

Caymanian Times

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Complimentary

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

● COMMUNITY NOTICES – P2

Top Civil Servant Visits Little Trotters Farm and Nursery

● COMMUNITY NOTICES – P2

Chicken Elections

● LOCAL NEWS – P5

DEH takes on 3rd worker from HMCIPS

● AGRICULTURE SHOW – P7

FLASHBACK 2018: 51st Agriculture Show – spectacular!

Disney to part fund new cruise port

By Lindsey Turnbull

Premier Alden McLaughlin announced Thursday that the Disney cruise line will join Royal Caribbean and Carnival in committing to finance the new port project for the Cayman Islands. Speaking at this year's Legislative Luncheon organised by the Chamber of Commerce and held at the Kimpton Seafire, the Premier said that the commitments by these three major players in the cruise industry, coupled with the finance to be provided by the preferred bidder on the project, effectively ensured that no public money would be required to build the new cruise berths and enhanced cargo facility.



... Continued story on page 3

UK and OTs: Rethinking the relationship

The dust has hardly settled and there are already signs of an avalanche of reactions on the recommendations in the report on the future of the Overseas Territories (OTs) by the British parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC).

The FAC's well-intentioned title of the report is 'One family: Rethinking Britain's relationship with the Overseas Territories'.

The inquiry started last July and saw a plethora of submissions and in-person presentations in London from OTs governments, private sector, social partners, citizens and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Early reaction on social media, talk shows and press readership feedback across several overseas territories is being driven by several central issues, some of which had already attracted a fair amount of controversy.

Topping the list are; same-sex marriages, electoral rights for British citizens who relocate to the OTs, and the vexed issue of public registers of beneficial ownership.

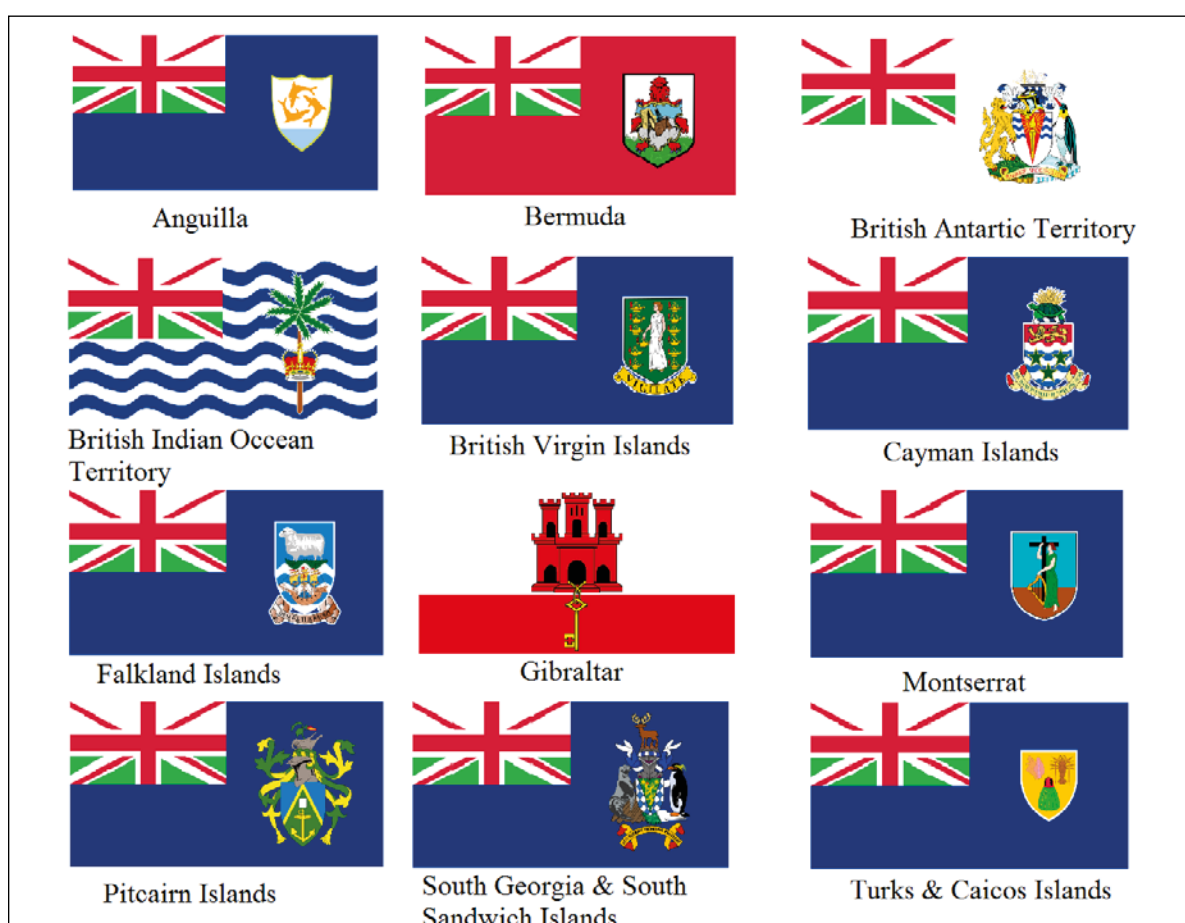
In fact, the FAC report itself had anticipated this reaction and admits to 'points of friction' between the OTs and the UK.

It states: "...while the UK Government should urgently address concerns held by the OTs – about access to NHS services, for example – the OTs must act to reduce areas of divergence and friction. This must include legalising same-sex marriage and working with the Foreign Secretary to set out a timetable for the publication of registers of beneficial ownership in each OT."

The FAC is particularly strident on the issue of same-sex marriages, adamantly recommending remotely enforcing the required legislation by Order in Council from London if the OTs don't voluntarily comply.

"It is time for all OTs to legalise same-sex marriage and for the UK Government to do more than simply support it in principle. It must be prepared to step in, as it did in 2001 when an Order in Council decriminalised homosexuality in OTs that had refused to do so. The Government should set a date by which it expects all OTs to have legalised same-sex marriage. If that deadline is not met, the Government should intervene through legislation or an Order in Council."

... Continued story on page 8



NCB Group to build new Hilton Hotel



Hilton (NYSE: HLT) announces the signing of an agreement for a new Curio Collection by Hilton property in the Cayman Islands with NCB Group. Scheduled to open in 2021, the new-build 80-room hotel will usher in a new era of upper upscale accommodations focusing on sustainability and wellness, incorporating renewable and energy-efficient technologies throughout the property.

"As tourist arrivals in the Caribbean continue to increase, we have prioritized the region in our larger expansion efforts with Hilton's first property in Grand Cayman," said Juan Corvinos, vice president, development, Latin America and the Caribbean, Hilton. "In partnership with NCB Group, we are working toward embodying a retreat that caters to the needs of today's discerning travelers that prioritize wellness while at home and abroad."

Situated on the edge of George Town, the beachfront hotel boasts 80 suites with spacious floorplans ranging from one to three bedrooms, which will also be available for purchase. Each suite will feature energy-efficient technologies, in-room yoga mats and fitness equipment, and lighting that regulates circadian rhythm. Travelers will also be able to opt for executive and penthouse suites with premier private pools.

"We are elated to be partnering with an industry leader like Hilton and have the opportunity to introduce this internationally renowned, global hospitality company to the Cayman Islands," said Matthew Wight, Managing Director of NCB Group. "It's an honor that our hotel was selected to be a part of this exclusive collection of one-of-a-kind, independent hotels and resorts that are all celebrated for their individuality. Through this alliance we will be delivering an innovative wellness tourism product that also caters to the discerning business traveler."

Guests will enjoy farm-to-table dining at two of the property's restaurants and poolside café, offering local seafood, fresh produce, organic wines and craft cocktails. With a fully-equipped gym, rejuvenating spa and conference facilities, the hotel will also provide guests with a

... Continued story on page 6

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COMMUNITY NOTICES

MRCU Begins Annual Residential Inspections for 2019

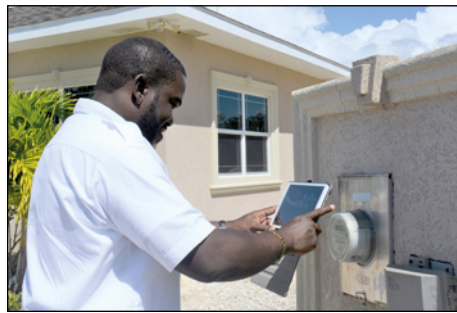
Disease Prevention Officers (DPOs) from the Mosquito Research and Control Unit (MRCU) recently began residential inspections as part of ongoing year-round efforts to combat the dangerous *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.

DPOs drive clearly marked MRCU trucks, wear MRCU clothing and have government identification. They inspect the grounds for containers, whether human made (buckets, tyres, cisterns) or natural (bromeliads, tree holes), that might harbour *Aedes aegypti*, which transmits diseases like Zika, chikungunya and dengue.

MRCU Director Jim McNelly, PhD says team members will explain the process in depth to householders in any yard they visit. Dr McNelly also notes that the inspections will extend more to the eastern districts than has been the practice in the past.

Minister for Health, Hon. Dwayne Seymour, stresses the importance of the public's cooperation during this exercise. Mr Seymour notes that the undertaking is part of MRCU's integrated strategy to combat the growth and reproduction of the invasive species. Homeowners' compliance during visits is essential, he says, to preventing a serious public health concern.

To track information obtained from the visit. DPOs are carrying tablets that



► MRCU Disease Prevention Officer Garbeth Wright logs the CUC electric metre number during a recent residential inspection, as part of enhanced surveillance and eradication measures to combat the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito

they use to enter the number, type and location of containers. This information is essential to MRCU's surveillance and eradication programme. For the first time the process includes scanning barcodes on CUC electric meters; which are being used to identify the inspection sites, and are part of MRCU's upgraded data management system.

To facilitate the new upgrade the DPOs received training from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the Centres for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States. Both entities have been advocating for the barcode system to be adopted throughout the Caribbean, as part of efforts to share regional data on *Aedes aegypti*. 🌐

Pink Ladies Celebrate International Women's Day

The Pink Ladies Volunteer Corps (PLVC) is celebrating International Women's Day on Saturday, March 9th with a fashion show featuring the closets of Cayman women.

The PLVC is partnering with the Humane Society for the evening event held at a beautiful sea front home in West Bay. The Thrift Store is providing their high-end togs that have been donated by their patrons, and both the Pink Ladies and the Humane Society are providing the models. These are real women who come in all ages, shapes, and sizes. The PLVC are delighted to make this an inclusive event and have invited special needs children to take a walk on the runway as well.

Humane Society Thrift Store Manager Jacki Ebanks says, "This is a fantastic opportunity for two local charities to showcase and sell high end donations from designers such as Stella McCartney, Michael Kors, Karen Stevens, BCBG, Free People as well as men's items from Ralph Lauren and Robert Graham." Local vendors including Rugs Oriental, Gabz & Gabz, and jewelry maker Maureen Collins will also have their creations and apparel for sale on the day.

Former Ford model Christel Ibsen will be giving the models a session,



teaching them how to walk the walk on the runway, and Arabus store owner, Ed Solomon, who has had extensive experience showcasing fashion shows on island, will be there too, managing the event.

Entry is \$75 CI and includes hors d'oeuvres and beverages. Tickets are limited to just 100 and are available at Focus Hair and Beauty Salon in Marquee Plaza, Arabus Boutique in Georgetown and Rugs Oriental in Galleria Plaza. 🌐

Top Civil Servant Visits Little Trotters Farm and Nursery

The Ministry of Education's Acting Chief Officer Cetonya Cacheo toured Little Trotters Farm and Nursery on Monday (18 February 2019). She presented school's Principal Josie Hoare with an Excellence cer-

tificate, gave a brief speech and visited classrooms interacting with the nursery's students and talked to staff. Backrow (L-r): OES Director Peter Carpenter, Nursery Principal Josie Hoare, Ministry of Education

Acting Chief Officer Cetonya Cacheo, OES Senior Inspector Althea Edwards-Boothe and Lead Inspector for Little Trotters Nicholas Butt. Front row: Little Trotters staff. 🌐



MASSIVE MEDIA LAUNCHES CHICKEN ELECTIONS – A SATIRICAL CHARITY CAMPAIGN WITH A SERIOUS POINT

Massive Media is excited to announce Chicken Elections, a satirical charity campaign featuring a real poll of Cayman attitudes towards six key issues. 100% of funds raised are being split between six charities featured in the campaign; **Cayman Islands Cancer Society, Jasmine, Cayman Islands Meals on Wheels, One Dog At A Time, Plastic Free Cayman and Special Needs Foundation of Cayman.**

www.chickenelections.com features a two week political campaign of six chickens vying to be the first Pre-

mier of the Legislative Eggsembly, with each chicken supporting a local charity. Each charity is guaranteed a minimum of \$500, with all additional funds being split between the charities based on their share of the vote.

Behind the satire and fundraising activities, Massive Media are conducting a poll into six key issues facing Cayman; gay marriage, iguana culling, marijuana legalisation, national health care, plastic use, and private development. The polling will measure public feeling about the issues, and a summa-

ry report of findings will be released to government, media and the general public, with the intent of providing information to contribute to the national debate.

The campaign follows in the footsteps of Massive Media's Chicken Foundation campaign, the satirical chicken adoption agency released in 2014 that raised

money for the National Trust of the Cayman Islands.

The Chicken Elections campaign will commence Tuesday February 19th and run until 5th March. To participate in the vote, visit www.chickenelections.com, any sponsorship inquiries or questions can be sent to hello@massivemedialtd.com. 🌐



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Disney to part fund new cruise port

... Continued story from page 1

Speaking to a packed audience of Cayman's business community, as well as a good many government officials, the Premier said that he feared Cayman's cruise industry would go into the same kind of sharp decline as the Kodak company did when it was too slow to embrace digital photography, should Cayman refuse to pay attention to the way the market was developing.

"We will go into a gradual but sure decline and our cruise sector will eventually be diminished," he said. "This government will not allow that to happen."

Mr McLaughlin reiterated his government's determination to plough on with the controversial development of the cruise port, despite growing demands for a referendum on whether the project should be allowed to progress.

"We not only remain committed to the cruise dock and cargo port project, but are even surer of the merits today. The new cruise dock is vital to safeguard the future of Cayman's tourism industry; whilst the new cargo facilities will receive larger cargo ships and help support the Islands' growing population and, by allowing greater economies of scale, help to mitigate some of the cost pressures impacting our cost of living," he stated.

Premier McLaughlin used the opportunity of speaking to the audience to confirm that his government would be structuring the financing of the port project in such a way as to not expose the country's finances to disproportion-



► Premier Alden McLaughlin at the Chamber's Legislative Lunch

ate risk. He also said that they would be looking to minimise or mitigate the environmental impact of the project.

That said, Mr McLaughlin said that \$245 million of net economic benefit, hundreds of construction jobs and then decades of increasing employment and business opportunities for Caymanians in the tourism industry "definitely outweigh the inevitable environmental costs in a part of Grand Cayman's only working harbour."

The Premier said that the procurement process was winding down and

a preferred bidder would be chosen by the summer.

"Once this is done, we will be in a position to speak more to the final designs and projected costs," he confirmed.

Unemployment down, inflation low

Premier McLaughlin also discussed improvements in the economy looking ahead for the near term at least, stating that there were indications that in the autumn of 2018, when compared with autumn 2017, total unemployment will have dropped to 2.9 per cent from 4.9 per cent and Caymanian unemployment will have dropped to 4.6 per cent from 7.3 per cent in 2017.

"This is the lowest level of Caymanian unemployment in more than a decade," he said.

Inflation was the other key macro-economic indicator that the government was also closely watching. The latest data for the consumer price index gave an annualised inflation figure of 3.5 per cent for the third quarter of last year. While high by recent standards, the figure had dropped back from a peak of 4.8 per cent in the previous quarter, the Premier outlined. Taking a longer-term

view, prices in the Cayman economy in September 2018 were actually only 2.5 per cent higher overall than they had been in September 2014.

"That represents a significant five-year period of overall low inflation," the Premier said. "However, we recognise that the current level of inflation can represent a squeeze on living standards and the cost of doing business, but the tools available to government to reduce inflation are limited."

Even though CUC had put up its prices contributing to an increase in inflation, government maintained "significant" fuel duty reductions that were still helping keep utility costs down, the Premier said. Continued reductions on various import duties to licensed retailers were helping to help lower prices and government had increased the duty-free allowance at the airport from \$350 to \$500 per person for goods purchased abroad.

Special bank holiday

Mr McLaughlin also confirmed that in honour of the royal visit of Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall in March, government intended to make Thursday 28 March, 2019, a public holiday.



John Gray High School history students receive an official photograph of the late Reverend John Gray, MBE

On Monday February 18, 2019 Year 11 Caribbean History students at John Gray High School received an official photograph of the late Reverend John Gray, MBE, for whom the school was named. The occasion was made possible through the efforts of the Cayman Islands Nation-

al Archive, as well as through the kind and gracious loan of a photograph from Reverend Gray's daughter, Ms. Elizabeth Scholefield. To make the presentation on behalf of Reverend Gray's family was his son, Mr. John Gray who also taught at the institution for several years. Also on

hand from the National Archive was Ms. Charisse Morrison. The brief ceremony marked a rewarding end to the research efforts of the students who had been visiting the archive for several weeks to acquire practical experience in historical research while examining a number

of local history topics. Also present to receive the photograph was Principal Jon Clark and Caribbean History teacher, Georgia Harding. This year marks 70 years since the establishment of the school and twenty-seven years since it was named after Reverend Gray.



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Promoting a Culture of Leadership Development for the CIFS

As part of its on-going commitment to staff training and development, the Ministry of Financial Services and Home Affairs circulated a notice inviting expressions of interest from all frontline personnel at the Cayman Islands Fire Service (CIFS) in relation to participating in coaching for the positions of Captain and Lieutenant on 23 January 2018.

This second opportunity for coaching has attracted 24 officers; almost double the response to the original request published in August 2018, which was geared towards those interested in the Deputy Chief Fire Officer position. The initial coaching programme focused on assisting the 14 participants with the development of essential leadership and interpersonal skills; so that they could all perform their best in the event that they decided to apply for one of the Deputy posts, the recruitment exercise for which is currently underway.

Since the organisational review of the CIFS that was conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) in June of 2017, the Ministry has been targeting areas that were identified, a key one of which was the need for a talent strategy/ plan for the Fire Service, encompassing the individual development of existing fire personnel, recruitment, succession planning and performance management.

The coaching programme being offered by local company RESOLVE, which was selected following an open Request for Proposal (RFP) process conducted in early 2018, forms a critical part of this strategy, as it not only meets the individual needs of personnel, but also helps to reshape the CIFS' organisational structure by fostering an internal culture of



leadership development. The fact that this has taken hold and is gaining traction is evidenced by the increased level of self-selection amongst officers.

RESOLVE's methodology includes both individual and group work with an emphasis on one-on-one coaching and is designed to assess the capacity of each individual in terms of potential to be effective in a more challenging role; readiness to perform at a higher level and suitability within the organisational content and culture. Foundational principles of trust and competence are emphasised, as these are critical for frontline Fire personnel given the nature and demands of their job and the key role that the organisation plays in the country's public safety infrastructure.

Additional leadership development opportunities that have been provided to frontline personnel include participation in numerous World Class Civil Service sessions, attendance at the Institute for Public Administration of Canada's



annual Leadership Conference with the Deputy Governor and training on Exceptional Communication and Difficult Conversations facilitated by members of the Civil Service Toastmasters chapter.

"The goal of the coaching programme and other training and development opportunities that are being offered is to provide CIFS officers with the necessary skills and tools they need to succeed and advance to positions of leadership within the new organisational structure" said Chief Officer, Dr. Dax Basdeo.

Ahead of the next round of coaching which is set to start in April, the RESOLVE team is currently working with all frontline staff in groups of 10-15, on key issues and strategies that will further foster a vibrant, leadership culture.

In addition to targeting leadership development, the Ministry's approach to the transformational change of the CIFS has involved an extensive exercise to

revise the organisational chart and job descriptions, which has been informed by employee feedback at various levels within the organisation. The Ministry hopes to implement the new job descriptions, which reflect the UK National Occupational Standards (UKNOS) within the first quarter of 2019.

"The Ministry is fully committed to supporting the CIFS on its journey to becoming a world class uniformed service, and we will continue to provide the necessary leadership development, coaching and support as it adapts to the needs of our society" added Dr. Basdeo.

The Ministry is proactively identifying opportunities to further enhance the career progression of staff in order to develop and promote the highest quality of frontline fire personnel and has plans to announce the results of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer recruitment exercise before the end of March 2019.



Dart in Final Stages to Acquire Le Soleil d'Or Resort

At the Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce Legislative Luncheon held on Thursday, Dart announced it is in the final stages of its proposed acquisition of Le Soleil d'Or, a boutique resort in Cayman Brac which gained international acclaim for its farm-to-table philosophy.

Dart chief executive officer Mark VanDevelde, says the proposed purchase would be a natural expansion of the organisation's growing hospitality portfolio given the resort's reputation for excellence and focus on sustainability.

"The 9-room resort, Le Soleil d'Or, has an outstanding international reputation which complements our existing hospitality portfolio," Mr. VanDevelde says.

"Dart's intent is to restore this luxury property to full operations to enhance Cayman Brac's tourism product and directly benefit the local economy."

The resort was ranked second best resort in the Caribbean and 34th best in the world by Conde Nast Traveler in 2016 before being partially shuttered. Since 2017 when the property was listed for sale, only one of the villas has been in operation.

Dart representatives met with senior Brac government officials ahead of the purchase negotiations to plan for a smooth transition.

District Commissioner Ernie Scott says local government officials are optimistic about Dart's plan to invest in Cayman Brac.

"On behalf of the people of Cayman Brac we welcome the arrival of the Dart Group to Cayman Brac. We recognise the partnership opportunities that we discussed in our recent meeting and the positive outlook this means for Cayman Brac," Mr. Scott says.

Mr. VanDevelde says the proposed acquisition is further proof of Dart's commitment to sustainable economic growth for the Cayman Islands.

"This planned investment demonstrates Dart's confidence in the strength and resilience of the Cayman Islands economy," he says. "We look forward to working with local officials and the Brac community to ensure Le Soleil d'Or remains a preeminent luxury destination for local and international visitors."



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DEH/Prison Expand Rehabilitation Partnership

The Department of Environmental Health (DEH) has taken on a third worker to help improve garbage collection, through its ongoing partnership with Her Majesty's Cayman Islands Prison Service (HMCIPS).

Late last year the two agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at improving the critical public service, whilst supporting the rehabilitation of low-risk prisoners.

The initiative involved the deployment of suitably risk-assessed inmates, who were within six months of their release or an appearance before the Conditional Release Board (CRB), to assist DEH with domestic garbage collection.

Matters considered in the risk assessment included the inmate's response to custody, and their efforts to engage with rehabilitative programmes.

The first stage of this partnership was to pilot the placement of two prisoners

with DEH over a five to six-week period beginning in early December.

Following assessment of that initial stage that took place in January the two agencies agreed on a way forward for their partnership. The review considered partner feedback, effort and participation by existing prisoners, as well as their continued engagement with efforts to test them ahead of release or presentation to the conditional release board.

Officials say an ideal outcome for the project is the possibility that prisoners leaving custody, who demonstrate that they have the necessary attitude and work ethic, may receive full-time job offers ahead of their return to the community.

Stressing the importance of the initiative, Director of Prisons Steve Barrett comments: "Finding employment following release from prison has been

recognised as a factor in determining whether or not someone is likely to re-offend and/or return to prison. We also know that prisoners who have worked whilst in custody are more likely to be in employment shortly after their release."

Mr Barrett adds that the current programme has the added benefit of allowing inmates an opportunity to engage with community based employers before their release.

Acting Director of the Department of Environmental Health Richard Simms comments that the two inmates who took part in the pilot programme, have proven to be exceptional workers.

"They assimilated well with the other staff, and their presence lessened the impact when others were on vacation or sick leave. As part of their rehabilitation, and to inspire them going forward, we would like to be able hire them full time. This will depend on whether positions become available and their performance in the recruitment process," Mr Simms remarked.

Observing that the presence of the two individuals contributed to an uplift in garbage collected over the holiday season, Environment Minister Dwayne Seymour praised the support offered by the Prison Director and his staff.

While from a technical perspective, programme participants are supervised by the DEH, prison officers also make frequent, random visits to observe them at work. Both departments have designated managers overseeing the day to day operation of the programme.

HMCIPS will continue to dialogue with the Department of Environmental Health on any potential for expansion of the programme, its Director says. Mr Barrett is also open to working with other essential public services in need of similar support.



► Cayman Islands Prison Director Steven Barrett

The Prison Service currently has a number of prisoners on Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) who are involved in community placements with stakeholder agencies. One such key stakeholder is the 'Fresh Start' programme which is a flagship partnership with collaborators, The Phoenix Group, Encompass Cayman, and Clan Construction.

Mr Barrett notes that one prisoner currently on placement as a trainee chef at a prestigious Seven Mile Beach hotel, has just been named that organisation's 'Employee of the Month.'

HMCIPS also offers direct supervision community placements, to undertake local beautification projects such as road cleaning. A recently completed initiative was the creation of a community park in West Bay.

"The Government is keen to extend the range and diversity of community placement partnerships as we genuinely believe such opportunities contribute to reducing future reoffending. We are particularly supportive of partnerships with organisations like DEH who see the importance of what the Prison Service is trying to achieve, and have been willing to offer their support," says Home Affairs Minister, Hon. Tara Rivers, JP, MLA.



POLICE NEWS

Public Alerts Police to Stranded Dogs in Well in West Bay; Two Dogs Rescued

Around 6PM, on Tuesday 19 February, a member of the public called the West Bay Police Station to inform police that two dogs were stranded in a well in the Shores area of West Bay. Two officers dispatched to the area where two black dogs, one with some brown colouring, were at the bottom of an uncovered well. One officer used a ladder to descend into the well, while

another helped pull the dogs out using ropes with a member of the public. The dogs immediately ran off when they were set down on the ground. Photos and videos of the dogs and the rescue are attached.

"When we were finally able to get the dogs out, you could tell that they were in distress" says PC Dadal, one of the officers who rescued the dogs, "they were shaking because they were soaked in neck deep water and covered in mud. I'm just glad that we were able to get to them in time."

Upon returning to the station, the officers learned that a woman had visited the station to post flyers of her two lost dogs who had not been seen since Saturday night, 16 February. Officers confirmed that the dogs in the photos were those that had been in the well, and

within a few minutes the owner called the station to advise that both dogs had returned home.

District Commander of West Bay Inspector Marriott states "We have identified that, though the dogs did stray unto someone's private property, having a cistern uncovered poses a danger to not just animals but to people. We have organised with the owners of the property to have the cistern covered and we implore dog owners to keep their dogs secured."



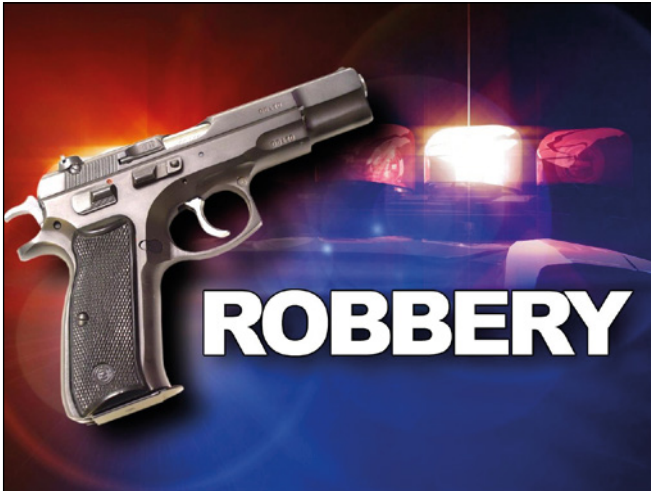
► PS Denby Groves from WBPS Helps Remove One of the Dogs from the Well



► Stranded dogs

Attempted Robbery on Godfrey Nixon Way

Shortly after 8:30PM on Monday, 18 February, officers responded to a report of an attempted robbery at a store on Godfrey Nixon Way. A lone masked man had entered the store, pointed an object, which was covered with a cloth, at a worker inside and demanded cash. A struggle ensued, during which the masked man was struck with a stick by the worker. The masked man then fled the scene on foot.



Nothing was taken during the incident and no injuries occurred. The object brandished by the culprit during the incident does not appear to have been a firearm or other weapon.

The incident remains under police investigation. The suspect is described as being about 5'6" in height, and was dressed in black shoes, dark jeans, a black hoodie, and had a black cloth over his face.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the **George Town Police Station at 949-4222**.

Anonymous tips can be provided directly to the RCIPS via our **Confidential Tip Line at 949-7777**, or via our website <http://www.rcips.ky/submit-a-tip>. Tips can also be submitted anonymously via the Miami-based call centre of **Crime Stoppers at 800-8477(TIPS)**, or online <https://www.tipsubmit.com/WebTips.aspx?AgencyID=681>.

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Curio Collection by Hilton Expands Presence in Caribbean with Signing of Hilton's First Hotel in the Cayman Islands

Set to open in 2021, the hotel reinforces Hilton's growth in the Caribbean

... Continued story from page 1

refreshing swimming pool complete with a swim-up bar and a fresh juice bar. The hotel will also have electric vehicle rentals and complimentary bicycles for eco-conscious guests to ride along and enjoy Grand Cayman's Seven Mile Beach.

"On the heels of our record-breaking arrivals in 2018, as a destination we must continue to meet the demand for luxury accommodations such as what the Hilton brand will now provide," Hon. Minister of Tourism, Mr. Moses Kirkconnell. "The ministry is committed to sustainably grow capacity and values the efforts of partners such as NCB Group who have embraced the Caymankind approach to tourism development. This property will brighten the tourism activity in the heart of George Town and we welcome this new hotel brand to our island."

Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism shared: "It's important for the destination to welcome accommodations that will provide exceptional experiences such as those offered by the Curio Collection by Hilton. Having a one-of-a-kind boutique property with wellness-focused offerings in our capital aligns with key segments of our visitor demograph-



ic and the strategic vision for tourism in the Cayman Islands. The property will be a welcome addition to room inventory and will further enhance our diverse product offerings and accommodations sector."

As a successful developer of sustainable residential communities, beachfront condos and commercial buildings, NCB Group is continuing its commitment in the design and operation of the hotel with sustainability at the core of the project. Renewable energy, environmental considerations and energy efficient mechanical, electrical and plumbing elements are intelligently integrated. Solar panels, geothermal cooling, water

recycling, SMART building management systems, LED lighting, and solar water heating will also be introduced to significantly reduce operating costs, lower the reliance on the electrical grid and reduce the carbon footprint.

The hotel will be a part of Hilton Honors, the award-winning guest-loyalty program for Hilton's 16 distinct hotel brands. Members who book directly have access to instant benefits, including a flexible payment slider that allows members to choose nearly any combination of Points and money to book a stay, an exclusive member discount, free standard Wi-Fi and the Hilton Honors mobile app.

Hilton currently has a portfolio of nearly 150 hotels and resorts open and welcoming travelers in 25 countries across the Caribbean and Latin America. The company is actively pursuing additional growth opportunities and currently has a robust development pipeline of more than 80 hotels throughout the region.

Units are now available for sale and interested buyers can contact Tania Knapik (tknapik@ncbgroup.ky, 345.946.9622) at NCB Group for detailed information on pricing and availability. For more information about the Curio Collection by Hilton brand, please visit newsroom.hilton.com/curio.



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Triplex
6bed, 5bath
Asking \$460,000
Construction: Block
Foundation: Slab
Year Built: 1996
Lot size: Acres 0.23
Living space Sq Ft: 3.300
Block: 24E/Parcel: 249**



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All have two bedrooms plus loft. 2 with two bathrooms, 1 with one bathroom.

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Each Townhouse has its own underground utilities with its own meters.

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All three apartments have been totally refurbished including a new roof, electrical, plumbing, appliances and furniture. The living rooms are very spacious and beautifully decorated with an open kitchen

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► There were plenty of fruits and vegetables



► There were lots of people, and lots to see

FLASHBACK 2018: 51st Agriculture Show – spectacular!

Thousands of people came to the 51st Annual Agriculture Show at Lower Valley. For a small country, the Cayman Islands can always put on a mighty fine agricultural show. There are always so many lovely animals and fruits and vegetables and plants to see – and craft items too. For a land that in many places has quite thin soil, it is wonderful to see how blessed it is. It is a show to be proud of, and could easily hold its own against agriculture shows in much bigger places.

Of course, parents always love taking their children to the show – where else can you see pigs and their piglets, goats and their kids, horses, chickens, and rabbits all in the same place? And this year there were sheep too – I am not sure if that is a ‘first’ for the show, but it was certainly good to see.

And then there were the crafts – paintings and silver thatch work and decorative sewn and knitted items. Colleen Gibson, in the Cayman Brac display booth had plenty to show: “I have Caymanite Jewelry, Silver thatch work, Jams and jellies and brooms,” she said. In the next door booth showing items from West Bay, Effie Ebanks had many wallets and little bags, all beautifully made from Silver thatch.

The George Town booth next along was filled with things from Deanna Look Loy’s farm: “This is sorrel left over from

Christmas and I have guavas, egg plants, bottlers bananas – Caymanians love those,” she said, “and this coconut is one of the coveted coconuts on the island the Malayan Red,” Harvest this year was good but I think what affected our crops this year is the cool weather – except for the tomatoes - they love the cool weather,” she said.

Zeta Bodden was one of the judges for the fruits and vegetables. There was a huge, magnificent pumpkin that had god a big blue “1st Place” rosette, next to a luscious green “1st Place” cabbage. “We look at quality, size and presentation – and the color is important too. For example, with sweet potatoes we have white, we have pink, and we have yellow. This year the cassava roots look really good and also the yams. They are big and their quality is very good too. And then you have a good display of broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and lettuce – everything!” she said.

Of course, no Agriculture show would be complete without lots of displays of foods like preserves, cakes, jams and jellies made from local produce. Shirley Clark of “Treats by Shirlys” had more to offer than ever before: “We have jams, jellies, sauce, cassava cake, almond drops, cupcakes, pickle peppers.

Her Excellency the Governor said “I have seen firsthand the enthusiasm

with which the people of the Cayman Islands embrace their agricultural heritage. Local farmers have managed to find ways to develop the limited arable lands and have introduced animals and plants best suited for our harsh terrain. We should make every effort to educate our children about the importance of farming as a profession and continue to buy local products at the farmers markets and the supermarkets.”

Premier Alden McLaughlin said: “My Government appreciates that the agriculture sector is vital to our country

as it continues to contribute to cultural preservation, culinary tourism and food and nutrition security. The (Agricultural) Society will embark on social programmes to educate our young people about the career paths in the agriculture sector. I am happy that the society is doing more with our youths to encourage agricultural activities that could mean future, well-paying jobs, and not just on farms but in laboratories, universities, private agriculture businesses and here at the Ministry and Department of Agriculture.”



► 1st Place Pumpkin!



► Cayman’s Miss Teen was there to make it a royal occasion!



► Willies Fresh Fruits and Juices



► There was something for everyone at the agriculture show



► Deanna Look Loy and the George Town booth



► Close encounter – of a goat kind!

Jamaica Government Gets Nod for Legislation to Retake Venezuela's Shares in the Island's Oil Refinery

Legislation to retake ownership of the 49 per cent shares in Jamaica's oil refinery, Petrojam, currently held by Venezuela's state-owned oil and natural gas company, Petróleos de Venezuela (PDV) Caribe, has been passed in the House of Representatives, despite resistance from the Opposition.

The Compulsory Acquisition (Shares in Petrojam Limited) Act, 2019 was piloted by Prime Minister Andrew Holness.

Holness said the decision to move in the current direction was not taken lightly, noting that Petrojam and Jamaica have been left at risk due to years of inaction.

"Technical assessments have found that refining operations will be negatively impacted by 2020 if Petrojam is not in a position to execute Phase 1 of the refinery upgrade (Vacuum Distillation Unit Project)," he noted.

"This is primarily due to the imminent international obligations as stipulated by the International Maritime Organization regulations regarding sulphur, which will become effective on January 1, 2020, and the transition by the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) to Liquefied Natural Gas for its 190 MW power plant by June 2019, thereby reducing the need for heavy fuel oil produced by Petrojam."

Holness argued that without an upgrade, Petrojam would be unable to fur-

ther process heavy fuel oil (HFO) into high-value products, and having lost a major customer in JPS, Petrojam would become unprofitable.

The Prime Minister also cited the United States Executive Order 13808 dated August 24, 2017, which essentially prohibits United States persons from entering into specified transactions with the Government of Venezuela and any political division, agency or instrumentality thereof, including PDVSA.

"While Petrojam itself was not identified as a 'sanctioned entity' under the Executive Order, the fact is that its banks and correspondent banks, which facilitate basic transactions with suppliers and service providers, are considered US persons, and were, therefore, at risk or at perceived risk of high fines for breaching such sanctions, and accordingly, they were hesitant to continue providing such services which were fundamental to the most basic operations of Petrojam," he said.

Holness explained that the Government has no choice but to take action in the interest of preserving the energy security of Jamaica.

"It is important to understand that the Government of Jamaica does not see this as a political issue....I want to make it absolutely clear that the decision to acquire the shares is an economic decision," Holness emphasized.

But Opposition Leader Dr Peter Phillips insisted that the legislation was unprecedented and inappropriate. He insisted that the timing was wrong, as the Government has already appointed a commission to study Petrojam's future possibilities and report on what direction it should take by May.

Meantime, the Prime Minister told the House that payments to and from Petrojam have been subjected to increased due diligence by the primary suppliers of lines of credit, as well as intermedi-

ary banks, and the disruption or delay of transactions for Petrojam Limited has become a source of unease for Petrojam's suppliers.

"An even more serious concern is the overseas suppliers of goods and services to Petrojam. Owing to Petrojam's continued association with Venezuelan entities, some suppliers have advised Petrojam that they are no longer willing to take the risk of supplying to Petrojam, and others have expressed grave concerns," he said.

The need for an upgrade of the refinery was recognized from as early as the 1990s, and Petrojam and the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ) have undertaken several studies on the refinery upgrade.

"The challenge has always been the cost of the upgrade, which can run into hundreds of millions of dollars, with estimates as much as more than a billion dollars, depending on the extent of the upgrade," Holness said.

In February 2005, a Letter of Intent was agreed between the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, acting through its Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, and the Government of Jamaica, acting through the Ministry of Commerce, Science and Technology, confirming, in principle, that they would pursue feasible options for the improvement of the refinery.

Additionally, in June 2005, further to the Letter of Intent, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the same parties, with a view to establishing a Joint Venture.

On August 14, 2006, a Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) was signed between the PCJ, Petrojam and PDV Caribe SA (PDV Caribe) to cooperate in the ownership and management of Petrojam and to undertake the refinery upgrade, which was recognised as critically important for the energy security of Jamaica.



► Prime Minister Andrew Holness making a case for why the legislation is necessary. (Credit: JIS)

"It stated that PDV Caribe SA and the PCJ agreed to embark on a Refinery Upgrade Project (RUP) through the medium of Petrojam. The JVA defines the RUP as a project that will be carried out to expand the Kingston Refinery Processing capacity from 36 kilo barrels per day to 50 kilo barrels per day," Holness said.

The first phase of the RUP will include a revamp of the Atmospheric Distillation Unit, and the installation of new units, including a Vacuum Distillation Unit, Naphtha Reformer. Phase II will be evaluated aiming at incorporating a Deep Conversion Unit in the Refinery.

"The JVA also set out that in order to facilitate its purpose, the parties would enter into a Share Sale and Purchase Agreement pursuant to which PCJ would sell, and PDV Caribe would purchase, shares in Petrojam. The Share Sale and Purchase Agreement was signed in August 2007, selling 49 per cent of the shares in Petrojam for the sum of US\$63.7 million, based on valuations by internationally recognized consultants with expertise in valuing assets in the energy sector," the Prime Minister explained.

Holness pointed out that despite discussions and negotiations, the RUP has not been achieved. 🌐



Antigua & Barbuda Banking on Sweet Potato- and Cassava-Based Businesses to Boost Economic Activity

Antigua and Barbuda is banking on sweet potato and cassava as alternatives that could reduce its high import bill, through value added production in these chains, which will revitalize the economy.

Through a training initiative, nutrition teachers, NGO staff at the national level, staff from the local prison and members of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs (MoAFBA) of this country were recently instructed in the preparation of bread, using these two root crops.

The three-day workshop was spearheaded by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and

MoAFBA, with support from the Epicurean Supermarket.

"The reason why these two products were chosen is that these types of bread have been made in other countries across the region and the recipes that we are using have been used and tested and have been successful in other countries in the Caribbean," Sereno Benjamin, Extension Officer from MoAFBA, explained. "If the project succeeds, the products will replace 40 per cent of the flour in bread, thereby reducing imports and increasing the production of sweet potato and cassava in the country."

The training is in keeping with IICA's efforts to guarantee food security in a region with high import levels, and

which is seeking to develop a production approach that increases the number of crops grown at the local level.

Craig Thomas, IICA Specialist in Antigua and Barbuda, indicated that this activity was first introduced in this country in 2016, under the Agriculture Policy Programme (APP) an EU funded Project coordinated by IICA. The Institute and CARDI, in collaboration with other stakeholders, have implemented other initiatives to add value to these agricultural chains, thus satisfying specific public and private sector needs.

Extension Officer from MoAFBA, Owolabi Elabanjo, said Antigua and Barbuda intends to limit the utilization of wheat and wheat flour products.



► Local women being trained in bread baking

"Through this project, we have identified two products that can substitute some of the flour that is consumed, and we hope that the public will embrace this new idea and experience better nutrition," he said. 🌐

UK and OTs: Rethinking the relationship

... Continued story from page 1

Other 'points of friction' in UK/OT relations highlighted in the FAC report include the issue of citizenship and electoral rights for British citizens in the OTs.

"The Government should urgently address concerns in the OTs about the issue of citizenship by descent and anomalies in the British Nationality Act that have taken too long to resolve.

It also stresses: "Belongship and its equivalents are wrong. While we recognise that the OTs are small communities with unique cultural identities, we do not accept that there is any justification to deny legally-resident British Overseas Territory and UK citizens the right to vote and to hold elected office.

This elevates one group of British people over another and risks undermining the ties that bind the UK and the OTs together in one global British family."

It calls on the FCO to "lay out a timetable for this consultation process and

set a deadline for phasing out discriminatory elements of belongingship, or its territory-specific equivalents."

The FCO itself does not escape reprimand.

The Foreign Affairs Committee describes it as "stuck in the past" regarding how it relates to the OTs.

In many submissions from the OTs, the very term 'foreign' was questioned regarding their relationship with the UK.

As the FAC itself noted: "This is reinforcing the sense that many in the OTs have that they are not just far away from Britain but foreign."

There are a few recommendations that the OTs will no doubt be happy with.

They include better access to the NHS, clarity and guarantees on how the UK proposes to fill any OTs funding gaps from its departure from the EU (in which the OTs, except Gibraltar, did not have a say), and a dedicated development and stimulus fund for aid-dependent territories.

But it's the culturally and religiously sensitive same-sex issue which warrants delicate handling.

Demanding that the UK set an ultimatum and directly "intervene through legislation or an Order in Council" as it did when it similarly forcibly outlawed homosexuality in the OTs in 2001, is a flashpoint.

The OTs too will have to deftly navigate this human rights minefield of an issue.

The threat of imposed legislation also looms large within the recommendations on the thorny issue of public registries of beneficial ownership (the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act, SAMLA).

Likewise, the FAC is also quite firm in its stance on voting rights and the more contentious matter of electoral rights for British citizens in the OTs.

The latter would be a political concern where it could cause a power shift for some of the smaller OTs given their population and voter demographics.

While the FAC contends that from its observations there is no appetite at present for direct representation in the UK parliament by the OTs, this recommendation might very well trigger a rethink.

The committee challenges the British parliament to "ensure that, while the people of the OTs are not directly represented in Parliament, there is a forum for the effective scrutiny of the decisions taken in London that impact them directly."

It thinks "the time is right to consider establishing a new formal mechanism by which the members of relevant select committees can scrutinise Government



► Leaders of the Overseas Territories

administration, expenditure and policy in relation to the OTs."

One wonders if that goes far enough as a counterbalance to streamline the voting and especially the recommendation for elected office rights for British citizens in the OTs?

But its still early days in the life of this report and its recommendations.

One senses that it won't be shelved despite the UK being currently embroiled in its own Brexit mayhem.

There are several issues with timelines pending; among them the SAMLA beneficial ownership registry issue and the matter of same-sex marriage.

Will this report really trigger the 'reset of the relationship' between the OTs and the UK in the way that the FAC hopes or envisages?

That's left to be seen. But it's worth working towards.

There's hardly much of an alternative. 🌐



CROSSWORD

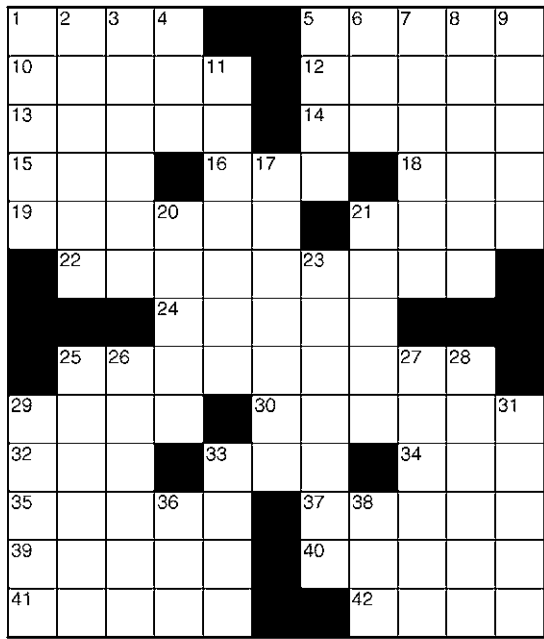
By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 42 For fear that
 - 1 Armada unit
 - 5 Battle souvenirs
 - 10 Implied
 - 12 Blender button
 - 13 O'Connor's successor
 - 14 Clear
 - 15 "— had it!"
 - 16 Bizarre
 - 18 Lazy fellow
 - 19 Get cozy
 - 21 Tire holders
 - 22 Preakness, e.g.
 - 24 Played like Pan
 - 25 Boarder's spot
 - 29 "The Simpsons" saloon
 - 30 Calm
 - 32 Leaf lifter
 - 33 Sch. supporters
 - 34 Dance tape
 - 35 Foreword
 - 37 Head out
 - 39 Summer fruit
 - 40 Passover feast
 - 41 Spirited horse
- DOWN**
- 1 Laundry problem
 - 2 Equal splits
 - 3 Most frosty
 - 4 Cherry center
 - 5 Broke the limit
 - 6 Rascal
 - 7 Language of Qatar
 - 8 Job seeker's need
 - 9 Appears
 - 11 Handy-man's tote
 - 17 Most profound
 - 20 Spanish snacks
 - 21 Weather aid
 - 23 Undoes, as a law
 - 25 Shakespeare creation
 - 26 Kitchen whistler
 - 27 Completely new
 - 28 Cutlery
 - 29 Disfigures
 - 31 Put forth
 - 33 Tadpole's home
 - 36 Lobster eggs
 - 38 Snaky swimmer



Yesterday's answer

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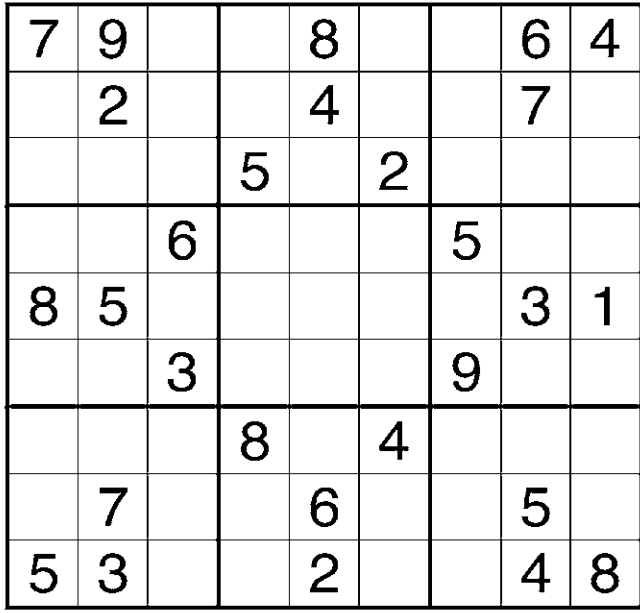
7-7

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Conceptis Sudoku

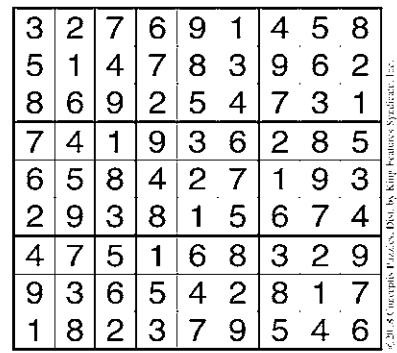
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★

6/12

Answer to previous puzzle



Difficulty Level ★

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Word Search



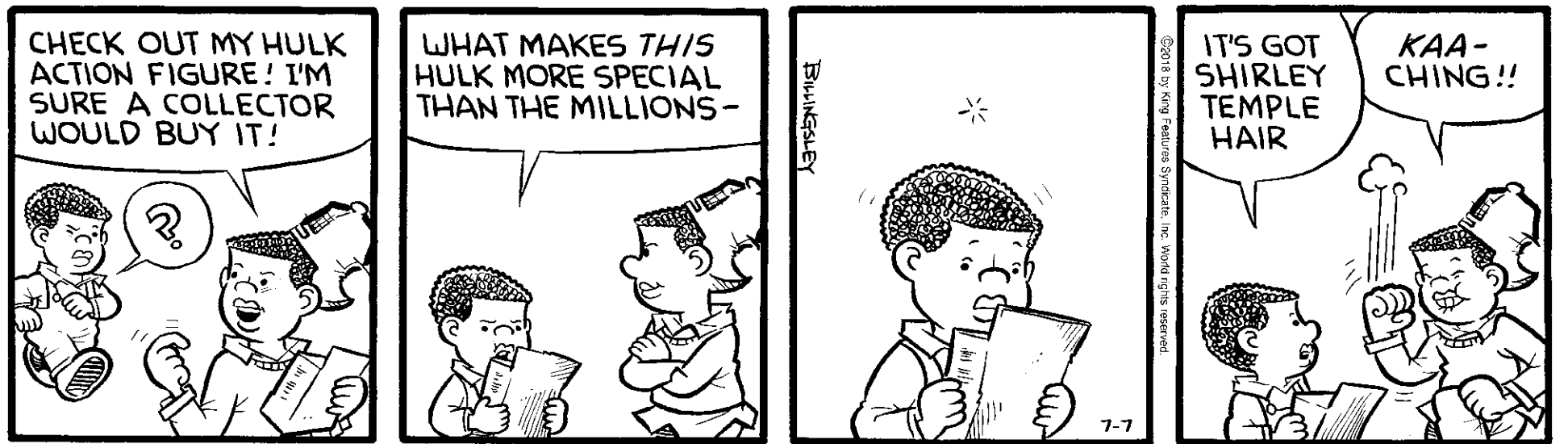
Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions – forward, back, up, down and diagonally.

- Acrostic
- Anagram
- Answer
- Clue
- Conundrum
- Crossword
- Cryptic
- Enigma
- Jigsaw
- Logic
- Mystery Number
- Question
- Rebus
- Riddle
- Solution
- Teaser
- Trivia
- Twister
- Word Search



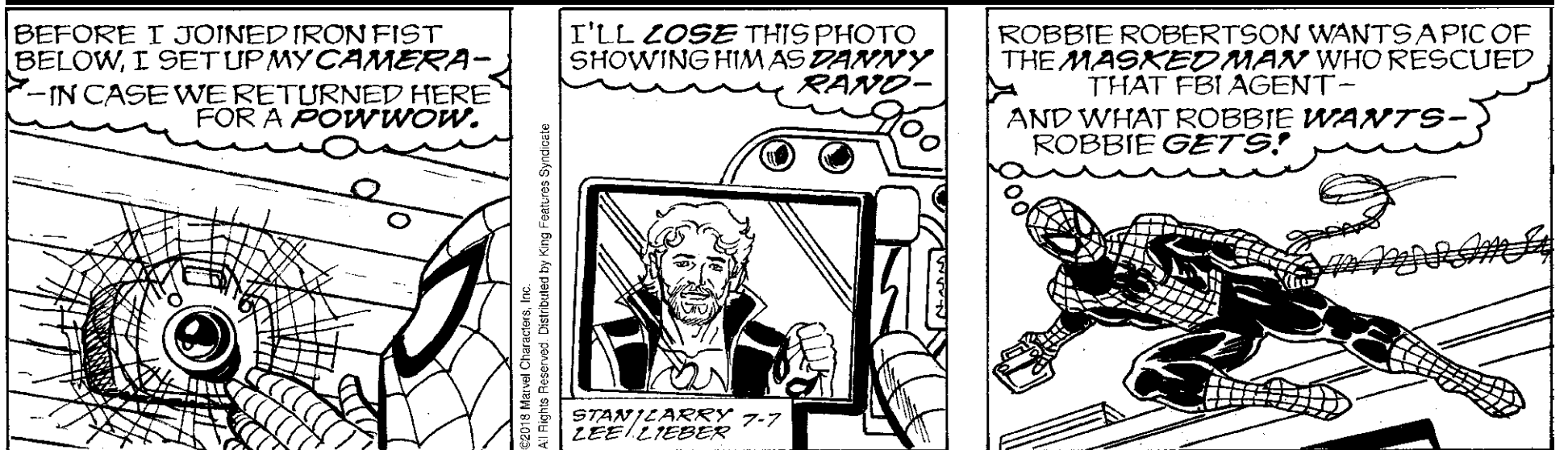
CURTIS

By Ray Billingsley



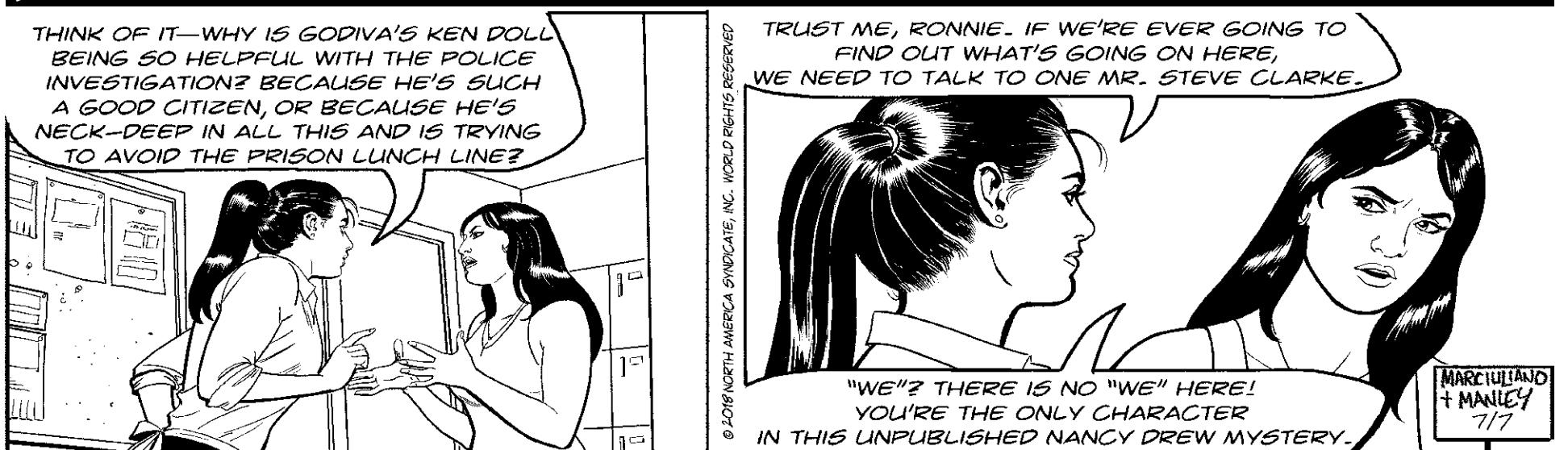
THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN

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