

## Readers Write



### Disappointed by BEL's Actions

Dear Editor;

Please for the opportunity to share my ordeal with the readers of the **STAR Newspaper**.

Many are the persons lining up at the Belize Electricity Limited (**BEL**) office in San Ignacio all victims of what BEL calls a re-evaluation exercise.

In my case, I received an October 5, letter from one **Sherman S. Ferguson**, BEL Customer Care Supervisor, informing of my "account not being billed the total monthly consumption for period January 7, 2011 to October 5, 2011. Therefore, your account has now been billed \$1,284.40 for this period."

For BEL and probably even for Mr. Ferguson, \$1,200 might seem like a small amount but for us poor people, this is a lot of money.

I have, for all these months been paying my electricity bill in accordance with the numbers recorded by the BEL meter attached to my house. How dare these BEL people now arbitrarily tell us that our account was not being billed properly when we have been paying in accordance with

their monthly meter recordings.

Even if their meter was "mal functioning" as they are alleging, which I honestly doubt, why did they take so long, 10 months, before addressing the matter?

I am a supporter of the constitutional amendment for the entrenchment of Belizean ownership of our public utilities including BEL. If this is what Belizean ownership signifies then I am having serious second thoughts on the matter.

BEL is a monopoly and so we are forced to pay this "**Reassessment**" or we go without electricity supply.

We are poor people and therefore lack the means to seek legal redress. I am no lawyer, but in my humble opinion I believe that a case like this will never stand up in court, but we are of little financial means and legal services would cost me the same or maybe even more than BEL is charging me so this is a case of either paying BEL or paying a lawyer.

The bottom line is that in any case a poor family like mine and many others will be robbed of over a

### Minister Montero and BWS Team Visit Work Site In Santa Elena



(L-R)CEO Alvan Haynes, Minister Rene Montero, TS Manager Keith Hardwick, Chairman Alberto August,

**SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo, Thursday, November 1, 2012:**

Minister of Works and Transport, **Hon. Rene Montero** and Belize Water Services Limited officials today visited the work site of the Santa Elena/San Ignacio Bypass Project.

The BWS team included **Chairman of the Board of Directors, Alberto August; Chief Executive Officer, Alvan Haynes and Technical Services Manager, Keith Hardwick.**

The first phase of the project, with an estimated cost of over five million dollars, is being executed by CISCO Construction Company. It includes the construction of a round-about at

the junction of George Price Highway and La Loma Luz Boulevard along with the construction of the carriageway encompassing almost all of that section on the Santa Elena side of the new bridge

BWS is seizing the opportunity to upgrade its underground water mains and service connections in the area in order to provide increase water pressure to customers on both sides of La Loma Luz Boulevard and surrounding areas.

Like the street concreting project currently underway in Belize City, while upgrading its network of water mains and service connections, BWS is seeking to relocate the all

**Please Turn To Page 15**

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thousand dollars in these extremely challenging economic times. This demand will make life even harder for many of us as we are forced to curtail on food for our families to pay for a bogus charge BEL.

This is a classic example of taking advantage of poor Belizeans

I am truly disappointed in our Belizean owned electricity company.

**Isidoro Bol**  
**San Ignacio**

### The Other Repeat Offender

**From Front Page**

He reportedly told the police that he had already sold the Acer lap top computer and requested to be given the chance to retrieve it. The accused was offered to opportunity as request but was unable to produce the stolen lap top computer. Notwithstanding, various other suspected stolen items were recovered from the house to which he directed the police.

It is reported that August had burglarized the same business place on at least one previous occasion.

On Monday, October 29, 2012,

**Darwin August**, 23, Belizean laborer, residing in the village of Blackman Eddy appeared in the San Ignacio Town courtroom of Magistrate **Narda Morgan** where he pled not guilty to the burglary charge.

Prosecutor **George Gomez** objected to the granting of bail on the grounds that the accused is a repeat offender. Concurring with the prosecution's objection, Magistrate Morgan proceeded to remand August to the central prison and adjourned the case until Thursday, December 6, 2012.



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# BDF Soldier Remanded

**SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo, Monday, October 29, 2012:**

A Belize Defense Force soldier accused of behaving badly against the estranged wife was remanded to prison for over a month

It was around mid-day on Sunday, October 28, 2012, when **Joanna Pineda**, 38, Belizean domestic residing in Santa Familia village visited the station in San Ignacio where she filed a formal report against the ex-husband, BDF soldier, **Luis Pineda**, 42, residing in Central Farm home of the BDF Camp Beilzario.

The wife told the police that she has been separated from the soldier for over a year and that on the day in question he entered her house as a trespasser and threatened to kill her. She told the police that whilst inside her house the soldier snatched a picture frame from the wall, slammed it on the ground,



**The Accused  
Luis Pineda, 42**

picked up a piece of the shattered glass with which he inflicted several cut wounds to her left arm.

The complainant told the police that

before shoving her out of the house, the soldier, still with a piece of the glass in his hand, threatened to use it to kill her.

Swift police investigation led to

the arrest of the suspect who was escorted to the police station in San Ignacio where he was positively identified as **Luis Pineda**, 42, Belizean soldier of a Central Farm address in the Cayo District.

Pineda appeared in front of magistrate **Narda Morgan** on Monday, October 29, 2012, due to the nature of the crime, prosecutor **George Gomez** objected to granting of bail resulting in magistrate Morgan ordering for Pineda to be remanded to prison. The matter was adjourned to Tuesday, December 4, 2012.

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- Assist in the preparation of monthly, quarterly, and annual financial statements.
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- Reconciliation of multiple balance sheet accounts.
- Ensure accuracy of general ledger input. That is, accurate expense and vendor recording as well as identifying and recording of month end expenses
- Assist the Director of Finance and external auditors with final year-end processing
- Assist in the implementation and documentation of control process improvements
- Manage foreign vendor accounts
- Prepare daily Cash flow Report
- Assist with Budget preparation
- Prepare journal entries
- Cross train with Accountant
- Perform other duties assigned

### QUALIFICATIONS: Required

- Associates Degree in accounting or business administration.
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- Two-three years of working experience as an accountant.
- Have a combination of training, education, and experience performing duties equivalent to an accountant.

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- Possession of a bachelor's degree in accounting or business administration or related field;
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# Argentina Voting Age Lowered From 18 To 16

Argentina's Congress has approved a law to lower the voting age to 16, in a move that will take effect for key mid-term elections next year.

President **Cristina Fernandez** has courted the youth vote and critics say the change is designed to boost her party's chances in the 2013 polls.

Supporters of the move say it will widen political participation.

Voting is obligatory in Argentina for people aged 18 to 70, but will be optional for those aged 16 and 17.

The long and bitter session saw deputies trade accusations and most of the opposition walk out before the measure was put to the vote.

In the end, the bill, which had already passed in the Senate, was approved by 131 votes to two.

More than one million 16- and 17-year-olds will be eligible to vote.

"It is a very important initiative because it expands the frontier of rights," said **Agustin Rossi**, head of



**The move will add more than one million voters to the electorate**

the governing bloc in the Chamber of Deputies.?

Supporters of the change argued that young people deserved the

chance to participate in decisions affecting Argentina.

Critics have said the change is designed to increase support for

President Fernandez's party in the 2013 legislative elections, with the ultimate aim of allowing her to run again for the presidency.

Ms Fernandez has a majority in both houses of Congress but would need the support of two-thirds of legislators to change the constitution to allow her to seek a third term.

She has not commented publicly on any such plans.

Across Latin America, the voting age is generally 18 but in some countries, including Brazil, Ecuador and Nicaragua, citizens can vote from age 16.

## Cristo Rey Villages Captures Burglar Suspect



**Contributed by: Mary Loan**

Continuing with the Cayo spirit to return peace and safety of the residents of the Cayo and Belize....

On Wednesday, October 31, 2012, the residents of Cristo Rey Village came out in force when a burglary suspect was recognized as a suspect in the theft of a bicycle and a bicycle pump the day before and was also thought to be a burglar from Bullet Tree.

This man made a mistake for himself by returning to the scene of the crime. The villagers networked by cell phone and set out on foot and in vehicles, including a motor cycle, to search for and capture the suspect. **Herman Tut** helped to coordinate the search effort.

Neighborhood Watch officers notified other Cristo Rey residents to be on the alert for any suspicious person(s). The suspected thief must have sensed that a search for him was going on and attempted the flee the village by cab or foot

before he was apprehended by the brave Cristo Rey Village search party.

Meanwhile the San Ignacio Police Department made their way to the village and the suspect was taken into custody.

There is another person, perhaps an accomplice, who evidently went into hiding. The residents of Cristo Rey have vowed to continue the search and will work in cooperation with the police to turn this man over to the

police if he is seen in the village or near-by.

Cristo Rey village in one of the fifteen Cayo Neighborhood Watch programs in the Cayo and is now an officially registered Neighborhood Watch group.

Neighborhood Watch programs work in cooperation with the police department with the motto "*Neighbors helping neighbors.*" This is a good example of Neighborhood Watch in action



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# Response to Belize Citrus Mutual

October 31, 2012



We reproduce below the requests the membership of CGA requested of the Government of Belize. These requests will benefit all growers including those of the Belize Citrus Mutual.

## We await Government's response to our request namely to:

- Issue a public statement after Tuesday's Cabinet meeting explaining government's position on the **Alan Slusher** email and clarifying once and for all government's policy and intention regarding the Citrus Growers Association, the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association, the Banana Growers Association, the Rice Growers Association and by extension any such Association like these that exist in our laws.
- Until it is amended, ensure that the Citrus Processing and Production Act is adhered to so as to allow for the smooth operation of the industry.
- Tangibly support the CGA and its growers in their vision to transform our industry from a citrus juice industry to a tropical fruit juice industry by assisting with the buying out of the Banks Holdings Ltd shares in CPBL. BCM has showed no such vision other than to try to become a private CGA.
- Ensure that the growers who are not members of the CGA contribute their fair share to the effort to control the citrus greening disease in Belize.
- Consider and approve the recommendations in the cabinet paper addressing issues dealing with citrus nurseries and submitted for government's consideration several times dating as far back to August 2011.
- Ensure that our security forces act responsibly and not incite or harm those of us who will be demonstrating to exert our majority ownership in CPBL.
- Review the services of CEO **José Alpuche** and advisor **Alan Slusher** as their actions, based on our understanding following discussions with the Hon. Prime Minister, are not carrying out the policy of the Government of Belize.
- Task the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture to meet with the CGA Committee of Management on Wednesday morning October 31st 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at the CGA conference room to work with us in finding amicable solutions to our concerns above and arrive on a definitive course of action that will end this crisis in the citrus industry.

The BCM release further alleges that the CGA's Committee of Management is illegal. The BCM has failed to mention to the nation that some of its key members showed up at a Special General Meeting of the CGA and wanted to attend and vote. The Committee of Management in the spirit of bringing the industry together offered to allow them to attend and participate in the meeting if they would sign up to pay the membership fees to the CGA. Instead of signing up they walked out of the meeting, went to the Court and got an ex parte (without CGA present) injunction to prevent the CGA from holding general meetings. The Court recently ruled in favour of the CGA stating that the CGA had all rights to remove their names off the Register of members because they were not paying their fees and were not following the rules of the Association. The CGA will now be holding its AGM before the end of the year.

Regarding the opening of the factory, CGA position is that the processes laid out in the law should be followed. We will illustrate with two sections of the law that was never challenged in the Court.

- (1) Section 4 (1) of the Citrus Act states: No person shall process any citrus except in accordance with the terms and conditions of a licence issued to him by the Board.
- (2) Any person who contravenes the provisions of this section commits an offence.
- (3) Section 18 states: The annual price of citrus shall be decided in two stages in discussions between the individual processors and the Association before the beginning and after the close of each year of operation.

CPBL sent a submission for Grapefruit to CGA and refused to discuss the submission and agree on a price with the CGA. This action of CPBL was uncalled for and undermines the fundamental rights of growers to have a say in the price paid for their fruits. Not to mention CPBL is a subsidiary of CGA. We note that BCM, of which is **Dr. Henry Canton** is a founder/owner is quite happy with the price.

Regarding production, when CGA tried to remove **Henry Canton**, **Mike Duncker** and **Frank Redmond** from the CPBL Board, Banks Holdings Ltd breached the Amended Investment Agreement and prevented the CGA from removing them from the CPBL Board. CPBL then with a Rogue Board removed the CPBL groves (subsidiaries of CGA) from the membership of the CGA. The reality is that CGA owns/represents 55% of the fruit production.

The BCM whose membership are responsible for the Investment Agreement, has clearly revealed to the Nation that its:

- Reason for existence is to attack the CGA
- Intent is bring down the CGA in the hope that CGA would be dissolved and its assets be distributed to the BCM.
- members do not want to contribute to the efforts to control the plant health issues affecting the industry.
- Members want to benefit without paying
- Members are not minded to comply with rules and laws.

The CGA has a clear vision of the development of the industry for the benefit of all industry growers, workers, stakeholders and Belizeans in general. BCM you sold out the CGA and growers with the Investment Agreement and left. Why do you continue to interfere in the business of the CGA?

# St. Ignatius High School Proudly Represented Cayo In TIDE Festival

**Submitted by: Flora Pereira  
Food & Nutrition Teacher  
St. Ignatius High School**

On Tuesday, October 13, 2012, St. Ignatius High School Participated in the Youth Conservation Competition hosted by **TOLEDO INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (TIDE)** at the Fr. Ring Parish Hall in Punta Gorda Town, Toledo. Under the theme “*The Value of Belize Barrier Reef.*”

17 year old **Annayelli Marin** was the 4<sup>th</sup> year student who participated in the competition walking away as the second place winner. We were the only out district school and with just merely a week and a half before the competition.

Food and Nutrition Teacher Ms. **Flora Pereira** received the

information about the competition, she quickly identified one of the most talented fourth year students at the St. Ignatius **Annayelli Marin** and encouraged her to participate. The student was excited and accepted the challenge. This challenge was very difficult as we had limited time and had to prepare for an introductory presentation, a talent presentation and the question and answer segment. Despite the fact that she had to complete all her school assignments and obligations Annayelli along with her twin sister, her aunt Ms. **Maria Young** and teachers worked arduously in order to participate.

Special thanks to our sponsors; the entire student body at St. Ignatius who supported us with our fundraisers, **Pacz Tours** and the **Lodge at Chaa**



**Annayelli Marin, 17**

**Creek** without your support this would not have been possible.

We are extremely happy to have

participated in such an event that educates young people about the value and how to protect our Barrier Reef.

We are definitely looking forward to participating next year and to represent Cayo District and St. Ignatius High School in order for us to show case the talent of our students and create environmental awareness.

## STAR Newspaper

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## 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 **STEPHEN HALL** is applying for a **PUBLICAN SPECIAL** liquor license for the year 2012 to operate **GUMBOLIMBO VILLAGE RESORT** located at Mile 2 on the Mountain Pine Ridge Road in the Cayo District.



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## ***Your Weekly Horoscope and Lucky Numbers***

**ARIES:**

**March 22 to April 20**

A subject that you have been studying for a long time might suddenly start making sense to you. Or you could finally reach a point where you can make it work for you in a practical way. Your thinking now is especially clear, focused, down to Earth, and efficient, so whatever you try or start today is likely to lead to success. Don't let occasional self-doubt stop you. **Lucky numbers: 09, 31, 60.**

## TAURUS:

**April 21 to May 21**

Past impressions that you may not even know you have could enhance your ability to deal with practical matters this week. You might need to handle some paperwork regarding a settlement of some kind. The thoughts and feelings of those closest to you are more apparent than usual. You may tailor your behavior toward them accordingly. Spend a quiet evening with your loved ones. You won't even need to talk. **Lucky numbers: 26, 45, 77.**

## GEMINI:

**May 22 to June 21**

Social events and group activities are on the agenda this week. You may be introduced to someone who could prove helpful to your career. A letter containing good news could come from a friend or partner. Any new moneymaking enterprise begun now is likely to succeed as long as you stay with it and continue to face it in a businesslike manner. **Lucky numbers: 12, 34, 58.**

## CANCER:

## June 22 to July 23

Glowing health and an enthusiastic attitude make almost anything a pleasure this week. Relations with friends and family are warm, congenial, and cooperative. Your week should go as smoothly as you could expect. There is something you want to do in the afternoon that you are looking forward to. In the evening, consider attending a class, lecture, or

workshop. Your mind is especially sharp right now. **Lucky numbers: 06, 29, 63.**

**LEO:**

### July 24 to August 21

Information that comes your way this week could launch you into a search for truth. Perhaps this is a new business-related idea that you want to explore. It could be a new philosophical interest, and you will want to learn as much as you can about it. Whichever it is, your mind is sharp, so you are likely to finish the week a lot more knowledgeable than you were when it began. **Lucky numbers: 51, 74, 96.**

## VIRGO:

**August 22 to**  
**September 21**

Although you are usually very responsible and you try to keep the proper balance between your home and professional lives, this week your mind and heart are more focused on your home. A warm sense of unity with family and close friends could make for a very pleasant day and an even more pleasant evening. Even finishing up paperwork will seem easier than usual. Relax and enjoy a great evening. **Lucky numbers: 17, 39, 66.**

**LIBRA:**

**September 22**  
**to October 23**

A gathering in your community could unite the people around you in aiming for a common goal, and this could be a new interest for you. Warm and loving emails and calls could come from family, close friends, or your life partner. An impromptu short trip to a favorite place could result in a pleasant surprise. This promises to be a busy day and a great one. **Lucky numbers: 23, 47, 69.**

## SCORPIO:

**October 24 to**  
**November 21**

You may have been expecting some money over the past several days, and this week it could finally arrive. Delays in reaching your goals are

finished for the moment. If you have a project you have been trying to complete, this is the week to do it, especially if it involves paperwork. This isn't the week to compete with anyone, however. Your sense of cooperation is too strong. **Lucky numbers: 10, 43, 86.**

## SAGITTARIUS:

**November 22 to**  
**December 21**

You are feeling especially sharp. Your thoughts are more focused than usual and your mind especially penetrating. A promised get-together with friends or loved ones may have to be delayed, but it will take place. Information about possible business opportunities could come through periodicals, and if you like them, check them out. The outlook on anything that comes your way this week is especially bright. **Lucky numbers: 15, 82, 95.**

## CAPRICORN:

**December 22 to**  
**January 20**

Practical thoughts may be the result of unconscious impulses brought to the surface by events at home. Old traumas and phobias could be released, although you should take care to not dwell on them too much or you

will reinforce them instead of get rid of them. Your imagination is flying high. You might focus it on decorating your house. You could find antiques especially appealing. **Lucky numbers: 20, 36, 54.**

## AQUARIUS:

**January 21 to  
February 19**

Gatherings in your neighborhood could bring new and interesting information your way. A message from an acquaintance could send you down a new path toward a new goal. Relations with everyone around you - from your romantic partner to the most casual of acquaintances - should be warm and congenial. Conversations should be stimulating. **Lucky numbers: 04, 56, 89.**

## PISCES:

**February 20**  
**to March 21**

Success in a project you have been working on could mean you want to go out and celebrate. You might feel guilty about doing it, but go ahead. Order a glass of wine and dessert! Tonight is the night to forget work and go for sheer, unadulterated pleasure. You have the break coming. Your efforts are finally being recognized, and you are on your way. Enjoy your good fortune! **Lucky numbers: 33, 61, 93.**

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# Prime Minister Dean Barrow's Address Business Forum "Partnering for Growth"



**Prime Minister of Belize  
Hon. Dean Barrow**

Mr. Master of Ceremonies, Rev David Golf, Distinguished Members of the Business Community, Ministers of Government and Members of Cabinet, Chief Executive Officers and other Members of the Public Service Other Invited Guests, Representatives of the Media, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this the second Business Forum, the purpose of which is to provide an opportunity for Government and the Private Business Sector in Belize to continue the open dialogue on ways to expand incomes, jobs and the level of business and economic activity generally. All this, of course, with a view to accelerate the social and economic development of our country, and to improve the quality of life of every resident of Belize.

There have been changes since we met here last year, some clearly positive, others clearly undesirable. At

the same time, many things have not changed, with some significant constraints to our development, some of these outside of our control, remaining stubbornly in place. Nevertheless, we continue to be reassured in countless ways that we are able to rely on the resilience and inventiveness of the Belizean people, and on their capacity, even in these trying times, to live all they can-to laugh, to have fun, and to support each other whenever and wherever support is needed.

On the positive side, our economy has continued to grow, although that growth is both below desirable rates and below our potential capacity. Last year's economic expansion was about 2.5%, and there will be some uptick this year with the Central Bank projecting as much as a full percentage point in GDP increase. This mainly reflects a combination of recovery in the agricultural sector from previous storm damage, and a phenomenal rebound in long-stay tourism visitor arrivals. The prospects for a resumption of large-scale farmed shrimp production appear to be favourable, and I am aware that discussions are underway with a view to bringing electricity output from the Blair Athol power generation facility onto the national grid, to help offset part of the high prices that Belize Electricity Limited is currently paying for its wholesale purchases. The recent entry of a large foreign refiner into our sugar industry is expected to make a substantial difference to jobs and incomes in the north, going forward. Major expansion in processing capacity is anticipated, at

least doubling the demand for sugarcane in the near term. We are also looking forward to the commencement of substantive work on the establishment of sugar processing capacity in the western part of the country by another foreign group, which means even more expansion in production and in the supply of electricity from bagasse.

On the negative side, there has been a faster than expected decline in petroleum production and exports, and this has had a substantial impact on the fiscal accounts. The ongoing seismic surveys and the current drilling operation in the northwest of the country have not yet produced a replacement for BNE production at Spanish Lookout.

At the global level, economic activity in the developed countries that are our major trading partners remains subdued, with the ongoing effects of the Great Recession take their toll now on Euro-area countries, even as the UK and the US face continuing fiscal difficulty. Low levels of economic performance in the developed countries feed through to us via reduced foreign investment flows (particularly in tourism-related construction), and via a reduced flow of remittances from Belizeans abroad to their families back home. Reduced performance is also manifested in lower levels of Government to Government development assistance flows. Canada remains a bright spot in the north though, and we would like to thank the Canadian Government, along with the Government of the United States, for their assistance in our anti-crime efforts.

Crime, of course, remains the major domestic issue at this time. And this is on top of the clear development challenges we have been facing, but addressing, in the provision of infrastructure, health services, education, and sustainable management of our natural resources. Minister John Saldivar will shortly bring you up-to-date on where we are with our new crime fighting efforts. Let me just say, then, that we fully recognize that crime, and in particular violent crime, is a societal evil that is also a major obstacle to the growth and even the maintenance of business activity levels; that security is now a critically important business cost area; that there is no way we can give in to a climate that holds business and entire communities hostage. So Government will wheel and come again. We have re-strategized, we will re-mobilize, we will re-operationalize. We believe we have finally found a way to get the

shooters off the streets and into an institution. So together with our social partners and the citizenry we will employ new means to lick this problem. And in so doing we will utilize every resource, spend every dollar, pay every price until once and for all we get this thing under control and take our country back.

But returning to the positive, there is one particular area that I am very happy about: and it has to do with the Steering Committee that had been established at the first Business Forum to maintain the public sector — private sector dialogue, to enhance the collaboration and cooperation between the two sectors, and to seek to address business sector issues as they arise. This Steering Committee has been expanded from its original 8 members (4 each from the public and private sectors) to 10 (5 each, with the addition of a focus on the services sector, and the inclusion of the Ministry of Economic Development); the single public sector chairmanship has been transformed into a joint public — private co-chairmanship; and the operation has been re-named the Economic Development Council, given the wide-ranging nature of the work that has been undertaken. I am particularly pleased with the step-up in responsiveness from both the public sector agencies and the private business sector that has come with the appointment of Mrs Amparo Masson to the EDC Secretariat, which is located in my office, so that I can remain close to the process. Mrs Masson has demonstrated a great deal of drive and initiative, and I am really quite pleased with the results so far.

As I indicated last year and repeat now, the main focus of this Forum is, through ongoing and intensive collaboration and cooperation between the public and private sectors, to identify and implement those approaches, activities and operations that will raise the level of business activity in Belize on a sustainable basis; that will expand jobs, incomes, and business profits; that will improve and expand the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector operations; and all with a view to improving, as rapidly as possible and on a sustained basis, the living levels and quality of life of all residents of our country. It is of vital importance that every individual in this country feel that he or she has a stake in the maintenance of all that is good and wholesome in our society and its institutions; it is vital that opportunity exists for all to achieve a good living provided they are prepared to make



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All offers to purchase the said properties must be made in writing to and full particulars and conditions of sale may be obtained from the Belize National Building Society.

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One duplex house situate on land being lot no: 186, Fresh Pond Development area, Belize District, being the intended property of John Boddin.

One two-storey house situate on land being lot no 1213, Sainsbury Area, Dangriga, Stann Creek District being the intended property of Lurleen Caliz.

One two-storey house situate on land being lots no 13 and 14 in block number 504 in the area formerly known as Carib Reserve Area, Dangriga, Stann Creek District being the intended property of Leona Enriquez

One bungalow house situate on land being lot no 328, Fresh Pond Development area, Belize District being the intended property of Sylvestre Romero.

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# Prime Minister Dean Barrow's Address

**Continued From Page 8**

the effort; and that crime, violence, corruption and other illegal activity be strongly denounced and resisted. The quality of life of all of our people must be improved as a good in and of itself. But also so that those successful in business and the professions may be able to enjoy the lifestyles they have worked so hard to afford.

Let me say a word about corruption. The private business community and private individuals have a particular responsibility in the area of corruption, which continues to be a serious issue. I am serving notice that the anti-corruption drive in the public sector, which we are renewing, must deal equally with those who seek compensation for their "special services" and those who pay that compensation.

Before highlighting some of the areas that the public — private sector dialogue has been looking at during the past year, let me set out briefly what we propose to do today, and how we propose to go about it. Following my address to you, we will have a series of short presentations by public sector officials on areas that we think will be of interest to you. Each presentation will identify issues and activities, and will hopefully give you a sense of where we are proposing to go in the particular area. We will then have a period of about 15 or 20 minutes for a question and answer session on the particular area. Because the time is limited, I will ask all those wishing to speak to be brief, and to keep your questions and comments short, so that we can get maximum participation. The session will be moderated by Mr **Alan Slusher**, and I warn you that he has my clear instruction to manage the interventions from the floor.

The areas that have been selected for these short presentations are: agriculture and agro-industry, taxation trade, investment and the business

climate, banking and finance, crime.

Depending on how well time is managed, there may be opportunity for a few additional questions on some of the areas that I will mention subsequently. I would like to remind you, however, that the Public — Private Dialogue operation being managed at the level of Mrs. **Amparo Masson** and at the level of the Economic Development Council is a full-time operation, and that you should feel free to get in touch with the office, using the contact information that has been circulated, in respect of any area of legitimate operational difficulty that you might be having. Mrs Masson and the EDC will do their best to help sort things out. Alternatively, you may seek to have your concerns addressed either directly through the particular public sector agency concerned, through BELTRAIDE, or through the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The important point I want to make is that you have somewhere to go if you are having a problem with any public sector operation, or if you are seeking help or guidance in establishing or expanding a new or existing business operation.

Let me now take a look at some of the things that we have been involved in since the last Business Forum, areas that have been of concern of the business community in one way or another.

## Utility cost reduction

Because business cares most about the bottom line, the reduction in electricity and water rates, complementing the decrease in telecom tariffs, is arguably the most notable development since our last gathering. BEL rates were cut by 6% and BWSL rates by 7.2%. For businesses of all sizes and in all sectors, this represented a huge assist. Further, the three public utilities will together deploy capital investments of over 100 million in 2012/2013. This will help generally

to stimulate the economy and drive growth, as well as improve services, efficiencies and productivity. And returning to particulars, this is the point at which to make some very important Telemedia announcements:

In October 2010, BTL doubled bandwidth for all its high speed Internet customers at no additional cost. Then in October 2011 it introduced a 128k Internet package for as little as \$49 per month, with Government also removing the 12.5% GST. To top it off now, yesterday the BTL Board of Directors agreed that the company will once more give its Internet customers increased bandwidth at reduced prices. Accordingly, the 128k Internet speed will go from \$49 per month to \$25 per month. All other DSL Internet speeds will double, but for the same price as current. As examples, 1 megabit which currently costs \$300 will now sell for only \$140 per month. And 2 megabit that is sold now for \$500, will cost only \$240. The reductions will take place later this month, and simultaneously the 206 schools countrywide that already receive free Internet from BTL will have their free speed doubled. All this against the backdrop of the 4g rollout, which will be fully operational by December. How about that for helping with the business climate, and let's give BTL chairman **Net Vasquez** a round of applause!

## Taxation Review

We have sought the assistance of the IMF to review our entire tax system and to make recommendations for its restructuring and improvement. We made this request some time ago, and there had been some delay in the IMF's response owing to pressure for the same service from other member countries. I met with senior Fund staff on another matter about a month ago, and the tax review for Belize is now a priority item. You would be aware that there are multiple objectives to be achieved here. There is a need for equity across the society in the payment of taxes, there is a need for revenue for the Government if it is to be able to carry out its functions, there is need for a tax system that encourages and promotes investment and economic growth, and the tax system needs to be as simple to understand, administer and enforce as possible. I want to emphasise that the exercise is intended to produce recommendations, which would then have to be tailored to suit our requirements and circumstances. At some point in this process we will be working in our fiscal incentives overhaul, in order to ensure that the objectives of providing fiscal incentives, in particular the imperative of creating jobs, are being achieved. These reviews have been driven jointly

by both the public and private sectors.

## GST Review

We will be reviewing the structure and operations of our General Sales Tax system in order to ensure that it is meeting its objectives, and that it is meeting those objectives in an efficient and effective way. We are presently in the process of selecting a qualified consultant to advise on the review process. Important issues behind this review have included declining net yields in the face of increasing transactions volumes, issues on both sides in relation to refunds, and issues in relation to registration.

## E-Governance

There is clear need for the community to be able to transact business with the public sector utilizing telecomputing facilities. While many Government agencies have computerized parts of their operations, most interactions with the general public, including financial transactions, require a physical presence. We are now in the preliminary stages of developing an approach to plan and manage the transition from manual to computer-based systems across Central Government, and including public sector agencies whose operations interact with those of the central Government.

## Public Sector Transformation

This will involve the re-engineering of Government agency services in ways that result in transparency and accountability in the performance of functions, and that require the ongoing measurement of performance against objectives. It will also allow for the ongoing assessment and evaluation of both individual and agency performance.

## Small Business Support Services

Particular attention is being paid to supporting small and medium-sized enterprise establishment and development. **BELTRAIDE** is in the process of establishing a **Small Business Development Center** (which you can ask Mr **Michael Singh** about); conversations are about to start with the utility companies in relation to special services and special payment arrangements for qualifying small business enterprises (a start has already been made with BTL); the commercial banks are being asked to structure special service packages for small business enterprises; and, where a small business enterprise is engaged in importation, the Customs Department will be asked to evaluate the possibility of introducing special clearance arrangements under its ASYCUDA system.

## Tax Relief

A number of tax relief proposals

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## The Belize Grain Grower's Association

P.O. Box 599 Spanish Lookout, Cayo

All grain farmers in Belize are cordially invited to the inaugural meeting of the Belize Grain Grower's Association, to be held at 2 pm on **Tuesday, November 13, 2012**, at the Meeting Hall, Center Road, Spanish Lookout

The purpose of the meeting is to register grain farmers who wish to become members, elect a Board of Directors and to discuss a plan of action to further the interests of all grain farmers.

If you plant corn, rice, beans or milo, come and join and let your voice be heard.

**Registration fee is \$5.00**

**For further information please call: 610-2832**



# Cuba Leader Raul Castro Says Cuba ‘hard hit’ by Sandy

Eleven people died and more than 188,000 homes were damaged as the storm passed over Cuba last week.

President **Raul Castro** said Cuba’s second largest city, Santiago, looked like it had been bombed.

He urged those affected not to lose hope and said that no one would be left destitute, but that the government would have to weigh up each case.

*“We’ll get over this, you’re fighting people, we’ve known that for more than fifty years,”* he told residents of Santiago on a tour of the worst affected areas.

*“The reality is much worse than what you can see in the pictures or on TV,”* President Castro said.

A United Nations report says that Sandy destroyed almost 100,000 hectares (245,000 acres) of crops in eastern Cuba.

*“Sugar cane was the single hardest hit followed by plantain and bananas,”* the report says.



Vice-President **Jose Ramon Machado** said one of the biggest problems facing the government was

guaranteeing food supplies for the people in the affected areas in the coming months. Cuba does not

produce enough food to feed its population and spends large amounts of money on importing food.

# Prime Minister Dean Barrow’s Address

**Continued From Page 9**

have been put forward. These include removal of the existing 20% cap on Business Tax carry-over losses; personal income tax exemption on shareholders’ income from businesses with sales of \$5 million or less; full or partial exemption from business taxation for firms that re-invest all or part of business profits; and requiring all incorporated businesses to file annual audited financial statements. These issues have so far only been discussed in a preliminary way, and for me decisions thereon should await the comprehensive tax review we have agreed, or at least the Budget exercise for the next fiscal year.

## Mortgage Guarantee Programme

The proposal here is for Government to provide a repayment guarantee of up to 10% of a housing mortgage loan from a commercial bank or DFC (or other approved lender) for first time buyers of residential property to be owner-occupied provided that the original loan amount does not exceed \$100,000. Loan repayment by the borrower would first take out the Government-guaranteed portion of the loan. Loans would be extended on normal commercial bank/DFC lending criteria. The intention would be to assist first time buyers experiencing difficulty in raising their 10% contribution, so that the lending institution would then be in a position to provide a 100% housing mortgage loan. It is thus with great pleasure that I announce today that Government has actually earmarked an initial \$3.5 million for the programme. This would assist a minimum of 350 borrowers with their equity part of the total equation, which would in

turn represent an aggregate sum of \$35 million in new housing construction.

## Export Credit and Export Credit Insurance Programme

The EDC is planning to consult with the private business sector and the banking community on the likely demand for and feasibility of providing credit and credit insurance facilities to exporters, in order to enable them to improve their export competitiveness.

## Superbond Loan Terms Restructuring

After a comprehensive debt sustainability analysis in April of this year, GOB announced in June its intention to seek debt relief from the holders of Belize’s 2029 bonds. On August 8 our liability management team published three options for a sustainable debt exchange offer. These indicative scenarios have formed the basis for ongoing negotiations with a Creditor Committee and with non-Committee Bondholders over the last 10 weeks. While GOB made a good faith partial payment of the August coupon, no further payment can be made until an equitable fix is agreed between Belize and the Bondholders. I am grateful for the expressions of support for the restructuring process made by the BCCI and the EDC after meetings with our team. As the negotiations continue, our stance remains resolute: for any outcome to be acceptable, it must be based on reasonable, realistic and- above all-sustainable assumptions.

Of course, our team will re-engage with business community and other leaders as soon as there is, or is not, final consensus on new terms for this

debt.

Also important in this connection is the fact of a special technical assistance programme being conducted by the IMF at Belize’s request. The intention is to bolster our debt management capacity, and the experts from the Fund’s Capital Markets Division are in country already to execute the mission simultaneously with the 2012 Article Four Review.

## Seaports

We are currently preparing terms of reference to be used to seek the assistance of one of the international agencies to examine our seaport facilities and operations and to make recommendations for long-term developments in this area, taking account of our location, our strategic needs, and the foreseeable evolution of bulk transportation.

## Industry Restructuring

Public sector effort is currently underway, once again, (though you wouldn’t believe it the way some people have been behaving) to assist the players in the citrus industry to sort out their issues. We must maintain and expand employment, incomes and foreign exchange in this very important sector.

I want to end by saying that I am entirely satisfied that this Business Forum has been an excellent initiative. The Business Forum Steering Committee/EDC has been meeting every two or three weeks since the last Plenary. And just the excellent formal and informal working relationships that have developed among its members alone are worth the price of admission. The Secretariat, operating out of my office, has intervened in a number of

individual cases; and while we have not been able to provide the desired solutions every time, the fact is that there has been this tremendous improvement in the relations between the public and private sectors over the past year, and far greater realism and understanding on both sides.

Of course, I am the first to concede that by the next time we meet we will have to be able to enumerate a far longer list of deliverables that have actually been achieved. You in the private sector will thus challenge us in the public sector to do more, and vice versa. And in that context let me just make one last point. There is currently \$13lm in excess liquidity in the banking system. And while there is still the issue of a widening spread between deposit and lending rates, the fact is that the latter is at an historic low of 12.23%. So in terms of both the quantity and cost of capital, the winds are in the private sector’s sails. Plus there is foreign exchange aplenty. Surely, then, there is opportunity for more entrepreneurship, ingenuity and business community can-do. I say very simply that the chances should not be allowed to go begging.

On behalf of the public sector, then, I recommit my full support to you in the private sector, and to the continuation of this exercise. I am sure that the fact of my NGO and Private sector picks for ministerial appointments, was lost on no one. Therefore, I signal in every way that I am intent on walking the walk. And in the interest of the development of our country, I believe it is a journey we make together in lockstep.

**Thank you.**



# WARNING!

**NAME: Niall Gillett**  
**NATIONALITY: Belizean**



“Niall Gillett is no longer an employee of Oceana in Belize. The statements and positions he takes on any issues pertaining to offshore and onshore oil is not in any way on behalf of Oceana in Belize, which remains committed to its steadfast position and mission as expressed in all its communications and meetings countrywide. Niall Gillett is also no longer Oceana’s representative on the Board of the Coalition to Save Our Natural Heritage.

We wish all our supporters to categorically know that if Mr. Gillett calls or meets with you it is in his capacity as a paid agent of U.S. Capital Oil company and not in any way as a result of his former role or connection with Oceana in Belize where he was our Communication Officer and did our community outreach in 2011-2012. We regret any misunderstanding or miscommunication that may have arisen in this regard with our supporters countrywide and especially in Southern Belize”

PAID MESSAGE APPROVED BY OCEANA IN BELIZE



## STAR HUMOR

### The New Doc In Town

A young doctor had moved out to a small community to replace a doctor who was retiring. The older doctor suggested the young one accompany him on his rounds so the community could become used to a new doctor. At the first house a woman complained,

*"I've been a little sick to my stomach."*

The older doctor said, *"Well, you've probably been overdoing the fresh fruit. Why don't you cut back on the amount you've been eating and see if that does the trick?"*

As they left the younger man said, *"You didn't even examine that woman. How'd you come to your diagnosis so quickly?"*

*"I didn't have to. You noticed I dropped my stethoscope on the floor in there? When I bent over to pick it up, I noticed a half dozen banana peels in the trash."*

### What Would You Do?

The CIA was recruiting for a top secret assignment. They were down to three recruits, two men and one woman. Only one could get the position.

As a final test each recruit was led down a hallway to a large gray door.

The CIA agents say to the first man, *"We need to know that you will do whatever we say regardless of the circumstances. Take this gun, go into this room and kill your wife"*.

A look of shock comes over the man's face. He says, *"I can't kill my wife. I just can't do it. I guess I'm not the man for this job"*.

*"No, you're not"*, agree the agents, *"You're free to go"*.

They bring the second man to the door and say, *"We need to know that you will do whatever we say regardless of the circumstances. Take this gun, go into this room and kill your wife"*. The man takes the gun and goes into the room. The

*That was what was probably making her sick."*

"Hmmm," the younger doctor said, *"Pretty clever. I think I'll try that at the next house."*

Arriving at the next house, they spent several minutes talking with a younger woman. She complained that she just didn't have the energy she once did.

*"I'm feeling terribly run down lately."*

"You've probably been doing too much extra work for the church," the younger doctor told her. *"Perhaps you should cut back a bit and see if that helps."*

As they left, the elder doc said, *"Your diagnosis is almost certainly correct, but how did you arrive at it?"*

"Well, just like you did at the last house, I dropped my stethoscope and when I bent down to retrieve it, I noticed the preacher under the bed."

room is silent and after five minutes the man opens the door, tears streaming down his face.

*"I tried," he says, "but I just couldn't do it. I can't kill my wife"*. The agents let him leave.

They bring the woman to the door and say, *"We need to know that you will do whatever we say regardless of the circumstances. Take this gun, go into this room and kill your husband"*. She takes the gun and before the door closes behind her, she shoots off all 13 rounds emptying the gun. The door closes behind her and for the next five minutes the agents hear loud banging and grunting. The door finally opens, revealing the sweat-drenched woman. She looks at both agents, wipes her brow and says, *"Whew! You guys didn't tell me that the gun was filled with blanks - I had to beat him to death with the chair!"*

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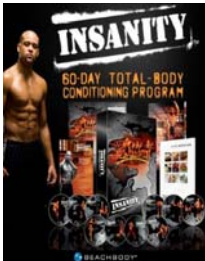
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# Back By Popular Demand “Teen Depression”

## A Guide for Parents And Teachers

Teenage depression isn’t just bad moods and occasional melancholy—it’s a serious problem that impacts every aspect of a teen’s life. Teen depression can lead to problems at home and school, drug abuse, self-loathing—even violence or suicide. But as a concerned parent, teacher, or friend, there are many ways you can help. Talking about the problem and offering support can go a long way toward getting your teenager back on track.

**Understanding For Teens**  
If you’re a teenager struggling with depression or you’d like to learn how to help a depressed friend.

There are as many misconceptions about teen depression as there are about teenagers in general. Yes, the teen years are tough, but most teens balance the requisite angst with good friendships, success in school or outside activities, and the development of a strong sense of self.

Occasional bad moods or acting out is to be expected, but depression is something different. Depression can destroy the very essence of a teenager’s personality, causing an overwhelming sense of sadness, despair, or anger.

Whether the incidence of teen depression is actually increasing, or we’re just becoming more aware of it, the fact remains that depression strikes teenagers far more often than most people think. And although depression is highly treatable, experts say only 1 in 5 depressed teens receive help. Unlike adults, who have the ability to seek assistance on their own, teenagers usually must rely on parents, teachers, or other caregivers to recognize their suffering and get them the treatment they need. So if you have an adolescent in your life, it’s important to learn what teen depression looks like and what to do if you spot the warning signs.

### Signs and symptoms of teen depression

Teenagers face a host of pressures, from the changes of puberty to questions about who they are and where they fit in. The natural transition from child to adult can also bring parental conflict as teens start to assert their independence. With all this drama, it isn’t always easy to differentiate between depression and normal teenage moodiness. Making things even more complicated, teens with depression do not necessarily appear sad, nor do they always withdraw from others. For some depressed teens, symptoms of irritability, aggression, and rage are more prominent.

### Signs and symptoms of depression in teens

- Sadness or hopelessness



- Irritability, anger, or hostility
- Tearfulness or frequent crying
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Loss of interest in activities
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Restlessness and agitation
- Feelings of worthlessness and guilt
- Lack of enthusiasm and motivation

- Fatigue or lack of energy
- Difficulty concentrating
- Thoughts of death or suicide

If you’re unsure if an adolescent in your life is depressed or just “*being a teenager*,” consider how long the symptoms have been present, how severe they are, and how different the teen is acting from his or her usual self. While some “*growing pains*” are to be expected as teenagers grapple with the challenges of growing up, dramatic, long-lasting changes in personality, mood, or behavior are red flags of a deeper problem.

### The difference between teenage and adult depression

Depression in teens can look very different from depression in adults.

The following symptoms of

depression are more common in teenagers than in their adult counterparts:


- **Irritable or angry mood** – As noted above, irritability, rather than sadness, is often the predominant mood in depressed teens. A depressed teenager may be grumpy, hostile, easily frustrated, or prone to angry outbursts.

- **Unexplained aches and pains** –

Depressed teens frequently complain about physical ailments such as headaches or stomachaches. If a thorough physical exam does not reveal a medical cause, these aches and pains may indicate depression.

- **Extreme sensitivity to criticism** – Depressed teens are plagued by feelings of worthlessness,


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**BELIZE TOURISM BOARD**

## CAREER OPPORTUNITY

### DATABASE AND SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR



**BELIZE TOURISM BOARD**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE:**  
The goal of the Database and System Administrator is to provide primary support for designing, implementing and maintaining BTB’s software and database systems. The personnel is to provide day to day support of computers, peripherals, and related equipment operated at BTB.

**PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Manage and support all software and database systems.
- Develop, design, and maintain data models and related software documentation with a view to create logical models and translate into physical database structures that integrate with existing or proposed database structures.
- Monitor software and database systems with a view to optimize all aspects including, but not limited to, performance, security, and resource use.
- Provide support for implementations, integrations, conversions, and capacity planning issues for existing and future software and database systems.
- Develop, maintain, and test regularly a disaster recovery plan/system, including data back-ups that seek to safeguard data and ensure minimal downtime.
- Provide day to day support for end-user hardware and software PC issues.
- Perform basic troubleshooting and support for computer systems, peripherals, and other electronic equipment.
- Perform related software and hardware duties as may be assigned.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Bachelor’s degree in Computer Information Systems or related field with at least 3 years’ experience directly related to duties and responsibilities specified.
- Knowledge of current technological developments/trends in area of expertise.
- Ability to interpret data models and to develop database structures.
- Ability to use standard diagramming techniques to design and develop computer data models.
- Ability to implement and troubleshoot programming changes and modifications.
- Ability to program, configure, manage, and maintain the operation of complex relational databases.
- Ability to develop and manipulate large, complex data sets.
- Knowledge of computer and/or network security systems, applications, procedures, and techniques.
- Knowledge of data integrity methods and techniques.
- Ability to perform acceptance testing on computer systems, applications, and hardware.
- Ability to install, maintain, modify, and upgrade database software.
- Ability to provide technical guidance and leadership to professional personnel in area of expertise.
- Ability to work in a team driven environment.
- Ability to write detailed, professional technical and non-technical reports.
- Ability to troubleshoot hardware and software PC issues.
- Basic understanding of networking concepts, including TCP/IP, Active Directory, and security.
- Ability to perform basic printer troubleshooting.

Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Applications should be directed to:

**Director of Administration**  
64 Regent Street  
Belize City, Belize  
Tel: 501-227-2420

Deadline for submissions is November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012



# Back By Popular Demand “Teen Depression”

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making them extremely vulnerable to criticism, rejection, and failure. This is a particular problem for “*over-achievers*.”

- **Withdrawing from some, but not all people** – While adults tend to isolate themselves when depressed, teenagers usually keep up at least some friendships. However, teens with depression may socialize less than before, pull away from their parents, or start hanging out with a different crowd.

### Effects of teen depression

The negative effects of teenage depression go far beyond a melancholy mood. Many rebellious and unhealthy behaviors or attitudes in teenagers are actually indications of depression. The following are some the ways in which teens “*act out*” or “*act in*” in an attempt to cope with their emotional pain:

- **Problems at school.** Depression can cause low energy and concentration difficulties. At school, this may lead to poor attendance, a drop in grades, or frustration with schoolwork in a formerly good student.

- **Running Away.** Many depressed teens run away from home or talk about running away. Such attempts are usually a cry for help.

- **Drug and alcohol abuse.** Teens may use alcohol or drugs in an attempt to “*self-medicate*” their depression. Unfortunately, substance abuse only makes things worse.

- **Low self-esteem.** Depression can trigger and intensify feelings of ugliness, shame, failure, and unworthiness.

- **Internet addiction.** Teens may go online to escape from their problems. But excessive computer use only increases their isolation and makes them more depressed.

- **Reckless behavior.** Depressed teens may engage in dangerous or high-risk behaviors, such as reckless driving, out-of-control drinking, and unsafe sex.

- **Violence.** Some depressed teens (usually boys who are the victims of bullying) become violent. As in the case of the Columbine school massacre, self-hatred and a wish to die can erupt into violence and homicidal rage.

Teens who are seriously depressed often think, speak, or make “*attention-getting*” attempts at suicide. An alarming and increasing number of teenagers attempt and succeed at suicide, so suicidal thoughts or behaviors should always be taken very seriously.

For the overwhelming majority of suicidal teens, depression or another psychological disorder plays a primary role. In depressed teens who also abuse alcohol or drugs, the risk

of suicide is even greater.

Because of the very real danger of suicide, teenagers who are depressed should be watched closely for any signs of suicidal thoughts or behavior.

### Suicide warning signs in depressed teens

- Talking or joking about committing suicide.

- Saying things like, “*I’d be better off dead*,” “*I wish I could disappear forever*,” or “*There’s no way out*.”

- Speaking positively about death or romanticizing dying (“*If I died, people might love me more*”).

- Writing stories and poems about death, dying, or suicide.

- Engaging in reckless behavior or having a lot of accidents resulting in injury.

- Giving away prized possessions.

- Saying goodbye to friends and family as if for good.

- Seeking out weapons, pills, or other ways to kill themselves.

### Encouraging a depressed teen to open up

Learn to identify and express your feelings

If you suspect that a teenager in your life is suffering from depression, speak up right away. Even if you’re unsure that depression is the issue, the troublesome behaviors and emotions you’re seeing in your teenager are signs of a problem.

Whether or not that problem turns out to be depression, it still needs to be addressed—the sooner the better. In a loving and non-judgmental way, share your concerns with your teenager. Let him or her know what specific signs of depression you’ve noticed and why they worry you. Then encourage your child to share what he or she is going through.

Your teen may be reluctant to open up. He or she may be ashamed, afraid of being misunderstood. Alternatively, depressed teens may simply have a hard time expressing what they’re feeling.

If your teen claims nothing is wrong, but has no explanation for what is causing the depressed behavior, you should trust your instincts. Remember that denial is a strong emotion. Furthermore, teenagers may not believe that what they’re experiencing is the result of depression.

### Tips for talking to a depressed Teen

**Offer support:** Let depressed teenagers know that you’re there for them, fully and unconditionally. Hold back from asking a lot of questions (teenagers don’t like to feel patronized or crowded), but make it clear that you’re ready and willing to provide whatever support they need.

**Be gentle but persistent:** Don’t

give up if your adolescent shuts you out at first. Talking about depression can be very tough for teens. Be respectful of your child’s comfort level while still emphasizing your concern and willingness to listen.

**Listen without lecturing:** Resist any urge to criticize or pass judgment once your teenager begins to talk. The important thing is that your child is communicating. Avoid offering unsolicited advice or ultimatums as well.

**Listen without lecturing:** Resist any urge to criticize or pass judgment once your teenager begins to talk. The important thing is that your child is communicating. Avoid offering unsolicited advice or ultimatums as well.

**Validate feelings:** Don’t try to talk teens out of their depression, even if their feelings or concerns appear silly or irrational to you. Simply acknowledge the pain and sadness they are feeling. If you don’t, they will feel like you don’t take their emotions seriously.

### Getting treatment for teen depression

Depression is very damaging when left untreated, so don’t wait and hope that the symptoms will go away. If you see depression’s warning signs, seek professional help.

Make an immediate appointment for your teen to see the family physician for a depression screening. Be prepared to give your doctor specific information about your teen’s depression symptoms, including how long they’ve been present, how much they’re affecting your child’s daily life, and any patterns you’ve noticed. The doctor should also be told about any close relatives who have ever been diagnosed with depression or another mental health disorder. As part of the depression screening, the doctor will give your teenager a complete physical exam and take blood samples to check for medical causes of your child’s symptoms.

### Seek out a depression specialist

If there are no health problems that are causing your teenager’s depression, ask your doctor to refer you to a psychologist or psychiatrist who specializes in children and adolescents. Depression in teens can be tricky, particularly when it comes to treatment options such as medication. A mental health professional with advanced training and a strong background treating adolescents is the best bet for your teenager’s best care.

When choosing a specialist, always get your child’s input. Teenagers are dependent on you for making many of their health decisions, so listen to what they’re telling you.

No one therapist is a miracle

worker and no one treatment works for everyone. If your child feels uncomfortable or is just not “*connecting*” with the psychologist or psychiatrist, ask for a referral to another provider that may be better suited to your teenager.

Don’t rely on medication alone. Expect a discussion with the specialist you’ve chosen about treatment possibilities for your son or daughter. There are a number of treatment options for depression in teenagers, including one-on-one talk therapy, group or family therapy, and medication.

Talk therapy is often a good initial treatment for mild to moderate cases of depression. Over the course of therapy, your teen’s depression may resolve. If it doesn’t, medication may be warranted. However, antidepressants should only be used as part of a broader treatment plan. Unfortunately, some parents feel pushed into choosing antidepressant medication over other treatments that may be cost-prohibitive or time-intensive. However, unless your child is considered to be high risk for suicide (*in which case medication and/or constant observation may be necessary*), you have time to carefully weigh your options before committing to any one treatment.

Risks of teenage antidepressant use. In severe cases of depression, medication may help ease symptoms. However, antidepressants aren’t always the best treatment option. They come with risks and side effects of their own, including a number of safety concerns specific to children and young adults. It’s important to weigh the benefits against the risks before starting your teen on medication.

### Antidepressants and the teenage brain

Antidepressants were designed and tested on adults, so their impact on the youthful, developing brain is not yet completely understood. Some researchers are concerned that the use of drugs such as Prozac in children and teens might interfere with normal brain development. The human brain is developing rapidly in young adults, and exposure to antidepressants may impact that development—particularly the way the brain manages stress and regulates emotions.

### Antidepressant suicide warning for teens

Antidepressant medications may increase the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior in some teenagers. All antidepressants are required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to carry a “**black box**” warning label about this risk in children, adolescents, and young adults up to the age of 24. The risk of

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## Guatemala Indigenous Leader 'Escapes Street Attack'

An indigenous leader in Guatemala who is an outspoken critic of the government says he has escaped an attempted shooting.

**Mario Itzep** of the National Indigenous Observatory said two men on a motorbike opened fire on him in Guatemala City.

He said he had recently received anonymous telephone calls telling him that unless he stopped bothering the

government he would regret it.

Itzep said he was not injured in the incident.

He recently filed a suit with the Prosecutor's Office for Human Rights over the killing of six indigenous people during protests in Totonicapan at the beginning of October.

An army colonel and eight soldiers have been charged with extrajudicial killing in connection with the case.



Coffins of the six indigenous people killed during protests in Totonicapan

## Back By Popular Demand "Teen Depression"

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suicide is highest during the first two months of antidepressant treatment.

Certain young adults are at an even greater risk for suicide when taking antidepressants, including teens with bipolar disorder, a family history of bipolar disorder, or a history of previous suicide attempts.

Teenagers on antidepressants should be closely monitored for any sign that the depression is getting worse. **Warning signs include new or worsening symptoms of agitation, irritability, or anger. Unusual changes in behavior are also red flags.**

According to FDA guidelines, after starting an antidepressant or changing the dose, your teenager should see their doctor:

- Once a week for four weeks
- Every 2 weeks for the next month
- At the end of their 12th week taking the drug
- More often if problems or questions arise

**Teens on Antidepressants: Red Flags To Watch Out For**  
**Call a doctor if you notice...**

- New or more thoughts of suicide
- Trying to commit suicide
- New or worse depression
- New or worse anxiety
- Feeling very agitated or restless
- Panic attacks
- Difficulty sleeping (insomnia)

## Minister Montero and BWS Team Visit Work Site In Santa Elena

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important transmission mains onto a section of carriageways which has proven to be more durable and cost effective both in terms access as well as protection from future destruction occasioned by off carriageways developments which in every single case result in damaging of water infrastructure.

While this relocation has been successful in the first part of the Loma Luz project, there are indications of a request from the contractor to divert the mains off the carriageway in the lower section of the boulevard which will result in reverting to the same

vulnerable location that the company is actively seeking to avoid. This concern was expressed to Minister Montero during today's visit.

As the tour was winding down, Minister Montero who is also the elected representative of the area, invited the BWS team to visit the New Santa Elena housing area. He expressed the urgent desire for water expansion into this new area of town. Minister Montero committed to providing a map of the area while BWS committed to having the Technical Services Department review the request for possible implementation of the project.

be beneficial.

**Encourage social activity**  
Isolation only makes depression worse, so encourage your teenager to see friends and praise efforts to socialize. Offer to take your teen out with friends or suggest social activities that might be of interest, such as sports, after-school clubs, or an art class.

**Stay involved in treatment**  
Make sure your teenager is following all treatment instructions and going to therapy. It's especially important that your child takes any prescribed medication as instructed. Track changes in your teen's condition, and call the doctor if depression symptoms seem to be getting worse.

**Learn about depression** Just like you would if your child had a disease you knew very little about, read up on depression so that you can be your own "expert." The more you know, the better equipped you'll be to help your depressed teen. Encourage your teenager to learn more about depression as well. Reading up on their condition can help depressed teens realize that they're not alone and give them a better understanding of what they're going through.

The road to your depressed teenager's recovery may be bumpy, so be patient. Rejoice in small victories and prepare for the occasional setback. Most importantly, don't judge yourself or compare your family to others. As long as you're doing your best to get your teen the necessary help, you're doing your job.

Taking care of the whole family when one child is depressed

As a parent dealing with teen depression, you may find yourself focusing all your energy and attention on your depressed child. Meanwhile, you may be neglecting your own needs and the needs of other family members. While helping your

depressed child should be a top priority, it's important to keep your whole family strong and healthy during this difficult time.

**Take care of yourself**—In order to help a depressed teen, you need to stay healthy and positive yourself, so don't ignore your own needs. The stress of the situation can affect your own moods and emotions, so cultivate your well-being by eating right, getting enough sleep, and making time for things you enjoy.

**Reach out for support**—Get the emotional support you need. Reach out to friends, join a support group, or see a therapist of your own. It's okay to feel overwhelmed, frustrated, helpless, or angry. The important thing is to talk about how your teen's depression is affecting you, rather than bottling up your emotions.

**Be open with the family**—Don't tiptoe around the issue of teen depression in an attempt to "protect" the other children. Kids know when something is wrong. When left in the dark, their imaginations will often jump to far worse conclusions. Be open about what is going on and invite your children to ask questions and share their feelings.

**Remember the siblings**—Depression in one child can cause stress or anxiety in other family members, so make sure "healthy" children are not ignored. Siblings may need special individual attention or professional help of their own to handle their feelings about the situation.

**Avoid the blame game**—It can be easy to blame yourself or another family member for your teen's depression, but it only adds to an already stressful situation. Furthermore, depression is normally caused by a number of factors, so it's unlikely—except in the case of abuse or neglect—that any loved one is "responsible."

**Keep Your Community Clean**  
**Please Put Garbage In Its Rightful Place.** Public Service Message From The STAR Newspaper



# DigiCell's

# 10

## Year Anniversary

# GIVEAWAY

**1 Ham, Meat Package, Assorted Liquors & 2 cases of Heineken**  
Courtesy Running W Meats & Karl H. Menzies

**2 \$500 worth of Textile/Curtain/Carpet**  
Courtesy Mikado

**3 Mabe 30 inch Stove**  
Courtesy DigiCell & Courts Belize

**4 4 Gallons Paint & Paint Supplies**  
Courtesy Karl H. Menzies

**5 Christmas Tree and Decorations**  
Courtesy Mirab

**6 \$1,200 Shopping Spree at Bottom Dalla**  
Courtesy Santiago Castillo

**7 42 inch TCL Flat Screen TV & LG Home Theater System**  
Courtesy DigiCell & Courts Belize

**8 Samsung Galaxy SIII**  
Courtesy Cellular Plus

**9 Round Trip (1) Ticket to Continental USA**  
Courtesy United Airlines

**10 \$10,000 CASH**  
Courtesy DigiCell/BTL



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