

Santa Elena





Editorial



Rest In Peace Siego

We take time out from the usual editorial material to dedicate this week's column to the memory of a well known resident of the west, **Dave "Siego" Valencio**, 44, who passed away quietly at the Western Regional Hospital in Belmopan on Wednesday, November 26, 2008.

We are dedicating this column to the memory of Siego because he was like family to us. We go way back from childhood days at St. Andrews Anglican School. Siego was a special needs child yet he never allowed those needs to hinder his desire to achieve.

As children we lived at one end of Santa Elena, but for some reasons then unknown to us, our mother sent us to primary school at the other end of San Ignacio. On our way to school every day we passed ALL the other primary schools. It is only now that we realize the benefits of those long daily walks during all those years. St. Andrews Anglican Primary School provided us with a solid educational foundation. One of these days we will reminisce about the teachers of those days but on this occasion we pay tribute to Siego.

It was attending St. Andrews Anglican Primary Schools that gave us the opportunity to grow up with Siego and his siblings. Siego and his family lived on Survey Street near the home of

our **Aunt Diega**. We were therefore acquainted even with his granny, **Miss Rosie Loague**, a pioneer in the Red Cross movement in Cayo. We also knew Siego's Aunt, **Ann Taibo**, who although she was a girl, and a big, tough girl at that, was many of our bouncers at school. Ann Taibo was always ready to protect us at school.

Siego was supposed to grow up with the community feeling sorry for him, but **NOT SO!** with Siego. Despite the disability Siego did better for himself than quite a few persons who should have done much better from themselves.

Despite his special needs, Siego kept himself in order, always neatly dressed. He took much pride in working for many years as a Customs Guard at the Western Border Station.

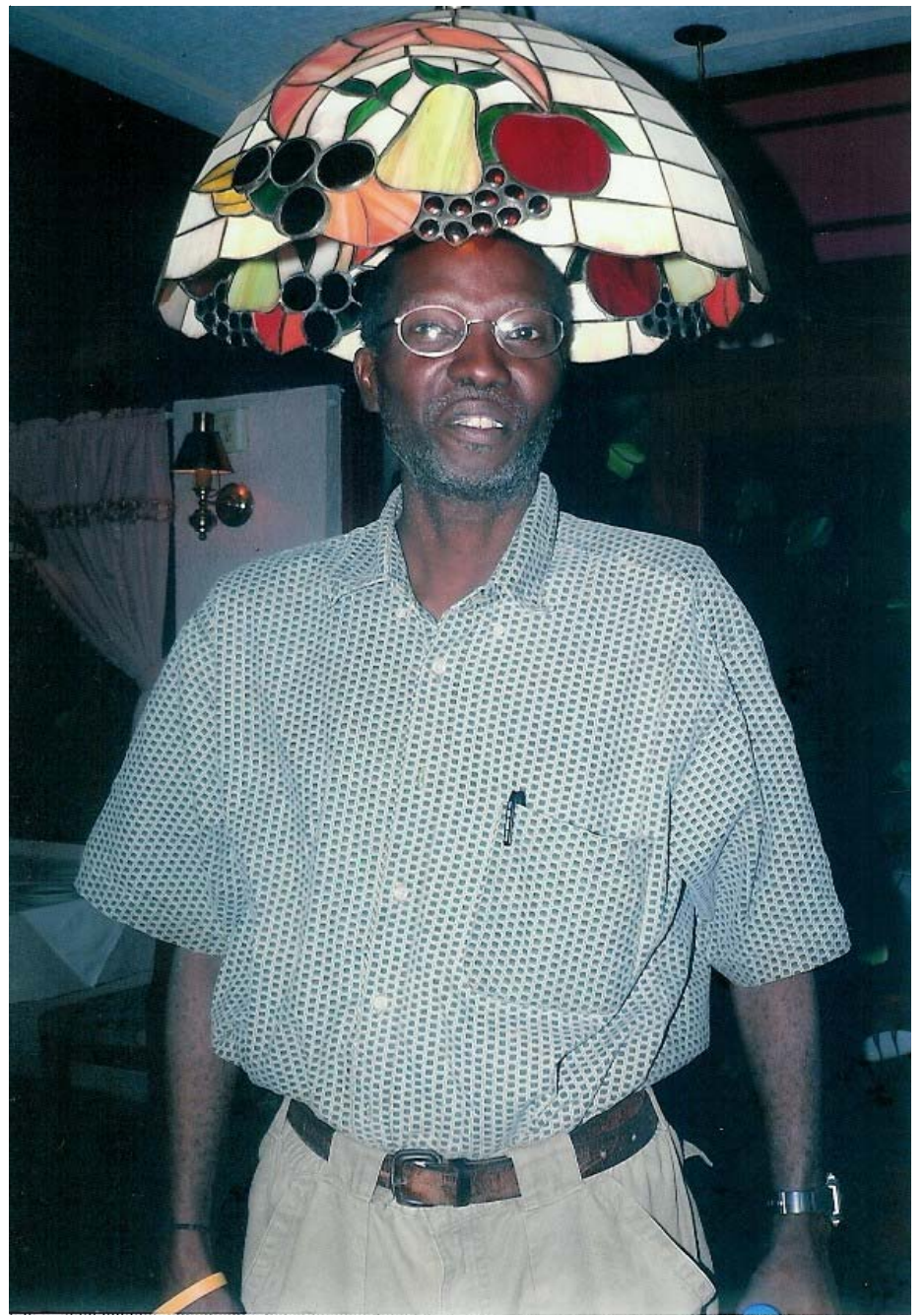
He was a regular client at Hode's Place where he could often be found having a few drinks with his buddy, Customs Officer **Ernesto "Grease" Garcia**.

Siego was known by many people in the community and many of us are proud of his genuine desire not to be left behind and lean on the sympathies of others as he confronted every adversity.

I recall a few years ago when my brother (who resides in Los Angeles) and I met Siego at the western border a few days after the death of my son, Rodney. Siego came up to us and said to my brother *"Bway Lou, when yu come? What are you doing here?"*

"I came for the funeral of Beto's son" responded my brother. He then turned to me and said *"Bway Beto, I neva know your son dead, CONGRATULATIONS bway."* Despite the tragedy we had no choice but to throw down a big laugh. That was the Siego we all knew. He will be missed.

Siego is survived by his mother, **Mrs. Julia Strand Loague**, Sisters: **Esther, Shawn, Kay and Jenine**; Brothers: **Wayne, Andy and Paul**; Several aunts including our St. Andrews School Teacher



Dave "Siego" Valencio , 44
SUNRISE: 14 July 1964
SUNSET: 26 November 2008

Mrs. Susan Loague Ortega, He is also survived by several Uncles, Nieces, Nephews, Cousins, other relatives and countless friends. He is predeceased by his father **Teodore Valencio** and his Granny **Miss Rosie Loague**.

Funeral service for **Dave "Siego" Valencio** was held at 10:00 a.m., on Friday,

November 28, 2008 at the Nazarene Church in San Ignacio. He was laid to rest inside the Santa Rita Cemetery in his San Ignacio hometown.

We express our deepest sympathy to **Miss Julia** and the rest of the family at the passing of the well known Dave **"Siego" Valencio**. May his soul rest in Eternal Peace.

STAR Newspaper

"The Newspaper that cares and dares to bring out the truth"

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ATTENTION!!
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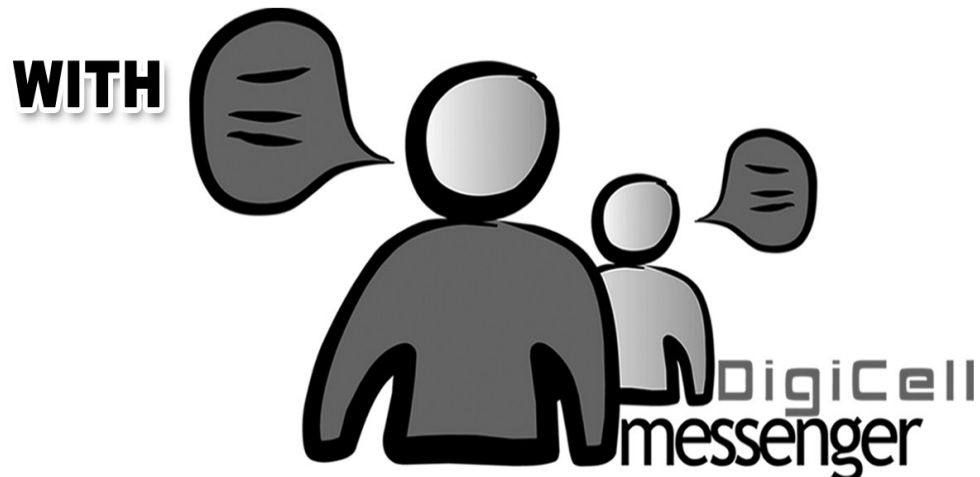
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Billy White scored the only goal in last Sunday's game



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ICQ	ICQ	REG ICQ [ICQ number] [password]

To register additional accounts replace REG with MREG

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Step 2: List your IM contacts Send command **LIS** to **CHAT**

LIS

SEND

Online:
32) erwin_123
17) sugardaddy
20) raf81

RECEIVE

Step 3: Start chatting

Type your message just like you would type an SMS. Send your message to **CHAT** and tag on the contact's number at the end, e.g. **CHAT32** (242832).

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242832

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UDP San Ignacio/ Santa Elena Town Board Candidates Elected

SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo District, Sunday, November 23, 2008:

The United Democratic Party (UDP) held its convention to elect candidates for the March 4, 2009 round of municipal elections in the twin towns of San Ignacio and Santa Elena.

The convention was held under the supervision of the party's Chairman **Douglas Singh** and Secretary General **Phillipa Griffith Bailey**.

The mayoral position was not up for election as incumbent Mayor John Francis August will again contest the election for the UDP. A total of 16 candidates were vying for the six positions to form the new slate of candidates.

Voting began promptly at 9:00 am and ended eight hours later at 5:00 p.m. The counting got underway shortly after the polls were closed. After about two hours of counting and tabulating the over 1,500 votes cast, the results in order of ranking is as follows: **Bernadette Fernandez**: 846; **Earl Trapp Jr.**: 819; **Desol Neal**: 693;



Moses Chuc, Desol Neal, Vanessa Neal, Eduardo Cano, Earl Trapp Jr., Bernadette Fernandez and John Francis August

Moses Chuc: 618; **Eduardo Cano**: 540; **Vanessa Neal**: 532 **Jimmy Gongora**: 496; **Miguel Gamez**: 465; **George Herrera**: 392; **James Moore**: 382; **Juan Polanco**: 376; **Jose Lemus Jr.**: 309; **Merari Torres**: 298; **Iliana**

Moreno: 276; **Kent Pandey**: 254 and **Ana Marie Harris**: 211.

Therefore, the seven candidates contesting the March 4, 2009 municipal election for the UDP in the twin town of San Ignacio and Santa Elena are: John August for

Mayor and for councilors: Bernadette Fernandez, Earl Trapp, Desol Neal, Moses Chuc, Eduardo Cano and Vanessa Neal.

Mayor John August aside, the team comprises four serving councilors (Fernandez, Trapp, Cano and Vanessa Neal) with Desol Neal and Moses Chuc as newcomers replacing George Herrera and Iliana Moreno.

Again, Mayor John August aside, the new team is made up of three candidates each residing in San Ignacio and Santa Elena (Fernandez, Trapp and Chuc - San Ignacio) and (Desol Neal, Eduardo Cano and Vanessa Neal - Santa Elena.)

PNP Gearing Up For Elections In PG

PUNTA GORDA TOWN, Toledo, Thursday, November 25, 2008:

A release from the People's National Party (PNP) informed that the party will be holding its first ever Town Council Convention at the Central Park in Punta Gorda Town on Saturday, 29 November 2008.

The release goes on to say that *"This is a landmark event for the PNP and the leadership of the party is very proud of this moment."*

Wil Maheia, Leader of the PNP, states, *"This convention will be a positive step forward for democracy. It will be beneficial for everyone. At the moment, we feel the UDP's are shooting themselves in the foot and the PUP's are shooting themselves in the belly, so our people of Punta Gorda Town will have an*

opportunity to vote in a party they can believe in."

The convention will start at 9:00 a.m., and voting will start at 9:30 a.m., culminating at 2 PM.

The convention is open to anyone residing in Punta Gorda Town and is legally registered in that municipality.

Maria Lara, one of the candidates contesting for a seat on the Council and states, *"I am glad to see that it is an open convention because people are so disappointed with both parties right now. We expect to have a wave of new membership coming from the two other parties."*

The PNP has also decided to allow electronic voting because many students and other citizens of Punta Gorda live and work outside the district. This option will allow them an

opportunity to vote for the candidates of their choice.

The two candidates vying for the Mayor's position are **Linston aka "Blues" McKenzie** and **Thomas Bejerano**.

There are nine other candidates vying for the six councilor positions.

BIRTHDAY GREETING

Happy 14th Birthday to Shareece & Shereece Sabal



Celebrating their 14th Birthday on November 28. This Greeting comes from Mom: Zelita; Dad: Joachim; Sisters: Jenieve & Dhyllis, and Nephew: Ahdanye with Lots & Lots of Love. May You Live To See Many More Birthdays



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is also featuring a family platter

Government Of Belize Will Absorb Increase In CXC Fees

BELMOPAN CITY, Thursday, November 27, 2008:

The Ministry of Education wishes to inform students, parents, schools/examination centers that it will be absorbing the recently announced increase in fees for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) Examinations (commonly called CXC Examinations) and the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE).

The decision to absorb the increase in fees this year was taken after the Ministry of Education reviewed the matter upon hearing expressions of concern from schools, parents and students.

Last week, the Ministry of Education had issued a memorandum to schools informing of the increase in fees announced by Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) and advising schools of the measures to be taken in order to ease the effect of the increase in the fees on students and parents. These included:

1. that the fees owed under the old fee structure be paid by the existing deadline of December 5, 2008; and

2. to extend the payment period for the difference between the old



**Hon. Patrick Faber
Minister of Education**

and new fee structures to February 27, 2009.

The Ministry of Education had also advised schools/examination centers that they were to keep a careful record of the fees paid in by students under the old fee structure and the remaining balance to be paid under the new fee structure.

Given that the Ministry of Education has decided to absorb the increase in fees, schools/examination centers are being requested to refund to students/parents any difference between the old and new fee structures that

students/parents may have already paid.

Students/parents who have already paid the difference between the old and new fee structures are reminded that they should request such refunds from their schools/examination centers.

Schools, students and parents are also hereby informed that given that the Ministry of education is absorbing the difference between the old and new fees, that the existing deadline for paying fees owed under the old fee structure still stands and that the extended deadline of February 27, 2009 for paying the difference between the old and new fees no longer stands.

The Caribbean Examinations Council had informed the

Ministry of Education of its intention to increase the candidate entry fees and subject fees for the May/June 2009 CSEC and CAPE Examinations.

CXC indicated that it found it necessary to increase its fees to accommodate the rising operating cost as it relates to the development, production and marking of the examinations.

Such a measure would enable CXC to continue delivering the high quality examinations for which it is internationally known.

The Ministry of Education through this release is informing parents, students and schools/examination centers of its decision this year to pay for the difference between old and new fees on the behalf of students in an effort to ease the effect on students and parents.

Juan Chuc's Store

#31 Bullet Tree Road, San Ignacio Town, Cayo
Tel: 824-2160

GRAND CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

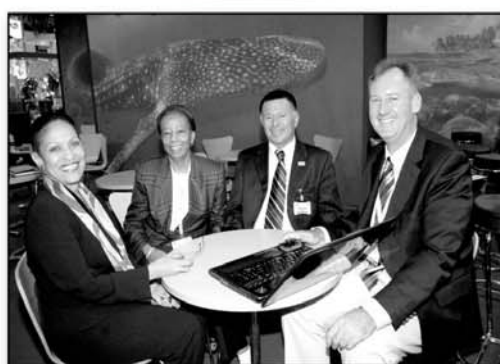
For every \$25 Purchase Customers receive a FREE

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BELIZE TOURISM BOARD BTB TOURISM NEWS

Belize is showcased as a premier destination at World Travel Market (WTM) in London



Belize City, Tuesday, November 25th, 2008 - Once again, Belize was well represented at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London, England from November 10th through November 14th, 2008. The Minister of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Hon. Manuel Heredia Jr., led the Belize delegation which comprised the Belize High Commissioner in London, H.E. Kamela Palma, Belize's Ambassador in Brussels, Ambassador Joy Grant, The Director of Tourism, Tracy Panton, and the Director of Marketing, Shakira Oxley-Tsai.

Over 5,000 leading suppliers and 44,000 industry professionals from over 194 countries attended and had the opportunity for the whole global trade industry to meet, network, negotiate, and exchange vital contacts and source new products and services.

Participating private sectors included The Belize Hotel Association, Belize Tourism Industry Association, Discovery Expeditions, Hugh Parkey Dive Connections, Best Western Biltmore Plaza, Almond Beach/Jaguar Reef Resort, Bella Maya Resort, Radisson Fort George, and Outpost International (Machaca Hill Lodge).

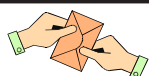
**For more information on the developments and events in
Belize tourism industry, please contact the Marketing
Department at the Belize Tourism Board at**

Belize Tourism Board, 64 Regent Street, P.O. Box 325, Belize City
Tel: 227-2420/Fax: 227-2423 E-mail: info@travelbelize.org Web: www.travelbelize.org, www.belize tourism.org





Readers Write



THE CONTROVERSIAL HYPOCRISY

By: G. Gomez, San Ignacio

"Justice is blind" or at least she is suppose to be. Her eyes must be covered in order to not differentiate, not to bias or not show unreasonable favor. She should be impartial, fair and deliberate.

The Constitution of Belize further provides that equal justice should meted out to all. How then in all fairness to that which is true and right did a senior Police Officer get caught up in the nonsensical prying eyes of those guarding Justice's Gate.

An issue over a few bottles of liquor and some cigarettes has riddled our headlines. It has created a mockery of a situation long in existence begging for a cure, but none would come.

Instead a scapegoat was found to set the example of what happens to persons who are caught importing illegal goods

An example which in fairness to some type of poetic justice does not treat the ailment, does not provide for an adequate example, but instead kills the truth which justice seeks to provide.

Everyday of the week Belizeans across this country engage in small purchases of goods in neighboring Guatemala and Mexico, some legally, others pushing the parameters of the law. However, none like those who are the guardians of the law, who are the protectors of Madame Justice herself, are themselves tarnished, as many of them are known to be engage in despicable acts of indignation and wretchedness far above that which Mr. Mariano is being accused.

Yes! I am referring to the CUSTOM OFFICERS. Those persons who in the course of their duties to country and people, have put to shame the meaning of the word ILLEGAL IMPORTATION.

One only has to visit their home and you will find them expensively furnished the product of their indignant acts. The driveway to their mansions sits is lined with expensive and late model vehicles, often time one being his and the other being her for his companion who is often a mere housewife. Their parties and social gatherings overflow with goods which the common man could never come by without lawfully paying tariffs or being scrutinized as a "contrabandista".

How ironic then after being engaged in illicit acts of enrichment in volume far graver than the Mariano issue, are able to sneak

away from the watchful eyes of other branches of LAW ENFORCERS.

At the risk of appearing to be condoning illegal activities, I think that I might have overestimated the camaraderies within the police department.

Customs Officers see the ill gotten assets of even the most junior within their ranks. Assets that they know is far, far, far above their pay scales however, a Custom officers would rather die than send one of their own to the slaughter.

I am not saying that condoning Mariano's act would be right – I am just saying that inflating a minor slip-up is wrong.

In a world far advance where everybody eyes has been opened and where opportunity screams for all, can you blame one, two or three individuals for trying to have the same opportunities as others would have?

Can you blame police officers for wanting to have at least a shadow of colleague law enforcement customs officers?

And can you blame a few who might be inclined to bend the law as they see others around them shattering the very same laws to pieces.

For my part is say, investigate the custom officers, clear their eyes. Draw a comparison between their income and their fluid assets even after a single year on the job.

Investigate their rise to richness and their blatant abuse of the power the exercise.

Let the senior command of the customs department do this first before they go out into the night swinging a stick hoping to hit someone.

There is an old saying *"if you don't want someone following you then stop following everybody else"*.

We see these unbalance in the system with others living more privilege than others and we are not in despair of it.

If we see a doctor driving an SUV we understand it. But if we see a fellow colleagues rising above his means too fast we become interested and we also want to partake in the interest which led the rise.

I say STOP THE CORRUPTION among those guardians of the law. Truly give justice back its maxim **"Justice is blind"**; and not that she is bound with a blindfold peeping out and targeting those whom she wishes to consume.

A word to the wise will suffice.

BTL Makes 4th Donation To Youth Business Trust

BELIZE CITY, Wednesday, November 26, 2008:

A release from the Youth Business Trust Belize (YBTB) informed of the receipt of a generous donation from Belize Telemedia Limited (BTL).

entrepreneurs and distribution of application forms.

The third and fourth donation of \$10,000.00 and \$15,000.00 respectively will be used to bridge the counterpart funding gap for the programme along with meeting



(L to R) Joe Habet, YBTB Treasurer receiving cheque from Dean Boyce, Chairman, Telemedia Executive Committee

The release informs that today's cheque in the sum BZ\$15,000.00 is the fourth donation being delivered thus far as part of Telemedia's commitment to the development of youth enterprise programs in Belize.

The cheque was handed over to **Joe Habet**, Treasurer of the Board of YBTB, on the occasion of Telemedia's Annual General Meeting held at the Radisson Fort George Hotel.

The first donation from Telemedia was free internet service within the offices of the Trust, to be used for the daily office administration as well as a resource facility for young entrepreneurs needing communication and research materials. A resource center is currently under construction.

The second donation was access to resources such as printing and design as well as use of BTL offices as satellite locations around the country for meetings with

much needed funding for daily operations.

Youth Business Trust Belize is a program offering young persons, between the ages of 18-35, assistance in starting their own businesses.

The program offers loan financing, training and the ever important component: mentoring, which guides the young persons business on the road to success.

Those who pledged their commitment to the program, which is being funded by the Inter American Development Bank, have made a serious investment in the future of Belize.

The program, which follows the Youth Business International model started by **Prince Charles of Wales**, boasts a vast network operating in thirty eight countries worldwide.

Youth Business Trust Belize expends a big Thank you Belize Telemedia for this latest donation.

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Butane Prices Gone Down By \$28.

BELMOPAN, Cayo District, Wednesday, November 26, 2008:

The Ministry of Economic Development, Commerce, Industry and Consumer Protection in conjunction with the Cabinet Standing Subcommittee of Ministers announced a decrease in the controlled price for a hundred pound cylinder of butane gas which took effect as of Tuesday November 25th, 2008.

A reflection of the price difference is as follows:

MUNICIPALITY	WAS	IS	SAVINGS
Belize City	\$124.00	\$96.00	\$28.00
Belmopan	\$126.00	\$98.00	\$28.00
San Ignacio	\$126.00	\$98.00	\$28.00
Benque	\$127.00	\$99.00	\$28.00
Orange Walk	\$125.00	\$97.00	\$28.00
Corozal	\$124.00	\$96.00	\$28.00
Dangriga	\$128.00	\$100.00	\$28.00
Punta Gorda	\$129.00	\$101.00	\$28.00

The Ministry in collaboration with the Standing Subcommittee of Ministers will continue to collaborate with other producers and stakeholders in order to procure further decreases in prices of other basic commodities.

The Government of Belize anticipates that the decrease in butane prices, coupled with recent decreases in fuel prices, translates to a doubling effect in lower prices and to this end providing much price relief to consumers.

One butane retailer said it best

when he told the media that he cannot recall the last time he sold a 100 pound cylinder of butane for anything under 100 dollars.



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*Christmas Trees
& Decorations*



Serving the
Twin Towns of
San Ignacio &
Santa Elena
for over
30 years!



Public Notice

Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE ELECTRICITY UTILITY SECTOR

It is the considered opinion of the Public Utilities Commission (PUC; the Commission), that since the issue of its Final Decision in relation to the 2008 Annual Review Proceeding (2008 ARP) for the Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) on June 26, 2008, BEL has embarked upon a negative campaign seemingly designed to create a perception of instability in the electricity utility sector, to undermine confidence in the PUC and in fact the Government and Country of Belize, and to present itself as a utility company in a severe financial crisis that threatens its ability to survive and to provide services.

BEL has repeatedly and publicly linked this campaign to the Final Decision issued by the Commission, and BEL's motivation appears to be to secure an increase in the rates approved by the Commission.

BEL has included in its campaign a strategy to deny services to persons who request same or to impose unapproved codes of practice with unapproved fee structures on persons who should choose to accept same, both actions being violations of various Conditions of BEL's Licence. The Commission found it necessary on November 11, 2008, to serve an Order on BEL to direct it to comply with its Licence and to continue to provide electricity services under established and approved codes of practice, and will monitor BEL's compliance with a view to taking legal action in the absence of such compliance.

Now, in light of the destructive nature of BEL's media campaign and the apparent success it has had with certain stakeholders in the electricity utility sector, in particular the apparent effect it has had on potential creditors and the interest it has garnered in the public media, the Commission finds it necessary to issue this *Statement on the State of Affairs of the Electricity Utility Sector* in order to allay any potential public and stakeholder fears and to 'set the record straight'.

The Final Decision and its Impact on Rates:

The Commission, in its Final Decision for the 2008 ARP, approved a Mean Electricity Rate (MER) for BEL as follows:

Value Added of Deliver – VAD	\$0.135
Cost of Power – COP	\$0.312
<u>Rate Stabilization Account Recovery</u>	<u>\$0.080</u>
Mean Electricity Rate – MER	\$0.527
<u>Less: Corrections</u>	<u>- \$0.086</u>
Net MER	\$0.441

Based on total forecast sales of 420,333,335 kilowatt-hours, the Tariff Basket Revenue (TBR – total forecast revenue from electricity sales for the period July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009) was determined as follows:

Tariff Basket Revenue	(420,333,335 x \$0.441 =) \$185,367,014
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Based on the Tariff Basket Revenue and forecast sales by class of customers, the Commission then approved rates and tariffs to be charged to the various classes of customers for registered consumption, which are provided in Decision 10 of the Final Decision.

Comments:

1) The Commission approved a rate increase for BEL but applied a total of approximately \$36.2 million in Corrections for previous tariffs charged to consumers that were due for correction at a later period or were, in the opinion of the Commission, not justified. These Corrections, when applied over the forecast sales for BEL for the Annual Tariff Period (ATP; July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009), resulted in a reduction of \$0.086 in the effective Mean Electricity Rate (MER), which remained unchanged at \$0.441.

2) BEL has objected strongly to these Corrections and has identified them as a major reason for its claimed inability to continue to finance its operations and to pay its creditors. It has misrepresented the effect of the Corrections on its financial position in order to further that perception.

3) BEL has appealed the Final Decision in the Supreme Court of Belize.

Misrepresentation of Effect of Corrections made during 2008 ARP:

The entire basis for the injurious course of action adopted by BEL rests on a misrepresentation of the effects of the \$36.2 million in Corrections made by the Commission during the 2008 ARP for tariffs charged to consumers in prior years. By applying unacceptable accounting principles, BEL has misrepresented its current liquidity position and its financial performance during the current calendar year.

Consider the financial figures and comment extracted from BEL's monthly Financial Reports and the accompanying correction to the Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows (column at far right) as presented in **TABLE 1**.

Comments:

1) As can be seen from the excerpts from BEL's INCOME STATEMENT – OCTOBER 2008, BEL has chosen to net the entire \$36.2 million in Corrections against ELECTRICITY REVENUES for 2008. The effect of this is that BEL is now reporting electricity revenues of some \$112,467,689 for the period January 1 to October 31, 2008, as compared to its budget/plan for revenues for the period of some \$145,536,201 and to a total of \$132,210,132 for a similar period in 2007.

2) This unacceptable accounting treatment employed by BEL misrepresents the actual electricity revenues realized by BEL during the period by reducing the total by some \$36.2 million, from \$148,667,689 million to \$112,467,689 million, and further results in the following:

- a) BEL's net earnings for the period is reported as a loss of \$12.245 million rather than a net profit of \$23.955 million that would be correct if the Corrections were given the appropriate accounting treatment;
- b) BEL's cash position at October 31 is reported as \$0.00 rather than the \$36.2 million that would be correct if the Corrections were given the appropriate accounting treatment.

(Cont'd on Page 9)



Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE ELECTRICITY UTILITY SECTOR

(Cont'd From Page 8)



3) The folly in BEL's accounting treatment is further confirmed by the fact that BEL reports total sales of 344,101,000 kilowatt-hours up to October, 2008, which, when combined with Electricity Revenues of \$112,467,689, results in an average tariff of $(\$112,467,689 / 344,101,000 =) \0.327 , which is incorrect. The approved Mean Electricity Rate (MER) over the entire period is \$0.441.

4) BEL reported paying Corporate Tax of \$2,459,041 for the period. At a tax rate of 1.75% on gross revenues, the amount paid by BEL relates to gross revenues of \$140.5 million. This further confirms that BEL's treatment of the corrections misrepresents its actual Electricity Revenues for the period.

5) In any event, it is unacceptable for accounting purposes to make a provision for a future event. By BEL's own admission, it has mounted a legal challenge to the Final Decision and the Corrections applied by the Commission may yet be reversed by the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the effect on rates of the Final Decision is that the effective Mean Electricity Rate (MER) continues to be \$0.441.

TABLE 1

Excerpts from BEL's Monthly Financial Statements				Financial Statements Reflecting True Electricity Revenues	
<u>Income Statement - October 2008</u>					
<u>Year to Date</u>					
	<u>Actual 2008</u>	<u>Plan 2008</u>	<u>Actual 2007</u>	<u>Actual 2008</u>	
Electricity Revenues	112467,689	* 145536,201	132210,132	148667,689	**
<u>Cost of Wholesale Power</u>	<u>95682,868</u>	<u>90791,914</u>	<u>80600,394</u>	<u>95682,868</u>	
Electricity Contribution	16784,821	54744,287	51609,738	52984,821	
Other Revenue	6669,131	5988,093	6024,958	6669,131	
Operating Expenses	17251,699	17786,139	16339,260	17251,699	
Depreciation	11367,369	10269,912	9500,747	11367,369	
Finance Charges	5263,711	5068,189	3962,683	5263,711	
<u>Gain/(Loss) on Foreign Exchange</u>	<u>642,712</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(794,856)</u>	<u>642,712</u>	
Net Earnings before Taxes	(9786,116)	27608,140	27037,150	26413,885	
<u>Corporate Tax</u>	<u>2459,041</u>	<u>2618,926</u>	<u>2370,704</u>	<u>2459,041</u>	
Earnings Applicable to Shareholders	(12245,157)	24989,214	24666,446	23954,844	
* Net of PUC's correction in the 2008 ARP Final Decision, which is subject to change after the results of the legal challenge.					
<u>Statement of Cash Flows - October 2008</u>					
<u>Year to Date</u>					
	<u>Actual 2008</u>	<u>Actual 2007</u>		<u>Actual 2008</u>	
Cash From (Used In) Operations:					
Net (Loss) Income	(12245,157)	24666,446		23954,844	
Items Not Affecting Cash					
Depreciation and Amortization (Net)	11367,369	9500,747		11367,369	
Unrealized Exchange Loss (Gain) on LTD (net)	(642,712)	794,856		(642,712)	
Change in Non-Cash Working Capital	<u>29280,218</u>	<u>(730,021)</u>		<u>29280,218</u>	
	<u>27759,718</u>	<u>34232,028</u>		<u>63959,719</u>	
Cash From (Used In) Investing:					
Acquisition of Plant and Equipment	<u>(34778,711)</u>	<u>(32040,670)</u>		<u>(34778,711)</u>	
	<u>(34778,711)</u>	<u>(32040,670)</u>		<u>(34778,711)</u>	
Cash From (Used In) Financing:					
Proceeds From/(Payment To) Bank Overdraft	2753,161	0		2753,161	
Proceeds From New Loans	7943,056	2100,243		7943,056	
Payment On Debt	(9339,308)	(10554,702)		(9339,308)	
Capital Contribution	(357,991)	943,614		(357,991)	
Proceeds From Sale of Debentures	2746,900	4844,500		2746,900	
Dividends Paid	(3796,252)	(11388,735)		(3796,252)	
Debentures Redeemed	<u>(4,380)</u>	<u>(43,800)</u>		<u>(4,380)</u>	
	<u>(54,814)</u>	<u>(14098,880)</u>		<u>(54,814)</u>	
Net Decrease In Cash and Short-Term Investments	(7073,807)	(11907,522)		29126,194	
Cash and Short-Term Investments, Beginning of Period	<u>7073,807</u>	<u>14236,802</u>		<u>7073,807</u>	
Cash and Short-Term Investments, End of Period	0	2329,280		36200,001	

Actual Effect of Corrections made during 2008 ARP:

1) The \$36.2 million in Corrections applied by the Commission have absolutely no impact on previous or current revenues generated by BEL while applying the Approved Tariffs. These Corrections were applied in determining the effective Mean Electricity Rate (MER), and by extension the Tariff Basket Revenue and the Approved Tariffs for Customer Classes for the period July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009. All revenues generated by BEL when applying the Approved Tariffs accrue to BEL and none has been confiscated by the Commission, as BEL's accounting treatment so misrepresents.

2) The Corrections are applied at a rate of \$0.086 per kilowatt-hour of electrical energy sold by BEL over the period July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009. As such, the proper accounting treatment is for BEL to net the Corrections against Electricity Revenues on a monthly basis, with Electricity Revenues being calculated at the rate of \$0.527 per kilowatt-hour of sales, thus producing an effective Mean Electricity Rate (MER) of $(\$0.527 - \$0.086 =) \$0.441$.

(Cont'd on Page 10)

Traffic Fatality In Orange Walk Town

ORANGE WALK TOWN, Tuesday, November 25, 2008:

An elderly man from rural Orange Walk lost his life on Monday evening as a result of a road traffic accident.

Police reports that it was around 2:10 p.m. on Monday, November 24 when **Antonio Novelo**, 48, of #12 Liberty Avenue, Orange Walk Town, reported that he knocked down a man about 10 minutes

earlier.

In a report to the police Novelo informed that he was driving his white, extended cab, Ford Ranger pickup truck, bearing license plates OW-C-13337) on Belize/Corozal

Road in Orange Walk Town when a male person suddenly walked from behind a parked truck directly into the path he was driving resulting in the person being knocked down.

The injured man, with visible head and body injuries, was identified as **Bonifacio Sosa**, 79, Belizean, from Trinidad Village. He was rushed, first to the Western Regional Hospital in Orange Walk Town and later, to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital in Belize City where he passed away whilst undergoing emergency medical treatment.

A post mortem examination conducted, the following day, by forensic specialist, **Dr. Mario Estrada** certified the cause of death as *"Subarachnoid Ventricular Hemorrhage and head trauma due to road traffic accident"*.

Novelo was first issued with a Notice Of Intended Prosecution (NIP) however, even before the post mortem examination was conducted, the NIP was effected leading to the formal arresting and charging of Antonio Novelo for the crime of: a) Manslaughter by Negligence; b) Causing death by Careless Conduct and c) Drove motor vehicle without due care and attention.

Fun Day For Cayo Youth

SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo, Monday, November 25, 2008:

Youth for the Future will be hosting a Fun Day on Saturday, November 29th from 9:30a.m., 4:30 p.m., at the Macal River Park in San Ignacio Town, Cayo District.

All those young persons in Standard 5 and 6 as well as those in 1st and 2nd Forms are invited for a full day of events; including competitive games, human obstacle courses and a water balloon fight.

Prizes will be awarded to schools with the highest percentage of participation.

For further information on this event please contact Ms. Tiffany Samson at telephone no 678-9909 or by email at TLSamson@gmail.com).

Ms Samson is the Youth for the Future Fun Day Coordinator from

The Cornerstone Foundation. She says they are in need of donations and volunteers for the event!

She is also inviting members of

the public to visit the Cornerstone Foundation at Number 90 Burns Ave in San Ignacio town, to get more details.

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Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE ELECTRICITY UTILITY SECTOR

(Cont'd From Page 9)



Conclusions and Comments:

Given the above, the following conclusions are inevitable:

- 1) The 'liquidity crisis' that BEL has attempted to present to the general public is certainly not as BEL would have us believe. Despite the Corrections applied by the Commission during the 2008 ARP, BEL is still very profitable and is in a better liquidity position than for the same period of 2007. BEL is in fact a financially viable utility operating in a stable utility sector overseen by a fair and responsible regulator.
- 2) The current media campaign adopted by BEL is based on untruths and unacceptable accounting applications, and appears intentionally designed to create a false perception of instability in the electricity utility sector and to create a sense of fear and anxiety amongst consumers. It ultimately undermines the efforts of the PUC and the people and Government of Belize in the sustainable development of our country.
- 3) There is no credible reason why BEL cannot continue to make the investments necessary to meet its obligation under its Licence to generate, transmit and supply electricity to such persons who make reasonable requests for the same.

Comments:

- 1) Ironically, given the rate setting methodology and principles employed by the Commission, BEL's profit potential is directly related to the useful investments it makes. This renders BEL's current position of refusing to make the investments necessary to provide services very mysterious, and disadvantageous even to BEL and its shareholders. Trying to scare off potential creditors and financiers does not appear a prudent business strategy either.
- 2) Another potential unacceptable effect of BEL's accounting treatment of the Corrections would be a reduction in taxes to be paid to the Government due to the inappropriate reduction in reported Electricity Revenues. Under the current rate setting methodology, there is an allowance for taxes calculated on total forecast revenues. It would be unfortunate indeed for BEL to collect the allowance for taxes in the rates and not pay same to the Government because of an under-reporting of actual electricity revenues.
- 3) Finally, how does BEL explain the \$36.2 million it has billed to consumers but has discounted from reported Electricity Revenues?

Assurances:

- 1) The Commission takes this opportunity to assure the general public and all electricity sector stakeholders that the electricity utility sector is indeed stable and the Commission commits to regulate and develop it in the best interests of the entire public, and in an efficient and responsible manner designed to mutually benefit all stakeholders.
- 2) Under the ratemaking principles employed by the Commission, BEL is guaranteed to recover the full cost of and enjoy a reasonable return on all useful investments it makes to provide electricity services to consumers. Consequently, creditors should not be fearful of extending credit to BEL for such investments on the basis of BEL's misrepresentation of the effects of the Final Decision for the 2008 ARP, particularly for those investments related to satisfying reasonable requests for electricity services and reasonable demands for electrical energy.
- 3) The Commission further assures BEL and the general public that it will do what it deems is necessary and reasonable to ensure the continuity and quality of electricity supply in order to satisfy all reasonable requests for electricity services and reasonable demands for electrical energy in Belize.

Issued November 26, 2008, by the Public Utilities Commission

Someone Stole Trin's Truck Right From In Front Of His Gate

SAN IGANCIO TOWN, Cayo, Friday, November 28, 2008:

Trinidad “Trin” Juan, 54, businessman of a Mossiah Street, San Ignacio Town reported to police that his truck was stolen right from infront of his gate in a straight line from the nearby police station.

Trin informed that at around 9:30 p.m., on Saturday, November 22, he parked his green 2003 Isuzu, four-door pick up truck with Cayo license plates C- 19610 on the

street in front of his gate.

His daughter came out of the house at around 11:30 p.m. and told him that the truck was GONE.

Trin immediately walked over to the nearby police station and filed the report of his missing 20,000 dollar vehicle.

Today, six days later, there is still no trace of the vehicle as police investigation continues.

Anyone with information is asked to call the nearest police station



The vehicle was parked right here inf ront of the gate

LIQUOR LICENSE NOTICES

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **WEN ZHENG XU** is applying for the renewal of his **PUBLICAN SPECIAL LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **XU GUANG QI RESTAURANT** located on George Price Boulevard, Benque Viejo Town in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **ZENY CARLITA MIS** is applying for the renewal of her **RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **LAS VEGAS RESTAURANT** located #74 Church Street, Benque Viejo Town in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **LUIS MARTINEZ** is applying for the renewal of his **MALT & CIDER LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **TRY IT** located in Esperanza Village in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **ALEXANDER VASQUEZ** is applying for the renewal of his **PUBLICAN SPECIAL LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **PLAIN LAND BAR** located in the village of Unitedville in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **NELSON GONZALEZ** is applying for the renewal of his **MALT & CIDER LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **GONZALEZ BAR** located in Buena Vista Village in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **MARIE CONTRERAS** is applying for the renewal of her **RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **MARIE’S RESTAURANT** located on Cemetery Street, Santa Elena Town in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **NARCISA ORELLANA & HECTOR SIERRA** is applying for the renewal of their **PUBLICAN SPECIAL LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **SIERRA FRIENDS BAR** located in Bradley’s Bank, Santa Elena Town in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **ESTELLA ARMSTRONG** is applying for the renewal of her **PUBLICAN SPECIAL LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **CARACOL BAR** located at Mile 62 on the Western Highway in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **WILLIAM REYNOLDS** is applying for the renewal of his **RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **LOWER DOVER FIELD STATION** located at Mile 59 on the Western Highway in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **VICTOR TUT** is applying for a **RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **EMERALD PARADISE ECO LODGE** located in Yalbac Village in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **VICTOR TUT** is applying for the renewal of his **RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **CRYSTAL PARADISE RESORT** located in Cristo Rey Village in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **JULIA COLE** is applying for the renewal of her **RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **FALDIS RESTAURANT & BAR** located in Cristo Rey Village in the Cayo District.

Notice is hereby be given that under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance Chapter 150 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that **ARMANDO CANTO** is applying for the renewal of his **MALT & CIDER LIQUOR LICENSE** for the year 2009 to operate **MANDY’S STORE** located in the Mountain Pine Ridge Area in the Cayo District.

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**I take this opportunity to
thank ALL those persons
who came out to vote in
the UDP Convention
last Sunday.**

**A speical Thank You
To the 693 persons who came
out especially to cast their vote for me.
I also thank my family and friends
who made a special effort to be
out there with me on Convention Day
to lend their support.**

***I promise to keep working even harder for
the people of the Twin Towns of San Ignacio
and Santa Elena.***

May God Belss You All & Thank You!

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Your Horoscope & Lucky Numbers



ARIES: (March 21 to April 20)

The best way to use the current phase to your advantage will be to study the situations before you in a long term perspective. The people you are dealing with may be aggressive or may sound unreasonable to you. But it will be good if you counsel yourself into working for larger advantages rather than smaller gains of the moment. Increasing your savings will be a good idea. **Lucky number : 9, 24, 69.**



GEMINI: (May 22 to June 21)

The coming week is likely to seem a little heavier for no other reason but your state of health. You have been pushing yourself to the limits mentally and/or physically and it is reflecting in your health. You should not be impatient about returns for your efforts, especially if they are related to making financial strides. You should make sure that you thank people who are supporting you even in small ways. **Lucky number : 5, 20, 81.**



LEO: (July 24 to August 21)

This phase sees you really living life to the fullest. Even though there are challenges, you enjoy dealing with them as they help you discover your own strengths. There will be financial gains. Try not to let a good opportunity slip out of your hands. There are indications of a breakthrough right at the beginning of the week. There can be excitement expected in romance. **Lucky number : 1, 34, 76**



VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21)

You have been trying to keep yourself away from worries by plying yourself with additional doses of work. But you realize in this phase that it is not something that you are really desirous of. You should be engaging more with your loved ones. Keeping away from arguments is the way to maintaining peace at home. **Lucky number : 12, 68, 77.**



LIBRA: (September 22 to October 23)

There is focus on improving the finances and the need is felt strongly. You will receive enough support from family and friends so that you can pursue your targets. You could be given a good opportunity to prove yourself or make a financial killing. Communication with a person you admire will bring cheer. Do not ignore any signs of ill-health. **Lucky number : 15, 26, 59.**



SCORPIO: (October 24 to November 21)

You need to prepare before you go in for any professional discussion. Do not rely on your past experience but do adequate groundwork. Opportunity may present itself and you would not want it to slip away. You may not get rewards in keeping with your expectations. Avoid dramatic moves when it comes to spouse/partner. A more understanding approach will help. **Lucky number : 8, 39, 72.**



SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21)

The focus is clearly on work. And no matter how much you try, your efforts will all be concentrated towards giving your best and extracting the best possible returns. Money could be an issue causing discord. You need to take heed that two things can cause you immense damage, carelessness and impatience. Steer clear of the two and you will come smiling. **Lucky number : 3, 47, 53.**



CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20)

This phase is the start of good times for you. There is increase in your social standing and you are able to make a lasting impression on people, especially those who matter. You will be able to exhibit your special skills. In contentious situations, try to be firm about your stand without appearing to be pushy. You will enjoy time with a special friend. **Lucky number : 14, 28, 49.**



AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19)

There is a sudden realisation within you as you try to keep your ego aside. It is the phenomenal response to your gesture that makes you realise what humility can beget you. There is also great focus on getting your personal life on track. Be careful if you are planning an adventure trip. Be creative, both in love and at work and it could get matters rolling. **Lucky number : 7, 88, 94.**



PISCES: (February 20 to March 21)

This phase is indicative of some kind of a confrontation involving a male. You can be sure though that it is bringing some kind of an opportunity in itself, even though the leading event is unpleasant. There will be a trend in the coming time where you are inclined towards taking on worries of other people. **Lucky number : 18, 44, 63.**



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STAR HUMOR

Wrong Owner Buddy

James went to the bank in Belize City the other day and parked his motorcycle in the bank parking lot.

He was only in the bank for about 5 minutes and when he came out there was a policeman writing a parking ticket for a car that was parked in front of the bank.

James went up to the policeman and said, "Come on buddy, how about giving a guy a break?"

The policeman ignored James and continued writing the ticket.

So James called him a ticket greedy tyrant. He glared at James

and started writing another ticket for having broken rear lights.

So James called him an ungrateful horse's rear end. The Cop finished the second ticket and put it on the car with the first one.

Then he started writing a third ticket!

This went on for about six more tickets. The more James hurled remarks at the Cop, the more faults he found about the car and the more tickets he wrote.

After a while James gave up walked to his motorcycle and went about his happy way.

A Cowboy's Guide To Life

- a) Never squat with your spurs on.
- b) If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.
- c) Never smack a man who's chewin' tobacco.
- d) Always drink upstream from the herd.
- e) Never drop your gun to hug a grizzly.
- f) If you're riding ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it's still behind

- you.
- f) When you're throwin' your weight around, be ready to have it thrown around by somebody else.
- h) Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier 'n puttin' it back in.
- g) The quickest way to double your money is to fold it over and put it back in your pocket.
- h) Never miss a good chance to shut up.

BELIZE/MEXICO Trade Forum

BELMOPAN, Cayo District, Wednesday, November 26, 2008:

The Embassy of Mexico to Belize informs that the Bi-national Forum on Belize-Mexico Trading will take place on Wednesday, 3 December 2008 in Belize City.

The purpose of the forum is for entrepreneurs, associations, producers, businesspeople and stakeholders of both countries to meet and identify new investment opportunities, create, strengthen and develop trade relations between Mexico and Belize.

Custom regulations, as well as import and export requirements will be discussed, by customs specialists of both countries.

The discussion panel will consist of presidents of chambers of commerce of Belize and Chetumal, Mexico, representatives of the University of Belize, the University of Quintana Roo, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belize, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, as well as Beltraide and its Mexican counterpart ProMexico.

All producers, associations,

entrepreneurs and businesspeople are invited to attend this forum.

The event will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Belize Biltmore Plaza Hotel in Belize City. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m.

The forum is being sponsored by the Embassy of Mexico, the University of Quintana Roo, the Ministry of Economy of Mexico, the Department of Economic Development of Quintana Roo Government, and CANACO Chetumal, with the support of the University of Belize, the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Directorate for Foreign Trade of Belize, Beltraide and ProMéxico.

Entrepreneurs, producers, associations, businesspeople, government officials, trade and development bodies and universities of both countries will be participating.

A second part of this event will take place on Tuesday, 9 December 2008 in Chetumal, Mexico.

For more information please call at 822-0406 or email embamexbze@btl.net

Malaysian Jailed For Maid Attacks

From BBC NEWS, Thursday, November 27, 2007:

Malaysian jailed for maid attacks
A former Malaysian flight attendant who repeatedly scalded her Indonesian maid has been jailed by a court in the capital Kuala Lumpur for 18 years.

The court convicted **Yim Pek Ha**, 40, of three attacks on **Nirmala Bonat** using boiling water and a hot iron.

Ms Bonat, who was 19 at the time, testified that she had been beaten and burnt for making mistakes.

The case provoked national outrage in Malaysia after newspapers published pictures of her injuries.

It brought attention to the situation of Indonesian migrant domestic workers.

The mother-of-four's defence team, which pleaded unsuccessfully that the injuries were self-inflicted, plans to appeal against the sentence.

Eka Suripto, an Indonesian diplomat in Kuala Lumpur, welcomed the verdict "as a deterrent to future cases".



Yim is mother of four young children

'Sadistic behaviour'

Judge Akhtar Tahir found Yim guilty of using dangerous weapons to inflict injury on Nirmala Bonat at her Kuala Lumpur home on three separate occasions.

Saying that he wanted to impose a "deterrent sentence" to show that "sadistic behaviour... cannot be tolerated in a civil society", he ordered her to start serving the sentence immediately.

In her testimony, Bonat said that on one occasion Yim had taken a hot iron and pressed it against her breasts after complaining that clothes had not been properly ironed.

The maltreatment came to light after a security guard at the

condominium where she lived found her crying and saw injuries to her face.

She has since returned to her family home in Indonesia.

In court on Thursday, Yim reportedly sobbed uncontrollably and hugged her family after the judge read his verdict.

Tens of thousands of foreigners are believed to work in Malaysia as domestic servants, many of them



Nirmala Bonat has returned home to Indonesia

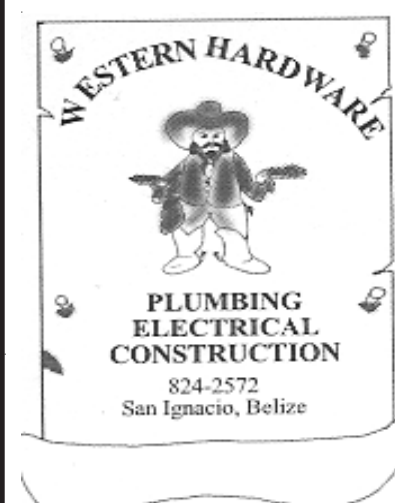
from Indonesia, and revelations about abuses have strained relations between the two countries.

At the time of the assaults on Bonat, the country was the second largest destination for Indonesian maids after Saudi Arabia.

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This week we debut the column MUNDO MADNESS.

The writer, writing under the pseudonym **Natalie X**, has expressed an interest in becoming “a consistent contributor to the Star Newspaper.” Natalie says that she “does not have any set agenda” and that she “would welcome any suggestions”. She wants to “write about the environment as well and perhaps look at gender issues or race issues. It will be based on what inspires me too.” concludes



Natalie X.

Here now is her debut column entitled: BELIEVE

Believe

By: Natali X.

This summer while on vacation in Texas, I was visiting Sea World Adventure Theme Park in San Antonio.

One of the spectacular shows that is a “must see” was the Orcinus orca or killer whale show, entitled Shamu. (Not surprising, my nephew of four years old is thrilled by this show and endearingly calls it “Shampoo.”)

To start the show, there is an introductory video called, “Believe.” The video tells the story of a little, native boy of 7 or 8 years old who lives along the coastline of Alaska.

He quietly discerns for himself that he not only wants to be a whale

watcher, but also wants to have an encounter with a killer whale. Furthermore, he dreams of being an Artisan who designs whale figurines. But these dreams can only actualize if he has a true encounter with a real whale. So, every morning the boy seeks out the water's edge. He peers out onto the open ocean and searches for an orca.

On the day that his opportunity arises, there is not a single adult present. In fact, he is the only one on the beach. He does the only thing possible in order to pursue his dream. He climbs into his tiny, yellow kayak and rows out gingerly to meet his killer whale. This is his moment to seize the day.

The whale experience becomes his inspiration to be the whale watcher, chaser and carver that he wants to be. At age 7 or 8, he believed. He also waited patiently, watched eagerly, listened attentively and then acted decisively.

He followed these four simple steps that any wise person would follow in order to know what choice or decision he or she is making.

He had the maturity, discipline and commitment necessary in order to accomplish this dream.

It was a perfect misty morning. The boy was in balance with nature. The waters were perfectly still. It mirrored his dexterity to maneuver himself over the waters to reach the whale.

It was a test of his own capability, endurance and capacity. If he willed it, it would be possible. Yes, he was alone. Yet, he had the many lessons of his father and other whale hunters of the fishing community. Granted, it may have also been a somewhat gender-biased tradition within the culture as it may have been the role of the males in the community to be whale seekers and carvers. However, it was a choice that the boy made for himself. It may have also been a mark or rite of passage for him which he accepted with grace and reverence.

He also had all the tools necessary to act on the moment when the opportunity presented itself. So, he was charmed in many respects. He was charmed by the grace, talent and gifts of the community around him.

Yes, he was alone. But, he was empowered by his elders around him who knew and expected him to endure his challenges with grace and fortitude. He was a boy who believed.

Like the native boy of Alaska, it would be fitting if many of us, Belizeans, would also believe in our abilities. Can we identify our own abilities?

Can we believe that we too are empowered?

Do we know that we have elders in our lives who can guide and foster our development?

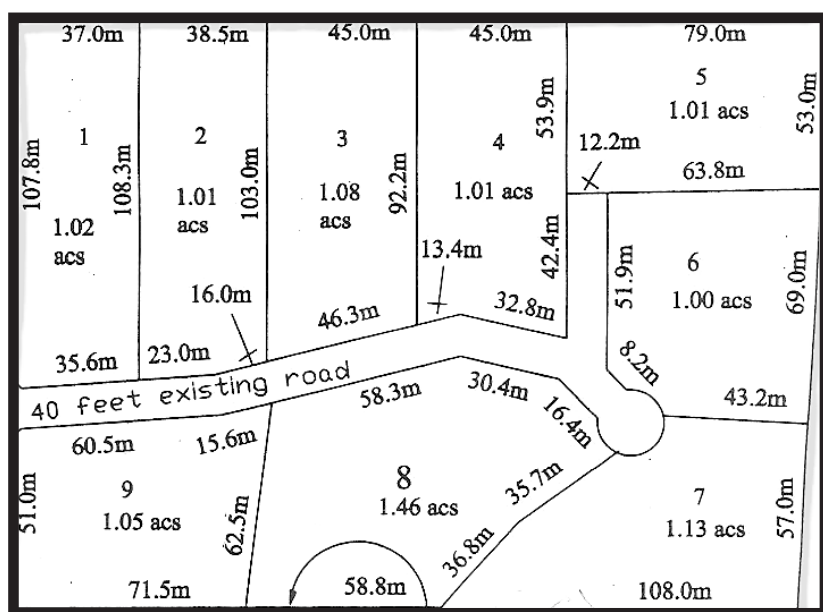
Can we find balance within our environment in order to endure, conquer and achieve?

It is also important to reflect on the African proverb: “It takes a village to raise a child!” It is those people who come before us who set the pace for which the younger generations are to follow.

What foundations are these elders establishing? Is it worthy? Is it moral? Is it sustainable?

Are there usable tools being developed which others can use to survive?

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TWO SANTA ELENA RESIDENTS STILL HOSPITALIZED WITH GUNSHOT WOUNDS

From Front Page

walking in the same area unaware that the sound was actually that of a gunshot and not a “cuetes”, when upon reaching the same junction they were met by one **Jorge Galindo** who stopped the motorcycle he was riding and began chatting with them. Shortly thereafter a second explosion broke the silence of the night and Galindo fell off the motorcycle holding the left side of the hip. He reportedly told the girls that someone had shot him. He got up and ran off with the two girls leaving the motorcycle behind. The girls ran for a short distance when one of them, identified as **Christine Dawson** whom the other girl was accompanying to her home, fell to the ground, bleeding from the left side of the back and stomach. and it was then that she realized that the wounds were caused by pellets from the blast.

Both Jorge Galindo, 23, and Christine Dawson, 18, were rushed to the San Ignacio Town

Hospital.

Galindo was found with a pellet graze in the left side of the buttocks. He was treated and released. However, Christine Dawson was transported to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital in Belize City where her condition is said to be gradually improving.

When police visited the scene, they found two expended 12 gauge cartridges along with a live 12 gauge cartridge. All three pieces of evidence were located several yards from each other. When these three sites are placed in a straight line, the live round was found between the two expended cartridges.

San Ignacio Police reports that several persons were detained, questioned and released as investigation continues.

And if Tuesday night’s incident was not enough action for the Galindos’, police reports that they were on mobile patrol in Santa Elena Town when at about 11:30 a.m. (Wednesday,



Scene Of The Incident. Police Suspect That The Shots Were Fired From Behind This Cement Fence

November 26) when they came upon four young male persons acting suspiciously under a shed inside a yard.

As the police approached, they saw when two of them threw something to the ground and when both items were retrieved they were found to be marijuana, one of them weighing 0.8 grams and the other weighed in at 3 grams. All four individuals were detained and transported to the police station where they were identified as **Jorge Albert**

Galindo and his brother **David Galindo** along with **Mcclain August** and **Joel Sierra**.

Jorge was charge with possession of the 0.8 grams while the other three were jointly charged for possession in respect of the 3 grams.

Both Jorge and David pleaded guilty to the charge and were each fined \$300 to be paid by January 30, 2009 in default 2 months in jail. The charges against August and Sierra were consequently dismissed.

\$30 Million Dollars To Enhance Belize's Tourism Product

From Front Page

management and monitoring of visitors use of tourism destinations and e) Capacity building and small scale grants in emerging destinations.

He informed that the 30 million Belize dollar STD Project will be financed by way of a 13.3 million US dollar IDB loan with counter financing to the tune of 1.7 million US dollars via BTB funds. These monies will be dispersed over a three year period for the financing of several new projects and the enhancement of existing tourism areas, products and services in the four major tourist destinations being Belize City, Placencia, San Ignacio and surrounding areas and Ambergris Caye with future targets in areas such as North Ambergris Caye, Corozal Bay and border



(L-R) Tourism Director Tracy Panton; Tourism Minister Hon. Manuel Heredia Jr.

zone, Mountain Pine Ridge, Toledo District, Dangriga/Hopkins, Belize River Valley and Orange Walk New River.

In terms of the San Ignacio and surrounding areas component, the project will encompass a San Ignacio Town Centre Urban Design Strategy, A Cayo Welcome Centre, Cahal Pech Heritage and Nature Park and a Cayo Site Improvement Programme.

CEO Singh also informed that stakeholders in the tourism industry were consulted and that their inputs and suggestions fully taken into consideration thereby allowing for the Ministry of Tourism and the BTB to have

a clearer picture of what stakeholders felt was most needed in their respective areas.

All ideas and suggestions are tentative as the STD Project is yet to reach the stage of implementation. Singh commented that a management team is yet to be brought on board but implementation could begin as early within 90 days.



IDB Country Representative, Caroline Clarke

For her part, IDB’s Country Representative, Caroline Clarke, informed that the IDB was pleased with the process and foresight displayed by the Ministry of Tourism and the BTB which was a major component in obtaining IDB’s approval to provide the loan facility.

All in all the Tourism Board and indeed the Ministry of Tourism are excited about the prospects of the project as it will serve to enhance Belize’s tourism product while simultaneously creating employment and contributing significant to the local economy.



Tourism CEO Michael Singh

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