982, so I listened to the semi-final between France and West Germany (this was before Gorbachev took down the wall in Berlin) on radio. If you have the time and the internet, and you don’t hate heartbreakers, Google the website [historyofsoccer.info](http://historyofsoccer.info) for the story, “1982 France vs Germany: Most Famous World Cup Semi Final.” The excuse for Les Bleus in this one is dirty robbery. There are clips of this World Cup on the internet, and if you want to judge with your own eyes, you will see the dirtiest, most vicious play in World Cup history, perpetrated by the German goalkeeper, and how the referee, incredibly, turned a blind eye. Even if you think racism doesn’t exist, you will still wonder why it was the team with the two black men that got the rotten end.

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## **REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST** **INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES**

**Institution:** Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing

**Country:** Belize

**Project:** Additional Financing for George Price Highway Rehabilitation Project

**Sector:** Infrastructure, Environment and Natural Disasters

**Abstract:** Individual Consulting Services – Production of a Video on the Process of Conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Department of Environment

**Loan/Credit/Grant No.:** 4616/OC-BL

**Deadline:** January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

The Government of Belize has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), towards the cost of the Additional Financial under the George Price Highway Rehabilitation Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include the contracting of an Individual Consultant for a minimum of thirty (30) days for the Production of a Video on the Process of Conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Department of Environment.

The Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing now invites eligible Individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: [Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank](#) (GN-2350-15, January 2020) – Section V, 5.2 Selection of Individual Consultants based on Comparison of Qualifications of National Individual Consultants.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours:

Program Management Unit  
#1 Power Lane, Belmopan, Cayo District  
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.  
Tel: 501-822-0100/1942  
Email: [pmupcmow@gmail.com](mailto:pmupcmow@gmail.com), [gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz](mailto:gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz) or [procurement.officer.midh@gmail.com](mailto:procurement.officer.midh@gmail.com)

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by **10:00 a.m. (Local Belize Time) on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

**Attn:** Mr. Rolando Chan  
Program Coordinator  
#1 Power Lane, Belmopan  
Cayo District, Belize  
Tel: 501-822-0100/1942  
**E-mail:** [pmupcmow@gmail.com](mailto:pmupcmow@gmail.com), [gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz](mailto:gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz)  
or [procurement.officer.midh@gmail.com](mailto:procurement.officer.midh@gmail.com)



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by Friday, December 30, 2022





# KREM Television Program Guide

*Shoa Wiself, Si Wiself, Bee Wiself!!!*

Questions or comments may be forwarded via email to

Phone: 202-5848 [kremtelevision@yahoo.com](mailto:kremtelevision@yahoo.com)

Friday, December 23 to Thursday, December 29, 2022

**FRIDAY**

- 6:30 a.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (LIVE)**
- 9:00 a.m. **Morning Stew (LIVE)**
- 12:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**
- 1:00 p.m. News Broadcast: Democracy Now
- 2:00 p.m. Movie: Black or White
- 3:30 p.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (repeat)**
- 6:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (LIVE)**
- 7:00 p.m. News Broadcast: Democracy Now
- 8:00 p.m. Belizean Legend: Harry Straddle
- 9:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**

**SATURDAY**

- 9:00 a.m. Movie: How the Grinch Stole Christmas
- 10:44 a.m. Documentary: GMO OMG
- 12:09 p.m. Belizean Legend: Albert Peyrefitte
- 12:41 p.m. Movie: A Husband Christmas
- 2:08 p.m. Documentary: Gill Net
- 2:22 p.m. Belizean Legend: Samantha Dirks
- 2:47 p.m. Movie: A Prefect Christmas
- 4:11 p.m. Ted Talks: Emotional Intelligence
- 4:24 p.m. Movie: Home Alone
- 6:07 p.m. Belizean Legend: Johnny Lindo
- 6:37 p.m. Movie: Home Alone
- 11:27 p.m. Music Videos

**SUNDAY**

- 9:00 a.m. Movie: Second Sight
- 10:22 a.m. Documentary: Birds Isle
- 11:05 a.m. Belizean Legend: Talita Long
- 11:49 a.m. Ted Talks: Black History Matters - Don John
- 12:07 p.m. Movie: The Tiffany Rubin Story
- 1:34 p.m. Documentary: Stake Bank
- 2:09 p.m. Belizean Legend: Patrick Rogers
- 2:51 p.m. Movie: Separados mas iguais - Separate But Equal
- 6:03 p.m. Documentary: Belize SocioPolitical Challenge - Farrakhan addressed inmates at Belize Central Prison
- 7:01 p.m. Belizean Legend: Jennifer Betson
- 7:48 p.m. Music Videos

**MONDAY**

- 9:00 a.m. Documentary: Millenials in Belize Suppressed by Gangs and Crime
- 9:13 a.m. Local Documentary: Police Street
- 9:31 a.m. Belizean Legend: Ras Indio
- 9:58 a.m. Belizean Legend: Harry Shaw
- 10:33 p.m. Ted Talks: The Difference being not racist and antiracist
- 11:24 p.m. Movie: Queen Nefertiti
- 12:22 p.m. Documentary: Belizeanizing History- Decolonizing an Independent Belize
- 2:52 p.m. Belizean Legend: Audrey Matura
- 3:25 p.m. Movie: The Great Debaters
- 5:32 p.m. Documentary: Re Caribbean Women for Land, Food and Climate Justice - Webinar
- 7:11 p.m. Movie: Simple Justice
- 9:00 p.m. Music Videos

**TUESDAY**

- 6:30 a.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (LIVE)**
- 9:00 a.m. **Morning Stew (LIVE)**
- 12:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**
- 1:00 p.m. News Broadcast: Democracy Now
- 2:00 p.m. Movie: Where Hope Grows
- 3:30 p.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (repeat)**
- 6:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (LIVE)**
- 7:00 p.m. News Broadcast: Democracy Now
- 8:00 p.m. Belizean Legend: Harry Straddle
- 9:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**

**WEDNESDAY**

- 6:30 a.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (LIVE)**
- 9:00 a.m. **Morning Stew (LIVE)**
- 12:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**
- 1:00 p.m. News Broadcast: Democracy Now
- 2:00 p.m. Documentary: 1804 - The Hidden History of Haiti
- 3:30 p.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (repeat)**
- 6:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (LIVE)**
- 7:00 p.m. News Broadcast: Democracy Now
- 8:00 p.m. Belizean Legend: Nelson Fuller
- 9:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**

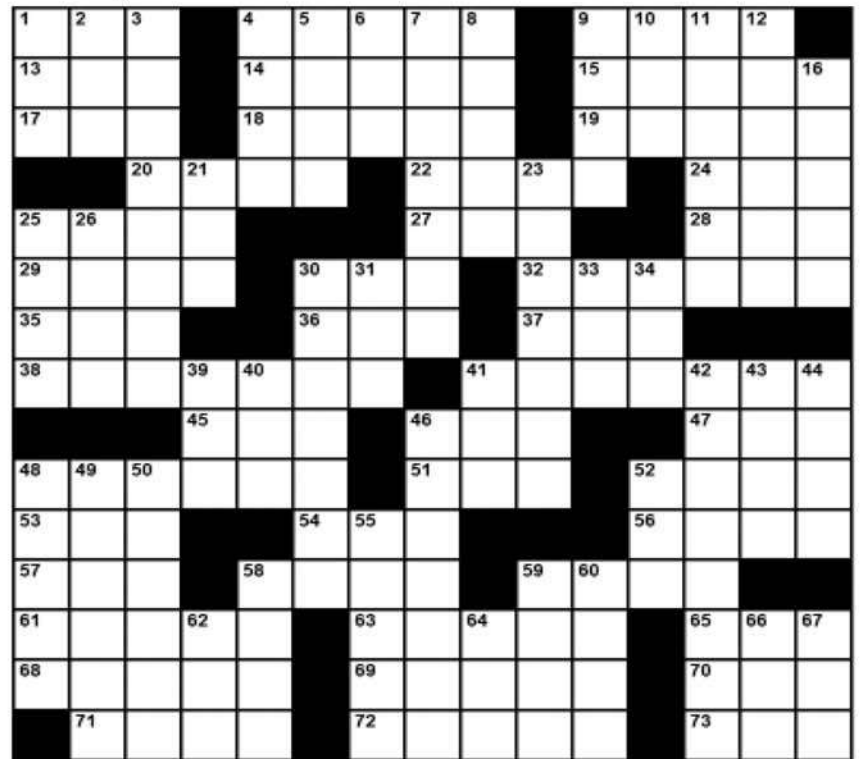
**THURSDAY**

- 6:30 a.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (LIVE)**
- 9:00 a.m. **Morning Stew (LIVE)**
- 12:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**
- 1:00 p.m. News Broadcast: Democracy Now
- 2:00 p.m. Movie: The Guardian 1984
- 3:30 p.m. **Wake Up Belize Morning Vibes (repeat)**
- 6:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (LIVE)**
- 7:00 p.m. Documentary: Mexico's Deadly Coca Cola Addiction
- 8:00 p.m. Navel String Connections
- 9:00 p.m. **Krem TV Evening News (repeat)**



NEW PUZZLE

**Daily Printable Puzzle - 12-21-2022**



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**Across**

- 1. Barn inhabitant
- 4. Leaves speechless
- 9. Back flows
- 13. A notorious Peron
- 14. Seraglio group
- 15. Penetrates
- 17. Ballet step
- 18. Crop up
- 19. Actress Potts
- 20. Choir offering
- 22. Off limits
- 24. Coffee shop vessel
- 25. Bingo card word
- 27. Bard's before
- 28. Barker and Bell
- 29. Clears of
- 30. Droop
- 32. Bite gently
- 35. Big bird down under
- 36. Assumed mane
- 37. Bearing pivot
- 38. Type of fever
- 41. Lament loudly
- 45. Be master of
- 46. Put to work
- 47. And also not
- 48. Is greater than
- 51. Ante up
- 52. Bookie terms
- 53. 1773 jetsam
- 54. Ankle site
- 56. Easy run
- 57. 60 min. parts
- 58. Briny drop
- 59. A chorister
- 61. Rust and others
- 63. Spinal bases
- 65. Deity
- 68. Cassia plant
- 69. Kingly decree
- 70. Author's last word
- 71. Linger in the tub
- 72. Dog's rein
- 73. Anything but that

**Down**

- 1. Edible mushroom
- 2. Aves, once
- 3. Like a has-been
- 4. Counterfeit
- 5. Mountain Lake
- 6. Altdorf's canton
- 7. Rainy day cache
- 8. Blur, as ink
- 9. Bible twin
- 10. Actor Kingsley
- 11. Stupefy
- 12. Coil around
- 16. Become aware of
- 21. Affirmative reply
- 23. British auto
- 25. Be a worrywart
- 26. Frosted
- 30. Chisel
- 31. Assistance
- 33. Beholden letters
- 34. Logarithmic unit
- 39. Break up clods
- 40. Be beholden to
- 41. Dos Passos subject
- 42. Male sex hormone
- 43. Busy person's list
- 44. Formerly, once
- 46. Bump into first class
- 48. Group beliefs
- 49. Historic Persian king
- 50. Bettor place
- 52. Baseball great Mel
- 55. Artist's prop
- 58. Fine wood
- 59. Circumference parts
- 60. Lattice part
- 62. Chromosome letters
- 64. Alias org.
- 66. John's Yoko
- 67. Banned substance

**Crossword answers for last edition**

The answers below are for the puzzle appearing in last Friday's edition of the Amandala. The answers for the above puzzle will appear in next week's Friday issue of this newspaper.



Daily Printable Crossword Puzzle - 12-14-2022 - Answers

A	D	A	M		B	O	L	A		C	B	S		
S	A	K	I		A	P	A	C	E		E	U	R	O
A	N	I	S		R	I	S	E	R		X	R	A	Y
P	A	N	S		R	U	T		A	D	U	L	T	S
					T	E	E	M		T	S	A	R	
B	O	R	E	A	L		D	R	U	B	B	I	N	G
E	R	U	P	T		P	E	E	R		D	A	L	
L	I	P	S		C	A	U	S	E		D	E	C	O
L	E	E			O	R	C	S		N	E	A	R	S
E	L	E	G	A	N	C	E		B	I	A	S	E	S
					A	R	C	H		R	O	L	L	
E	U	R	E	K	A		L	E	U		I	R	I	S
O	V	A	L		V	Y	I	N	G		N	O	N	E
N	E	S	S		E	A	R	T	H		G	A	T	T
S	A	P			P	A	S	T		S	N	O	T	





## AMANDALA is now ONLINE!

You can now access Amandala's Mid-week and Weekend issues Online by logging on to our website at <https://amandala.com.bz/news/> and joining our membership portal today!

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1. Go to Amandala's website
2. Navigate to the Subscribers area
3. Choose a membership level
4. Checkout using our secured portal
5. Log in to the members-only section

## All Power to the People!

Tel: 501-280-4703 OR  
202-4477  
Fax: +501-222-4702

Emails:  
amandalapress@yahoo.com OR  
amandalapress@gmail.com



### VACANCY AT JULIAN CHO TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL



Julian Cho Technical High School invites suitably qualified persons to apply for the following post:

#### 1 English Teacher – Permanent

#### Qualification for Teacher:

- a) Bachelor's Degree or Higher in the subject area with pedagogical training preferred, however, an Associate Degree in the subject area may be considered.
- b) Teaching experience at the secondary level would be an asset.
- c) Good communication skills and a willingness to uphold the mission of Julian Cho Technical High School.

#### Application package must include:

- A letter of application and resume
- Certified copies of diplomas and certificate/s
- Sealed transcript from all post-secondary institutions attended
- Birth certificate or Passport
- Certified copy of Social Security Card
- Recent Medical Certificate
- Recent Police Record
- Valid Teacher's License (Secondary level)
- Two recent letters of recommendation

\*ALL COPIED DOCUMENTS MUST BE CERTIFIED BY A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

#### Salary:

Salary will be in accordance with the government pay scale based on qualification.

Application packages must be addressed to: Secretary

Board of Governors

Julian Cho Technical High School

P.O Box 171

Toledo District

Belize, Central America

ELECTRONIC PACKAGES CAN ALSO BE EMAILED TO: [jcths.secretary2@yahoo.com](mailto:jcths.secretary2@yahoo.com)

[principaljctech@gmail.com](mailto:principaljctech@gmail.com)

PLEASE NOTE THAT A HARD COPY OF APPLICATION PACKAGE MUST BE PRESENTED ON DAY OF INTERVIEW IF SHORTLISTED.

Deadline for applications is Monday, January 9, 2023.

## “Tour-isms”

### Share the Tea- Spill the News

It has been said that “power, today comes from sharing information, not withholding it”. Sharing information can be likened to having tea. Having tea is a Belizean past-time. We enjoy a good tea, natural or packaged. Similarly, many of us share our information on social media platforms every day. We log on, serve-up, and spill the tea on what is happening in our communities, businesses, and in our lives. For businesses, this includes strategy, resources, originality, and witty headlines. At the Belize Tourism Board (BTB) our tea can often spill over. There is so much to share each day and every week. This way, we ensure that all our stakeholders get the type of tea they prefer and need. Tourism news is mostly good news. It is news about nature, people, experiences, families, pictures, candid moments, making new friends, and creating life-lasting memories. The BTB shares its news, spills its tea each day, and is happy to do so.

So far, the tea spilt in December has been mostly homegrown with a little international variety. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, the Salvation Army's Christmas fundraising campaign received \$3000 from the BTB that will go towards helping less fortunate families and holiday treats and gifts for children. On the 9<sup>th</sup>, the BTB presented the Belize Defense Force (BDF) with four heavy-duty specialized batteries to assist with the solar system that powers their mobile communication apparatus. Up north in Orange Walk, the 11<sup>th</sup> Festival del Pueblo took place in San Lazaro Village, and we were proud to be a sponsor. Mr. Luis Wade Jr. was awarded a full scholarship to enroll in an international broadcast media training program at the CSB Media Art Centre in North Palm Beach, Florida. Now that is some good tea. Additionally, our various training workshops continue around the country. For international flavors, the December tea has been sweet. The BTB participated in meetings and workshops in Austin, Texas to discuss travel trends and future marketing opportunities for Belize. The inspirational travel brand, Global Child TV, shot an episode in The Jewel to explore our jungle, marine, and culture alongside our own, Miss Earth 2021, Destiny Wagner. Belize was recently ranked as one of “The 8<sup>th</sup> Best Destinations for Your Next Winter Getaway” by Afar Magazine. Even Brian Kelly of The Points Guy shared with Gale King on CBS News that he was excited to be visiting Belize for the first time this December. The tea this December has been spilling over and the month is not over yet.



Belizeans tend to like some powder-buns or journey-cakes with their tea. We like to share about what is going on in our neighborhoods, our workplaces, and our homes. This December we all will have a better Christmas to talk about and even more to share. This Christmas is the first, since 2019, that we will be able to indulge in all our usual holiday traditions. Hurricane Lisa caused significant infrastructural damage to Belize City, but our tourism industry is resilient. To quote the Honorable Minister of Tourism & Diaspora Relations, Anthony Mahler, “...our Belizean resilience too promises great hope for a brighter future...”. In the spirit of all the tea that will be spilt over kitchen tables and social media during the Christmas and the New Years, we highlight *transformism*. This -ism is for the transformative power of sharing information, for the transformation our industry went through these last two years, and for all of our personal evolution moving into 2023. Share information! -Spill tea! - Be merry!

See you next week.

*The Belize Tourism Board*





## VACANCY

The British High Commission, Belmopan has a vacancy for a part time Finance Officer.

### Main purpose of the job:

To ensure the smooth running of the accounts section by providing efficient and timely day-to-day management of financial transactions and procedures.

### Roles and responsibilities:

- Accounts payable and receivable.
- Reconcile transactions and identify and resolve accounting discrepancies.
- Process cash transactions – ensuring expenses are within assigned budgets, within approved limit and completion of the record of cash transactions.
- Prepare cash payments for UK Based Staff.
- Prepare accurate and timely monthly payroll – inclusive of payments to Income Tax, Social Security and Sagcor Life Inc.
- Maintain Salaries and Income Tax registers.
- Prepare annual Income Tax returns.
- Prepare monthly application for GST refund.
- Replenish residence imprest monthly.
- Administration of bank account – changes in signatories, deposits, withdrawals, monitoring for discrepancies and funding, reconciling payments.
- Prepare and submit forms for set up of new suppliers/ reactivations.
- Update internal systems with financial data.
- Prepare employment letters for staff.
- Assist Deputy Corporate Services Manager with funding profile – annual upload and any amendments.
- Assist with budget preparation, management and forecast.
- Monthly finance housekeeping – monitoring credit card expenses, invoices on hold, purchase orders, filing.
- Monitor utilities usage.
- Monitor rates of exchange and share with staff.
- Key relationship holder with local and FCDO finance providers and stakeholders.
- Supporting the Deputy Corporate Services Manager and Corporate Services Manager with finance projects and tasks when required.

### Essential on arrival:

- Associates Degree or minimum of 2 years' experience in accounting.
- Strong ethics, with an ability to manage confidential information.
- Flexibility and adaptability.
- Excellent organisational skills and the ability to multitask.
- The ability to be proactive and take initiative.
- Ability to handle time-sensitive tasks.
- Excellent numerical skills.
- IT literacy, especially in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook & Teams).

### Desirable:

- Good communication skills

**Salary** will be BZ\$ 1,165.69 per month.

**Working Hours:** 19 hours per week (mornings)

### How to Apply

Interested persons should use the preferred method of applying online at <https://bit.ly/3VktqDM>

The Deadline for applications is 11.59pm on **Sunday 8th January 2023**. Only those candidates who are short-listed will be contacted. Please be aware that all applicants must have a legal status to work in Belize. Confirmation of appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period and security clearance.

*The British High Commission in Belize is an inclusive and diversity-friendly employer. We value difference, promote equality and challenge discrimination, enhancing our organisational capability. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate based on disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status or other category protected by law. We promote family-friendly flexible working opportunities, where operational and security needs allow.*

# Gilroy Usher rails at MIDH after cancelled house handover

Continued from Page 25

had informed personnel in Usher's office (specifically, Usher's point-person, his niece) while he was out of the country that there would be a postponement of the handover, and she provided 7News with screenshots of text messages that were sent on December 14 as proof.

Alamilla revealed a further complication that led to a breakdown in the process: the contractor who was to have done the remedial work did not carry out that work because he was engaged in another project— painting Usher's home in preparation for the Christmas holiday. According to Alamilla, the contractor told them he could not abandon what he was doing for Usher to carry out the small remedial touches to the one-room starter home. "Since that is the situation and since the contractor apparently is friends with the Minister, we don't get involved in that, we have to wait," Alamilla told local media.

And without that remedial work, the Housing Ministry refused to hand over the home on the scheduled date. Alamilla explained the reason for that refusal:

"Honestly, my issue is more based on the fact that we must understand who we are building for. We are building for persons who have limited means. They cannot get into a house and then have to fix anything. Our Minister is cognizant of that, and so our Minister imparts on us that we must deliver a certain quality so that we don't give these people more stress. The idea is to relieve stress, not to give them stress, and I thought that if anybody would understand that, Honorable Usher, who leads a constituency of these very people, would understand why we need to meet a certain quality, why we need to — I would have been more than happy to hand over Ms. Apolinaria's house this morning, but we cannot, she will be the same one to be dissatisfied with that," she said.

Alamilla noted, "It's just small remedial touches that we have come to take pride in. If the paint is not done properly, if the — any little thing that we see that is not up to standard, those are the little things, it's not a lot of work. If his contractor would have left the Christmas painting, we could have handed over his house. And I told him that. I said, 'your contractor has said he's painting your house so can we...'. I was thinking he would have called his contractor and said, 'leave my house and come finish this lady house', but he didn't do that. I can't tell the man stop."

Usher has lamented the fact, however, that he was notified yesterday morning that the ceremony was canceled and no prior indication before, Alamilla said that his daughter called her yesterday morning to say that someone had called to indicate that the handing over would take place. That person, however, was her uncle, and not a representative from the Ministry, Alamilla discovered.

"Her uncle can't set a handover. We set a handover because we have to have a certain quality. So, all this snafu is out of Minister Usher's camp," Alamilla said in an interview with News5's Marion Ali.

Alamilla also addressed claims made by Usher that point, beyond this particular handover postponement, to an overall prioritization by the Housing Ministry of other constituencies while the housing

needs in Port Loyola are relegated to a lower tier in the agenda of the Ministry. Alamilla has insisted that this is not the case, and that the Housing Ministry has faced a number of roadblocks in the construction of houses for certain Port Loyola residents and has had to address those issues before proceeding with construction. Those issues have been primarily land-related, and to address them the Housing Ministry has had to carry out land-filling and verification of leases.

"All the houses that have been approved for building and for construction for Minister Usher are in swamp, and we have gone ahead and we have filled those properties with clay, and we are waiting for the clay to consolidate. Clay takes 6-9 months to consolidate. We have some of his homes earmarked for beginning of January to start because they have consolidated. We will put more loads of sand on them in the first week of January, and then we will wait a couple weeks and then we can start those homes, because we'll bind the clay to start. One of the land, basically, we need to put 20 more loads, so we'll have to wait until that consolidates again, so if I don't do that, the houses will sink, we will get a bad reputation, Mr Usher's going to get a bad reputation, and we can't afford that," Alamilla said.

"Some of the houses, when they were approved, they were approved on leases. We have to ensure that the leases still belong to those people, because as you well know, sometimes previous governments will cancel a lease and not inform the person, so the person thinks he own the lease and he doesn't really, so I have to go into Lands, do all of that paperwork before I can even start to fill. They are well aware of all these problems we have," she added.

Her statements were contrary to what Usher asserted. He had told reporters, "One of the excuse was that they said there was delay in people obtaining the title for their land, so I said, that has been addressed, the people have the title for their land. There was once the excuse that they had to fill the land; the land has been filled. All those has been filled, so what's the excuse going forward? In terms of preparedness, our people have title for their land. Four of the lots have already been filled; the persons who should received the starter homes are all employed. The residents of Port Loyola, are ready to experience the dream of better housing with the starter homes as the other residents in the other divisions."

The Minister of Housing and Development, Julius Espat, after learning of Usher's claims, told local reporters that he "understands and respects" that Usher is doing his job, but pointed out that he "does not understand the reality" the Ministry is facing. Espat, who insisted that there is no "bad blood" between the two members of Cabinet, further commented, "... you have to understand: when Hurricane Lisa came through, all the human resources from MIDH went into assist his people. He's not mentioning that. He's not mentioning that five of his residents will be given houses in January in Boom area because he doesn't have any land in the Port Loyola. All of his requests for assistance and relief was accomplished, so I think he's being a bit

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# Statement from Professor Sir Hilary Beckles: Caribbean Response to the Netherlands Apology for Slavery

*The UWI Regional Headquarters, Jamaica W.I. Wednesday, December 21, 2022—The following statement is issued by Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor of The University of the West Indies, and Chairman of the CARICOM Reparations Commission in response to an apology for African enslavement, issued by Prime Minister Mark Rutte on behalf of The Kingdom of the Netherlands on December 19, 2022.*

It has been near a decade since the Governments of CARICOM established a Reparations Commission to promote regional and global understanding of the

enslavement of African people and native genocide with the objective of securing reparatory justice and development for the still suffering people of the Caribbean.

With the formal apology from the Dutch Prime Minister acknowledging that the transatlantic slave trade in enchained African bodies and chattel enslavement were crimes against humanity, the reparatory justice movement has moved into a new phase.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte must be commended for this enlightened development that establishes The Netherlands as the European country best poised to bring global leadership to this

long and sustained call for justice. His statement moves us closer to closure in respect of the crippling, criminal chapter in human history.

We recognise however, that this development is best understood as an internal conversation within the Dutch state. The Prime Minister did not bring to the table those who are the survivors of the crimes. The victim communities in the Caribbean and African are not stakeholders to this statement.

Historic though it is, the statement is flawed on the basis that the Prime Minister did not seek the organised input and support of the Caribbean. The

unilateralism of the apology and acknowledgments must now move to a multilateral basis. The marginalisation of these victim communities will undoubtedly be experienced as an ongoing approach steeped in the imperial culture we are seeking to replace with a deeper democratic sensibility.

The Dutch State was Europe's pioneer of the global slavery enterprise. For most of the 17th century it monopolised the transatlantic slave trade and provided the finance and technology that enabled the English, French, Spanish and Portuguese

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GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE

## BELIZE SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND III PROJECT

### INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Government of Belize (GOBZ) has received financing from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in an amount equivalent to USD\$10,000,000 towards the cost of the Belize Social Investment Fund III Project and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this financing to eligible payments under this contract. Payment by CDB will be made only at the request of (GOBZ) and upon approval by CDB, and will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Financing Agreement. The Financing Agreement prohibits withdrawal from the financing account for the purpose of any payment to persons or entities, or for any import of goods, if such payment or import, to the knowledge of CDB, is prohibited by a decision of the United Nations Security Council taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. No party other than (GOBZ) shall derive any rights from the Financing Agreement or have any claim to the proceeds of the Financing.

The Project is being implemented by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) through the Social Investment Fund (BSIF). BSIF has contracted Consultants who will assist with delivering the project.

BSIF now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the **Construction of Administration Building, Dormitories and Ancillary Works for Dorothy Menzies Child Care Center Replacement Facility, Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize: Lot 1 and/or Lot 2**. The works include, but are not limited to the following:

**Lot 1: Construction of Dormitories and Ancillary Works for Dorothy Menzies Child Care Center Replacement Facility, Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize.**

*The proposed scope includes the construction of two (2) separate single storey reinforced concrete dormitories each containing an interior floorspace of approximately 3,800 square feet. Each dormitory shall be equipped with restroom facilities, activity areas, bedroom facilities, kitchenettes, sick bays, staff monitoring facilities, and access for persons with disabilities.*

*Works shall also include the construction of site fencing, the construction of a playground area - complete with a gazebo, and the undertaking of relevant site works. Provisions for the installation of electrical, plumbing, water supply and wastewater systems, in accordance with the regulations of the respective authorities, will also be included.*

**Lot 2: Construction of Administration Building for Dorothy Menzies Child Care Center Replacement Facility, Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize**

*The proposed scope includes the construction of one (1) single storey reinforced concrete structure containing an interior floorspace of approximately 4,900 square feet. The building shall be equipped with dining facilities, kitchen facilities, storage spaces, bathrooms, laundry facilities, office spaces, conference facilities, a computer room, and access for persons with disabilities. Works shall also include the installation of electrical, plumbing, water supply and wastewater systems in accordance with the regulations of the respective authorities.*

Bidders may Bid for one or both lots, as further defined in the bidding document. Bidders wishing to offer discounts in case they are awarded more than one contract will be allowed to do so, provided those discounts are included in the Letter of Bid.

Consideration will be limited to firms or joint ventures of firms, which are legally incorporated or otherwise organised in, and have their principal place of business in an eligible country and are either:

- more than 50% beneficially owned by a citizen or citizens and/or a bona fide resident or residents of an eligible country, or by a body corporate or bodies corporate meeting these requirements; or
- owned or controlled by the Government of an eligible country provided that it is legally and financially autonomous and operated under the commercial law of an eligible country and otherwise meets the eligibility requirements of the CDB Guidelines for Procurement (2006).

Eligible countries are member countries of CDB.

Eligible bidders will be required to submit full qualification information with their bids establishing their eligibility to bid and qualification to perform the contract if the bid is accepted. Tender and qualification information are to be submitted in the English Language on the prescribed forms inserted in the Bid Documents. Submissions that do not provide the information required, or do not demonstrate the prospective contractor's ability to perform satisfactorily, will not qualify and will not be considered for further evaluation.

Qualification requirements include, inter alia:

- an average annual turnover (defined as certified payments received for works in progress or completed) within the last 5 years of at least for Lot 1 : Nine Hundred Thousand Belize Dollars (BZ\$900,000) (USD\$460,000); Lot 2: Eight Hundred Thousand Belize Dollars (BZ\$800,000) (USD\$405,000)
- a demonstrable cash flow (including access to credit) for Lot 1: Fifty One Thousand United States dollars (USD\$ 51,000); for Lot 2: Forty One Thousand United States dollars (USD\$41,000); and
- experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least three (3) assignments of a nature, scope and complexity comparable to the proposed project activity within the last five (5) years (to comply with this requirement, works quoted should be at least 80 percent complete).

Bidding Documents may be obtained by eligible bidders from the first address below for a non-refundable fee of BZ\$200 (USD\$100). Requests may be made by written application including email. Written applications must be clearly marked: **“Request for Bidding Documents for the Construction of Administration Building/Dormitories and Ancillary Works for Dorothy Menzies Child Care Center Replacement Facility, Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize: Lot 1 and/or Lot 2”**, along with the name, address and contact information of the bidder for which Bidding Documents are being requested. Payment should be by cash deposited to, or Bank transfer to BSIF's Bank Account only. Banking details can be requested at the address below. Cash payment will not be accepted at the BSIF Office.

Applicants who request that documents be forwarded to them must submit an account number from a local courier agent that accepts freight collect charges. Documents will be promptly dispatched, but under no circumstance will the Government of Belize or their authorised agent be held responsible for late delivery or loss of the documents so transmitted.

Submissions in sealed envelopes clearly marked **“Bid for the Construction of Administration Building/Dormitories and Ancillary Works for Dorothy Menzies Child Care Center Replacement Facility, Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize: Lot 1 and/or Lot 2”**, must be received at the second address below not later than **10:00am (Belize Local Time) on 6th February 2023**. Bid opening will take place immediately after the deadline for submission at the address below in the presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend. Qualification information **only** must be simultaneously submitted electronically to the third address below.

All bids must be accompanied by a “Bid Security” of: BZ\$14,000 (USD\$7,080) for lot 1; for Lot 2 BZ\$12,000 (USD\$6,070) for lot 2 and BZ\$26,000 (USD\$13,150) for both lot 1 and lot 2. Late bids will be rejected.

The Government of Belize reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected prospective bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected prospective bidder(s) of the grounds for the Government of Belize action. The Government of Belize will not defray any costs incurred by any bidder in the preparation of bids.

#### 1. Address for Correspondence

Senior Procurement Officer  
Social Investment Fund  
3rd Floor, #1902 Constitution Drive  
Belmopan Cayo District  
Tel: 822-0239/822-0508  
E-mail: [angeles.itzab@sifbelize.org](mailto:angeles.itzab@sifbelize.org)  
cc: [carlos.tun@sifbelize.org](mailto:carlos.tun@sifbelize.org)  
[kyla.cho@sifbelize.org](mailto:kyla.cho@sifbelize.org)

#### 2. Address for Bid Submission and Bid Opening

Senior Procurement Officer  
Social Investment Fund  
3rd Floor, #1902 Constitution Drive  
Belmopan Cayo District  
Tel: 822-0239/822-0508  
E-mail: [angeles.itzab@sifbelize.org](mailto:angeles.itzab@sifbelize.org)  
cc: [carlos.tun@sifbelize.org](mailto:carlos.tun@sifbelize.org)  
[kyla.cho@sifbelize.org](mailto:kyla.cho@sifbelize.org)

#### 3. Email Address for Completed Qualification Information Only

Procurement Officer  
Email: [procurement@caribank.org](mailto:procurement@caribank.org)



## Members of the Belizean Diaspora Donate Laptops to Secondary School Children

**Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022**— The Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations (MTDR) has received a donation of 76 laptops and accessories valued at \$83,500 from Belizeans living at home and abroad which will be distributed to secondary school children by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology (MoECST).

Build Belize Inc, which is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, organized the “Donate to Educate” program in collaboration with MTDR and MoECST. Present at the handing-over ceremony were Ambassador Sandhya Murphy along with Raymond Gongora and Grace Pate representing Build Belize Inc; CEO Nicole Solano; CEO Dian Maheia and other representatives from MTDR and MoECST.

This donation is the second of its kind under the Donate to Educate campaign. In March of this year, MoECST received 130 devices and accessories valued at \$150,000. All student recipients will be required to demonstrate responsibility, and a certain level of accountability for the devices. As a part of the distribution process, the MoECST will work with schools to establish a community service arrangement, and a tracking app will be utilized to ensure the security of the devices.

The mission of Build Belize Inc. is to empower and improve the lives of Belizeans through education, health, and community service. The organization supports the Belizean diaspora by coordinating efforts and assisting them to make contributions to the overall socio-economic development of Belize.

Build Belize Inc. and the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations encourage Belizeans at home and abroad to continue supporting the “Donate to Educate” Campaign to ensure that all Belizean children receive an exceptional education. Visit the Build Belize Inc. website <http://buildbelizeinc.org/> to learn more about the causes.

For more information, please contact the MTDR Diaspora Relations Unit at 227-2591 or email [diaspora.relations@tourism.gov.bz](mailto:diaspora.relations@tourism.gov.bz)

END



## **Build Belize Inc. secures Donation of Medical Supplies for MOHW and Nurses Association of Belize**

**Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022** – Build Belize Inc., a Florida non-profit organization secured much-needed medical supplies for the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Nurses Association of Belize. These donations were made possible through the support of Homeless Stand.com, The Jewel Foundation, the Straughan Foundation, and Sigler Foundation. The donation included hospital gowns, soap dispensers, wipes, masks, and hand cleaners. The donation is valued at over \$250,000.

In attendance for the handing over event were Mrs. Sandhya Murphy, Ambassador for Diaspora Relations; Hon. Kevin Bernard, Minister of Health and Wellness; Dr. Julio Sabido, CEO in the Ministry of Health and Wellness; Dr. Melissa Diaz Musa, Director of Health Services; Mr. Robert Sigler from Sigler Foundation; Ms. Yasmin Hulse representative for Homeless Stand.com and The Jewel Foundation, along with Ms. Grace Pate, Ms. Sandra Hall and Mr. Raymond Gongora representing Build Belize Inc.

Mr. Michael Straughan of the Straughan Foundation, a Belizean living in Plano, Texas through his family Foundation, collaborated with Sigler Foundation to donate over 150,000 Kn95 masks to the MOHW. The Foundation is focused on building community impact and alliance with family office networks and developing strategies throughout their global village.

Ms. Angelica Sarmiento of Homeless Stand.com and The Jewel Foundation facilitated the donation of hospital gowns, soap dispensers, wipes, masks, and hand cleaners. Homeless Stand.com and The Jewel Foundation are non-profit organizations whose purpose is to serve the underprivileged population around the world.

All Belizeans are encouraged to continue supporting Belize and its people through education, health, and community services. For more information on how to donate visit the Build Belize Inc. website at [Build Belize Inc. | Our Causes](http://BuildBelizeInc.org/OurCauses).

**\*\*END\*\***





# BDF find and destroy 120,000 coca plants



**Brigadier General Azariel Loria,  
Commander of the BDF**

by Charles Gladden

LADYVILLE, Belize District, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022

Belize’s law enforcement agencies have become accustomed to the discovery of marijuana plantations in the country, but any cocaine that has been found in the country has usually been smuggled from overseas. However, the BDF came across what

appears to be a novel enterprise that has been taking shape in the southernmost part of the country—three plantations on which there were a total of 120,000 coca plants, from which cocaine is derived. The discovery was made on Monday, December 19, near the village of Graham Creek in Toledo, just a little north of the Sarstoon River that separates Belize from Guatemala. It was a joint patrol consisting of members of the Belize Defence

Force, the Coast Guard, and the Police Department that came across the secret plantations, and there was also reportedly evidence of preliminary attempts to set up cocaine labs in the area.

According to Brigadier General Azariel Loria, Commander of the Belize Defence Force, there were 10,000 plants ranging from two to three feet in height on one plantation; 20,000 plants of

similar height on another plantation, and 80,000 plants on a third plantation.

“This morning, there was a special operation conducted in that area you mentioned, southwest of Graham Creek. It is a small village close to the Sarstoon, about a mile and a half north of the Sarstoon where we discovered three plantations, coca plantations. But, that was something bound to happen. The Guatemalans they have destroyed some three to five kilometres to the south of that general area where we discovered the plantation,” Loria said.

He added, “We will keep patrolling the area and we caught this on time. They were not mature yet, [they] had been recently planted.”

No one was present at the time of the discovery; however, Brigadier General Loria noted to reporters that an investigation will be carried out to determine who’s responsible for the plantation and to determine whether there was any recent human activity in that area, as the plantation is close to

Graham Creek Village.

“... There has to be some activity in that area. Remember that the farms are not too far away from that same village that I told you about,” he remarked.

He further noted, “The area in question, usually the transnational criminal organizations they look for remote areas, and that is a remote area for them to conduct their illicit activities. The police cannot reach there. We have operational reach, and we can reach up to all the confines the country of Belize and that’s what we are doing. Usually, the Belize Defence Force conducts air flights, air reconnaissance missions and looking around our borders to see if those plantations, those illegal activities are happening.”



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Belizeans in the Diaspora Contribute to Hurricane Lisa Relief Efforts

**Wednesday, December 21, 2022** – Over the last several weeks, Belizeans in the diaspora have contributed significantly to Hurricane Lisa relief efforts, and the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations (MTDR) continues to coordinate additional donations from Belizeans living abroad. This week, hurricane relief supplies were received from several organizations and individuals with the help and coordination of Build Belize Inc. and No Child Hungry, two organizations that have generously organized the consolidation and shipment of much-needed supplies for Belize City residents who are still in need of support after the hurricane. MTDR, in conjunction with the Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs, has facilitated the distribution of these supplies, along with some members of the diaspora.

A total of four containers of supplies, valued at \$1,000,000, have been received from the following organizations: two from Build Belize Inc, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose purpose is to empower and improve the lives of Belizeans through health, education, and service; and two from No Child Hungry, a nonprofit organization working to solve problems of hunger and poverty all over the world. Build Belize Inc secured a substantial donation from Bread of Life Inc, an organization in Houston whose mission has been to serve those in vulnerable communities

“November 2, 2022, hurricane Lisa Whapped Belize! Love, patriotism, and passion made the Belize diaspora put its axle in drive. Moved by the many people who lost their homes as well as those in need of clothing and supplies, Build Belize Inc. garnered the support of the various Belize Associations in the diaspora and many other Belizeans and friends of Belize and collected an abundance of supplies and over \$10,000 US. The funds will be used to purchase building supplies and assist in putting people back into their homes.” commented Raymond Gongora, Vice Chairman of Build Belize Inc.

Relief supplies include clothing, toiletries, hygiene kits, canned goods, household items, toys, food, school supplies, crutches, and wheelchairs. The MTDR Diaspora Relations Unit along with Build Belize Inc and the Ministry of Human Development have been distributing these supplies to residents within Belize City who were hit the hardest by Hurricane Lisa. Along with Sandhya Murphy, Ambassador for Diaspora Relations, some members of the diaspora have decided to visit Belize to assist with the distributions. They are Mr. Raymond Gongora, Ms. Gilda Swasey, Ms. Jameli Bedran, Mr. John Marsden, Ms. Grace Pate, Dr. Earl Gabb, Ms. Stacy Gabb and Mr. Andrew Fraser.

The MTDR, on behalf of the Government of Belize, expresses its sincere thanks to all individuals and organizations in the Belizean diaspora who have come together to assist in these challenging times. These contributions to the most vulnerable communities in Belize City are sincerely appreciated.

END





## Rear Admiral Bennett: Sapodilla Cayes are key to country's...

Continued from Page 3

as a 39,000-acre section of the barrier reef). Admiral Elton Bennett, when speaking to local reporters at the Annual Coast Guard luncheon held on Tuesday, explained, "Sapodilla Cayes is the ideal strategic location for the country of Belize. It's set squarely in the middle of the Gulf of Honduras overlooking Honduras, Guatemala and Belize. It really marks the southern maritime border of our country. Our waters overlap with Honduras, and there's a tripoint with Belize, Honduras and Guatemala – so strategic that the military base must be at that location."

He further emphasized how key the location is, and has been, to efforts to preserve our territorial integrity by stating, "We've always had military presence there, from the time the British were here. In the 70's they

established a base at Hunting Caye. That base was handed over to the Belize Defence Force Maritime Wing, and the Belize Coast Guard took that over in 2005. So, the Government of Belize, through its military instrument, has always maintained their presence at that location to demonstrate ownership. To ensure that we can execute territorial integrity operations from that location. So very geo-strategic important location for us."

Admiral Bennett, in addition to speaking of the efforts of the Coast Guard to monitor the country's maritime borders, made mention of the many successes of his department over the past year:

"There are many other humanitarian operations this year. I think we saved 34 lives at sea this year – major search and rescue year for us. That's in line with the humanitarian aspect, but when it comes to law enforcement,

## \$5 minimum wage set ...

Continued from Page 2

money people have, the more they can spend, the more they can afford to go and buy in their stores. So the private sector, they are going to benefit, and most businesses are already paying more than \$5 per hour than what we are proposing."

"I think of the 100,000 plus workers. About 30,000 are earning less than \$5 per hour. So by doing this, all of this will be in effect a much needed raise," the PM said.

we were very effective as well. I think the impact that we've had on drug trafficking through Belize has certainly decreased. When you look at plane landings in Belize, certainly decreased."

The role the Coast Guard played in relief efforts following Hurricane Lisa as well as in directing the Joint Intelligence Operations Center were also noted by Rear Admiral Bennett.

The release from GoB states that the upcoming increase in the minimum wage is in line with the Government's overall strategy to reduce inequality and allow working-class families to provide a decent life for their families.

The release states, "this increase in wages will result in tangible benefits for both businesses and workers. An increase in income in the hands of consumers will provide a stimulus to the Belizean economy through increased demand and consumption."

The ministry states that they are engaged in reviewing a wage-setting methodology that will be used to determine minimum wage increases in the future.

## Gilroy Usher rails at MIDH...

Continued from Page 30

unfair, but you can't change a man's personality and I'll leave it at that."

"Gilroy was the first person that went publicly to say that the houses were too small and he didn't want any house in the Port Loyola, and so what you want me to do? When you have unreasonable people, I can't do much more for them, but I will continue with all that I have to assist his area," Espat said.

The Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing has indicated that they have terminated the contractor recommended by Usher and will have their personnel carry out the minor touches on Choc's home. They estimate that by December 29 the home will be finished and handed over to Ms. Choc.

## Statement from Professor Sir Hilary Beckles...

Continued from Page 31

to establish their own slave-based empires. As a result, Amsterdam became the financial centre of Europe and the leading supplier globally of capital for colonisation.

The national enrichment from African enslavement was large and unprecedented. The Dutch community, with the slavery wealth derived from human enslavement, and crimes against humanity, became a sustained developed nation. It continues to be an imperial nation holding Caribbean people impoverished in colonial bondage.

Critically, nonetheless, we acknowledge that the honorable Prime Minister described his statement as ending with a 'comma' rather than a 'full stop'. This metaphor is encouraging and offers hope for the future. The CARICOM Reparations Commission is keen to enable the Prime Minister to complete the Dutch sentence. It looks forward to the next step which must be a dialogue with nations and communities that continue to suffer and expect to be treated with the dignity of participation in the dialogue.



# CENTRAL BANK of BELIZE



## CAREER OPPORTUNITY

### SYSTEMS ANALYST

The Central Bank invites qualified individuals to join its Information Technology Department.

The Systems Analyst (SA) is responsible for the development, analysis, implementation, and maintenance of information systems in accordance with the Central Bank's development standards and tools. The SA ensures data confidentiality, integrity, and accuracy. The SA will also implement information systems software packages in support of core organizational functions following established guidelines.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Information Systems Development and Implementation:** Implements information systems according to established development standards and methodology.
- **Information Security:** Responds to security alerts and addresses information security infractions and violations; provides preventative and corrective actions.
- **Information Systems Maintenance:** Implements authorized changes to systems in production.
- **Disaster/Recovery:** Implements, tests, and maintains suitable backup and recovery measures for information systems.
- **Maintenance & Support:** Provides support for information systems and utilities, and level one support for system software, security software, data backup systems, and hardware.
- **Training:** Provides training on application and end-user software.

The applicant should possess the following:

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Minimum qualification of a bachelor's degree in computer science or a related field from a recognized university. Relevant experience will be considered.

**TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE**

- Possesses, applies, and maintains a high degree of knowledge in information technologies to deliver quality work; remains informed of the latest trends and developments in the discipline; knowledge of business and management principles, project management, information auditing, and information security; proficient in diverse software applications and operating systems; demonstrates cross-functional ability and desire for continuous self-improvement.

**COMPETENCIES**

- Managing Change; Fostering Innovation; Analytical Thinking; Diagnostic Information Gathering; Results Orientation; Flexibility/Adaptability; Conceptual Thinking; Attention to Communication.

Submit the following documents by **Friday, 30 December 2022:**

- Central Bank Employment Application Form (available online)
- Curriculum Vitae
- Three references (one must be from previous employer)
- Copies of school transcripts, degrees, and any other personal certificates

Applications should be addressed to:

Manager, Human Resources Department  
Central Bank of Belize  
P O Box 852 or Gabourel Lane  
Belize City, BELIZE

Ref: Systems Analyst – Information Technology Department

Email: [hr@centralbank.org.bz](mailto:hr@centralbank.org.bz) or online at [www.centralbank.org.bz](http://www.centralbank.org.bz)  
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# JR Smith freed of charges for Wabinaha club shooting

Continued from Page 1

evidence to tie him to the shooting. Smith had been on remand at the Belize Central Prison since early August, after being detained and charged along with Brian Andrews, 28; Kenyon Moore, 25; and Sherwin Moore, 35—three Sittee River residents who had stormed into the nightclub early in the morning on July 31 and fired indiscriminately at the persons inside.

The men had been in the club earlier, but after a confrontation with Noah Moro, 23 (who was reportedly with a woman toward whom the men had made advances) had left. Shortly after, they had returned in a vehicle that reportedly was driven by Smith. They then entered the club with firearms — first murdering Moro, and thereafter opening fire on the patrons in the club. Another man, 56-year-old Honduran national, Emilio Garcia, who had reportedly tried to close the doors of the club to block the gunfire, was also

shot. (He reportedly stumbled over a body during that attempt to save lives and was shot by the gunman when he fell onto the floor.) The other shooting victims included two police officers and a 15-year-old. Later on, the men were caught near Silk Grass in a vehicle driven by their attorney, who claimed that the accused men were on their way to surrender themselves to the police.

Smith was initially charged with abetment to commit murder, but the charge was upgraded to murder, and he was charged jointly with the Sittee River trio. However, when the men appeared in court on Tuesday, December 20, Smith was released due to insufficient evidence, thus making him a free man.

Belizeans learned a great deal about Smith, who was initially a mysterious figure known only as “JR Smith” in the days following the shooting. An AMANDAIA article had noted that a banner linked to the Canadian Army was on his Facebook profile and that in his profile photo, the three accused men

could be seen alongside him. It was subsequently confirmed that he is a veteran of the Canadian army who has been retired for over a decade and had moved to Belize just 6 months prior to the shooting. He had reportedly been residing in Sittee River, where the three accused gunmen also reportedly lived.

The retired Master Corporal served during 2 tours in Afghanistan and during Operation Medusa, during which 12 of his comrades were killed and 40 wounded. During an interview early this year which was posted on YouTube, Smith had reportedly spoken about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicidal thoughts and night terrors and struggles with addiction.

Speaking of his time in Afghanistan, he had said, “There wasn’t a second of my existence during that time, that rifle was not laid in the exact spot that I needed to use it along with my load-bearing vest and my kevlar and, you know my body armor, everything laid out in a certain order, and then all of a

sudden you wake up in the middle of the night and the package is not there; you don’t know where it is, cause you don’t have it no more. That was back then, and now I’m in the same pit, now I’m in the same position fast forward 10 years later.”

Smith, who had come to Belize after the closing of Frontline Cabinetry — a company he formed to provide employment and support to other veterans, had stated, when asked if he was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), “I was diagnosed more or less, because I did not have remorse, how I felt when I had to take lives. There’s just a big difference between going and hurting the innocent; in our case we fought Medusa ... it was simple, black and white.”

In the Youtube video dated March 2022, he had acknowledged battling an addiction to cocaine, and had further commented, when asked if he struggled with anger management, “I’ll always get anger. It will always be a part of me, it’s my strongest emotion, it’s easy to resort to anger. It’s intense, you know. That violence can get you in a lot of trouble. You’re out of control of the repercussions, so the anger can be your enemy.”

Nonetheless, there were clear indications after his arrest in connection with the shooting that there would be no way to prove that Smith was willfully an accessory to the murders that took place.

In late September the AMANDALA reported that Smith’s wife, Denise Hepburn, had claimed in an interview with CTV News, a local television network in Canada, that Smith was in the wrong place at the wrong time and tried to help get as many people to safety as he could in his vehicle.

“Everybody was pouring out of this one door of this place, and he said ‘I didn’t stick around to see what was happening’. He said ‘I just wanted to get these people out of there’,” Hepburn stated.

“She further claimed that Smith was in his pickup truck when the sound of gunshots rang out and a few seconds later a young woman and two young men jumped into his truck,” the AMANDAIA article had stated.

Hepburn went on to make claims that Smith was beaten while behind bars.

“He’s been beaten. He’s had a bag, plastic bags, put over his head. He said he almost passed out a couple of times. He had to be taken to the hospital because they kicked him in the stomach so hard, and he just had an emergency appendectomy a couple of weeks before that,” she had said.

The AMANDALA article additionally reported that an online fundraising page had been set up to collect contributions to cover Smith’s legal expenses, and that at that point, at the end of September, the amount raised had exceeded the page’s stated goal of 10,000 CAD.

The attorney whose services was secured with that funding, Richard “Dickie” Bradley, spoke to reporters after the hearing on Tuesday, December 20, and asserted almost exactly what Hepburn had claimed — that Smith had not been an accessory to the crime, but had tried to assist the victims.

“Remember, this happened at night.

## Request for Expression of Interest HYDRAULIC ENGINEER CONSULTANT



**Institution:** Ministry of Economic Development

**Country:** Belize

**Project:** Resilient Rural Belize Programme

**Loan No.:** 2000002301

**Deadline for Submission of Expression of Interest:** January 17, 2023 at 10:00 AM.

### Project Background:

The Government of Belize (GOB), with financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Green Climate Fund, has embarked on a six-year Programme, Resilient Rural Belize (RRB), which aims to minimize the impacts of climatic and economic events on smallholder farmers while supporting sustainable market access for their produce. The Programme will help farmers employ climate resilient agricultural practices and technologies; integrate profitable smallholder participation into the development of select vegetable, fruit, and honey value chains; and support smallholder production capacity through investments in public and private climate resilient infrastructure and in the strengthening of smallholder farmer Producers Organizations and relevant GOB Departments.

### Scope of Service:

Under the direct supervision of the Programme Manager, the Hydraulic Engineer Consultant will be responsible for the Integrated Water Resource Management and all water related investments under the Climate Resilient Rural Infrastructure (CRRIA) component and those irrigation and drainage investments as identified in the Producer Organization business plan under Component 1. The Hydraulic Engineer Consultant is expected to abide by the Programme Implementation Manual (PIM), and regulations and procedures for supervision of design and civil works as per the applicable legislation of Belize. The contract for this consultancy will span 12 months (12 working days per month).

### Academic Qualification:

The Hydraulic Engineer Consultant must possess:

- A minimum of a BSc. in Hydraulic Engineering, Irrigation Engineering or related field.

### Specific Experience:

The Hydraulic Engineer Consultant must possess the following experience:

- Demonstrate experience in at least two (2) projects similar in nature to that being implemented (irrigation, drainage, water catchment, etc.). Experience with projects funded by an international funding agency would be an asset.
- A minimum of one (1) year experience in engineering design, design review, and its related aspects for small-scale irrigation and drainage systems. Specific experience in irrigation works supervision would be an asset.
- At least two years’ experience in implementing irrigation and drainage systems construction or rehabilitation works.

Individual Consultants interested in receiving the **Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)** document for this consultancy should register their interest by sending an e-mail (with subject: **Request for REOI – Hydraulic Engineer Consultant**) to the Procurement Officer at [nvernon.rrb@med.gov.bz](mailto:nvernon.rrb@med.gov.bz) giving full contact details of the Consultant. This will ensure that the Consultants receive updates regarding this consultancy.

The REOI must be delivered to the following address on or before **January 17, 2023, at 10:00 AM** (Local time) via e-mail to the following e-mail address:

Email: [geraldo.flowers@med.gov.bz](mailto:geraldo.flowers@med.gov.bz)

CC: [nvernon.rrb@med.gov.bz](mailto:nvernon.rrb@med.gov.bz)

Resilient Rural Belize Programme

Attn: Geraldo Flowers

Resilient Rural Belize Programme

National Agriculture Showgrounds

Belmopan City, Cayo, Belize



# From the border... to the Boulevard;



# From the Hondo... to Mahogany!

## Sugar and Cream

Corozal Town - Orange Walk Town - Belize City

New Year's Day

2023



## Who will win?

# 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual kren FM CYCLING CLASSIC New Year's Day 2023!!



1991	Michael Lewis (first) Ernest Meighan (second)	(Ladies)	Lori Harkey (first)
1992	Francisco Flores (first) Fitzgerald Joseph (second)		Shalini Zabaneh (second) Carlos Hernandez (first)
1993	Derrick Mahler (first) Orlando Chavarria (second)	(Ladies)	Carlos Manuel Hernandez (second) Shalini Zabaneh (first)
1994	Douglas Lamb (first) Ronald Sutherland (second)		Anthea Sutherland (second) Marco Salas (first)
1995	Robert Mariano (first) Gustavo Carillo (second)	(Ladies)	Juan Rojas (second) Shalini Zabaneh (first)
1996	Nigel Matus (first) Ian Smith (second)		Patricia Chavarria (second) Geovanni Choto (first)
1997	Fred Usher (first) Michael Lewis (second)	(Ladies)	Byron Pope (second) Kaya Cattouse (first)
1998	Francisco Flores (first) James Frampton (second)		Shalini Zabaneh (second) David Henderson (first)
1999	Ernest Meighan (first) Skip Spangenburg (second)	(Ladies)	Gregory Lovell (second) Shalini Zabaneh (first)
2000	Ariel Rosado (first) Quinton Hamilton (second)		Patricia Chavarria (second) Byron Pope (first)
2001	Miguel Perez (first) Shane Vasquez (second)	(Ladies)	Carlos Lopez (second) Shalini Zabaneh (first)
	(Ladies) Karen Rosito (First)		Gabrielle Lovell (second)
2002	Amlitia Knowles (second) Barney Brown (first)		Hector Rangel (first) David Santos (second)
	(Ladies) Ann Marie Bennett (first)	(Ladies)	Alicia Thompson (first) Kaya Cattouse (second)
2003	Douglas Lamb (first) Frank Cannon (second)		Joel Adan Borland (first) Gregory Lovell (second)
	(Ladies) Fiona Humes Gonzalez (First)	(Ladies)	Alicia Thompson (first) Kaya Cattouse (second)
2004	Marlon Castillo (first) Mateo Cruz (second)		Ron Vasquez (first) Brandon Cattouse (second)
	(Ladies) Fiona Humes-Gonzalez (first)	(Ladies)	Alicia Thompson (first) Kaya Cattouse (second)
2005	Claudett Maheia (second) Michael Lewis (first)		Giovanni Lovell (first) John DeLong (second)
	(Ladies) Shane Vasquez (second)	(Ladies)	Alicia Thompson (first) Kaya Cattouse (second)
2006	Marinette Flowers (first) Scottie Weiss (first)		John DeLong (First) Clayton Travis (Second)
	(Ladies) Marlon Castillo (second)	(Ladies)	Kaya Cattouse (First) Nicole Gallego (Second)
2007	Marinette Flowers (second) Shane Vasquez (first)		Oscar Quiroz, Jr. (First) Joslyn Chavarria, Jr. (Second)
	(Ladies) Marlon Castillo (second)	(Ladies)	Alicia Thompson (First) Nicole Gallego (Second)
2008	Gina Lovell (first) Shalini Zabaneh (second)		NO RACE (DUE TO COVID)
	(Ladies) Neo German Camacho Villegas (first)		Brandon Cattouse (first)
2009	Edward Reyes (second) Shalini Zabaneh (first)		Derrick Chavarria (second)
	(Ladies) Shalini Zabaneh (second)	(Ladies)	Gabrielle Gabourel (first) Kaya Cattouse (second)
	Marlon Castillo (first) Gregory Lovell (second)		





# King's College girls and Sadie Vernon Tech boys are National High School Basketball Champions 2022



**King's College – NSSSA 2022 Female Basketball Champions**



**Sadie Vernon Technical – NSSSA 2022 Male Basketball Champions**

BELIZE CITY, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022  
 The Punta Gorda Multi-Sports Complex was the venue last Friday and Saturday, December 16 and 17, for the National Secondary Schools Sports Association (NSSSA) basketball championships, hosted by Toledo Community College and featuring the various regional champions of high school female and male basketball. And when it was all over, King's College girls of Maskall Village and Sadie Vernon Technical boys of Belize City were crowned national high school basketball champions.

**FEMALE CATEGORY**

The regional champions representing their region in the female category were: Northern Region – King's College; Central Region – Wesley College; Western Region – Sacred Heart College; and Southern Region – Delille Academy. Playing in a simple knockout format, the opening female game on Friday saw King's College defeating Wesley College,

23-17; and then it was Sacred Heart College gaining the 24-17 win over Delille Academy. In the 3rd Place game on Saturday, Delille Academy prevailed, 21-15, over Wesley College. And in the championship game, it was King's College coming away with the 20-18 victory over Sacred Heart College.

**MALE CATEGORY**

Regional champions in the male category were: Northern Region – New Hope High School; Central Region – Sadie Vernon Technical; Western Region – Sacred Heart College; and Southern Region – Stann Creek Ecumenical High. In the knockout opener on Friday morning, Sadie Vernon dropped New Hope High, 73-54; and in the afternoon, it was Stann Creek Ecumenical with the 52-41 win over Sacred Heart College. The 3rd Place game on Saturday morning saw Sacred Heart College prevailing, 46-41, over New Hope High.



**Aldaeshuny Dixon – NSSSA 2022 Female MVP**



**Keon Rowland – NSSSA 2022 Male MVP**

And in championship game in the afternoon, Belize City's Sadie Vernon Technical won, 72-60, over Stann Creek Ecumenical.

**AWARDS**

The NSSSA Executive Committee issued 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place team trophies and individual medals for both female and male categories in the

awards ceremony following the last game. Receiving the MVP award for the females was Aldaeshuny Dixon who led the scoring for King's College, while top scorer for Sadie Vernon Tech, Keon Rowland received the MVP award for the males.  
 (Information courtesy William Ysaguirre)

# New Cycling Federation ruling on Belize riders participating with foreign teammates

BELIZE CITY, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022  
 With the Krem New Year's Day Cycling Classic just ten days away, the newly elected executive of the Cycling Federation of Belize (CFB) has made its first major ruling in regards to eligibility for participation in its CFB sanctioned races in Belize. A letter from CFB General Secretary, Alan Auil, dated December 17, spoke directly to its members as follows:  
 Dear CFB Members,  
 For the first time in our history we will begin a New Year in 2023 with local based Belizean registered cyclists - holders of BIZ racing licenses – being contracted members of foreign teams. In that regard we wish to congratulate our own Kaya Cattouse

and Oscar Quiroz who have achieved that honor as members of USA based domestic elite teams. As a result of this new development the CFB have considered, and subsequently approved, new rules that will apply until further notice for Belizean license holders who are a registered member of a foreign team. The new rules are as follows:  
 1. Belizean registered elite cyclists who are members of a foreign team will be permitted to participate in CFB races along with their foreign teammate(s) who qualify under

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**New CFB Executive, (l to r) Warren Coxe (treasurer), Glen Flowers (vice-president), Alicia Thompson (president), Alan Auil (general secretary), Douglas Lamb (member), Justin Williams (member), Ronald Sutherland (member)**





## Lionel Messi finally wins a World Cup — and, after years of heartache, Argentina's love



**Argentina's Lionel Messi, center, holds the winners' trophy as he celebrates with fans after Argentina won the World Cup final soccer match against France at the Lusail Stadium in Lusail, Qatar, Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022. (AP Photo/Francisco Seco)**

**Henry Bushnell, Yahoo!Sports**

LUSAIL, Qatar, Sun. Dec. 18, 2022

Lionel Messi cried when he left Argentina. He was 13 years old and zooming down Ruta Nacional 9, from Rosario to a Buenos Aires airport, with endless pastures whizzing by, when tears welled and fears of a faraway land set in.

Messi was, at the time, just Leo, a 4-foot-8 prodigy with skyscraping dreams. And to chase them, he had to sacrifice. He had to hurriedly wave goodbye to friends and to comfort, to family and to his favorite places on Earth. To jumpstart his rise to the top of global soccer, he had to jet to Barcelona; he had to leave home.

But as he rose over the 22 years that followed, from *Leo* to *Messi*, collecting Ballon d'Ors and \$1 billion as he went, home never left him. He lived a spotlighted yet secluded life in Spain, but seemingly longed for the city that had shaped him. He clung to his Rosarino accent, swallowing consonants everywhere he went. He maintained his childhood house even after his family had deserted it. He married a Rosarina at a Rosario hotel. He talked about how, someday, he wanted to return.

In the meantime, he channeled his longing into soccer. He wanted, more than anything, to make Argentina happy. He wanted, "more than anyone," he said, "to win a title with the national team," to bring the World Cup home.

On Sunday, in a maniacal final for the ages, he won it. He kissed a gleaming trophy and lifted it, with 25 of his closest friends surrounding him and unbridled happiness beaming from his face.

And along the way, en route to his coronation, with genius and joy and grace throughout his last World Cup, he won something else that once seemed just as elusive: his country's undying love.



**Lionel Messi of Argentina celebrates at full time after winning the World Cup Qatar 2022 during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Final match between Argentina and France at Lusail Stadium on December 18, 2022 in Lusail City, Qatar. (Photo by Ian MacNicol/Getty Images)**

### Messi's move to Barcelona

Leo was born with extraordinary talent into an ordinary family, which grew from two to six at a modest home on a one-way street in south Rosario. His dad worked at a steel factory. His mom cleaned houses to help support their lower-middle-class existence. Leo was their third son, and Argentina's umpteenth dreamer. He'd prance around nearby fields, a ball already strung to his magical left foot. His childhood, per most retellings, seemed idyllic—until he stopped growing.

Around age 10, Leo was diagnosed with a hormone deficiency. Doctors prescribed medicine that was cumbersome and expensive. Leo would lug around a small blue cooler and inject the liquid into his own legs every single day. His family's health insurance and his youth club, Newell's Old Boys, covered a chunk of the cost.

But then Argentina, as a nation, plunged toward economic crisis. Newell's walked back its financial commitment. And for the Messis, money got tight. They went in search of another club that would help fund Leo's \$1,000-

a-month treatment. They landed, in the fall of 2000, some 6,500 miles away in Spain.

Barcelona, in a way, rescued the prodigious talent in Leo's stunted body. Executives and agents hashed out an agreement that became the foundation for one of the most fruitful club-player relationships in soccer history. Messi would, over two decades, lead his adoptive club to 34 trophies and claim just about every individual accolade.

But in those early months, Leo's first outside Argentina, he'd hide in his bedroom and weep. He was so shy, barely even uttering words to teammates, that they began calling him "el mudo," *the mute one*. He wowed them in training, but a regulatory conflict restricted him from playing for Barca's Juvenil A team, so he struggled. As he and his father, Jorge, hopped from hotels to a flat—and as his mother and siblings, who initially accompanied them, returned to Argentina—he'd often cry himself to sleep.

He missed them, and his cousins, and the rhythms of life back in Rosario, the only community he'd ever known. He missed the ragged fields where he'd fallen for the game and developed his *fútbol* addiction. He missed Argentine food and dialects, and most of all the people who nurtured him as one of them. He missed home.

### A foreigner at home

Over time, he settled in Barcelona. He trained on pristine fields and learned a more methodical version of the game. And to most of Rosario, for a few years in a pre-digital age, he disappeared.

Even in Argentine soccer, he became something of an enigma. Hugo Tocalli, a youth national team coach, learned of Messi via a now-fabled video tape. There, on a fuzzy screen, was little Leo in an oversized Barca kit, tying Spanish teens twice his size into knots. The tape was mind-boggling. But Messi almost seemed mythical. He was an outsider, almost a foreigner to a U-17 team comprising kids from exclusively Argentine clubs. So Tocalli didn't take him to the 2003 U-17 World Championship—where, ironically, Tocalli's Argentina lost to Spain.

Spanish soccer, meanwhile, was hyper-aware of Messi, and had begun recruiting him. With Spanish citizenship, which he'd obtain in 2005 after five years of residence, he could have played for *La Roja*.

Messi, though, wanted to play alongside his idols. He held out for Argentina call-ups, which soon came.

What he never could've imagined was that, despite his longing and his extraterrestrial talent, and despite the embrace of his teammates, many of his countrymen would come to see him as something of a foreigner as well.

They acquainted with him solely

through TV screens as he burst into the Barca spotlight. They marveled at a still-diminutive kid who played, in the words of teammates, like "an alien." But when they heard the comparisons to Diego Maradona, their World Cup-winning God, they demurred. Maradona was excruciatingly Argentine and human, a *pibe* who'd risen from poverty to greatness, with flaws and brash charm. Messi, on the other hand, seemed unknowable. He played exquisitely but dispassionately, without that customary Argentine fire. He seemed ... Spanish.

They celebrated and welcomed him as he justified the Maradona comparisons on La Liga fields and Champions League stages across Europe. They marveled as he scored Maradona-esque goals and won a virtually undisputed Ballon d'Or at age 22, his first of seven. But they never quite identified with him. So they doubted him. As he failed to replicate his Barcelona brilliance with the Argentina national team, they questioned him. *Did he really care for his country? Why didn't he sing the anthem? Why did he always look so indifferent, so unenthused?*

A Copa America on home soil in 2011 brought the first tipping point. Amid a two-year goal drought in competitive games for Argentina, after a couple dire group-stage draws, pundits and zealous *hinchas* turned on Messi. They whistled and booed him. They chanted "Diego." They cursed and called on him to quit.

The vitriol stung Messi and exacerbated pressure. He'd vomit before and even during games, a habit that many attributed to nerves and anxiety. Contrary to popular opinion, he yearned to satisfy his nation's insatiable appetite for soccer success. He was desperate. "Argentina is my country, my family, my way of expressing myself," he said in 2014. "I would change all my records to make the people in my country happy."

But he couldn't. Inexplicably, he just couldn't. He lost a World Cup final and two Copa America finals in three consecutive years, 2014-16. After the third, a penalty-shootout loss to Chile, he crumbled in despair. "It's the worst I've ever seen him," his teammate and *gran amigo* Sergio Agüero said that night in New Jersey. And in a distraught locker room, Messi gave up. "I tried so hard to be [a] champion with Argentina, but it didn't happen, I couldn't do it," he told reporters. So he did quit. "It hurts me more than anyone," he said, "but it's evident that this is not for me."

Then, for two months, he stewed on the decision.

"I seriously thought of leaving," he'd eventually say.

"But I love this country and this shirt too much," he continued. It had turned





## New Cycling Federation ruling on Belize riders participating...

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vetting rules;

2. In the case of female elite riders, such teams of combined nationalities may not exceed 2 members, including the Belizean registered rider; and

3. In the case of male elite riders, such teams of combined nationalities may not exceed 3 members, including

the Belizean registered rider(s).

Please take note that all other rules governing foreign rider participation in CFB races remain in full effect (no foreign UCI Pro or Continental riders are permitted).

Alan Auil  
General Secretary  
for Cycling Federation of Belize

## Lionel Messi finally wins a World Cup...

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on him, but he couldn't possibly turn on his people. "Hopefully," he said in a statement announcing his return, "we can give them something to cheer about soon."



Players of Argentina lift in the air their captain Lionel Messi after winning the Copa America in 2021. (Photo by MB Media/Getty Images)

### Leo is liberated

Something funny happened in those days and weeks after Messi's impulsive retirement. Argentina, which had essentially distanced itself from him—for years, there were very few murals or tributes or posters of Messi even in Rosario, his birthplace—realized that it needed him, and began reciprocating his love.

"Lionel Messi is the greatest thing we have in Argentina and we must take care of him," President Mauricio Macri preached to the people.

"No te vayas, Leo," fans pleaded. *Don't go.*

Skepticism lingered, though. After a calamitous 2018 World Cup, Messi again considered walking away. By 2019 and 2021, vitriol had mellowed into resignation. Hate had become acceptance, almost sorrow. Argentines grew to understand that "his aim is to bring the Cup home," as Messi's mother, Celia Cuccittini, said in 2018. "It's one of his biggest desires. We see him suffer and cry at times. He is the first who wants to bring the Cup with him."

They grew to understand that their pain, their exasperation, their *lagrimas*—tears—were also his.

And then, in 2021, he triggered a new type of tears. Argentina beat Brazil in the Copa America final, for its first major

trophy since 1993. Messi fell to his knees, then levitated into the air, hoisted by his indebted teammates, as an Argentine commentator sermonized: "Twenty-eight years later! Thank you God! Thank you Diego! Thank you MESSI!"

That triumph liberated Messi. It also rekindled Argentine dreams. It stimulated a potent cocktail of hope and pride that accompanied the team to Qatar and exploded back home. You could see it, hear it, feel it in the arms that pulsed and the songs that rang. You could feel it in the eruptions on rooftops and even at airports; in

the streets that emptied as the country ground to a halt for each World Cup game, then filled with glee after each win.

They filled with an intense desire that words couldn't really explain, that led sane humans to commandeer tanks and climb streetlights; to summit statues and gallop across the tops of buses, all to celebrate a semifinal, dreams possibly coming true. It led grandmas into dance circles and priests onto the shoulders of strangers, with replica World Cup trophies in their hands.

It's the same desire that once fueled the fury and aggravated the pressure that overwhelmed Messi. But here, throughout a cathartic month, it propelled him, and he them. Here, a country and its long-lost son sang and endeavored and believed as one. The people roared. He scored. And they chorused in unison as they went: "*Muchaaachooooossss*, now we're excited again."

They sang and sang, relentlessly on Sunday, throughout the greatest final ever played, and when it ended, they climbed atop whatever they could, into the sky. Back home, from Buenos Aires to the tiniest of Argentine villages, as Messi rode on the shoulders of teammates into lore, revelers spilled into streets, euphoric.

There were millions of them who, over the past four weeks,

## Alicia Thompson new Cycling Federation president; elections hosted by Belize Olympic Association

BELIZE CITY, Wed. Dec. 21, 2022

It was originally scheduled for November 26, but due to a procedural oversight the AGM and elections for the Cycling Federation of Belize (CFB), where two slates were contesting positions on the executive, was postponed until a couple weeks later on December 10.

Accompanying the previous text informing of the AGM and elections, were flyers of the two contesting slates as follows:

The flyer for one slate, titled "Developing Cycling through Unity", featured candidates, for President – Alicia Thompson, for Vice-President – Glen Flowers, for General Secretary – Alan Auil, for Treasurer – Warren Coye, and for Committee Members – Douglas Lamb, Justin Williams and Ronald Sutherland.

The other flyer declared "Pedal for Change 2022-2026", and listed their candidates, for President - Tariq Cano, for Vice-President - Giovanni Lovell, for Secretary – Karen Vernon, for Treasurer – Troy Gabb, and for Executive Members - Kaya Cattouse, Zahir Figueroa and Yadira Argueta.

A release on the Facebook page of the Belize Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (BOCGA) dated December 11, revealed that the Alicia Thompson-led slate was successful in their election bid. Notably among the familiar big cycling names on her executive is two-time Cross Country



Champion, Justin Williams. The first female president of the CFB, Alicia Thompson, herself a 3-time Women Cross Country Champion, succeeds Orson Butler who served as president from 2018.

Below is the BOCGA release, which also appears on the CFB Facebook page:

December 11 at 10:08 AM

On Saturday, December 10th the BOCGA hosted the elections for the Executive Committee of the Cycling Federation of Belize. Congratulations to: President - Alicia Thompson; V-President - Glenford Flowers; General Secretary - Alan Auil; Treasurer - Warren Coye; Committee Members - Ronald Sutherland, Douglas Lamb, Justin Williams.

This team is committed to: The expansion of female participation; Youth development programs; Coaching seminars; Active racing season; Development of National Team; Unite cycling bodies; Create opportunities for more international exposure.

Congratulations from the Amandala Sports desk, and best wishes to all in the Cycling Family!

## JR Smith freed of charges...

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Everything happened so quickly. There is nobody to say anything. He had been trying to assist and tell people [to] jump into my vehicle, and he drove to the police station in Hopkins, [but] there was nobody there," said Bradley to 7News.

When Smith exited the courtroom, his wife and father were outside, and after jubilantly embracing them, he told reporters, "I have maintained my innocence since the first day. I should never have been put in prison, to begin with, and I'm sorry that people got hurt that night. I had nothing to do with it, and I'm a free man now and I'm [going to] go live free."

"... I'm innocent and I should never

have been put in prison in the beginning. It feels like it should, I feel like a free man with my wife and my dad here. You know, they've been pushing to make it happen, these guys made it happen. I couldn't have done it without them. These guys made it happen. Mr. Bradley and the legal system made it happen. It feels great and I want to go and celebrate," he added.

However, when local reporters asked Smith to speak of the alibi he might have presented to the court to prove his innocence, he avoided the question.

While Smith has been freed, however, Brian Andrews, Kenyon Moore, and Sherwin Moore are still facing charges for double murder.

felt something, "something nobody can take from you," as Sofia Martínez, an Argentine television reporter, told Messi after his semifinal masterpiece. She paused her interview to deliver a message on behalf of the millions, one that struck Messi and swept sincere emotion across his face.

"You've resonated with every single Argentine," Martínez told him, even before he booked the World Cup

trophy's trip home. "Seriously. There's no kid who doesn't have your team [shirt], no matter if it's an original or fake one. Truly, you have made a mark on everyone's life. And that, for me, is bigger than any World Cup. No one can take that from you. And this is my gratitude for the great happiness you bring to so many people. I seriously hope you take these words into your heart."



# What is Christmas made of?

All The Things That Matter Most!



May all your wishes come true this holiday season.

Merry Christmas  
from Sagicor

