

Consul General Leads Jamaican Delegation, Groton, New London Waterfront Districts



Front Row: L-R, Corey Whyte Vice Consul, NY Consulate, LT Shaun Douglas, Port Operations Officer, USN, Hon. NY Consul General Alsion Wilson, OD, Senator Delroy Williams, Mayor of Kingston, Robert Hill, CEO, Kingston, Ayanti Grant, Esq., Dist. Director, Congressman Joe Courtney Office, Aundre Bumgarner, Outreach Coordinator, CT State Treasurer's Office, Back Row: Andrew Lawrence, Hartford, Senator Cathy Osten, D-Sprague, Xavier Chevannes, Chief Civil Engineer, Kingston, John Burt, Groton Town Manager, Keith Hedrick, Mayor City of Groton. Naval Submarine Base New London, Groton, Connecticut.

By Mark D. Milward

In response to efforts from Groton and New London, Connecticut municipalities to establish a "sister city" relationship with Kingston, Jamaica, Consul General Hon. Alsion Wilson, led a Jamaican delegation to the area for the purpose of exploring that possibility.

Sister cities or twin towns are a form of legal or social agreement between cities, counties, provinces, regions, states, and even countries in geographically and politically distinct areas to promote cultural and commercial ties.

The delegation representing Jamaica included the Mayor of Kingston, Delroy Williams and Robert Hill, CEO of Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation. Hill termed the Groton and New London and Jamaica relationship "an absolute gem!"

Representatives from Groton and New London included New London Mayor Michael Passero; Groton Town Manager, John Burt; City of Groton Mayor Keith Heidrick; and Groton Town Mayor Patrice Granatosky. Representing the U.S. Rep. Joe

Courtney's office was Ayanti Grant, Esq.; Aundre Bumgardner, who is also a Groton Town councilor and aide to State Treasurer Shawn Wooden, completed the Groton and New London team. Representatives of Diaspora organizations were the West Indian Social Club of Hartford, Inc., and the National Association of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations (NAJA-SO).

To all intents and purposes, the attraction for the Groton and New London areas is due to Kingston, Jamaica's position as a leading transshipment point for maritime traffic and its status as a major shipping hub and growing emergence as a logistics centered economy. Jamaica's Prime Minister, Hon. Andrew P. Holness had long ago designated the Jamaica Logistics Hub as the country's number one investment project and a central feature of economic growth and wealth creation for the nation.

Comparatively, the regions—Groton, New London and Kingston—are port cities seeking expansion in various sectors of their operations. And with the visit of the Jamaican delegation, local officials

from Groton and New London were able to engage and tour the delegation through port locations and harbor at the State Pier facility.

Kingston, Jamaica possesses the 7th largest harbor in the world and is currently expanding its port operations as a major transship-

ment point for the global distribution of goods and services worldwide. In addition, Kingston has also sought to

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Upsurge In Farm Stands



By Leon Fraser

The promotion of prepared, packaged fruits and vegetables have nurtured us to a finite threshold that we see a product at

a farm stand and drive by en-route to a box building to purchase a similar product, complete with the environmental daggers of plastic and Styrofoam. The irony of this

aspect of the promotion is called MARKET-ING.

In this current atmosphere of conservation, renewable, degrad-

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*Happy Holidays
From The Staff of
The West Indian American!*



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Give Love, Time
For The Holiday
Season



Thomas Aldridge

As the Christmas holiday season kicks into high gear, I am amazed at how many people are running frantically trying to find gifts for friends and loved ones. While this is a humane and noble gesture, some people still wonder if the persons will like the gifts they receive; if they are spending enough, and most of all, they question as to whether or not they can afford the kind of gifts others are expecting.

However, in this mixture one may ask and ponder if they are giving or spending much appreciated time with their loved ones?

Our time is the most precious and limited commodity we possess. Needless to say, our time is what others often require mostly from us; not the gifts we give. Although many persons will appreciate a tangible gift, most will be more appreciative of your time.

Over the years, I have come to realize that time spent can be without boundaries; that is, you do not have to be together in the same location during the season to share your time. Nowadays, we

Consul General Encourages Investing In Jamaica

By Paulette Blythe

Consul General for Jamaica to New York, Alston Roach-Wilson, visited Hartford, Connecticut on November 5, 2019 for a meet-and-greet occasion.

The Jamaica Progressive League (JPL) located at 1120 Albany Avenue, Hartford, CT hosted the visit. Included in Roach-Wilson’s delegation were Delroy Williams, mayor of Kingston and St. Andrew, Jamaica; Robert Hill, town clerk; and Shane Anderson, businessman.

Before Roach-Wilson’s speech, Caswell Sewell, president of JPL, Hartford Chapter presented her with the general laws of the JPL.

Roach-Wilson’s long record of philanthropic activities on behalf of Jamaica is well known, and she is no stranger to many in the Greater Hartford area and other Jamaican and Caribbean communities. She has lived and worked in New York for over 30 years.

Currently, she is Jamaica’s eleventh consul general to New York; she was appointed in July 2019.

Under her jurisdiction, her responsibilities for Jamaica’s nationals and interests for 33 years are not only for the United States but also includes Bermuda and Puerto Rico.

During her speech, Roach-Wilson cited some economic indicators that are trending in the right direction, making Jamaica “ripe” for business. She is passionate about having Jamaicans in the Diaspora invest in their country of birth.

In keeping with Jamaica’s vision to be the place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business, Roach-Wilson charged Suzette DeBeatham-Brown, mayor of Bloomfield, CT to work with her local Jamaicans to forge partnerships that cross political boundaries.

have so many media choices at our disposal that enhance our space and time connections.

I’d like to use myself as an example. My family and friends are all over the globe, and although I might spend the holiday in one place, there is no reason why I cannot spend some quality time with others in various parts of the world. Be reminded that many of our loved ones would appreciate hearing our voices at Christmas, rather than receiving a card or a box of goodies. Let me hasten to qualify this by say-



From left: Consul General A. Roach-Wilson; Caswell Sewell, president of JPL-Hartford; Delroy Williams, mayor of Kingston and St. Andres.

The thrust of Roach-Wilson’s presentation focused on education and investment. Accordingly, these are the backbones of her office, seeking to form alliances at home and overseas. Doing so she cited some notable facts about Jamaica including the following : Jamaica is ranked 14th in the top 25 tourist destination, and is ranked first within the Caribbean for best tourist destination; there are lucrative real estate and rental opportunities for businesses at this time.

Also, the Urban Development Cooperation (UDC) has values over \$3.5 million in assets; the Jamaica Stock Exchange is now the world’s best performing stock exchange, and the Global Stock Exchange Index ranks Jamaica consistently in the top three performing markets worldwide.

According to Mayor Delroy Williams and Robert Hill, both agree that Jamaicans need to aggressively invest at this time, especially now that Kingston is repositioning itself to pursue tourism within the city.

Kingston gives a more holistic experience to visitors, Williams and Hill acknowledge. There were major infrastructure improvements to accommodate visitors.

To illustrate Williams and Hill alluded to the five major hotels

being built; housing developments are increasing due to spacing issues as city development is growing. Urban planning is an important aspect. And the Creative Industry, which takes into account entertainment, event promotions, and general youth employment, require infrastructure, which the government is currently putting in place.

In regard to Port Royal, the first cruise ship will be arriving there in 2020. Consequently, real time cameras for security, street vending, and immigration services will be put in place.

Under the umbrella of a Major “Re-facing of Kingston,” the following historical icons will be redesigned: Ward Theater, Liberty Hall, and Coke Methodist Church. The parade areas will all be renovated; Chase funds and other investment funds will be used to sustain these projects.

Concerning Ward Theater, the aim is to restore it as a symbol of culture. To make Kingston the “Pearl of the Antilles” and the “Light of the Caribbean,” the vision is to grow a generation of individuals to help solve urban challenges across the Caribbean.

To accomplish this, purposeful and concerted efforts are geared towards educating youth. Members of the business industries are visiting schools, speaking about the roles of the next generation in

Many of us like to give, but have we ever stopped to think of what we are doing, or does it happen automatically? Even so you have to remember that true giving comes from the same place inside of you, where dwells your deepest happiness. When you give a gift it is enjoyed twice, first by you the giver, and then by the person who receives it. So it should not matter if the person you reach out to never gives you a gift in return. This should not be an exchange, but a gift, an act of love.

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sustaining growth and development.

For Delroy Williams, the emphasis is a forging of relationships between cities and towns, and producing crucial knowledge to the success of these ventures. “We will understand the needs to process in creating bonds of friendship and the required specialized knowledge in our Island,” Williams said.

Both Williams and Hill are key advisors to the government and they are facilitating local and foreign investments. Williams’ leadership, influence, and initiatives serve as a role model for countries throughout the region. According to him, all indicators are positive and Jamaican investments are poised for take-off and JAMPRO is going to be one of the drivers for the launching.

Williams said the goal of the National Housing Trust’s (NHT) is to produce 23,000 housing units by 2020.

The urban centers in Montego Bay are seeking investors. Restructuring of Goodyear Center is also another investment goal. Outsourcing sectors such as the Jamaica Public Service (JPS) stock exchange is also a lucrative investment at this time.

And what of the Cannabis industry? This is another source for investors with the qualifying requirement of at least one of the investors being a Jamaican owning 51% of the share in the company.

Other proposals were mentioned, such as the STEP program becoming a partnership between University of Connecticut and the University of the West Indies; plans are in progress for flights from Bradley International Airport in Hartford, CT to Jamaica; Recycle Waste Management Online is another prospect; Town Hall meetings; and a passport drive is being discussed. Having Jamaican passport allows holders of the passport to visit 77 countries without a visa.

In keeping with the vision of Jamaica 2030, Consul General Roach-Wilson encourages all Jamaicans to stay connected and to invest in the development of the island.

A gift does not have to be wrapped or tied with a ribbon. It can be found in a different form like small personal acts of kindness, since everybody has something of value for another person.

It could be a smile, a word of advice, a word of reassurance, a compliment, some appreciation or a shoulder to lean on. All this spells “love”; the kind of love that Bob Marley called “One Love.” If you treat everyone you meet humanely, then you are sending

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We Need A Compass To Our Decisions In 2020

My column in December 2018 dealt with what had begun to reemerge—or so I thought—as a national conversation on the issue of reparations. I highlighted the work of U.S. Representative John Conyers who year after year presented a bill to establish a commission to study reparations proposals for African Americans. It received little traction.

Mr. Connors passed away recently. The advocates of Black Lives Matter established after the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri did not specifically address the issue of reparations as part of an overall justice reform strategy but has succeeded, along with support from diverse quarters, in what appears to be legislation now going through Congress regarding justice reform.

It's the beginning of an examination of the disproportionate application of judicial sentences impacting African-Americans and the men in these communities.

This might prove to be the only Congressional bright spot during this year because of its bipartisan support. Our nation's collective psyche, I am confident, does not believe that the country's chasm-like divisions will evaporate over the next eleven months ahead of us or even ever.

What comes to mind when we examine the highs and lows of 2019? Well, this much is certain if there is one figure that is central to the framing of our national mood that would be President Donald Trump.

What we have seen that many attribute to the Trump effect: his use of language, tone and articulation has given shelter resulting in an increase in the assertiveness of white right-wing extremist elements agitating for legitimacy as a political force.

Many believe that because of the support Trump received from essentially what's described as the Trump political base, they have been provided implicit cover.

We have witnessed, however, the assertiveness of some aspects of our justice system that has held to account such people as Jeffrey Epstein and movie mogul Harvey Weinstein with persuasion from a focused and committed *MeToo Movement*. Trump's role in matters such as trade tariffs has been described as not sufficiently thought through.

It has stymied the plans farmers usually make regarding the management, operations, and success of their farms. His continued interference in matters before judicial forums as well as matters outside of the United States in foreign countries leave many perplexed.

Some attribute the rise of bullying incidents nationally, with many producing tragic results, to the tone he projects; his behavior or conduct; his slipperiness with the truth, may also be having a negative impact on school-aged children.

The long-term effect of bullying among school-age children will likely contribute in years to come to increased incivility and intolerance. Trump's inability or unwillingness to present a cohesive set of principles to guide his administration has produced chaos, consternation and even alarm among all the nation's allies and partners. Our status globally has



Jim Daniels

been ridiculed.

As the incidence of mass shootings continues to soar, he vacillates on whether to support restricting certain kinds of firearms. This gave rise, admirably, to a youth movement to bring about change in the areas of background checks and banning of assault rifles. The NRA has been distracted in their opposition to any changes because of internal struggles for control of the organization.

The president has maligned and defamed the refugees from Central America and has sought to mobilize support for his border wall as well as housing in deplorable conditions the migrants who have entered the country. But there is no defensible policy guiding the decisions that the administration makes.

This very expansive issue has attracted the attention of the country as we all have had opportunities to see for ourselves the absence of a cohesive strategy to deal with the issue of immigration.

Slowly, certain segments among white evangelicals in the country have begun to criticize their peers who had turned a blind eye to the issues of injustice and racism. They remain obsessed with abortions, judges appointed by the Republican-controlled Senate, and the increased influence of the gay community.

In short, they have traded their biblical principles in contravention of what they have stood for, or ought to stand for, believing that they can effect cultural change without the message of the Gospel.

There is no denying that Trump has taken the economic progress begun under President Obama and improved the lives of many.

But to concede that this progress has produced generalized improvements to the lives of the nation as whole would be to hide from established facts. Something Trump cannot comprehend. It is the acceptance of facts that should guide our decisions in the pivotal year 2020.

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become a "destination city" for tourism. It is a part of the United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) network.

Created in 2004, UNESCO Creative Cities Network's (UCCN) goal is to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.

The 180 cities that currently make up this network work together towards a common objective: placing creativity and cultural industries at the heart of their development plans at the local level and cooperating actively at the international level.

According to Wilson, "a potential sister city relationship could include such aspects as student exchange programs between universities in Kingston and Connecticut, shipment of goods between Kingston and southeastern Connecticut, and opportunities for live cultural music, such as free reggae concerts."

The tour of the Groton and New London area included a visit to ThayerMahan, a world leader in maritime surveillance equipment.

The company designs and manufactures sonar equipment for underwater surveillance, which is a critical requirement in maritime operations for monitoring and surveying underwater activity.

The delegation also ventured out to the U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London, where they had an opportunity to board a tugboat that is used to pull the USS Toledo Submarine out of its maintenance location for sea deployment.

The Naval Submarine Base New London is the repair and maintenance Hub for 18 Nuclear Attack Submarines representing the entire North America Atlantic Submarine Fleet.

The Jamaican delegation was able to view submarines at their maintenance/repair locations and observe the staging of Dry Dock equipment maintenance operations.

Kingston's current expansion plans for the Jamaica Logistics Hub is to become the

Delegation

4th node in the global supply chain of goods and services behind Singapore, Rotterdam, and Dubai

Opportunities such as what is being explored with Groton and New London will certainly bolster competitive position globally, while building an alliance in a region where significant educational and cultural exchanges for both sides can be obtained in addition to the maritime operational advantages.

Although it was not a part of the official tour or a significant part of the discussion, Groton and New London officials were informally encouraged to begin looking at the opportunities in the Jamaica Stock Exchange at the reception.

Last month the Jamaica Stock Exchange toured the northeast of the United States and the New York Stock Exchange was

identified as the best performing Stock Exchange in the world.

Wilson promised a tour of the Jamaica Stock Exchange team to Connecticut and other New England states in the near term. Awareness and participation will be a huge and unexpected surprise for Groton and New London stock market investors.

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Give Love

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love his or her way. This love weighs much more than gold. Remember, love is of God.

At an early age I learned from my parents, that generosity and kindness are not limited to material possessions, but rather by the purpose of the heart. Although we did not have much financially, and Christmas toys had to be recycled, as children we were very happy with what we had most—our family and a whole lot of love.

My parents believed that every single act of love and kindness would multiply and come back many times over, and that the more you give, the better you would feel. We were also taught that if we give without any expectation of getting something back, the returns would be limitless. Truly giving from the heart is an action that will leave you overjoyed.

The act of giving is often simpler than you might think. It is true that if you want to experience joy, you should give joy to others; if you want to feel loved, you have to give love; and if you want to feel wanted and appreciated, then you must learn to show these virtues to others.

There are many suggestions for Christmas gifts, and I am sure you have an idea of what you are planning to give. However, I am going to join Oren Arnold with some suggestions that pay dividends:

- To your enemies, give forgiveness.
- To your opponents, give tolerance.
- To your friends, give your heart.
- To your customers, give service.
- To all, give charity.
- To every child, be a good example.
- To yourself, give respect.

Please remember that all of the above are given with *love* and with devoting your *time*. **HAPPY HOLIDAYS EVERYONE!**

(For comments or questions, please contact me at: thomasaldrige@yahoo.com).

A Christmas Message

Hearing Again The Angel’s Voice Of Peace

By Edgar Johnson

It is that time of the year again. It’s the Christmas season

and many Judeo-Christian believers are still in the wonder of it all—how the Christmas season with its festivi-

Farm Stands

Continued from Page 1

able and re-usable by-products of a rotational crop rotation, free from all the pesticides that are known agents of carcinogens. The lip service that is given is evident in the absence of throngs at the monthly farmer’s market that’s readily usually available at particular locations in Hartford. The last one for the year and season was held at the corner of Woodland Street and Albany Avenue, adjacent to the post office.

The ability and opportunity to have available and to purchase freshly grown items is a much-talked about process from farm-to-table, but our ancestral connection to the soil, in this hemisphere, has somehow pushed us to what is promoted in the commercials.

At LaSalle Road in West Hartford, and Clemens’ Place in Hartford, the appreciation for the freshly grown is obvious, and there is a marked difference in the support.

A farmer’s market in a city has its challenges, but there are benefits that warrant maintaining the presence of a farm stand.

An upsurge in the awareness of farm-to-table products, and by extension more feet walking to the various locations in search of the freshly grown, but it is still a process. With limited resources and unlimited square footage/miles to cover, the need is immense.

There is, however, a ray of light, if focused, it could become amplified to radiate with precision and with many advantages. As Caribbean people, we have supplanted the labor force in this and other states. This has led to a large population center developing in and around the capital city and adjoining towns.

These areas all have restaurants that cater to these folks. The food grown by these local farmers of Caribbean descent should have been a win-win situation.

Maybe the in-charge person could target the food houses, secure a commitment and have the farmer plant more of a particular type of provision that goes to these locations, and would reduce anxiety of some of the managers of these businesses, and in all this, it becomes a true farm-to-table process.

ties sneak upon us so early this year from Black Friday and Cyber Monday leading the way, and so are the overwhelming commercialization of the season. With its merry-making activities and entertainment that once had a deep religious thrust about “Baby Jesus,” “Away in a Manger,” affirming the biblical story of the birth of the Messiah. “Joy to the World, The Lord is Come . . . He Rules the World with Truth and Grace.”

So to many the season once brings renewed hope, joy and peace appears to be a world drifting toward a grand crescendo, a reminder that the coming of the Messiah is the only way out for all humanity.

And in telling the story of the brilliance of God’s glory to the shepherds who were living out in the field and guarding their flock by night, according to Luke, “the angel said to them, “do not be afraid for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2: 10f).

Undoubtedly the angel’s announcement and the bearer of good news was like fresh water to the shepherds on a hot day—it was really good news to weary pilgrims.” Jesus came as the Savior of the world—He is the Emmanuel, “the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, and Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Peace is here closely related to salvation and is made

available to everyone who accepts Jesus, the Son of God. He brings good news to depressed humanity, to Jews; Gentiles have become the people of God; men and women, boys and girls alike.

He uplifts the human dignity of all people. He announces good news of joy for all people. Yes, the economically and socially deprived, the oppressed and the lonely—the blind see and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the Gospel preached to the poor.

Clearly, the angel’s announcement of the good news at Jesus’ birth was transformational then and even today. We ought not to allow the modern commercialization and the season’s festivities to crowd out the significance of Jesus’ birth—good news for all nations.

We know that there is no Scripture to a birth on December 25. It is important to look beyond the tradition behind the birth date, and the dichotomy placed between the sacred and the secular in medieval theology. This is important as we examine the historical context that led to a date of December 25, claiming it to be the date when Jesus was born.

And don’t forget to take into consideration certain principle of interpretation when examining scripture. In interpreting Scripture, Jesus also used certain thought pattern of the time to extrapolate critical lessons for his hearers. So although no one knows the specific date when he was born, we affirm his birth.

This is good news for all nations—“was that a might day when Jesus Christ was born? Angels came from heaven when Jesus was born, giving glory to the King . . . He brings joy, hope, happiness, and salvation to all, and all in all, ultimate unity.

May this experience become our experience as we celebrate the season’s festivities.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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Two Receive Pentecostal Apostolic Church’s Scholarship



Panelists at PTA Church’s Fourth Annual Scholars’ Banquet and Scholarship Presentation

HARTFORD, CT: The Pentecostal Tabernacle Apostolic (PTA) Church’s fourth annual scholars’ banquet and scholarship presentation was held on Saturday, November 4, at the Casa Mia Hawthorne 2421, Berlin Turnpike.

The theme for the program was “Achieving with a Spirit of Excellence.” Shaunte

Hewitt, chairperson of the Scholarship Committee, and head of the youth department that organized the program, in her welcome stressed the importance of excellence in all our pursuits and said that the spirit of excellence is at the heart of what informs the youth department.

Panelists for the occasion were Dr. Angela Geddes, a pediatrician, Dr. Anthea Hanna, a cardiologist, Ms. Keyon Gardner, a project development specialist, and Michael Hanna, a specialist in professional development.

Each panelist stressed the importance of utilizing the resources necessary in preparing for a career path and the necessity of spiritual grounding. “You have to make time to study the word,” said Geddes, a sentiment that was echoed by all the panelists.

Hanna addressed the importance of time management and having a balance between faith and career and said establishing priorities is critical in managing time, distinguishing between urgent and important is a key factor in “time management matrix,” he said. Furthermore, he pointed out that conviction is necessary for a consis-

tent and steady approach: “You have to have convictions if you want the Lord to keep you,” she said, while Ms. Gardner noted that her background of having an early relationship with God kept her grounded.

In his remarks, Pastor of PTA Bishop Dr. Lloyd Russell, said we should give thanks to God for all that he has done. “It is good that our young people can see success both naturally and spiritually. When God becomes number one anything is possible,” he said.

The two recipients of the scholarships were Celeste Davis, who received the Dr. Lloyd E Russell award for incoming freshman, and Kevonice Morgan for the Lisd Russell award for continuing education.

Moderator for the panel discussion was Charlene Russell-Tucker, who also stressed excellence and the importance of faith.

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Caribbean Tidbits

Playing field renovated at Duhaney Park Primary School
ST. ANDREW, Jamaica: Students and staff of Duhaney Park Primary School in St Andrew were in an ecstatic mood on December 5th, following the official handover of a newly-renovated playing field at the institution. The area was once a dust bowl, causing a major nuisance for students and staff, many of whom complained of respiratory problems. Guardian Group Foundation, National Commercial Bank (NCB) and General Paving Company Limited came together to fund the \$2.1-million renovation project, creating a green space where students can participate in various sports without the dust nuisance. The work included installation of an underground automatic irrigation water system, excavation, installation of topsoil, and planting of grass. The project was started in November 2018 and was completed in August after six months of maintenance work. Coleen Reid-Grant, school principal, expressed gratitude to the sponsors on behalf of the school community.

25 cops honored in Kingston Western division
KINGSTON, Jamaica: Police Commissioner, Major General Antony Anderson, on December

6th presented special awards to police officers from the Kingston Western division. The cops were recognized and commended for their contributions and commitment in making the communities where they serve safer, during the division's annual conference and award ceremony at the Heart Trust Garmex complex in Kingston. The police officers from the Dehnam Town, Trench Town, Admiral Town, Tivoli Gardens and Darling Street stations were in attendance as Anderson spoke at length on policing, despite challenges that the service faces. "If you don't have a passion for it, you won't last. The fact that you all have lasted in the midst of the challenges is commendable," Anderson said in telling the cops that policing is a career and not a job. Officers were reassured of new technological advances to come on stream within the force to aid them in carrying out their duties more effectively. The technologies include an updated system to carry five times the amount of data island-wide, and the introduction of digital station records to replace over 30 paper-based registers. Additionally, license plate recognition cameras on police vehicles and traffic lights, are to be in place to assist in policing the nation's roadways. Anderson said the changes are scheduled to come on stream in

the New Year.

PM Mottley eys opportunities for artists and designers in Africa and the Pacific
BRIDGETOWN, Barbados: Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley is looking to Africa and the Pacific for new growth prospects for artists and designers from Barbados and the rest of the region. She made her intentions known on December 7th while attending a fashion show in Nairobi, Kenya where young fashion designers got the opportunity to show off their creations for delegates from the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of nations. Asked by the organizers to speak to the audience, Mottley said: "For a very long time we have seen the benefits of cooperation with the ACP and EU for our designers and creatives, and indeed, Caribbean Export has been doing an excellent job in creating that platform for our artists and designers. "We hope that we can now create the logistical framework that will allow the trading to take place, so that we don't only marvel at the beauty of the designs, but that we can ensure that the economics that will support the sale of the designs can make the businesses sustainable."

PM: Administration to Present Fifth Tax-Free Budget in a Row
ST. KITTS and NEVIS: Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis and Minister of Finance, Dr. the Honorable Timothy Harris, will present his fifth tax-free budget in a

row when he delivers the Federation's Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020 in the National Assembly, the Press Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister announced on December 10. The Appropriation (2020) Bill, 2019 is a Bill to provide for the services of Saint Christopher and Nevis for the financial year commencing Jan. 1 and ending Dec. 31, 2020.

Online Portal Launched for Renewal of E-Passports
NASSAU, Bahamas: It's official! Bahamians adults will now be able to renew their passports online via the newly launched portal. The online process for minors is slated to commence by February 2020. The announcement was made on Monday, 9th December 2019 during a ceremony held at the Passport Office. Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Marvin Dames was on hand to officially launch the

portal. He said that this would serve to relieve the historically long waits associated with this process. "The online portal is an alternative that will serve to relieve the waiting lines at the Passport Office for the renewal of adult e-passports," said Minister Dames. "Once the online application is successful, our citizens will be able to collect their documents from the New Providence and Grand Bahama passport offices or from one of our missions in the United Kingdom, China, the United States of America and Canada. He said that the online portal is now operational and will include support in the form of a help desk with operators to assist the general public with any technical matters that may arise during the application process. It is expected that the turnaround time would be between 7 to 10 days, with applicants having the option to also request emergency passports at an additional cost.

As I See It: Leadership Has Its Difficulties



Christopher A. Service Sr.

remember the saying, "Leadership is a bitter cup." In my November article I attempted to outline some characteristics I think a leader should have. Unfortunately, I was "tackled" by someone who thought I was being hypocritical as it relates to some of our present leaders. The reality is that many will dislike the way those who supervise or lead us behave. The initial feeling is, if we were in that leadership or decision-making position things would be different or even better! Many factors go into the selection of an individual who is chosen to lead or who offers to lead. There are also many factors and skills that an individual who accepts leadership must consider. Whether the entity is a social organization, municipality, or a country. In my view, the leader ought to ponder some reality questions, for example: Do I really want the leadership job? Am I willing and

able to reach out to all stakeholders? Am I willing to make decisions that may not be liked by those who put me in the leadership position? Am I willing to strike a balance between being overly assertive but fair? Are the decisions I make rational and professional? Will my decisions lead to the betterment of the entity and/or those who stand to benefit? Accepting a leadership position, wherever it is, implicit in that acceptance should be the understanding that one is going to be the focus of attention. Mixed moods and attitudes will now take center stage as the events of the activities begin. It is now "show time." One must decide, are the "rotting apples" going to be thrown out, or are the "flower petals" going to be laid? The leader must be prepared to do the job with the objective of the job being uppermost in his or her mind. It is nonsensical to think that all will accept decisions made. Because there are people with varying views and personality that will be affected by decisions made, the individual making the decision should consider who benefits. Decisions made should be in keeping with the desire of the majority of the individuals who will potentially benefit. That in itself may be problematic but should be fair. Even the individuals who caused the decision maker to be there should be considered. Sometimes those who select an individual to lead see themselves in that leader. That can be disadvantageous, because it sug-

gests that the person selected to lead will not be able to exercise his or her individuality. Again, the new leader should take all involved into consideration and make decisions that are unbiased and fair remembering that not everyone can be pleased. No one individual can solve all the problems or address potential difficulties that will emerge in the process of trying to accomplish what the entity desires to achieve. It should be the desire of the individual who is the decision maker to assess, engage in self-reflections, and realize when it is time to "pass the baton" to someone else. That is as I see it.

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Celebrating Christmas In Jamaican Style

By Stan Walker

Despite the number of negative reports of increased incidents of crime and violence that are presently coming out of Jamaica, Jamaicans are still preparing to celebrate Christmas in their usual customs.

Although the government has introduced States of Emergencies (SOEs) in several parishes by combining the police and the military to improve security, in a bid to curtail these incidents, it still does not seem to be getting any better.

In Jamaica Christmas is very similar to everywhere else in the world. The only difference is the climate and cultural practices. Christmas is considered a time when families get together, so Jamaicans living abroad usually go home to celebrate with loved ones and to enjoy the many festivities, which run from

early December to the New Year.

Jamaica is a tropical island; there is no cold winter. However, despite the lack of snow and chimneys, Santa Claus still visits the island and gift giving is part of the tradition.

Christmas is a very special time in Jamaica and like in other countries everywhere. The plastic trees may dominate but locally grown trees can also be found. Towns and cities create a festive atmosphere by decorating the streets with brightly colored lights known locally as pepper lights. Houses in affluent neighborhoods compete to create the best light displays and even local taxis are decorated.

Most families are inclined to spend Christmas Day at home with friends and family members. Mostly a Christian island, Jamaica has more churches per square mile than any other country in the world,

so it is not surprising that Christmas, celebrating the birth of Christ is one of the most important religious and cultural celebrations in the island. At Christmas, Jamaicans look forward to going to church on the Sunday or Saturday when they normally wear their best clothing to church on those days.

The celebrations actually begin on Christmas Eve with the long-standing tradition of “Grand Market” one of the biggest days for many Jamaicans, especially for the children.

From Christmas Eve until Christmas, vendors gather to sell their wares, everything from last-minute gifts and Christmas decorations, to clothing and food, at key locations around the country. Many attend the market just to enjoy the party atmosphere.

Apart from the attendance at early morning church services,

Christmas Day begins with the traditional breakfast of ackee and salt-fish, roasted breadfruit and boiled green bananas.

The Christmas dinner, which takes place later in the day is a big event. It brings families together to celebrate and feast. Curried goat, roast chicken, and a much-loved ham are, for some, the favorite meats that are served with rice and pigeon peas. The food is served with that favorite seasonal drink Sorrel. The traditional desert of rum-laden fruitcake finishes the meal.

The party starts again on Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, with the national Pantomime performance, a celebration of the Jamaican national culture, folklore and history, which used to take place annually at the Ward Theatre, downtown its capital, Kingston.

To most Jamaicans, December in Jamaica was a non-stop party season with all kinds of celebrations taking place from shows at the theatres, beach parties, and a number of dances held by the sound systems all over the island.

Regardless of your situation, we hope that you all will have an enjoyable time. Happy holidays everyone!





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