

Issue 03 | 12 May, 2018

The People's Paper

OUR SAINT LUCIA

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Bi-monthly Progress Report from the Government of Saint Lucia

Island-wide Free Wi-Fi

Becoming a Reality



Renewed Confidence
in Bananas



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At a glance...

Saint Lucia Welcomes Further Investment by Sandals

INVESTMENT

Sandals continues to show their confidence in Saint Lucia and is set to commence its fourth hotel on the island. At a sod turning for Sandals La Source recently Prime Minister Allen Chastanet welcomed the investment which he says will bring significant benefits to Saint Lucia. Approximately 1,200 persons will be employed during the construction phase, which is anticipated to be between 22 and 24 months. Upon completion the new Sandals resort will boast 380 high end suites, the very latest in room designs and features, and will employ an additional 900 permanent workers, bringing the total number of employees in Saint Lucia to some 2,700 people.



COMMUNITY

Earth Day Clean Up



A team from the Embassy of the Republic of China on Taiwan recently organized a clean-up campaign in the north of the island on the eve of Earth Day (April 22). His Excellency Douglas Shen, Ambassador of the Republic of China (Taiwan), and Hon. Lenard Montoute, Minister for Equity, Social Justice and Empowerment and Parliamentary Representative for Gros Islet, lead the clean-up campaign in Gros Islet, along with members of the Gros Islet Town Council and volunteers. Over 60 volunteers participated in the clean-up project.

Labour Code Brochure

WORKERS

Launched on May 1, the Labour Code Brochure is produced by the Department of Labour to provide a simple explanation to some of the frequently used sections of the Labour Act. The Government pledges to continue to work towards maintaining and ensuring that a proper climate of industrial peace, tranquillity and responsibility exists in the country at all times, with a few to advancing our national development.



A Short Guide on the Labour Law

TOURISM

Incentive Program for Travel Agents



The Saint Lucia Tourism Authority (SLTA) has launched the eighth annual travel agent incentive program, Saint Lucia Agent Months (SLAM), to acknowledge the hard work of travel agents who are vital to the success of any tourist destination. SLAM's aim is to showcase Saint Lucia to visiting travel agents from June 1 to November 30, and includes special rates on accommodations, tours and attractions, hotel transfers, airline tickets and dining options. For more information about the Saint Lucia expert program, visit www.recommend.edu/saintlucia.

Banana and Agricultural Outputs on the Rise



Reports from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Cooperatives, Natural Resources and Physical Planning indicate that an increasing number of farmers are returning to the land. There has also been some indication that a number of young people are showing a keen interest in turning to agriculture.

Banana, which is still the major export crop in Saint Lucia, has seen the involvement of the Banana Productivity Improvement Project assisting in the rebounding of the industry.

According to the Project Manager for the Banana Productivity Improvement Project, Kerde Severin, 2017, the first year of the project, was a good year.

"We have moved from a pre project situation where we had 286 active farms to a situation now where we have 726 active farms. We have moved from a situation where we had 1127 acres dedicated to banana production, to 2232 acres. So in that short space of time we have almost doubled the number of acres, and increased the number of farms by over 150 percent," he said.

According to Severin, a number of farmers have also come back and are now in the "system". "Because if you have to sell to the European market you have to be registered as Global Gap Certified and therefore you need to be in the system," he explained.

Last year, there was a slight decline in regional exports, mainly because of one of the largest source markets Trinidad & Tobago, importing from other markets, including Suriname. However, Saint Lucia has been able to secure new markets from the French territories of Martinique and Guadeloupe and exports to the UK increased to about 25 to 26 percent.

Asked about the renewed interest and confidence by farmers, Mr. Kerde Severin believes that it has much to do with the Government's stated policies and active interest in the industry.

"Government basically came out and enunciated a policy that helped to revitalize the banana industry and that in itself instilled confidence, in addition to that, a critical factor is the procurement of inputs, because a number of our farmers were unable to procure inputs, when they needed them and in the required quantities. That is why we

place a lot of emphasis on procuring the critical inputs – we talk about fertilizer, as you know fertilizer is critical for a plant's nutrients, then we say to control the black sigatoka we need to have the oil and de-fungicide," Severin says.

The Ministry has also put in place a team specifically devoted to pest and disease management led by an agronomist. "They go out there and they monitor the diseases and then that data is fed back into a system and then using the technology that data is analyzed and based on the information we decide which area we are going to spray," Severin explains.

Earlier this year, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries, Cooperatives, Natural Resources and Physical Planning Ezechiele Joseph expressed great optimism for the local agricultural sector.

Reviewing the performance of the local agricultural sector for 2017, Mr. Joseph spoke on the many strides which were made with regard to the increased levels of production and direct employment in the sector. This he added, resulted in an improvement in the economic and social wellbeing, particularly in the rural communities.

"In 2018, we shall see the operationalization of a new marketing entity with the focus on providing critical support needed to increase production of targeted crops; and more importantly, provide the marketing intelligence, infrastructure, and arrangements for the sale of these crops locally, regionally and internationally," the Minister indicated.

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Constituency in Focus

ANSE LA RAYE/ CANARIES

The constituency of Anse La Raye/Canaries is on the rise and the community has seen heightened activity, especially as it relates to upgrading infrastructure. There has also been a focus by the Parliamentary Representative Hon. Dominic Fedee on bringing activity back to the village with the relaunch of some events and igniting new ones.

Here is a snap shot of some the activities in the community.

Activities/Tourism



- Relaunch of Anse La Raye Fish Fry
- ARC Thursdays
- Village Tourism
- Launch of Food & Rum
- Boxing exhibition
- West Coast Jazz

Infrastructure



- Roseau to Vanard Road Rehabilitation Project completed
- Canaries Bridge
- Upgrading of Canaries Playing Field
- Major Retaining Wall on Canaries Highway
- Road repairs in Au Tabor
- Road repair on Morne D'or
- Major Drainage works in Vanard
- Upgrading of the Roseau Laundry
- Road repairs in Jacmel
- Foot path built in Morne Ciseaux
- Concrete Road Construction in Anse La Raye
- Launch of GINet in Canaries
- Improvements have begun to the broken roads and other infrastructure neglected since hurricane Tomas.
- Flood mitigation projects have begun in some communities including Millet

Sports



- Annual Fedee Football Cup
- Donations to Cricket Teams
- Youth Employment and Training Workshop



Anse La Raye Activities Revitalize Village!



On Friday December 1, 2017, a festive atmosphere greeted visitors to the revamped Anse La Raye Fish Fry. And, they came from all over - not just resident guests at hotels - but Saint Lucians from various parts of the island, embraced the true Saint Lucian hospitality from the community.

The Anse La Raye Fish Friday offers a mouth-watering assortment of seafood and other treats fresh off the grill. Patrons can also enjoy freshly made smoothies, a wine bar, a variety of drinks and an assortment of art and craft, all along the torch-lit waterfront. It is truly a unique experience, as organizers have gone the extra mile to offer a variety of entertainment including music from popular DJs and entertainers, to dancers and stilt walkers – many of whom are from the community itself.

The month of December also saw Anse La Raye hosting two events as part of the annual Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (the ARC) as well as “Twadisyon Noel” a cultural expose as part of the Fish Friday, just before Christmas. And in January, the Anse La Raye Fish Friday exploded with its inclusion on the program for the Food & Rum Festival. A massive crowd converged on the Fish Friday venue on January 12, 2018 to enjoy music by several Saint Lucian performers and Burning Flames of Antigua. It was a night which saw vendors experiencing great sales with most of their stock running out quickly.

More recently, in April to be exact, the Anse La Raye Fish Friday Committee, worked with the Boxing Association, to stage an exhibition boxing night as part of the Fish Friday experience. This too was a huge success.

Since then, residents have been singing the praises of the reintroduction of the Anse La Raye Fish Friday, which has resulted in tremendous economic spin offs for the West Coast fishing Village.

“It was a shame that the event was stopped several years ago and as soon we came into office I knew that this was something that we had to bring back,” Minister for Tourism, Information and Broadcasting and parliamentary rep for Anse La Raye/Canaries Hon. Dominic Fedee explains. “So, along with a revitalized Anse La Raye Vending Association, we have been working closely, to make the event bigger and better, as I know this is something that is very special to this village, to its people, to its economy and to their very survival,” he went on to say.

“The intention is for this to evolve into something bigger, not just on a Friday night, but even during the week, particularly during the cruise season, where we will entice visitors here during the day. Anse La Raye is a short call from the Castries Port, away from the hustle and bustle of the

north, so we will put something in place where persons can come here and enjoy a truly cultural and culinary experience with us along the picturesque waterfront, throughout the week,” Hon. Dominic Fedee states.

The Anse La Raye/Canaries MP is also pleased that West Coast Jazz is on once again and will be held this Saturday May 12, 2018 at the Quantum Gardens from 2 PM. The Latin Jazz experience will feature groups from Cuba and Mexico as well as the Charles Cadet Orchestra from Anse La Raye, Antonius Henry, Rob Zi & Phyness and Evalucian Band.



WASCO TO FOCUS ON BUILDING RESILIENCE

Hurricane Tomas, the ensuing 2013 Christmas Eve Trough and other bouts of heavy rainfall due to climate change, have resulted in large volumes of silt being deposited into the John Compton Dam. As Saint Lucia's largest water supply, the John Compton Dam is responsible for supplying water to most of the northern part of the island. However, the constant silt deposits in the dam has resulted in its holding capacity being reduced to one third of its actual capacity.

The upcoming desilting project, being undertaken by the Water and Sewage Company (WASCO), has come after eight years of planning, strategizing and numerous setbacks. WASCO has set out two phases in which the project will be completed.

A small ceremony on the 20th of May will launch the first phase of the project. Phase one is the construction of a site to dispose of the sediments that will be removed from the dam. A local company, Mega Contracting, won the tender for its completion. This phase is valued at roughly 17 million dollars, and is largely funded by a 'dredging fee' attached to customer invoices. The revenue collected through this fee goes directly to the construction of the sediment disposal area.

The second phase of the desilting project will facilitate the dredging of the dam by way of a drain pipe. The pipe will allow silt and sediments to be transported downstream instead of becoming stagnant and accumulating. A commencement date for the second phase has not yet been announced. Funding of this phase comes from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), but its cost is yet to be finalized.

Like many other projects of such magnitude, liaising with the public and those most closely affected is always necessary. A team from WASCO, Hon. Dominic Fedee, as well as the CEO of Mega Contracting, Ned Samuels, recently visited the Tet Chemin area. The purpose of the visit was to 'discuss particulars of the project', which included details like inconveniences caused by the heavy equipment, employment opportunities, and the availability of water.

Local participation in the desilting project has been of great importance. Mega Contracting will give first priority to residents of the general Millet and Tet Chemin area. The employment opportunities created by the desilting of the dam will help boost the economy, and support families and individuals who will be gainfully employed for the duration of the project.

WASCO has placed emphasis on ensuring that the new structures will be climate resilient. Since the John Compton Dam is the island's largest reservoir, it is essential that any remedial work can withstand any natural disasters as well as climate change.



Government Receiving PAHO and EU Assistance on National Health Insurance



What is National Health Insurance?

National Health Insurance or NHI is a financing system that will make sure that all Saint Lucians are provided with essential healthcare, regardless of their employment status and ability to make a direct monetary contribution.

It is needed because Healthcare is a human right!



The Government of Saint Lucia is focused on ensuring Saint Lucia finally has affordable healthcare. In his Budget presentation recently Prime Minister Honourable Allen Chastanet noted that when it comes to investment in the people of Saint Lucia “health care is a universal concern that touches every Saint Lucian at some point in their lives.”

“What is it that we most desire as individuals when faced with ill health or traumatic injury?” the Prime Minister asked as he addressed Parliament.

“Every Saint Lucian wants to know that they have access to high quality medical care and that they can afford it.”

“The members of this Government are firm in our belief that health care must be available and affordable to all segments of the population regardless of social standing or economic circumstances,” stated the Prime Minister. “I therefore want to start with the

clear understanding that there needs to be a new approach to how health services are financed in our country.

“With health care costs skyrocketing, in tandem with the expectations of our people for first-world medical care, we must find a sustainable way to finance these costs. My Government is of the view that a Universal National Health Insurance Scheme is the best way forward and we are currently receiving technical assistance from the Pan American Health Organisation and the European Union in this regard.

“It is envisaged that both employers and employees will make mandatory contributions, in much the same way as they do now to the National Insurance Scheme.”

The Prime Minister added: “If we want as a people to have access to the very best health care we can afford as a country then we must be accepting of change and resolute in our pursuit of

excellence. As a responsible Government, we are duty bound to provide the best health care we can for our citizens at the most affordable cost and this is what we are setting about to achieve. We could have raised taxes to improve the quality of health care, but it still would not benefit those who could not afford it.”

The National Health Insurance Scheme will neither favour nor discriminate against any Saint Lucian.

“On receipt of the technical advice and after consultation with the health care professionals we hope to be in a position to institute the health insurance before the end of this fiscal year,” explained the Prime Minister.

The Government is also expected to roll out a public sensitization campaign on the Insurance Scheme.

N. H. C. to Create More Affordable Housing



The price of houses and land in St. Lucia continues to increase, as land grows in value over time. This makes it more and more difficult for regular St. Lucians to be able to afford comfortable, stable and safe housing. As it stands, persons seeking to purchase land, or houses and the surrounding lands are subject to prices averaging \$8 per square foot, or \$43,560 an acre.

In an effort to make housing more affordable and accessible, the St. Lucian government has undertaken various developments over the years. In some instances, housing schemes have been established as a means of relocation after natural disasters. In 2012, residents of Fond St Jacques, Soufriere were made the recipients of 11 new houses after being ravaged by Hurricane Tomas in 2010. In 2015, an affordable housing development was completed in Monchy, under the Ministry of Physical Development, Housing and Urban Renewal. It would come to house a number of displaced residents from Conway, Castries and offered 22 houses up for sale to low and middle income families.

In more recent years, the responsibility of these houses schemes has greatly been with the National Housing Corporation. Chairman of the NHC, Timothy Mangal has maintained that the 'cost of owning a house and land package will go down'. A series of government housing developments are on the way for St. Lucians. Unlike previous schemes, the NHC has promised that the costs attached to these new houses would be much cheaper, ranging from EC\$80,000 to EC\$110,000.

To date, the NHC has completed one development in Forestierre in 2017. Housing Minister, Hon Guy Joseph applauded the work done at the development, and the ways in which it would benefit new home owners. The lots made available in Forestierre are significantly cheaper than plots of land in other parts of the island. As the NHC's first project in a decade, the Forestierre Housing Development was a welcomed and well received initiative.

Funding for future housing development by the NHC will be funded through public-private partnerships, soliciting assistance from St. Lucia's private sector. For now, a series of future developments are now in the pipeline, including the timely progression of designs for a development in Choc. Housing schemes in Talvern, Bois Jolie and River Doree are also up for future consideration.



GIRLS ROCK AT YOUTH AWARDS!

The 2018 National Youth Awards were filled with a number of highlights and was a major highlight for persons and groups involved in youth work in Saint Lucia. And speaking at the awards, Youth Development and Sports Minister Hon. Edmund Estephane pledged the Government's continued support for those youth groups, youth workers and for young persons engaged in advocacy work, in a more tangible way. Starting with the annual Youth Awards itself, the Minister moved that he would be taking a proposal to Cabinet so that the Youth of the Year reward is on par with what is given to the sports personality of the year, EC\$10,000.

"This government remains focused and determined through stated political will to ensure that our youth are given opportunities to represent our country at the highest levels of leadership," Hon. Edmund Estephane said. "We acknowledge the contribution of youth in national peace and prosperity. Youth workers play an essential but often under recognized and under resourced role, in engaging and supporting young people to be positive and productive citizens and this we are trying to change," the Minister added.

"I want to move a motion as Minister for youth development and sports that I declare equity in the awards, demonstrating our appreciation given to our youth workers," the Minister declared, to much applause.

Several awards were handed out on the night including the prestigious "Youth of the Year" title. That honour was bestowed upon 22 year old Chelsea Foster founder of the group "Girls of a Feather". The group is described as a mentorship organization for young women in Saint Lucia, particularly disadvantaged young girls. Their aim is to focus on the personal, professional and academic development of mentees.

According to Foster, her decision to form the group several years ago, was on the spur of the moment after being urged by her mother to get involved in the community. "And so we started off on Facebook while I was at University and soon mushroomed into this entity going into schools and now doing an annual camp and workshop for girls," the young advocate says. The group's latest venture has been the "Girls with goals" mentorship program which according to Chelsea Foster has been another successful aspect of the group.

Some of the groups workshops and mentorship programs have focused on issues such as mental health, gender based violence and body awareness and self-esteem.

Speaking on winning the award for youth of the year she had this to say: "I was not expecting this but I am very happy and proud of the girls and women who continue to support our organization "Girls of a Feather," so this ward is really for them and I am happy to see that we are really paying close attention to what is happening around the world and putting women and girls issues at the forefront."

As a youth leader Chelsea Foster says that one of her dreams is to see more gender education in secondary schools. "I believe the curriculum needs to sensitize girls more on these issues, and hopefully the funding that we have gotten, can go towards that," she stated. Foster says she is extremely appreciative of the youth awards and the department of youth awards and was also proud of the many girls and women who are making a difference at the community and national level.

A number of young women stood out at the awards including Danielle Dubois who won "Most outstanding youth in Performing Arts,"



Anita Felix "Most outstanding youth in Social Development, Paulina Murray - "Most Outstanding Youth in Literary Art", Kim Cayol "Community Achievement Award", Reshul Narhari "Most Outstanding Youth in Innovation and Technology", and Ghenitta Pascal "Esteemed Volunteer Award."

Other award winners were Nyus Alfred- Most Outstanding Youth in Entrepreneurship, Naja Simeon-Most Outstanding Youth in Visual Arts, Charde Desir- Most Outstanding Fellow in Youth Work, Jeshrun Andrew- Most Outstanding Youth in Agriculture, Kevin Jean Baptiste- Esteemed Challenge Award in Youth Development, Sporte Avis-Media Award, Most Outstanding District Youth and Sports Council- Soufriere Youth and Sports Council, Most Outstanding Religious Organization- Youth Power Group, Most Outstanding Student Council- Soufriere Youth and Sports Council, Most Outstanding Student Council- Anse Ger Secondary School Students Council, Community Group Achievement Award- United Visions Youth Organization, Most Outstanding Youth Organization- Youth Power Group, Youth Service Week Award - Babonneau Youth Synergy. A special award was also presented to the Saint Lucia Red Cross.

The National Youth Awards formed part of activities for youth month and was held on April 28, 2018 at the Financial Centre.

Canaries first in quest to



From left: Project Manager Karen Kuo, Security Minister Hon Hermangild Francis, H.E. Douglas Shen, PS Esther Bousquet, Tourism Minister and Anse La Raye/Canaries Parliamentary Rep. Hon. Dominic Fedee, Cabinet Secretary Ben Emmanuel and Infrastructure and Labour Minister Hon. Stephenson King

The Community of Canaries was abuzz on May 2nd 2018 as Government Officials, Taiwanese diplomats and members of the community met at the Old Church Building to announce that Canaries was now a wifi zone!

The Saint Lucia Government Island-Wide Network (GINet) Project was officially launched in the community and is up and running. The GINet aims to help develop a wireless local area network (WLAN) in public areas of towns and villages in order to provide residents, tourists and persons conducting business with free internet access.

The GINet Project is being made possible through the generous assistance of the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the sum of USD 3.28 million with the Government of Saint Lucia providing the remaining USD 0.72 million to meet the estimated project cost of USD 4 million. In addition, the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has provided training in the installation and maintenance of the Network.

At last Wednesday's Canaries ceremony for the GINet programme, Permanent Secretary, Department of the Public Service Ms. Esther Bousquet, explained that the initiative "is meant to address the problem of the urban and rural digital divide and low home internet penetration rate."

"It includes a wireless network backbone and operation and maintenance centre and internet management platform and it is expected to provide residents, tourists and businesses alike within a quarter mile radius of wireless access points with access to internet and a platform for business," she explained.

The PS also hopes that the initiative can ensure the success of Village Tourism.

"I therefore invite App designers to don their thinking caps to design Apps which will among other things work with mapping community assets for use by locals and tourists alike as part of the village tourism," she noted.

His Excellency Douglas C.T. Shen, Ambassador to Saint Lucia for the Republic of China (Taiwan) also spoke at the event.

"Today marks the milestone of ICT development for Saint Lucia as this is the first launching ceremony for the Government Islandwide project," he noted, adding that at the G20 Ministerial meeting it was agreed that: "All people around the world should have access to internet by the year 2025. Through the efforts of our two countries Saint Lucia is moving steadily towards that goal."

Parliamentary Representative for Anse La Raye/Canaries, Dominic Fedee was elated as he spoke at the ceremony.

"We get to become the first wi-fi village in Saint Lucia!" he said. "Not Rodney Bay, not Castries but a little forgotten village on the West Coast is making history and that makes me extremely proud as the parliamentary rep."

The Minister was thankful to the Taiwanese Government stating that the friendship between Saint Lucia and Taiwan is not only felt at the diplomatic level but it is also felt at the Grass Roots level.

"The objective of bridging the Digital Divide will become a reality today here in Canaries. The GINet is expected to impact all sectors of the economy and allow for much innovation."

Minister for Infrastructure, Ports, Energy and Labour, Honourable Stephenson King, speaking on behalf of the Prime Minister at the event, began by asking the question:

Bridge the Digital Divide

“Why should someone in the north have any more accessibility to information than someone from the south or the east or west coast of our island?”

He quoted former US President Obama who said:

“The Internet is not a luxury, it is a necessity.”

“The fact is that information and communication technologies are vital to quality of life. It has the ability to transform our society, improve our mutual understanding and help us realize a truly free and democratic society,” stated the Minister.

“Today marks the beginning of a new era for Saint Lucia and specifically for this community. One where residents and visitors alike can easily access the World Wide Web and its abundance of information through the newly installed Government Island-Wide Network (GINet) facility.”

The communities identified to benefit from this first phase of the GINet are: Central Castries, Canaries, Dennery, Micoud and Vieux Fort.

The Labour Minister explained that it was alarming to discover in the 2010 Population and Housing Census that Internet penetration was at only 43 percent with most persons who have access residing in Castries and Gros Islet.

**“The Internet
is not
a luxury,
it is a
necessity.”**



GINet Installation: THANK YOU!

Expressing gratitude to all who have made the launch a reality:

- Prime Minister, Hon. Allen Chastanet – for your support and commitment to making the vision of the GINet become a reality.
- Government and people of the Republic of China (Taiwan), His Excellency Douglas C.T. Shen and the staff of the Taiwanese Embassy – thank you for your continued support
- Minister, Hon. Dominic Fedee, Parliamentary Representative for Anse La Raye Canaries
- Ms. Esther Bousquet, Permanent Secretary, Department of the Public Service for your stewardship and getting us to this point.
- Mr. Philip Dalsou and Mr. Daune Louisy
- Ministry of Physical Development, in particular the staff from the Survey and Mapping Unit
- The staff of the Office of the Prime Minister

Special mention:

- Mr. Gregory Deterville – Old Church Building, Canaries Village Council (Stakeholder)
- The Canaries Infant and Primary Schools
- Ministry of Economic Affairs especially the Minister and PS
- ECTEL and NTRC
- Minister of Labour and his ministry

Technical teams from:

- K-Best – for their technical assistance in training local personnel to install backbone and wifi devices
- Institute for Information Industry (Triple I) and Z-Com of Taiwan
- Government Information Technology Services (GITS) support team – for their help in the installation of the backbone and wifi access points
- Cable & Wireless (FLOW) along with MD Electrics
- Digicel
- The Department of the Public Service, in particular the GINet Team
- Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth development, Sports, culture, and local government
- Taiwan ICDF Project Manager, Ms. Karen Kuo
- All the stakeholders, who due to their appreciation of the importance of such an initiative, have been generous enough to allow for the installation of GINet devices on their buildings and structures.

VIEUX FORT: LET'S BUILD SOMETHING TOGETHER

Mayor Denbow: "It's not a Vieux Fort Thing, but a Southern Thing"



Remembrance Day



From left: Mayor Denbow, Min Fortuna Belrose and PS Juliana Alfred

Vieux Fort has been in the spotlight for numerous reasons lately, and much of the publicity has to do with the fact that change is on the horizon. Numerous projects are currently underway, or in the planning stages for the southern territory. Mayor of the Vieux Fort South Constituency Council, Mrs. Orricia Denbow-Bullen spoke of the Council's role in it all, as well as their plans, and objectives for 2018, and beyond.

Since assuming her post as mayor, Denbow, a retired banker, has emphasized the need for focus to be placed on accountability, customer service, and other policy areas within daily operations of the Council. She goes to the office daily, her mind spiralling with ideas, many of which have come to fruition since the start of her tenure.

Where community spirit is concerned, Mayor Denbow and her team have made a concerted effort to support events including Assou Square, Jounen Kweyol, and others in a move to spur economic activity in the community. Most of these events have been incident free, including activities connected to Remembrance Day, which included the participation of schools, the police, and other uniformed groups.

For this Council executive, educational advancement is top priority, and the education committee recently embarked on a drive to recruit persons from the area to the National Enrichment Learning Unit (NELU) – an initiative dedicated to improving literacy and other skills for those most in need. At present, NELU offers cake baking and decorating workshops, as well as plumbing courses which are all open to the public. The unit is hoping to see more graduates from these programs soon. The committee is also currently focused on promoting a community after school program, specifically targeting youth in the area.

Still in the arena of professional development, the Mayor

related that a Small Business Association of the South had recently been formulated with support from the Southern Chamber of Commerce, The Ministry of Commerce, The Saint Lucia Manufacturing Association, The Saint Lucia Industrial and Small Business Association and other stakeholders. Services offered by the Association include business registration, financial planning and guidance, and training.

"It's not a Vieux Fort thing, but a southern thing," the Mayor noted. "People were saying there was nowhere to go when they needed this kind of assistance, and now there is."

Through the Council, the Association also boasts a Business Help Desk, which provides additional assistance to those who need it. In November 2018, the Association will host an Empowerment Forum for Unemployed Youth, which will receive special assistance from sponsors, including Jet Blue representatives, who have committed to helping the cause.

The Council has remained busy in recent weeks and months, upgrading washroom facilities around the Vieux Fort Square, installing water tanks, repairing infrastructure on the roadways (particularly in the Bruce Ville area and near the Beanfield Secondary School) and supervising the de-silting of drains and waterways in the community.

"So far we've been fortunate that when there's hurricanes, Vieux Fort does not flood," the Mayor said. "We're keeping our fingers crossed that this year will be the same and in the meantime we are still taking measures to prevent disaster."

Other memorable activities and endeavours include this year's Independence lunch for residents of Comfort Bay (sponsored by Coconut Bay and Goddard's Catering), and the Dominica Relief Project, sponsored by Brice and company, D&J Company, Coconut Bay Beach Resort & Spa, Baron Foods, Fred's Lumber

Limited, Napa, All Biz, Southwell Wholesale, The Swan Limited, and Andy's Wholesale and Retail. As part of the hurricane relief initiative, supplies were shipped off to the worst affected areas in Dominica, particularly the Parish of Grand Bay.

Despite their achievements, the Vieux Fort Constituency Council has no plans on slowing down. Plans for the very near future include bringing the Vieux Fort dock back to its former glory. The Mayor says the Council will continue to work closely with SLASPA on developmental plans in that regard.

"The docks have been dormant for years," Denbow explained. "We've gone to the Taiwanese Ambassador and the funds are already there so we can re-open the docks. Before it was only for containers, but now we want it to be for vehicles, lumber, and everything you can find. That is where the economic spin off will start... you will have more people on the docks, and the business people won't have to pay \$1000 to bring their containers from the north."

She added: "The Taiwanese will also assist us in installing two fields; a football field, and beach football field, between New Dock Road and Bruce Ville. There's sufficient space for that – they're just coming up with the plans so we can look at it and take it to the stakeholders."

With DSH Pearl of the Caribbean which includes a racecourse and other major projects on the horizon, Mayor Denbow expects things to pick up rapidly in the south.

The Government has already partnered with OJO Labs to create employment in the south and the call centre is expected to employ 200 persons by the year's end. There is also a proposed development at Black Bay.

The Mayor looks forward to the Council's continued support in what can only be described as the total transformation of a once sleepy town!

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Cleaning of drains before hurricane season



OJO LABS



Water storage for the square

Labour Department aims to enhance institutional, administrative and social architecture

Following are excerpts from Hon. Stephenson King, Minister for Infrastructure, Ports, Energy and Labour, for the observance of Labour Day 2018



This year, Labour Day is observed under the theme “Uniting Workers for Social and Economic Advancement”. It is a theme that is rich in meaning, relevance and significance, and one that reinforces the absolute mandate of the labour movement throughout the World. It gives value to the advancements attained by trade unions and labour organisations and underscores the need to strengthen our resolve for social justice.

It is all too common for society to relegate of ordinary value the contributions of workers and the strides made by trade unions and Labour organisations in strengthening laws and elevating social and economic standards of workers. These achievements have certainly contributed to the overall national development of our Country. Landmark decisions and legislative changes are the bountiful harvest of the sweat, tears and even blood of our forefathers in the labour movement. Their selfless pursuit of humane standards motivated governments to respond, by legislating laws that were fair, and promoted the welfare of workers – influencing legislation with a human face, rather than a heart of exploitation. They persevered to promote legislation that recognized that people were absolutely indispensable to the production process and the accumulation of wealth.

The heightened significance that was given then, is well appreciated, as it attempted to elevate and give recognition and significance to workers. Through their engagement, workers steadily earned their rightful places in the enterprises; their Unions were forceful and proved unabated in their negotiating postures and their doctrine of “strength in unity” was espoused by their membership who; with religious fervour, followed and supported the every move of their union leaders - even governments took heed.

Being fully aware of the progress made by the Labour movement in Saint Lucia, and its contribution to the advancement of our workers, both at the workplace and in our society, it has always been my belief that Labour related matters should never be taken for granted and we, ought to recognize the role they play in nation building, stability and tranquillity. We must never cease to celebrate the strides and advances made in the lives of the hard-working men and women in our country.

Let us not lose sight of the efforts of our fore fathers as we celebrate the strength, achievements and “esprit de corps” – that sense of unity and of common interests and responsibilities, as developed among our workers, Trade Unions and Labour Organisations.

The progress and strides made by the labour movement here in Saint Lucia must always be at the fore and core of our collective consciousness. We must of necessity focus on our achievements and more

importantly aim to build on that foundation. Never should we lose sight of opportunities to make further advancements. Any oblivion on our part may result in a potential loss of ground, underscoring the need to zealously guard those advantages.

The Department of Labour commemorates this year’s celebration with activities that emphasize the spiritual, economic, social and civic significance of this prominent day of observance.

Let today be an opportunity for introspection, as workers, employers and as a nation. One in which we must challenge ourselves, by tracing our history, assessing our achievements and mapping out a revised route on the way forward. Our role and function as stakeholders must be reassessed, to determine what brand of employer or employee we are, and the classification of a nation we are building. In so doing, there must be a re-evaluation and a recommitment to the cause for which our forefathers struggled so hard to institute, to ensure the preservation of our civility.

As Minister, it is my intention to continue working collaboratively with all stakeholders, to ensure that the mandate of the Department of Labour; enshrined in its Mission Statement, is fulfilled, as we recommit to social and economic advancement.

This year, the Department will continue its work on:

- Concluding the review of the Labour Code, in preparation for consideration by the Parliament.
- Initiating the mechanism for instituting a tripartite arrangement, to engender a stable and conducive industrial climate.
- Implementing the recommendations of the Management Audit which was conducted last year, and develop a strategic plan for the Department with an appropriate structure to effectively execute the mandate of the Department.
- The full development of the Labour Market Information System to facilitate the role of the Department of Labour as a provider of information on the labour market.

These initiatives are intended to reinforce the legislative framework which governs industrial relations in Saint Lucia, in an attempt to safeguard and strengthen the gains won by workers through the trade union movement over decades. Also, the intention is to enhance the institutional, administrative and social architecture necessary for a favourable industrial climate.

I am confident that these targets can be achieved, if only we; as stakeholders, can put our shoulders to the wheel and garner the willpower necessary to fulfil such national outcomes.

SAACS HOPEFUL FOR DRUG FREE SAINT LUCIA



Challenged with the mission of fostering a drug free Saint Lucia, anti drug advocacy continues to be a top priority for the Substance Abuse Advisory Council Secretariat (SAACS). This month, the SAACS in collaboration with the Probation and Parole Department held a closing ceremony to mark the end of a six-week training programme for 16 participants.

Conducted under the theme "Break Free Through Drug Education," the training session was convened by Caleb Paul of the SAACS. The facilitator was supported by Turning Point representative Barry Modeste, and Gender Relations Representative Rohn Peter.

SAACS, guided through an advisory council mandated by cabinet has over the last few months intensified efforts to advocate against the supply and demand for illicit drugs, and the reduction of the abuse of licit substances. As part of this drive, their recent training programme focused on empowering participants to make informed choices to improve their general wellbeing. The programme is one of the many efforts of SAACS to reach out to people most in need of support and guidance.

Hubert Emmanuel, former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Former Ambassador of Saint Lucia in Taiwan

speaking at the event reminded participants of the power of the mind and the need to use their newly acquired knowledge for personal development. He also encouraged the participants to continually think of new ideas and means of creating employment and keeping occupied in a constructive and positive way.

During the interactive session, participants related their satisfaction with the programme, with one gentleman making it known how pleased he was to have been part of the experience. He related his commitment to utilizing the knowledge gained to propel himself, and his life in a more positive direction, and vowed to continue seeking self-betterment, while encouraging others to remain drug free.

Facilitator Caleb Paul of SAACS also expressed his satisfaction with the level of engagement and dedication from the participants and pledged his continued support for outreach programmes of a similar nature.

The Probation Department has vowed to continue collaborating with SAACS and encouraged the participants to seek guidance when necessary.

The graduation ceremony took place on Wednesday, May 4, at the National Skills Development Centre (NSDC), in Vieux-Fort.

NEW SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES!

Scholarship Opportunities

OAS & Galilee International Management Institute

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Galilee International Management Institute (GIMI) are offering scholarships to qualified candidates of the Americas to participate in its certificate courses. The modality of the programmes is onsite in Nahalal, Israel and the language of instruction is English.

Applicants should first apply at GIMI. Eligible participants will be asked to register for the selected course through the OAS website after registration with the GIMI. Benefits include: 100% of tuition and fees, including study materials, which will be available to 500 citizens of the Americas.

Application deadlines vary per course. <http://www.oas.org/en/scholarships/>

ITC-ILO Master's Degree Programme Scholarships

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ITC-ILO) are offering scholarships to qualified candidates of the Americas to participate in one of the ITC-ILO's Master's degree programmes below:

Master in World Heritage and Cultural Projects for Development (October 15th, 2018 - October 12th, 2019); Master in Management of Development (October 15th, 2018 - October 18th, 2019); Master in Applied Labour Economics for Development (October 22nd, 2018 - October 28th, 2020).

The deadline for university admission is May 15th, 2018 and the deadline for submission of the scholarship applications through the OAS Fellowship Management System is June 1st, 2018. More information on the programmes, scholarship benefits and candidates' responsibilities can be accessed via the OAS website.

USC Aiken Undergraduate Programmes

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the University of South Carolina, Aiken, are offering scholarships to qualified candidates of the Americas to

participate in the USC Aiken undergraduate programmes which start (Fall) August 24, 2018, and (Spring) January 2019. The modality of the course is onsite in South Carolina, United States. The end date varies per program of study.

The deadline for university admission is June 15th, 2018 (FALL 2018) and September 30, 2018 (SPRING 2019); and the deadline for submission of the scholarship applications through the OAS Fellowship Management System is June 30th, 2018 (FALL 2018) and October 15th, 2018 (SPRING 2019).

For further information on the programmes, scholarship benefits and candidates' responsibilities, visit the OAS website.

OAS and UWI Master's Degree Scholarships

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the University of the West Indies (UWI) are offering scholarships to qualified candidates of the Americas to participate in its one year masters degree programmes. The modality of the programmes is onsite in Barbados, Jamaica or Trinidad and Tobago and the language of instruction is English.

The deadline for university admission is June 4th, 2018 and the deadline for submission of the scholarship application form through the OAS Fellowship Management System is June 30th, 2018.

For further information on the programmes, scholarship benefits and candidates' responsibilities, visit the OAS website.

University of Malta Post Graduate Climate Change Courses

The University of Malta is offering full scholarships for postgraduate courses focusing on climate change, commencing in October 2018.

Each scholarship will focus on one of the following three key areas recognized as essential pathways for ensuring effective climate action on a national level: Mitigation of climate change and low carbon transportation; Adaptation to climate change to enhance resilience for the conservation of living marine resources; Climate change governance in the context of small island states and territories.

The deadline for the application is May 25th, 2018. For further information please contact the International Office of the University of Malta by email at international@um.edu.mt.

SAINT LUCIA JAZZ 2018

May 7-13

A WORLD OF JAZZ

Sandals Grande St. Lucian Spa & Beach Resort
7PM - USD40/ECD100
MON MAY 7 - Barbara Cadet • Denys Baptiste
TUE MAY 8 - Pauline Jean • Arnaud Dolmen
WED MAY 9 - Zara McFarlane • Etienne Mbappé
THU MAY 10 - Cameron Pierre • Luther François
FRI MAY 11 - Carolyn Malachi • AZIZA feat.
 Chris Potter, Dave Holland, Lionel Loueke
 & Eric Harland

A TASTE OF BOURBON STREET

Harbor Club - 7PM
USD100/ECD270
THU MAY 10 - FRI MAY 11
 Jazzmeia "Jazz" Horn

A MUSICAL TAPESTRY

Royalton Saint Lucia Resort & Spa
7PM & 11PM - USD40/ECD100
FRI MAY 11 - Lalah Hathaway
SAT MAY 12 - Alfredo Rodriguez

MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Pigeon Island National Landmark - 2PM
USD50/ECD135
SUN MAY 13
 • The Frantz Laurac Quartet
 • Ronald 'Boo' Hinkson & Friends
 • R+R=NOW with Robert Glasper,
 Terrace Martin, Christian Scott,
 Derrick Hodge, Taylor McFerrin
 & Justin Tyson • Avery*Sunshine

#SOLEILJAZZ

TICKETS: SOLEILSAINTLUCIA.COM | THE CELL OUTLETS ISLAND-WIDE

JAZZ FRINGE EVENT SCHEDULE

EVENT	VENUE	DATE
THE JAZZ SAMPLER	National Cultural Centre, Barnard Hill, Castries	April 28
VOICES ON THE BAY/BOO JAZZ&BIG CHEF	Tapas on the Bay/Big Chef	May 3-13
BB JAZZ	Bougainvillea Bluff, Tapion, Castries	May 5 - 6
Q JAZZ	Q Jazz Lounge	May 8 - 14
BANANA JAZZ	Banana COUNTRY, Rodney Bay	May 9 - 14
KEEBEE'S JAZZ	Keebee's, Rodney Bay	May 9 - 14
TEA TIME JAZZ	La Place Carenage, Castries	May 9
BEACH SUNSET JAZZ	Bay Gardens Beach Resort	May 9
JAZZMATAZZ	Coconutz, Rodney Bay	May 12
WEST COAST JAZZ	Quantum Gardens, Massacre	May 12



STRAIGHT FROM JAZZ TO CARNIVAL... THE AFTER-PARTY!

CARNIVAL KICK-OFF

PIGEON ISLAND NATIONAL LANDMARK – SUNDAY 13 MAY 2018
DESTRA • SHAL MARSHALL • DJ PUFFY • EZRA D FUN MACHINE
• MATA & MIGOS • SHEMMY J & IMRAN NERDY
• DJ HOLLYWOOD HP • EVALUCIAN

YOUR SUNDAY JAZZ TICKET GETS YOU IN!

SOLEIL - *A Mother's Day Special*

By now, you're likely to have had a chance to take in a 'World of Jazz', brought to life by performers including Barbara Cadet, Denys Baptiste, Pauline Jean, Arnaud Dolmen, Zara McFarlane, Etienne Mbappe, Cameron Pierre, Luther Francois, Carolyn Malachi and others. Perhaps you've even had 'A Taste of Bourbon Street', with the main being none other than Jazzmeia "Jazz" Horn. Sights and sounds of 'A Musical Tapestry' were not to be missed at the Royalton Resort & Spa on Friday evening featuring Lalah Hathaway, but just in case you did, there's still time to check out the second act – Alfredo Rodriguez, who'll take to the stage tonight (Saturday, May 12).

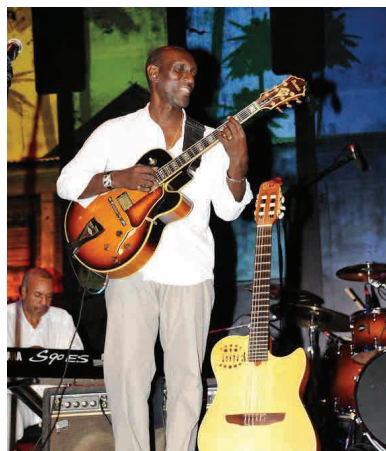
If you weren't able to make it to any of those events, or still haven't gotten your jazzy fill, Soleil presents a 'Mother's Day Special' at the Pigeon Island National Landmark on Sunday, May 13. Performers for this highly anticipated affair include The Frantz Laurac Quartet, Ronald 'Boo' Hinkson & Friends, and R+R= NOW with Robert Glasper, Terrace Martin, Christian Scott, Derrick Hodge, Taylor McFerrin & Justin Tyson, and not forgetting show stopper Avery Sunshine. Get your tickets online at soleilsaintlucia.com, or at Cell Outlets island wide!

Avery Sunshine

Ascend into heavenly bliss with musical threads from the Atlanta based singer who continues to mesmerize audiences world-wide. Avery's soulful R&B sound combined with a captivating and often humorous stage presence is sure to free your mind and soul, as she belts hits including the award winning 'Call My Name' and others. This act is not one to be missed, after all, Avery is one of those rare artistic finds who has every intention of staying true to her musical vision, empowering and encouraging others along the way.



Ronald 'Boo' Hinkson & Friends



Prepare to be mesmerized by one of Saint Lucia's most renowned artistes who has graced the jazz stage several times before. Boo Hinkson has made the rounds internationally, and continues to shine. This Sunday, he will be joined onstage by a mystery grouping of top of the line Saint Lucian acts that you'll have to be there to see for yourself!

The Frantz Laurac Quartet

Music has a way of bringing people together, and Martinique's Frantz Laurac has mastered the art. This Mother's Day, bounce around with him and his talented Quartet to jazzy and upbeat tones that will keep you in a happy zone, amplifying your love and appreciation for all things musical.

R+R= Now

Featuring Robert Glasper, Terrace Martin, Christian Scott, Derrick Hodge, Taylor McFerrin & Justin Tyson, this grouping coming together especially for the occasion promises to bring some real jazzy fire to the main stage. Christian Scott's a two-time Edison Award winning (2010 and 2012) and Grammy Award nominated trumpeter, composer, producer and music executive; Derrick Hodge is a celebrated composer and bassist; Justin Tyson – a talented and respected up-and-coming musician living in New York City, Robert Glasper – a jazz pianist with a knack for mellow, harmonically complex compositions that also reveal a subtle hip-hop influence, and Taylor McFerrin – a jazz/soul/electronic musician and producer, and Grammy award winner who has worked closely with artistes including Kendrick Lamar.



MINISTERS on the Move



Hon. Guy Joseph unveils plaque at the opening of the new Sarrot Multipurpose Court



Parliamentary Rep with the excited Champions of 2018 Ezechiel Joseph T20 Cup



Monchy vendor gets a chance to speak with Minister Montoute about the issues



All smiles for a photo with the Hon. Prime Minister in Sarrot



Youth in CDC chill and talk with Castries Central MP Sarah Flood-Beaubrun

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SAINT LUCIA WE LOVE

Did you know...

Part of the Commonwealth of Nations, Saint Lucia recognizes Queen Elizabeth the II as Head of State. The Queen is represented on island by a Governor-General – Neville Cenac, the island's recently appointed Royal representative.

At present, there are 13 constituency councils established on island. These include councils in the communities of Babonneau, Canaries, Gros Islet, Dennery North, Dennery South, Choiseul, Micoud North, Micoud South, Anse La Raye, Castries South East, Soufriere, Vieux Fort North, and Castries.

Piton Beer, brewed by the Windward and Leeward Brewery is named after the island's most recognized touristic landmarks, Gros Piton and Petit Piton. The beer commands a significant portion of the island's market share for lager beer and is a favourite of locals and tourists alike!

The French, the first European settlers to Saint Lucia, signed a treaty with native Caribs on the island between the years 1663 to 1667.

The theme for National Day 2017 was "I Am Saint Lucia." National Day is observed annually on December 13. In recent times, National Day has become synonymous with national pride, with cultural performances and other demonstrations taking place throughout the island.

Trek to Pigeon Island!

WEEKEND WARRIOR

The place to be this weekend is undoubtedly the Pigeon Island National Landmark. While Jazz will be hitting the main stage from 2pm, it's also the perfect opportunity to bask in the natural ambiance of the venue. On a regular day, the Pigeon Island National Landmark plays host to everything from weddings, to tours... to simply being the backdrop of the most unforgettable beach days. Any one of those occasions is made even more memorable considering the rich history of the landmark.

West Coast Jazz

with a Latin Flare!

May 12th 2018

2pm • Quantum Gardens
Massacre, Anse La Raye



ANTONIUS HENRY
CHARLES CADET ORCHESTRA
ROB ZII & PHYNESS
EVALUCIAN

ADRIAN OROPEZA
TRIO FROM MEXICO

FROM CUBA
DEBOSON

ADMISSION \$30
CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE

EVENTS
SAINT LUCIA

