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Double-Benked

More legal battles for the Belizean taxpayers to pay for, battles created by our corrupt government politicians; once again we are strained to the limits of our resources, like a child made to be a prostitute before puberty has set on.

Never before have Belizeans been in so much conflict with their elected officials: a true anomaly. Clearly it appears that Belize is being "Double-Benked" by both Musa and Ashcroft; high-jacked and black-mailed, stripped of



Lord Michael Ashcroft

its sovereignty to make court decisions in its own jurisdiction, denied the right of "due process".

Anyone could easily conclude that this case is obviously a "Belize matter". The business is named Belize Bank, operating business in Belize, subject to Belizean laws, earning money from Belizeans through the service they provide.....getting rich from Belizeans, getting tax breaks from the Belizean government, supported by the Belizeans



Prime Minister Said Musa

Water – a precious & endangered resource



Mucked up mess! Non-functional Belmopan treatment plant forces raw sewage directly into the Belize River.

By: William G. Ysaguirre

As the world's population grows, presently 6 billion, water is becoming an increasingly vital resource and is already being traded like a commodity

which will in the future become as important as petroleum. This is because although 70.8 % of the world's surface is covered by water (361.132 million (Please Turn To Page 3) ■■

workers, clearly Belizean jurisdiction!

These stealth deals appear to be pre-meditated, set up from the beginning to circumvent Belize and Belizeans from

their money in the event of their exposure or being challenged.

Since the Belize Bank has exercised (Please Turn To Page 14) ■■

Miss Belize is Costa Maya Queen



Miss Belize Maria Jefferies wowed the judges to win the 2007 Reina de la Costa Maya pageant in San Pedro. (See more photos in Guest Gallery on pg 15)

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Letters to the Editor

Eco-tourism is fastest growing sector, says WTO

Dear Editor,

According to World Tourism Organization, ecotourism is growing at an annual rate of 5%, or about three times better than the industry as a whole.

“It’s one of the fastest-growing parts of tourism,” Dave Sollet, executive director of the International Ecotourism Society, based in Washington, D.C. told the Pittsburgh Business Times. “There is a consumer demand.”

CAN SOMEBODY LET THE Belize GOVERNMENT KNOW?

Signed Linn Wilson

Dear Editor,

Mr. Krohn seems to have missed the point of PCSD’s article, *Doom or Boom in Placencia*, published in the Friday, 10 August 2007 edition of The Independent newspaper. In no case does PCSD condemn all developments. In fact, the article itself states that:

Development can be sustainable and offer positive economic growth and environmental, social and cultural protec-

tion at the same time. But, rampant and uncontrolled development offers neither sustainable economic benefits nor environmental, social and cultural ones.

That’s the whole point - sustainable development that doesn’t rob our children and our grandchildren of the natural resources and beauty of this very beautiful and ecologically rich Peninsula.

And, as pointed out in our article, the process of achieving sustainable development must include:

- An environmental review process that takes the cumulative impact of all developments on the Peninsula into consideration, not a case by case approval process as we have now.
- A transparent and legitimate environmental review process which openly informs the public of proposed projects, allows adequate time for public review and comments on those projects, and which is not influenced by politicians seeking to advance their own interests and the interests of their political cronies and campaign contributors.
- Enforcement of laws and regulations regarding dredging, cutting of mangroves and compliance with regulations set out in Environmental Compliance Plans as part of the approval process of the Department of the Environment. Enforcement should include requiring developers to post permits in publicly accessible places so that people on the Peninsula can assist in enforcing our laws.
- A substantive legal review of the format of Environmental Compliance Plans used by DOE. In their present format, these ECPs have so many holes you could drive a dredger through them.
- Governmental monitoring of projects and publication of monitoring results.

We agree with Mr. Krohn that a Peninsula planning authority would be an enormous benefit to the development of the Peninsula. However, Placencia and Seine Bight Villages cannot even persuade the national government to approve the Village bylaws passed by both Villages back in 2002 under the Village Council Act. Those by-laws, which would allow local Peninsula governments to have some say in the kind of development that occurs on the Peninsula, are apparently a dire threat to the ability of the Government of Belize (Please Turn To Page 16)

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Water – a precious & endangered resource

☛ (Continued From Page 1)
square kilometers), only 3% of that is fresh water. And 70% of that fresh water is frozen in the polar ice caps and glaciers, while 30% lies beneath the earth's surface as ground water. Only 0.3% is readily accessible in surface water, of which 67% is stored in lakes, 12% is trapped in swamps and only 2% flows in rivers.

Belize has 34 watersheds from which water may be drawn for human use, and 99.5 % of our urban population (98.4% overall) has access to potable drinking water, according to 2004 statistics. But the reservoirs from which that water is drawn are threatened by contamination from a number of sources, Albert Roches of the Department of the Environment told participants at an environmental journalism workshop at Chaa Creek on Saturday.

The pollutants may consist of a wide



Albert Roches of the Department of the Environment talks to environmental journalists about Belize's water woes.



The BSI sugar factory at Tower Hill reduces the biological oxygen demand (BOD) of its effluent in treatment ponds before releasing it to the new river, but also causes thermal pollution from its condenser cooling water.

range of organic and inorganic chemicals such as heavy metals, petrochemicals, and bacteria. Water pollution may also occur in the form of thermal (heat) pollution and oxygen depletion. Other threats include climate change, loss of biodiversity, over-use of the water as a result of development, and through some new legislation there also ownership issues.

Sources of this pollution include the Belize sugar industry, the citrus industry, agriculture, aquaculture, Mining, sewage and oil. For instance, the Belize sugar industry produces over 30,000 gallons of effluent/minute primarily from its condenser cooling water stream, causing thermal pollution of the New River. The biological oxygen demand (BOD) of the effluent ponds is very high and as a result these ponds dump over

5 tons of organic demand into the New River everyday. Since the river is within the tidal range of the sea, some of this effluent will eventually also affect marine life. Whenever the biological and chemical oxygen demand of the factory depletes the oxygen in the river, townspeople become aware when the river fish go belly up gasping for oxygen at the surface and a fish kill is recorded.

The citrus industry produces over 100,000 tons of citrus peel every year, which used to be dumped in a ravine and the leaching into watersheds has caused numerous fish-kills in the North Stann Creek River. This caused an alteration in practice, 100% of the peel is now being composted; but the leachate produced at the compost site still causes water pollution. Tons of decomposing citrus peel at the old site still require

monitoring.

The banana industry also uses some 460 million gallons of water per year, mostly from South Stann Creek, Swasey, Trio and Bladden rivers. Water is also from wells within banana belt. The water is used primarily for irrigation and fruit processing, but it is also used for aerial spraying, airplane cleaning, and mixing herbicide. The waste wash waters and the runoff from irrigation ends up back in our streams and rivers. The rice industry uses water for flood irrigation, drawn from Blue Creek in the North, and from rivers and streams in the south.

But the aquaculture industry is the biggest effluent producer in the country. Fish and shrimp farms are using 40,000 acres of coastal land. These farms extract hundreds of millions gallons per day from the sea, estuaries, lagoons and

rivers, producing millions of gallons of effluent per day, but less than a quarter of the 12 farms do any sort of treatment before releasing its effluent. They also contaminate environment in the disposal of waste such as shrimp heads, oil and fuel storage, etc.

A compromise was made as the industry's export production and revenues have grown increased from 189 thousand pounds (Bz\$1.8 m) in 1990, to 1.17 million pounds (Bz\$10.4 m) in 1995, to 7.1 million pounds (Bz\$48.7 m) in 2002 and 22.7 million pounds (Bz\$153 m) in 2003. This industry processes nearly 5 million pounds of shrimp annually, generating a 1,000 tons of waste (shrimp heads) each year, which is disposed of by burying. This is now a cause of concern as the decomposing

(Please Turn To Page 7)



Water leaching into watersheds from citrus peel dumps like this one has caused numerous fish-kills in the North Stann Creek River.

Disbelief in Belize



By: Karla Heusner Vernon

They were lined up along the highway, armed with weed-whackers. A whole troop of them dressed alike in royal blue shirts: one the front the words “Ralph Works” and on the back “Believe in Belize.”

Both statements struck me as odd, because it was not Ralph working at cutting the grass, it was men he had hired to do it, casual labor, with no future associated with that labor. Except a few more days in the broiling sun.

The “Believe in Belize”? Well, if that is the campaign slogan for 2007-08 it needs some serious work. It’s just not true, for if the party believed in Belize we would not be in the mess we are in

and so many Belizeans would not be filled with disbelief at our predicament. Of course, I suppose there are some Belizeans whose heads have been in some options. Or maybe if there was an affordable community college or easy access to small business loans they might have used their dismissal as a spring-

It is campaigning as usual, as if Belize has not changed and everything is as it was before.

the sand for the past 8 years and who still believe this country, their particular division, has improved. People who still believe in Santa Claus I guess. People who will ignore the fact that this coming Christmas hundreds of women will be jobless with the shutdown of the nation’s only real sewing factory. Such is the optimism of the brainwashed. Someone always rescues someone in time...

These women would not have needed rescuing if other factories had opened their doors in Belize over the past few years. If the climate for investors had been welcoming, taxes and utility costs lower, Belize’s ranking on the corruption index not quite so high. If this had happened, these women might have

board towards their own personal and professional development. Realized some of their own small dreams, progressed in their education, set up a small business, joined together in a cottage industry producing crafts or garments or t-shirts tourists might buy, uniforms for local schools and businesses, government offices.

But the reality is this is just another Christmas Retrenchment. These workers will join their colleagues already let go and the hundreds of others out job-hunting since Nova Shrimp Farm closed down too.

Will they all get a temporary job weedwhacking a fake park which is only bushed over around election time?

A lot of things only happen around election time. A lot of roads only get fixed, lines painted, buildings face-lifted right before a vote occurs. Perhaps this is something our politicians inherited from the colonial governors who only ordered public buildings painted and streets resurfaced when royalty from the motherland were coming to town—and only on the routes their royal highnesses would pass over!

Did the colony’s citizens see through the hypocrisy then? Or did they just enjoy the makeovers when they happened? Consider it better than nothing?

Have we made so little progress that a few cosmetic changes are still considered better than nothing, some small compensation for the lack of upkeep all the rest of the time? Why do we allow money to be released into our villages, towns and cities when some politician and his friends can benefit or votes are being bought-- and not when the villages, towns and cities need it? Why do we think its okay to neglect our nation’s infrastructure and appearance for five years as long as it get’s spruced

(Please Turn To Page 16)



Yu no hear weh ah di try fu tell yu, yu kyant pleez everybody!!!

Party Animals



By: Trevor Vernon

I was driving along the western highway a few months ago and a big sign close to the Zoo's entrance read something like: "predators are important to nature's balance, we need to protect them." There was a beautiful image of a big cat in the background. I can't to this day get that message out of my thoughts: protecting predators which wreck havoc on the existence of the masses?

Normally when I think predators, I think the higher level animals, the homo sapiens/man. I think of the people who raid the treasury, the DFC, SSB, et al. I reflect on the mindset that appears to be so dominant across our beautiful country today. Get the Benjamins at whatever risk including lives, at whatever other compromise: judicial, moral, environmental or a combination.

Now, the Zoo has been a solid advertiser since the first issue of the Independent and for this we are most grateful; at the same time we like to think we project a good pro-conservation image. PACT, Audubon, WWF and BTB

don't seem to think so just yet but we are sure they'll see the light soon enough. We are proud to have Sharon & the Belize Zoo advertise with us and share your wonderfully informative column with our readers, especially the kids.

But getting back to this predator business, human are animals after all and we have human predators all around and amongst us.

We are watching in Belize a rapid pace of deterioration of the once pristine environment to the detriment of the delicate ecological balance of all our ecosystems. And at the same time we are watching a serious moral degradation of our society at all levels, across the board and around our little world called Belize. And I would like to suggest that they're connected; the glue that holds them together is the new trendsetting mentality of the political directorate for instant gratification, for instant "bling".

Now there is a dilemma for this predatory political directorate as the general elections rapidly approach. A big dilemma for them because the people who vote are not of the mind to protect those predators from anyone, anymore. Our villages, towns, and cities have been raided by those predators way too often and the people are not happy. Those predators are taxing the people to death and have eaten away at their disposable incomes with senseless consumption taxes. The

people want back the power and not just for a day when they go through the charade of dipping their fingers in ink. The people want to own that ink well and permanently keep their index finger wet with that red ink. The people want justice and they want it applied equally and constantly.

The predators are now offering at the eleventh hour, free poorly translated textbooks, and free land certificates, and free patching of roads, and free street lights, and free rum to keep the people intoxicated... until that ink dries on your finger. Then the people will pay a thousand fold for all the free this and free that and the merrymaking and then the smiling buddies will be gone for the next five years of pain that they will be forced to inflict by the people they got the 50-100 million to run their flashy political campaigns. That's what predators do: they sweet you up till they get your vote then they return to "stealing your corn and look at you with a scorn"... for the next five years.

No, these are one set of predators the people will never protect, never again. They, the political predators all, must feel the pain and humiliation of defeat because they have inflicted way too much pain on us in this animal kingdom in order to feed their egos and offshore bank accounts. And after, we'll deal with the other forms of legal retribution to recoup our national patrimony.

A dear friend opined the other day, in

a high tech forum, that the country should be run by the civil service for the next 5-6 months after the elections, whoever wins. Let cooler heads prevail for a period, a cooling off period to allow the outgoing predators to find new feeding ground and safe havens to bury their loot, I suppose, far away from us. But unfortunately there is no legal precedence for this so it will never happen.

Another dear friend retorted that totally ridding ourselves of the predators we know (who feed off us) will create a power vacuum. That threw me for a while. Homo sapien predators create systems and structures that are vital to smooth social and economic interaction, she continued.

To hell with power vacuums, we need flatter organizational structures across the board, especially after the elections have come and gone. Its way too late for the current fat cats to change their spots; they commissioned **but didn't implement** that wonderful Political Reform Commission report, 2000.

The tables have turned with the people now smelling blood in a passive-aggressive sort of way. Wonder what that red ink they use at polling booths is really made of? Maybe they should use some sheep's blood in the mixture come elections day, one that won't dry and flake off anytime soon... to remind us constantly of the hell they, the master predators, have been inflicting on us all in this kingdom of the party animals.

SATIIM unhappy with US Capital Energy EIA

press release from Satim

The Environmental Assessment (EIA) for US Energy Helile Limited has been completed. It was prepared and handed to community leaders by 'Tunic Nah Consultants and Engineering on Monday, 6 August, 2007. The package contained a note book where the leaders were told to write the names of the residents of their communities to formally confirm their understanding and acceptance of the EIA. According to community leaders, they are to come to Punta Gorda in a week's time for a consultation where they are to give their inputs.

This is totally unacceptable, outright discriminatory and blatant disregard for the rights of these communities on the part of the government and the US Capital Energy. The finger must point squarely at the Department of the Environment for their failure insist that the company conduct thorough consultations in each community about the EIA Report.

We have submitted proposals to the Department of the Environment and US Capital Energy on how the EIA consultations should be conducted. However, the Department and US Capital Energy refused to accept these proposals. "These proposals were developed in an effort to overcome the socio-cultural factors of the decision making process and the language barriers of the communities,

As one leader says, how can they expect to read this EIA report in one week, much less understand these technical jargons in this huge document when we are limited in our knowledge of the **English Language**.

SATIIM has only been given the draft copy and is from this version. "What have become apparent are the enormous gaps in baseline data that have translated to dubious mitigative measures. SATIIM is currently looking at all options available, both political and legal, to address the issues that have begun to emerge from Environmental Impact Assessment Report

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US migrant laws hit cash sent to Mexico

By: Richard Lapper

Legal restrictions targeting illegal immigrants have contributed to a sharp fall-off in the remittances sent to Mexico from a number of US states, according to a survey published on Wednesday.

The survey, commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank, shows that Mexicans living in southern and other US states without a strong tradition of Latin American immigration – such as Louisiana, North Carolina and Georgia – are feeling uneasy about the future.

These states have also seen a recent surge in legislation increasing penalties for those who employ illegals and making it more difficult for migrants to obtain driving licences and other documentation, for example.

Only about half the almost 2m Mexicans in these so-called “new” migration states are sending back remittances, compared with four-fifths a year ago. That is the biggest single factor explaining a levelling-off in remittance growth to Mexico following several years of double digit growth, according to the report.

“The environment is becoming much more hostile in these new states,” said Don Terry, head of the multilateral investment facility, which leads the IADB’s work on emittances.

The research singled out the southern state of Georgia as “the epicentre” of the new trend. “It is logical that if you feel you are not welcome and are going some place else you start to save a little kitty to deal with emergencies. In addition, in these states it

is not so easy to get a job or to secure an increase in wages,” said Sergio Bendixen, a pollster who conducted the research.

Mexico received \$23.1bn (€16.8bn, £11.4bn) in remittance income in 2006, with the flows helping to boost substantially the income of poor families. However, the rate of increase has begun unexpectedly to tail off this year. Figures from the Mexican Central Bank show remittances grew by only about 0.6 per cent in the first six months of 2007 compared with a rise of 23 per cent a year previously.

“Immigrants feel they are suffering from discrimination and lack of respect,” said Mr Bendixen, whose research was based on focus group interviews with Mexican and Central

American migrants. “They are unable to rent homes and in some cities it is becoming more and more difficult to find a job.”

The survey shows a slightly different picture emerging in 10 states such as New York, California and Florida where there has traditionally been a strong Hispanic presence and where the Mexican, Central American and other Latin American communities are well organised.

About two-thirds of the estimated 8.4m Mexicans who live in these states have continued to send remittances this year. Remittances from Guatemalan, Salvadoran and Honduran migrants, who tend to be concentrated in these traditional areas, rose by 11 per cent in the first six months of this year from just under \$4.5bn to almost \$5bn.

OAS Asst Sec General defends regional media's right “to work without intimidation”

by Miranda La Rose

The Assistant Secretary General of the Organisation of American States, Albert Ramdin expects that the matter of the Guyana government’s withdrawal of advertisements from the Stabroek News would be dealt with substantively between the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS and the Guyana government.

Asked at a press conference in Georgetown last week for his general impression on the ads issue between the government and the Stabroek News Ramdin said that he would not comment on the substantive issue because the matter fell under the purview of Ignacio J. Alvarez, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression in the Inter-American Human Rights Commission.

However, he said that he strongly supports the role of the media both from the perspective of being able to carry out their responsibilities as best as possible and that as an important element of society they must be able to carry out their work freely without any intimidation.

This view, which he publicly stated at a seminar in June in Washington with Caribbean journalists, he said, was also shared by the Secretary General and other organs of the OAS. Nevertheless he expects responsible journalism from the media and “it cuts both ways,” he added.

In terms of the response to the Special Rapporteur’s request for information from the government on the withdrawal of the ads, Ramdin said he feels the matter would be resolved by having good communication between the government and the Special Rapporteur.



OAS Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin

He said that the letter from the Special Rapporteur to the government not arriving on time and that a statement had been issued by the rapporteur before the government had time to deal with the issue was an “unfortunate development.”

He was of the impression that the communication between the government and the Special Rapporteur on the ads issues was going to continue without any further difficulty.

The government cut off ads from Stabroek News in November last year and has to date not provided any information to support its argument. The OAS rapporteur is now seeking such information. The rapporteur had given the government 15 days to respond and when no response was forthcoming he issued a statement expressing

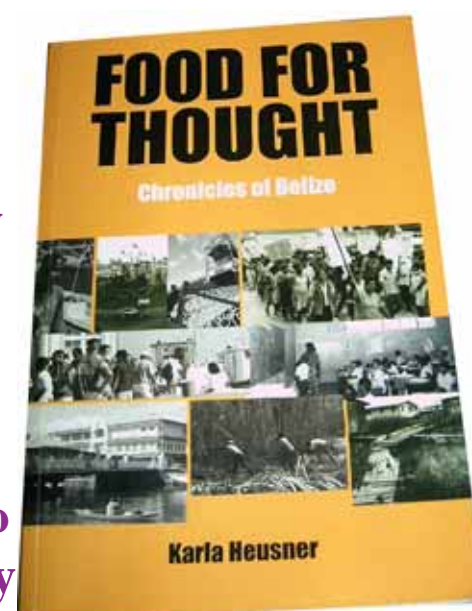
government to review the withdrawal of the ads.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Rudy Insanally then said he did not see the letter requesting information until the day Alvarez’s statement expressing disappointment at the non-response had been released. The ministry said it has not been able to trace exactly when the request for information arrived at the ministry as the relevant envelope with the markings would since have been disposed of. The ministry said it would be replying to the rapporteur in due course but to date there has been no indication that this has been done.

The withdrawal of the ads by the government has been greeted with widespread condemnation by press groups in the Caribbean and further afield.

Background on the withdrawal of the ads can be gathered on www.stabroeknews.com by clicking on the press freedom link.

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Water – a precious & endangered resource

➡ (Continued From Page 3)
heads will produce leachate that could seep into groundwater. The shrimp heads contain a lot of phosphate, but so far no one has suggested processing them into fertilizer.

Approximately 12,000 hectares of forest is cleared for agriculture each year, and soil eroded from steep slopes is dumping material rich with chemicals into our rivers & streams.

Some 40% of the 600,000 gallons of oil which Belize imports each year is disposed of in a manner unfriendly to the environment. The country has begun collecting and recycling waste-oil and has exported some 300,000 gallons of waste oil to Guatemala to be refined as fuel for cement kilns.

In Belize where only 165 of households are connected to a sewer system



This satellite image of Belize City shows the sewage treatment ponds (arrow), from which spillage caused the closure of several popular beaches.

cerns such as water quality, mercury levels, the color and taste of the water, habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity, and emergency plans human should the dam fail.

Under the Environmental Protection Act passed in 1992, the Department of the Environment (DOE) was assigned 27 duties, two of which are: “to control the volume, types, constituents and effects of wastes, discharges, emissions, deposits or other sources of emission and substances which are of danger or potential danger to the quality of the environment, and to maintain a register of all wastes, discharges, emissions, deposits or other sources of emission or substances which are of danger or potential danger to the environment”

With budget cuts and a small staff, the DOE relies primarily on voluntary compliance, only the approval of a budget for a larger staff can give the department the manpower and the teeth to enforce the law.

normally attached to these grains and they accumulate in the marine environment.

Dams also raise environmental con-



Raw sewage flows into a drain in Belmopan and ultimately into the Belize River.

and another 42% connected to a septic tank, water contamination from sewage is another major concern, especially in the coastal areas such as Belize City where only 30% of the population is hooked up to the sewer system. The Public Health Laws of Belize still allow the disposal of “night buckets” into the sea from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. In San Pedro Town, potable water must be produced from the sea by desalination through reverse osmosis, because all water wells have been contaminated with faecal coliform.

Spillage from the sewage treatment ponds of the city forced the closure of a number of popular beaches when faecal matter was detected in the water. The sewage treatment plant in the Belmopan is non-functional and raw sewage is now flowing directly into the Belize River, which eventually flows downstream to where the Belize Water Services draws river water for its treat-

ment plant to supply the Belize City with water.

Cruise ships visiting Belizean water are forbidden from emptying their bilge and waste water tanks within the 12 mile limit of our territorial seas, but we have no control outside the 12-mile limit. The same cannot be said of the cruise ship tenders and other tour operators’ boats which take cruise ship tourists to visit nearby offshore cayes. Although these boats can accommodate up to 150 passengers - eating, drinking, partying at a caye, the boats routinely return to port with their sewage tanks empty. Was the sewage dumped at sea? Only proper monitoring can force operators to comply with the law, and the department of the environment is undermanned and overwhelmed to cope with the problem.

Mining in rivers has resulted in tons of sediments being transported out to sea. Organophosphates (fertilizers) are



The disposal of shrimp heads (above) into the dump (below) produces leachate which could contaminate the ground water.



The Race to the National Elections



By: Ray Auxillou

Discarding the Christmas and New Years holiday month, there are only six months of active election campaigning left. How do we stand? With an active political machine and all seats covered by candidates, the incumbent PUP is way out in front. For leadership, they have presented the National Health Insurance scheme as their province. Not too bad an idea, although they haven't quite figured out how to pay for it. Leadership will be measured by their ability to show improving money management governing skills, by a shrinking number, of the foreign debt to GDP ratio. They need to get that into the low half of 2% of GDP, to indicate improvements over their dismal past record of learning to govern capability. It was the PUP who got us all into this current debt crisis, for lack of leadership and management skills in the previous term. For vision, they have to pass a Balanced

Budget Act and an Elected Senate Act before Christmas to find credibility with the voters.

While the government itself is short changed for money due to PUP past policies, the party itself have a windfall very full campaign treasury, which promises free beer, food and music parties around the districts. Thanks to Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, the rumor mill says.

The UDP are in second place coming around the first stretch into the next turn of this race. This party also has all seats covered for the national elections. A small campaign budget, still a bit disorganized, but picking up speed and slowly catching up to the lead runner. For leadership skills, they promise to fix the National Debt problems created by the PUP and have put forward a few Political Reform suggestions to the Constitution, to show their leadership capabilities. The vision section of their party hasn't come up with anything yet for the future. So far, this early in the race, the battle for first seems to be between the PUP and the UDP.

The NRP, a Mennonite run political party, they claim to have most of the national elective seats covered. Slow off the starting blocks, this party is way behind the two lead runners. They were said to have a sufficient campaign treasury, which now seems to have been an imaginative over-exaggeration.

No significant money has been spent for this election, even though the race has started in earnest. I probably spent more in the last election for the WTP! Currently the odds are 20 to 1 in betting shops against the NRP catching up to the two leading parties in the race. For leadership they offer the example of Mennonite community social system through the heartland of Belize. For vision they are talking about creating agro processing export growth through tax breaks.

The rest of the political parties in the field are bunched up back with a very wide gap between this group and the leaders half a lap ahead already. Of the bunch running in last place, the PNP seem to be slightly ahead of this laggard group. The vision seems to be solely for the Toledo District seats in an attempt to boost the development of their homeland through self government. They will make an excellent third party in a mixed government.

Coming behind them are the VIP of Belmopan, who also have no campaign treasure chest, some intellectual skills passed off as leadership potential, some vision barely expressed for political reform, but poorly communicated to the general public. They also seem to be a small Belmopan area political party, whose interest seems more orientated to the capital of the country and the civil ser-

vice.

The rest of the bunch of political parties coming behind in last place-- I can't even remember their names. There are two upsets that could happen in this early part of the race. Bad publicity for the PUP could shove the UDP in a frantic last ditch spurt of speed into first place. What they call the rebellion dissatisfied reaction. Then the NRP could get organized and turn serious about campaigning. The other factor would be if voters in most of the electoral divisions decided to vote for candidates presenting themselves as persons of good character and honesty, willing to do their best.

Regardless of which party they belonged to, a slate of honest candidates like that happened in Belize Rural South two terms ago, could upset the plans of both the PUP and the UDP and bring a whole bunch of parties across the finish line at the same time, creating a totally new form of government in Belize. This wouldn't be at all bad and really for the next five years we do not even need one dominant party running the government. There is little to do but build classrooms and no money to do public works. The PUP already spent it, during the term before this! Maintaining the status quo with government jobs is the name of the game for the next five years. Forget the infrastructure maintenance like the last five years.

A time to choose

By: Ricky Singh

As a "community of sovereign states" Caricom upholds, as one of its four major pillars, co-ordination in foreign policy. It frequently reminds us of continuing efforts to achieve consensus on important issues of foreign affairs, including elections to top positions in international organisations.

Caricom Heads of Governments would, therefore, be expected to discuss and decide on their candidate of choice as new Secretary General of the 53-member Commonwealth of Nations when they meet in Port of Spain next month for the one-day Health Summit.

Since the Health Summit takes place ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in November, the Caricom Secretariat considers it opportune for our preference as new Commonwealth Secretary General to be discussed, following completion of the main agenda issue -the region's health development, with special focus on non-communicable diseases.

Choosing a successor to New Zealand's outgoing Secretary General,

Don McKinnon, who has served two terms, is one of the agenda issues for the forthcoming Commonwealth Summit in Kampala, Uganda.

With the exception of Asia, all regions of what had emerged as the British Commonwealth way back in 1931 have had the satisfaction of one of their nationals serving as Secretary General with the creation of that post in 1965 - Caricom included with Shridath Ramphal.

When the contest between New Zealand's McKinnon and Bangladesh's Farook Subhan emerged eight years ago, divisions, resulting from a mix of superior lobbying, financial and political influence, went in McKinnon's favour, including split votes within Caricom. I doubt such a recurrence within Caricom at the coming conference in Kampala.

Now, for the first time, India, which, like China is an emerging economic power, and accounts for most of the 1.7 billion multi-ethnic population of the Commonwealth - (after Zimbabwe's suspension and subsequent withdrawal) - has decided to

have one of its distinguished foreign service nationals to head the London-based Commonwealth Secretariat - Kamallesh Sharma.

Currently India's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Sharma, however, faces competition from three other identified candidates.

They are Malaysia's Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister Dr Rais Yatim; Malta's Foreign Minister Michael Frendo and Mohan Kaul, the India-born ex-officio Director General of the Commonwealth Business Council, who is not to be confused as a candidate of India. The two front-runners are evidently India's Sharma and Malaysia's Yatim.

However, as of July 28, the Malaysian national news agency, BERNAMA, was reporting the possibility of Malaysia's Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, accepting Yatim's desire to withdraw as a candidate since he claims not to have had sufficient opportunity to personally promote his candidature. In contrast, that is, to Malta's Frendo and India's Sharma.

Even if Malaysia should maintain interest in having a candidate as Commonwealth Secretary General, it seems that Asia's turn has inevitably finally arrived to have a national in that post. It would be extremely difficult to ignore the objective factors in favour of India's candidate.

Outgoing Secretary General McKinnon recently made a surprising observation as reported by the Associated Press on July 19 There was an assumption, he said, that his successor could be "an Asian candidate" because Asia has not had a Secretary General....

"The message will be, sure put up an Asian candidate, but," he added, "Commonwealth leaders would want to ensure that he or she is a credible and good candidate."

If his intention were not to be condescending, the former Foreign Minister of New Zealand, who will be leaving the Commonwealth Secretariat next year, is experienced enough to know that there is no doubt about (Please Turn To Page 9)

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TOPICAL

TIDBITS

El fiasco de los libros

The Ministry of Education claims the new “free” textbooks were selected in full consultation with the teachers, or at least a select group from the Ministry. So whose head is going to roll over the problem with the Spanish books which depict Belize as a part of Mexico? Clearly NO ONE looked through this book carefully, or perhaps they never even saw a single copy? What an outrage and disgrace. The only thing worse would have been a map with Belize as part of Guatemala! Back to school for some Ministry personnel to take a basic course in geography. If these books are not recalled and exchanged for another the teachers are going to go ballistic. Not to mention the parents....

BTL pulls a fast one

Perhaps in an attempt to correct a flub-up with their billing system which could not get out the “new” Belize Telemedia bills on time a couple months ago, Belize consumers were shocked to find their latest bill due on August 6 instead of the 15th, or end of the month as usual. To heap injury to insult the bills were postmarked August 2 and only reached many customers on August 5 or even days after they were due!

As if their rates are not extortionary enough now Lord Shark wants his blood money in minutes. Isn’t there a law somewhere that bills are not overdue until 30 days? Maybe its time for a strike by customers since the union busting appears total with employees getting their new uniforms, new logo and new raise. Go check your bill if you have not already paid, you might not have seen the due date and are in danger of being cut out!

Butane Pain

Thanks to Channel Seven for some great interviews on how the latest increase in butane is affecting food sellers and consumers who frequent them. Why on earth is GOB raising the price of cooking gas again. This commodity should be price fixed since it is an essential. Just one more way to squeeze the poor and working poor. Maybe Gordito and Musito can ask Hugito to send Belizeans some cheap butanito. Then again, maybe the price is being artificially inflated so they can drop it in time for elections and make people think they are getting a break. The games gangsters play...

Where are they now?

Are Mark, Cordel, & Johnny in country? We know Eamon is; he just opened his own brand new law firm and moved from under uncle, wife, daddy’s wings at the big family firm. Johnny has lots of business interest and is said to be investing in a cable company in Ralph’s territory among other things. Mark has business interests too but not very public. We have no idea what Cordel is keeping himself busy with but are quite sure its in Lake I. God-Frey is busy as tourism minister pushing for big hotels. Nobody in the industry which has less than 50 room occupancy already wants anything to do with his “flagship” hotels but he’s pushing it everywhere he goes. More rooms mean more taxes, eh Frito? Or is it the African junket has him dreaming grandiose dreams. He really has him hooked on the Lord and whatever he was made to see there?

Do they really care about health care reform?

The “original reformer” Coye is pushing NHI being financed by oil revenues and not from any line item in previous budgets. Coye can want all he chooses but we know it is Ralph who will decide the faith of the NHI rollout funding... weeks before elections.

Under PM Price we had free health care and free education. We had healthier people and more educated ones.

Under PM Esquivel we got the KMHM, but what have we gotten except a lack of supplies, the UHS scandal and nurses and doctor’s strikes under PM Musa? Not to mention baby Kimora Leslie and other needless deaths....Do they think the Belizean people will forget how many people had to beg for money for life-saving treatments over the last 8 years just because they roll out NHI at the last minute? Wasn’t it part of their manifesto promise from 1998?

Maybe if the money thrown away on UHS had been thrown at KMHM and the Regional hospitals we wouldn’t need NHI, hmmm?

Child Labor in Political Ads?

The UDP recently published an ad in which some children are working and the PUP are scolded for borrowing so much money Belizean children will have to work their whole lives to pay it back. The PUP complained bitterly that the UDP were exploiting working children..Now hang on a minute: 1) these kids WILL have to work their whole lives to pay enough taxes so these loans can be repaid over the next 50 plus years

2) If they are forced to work as little children it is precisely because the PUP government has screwed the economy up so badly their parents have no other choice. So who is exploiting the children of Belize? Not the UDP.

You can bet there won’t be any photos of underage cane cutters and and street vendors selling pillows and tamales in the new textbooks....

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A time to choose

➡ (Continued From Page 8)

the capacity of the Asian continent to deliver a very “credible and good candidate” to succeed him.

The question of relevance is to what extent Caricom could help make that possible with its own dozen votes, along with pledges forthcoming from African states such as Uganda, host country for the November Commonwealth Summit; South Af-

rica and Kenya as well as those that once comprised the so-called “old Commonwealth” - like Britain, Canada and Australia?

It is difficult to conceive, given the demographic, cultural, trade and economic realities, India’s Sharma failing to emerge, either by majority or consensus, as the successful candidate to be the new Commonwealth Secretary General in 2008.-- the Trinidad Express



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Environmental Journalists tap into new resources

There is a debate going on in Belize over the management of our natural resources. Actually there are many clashing interests where our natural resources are concerned. So much so that last week IW headlined the Placencia situation where developers and environmentalists have locked horns as we present some views from both sides.

It's a most interesting debate where the release of relevant information is usually a major weapon. Our journalists, as a whole, haven't had the management support and financial resources to adequately cover the environmental impact of the barrage of new resort & condominium developments, for ex-

(Please Turn To Page 12) 



Belizean journalists learn about oil exploration and production from BNE's Daniel Gutierrez (in blue overalls).



Dr Bob Thomas, Director of the Center for Environmental Communications at Loyola University, explains the difference between a garbage dump and a sanitary land fill.

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Environmental Journalists tap into new resources

➡ (Continued From Page 11)
ample. Still our journalists are just now becoming engaged in the fight for the dissemination of all information on environmental issues.

In this effort, The Belize Environmental Reporters Network (BERN) was formed last December coming out of the first meeting at St. George's Caye. This past weekend, through the sustained assistance of local & international conservation organizations, experts on environmental reporting flew in from the United States to participate in their Second International Center for Journalists' Environmental Journalism Workshop.

It's a project at the International Center for Journalism in Washington DC and it's funded by Protected Areas Conservation Trust of Belize and the OAK Foundation. Funds have also come in from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in Washington DC.

Independent Weekly's editor had the opportunity earlier this year to visit the International Center for Journalists in Washington, DC. Shortly after that trip we designated an environmental editor for the paper.

Many of you may know William Ysaguirre as a freelance sports reporter, but the man who holds an HNC in Chemistry from London is also a key environmental reporter and editor. He participated in both workshops and filed his front page report in this issue of the paper. There were over a dozen Belizean journalists and key local & international presenters at the three day workshop in Chaa Creek this past weekend.

Professor Bob Thomas from Loyola University of New Orleans, workshop facilitator, said that the reason for the workshop was to talk primarily about journalism skills, about new tools in journalism that can help the communication of information through various media houses. Environmental journalism is multi-disciplinary and the international team did a wonderful job of choosing topics and site visits to better sensitize the journalists about the nuances of this type of reporting.

Key areas of discussion focused on oil and the environment and the runoff of agricultural pesticides into waterways, potable water contamination, whereas last year's workshop at the caye focused more on the reef ecosystem.

Here's what some of the participants had to say about what was a highly successful workshop:

"The responsibility is left now with us,



NEAC's Dr. Candy Gonzalez explains BACONGO's position.

journalists. We need to do our part in sending the messages to the public." - Claudelle Serano, Love FM

"I really learnt a lot from this workshop. I had a chance to hear both sides of the issues that are affecting our country." - Kera Bowen, Plus TV Belmopan

"It was very useful for my knowledge to further develop these skills so as to write about it and get the public informed/educated/aware on these sensitive environmental issues."

"These workshops have opened my eyes and I now see things I would have missed before." - Ian Leiva, Reef Radio - San Pedro

It is with profound sadness that we announce the death of four year old miniature Schnauzer, Lucia Staines, who was euthanized due to a terminal illness on Saturday, August 4, 2007, in Belize City. Lucia is survived by



her mother and care giver, Rosalie T. Staines, her big brother Nicholas Staines and many friends. Lucia was a beautiful, loving and loyal companion, friend and bodyguard who will be tremendously missed but never forgotten by all those who knew and loved her during her short four years of life with us.

Sincere appreciation goes out to Ms. Susan Wilken who gave tremendous support and assistance to Rosalie during her time of sadness. We also thank Dr. Patricio Rivero Medina of Chetumal, Q.Roo, Michael Deshield, Jane Crawford, Sheila Schmeling & Rosie Flores who cared for and treated Lucia during her illness.

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Page



By: **Julia Heusner & Robin Schaffer**

We understand that there are approximately 38,000 Belizeans who use internet websites regularly to make friends (or so we’ve heard recently on a talkshow). Hi5 is one of the more popular internet sites. Many of you know what Hi5 is. But are you aware of the dangers of it?

For those of you who are not aware of the website, let us explain. Hi5 is an internet website whereby people join to meet friends. People usually put up pictures and information about themselves that others are free to comment on. Sounds innocent enough.

So what are the dangers one might ask. There seems nothing wrong with trying to make friends, but is everyone there for just that? When you are talking to some one on the internet anyone can be behind the computer. So for example, 13 year old Jamie from Alaska may actually be 47 year old Bob from Belize (pervert). So then how are you sure if you are interacting with someone your own age, or with a sexual predator? The fact of the matter is you can never be sure. So then why do you do it? Why do you put pictures of yourself that some sick pervert can copy and paste to wherever he or she may wish. (porn site!). So then, why expose yourself?

Hi5: a way to meet friends or a way to scandalize them?



Hi Irene , I’d like to add you to my hi5 friends network. You have to confirm that we are friends, and we’ll each get to meet more people. Please approve or reject my request by accessing the hi5 web site: Accept Friend»

What someone else takes from the internet, you CAN NOT CONTROL. Even if you do not care, think of what it can do to your reputation. Do you want years from now for your child to stumble into a porn site with you on it? Or if you want to run for minister, do you really want the public to see a naked picture of you? (THINK PEOPLE!) Also, be careful with what you do with your pictures, or who



Thanks, A friend takes them. Because even if you do not post it up on the internet, who is to stop an ex-friend or ex boyfriend/girlfriend? In our personal experience we’ve had a friend who was scandalized by a group of revengeful ex-friends.

They created a Hi5, using her name and email, and they took pictures of her and other people she hung out with and posted it up on the net. They accompanied this

with terrible comments that demeaned her character and embarrassed her family. When our friend noticed she was getting Hi5 requests, she knew something was wrong. (busted!) Eventually the truth came out and parents were involved.

The whole point of this is BE CAREFUL. Make sure you know where pictures that people take of you go, and remember that whatever you put on the internet is available to EVERYONE. Technology isn’t bad. It’s how you use it, so be smart and USE YOUR HEAD!



Your weekly

HOROSCOPE

ARIES (Mar. 21- April 20)

Deceit with coworkers is apparent. You can ask for favors but don’t take them for granted. Be diplomatic but stem. Someone you least expect may not have your best interests at heart. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

TAURUS (Apr. 21- May 21)

You won’t have to look for the action. You will be able to pick up on future trends if you keep your eyes peeled for unique ideas. Don’t let someone talk you into parting with your cash unless you can truly see the benefits of doing so. You will be too quick to point your finger at your mate. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21)

Don’t be too hard on your mate. Set your goals and stick to your guns. You can make some favorable changes to your looks. You can expect to feel confused about your personal prospects.

Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

You need to get out and be an observer. Think hard before going into business with friends or family. You will be overly generous with children this week. Children may be difficult to handle. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

LEO (July 23-Aug 22)

You can discuss your findings behind closed doors with your boss. You can sell your ideas to those who have the money to back them. Try not to make waves. Don’t start a dispute unless you’re prepared to accept irreversible results. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 -Sept. 23)

Take action. You mustn’t give too much to your children. You can win if you’re open and up front with your boss. Refrain from using the highway

as a racetrack. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 -Oct. 23)

Your involvement in sports or entertainment will lead to new romances. Children might be on your mind. Don’t hesitate to make special plans just for two. Your lover may be annoyed if you have been flirtatious or not attentive to their needs. Make plans that will take you to exotic destinations. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Your unique contribution to the organization will enhance your reputation. Your high energy will help you through this rather hectic day. Residential moves will also be advantageous for all concerned. Payoff all your debts before you go out and celebrate. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 -Dec. 21)

Don’t take offense at comments made by coworkers. New relationships could evolve through group activities. This will not be the day to lend money to friends or family. Some of your new friends may not be that trustworthy. Your lucky day this week

will be Wednesday.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22.- Jan. 20)

You could be quite erratic regarding your personal relationship. You can make a difference if you offer your help at functions that involve children. If you’re already in a relationship, use this added energy passionately. Your childlike quality may get you into big trouble this week if you neglect your responsibilities. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 -Feb. 19)

Changes in your home may be alarming at first. Your social skills with people may be more than just helpful. Keep your thoughts to yourself for the time being. You will have the discipline and fortitude to accomplish what you want this week. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

PISCES (Feb. 20-Mar. 20)

You have more energy than the rest of the people you live with anyway. You will find travel and lectures most stimulating. You can come up with future trends in creative fields. Try to be there for someone if they need assistance. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

Double-Benked

☞ (Continued From Page 1)

its contractual right to move and change jurisdiction and go to foreign Arbitration, hopefully there are mechanisms in place for recourse within international law to make an appeal or challenge the result in that same chosen jurisdiction.. Maybe the Association for Concerned Belizeans should explore this matter and if there is recourse they could bump it up to the Supreme Court of England. They may view things differently--ethically and morally--after all, Britain gave up its hold on Belize a long time ago. The Crown may not look too kindly on one of its citizens controlling the economy of their Queen's former colonies.

The fact of the matter is Mr. Ashcroft is a very wealthy man and he did not get to be this wealthy by being foolish. He has companies that conducts business in most of the Caribbean Islands

(all previous British Colonies with similar British Common laws as Belize). He should know these country's laws, the proper procedures and protocol. He also knows the "Art of the deal" (see his website), he knows the legal perimeters; he knows the "Danger Zones" he has an entourage of top attorneys. Did he and his attorneys not know that size of the Universal Health Service Deal required Cabinet approval???? I smell a Big Dead Rat.....sorry, a huge dead George....ahh.....Charlie Price!

"Cavet Emptor," I say to you Mr. Ashcroft, he premier rule in business: Buyer/Investor Beware!

In the past, the Belizean press has revealed that Mr. Ashcroft has done business with these same Belizean Politicians before with unfavorable results. We Belizeans remember Intelco !!! Why then should innocent Belizeans pay for more apparent "mistakes?" Why

should we pay for what may actually be an act of collusion and corruption?

Hey, I have an idea Mr. Ashcroft, why not go directly after the two people who defrauded you through their mis-representation and circumventing of the Belizean people. Go after their personal assets! They have milked us royally. Leave the innocent alone!

The issue is clear...."What is legal and what is illegal"? I strongly believe that there is an imposed reverse onus when doing business directly with any country's government; an implied obligation for due legal process and extra caution exercised when using tax-payers money to fund deals (especially obvious, "conflict of interest" private deals using the people's money). This is the basis of Common Sense... Honesty... Prudence... Good Faith in a country's Constitution.

I dare say Mr. Ashcroft....that on

such a huge deal as UHS, we believe that your T's...should have been legally crossed and you I's ethically dotted!

At the risk of pontificating: people who have been elected into a position of power and authority are given a unique and special opportunity to do "real good" for your people. Instead, you betrayed and stole from them. You may feel that you are not accountable to ANYONE but you will be accountable to your GOD! You may think you will live forever.....you think you can take it all with you.. you think that your estate will flourish from your sins....but your sins will find you and your children and their children as it is written Psalm 32.23. I don't know about you people, but I am a God fearing man and I don't like being double-benked. Or double banked.

By: Charles Lawrence Payne

Disbelief in Belize

☞ (Continued From Page 2)

up in time for the big party?

Yes, Evan X is right, the campaign has been on for some months now. It is obvious from the tv ads, the cosmetic changes, leadership tours and flurry of press releases extolling the virtues of the aspiring representatives and the various government departments generally in hibernation except around election time. The machinery is in full swing.

It is campaigning as usual, as if Belize has not changed and everything is as it was before. Splash the countryside with colorful t-shirts, toss some money around and the stupid fools will forget everything they have been subjected to. Loyal subjects all who will turn out on National Day and wave their little flags and grin up with their leaders, allow their photos to be taken, grinning like idiots when some political Boss puts his arm around them and says "Say Cheese." Then slips them some cheddar and emails the picture to the party paper for publication, or orders the videotape edited in time for the 6:30 news.

Well, I am sorry Mr. Politician (there are so few Ms Politicians as to be negligible) I do not vote for you based on some crappy park you park some benches in, some handouts you hand-out, some projects you launch that will never get off the ground, donations of used, expired or rejected equipment or supplies or hustled from do-gooders in other countries. I vote based on your track record and performance in office. And if you have no prior list of achievements, or misdeeds, then I evaluate you

based on your stand on reform and campaign finacing limits, poverty alleviation, your commitment to creating jobs and opportunities and making educational opportunities available. It is not about the jokes you tell or your silver tongue and ability to talk your way out of a lie. I don't care how many little old ladies think you are sexy or young women want to have your babies. Its not about personality, it's about performance, integrity and all those other clichés, yes, even character.

Some say the economic train has stalled, some say it lost direction, others say it was badly driven. I can reach only one conclusion: the train was only ever intended to carry first class passengers. All the other cars were detached early on and left to sit on the tracks abandoned, the passengers left like National Transport riders to find their own way to their destination while those who rode up front barreled off at high speed to get to the goodies first and hide it from the rest of us.

I cannot and will not support any economic policy which only pursues one goal: self enrichment of those in power and at the expense of those without. I cannot and will not support any politician who refuses to acknowledge any wrongdoing or corrupt acts, or any who covered them up. I will not vote for any man or woman who is so foolish as to admit he or she "deserves" to be elected because it is his/her turn at the trough. I will not accept t-shirts of free beer or meals or rides to rallies or payment for my vote. I do not need your nationality

papers or promise of a job or favors. I do not need you as much as you need me and you need to remember that.

I have but two requests from the man wanting my vote. Bring the cost of gasoline down to \$7 or less a gallon and do something for my sisters who are being laid off just down the road from my home, in my community. Because they are about to punish, and badly.

Help them, not with handouts, but with real opportunities to do something to generate income or get a decent job.

If you can start with these women and their families, help them maintain their dignity for their years of service to those companies and this country, THEN I will begin to believe **you** Believe in Belize.

Only then.

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Guest Gallery

This Week: Costa Maya Pageant at San Pedro



Miss Mexico Isis Amor Barerra (photo by Shamir Guererro)



Miss El Salvador, Marta Elena Martinez Vidal (photo by Shamir Guererro)



Miss Nicaragua Dalia Locayo Sequiera (photo by Shamir Guererro)



If you have any photos you would like to share with Independent readers in our Guest Gallery, send your digital jpg or tiff images to karlavernon_belize@yahoo.com.

Letters to the Editor

☞ (Continued From Page 1)
to do whatever it wants, when it wants, and how it wants on the Peninsula. If the GOB won't even support our by-laws, why would they support a regional planning authority which would be an even greater threat? And, in fact, Peninsula-wide planning already took place when the Peninsula was made part of the Mango Creek Special Development District. The "zoning" of the Peninsula that took place as part of the Special Development Area planning process has been simply ignored by the GOB.

However, if Mr. Krohn would like to try to develop a Peninsula Planning Authority, PCSD will support this effort and offer any assistance that we can to make a Peninsula planning authority a reality.

As for the road, well. November — maybe. First a start was promised *this year* for March, then July, now November. Frankly, people on the Peninsula have been through this road dance so many times that our dancing shoes have worn out from the dust, potholes and rocks with which our road is STILL lined. (Paving of the road was first promised around 1998.) Water and the aquifer? According to the engineers that we've talked to, the amount of water in our aquifer CAN be measured. However, it will require the assistance of the GOB because it will be expensive. And, should people on the Peninsula be required to sacrifice the good, pure water we now have just to line the pockets of developers? One of the engineers we discussed this with is a man who is a registered civil engineer, has owned and operated 7 water companies in the State of Maine and has well over 50 years experience in the field.

At present, at the age of 92, he is chairman of the Clean Water Committee for the State of Maine. Here's what he has to say:

The first and most important issue is to not issue any more permits for construction until the water supply situation has been studied and recommendations made and accepted by the authorities for future growth—and this should include down to single family occupancy. This is vital. Regarding aquifer capacity -- it is a three dimensional matter -- width, length, and depth measurements are needed to start. Depth from surface to bedrock is the costly, exploratory factor and while test drilling in sand overburden at scattered points will provide some info, bedrock permeability must be explored, depending on type of rock-coral, metamorphic, etc. If the geological formation on the Peninsula is similar to that of the three wells [dug and tested by Ara Macao], you have a lot of info to start. However, underground formations can vary tremendously so one has to be careful—the two areas might be worlds apart in their formations. The first step is to hire an experienced engineer who has a track record in the field and he/she will lead you on.

We would very much appreciate the assistance of Mr. Krohn as well as the assistance of all the developers on the Peninsula to measure aquifer capacity - BEFORE we run out of water. (Many experts predict that within the next 50 years, wars may be fought over water. Water is critical to human life and asking the people of Peninsula to sacrifice their water is simply untenable.)

The members of PCSD believe that

sustainable development of the Placencia Peninsula can occur only through viable public and private partnerships that work to make the Peninsula a better place for all of us. And, we are eager to work with developers who come to build and not destroy.

Mr. Krohn's development, which is low density, and has attempted to embrace the natural environment of the Peninsula, is exactly the kind of development we would like to see on the Peninsula. Unfortunately, most of the developments currently under construc-

tion are not.

And, we cannot and will not support developments that ignore our culture and our community and the potentially adverse effects of their developments on us.

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We must receive your ad by Friday at mid-day for inclusion in following Tuesday issue.

For Sale



Two Yamaha propellers:

1) for 115 Enduro (Aluminum)

2) for 200- Stainless Steel- 19 pitch

Asking Bz\$600 O.B.O.

Contact Independent Weekly

Announcement of Sale of Business

This article is to give notice that the business known as C@fé Caye operating at 12 Burns Ave, San Ignacio, Cayo District is under contract for sale. Completion of sale to take place 28th August 2007.

Any persons or businesses who believe they have outstanding accounts to be paid from said business should contact; Rainforest Realty, PO Box 195, San Ignacio, Cayo District, in writing 7 days before the date of completion.

Conservation Land For Sale



70 acres in Burrell Boom for US\$70K
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