



# NationWIDE

SATURDAY APRIL 16, 2016

## Heroes Homecoming for National Cricket Stars!



### Darren Sammy National Cricket Stadium



When the Beausejour Cricket Ground (BCG) was built in 2002, Darren Julius Garvey Sammy was a young member of the Windward Island cricket team and a member of the West Indies Under-19 Youth team. The BCG would immediately set Saint Lucia off the mark in scoring what would eventually be several records in West Indies Cricket history: the first stadium specifically built for cricket in the Caribbean; and the model after which all others were fashioned ahead of the ICC Cricket World Cup being hosted by the West Indies in 2007. But back then, none at the stadium or viewing around the world had any reason to think that just nine years later, the BCG would have been renamed after Darren Sammy. Born on 20 December 1983, Sammy made his One Day International (ODI) debut against Bangladesh in 2004. Three years later, he made his Test debut against England, taking 7 for 66 -- the best bowling figures for a West Indian in his first Test since Sir Alf Valentine in 1950. Sammy was appointed West Indies Captain in October 2010 and scored his maiden Test century of 106 in May 2012, also against England. Sammy also plays in the Indian Premier League as Captain of Hyderabad. He also plays in the Caribbean Premier League. Sammy is the only captain in the cricketing world who has won the ICC World T20 Championship twice: the first being in 2012 against Sri Lanka -- which became the first major West Indies trophy for eight years. Sammy would again captain the West Indies to the 2016 ICC World Twenty20 victory against England at this year's tournament in India earlier this month. For all these reasons, Saint Lucians are proud to have had the BCG renamed the Darren Sammy National Cricket Stadium. (More on Back Page). Read on and Enjoy! And watch *NationwideTV* on NTN and browse the Nationwide Website at [stlucianationwide.com](http://stlucianationwide.com)

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Happy Reading! Happy Viewing! Happy Browsing!



## Dame Pearlette Louisy Legacy Committee reveals plans to honour legacy of island's long-serving Governor General

A cadre of patriotic Saint Lucians have formed an organisation to honour the legacy of the island's Governor-General, Dame Pearlette Louisy.

The Dame Pearlette Louisy Legacy Committee was founded in December 2014 for the sole purpose of chronicling, preserving and celebrating the contributions of Saint Lucia's longest serving Governor-General.

Chairman of the Dame Pearlette Louisy Legacy Committee, Dr. Winston Paris, said for the past eighteen years, the Governor-General has devoted significant efforts to the island's development.

According to Dr Paris, "Our Governor General has remained productive, she has served with distinction, in many fields -- the field of governance, certainly in the field of culture, in the field of education, particularly where she was the principal of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.

"She has contributed to the field of education, she has contributed to many important national events, for example, the Jounen Kwéyòl, which is famously known throughout Saint Lucia, everyone is looking forward to October and that event, the Nobel Laureate Week in February... her finger-



The committee was founded in December 2014 for the purpose of preserving and celebrating the contributions of Saint Lucia's longest serving Governor-General.

prints are all over that event."

Dr. Paris said he specifically sought the permission and encouragement of the Governor General before embarking upon projects to capture her contributions to Saint Lucia.

He explained, "The issuance of two scholarships in Dame Pearlette Louisy's name -- one for a student from Laborie and the second for a student from anywhere else in Saint Lucia.

"The third project is for the issuance of a first day cover stamp,

in her honour, her picture on it, and that is a work in progress, and it should happen sometime shortly.

"There is another project, which is the creation of a room in a special place we have identified for iconic Laborie residents, but the primary icon is going to be Dame Pearlette Louisy."

Meanwhile, various other projects celebrating the life and career of Governor General of Saint Lucia, Dame Pearlette Louisy will also unfold in the months to come.

## Tourist Board in UK selling Love in Saint Lucia

The romance market continues to be an important focus for the Saint Lucia Tourist Board (SLTB) UK.

Later this month, the SLTB will roll out a series of marketing activities to promote weddings and honeymoons in Saint Lucia, including an advertorial, a full page advert, a website take over and solus e-mails with You and Your Wedding magazine and hitched.co.uk.

A new romance micro site, [www.saintluciauk.org/love](http://www.saintluciauk.org/love), and a press release on wedding and honeymoon trends will also be launched this month.

The romance activities continue into next month with the first "Love in Saint Lucia" consumer event taking place in Knightsbridge, London on May 19.

Six hotels and event sponsors, Caribtours and You and



The Saint Lucia Tourist Board will roll out a series of marketing activities to promote weddings and honeymoons on the island.

Your Wedding magazine will join Saint Lucia in showcasing the destination and driving romance bookings.

SLTB UK will also be working with British Airways on a number of activities to keep Saint Lucia in mind for summer

bookings.

There will be ads across the British Airways website for the months of April and May, an advertorial in the May issue of BA's inflight magazine HighLife, and a pre-roll video will be shown in-flight in June.

## St. Lucia bidding for bigger slice of French market!



Pigeon Island, Saint Lucia is very popular with French visitor to the island

The Saint Lucia Tourist Board's Paris office organized a workshop in the Paris Opera building on March 22 in France.

Twelve Saint Lucian hotel partners and destination management companies, including: The Body Holiday, Sugar Beach Viceroy, Bay Gardens Beach Resort and Calabash Cove, among others.

They joined the Saint Lucia Tourist at the stunning National Opera House building in Paris to

host over 73 French tour operators, travel agents and press.

One-on-one meetings were held throughout the day to strengthen relationships and increase business from the French market.

Operators were impressed with the range of products available in Saint Lucia and a number of new French tour operators will be featuring the destination from winter 2016 onwards.

As a result of the Paris workshop, the Thomas Cook France

product manager selected four new Saint Lucia hotels to feature this coming winter 2016/2017.

Several other French tour operators such as TUI, Turquoise and Exotismes attended the Paris workshop and will also be adding new hotels in the next brochures.

Partners were also pleased to meet new and existing upscale agencies and the luxury market in France continues to increase for Saint Lucia as a destination

## Editorial

# Filling the gap!



When Barack Obama was elected General Elections approaching, there's been quite some mischievous speculation being fueled and banded about lately by some small players in the tourism industry with big political plans for it.

Unable to reverse the advances being made by the Saint Lucia Tourist Board and sorely wishing otherwise, the preachers of doom and gloom have been forecasting only bad weather and rough seas ahead for the island's cruise industry.

Citing undeclared sources and quoting un-sourced figures, some have said some important cruise lines are 'thinking' about stopping calls to Saint Lucia 'due to the crime rate.' And now they cite 'Zika!'

But the predictions of gloom have been overcome by the comparative boom in arrival figures and the verifiable boon in performance figures being registered year after year, thanks to the Tourist Board's successful marketing techniques.

The Tourist Board's continued success in selling 'Simply Beautiful Saint Lucia' is also responsible for the decision by P&O, one of the world's largest cruise lines, to make this island a Caribbean home port as of November 2016 for its newest and largest ship.

The Board is confident its

fruitful marketing of the island worldwide will continue to reap the increasingly regular rewards in the growing numbers of world tourism awards being won by the island and its hotels each year.

Indeed, Saint Lucia is nominated for another four top world tourism awards this year and votes are indeed being cast online every day in each of the categories by the millions everywhere who have savoured our fare.

The accolades being won by the island are expected to draw even more visitors from Europe, the USA and other traditional sources. But new and non-traditional sources are also being positively tapped, from the recent sale of Destination Saint Lucia in the UK and France (on this Page) to the continuous efforts to attract more visitors from as far as Asia and close as neighbouring Caribbean and Latin American markets.

The vagaries of the tourism industry are well known by the critics, but better understood by the doers and shakers who shape and guide the industry here.

Yes, it's never known when what will happen. But being prepared is what counts -- and the arrival of P&O's 'Britannia' to its new Caribbean home port here in November will certainly help fill any unexpected and/or unavoidable gap in cruise calls that may be thrown Saint Lucia's way between now and then.

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## PM welcomes new flour mill investment in Vieux Fort



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony (left) recently visited the Caribbean Grains Flour Mill currently under construction at the Vieux Fort seaport.

Prime Minister and Parliamentary Representative for Vieux Fort South, Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony has welcomed a new investment into the town of Vieux Fort.

Caribbean Grains Flour Mill, which proposes to employ over 100 persons upon completion, is currently under construction at the Vieux Fort seaport.

According to the Prime Minister, the flour mill is a major boost for the south of the island. "I welcome this investment, particularly because of the job opportunities it presents now and in the future," he said.

"Over the years, we have had the challenge of dealing with unemployment in Vieux Fort, particularly as most of our factories have closed and moved overseas.

"The challenge then has been to find alternatives and to at-

tract investors to the south of the island.

"This is a timely and much appreciated investment in Vieux Fort. For many, it is nostalgic, as a flour mill once existed in the same location.

"This is also good news for Saint Lucia, because once fully operational, this would make us self-sufficient in producing flour for our needs."

During his Constituency Day on March 30, the Prime Minister toured the construction site and was briefed of the current status of the project.

The project currently employs 26 individuals and engages five sub-contractors.

Construction commenced in October 2015 and is expected to be completed in July.

The investors have expressed a desire to be fully operational by November.

## Postal Service wins second consecutive Global Gold Award

For the second consecutive year, the Saint Lucia Postal Service has received a gold award and a First Place ranking among the 192 member countries of the Universal Postal Union, for its delivery performance in express mail items for 2015.

On April 5, the Saint Lucia Postal Service was awarded Gold for 2015, a repeat of their performance for 2014, admirably capturing the most coveted number one spot once again.

Each year, the Universal Postal Union recognizes countries with consistent high Express Mail Service (EMS) performance.

The awards are given at three levels -- Gold, Silver and Bronze

-- based on key performance indicators of delivery performance, track and trace performance, EMS Service information and Customs information.

Performance is monitored and compiled independently by Price Waterhouse Coopers.

For 2015, some 20 countries qualified for awards, with 11 countries awarded Gold.

Saint Lucia is the only Caribbean country to have won Gold, while some five countries got Silver and four got Bronze.

Management of the Saint Lucia Postal Service congratulated the staff for their efforts in gaining the prestigious and competitive award in the global postal sector.

## Ministry tackling plastic waste disposal

Senator Dr. James Fletcher, Minister for Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, yesterday convened a meeting to discuss the vexing problem of plastic litter disposal on the island.

Saint Lucia has long grappled with the improper disposal of plastic litter.

The indiscriminate disposal of plastics -- from shopping bags and beverage bottles to Styrofoam containers -- has created serious environmental issues.

A Returnable Containers Bill was drafted a few years ago, but has not yet been brought to Parliament.

While the Ministry of Sustainable Development remains optimistic that the bill will be finalized soon, it views the

problem of plastic waste as severe enough to seek a solution prior to passing legislation.

Recently, some Caribbean territories -- Antigua and Barbuda and Guyana -- have instituted bans on plastic grocery bags and Styrofoam storage containers, and other countries are looking at the success of these initiatives to determine whether they should follow suit.

The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology believes any solution must have support from a broad cross-section of society in order to be successful, which is why it brought together all relevant bodies to discuss possible solutions. The meeting was chaired by the Minister. (More on Page 4)

## Minister leads tour of major Micoud water projects

Minister of the Public Service, Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology Senator the Dr. James Fletcher on Thursday led a press tour to water projects in Micoud and Desruisseaux.

The project is funded by the European Union (EU) in the amount of € 810,000 to the beneficiary of Saint Lucia, the National Authorizing Officer (NAO).

The Water and Sewerage Company Inc acts as the project supervisor.

In Micoud, the project seeks to increase the water treatment plant capacity by 1,364 cubic meters or 300,038 imperial gallons and improve resilience of the treatment process to turbid waters caused by erosion and/or landslides during rain events.

The objective is to improve access with a consistent and sustainable supply of safe drinking water in the Micoud community.

It includes construction of a clarifier, filter and renovation



Works are well under way at the WASCO projects in Micoud, alongside several others taking place around the island.

work to the grounds at the Micoud Treatment Plant.

The Desruisseaux intake was built to accommodate 864 cubic meters of water, which is equivalent to 190,000 (UK) imperial gallons per day of water.

This phase of the project in-

volves the construction of an intake plant at Desruisseaux, rehabilitation and upgrades of the treatment plant, replenishment of sand in the filter, supply and replacement of missing parts of the treatment plan. (More Water News on Page 5)

## CDF to host Vieux Fort Street Theatre, Arts and Cultural Exposé next Saturday

The public is invited to the Vieux-Fort Street Theatre, Arts and Cultural Exposé on Clarke Street, Vieux-Fort on Saturday 23 April at 3:30PM.

This event is part of the 2016 National Arts Festival (NAF) spearheaded by the Cultural Development Foundation (CDF).

The event will include street drama, fashion show, dance, masquerade, steel-pan, and poetry. In addition, several visual artists will be invited to paint street-side, and a team of citizens will create a community collage, using paint and plywood.

Earlier in the year, several Vieux Fort groups met with representatives from the Cultural Development Foundation (CDF).

The meeting created a sustain-



Sneak Peek: Street Theatre will bring these and many other catwalk thrills to Vieux Fort next Saturday.

able group for the development of arts and culture in Vieux Fort by ensuring that Vieux-Fort is featured in the national calen-

dar of events, including the upcoming National Arts Festival. Next Saturday's activity is a free public event.

## Government to increase wheelchair accessibility in Castries

The Government of Saint Lucia is embarking on the construction of Wheel Chair Access in the City of Castries to aid in creating accessibility for differently able persons within the City Circuit.

The project will be financed by the Constituency Development Programme and will be supervised by the Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport.

A total of fifteen (15) access ramps equipped with hand rails will be constructed along various

streets across the City of Castries. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines will be adopted as the standard for the Wheelchair Access Project.

The project will cost approximately \$180,000 and is expected to change the physical and social character of the city and ensure that the differently-able persons have physical access to buildings and other spaces that are used by the public, as well as changes to ensure their access to employment, services and civil participation.

The Government of Saint Lucia will ensure that the relevant stakeholders and emergency and safety agencies are informed of this project in an effort to safeguard and minimize the possibility of emergencies.

The Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport solicits the cooperation and patience of the commercial houses, pedestrians and general public and wishes to apologize for any inconvenience which may be caused during the project implementation

## Gros Islet MP hosts Project Writing workshop today

Parliamentary Representative for Gros Islet Emma Hippolyte will today host a Training Workshop on 'Writing Project Proposals' for community organizations in the Gros Islet district.

The workshop, which will

be held at the Conference room of the Ministry of Infrastructure from 9am, will facilitate 50 persons.

According to the District Representative, the objective is to assist with the capacity development of the community groups so that they can improve upon

the implementation of their activities and programs.

The Facilitator for the workshop is Ms. Krystal Lucien and it will be formally opened by Ms. Hippolyte, who is organizing the event for the second consecutive year.



## Saint Lucia to ratify Paris Climate Change agreement next week

The Government of Saint Lucia will sign and ratify the Paris Agreement on Climate Change when the Agreement is opened for signature on Friday 22nd April, 2016 during a High Level Ceremony to be hosted by Secretary General Ban Ki Moon at UN Headquarters.

Saint Lucia played a leading role during the negotiations that led to the adoption of the historic climate change agreement in Paris in December 2016.

The country's minister for Public Service, Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, Sen. Hon. Dr James Fletcher led a strong CARICOM negotiating team that fought for and was successful in getting many critical issues reflected in the Paris Agreement.

Saint Lucia's minister also served as one of the ministerial facilitators appointed by then COP21 President Laurent Fabius to help reach agreement on some of the difficult issues.

Hon. James Fletcher chairs the Regional Task Force on Sustainable Development that was established by CARICOM Heads of Government and he is also the chair of the Regional Coordinating Committee on Climate Change.

The High Level signing ceremony is expected to attract more than 130 nations, with over sixty world leaders expected to sign the landmark climate agreement on Earth Day, 22nd April, 2016.

This will mark the most ever signatures for a UN Agreement on an opening day. Hon. James Fletcher will lead Saint Lucia's

delegation and sign the Paris Agreement on behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia.

By also depositing its instrument of ratification, Saint Lucia will become one of the first countries to have ratified the Paris Agreement.

The Paris Agreement will legally come into force when at least 55 countries representing 55% of global emissions ratify it.

In addition to representing Saint Lucia at the High Level Signing Ceremony for the Paris Agreement, Hon. Dr. James Fletcher has been invited to participate in the High Level Thematic Debate on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which will take place at UN Headquarters on Thursday 21st April, 2016.



The Paris Agreement will legally come into force when at least 55 countries representing 55% of global emissions ratify it.

This event, which is being hosted by the President of the UN General Assembly, is expected to bring together global political, business and society

leaders to increase international awareness and political momentum around the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## Geothermal Energy drilling in Soufriere to start by 2018

Saint Lucia is on target to begin geothermal exploratory drilling. Recently completed surface exploration studies, designed to better understand Saint Lucia's geothermal resource conditions, suggest that the resource exists outside of both the Sulphur Springs area and the Piton Management Area (PMA).

This is good news as earlier concerns about threats to the integrity of the PMA by this project will now be precluded.

The final technical report on these surface exploration activities is being discussed at a series of geothermal meetings held April 12 - 14 at the Bay Gardens

Inn, Rodney Bay.

In addition, meetings will be held between LUCELEC and the proposed geothermal developer to reach consensus on a term sheet towards the signing of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), and a term sheet between the Government of Saint Lucia and the geothermal developer to reach consensus on a Geothermal Development Agreement (GDA). The meetings will further advance the Geothermal Resource Development Project.

The development of a geothermal resource is in keeping with government's policy objective to reduce Saint Lucia's dependence on fossil

fuels for energy generation.

In 2014, Saint Lucia committed to achieving a national target of meeting 35 percent of its energy requirements from renewable sources by the year 2020. The Government of Saint Lucia envisages that developing the country's geothermal resource is a key strategy and a practical way to meet its sustainable energy target.

In light of this policy objective, the Government obtained financial assistance and technical support from a number of development partners to advance efforts towards the development of the country's geothermal resource.

The World Bank assisted Saint Lucia in accessing approximately US\$2 million from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the SIDS DOCK Support Program for the Geothermal Resource Development Project.

Technical assistance valued at US\$800,000 was received from the Government of New Zealand and US\$500,000 of in-kind support was received from the Clinton Climate Initiative to assist this initiative.

The Government of Saint Lucia has secured the services of a consultant to assist with the ongoing negotiations with a qualified geothermal developer, to in-

vest in the geothermal wells, the steam gathering system and the geothermal power plant. In addition, government is in the process of securing the services of consultants, who will carry out an environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) including public consultations, as well as a pre-feasibility assessment to decide whether to proceed with the exploratory drilling stage.

It is expected that this phase of the Geothermal Development Project should be completed by the first quarter of 2017, with a view to commencing exploratory drilling in a new resource development area by 2018.

### ECTEL Council met here to improve draft OECS Telecoms Legislation

Ministers with responsibility for Telecommunications in the region of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) met in Saint Lucia earlier this week to discuss new legislation designed to strengthen consumer rights and ensure that the climate for investment remains competitive.

The main agenda item for the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) Council of Ministers' 33rd meeting was the new draft Electronic Communications (EC) Bill.

The EC Bill contains changes to the licensing process that will facilitate investment in all ECTEL member states; new rules that address competition issues facing the sector; and recommendations for strengthening the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commissions (NTRCS) to make it more effective. The bill also contains improved rules for resolving quality of service issues faced by consumers.

At the meeting, the ECTEL Council of Ministers will, additionally, discuss new quality of service regulations, consumer protection regulations, retail pricing, wholesale pricing, and the sharing of infrastructure; and consider a recommendation on measures to address the im-

pact of the merger of Cable & Wireless Communications and Columbus International in light of the impasse in negotiations between ECTEL and the companies.

Managing Director of ECTEL, Embert Charles, said the meeting was an important one that will advance the policy objectives of member states.

"These submissions to the ministers are in response to the directives of the ECTEL Council of Ministers late last year for the Directorate to advance the process of regulatory reform, in order to address the wide range of emerging issues in the electronic communications sector in ECTEL member states."

Following deliberations, the approved new regulatory instruments, including the EC Bill and an amended ECTEL Treaty will be submitted to the member states for promulgation.

The ECTEL Council of Ministers is made up of ministers responsible for telecommunications in the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The governments of Antigua and Barbuda and Montserrat have been participating, as observers, in the deliberations of the ECTEL Council of Ministers since 2012.

### Third round of consultations held on new electricity regulations

The Government of Saint Lucia, through the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology has held a third round of national consultations on electricity sector reform.

At the consultation, consultant Karen Stephen-Dalton, attorney-at-law, presented the draft electricity legislation.

Mrs. Dalton had been contracted under the Eastern Caribbean

Energy Regulatory Authority (ECERA) project by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and is acting on behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia, to draft electricity sector laws and other statutory instruments.

The consultation provided the opportunity for stakeholders to give verbal and written feedback.

Three draft regulations were introduced under the new Electric-

ity Supply Services Bill: customer code, fair competitive regulations, and licensing regulations.

The development of new electricity sector laws is one of the outputs under the ECERA project managed by the OECS Commission, on behalf of the governments of Saint Lucia and Grenada.

The consultation was held at the Rex Saint Lucian conference room, Rodney Bay, on April 6.

### Ministry hosted Climate Change Consultations with stakeholders

The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, through its Sustainable Development and Environment Division last week hosted a consultation under the Vulnerability and Adaptation (V&A) Assessment Component of its Third National Communication (TNC) Program to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

This program to date has completed two critical components namely a "Greenhouse Gas Inventory" and a "Mitigation to Climate Change Assessment".

Sector consultations under the V&A Assessment Component were held with stakeholders from April 4 - 6.

The stakeholders included the agriculture sector (including livestock and crop farmers, fisher folk as well as technical and extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Production, Fisheries, Cooperatives and Rural Development); the water sector (including stakeholders from the Water and Sewerage Company, the National Utility Regulatory Commission, the Water Resource Management Agency, the Forestry Division



The consultation presented a summary of findings per sector on climate change vulnerability and adaptation.

and the Meteorology Office); the coastal zone and tourism sector (including Ministry of Physical Development, Housing and Urban Renewal, the Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association, the Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards, the National Conservation Authority and the Soufriere Marine Management Area and the Labrie Development Foundation); the human health sector (including stakeholders from the Epidemiology Unit and the Department of Environmental Health of the Ministry of Health, Wellness, Human Services and Gender Relations and the Caribbean Public Health Agency); and the financial services sector (including stakehold-

ers from the Saint Lucia Development Bank, the Insurance Council of Saint Lucia, the Ministry of Finance and the St. Lucia Civil Service Cooperative Credit Union).

The final consultation was held at the Orchid Conference Room situated at the Tissue Culture Laboratory.

The consultation provided information on the science of climate change, presented a summary of findings on sector consultations and provided overall context of the Third National Communication Project.

The work under this program is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and is implemented by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).



## 75,000-gallon water tank to help La Haut enhance Climate Change resilience

Saint Lucia's Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO), along with the Windward & Leeward Brewery Limited (WLBL) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), through its International Water Stewardship Program (IWASP), are engaging in a water stewardship partnership to provide a 75,000 gallon potable water

tank for the community of La Haut in Laborie, on the island's south-west coast.

WLBL and the GIZ each contributed US\$90,000 towards the realization of the project, resulting in a total of US \$180,000 (EC \$489,052) invested.

The potable water tank is intended to enhance water security for the people of La Haut by ensuring that there will be

a supply of water for the community.

The project is also intended to develop greater levels of Climate Change Resilience, should there be any major interruption on the raw water system, treatment plant or supply line. The project is being undertaken by WASCO and is due to start this month (April) and will last for 13 weeks.



Laborie MP Alva Baptiste cut the ribbon recently for the new major water project, assisted by Horst Vogel of GIZ and WLBL's Sebastian Sanchez (at right)

## New ICT centre opened in Canaries

The Government of Saint Lucia has taken a significant step in bridging the digital divide when it opened a new, modern, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) community access centre in Canaries on Thursday.

The village of Canaries was identified in the 2010 national census as being the community with the lowest level of internet penetration on the island.

With an internet penetration rate of less than 15% in 2010, Canaries immediately became a focus of the administration to improve the level of ICT services available to the residents of the scenic western village.

The new community ICT access centre in Canaries is the second such centre to be commissioned on the west coast, following the establishment of a similar centre in Soufriere a little over two years ago.

The centre is equipped with computers, printers, a projector, an electronic whiteboard and free broadband internet access.

It is expected that, like the Soufriere ICT access centre, the Canaries centre will be a focal point for community training in digital services, provide access for residents of the community wishing to access the internet and use the services of the centre for research and other productive purposes, and provide an internet Wi-Fi hot spot for students and other residents of the village.

Minister for the Public Service, Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, whose ministry is spearheading the initiative, said the Canaries ICT Access Centre allows the government to provide greater access to citizens on a range of services that will soon be digitized, such as the payment of driver's licenses.

Dr. Fletcher also indicated that over the next eight weeks, his ministry will commission similar modern ICT access centres across the country.

The official opening of the Canaries ICT access centre took place on April 14.

## Contracts signed for four retaining walls for Marchand River Stabilization Project

The Government of Saint Lucia has signed contracts for the construction of four retaining walls along the Marchand river, as part of the Marchand River Protection Project, which is a component of the Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Program (DVRP).

At the recent contract signing ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport and Parliamentary Representative for Castries East, Hon. Philip J. Pierre spoke about the benefits of the project.

He said residents in homes located along the Marchand Tiver can look forward to relief from flooding, land slippage and the effects of other natural hazards, adding that the project complements the Public Sanitation Facility currently under construction in the George Charles Boulevard.

Infrastructure Minister Philip J. Pierre and Permanent Secretary Alison Jean (at left) and contractors signed-up for the four projects during a ceremony that was both public and transparent, in the presence of residents affected by the current conditions. (Marius Modeste photo).

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Earlier slope stabilization works at Entrepot are also linked to plans to build a wall stretching from the Entrepot Bridge to the Marchand



Infrastructure Minister Philip J. Pierre and Permanent Secretary Alison Jean (at left) and contractors signed-up for the four projects during a ceremony that was both public and transparent, in the presence of residents affected by the current conditions. (Marius Modeste photo).



Earlier slope stabilization works at Entrepot are also linked to plans to build a wall stretching from the Entrepot Bridge to the Marchand Bridge. (Marius Modeste photo)

Bridge. (Marius Modeste photo)

Both projects, he said, are meant to improve the living conditions of all his constituents, thus ensuring that they are afforded an opportunity to live full and productive lives.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Infrastructure, Allison A. Jean, said that the latest phase of construction work will result in the construction of a continuous wall from the Entrepot Bridge to the Marchand Bridge, in keeping with the Ministry of Infrastructure's philosophy to "Build Back Better."

Additionally, she appealed to residents who live near the river to dispose of their solid waste prop-

erly, to help further reduce the possibility of flooding.

In this new phase of the Marchand River Protection Project, four retaining walls will be built and or rehabilitated at a cost of EC \$732,197.55.

Over all, a total of 14 retaining walls and two drains will be constructed at approximately US\$2.5 million or EC \$6.7 million.

This phase of work is funded by the World Bank under the Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project (DVRP).

The contracts were awarded through a tender process and signed at an official ceremony.

## Infrastructure Ministry hosts strategic planning workshop



The workshop was one in a series of sessions to prepare a strategic plan for the period 2016 - 2020.

The Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport recently held a strategic planning workshop.

The workshop, facilitated by Deputy Permanent Secretary Ivor Daniel, aimed to examine the successes and shortcomings of the Ministry of Infrastructure over the past years, and to position the ministry and staff to meet the expectations of the public.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Infrastructure, Allison A. Jean, in her opening remarks told participants to view the strategic planning exercise as an opportunity for retrospection and introspection.

She was hopeful that at the conclusion of the exercise, the ministry would be in a position

to better dispense its mandate.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport Hon. Philip J. Pierre commended the staff of the ministry for the quality of work and the efficient use of limited resources over the last four years.

He added that because the work of the Ministry of Infrastructure impacts on lives, people's futures and their well being, staff must strive at all times to deliver the highest quality of work.

The workshop was one in a series of sessions to prepare a strategic plan for the period 2016 - 2020 and was held on April 5. (See Infrastructure Ministry's finished works on Pages 6, 7 and 8)

## Tax Service help desk established at Soufriere Access Centre

The Inland Revenue Department (IRD) would like to inform the general public, especially taxpayers in the south, that a Tax Service Help Desk has been established at the Soufriere Community Access Centre

from March 21, until further notice.

The Help Desk provides assistance in filing tax returns, as well as transact other business regarding corporation taxes, VAT or other taxes.

This is an effort to facilitate the easy filing of tax returns

and other transactions during the closure of its usual office location.

Persons needing more information can contact the Vieux Fort Tax Service Center at 758.468.4961 or IRD's main office at 758.468.4700, for details



# PATHS OF DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHWAYS TO THE FUTURE!

**The Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport has never stopped rebuilding and developing the island's pathways and roadways, byways and highways, in every constituency and community touched (so far) in the past four years. The projects highlighted through these pages bear testimony to the fact that under the leadership of Deputy Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre, the Infrastructure Ministry is truly building new paths to development and clear highways to Saint Lucia's future!**

## Fond Cacao Road Rehabilitation Project

The Fond Cacao Road Rehabilitation project commenced in November 2015. One (1) Km of road was rehabilitated with a concrete, two retaining walls will be built and the accompanying drainage works were also included. During a town hall meeting held on 26th November 2015 to discuss the road project with Fond Cacao residents, Parliamentary Representative Ms. Alvina Reynolds was happy that this project is being undertaken, and she was aware that this road would bring much needed relief to residents who had for decades endured poor road conditions.



## Gesneau Slope Stabilisation and Road Reinstatement Project

One of the biggest landslides triggered by the passage of Hurricane Tomas in 2010 is the Gesneau landslide. The important road connecting the Babonneau Community with the Gesneau Road was severed and several families were displaced as their homes were lost.

Work is progressing smoothly on efforts to stabilize the slope and reinstate the Gesneau Road leading to Babonneau. This project is expected to be completed by the end of April 2016. This project is being undertaken with funding from the Caribbean Development Bank.



## Ciceron Road Rehabilitation

This road project is one of five road rehabilitation projects which commenced in November 2015. The entire Ciceron Road is being rehabilitated. Currently, the contractor is paving the final layer.



## Entrepot River Slope Stabilisation Project

Prior to this project, residents whose houses are located near the Entrepot River feared losing their homes as land slippages were threatening their homes. In response to this threat, the Government of St. Lucia sought the assistance of the Caribbean Development Bank to fund the Entrepot River Slope Stabilisation Project.

This project caused walls to be constructed along the Entrepot River to provide some protection from Landslides and flooding. The project was completed in January 2016.



## Ti La Resource Road Rehabilitation Project

This road is a major community road in Dennery North. It provides access to the largest cemetery in Dennery North and also serves as a reliable by pass road to the Aux Lyon community when the area near the La Resource School and Church is congested. This project will result in improved drainage and the construction of a new concrete road surface. This project started in December 2016 and was completed in March 2016.



## Cul De Sac/Souci Road Improvement Project and Water Infrastructure Upgrade

This project had two components, namely the rehabilitation of the Souci Road and replacing the existing 2" water main with a 4" main. This project started in late February 2016. Based on the feedback received from the residents, these new projects are very timely and transformed the landscape of the community, creating ease of travel.



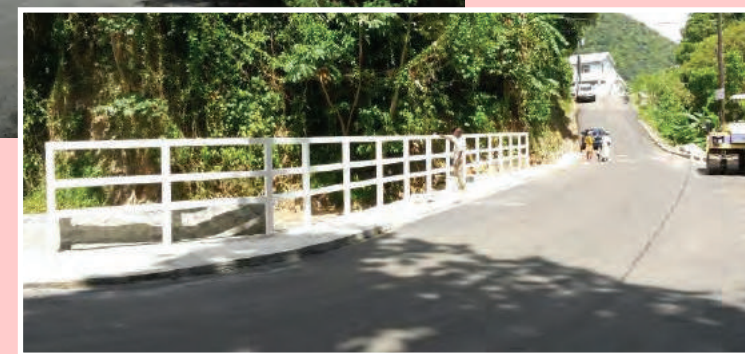
## Caico Road Rehabilitation Project

Full rehabilitation of the Caico/Millet road will be undertaken along with Drainage improvement and construction of new retaining walls.



## Mocha Bridge

The old Mocha Bridge was severely damaged during the passage of Hurricane Tomas, but in May 2013, further deterioration forced the closure of this bridge and subsequently, a new and better bridge was constructed. In April 2014, a new bridge accommodating two lanes of traffic replacing the single lane bridge was officially opened.



## Sulphur Springs Road Rehabilitation

The passage of Hurricane Tomas caused severe deterioration to this road. A number of landslides reduced the road carriage to a single lane, and the drive to the Sulphur Springs Park was made very difficult and challenging. The project resulted in a better road, improved drainage, an extended parking area and a more resilient road leading to the park. This project was completed in September 2016.



## Cannelles

This open gorge was the result of an unusual weather system which has been called the 2013 Christmas Eve Through. Two persons died when their vehicle fell into this hole during the passage of this system. New concrete reinforced culverts were placed and the road carriage was reinstated.



## Beasejour Roads Project

A total of seven roads in the Beasejour community were rehabilitated between July and September 2015. These community roads were difficult to traverse after heavy showers, and generally made traversing them very difficult. The following roads were targeted: Damhiel Hill, Vincent Drive, Lake Side View, Conrad Larcher Road, Julian Hunte Drive and Ernest Hilaire Drive.





# PATHS OF DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHWAYS TO THE FUTURE!

## Balca Road Rehabilitation

These roads were rehabilitated using the Finance and Build Models. Prior to this project, these roads were in very poor condition.



## Darban Road Rehabilitation Project

Similar to the Balca Project, these roads were hardly motorable. The intervention of the Government has resulted in easier commute to their homes and businesses, a more reliable public transportation system and an overall improvement in the quality of life of the affected residents.



## Mountain Springs River Slope Stabilisation Project

This project, just as the Entrepot River Project was developed because of the need to save properties located along the river bank from land slippage.



## Dierre Morne Bridge

Like many of the bridges replaced in the past few years, the old bridge was severely compromised by Hurricane Tomas. A new two lane bridge with sidewalk was built.





## New Choiseul school designs to be displayed and discussed today

The Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport in collaboration with the Project Coordinating Unit of the Department of Planning and National Development will host a Stakeholders/Community Meeting at the Choiseul Secondary School today, Saturday April 16, starting at 3:00 pm. The meeting is to present the designs for the New Choiseul

Secondary School Block B and C. In June 2011, the findings of a structural analysis recommended that Blocks B and C of the Choiseul Secondary School be replaced due to structural capacity. Since then, the Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Service and Transport, Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development and the Department of Planning and National De-

velopment have engaged consultants to develop appropriate designs and have also held discussions with stakeholders. Invitation for Bids for the construction for the Choiseul Secondary School Block B and C was advertised in December of 2015. The construction of the (2) new three (3) story buildings will accommodate 12 classrooms, Sickbay with toilet facilities,

Resource Room, Technical Drawing Room, Students Washrooms, Information Technology Lab, Electronic Document Preparation and Management Laboratory, Physics and Chemistry Laboratories with prep room, Music and Theatre Room. The total construction area is approximately 34,330.95 sq. ft. The Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Trans-

port therefore invites parents, teachers and residents of Choiseul community and neighboring communities to the meeting. Personnel from the Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport, Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development and Labour and Department of Planning will be present to answer to any concerns or queries they may have.

## Des Barras Primary School refurbished by bank's staff

Teachers and students of the Des Barras Primary School now have more cheerful surroundings, thanks to the staff of CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank. Each year the CIBC FirstCaribbean's 'Adopt-A-Cause' programme focuses on improving a facet of the community through the activities chosen by the bank's employees. Over the past few years, the programme has focused on schools, enhancing their environments to facilitate more comfortable learning. The bank's Country Manager, Ladesa James-Williams said, "Our book drive was an immense success with a number of employees donating books that will enhance the reading ability of the students, as well as opening up a world of possibility

with new and interesting stories. "We carpeted the school's library with new floor mats from wall to wall in hopes of creating a more comfortable environment for the children to read, and also brightened up the school's exterior with a fresh coat of paint," she added. This is the first time the bank's Adopt-A-Cause programme has included the Des Barras Primary School. Other schools that have benefitted in the past include Augier Combined School, Babanneau Secondary School, Bocage Combined School, Fond St. Jacques Primary School, Grande Riviere Infant and Primary Schools, La Croix Maingot Combined School, Salvation Army Preschool and Day Care, Soufriere Infant School and Vide Boutielle Primary School.



Bank staff outside the school during their voluntary effort that improved the school and its surroundings

## LUCELEC promoting primary school literacy



The Rainforest of Reading Festival is designed to eradicate illiteracy among primary school students.

The Rainforest of Reading Festival is designed to eradicate illiteracy among primary school students. Saint Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) in collaboration with One World School House Foundation, last month held the annual Rainforest of Reading Festival. The Rainforest of Reading Festival is an activity designed to eradicate illiteracy among students in grades three to five, in the participating countries of Grenada, Saint Lucia and Nevis. The Foundation places twelve children's books from Canadian authors into each participating school. Over a three week period, students read the books before attending the reading festival where they meet the book authors and participate in a host of reading related activities. Seven thousand, seven hundred (7,700) students from all 74 primary schools on the island participated in the reading festival held both in Castries and Vieux Fort. LUCELEC Corporate Communications Manager, Roger Joseph, said the One World School House Foundation's mission of educa-

tion, youth empowerment and access to tools to guarantee success is what compelled LUCELEC to support the initiative. "We've supported the reading festival over the past three years because we recognize that many of the challenges at the upper primary and secondary school level that we're being asked to assist with, have their genesis at the early childhood education level. "We are also pleased that the festival focuses on increasing literacy and numeracy skills, key concepts and skills that should be grasped early on in a child's life cycle to ensure they maximize educational opportunities," he said. The reading festival is endorsed by the Ministry of Education and held under the patronage of Her Excellency Governor General Dame Pearlette Louisy. The organizers of the festival say they were motivated to help after learning about the infrastructure damage caused by Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Tomas, as well as the economic impact of the global recession on the region. This is the third year that LUCELEC has supported the festival in Saint Lucia.

## Augier Combined School reopening Monday

The Ministry of Education has announced that the Augier Combined School will reopen for the Third Term of the academic year this coming Monday, 18th April 2016. The school remained closed from April 11th to 15th, 2016 to allow for cleaning and sanitization of the buildings. The school has been closed since the middle of March 2016, due to foul odor and other pollutants emanating from nearby chicken farms. However, a regime of cleaning and supervision of the farms has been agreed to in the interim, to minimize the level of pollutants and stench from those farms.



Meanwhile, a meeting with parents of students attending the Augier Combined School was held Wednesday in the Parish Hall of the Augier Roman Catholic Church. Classes for the Grade 6 stu-

dents preparing for the Common Entrance Examination were also held in the Parish Hall of the Augier Roman Catholic Church from Monday April 11th to Friday April 15th, 2016.

## Division of Gender Relations youth program cautions against violence

Youth Active Response Team (ART) program targeting secondary school students was recently held by the Division of Gender Relations as a means to reduce incidents of dating, domestic and gender-based violence. The program aims to educate about healthy relationships, promote healthier approaches to relationships and conflicts, increase students' understanding of teen dating abuse and enable students to reach out to provide support and help to a friend or family

member who may be involved in an abusive relationship. It also aims to increase help-seeking behavior among students involved in abusive dating relationships and increase students' knowledge on the fundamentals of human rights and gender equality. Research indicates that children who grow up witnessing domestic violence or are themselves victims of any form of gender-based violence experience a wide range of age-dependent negative effects. Most experts believe that children who are raised in abusive

homes learn that violence is an effective way to resolve conflicts and problems. They may replicate the violence they witnessed as children in their teen and adult relationships, and parenting experiences. Teens experiencing dating abuse are more likely to tell their friends than anyone else. With this approach, the Division of Gender Relations expects to empower teens to evaluate their interactions and discern whether or not a relationship is healthy and right for them.



## Health Ministry urges vigilance as two additional cases of Zika confirmed



*The Aedes Aegypti Mosquito.*

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer was earlier this week informed by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) of the confirmation of two additional cases of Zika Virus Disease in Saint Lucia.

The patients are both female residing in separate locations within Saint Lucia and at the point of case confirmation, the two cases seem unrelated.

There is no apparent clustering of cases, as the confirmed cases to date are from separate communities within the island.

Officials of the Ministry of Health are currently undertaking a full epidemiological investigation.

These two cases follow the island's confirmation of its first two of the Zika Virus Disease on Wednesday April 8, 2016.

In the interim, all persons island-wide are reminded to adopt and maintain measures to reduce exposure to this mosquito borne virus.

This includes storing water in tightly sealed containers to avoid the breeding of mosquitoes, using insect repellants and long sleeved shirts and long pants clothing to protect exposed skin from mosquito bites.

Also, households should conduct routine checks inside and outside of their property for potential and active breeding sites and when identified, immediately disposing of them as has been recommended by the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Health maintains its strong collaboration with the tourism sector for a strategic approach to Zika virus preparedness.

The Government of Saint Lucia together with partners within the tourism sector have invested in the procurement and set-up of In-2-Care Traps to strengthen the vector management programme with specific focus on locations with high mosquito indices.

Tourism partners have also provided on-going support with donations of bed nets to be distributed at health facilities, the training of staff within the tourism sector, community clean-up campaigns and other health promotion and public awareness efforts.

The Ministry continues to work in collaboration with regional and international partners as we seek manage the disease.

The public will be kept updated by the Ministry of Health on progress in managing the response to Zika Virus Disease in country.

## PAHO Director lauds Mexico's Soda Tax as 'a model measure' to fight Diabetes

Mexico has become the first country in the Americas to increase taxes on soft drinks and other sugary beverages to reduce consumption - and that's an example for the world to follow. That's the view of Carissa F. Etienne, Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), at an event marking World Health Day that focused on diabetes.

Measures such as increased taxes on sugar-sweetened drinks, regulations on advertising unhealthy foods to children, and food labeling to warn of excess salt, sugar or fat are among measures recommended by this year's World Health Day campaign to promote healthy diets for diabetes prevention.

"Mexico has shown global leadership by increasing taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages, which managed to reduce soda consumption by 6% in just one year. This is one component of a comprehensive national strategy adopted by Mexico to fight obesity, overweight and diabetes," said Etienne.

"It is a great start, and other countries of our region, including Barbados and my country, Dominica, have replicated this intervention. As such, I invite the rest of the countries of our region to establish taxes on sugary beverages following Mexico's successful example."

Etienne's call to action is part of the global campaign for this year's World Health Day, whose slogan is "Step up. Beat diabetes."

The campaign seeks to raise awareness of the importance of stepping up prevention and control of diabetes, which is the eighth-leading cause of death globally, the

fourth-leading cause in the Americas, and the leading cause of death in Mexico.

In the Americas, the number of people with diabetes has tripled over the past three decades, from 18 million in 1980 to some 62 million, about 8% of the population, by 2014.

This increase has paralleled rising rates of overweight and obesity, a leading risk factor for Type 2 diabetes in the region.

If current trends continue, PAHO estimates that the number of persons with diabetes in the Americas will exceed 100 million by 2040.

"Diabetes affects people from all walks of life but especially people in vulnerable situations: those with economic limitations, without access to health care, and with fewer opportunities for healthy living," said Etienne.

"We are, without a doubt, facing an epidemic that has devastating effects on the quality of life of those affected as well as on their families, health systems and countries' economies."

The PAHO Director's remarks came at the opening of a two-day meeting of international experts on diabetes organized by PAHO and Mexico's Ministry of Health.

World Health Day is observed each April 7 to mark the anniversary of the founding of WHO in 1948.

PAHO, founded in 1902, is the oldest international public health organization in the world.

It works with its member countries to improve the health and the quality of life of the people of the Americas and also serves as the Regional Office for the Americas of WHO.

# Don't Panic!

*Tourism Minister responds to confirmation of Zika cases*

Tourism Minister, Lorne Theophilus, has said that the likely impact of the Zika confirmation on this country's vital tourism industry is difficult to predict, especially as the Zika virus has been reported almost all over the world. But he warns Saint Lucians not to panic.

"I think that what we need to do once our visitors to our shores are satisfied that our health services are doing all that is possible to contain it, is continue to market our destination and hope that the strength of our destination overrides the concern associated with the virus," the Minister said.

He noted that Saint Lucia is probably the last island in the Caribbean where the Zika virus

has penetrated, as this country has been preparing for quite some time, with the result that systems are in place.

"We are very confident that the health authorities are in a position to manage it in the same way that they managed other threats that have come up over the past year," Theophilus declared.

He said: "We are holding true to the fact that our health authorities are in a position to deal with it and deal with it quite effectively."

According to the Tourism Minister, while any virus or disease is something that all Saint Lucians and all people should be concerned about, they should be comforted by the fact that the



*Tourism Minister Lorne Theophilus*

local health authorities are prepared to deal with the situation.

## Two more new Dialysis Machines for Victoria Hospital

The Saint Lucia Civil Service Cooperative Credit Union made a donation of \$150,000 to Victoria Hospital towards the purchase of two fully equipped dialysis units to support the Nephrology Department at the hospital.

The two units will increase the number of clients who can access dialysis treatment at the medical facility.

Executive Director at the Victoria Hospital, Jeanette Hughes highlighted the importance of collaborations like this between corporate St. Lucia and the Hospital.

She said, "What is important to us is the fact that you are making a contribution towards a service which is a very costly service for the hospital and for the clients and it is also a life-long service. As a result any resources we can get on behalf of those clients we welcome."

Consultant Nephrologist, Dr. Merle Clarke, revealed that many persons are afflicted with chronic kidney disease in St. Lucia which is one of the main complications of diabetes and hypertension; the most common chronic non-communicable diseases on island.

The consultant explained, "Treating persons with chronic kidney disease is extremely expensive there really is no getting away from that. In the early stages it is not that expensive but doesn't mean there are no expenses involved."

"But in patients with stage five kidney disease who require renal replacement therapy, dialysis or hemodialysis, being the modality which we provide here, it really becomes extremely costly and out of the reach of the average patient particularly without heavy government subsidies."

"Patients unless they get a kidney transplant, in and of itself is very costly particularly in the first year, you require dialysis for the rest of your life."

Dr. Clarke added that the cost of dialysis doesn't include the cost of the medication patients require which also is very expensive.

She said, "So every facet of effectively treating a patient with chronic kidney disease is extremely expensive."



*Credit Union President Adria Rose Sonson (left) handed the valuable cheque to Victoria hospital's Executive Director Jeanette Hughes.*

The Civil Service Cooperative Credit Union came in for high praise from the medical doctor for the support provided over the years and for also hosting last year's World Kidney Day Fair on the grounds of the Credit Union.

President of the Civil Service Cooperative Credit Union, Adria Rose Sonson, who presented the cheque of \$150,000 on behalf of the members, board, management and staff, stated that the credit union is member-driven therefore anything affecting the society will most likely affect her members.

She said, "This donation in particular is very dear to our hearts because among us I know there are a few members of our credit union who are afflicted with kidney disease. And so we are very happy."

"You said it's a very generous donation but it's something we want to continue to do every so often because if our society is affected, we are affected and so this partnership, this donation, our efforts together will continue."

Sonson added that during the observance of World Kidney Day the credit union was informed of the long waiting list of persons to be dialyzed, the shortage of machines and the high cost of providing dialysis services.

The credit union she said

felt that the best way to make a contribution was to donate the monies for the purchase of two dialysis machines, recliner chairs and supplies to the Victoria Hospital.

Nurse in the Renal Unit at the Victoria Hospital, Lily Daniel said currently there is no dialysis unit in the Intensive Care Department and so one of the two units will be placed within this unit to support patients with both chronic and acute renal failure until their kidneys recover.

She explained, "It's really tedious for us at the moment to take them down to the unit and back to the ICU."

"So we just want to thank you for this opportunity that is going to improve the level of care for our patients and the supplies that go along with the machines we just want to thank you so much for this grand gesture."

Nurse Daniel indicated that the successful dialysis of a patient requires some essentials separate from the machine.

This includes a recliner chair for the four hour long procedure, an artificial kidney and extracorporeal circuit which are disposable units for each treatment per patient, three times a week for the rest of their life. The renal unit is currently at maximum capacity with 66 patients per week



# The Diplomatic Courier

## Venezuela to pay bicentennial tribute to Bideau next year

The Government of Venezuela will be paying special tribute next year to a special national hero born in Saint Lucia.

It will all happen on April 7 2016, when the remains of Captain Jean Baptiste Bideau will be relocated from the remains of the fort where he dies in battle to be paid at the national heroes park in Caracas.

The announcement was made last week by the Venezuelan Ambassador to Saint Lucia, while Saint Lucians paid tribute to Bideau, 199 years after his death in battle defending the independence of Venezuela.

Bideau, originally from Micoud, fought alongside Simon Bolivar for Venezuela's Independence over 200 years ago. He was a close friend of the Venezuelan Liberator and also once saved Bolivar's life.

Bideau became a governor of the Eastern part of Venezuela after independence and many landmarks were named after him before he died battling for Venezuela on April 7 1817.

The Venezuelan Embassy here hosted a special memorial ceremony at Bideau Park in Castries on April 7, to observe the 199th anniversary of his death - and to unveil plans for a year of activities leading to the bicentennial anniversary on April 7 next year, in both Saint Lucia and Venezuela.

Meanwhile, members of the Bideau family in Micoud also joined the Venezuelan Ambassador and members of the government and the diplomatic corps to pay tribute to their he-



The bust of Jean Baptiste Bideau at the park named after him in Castries was decorated for the wreath-laying ceremony held last week to coincide with the 199th anniversary of his death.

roic ancestor and father figure.

Surviving members of the Bideau Family were officially invited by Ambassador Escalona, to participate in the public ceremony.

The event was attended by the Governor General, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, Members of the Cabinet of Ministers, the Mayor of Castries and other officials.

When Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro visited Saint Lucia last year, he said Venezuela and Saint Lucia will work together this year, to jointly observe the 200th anniversary of Bideau's death in both countries next year.

## Food for the Poor to Plant Ten Thousand Trees in Saint Lucia

Food For The Poor is working with Taiwan's Tse-Xin Organic Agriculture Foundation to plant 10,000 fruit-bearing trees on the campuses of 60 primary and secondary schools across St. Lucia.

In addition to the fruit trees, they will also build 20 greenhouses to assist 20 basic schools with their individual feeding programs.

"St. Lucia is a beautiful mountainous island and Food For The Poor is honored to be a part of this tree planting project that will provide additional nourishment for students and a source of revenue for local farmers," said Robin Mahfood, President/CEO of Food For The Poor.

"Ten thousand trees is a massive undertaking that's being made possible by the generous donors of Food For The Poor and the Government of Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

For more than a decade, the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund have been cherished partners of Food For The Poor.

Since 2007, Food For The Poor has received more than five million (5,000,000) pounds of rice through Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Haiti.

On Thursday, Food For The Poor was joined by Dr. Dame Pearlette Louisy, Governor General of Saint Lucia, Ambassador Ray Mou of the Republic of China Taiwan and Li-yi Cheng, Director of Taiwan's Tse-Xin Organic Agriculture Foundation in St. Lucia.

Dozens who attended the event were greeted with songs by students from the Vieux Fort Comprehensive Secondary School Choir.

But the highlight of the ceremony was when special guests, including Ms.Cheng, took part in the symbolic planting of the fruit trees.

Ms. Cheng arrived in Florida from Taiwan on Tuesday to meet with Food For The Poor's President/CEO



The species of trees are comprised of a variety of 25 fruit-bearing plants that are grown in St. Lucia, including cocoa, coffee, sour sop, sugar apple, and citrus.

before heading to St. Lucia for the first time, to attend the inauguration ceremony.

She explained, "Trees are disappearing very fast from the world. In Taiwan, we plant and grow a lot of trees, but it's important to make this impact in the rest of the world.

"We have an opportunity to make a difference and we're starting with St. Lucia, which can become the model used by others to help restore tropical rainforests in the future. "It was very important for us to find the right organization to partner with.

"Food For The Poor has a very good reputation and we believe our donation towards the tree planting project will be used appropriately."

The species of trees are comprised of a variety of 25 fruit-bearing plants that are grown in St. Lucia, including cocoa, coffee, sour sop, sugar apple, and citrus.

In addition to the trees, 30 solar-powered and 30 electric-powered NComputing systems will be divided among the 60 schools.

Each NComputing system can turn one PC into a multi-user host with seven workstations and each workstation will have a monitor, keyboard and a mouse to provide

computer access to students in St. Lucia's remote areas. Food For The Poor also will provide bee training to 15 farmers from various rural communities.

Each farmer will receive bee farming equipment and honey production training. Beekeeping has the potential to generate a consistent source of income through the production of honey and hive byproducts, such as beeswax.

Food For The Poor has been working to serve the people of St. Lucia for more than 30 years, thanks to its in-country partnerships with the Caritas Antilles Chancery Offices and through its generous donors.

Food For The Poor, one of the largest international relief and development organizations in Taiwan, does much more than feed millions of the hungry poor in 17 countries of the Caribbean and Latin America.

This interdenominational Christian ministry provides emergency relief assistance, clean water, medicines, educational materials, homes, support for orphans and the aged, skills training and micro-enterprise development assistance, with more than 95% of all donations going directly to programs that help the poor.

## CCJ judge warns of dangers in accepting Privy Council offer

A Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) judge has cautioned the country about a Privy Council proposal to operate as an itinerant court.

Justice David Hayton said accepting such a proposal, which would be at the expense of the state, might be dangerous and could potentially be considered political interference.

Lord David Neuberger of the Privy Council said last month that the court was willing to offer services to the region via video links and to travel to hear cases from Commonwealth countries.

However, Justice Hayton warned that the aggrieved party could also be left with a hefty bill if he loses the case, since that person usually has to pay costs for both sides.

"When the Privy Council goes to a country like it did the Bahamas, it's where they've got about three cases on the books, because they're not going to the Bahamas for one or two days...then we'd be happy to go if the government agrees to pay," he said.

In contrast, he said the CCJ is not only an itinerant court, but also has other systems in place to ensure cases are dealt with speedily and at affordable rates.

Justice Hayton also gave the thumbs down to a suggestion for a collaborative approach between the London-based court and the CCJ, saying the suggestion by Commonwealth Secretary-General Baroness Patricia Scotland would not be feasible or wise.



Justice David Hayton said accepting such a proposal, which would be at the expense of the state, might be dangerous and could potentially be considered political interference.

"My own view is you can't have the Privy Council and the Caribbean Court of Justice operating together, basically because the Caribbean Court of Justice has exclusive sole jurisdiction over interpreting the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, the written constitution. The Privy Council can't get involved in that in any way," he said.

The CCJ judge was speaking on the sidelines of a discussion hosted by the Antigua & Barbuda Chamber of Commerce & Industry as part of an ongoing public education campaign ahead of a referendum on the country joining the Trinidad-based court. (Caribbean360.com)

## Martinique formally seals full OECS Membership

Philippe SEIGNEURIN, Deputy Head of Mission from the Embassy of the Republique of France officially presented the instruments to the Director General of the OECS Dr. Didacus Jules during a formal ceremony on April 7th, at the OECS Commission Headquarters in Castries Saint Lucia.

He said, "It's a great day for Martinique, for the French Government and for me because, with reference to Article 1 of the agreement signed in Shoelcher on February 4th 2015 between the government of the French Republic and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, defining the modalities for admitting Martinique to Associate Membership of the OECS, I have the honour and the privilege and the pleasure to inform you that the procedures required by the constitution of the Republic for the entry into force of the said agreement have been completed."

The French government official expressed great pleasure in presenting the formal approval instrument of the agreement.

Staff of the commission and commissioners were among the invitees to witness the handing over of the Instruments of Accession.

Director General of the OECS Dr. Didacus Jules expressed jubilation for Martinique's official confirmation of Accession to the OECS.

He said: "We would like to express our deepest appreciation to the French Republic through its Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Jean-Marc Ayrault for assiduously pushing this through the legislative processes required for its proclamation.

"We also would like to recognize the historical commitment of President of the Executive Council of the Territorial Authority Hon. Alfred Ma-



Philippe SEIGNEURIN, Deputy Head of Mission from the Embassy of the Republique of France officially presented the instruments to the Director General of the OECS Dr. Didacus Jules HEADLINES

rie Jeanne who has consistently advocated the integration of Martinique into the family of the Caribbean.

"I would be grateful if Commissioner Lesales of the Territorial Authority transmit to President Marie Jeanne our great anticipation of our meeting to discuss the deepening of this process.

"Today we embrace once again but in an official manner our sister Martinique in the family of the OECS.

"Welcome again sister, your time has come, let us continue walking together."

On hand as well was Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' Ambassador to the OECS His Excellency Elseworth John, who shared his elation with the ceremony.

He said: "I couldn't miss the opportunity to welcome Martinique into our fold. Their contribution and participation is a very important milestone for the OECS.

"It shows an interest of other countries in being a part of our forward movement as an organisation.

"I am just happy that finally we could embrace Martinique as full Member of the OECS."

On February 4th 2015, Martinique made the historic step towards membership of the OECS when the French overseas territory formally signed the documents to initiate accession to Associate Membership to the sub regional grouping.

At that time, President of the Regional Council of Martinique Serge Letchimy signed on behalf of the French Territory. The signing ceremony was the highpoint of the 60th Meeting of the OECS Authority held for the first time in a French Territory. Prior to that, on October 14th 2014 the Regional Council of Martinique in a unanimous all party historical vote agreed to join the Eastern Caribbean fraternity of Nations



# HEROES HOMECOMING FOR NATIONAL CRICKET STARS

## CHAMPIONS!

*The National Heroes Homecoming for Sammy and Charles was a proud proclamation by this nation of the return of West Indies supremacy to the world of One Day cricket!*



*The Captains of the West Indies Women and Men teams, Stefanie Taylor and Darren Sammy (above) had all the best reasons in the world to be all smiles after leading their respective teams into world cricket history, within hours, on the same day, at the same stadium in India. The Men Women and Men teams brought home all the bacon after defeating Australia and England, just like the West Indies Under-19 Youth team lead by Captain Shimron Hetmyer several days before to defeat India in Bangladesh on their first T20 outing.*

The re-naming of the Beausejour Cricket ground (BCG) after Darren Sammy is no simple tribute. Instead, it's a most fitting award in reward for all he has done to restore pride and confidence in West Indies Cricket.

When Sammy and Johnson Charles quickly returned home after the West Indies team became the first in the world to capture the T20 title twice, the entire nation laid out the Red Carpet for its two illustrious sons. They were fittingly honoured all along the way, from the VIP and public welcomes at Hewanorra Airport, along the highways, through their home communities. The Governor General gave heroes' praise to the island's two illustrious sons. The fitting royal toast by Her Excellency the Governor General at Government House and the massive public welcome at Derek Walcott Square in Castries said everything all wanted to say to the two outstanding national cricketers.

The heroic homecoming was indeed a very great day for Saint Lucia. It drove home Saint Lucia's contribution to the return of stability to the main West Indies team in the past decade. Sammy's captaincy evolved ahead of the departure of Sir Julian R. Hunte as President and Dr Ernest Hilaire as CEO of the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB). His own leadership style and role also returned unity and team spirit to the players. And his courageous exposure of the reality his team faced has won him and his players even more admiration for having performed so admirably under such pressure.

But the homecoming welcome given to Sammy and Charles here was not for Saint Lucia alone. It was also for the equally important victories scored by the West Indies Youth and Women teams. Without their trophies, the West Indies will not have been able to score that other eternally impressive record of being the only nation of states ever to have won all three T20 trophies - and in the same year.

Sir Julian R. Hunte and Dr Ernest Hilaire did get their chance to meet and greet Sammy and be part of the phenomenal welcome home of the phenomenon that has evolved from the young official errand clerk they placed Saint Lucia's confidence in so many years ago. They - and the selectors -- clearly saw in him the possibilities they envisioned. Now he's made them - and us all in Saint Lucia and the rest of all other Windies fans in the entire cricketing world - proud of his role in restoring faith, hope and confidence in West Indies cricket.

Thanks to Sammy and Charles and all their teammates, to Stefanie Taylor and her teamsters, to all the boys on the youth team, once again, West Indies supporters in Saint Lucia, the Caribbean and the whole wide world, can walk with our heads high, our noses in the air and our hearts filled with pride and joy.

Once again, we can shout it out as we loudly proclaim: "We are the Champions!"

