Taxi Driver, Polo Waight, Brutally Murdered

SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo, Thursday, September 6, 2007: The San Ignacio/Santa Elena community woke up last Saturday morning, September 1, 2007 to the shocking news of the brutal shooting death of one of its veteran and popular taxi drivers.

It was shortly after 8:00 a.m. last Saturday morning when San Ignacio Police were alerted to the presence of the dead body of a male person on the side of an isolated road in an area due north of the Cahal Pech Village Resort in San Ignacio Town.

When the police arrived on the scene they came upon the lifeless body of a 47-year old, Belizean taxi driver, Leopoldo “Polo” Austin Waight of #4 - 4th Street, San Ignacio Town, with what appeared to be a gunshot wound to the head and another to the upper mid section of the body.

A postmortem examination conducted, on Monday, September 3, by Forensic Specialist, Dr. Mario Estradahan certified that Polo Waight died as a consequence of “Trauma shock multiple injuries to head and chest due to shotgun”. Polo was laid to rest inside the Santa Rita Cemetery in San Ignacio Town after funeral services at St. Andrews Anglican Church in San Ignacio at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 4, 2007.

Polo is survived by his common-law-wife of 28 years, Yolanda Martinez Coyoe; two daughters: Aidi Waight and Luceedi Martinez Waight; four sons: Leopoldo Austin Waight Jr., Gilbert, Eluid, and Anthony Michael Waight. He is also survived by five sisters: Michaela Zetina and Octavia Craney residing in California, USA; Dorlina Taylor residing in Northern Ireland as well as Desol Neal residing in Santa Elena, Cayo, and Doris Wallacott residing in San Ignacio Cayo. He is also survived by three brothers Eluid Cruz, Alfonso Cruz and Lyle Waight Jr.

Polo is predeceased by his parents Eluid, Anthony and Michael Waight. Polo is also survived by five sisters: Michaela Zetina and Octavia Craney residing in California, USA; Dorlina Taylor residing in Northern Ireland as well as Desol Neal residing in Santa Elena, Cayo, and Doris Wallacott residing in San Ignacio Cayo.

Cayo’s New Deputy Police Commander

SAN IGNACIO, Cayo, Wednesday, September 5, 2007: After being without a Deputy Commander for several months following the interdiction from duty of ASP Jeffery Martinez in connection with a road traffic accident which claimed the life of the son of a police Sergeant, the Cayo (Police) District this week is welcoming a replacement Deputy Commanding Officer in the person of Inspector of Police Eugenio Sylvestre Fuentes.

During his twenty-one year career in the Belize Police Department Inspector Fuentes has served in the

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Please Turn To Page 11
Taxi Driver, Polo Waigt, Brutally Murdered

Continued From Front Page

the taxi driver handed over the license to the police. Reports reaching us indicate that several other pieces of documents including the vehicle’s insurance paper and receipts were found in the area of Hodes Place in the Savannah area. A close relative informed that the information reaching her indicate that it was probably Polo who began throwing these documents out the car window in an effort to raise the alarm that he was in danger.

Although some witnesses are saying that he was last seen alive at around 3:00 a.m. or maybe even up to 4:00 a.m. that Saturday morning at least one relative is however contending that the incident could have occurred much earlier even up to around 9:30 p.m. on Friday, August 31. This relative is also of the opinion that robbery could have been the motive behind the death as he was reportedly in possession of no less that five 100 dollar bills of which not even a dime was found in his possession. His cellular telephone and his car were also missing. The relative is further contending that the terrible act could have been conducted by someone that the deceased knew especially since the deceased was fully aware of the dangers involved in operating a nighttime taxi service and as such he would refuse all requests for service by individual he did not actually know.

It was not until 3 days later, on Tuesday, September 3, that the car was found abandoned on the road leading to the village of Cristo Rey on the outskirts of Santa Elena Town. Up to press time this Thursday night, several persons have been detained, questioned and released as police continue the search for that single crack needed to bring those responsible to justice. The assistance from the general public is requested. Anyone with information is asked to contact the nearest police station.

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Happy September Celebrations!
SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo District, Wednesday, September 5, 2007:

Another Santa Elena Chinese Shopkeeper today fell victim to a brazen early morning robbery.

The single surveillance camera inside the Chinese 8 & 8 Supermarket on Bishop Martin Street in Santa Elena captured the entire incident and clocked it between 8:55 and 8:59 a.m. on Wednesday, 5th September 2007.

The four-minute camera footage showed two masked men, one pedaling a bicycle and the other on the handle bar, riding directly off the street and into the shop. The one on the handle bar held a shotgun while the other was in possession of a large dark blue traveling bag.

The armed gunman slid off the handle bar directly in front of the cashier placing the gun to his head and demanded money. He then moved over to a young Belizean male employee who was standing at the front door. He placed the gun to the employee’s head and shoved him face downwards to the floor. He then moved over to a little Chinese boy who was standing on the other side of the front door and did likewise with him.

The gunman then moved behind the counter and began helping himself to several packs of Phillies cigars which he threw into the open bag held by the accomplice who was standing on the other side of the low counter. The gunman then moved to the set of drawers behind the counter and began emptying them, the contents of which he threw into the open bag. The cashier complied with their request and handed over everything that was inside the cash register.

The masked robbers then rushed out of the store, hopped on the bicycle and sped off with the gun totting robber assuming his original position on the handle bar. They rode down Bishop Martin Street onto Perez Street and headed towards the Trapiche area.

After they departed, the young Belizean male shop assistant who was forced to the floor sprang up and set chase behind them on foot. Along the trail, in the roadside bushes, he came upon one of the masks that is believed to have been discarded by one of the robbers. When the police arrived, they were directed to the area where the robbers had fled and with the assistance of at least one member of the public, they were directed to an unfinished cement bungalow structure located about 100 yards off George Price Avenue in a bushy area.

The scene of the crime - Chinese 8 & 8 Supermarket on Bishop Martin Street, Santa Elena, Cayo

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At first, the policemen, with only one armed element in their midst, were hesitant to venture into the area. However, when they entered the structure they came upon one of the robbers still holding the shotgun and with the dark blue traveling bag at his feet.

Probably unaware that the police were handicapped, he offered no resistance and surrendered. A search of the bag revealed almost all of the items reported stolen including cash, cigars, telephone cards, a camera and a handheld computer.

The gunman was identified as Joel Sierra, 16, of #7 Cemetery Street, Santa Elena. He was immediately detained and transported along with the gun and travel bag to the San Ignacio police station.

Further investigation led, shortly thereafter, to the detention of Edwin Nigel McKoy, 18, Belizean laborer of a Santa Cruz, Santa Elena address.

The two suspects were placed inside separate holding cells at the San Ignacio police station. It was after 9:00 p.m. that same Wednesday night when police reportedly found the bottom section of the cell door in which Sierra was housed, to be bent outwards and upon checking they found out that Sierra was nowhere inside the cell and therefore listed as an escaped prisoner.

Those at the senior rank of the local police detachment are still baffled as to how a detainee, who is not even allowed to enter the cell with his shoes and not even a plastic fork...
Writing is our business - we don't breed writers on that.

This murder pan you and mek yu if da noh you du it, we will pin something to write about - Even write - We will give him flaunt the statement, to withhold their bias, began to openly Notwithstanding, the police, unable against a client. report which any skillful attorney of them saw the obvious flaw on the danger and investigations reveal that Waight and identified as 48 year old Leopoldo “Polo” Waight the following report.

San Ignacio Police are investigating the apparent death of a 48 year old taxi driver of San Ignacio Town. Sometime around 8am of today, Saturday September 1st., Police acting upon information received, visited an area north of Cahal Pech Resort where they observed the apparent lifeless body of a male person lying face down on the ground with apparent gunshot injuries to the head and back. Said individual was transported to the San Ignacio Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival and identified as 48 year old Leopoldo Waight. Initial investigations reveal that Waight was driving his blue Toyota Camry taxi in San Ignacio when he picked up four passengers and was not seen again. Police are investigating and have not yet recovered the car. Anyone with information is asked to please call the Police or Crime Stoppers. G. Michael Reid Police Officer 227-2222 ext. 302.

As a result of the above police press report for Saturday 1st September 2007, the police requested my assistance to get my younger brother as he was needed for questioning. I immediately contacted the police and they told me to wait until 11:00 a.m. at which time I should bring him to the police station.

We showed up at the police station at exactly 11:00 where I left him. I told him to call me as soon as the interview was completed so that I could retain him.

When he did not call at around 2:30 p.m. (being a full 3 1/2 hours later) I inquired at the station and I was told that he was still being interviewed by Special Branch and Crimes Investigation Branch personnel. I visited the station 4 hours later, at 3:00 p.m. and was told that the interview had just been completed and that he would “soon be released as there was one detail that needed verification”.

I waited around the police station for about an hour after which I left

I related the incident to him and he denied any involvement. His denial meant very little to me and I made that known to him. I told him to come to San Ignacio and that I will leave it up to the police to tell me if he was or was not involved in the crime. He agreed to come to San Ignacio and to make himself available to the police for questioning.

He was at my home in Santa Elena at 8:00 a.m. on that Sunday morning. I immediately contacted the police and they told me to wait until 11:00 a.m. at which time I should bring him to the police station.

When I arrived at the police station a few hours later, I came upon the police searching him and getting ready to lock him away. Nevertheless, I was told that my story checked out and that he would be released but that Sgt. #1 Enrique Aldana, who heads the local Crimes Investigation Branch, wanted to speak to him before his release. I was told that Aldana was on his way from Corozal as he was coming in due to the threat of the hurricane and that he would have been at the station by 7:00 p.m.

It was after 8:00 p.m. when Aldana finally arrived. I waited at the station for another 2 hours and when I inquired, Aldana told me that my

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Page 4  STAR  Tel: 667-7827  Email: starnewspaper@gmail.com  Sunday, 9th September 2007

“STAR Like To Write, We Will Give Him Something To Write About” says the police.

This section of the newspaper is usually reserved for the expression of personal opinions and the fowarding of suggestions usually on current issues of general importance.

This week however, we deviate from the normal as the week just gone was no normal week. It all started off with Saturday morning’s reported discovery of the lifeless body of San Ignacio Taxi Driver Leopoldo “Polo” Waight and the subsequent detention of my younger brother for questioning in connection with the incident. His detention was followed by the leaking of misleading information leading to widespread speculation. In particular the TOTALLY unfurthful leaked statement that my brother was found in possession of a cellular telephone belonging to the deceased.

The police, with obvious intent at getting at the STAR for whatever reason, began to allow that bias to dangerously hamper the investigation to the point where they witnessed the post mortem examination and received the forensic report but none of them saw the obvious flaw on the report which any skillfull attorney could use to secure a not guilty plea against a client. Notwithstanding, the police, unable to withhold their bias, began to openly flaunt the statement, “STAR like to write - We will give him something to write about - Even write - We will give him flaunt the statement, to withhold their bias, began to openly Notwithstanding, the police, unable against a client. report which any skillful attorney of them saw the obvious flaw on the danger and investigations reveal that Waight and identified as 48 year old Leopoldo “Polo” Waight the following report.

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SANTA ELENA, Cayo, Saturday, September 1, 2007:

It was exactly 10:45 p.m., on Saturday, September 1, 2007, when a group of masked armed gunmen stormed into Cosy Corner Bar and proceeded to rob the owner and customers of the establishment.

According to Hayden Rodriguez, owner of the Bar, he was sitting with some customers under one of the palapas on the lawn in front of the establishment, when he got up and entered the building to change the music. He proceeded behind the counter and was only there for about 15 minutes when one of the waitresses ran inside and shouted “Ladrones” (thieves) by the time he attempted to turn around one of two gunmen who rushed into the bar held a shotgun to his head and told him “don’t move pussy”. He then proceeded to search Rodriguez’ pocket and in the process relieved him of a V3I red Motorola Razor cellular telephone (valued at $850.), a bunch of receipts and his wallet containing $450.00, his learners driver’s permit, social security card, voters identification card, Scotia and Atlantic Bank cards, his daughter’s birth certificate and other documents.

Shortly thereafter two other masked gunmen entered into the bar with all the clients whom they had rounded up from the outside. All clients were relieved of their cash, cellular telephones and jewelry.

Three of the gunmen were armed with shotguns while the fourth was armed with a short firearm believed to be a point 38 revoler.

One of the gunmen then ordered the cashier to go behind the counter and open the cash register. It took her a while to activate the button and he told her to hurry up. He subsequently took possession of the 90 to 95 dollars in cash that was inside the register. One of them then helped himself to Rodriguez’ white pants that he had purchased the day before which was laying on a shelf under the counter.

One of them took four sealed Belikin beers out of the freezer along with an opened one that was on the counter which one of the waitresses had taken out to serve to a customer. He also took a dish of retail cigarettes from under the counter along with some CD’s.

One of them then ordered the others to “Let’s Go” and they all rushed out of building but not before one of them punched one of the waitresses in the neck area.

They ran behind the building where they boarded a gray, open back, single cab Tacoma pickup truck and sped off into the darkness.

Although this bar has been jacked several times, Rodriguez informed that this is the first time that the establishment has been attacked since his taking over the business almost three months ago.

Scene of the Crime - Cosy Corner Bar

“It was exactly about 3 to 4 minutes to pull off the robbery” concluded Rodriguez.

Up to press time this Thursday night, an arrest is yet to be made, as police continue to investigate.

LIQUOR LICENSE NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that, under the Intoxicating Liquor License Ordinance, Chapter 150 of the Laws od Belize Revised Edition 2000, NATALIE HULSE is applying for a NIGHT CLUB LIQUOR LICENSE for the year 2007 to operate PLAY PEN BAR & NIGHT CLUB located inside the Manzanero Complex in the Savannah Area, San Ignacio in the Cayo District.

Scene of the Crime - Cosy Corner Bar

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Keeping the tradition of his administration alive, today San Ignacio/Santa Elena’s Mayor John Francis August made the rounds as part of the program of events for the September Season.

Mayor August today made the first stop at La Loma Luz Hospital in Santa Elena where he was met by the Hospital’s Administrator, Grant McPherson with whom he held brief discussions while donating a 10 speed Sun Beam Blender to the hospital.

Mr. McPherson took the opportunity to brief the Mayor on this weekend’s arrival of some 22 specialists from Denver, Colorado to conduct medical services at La Loma Luz Hospital. He said that the team is scheduled to arrive on Sunday, September 9 and will provide services right up to Friday, September 14.

The hospital expects these visits to be conducted on a semi-annual basis and, according to Mr. McPherson, this undertaking is certainly not intended to disrupt services provided by local medical professionals but rather to cater for those persons who are unable to otherwise pay for them. Mr. McPherson also took the opportunity to brief the Mayor on the wheelchair program. He informed that since the inception of the project, almost 400 wheel chairs have been donated to needy individuals. The next round of wheelchair donations, he said, will include 25 going to the Octavia Waight Center for Senior Citizens and an additional 5 going to the San Ignacio Hospital.

The Mayor’s next stop was at the Octavia Waight Center where he donated a wide assortment of grocery and other food items. He also took the opportunity to discuss with administrators of the Center and to interact with residents.

The final stop on the tour was at the San Ignacio Hospital where he donated kitchen appliances and linen. He also held brief discussions with hospital administrators.

During these visits, Mayor John August was accompanied by Deputy Mayor Eduardo “Eddy” Cano and Councilor Bernadette Andrews-Fernandez.
**VACANCY**

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- Wednesday: Margaritas $9.95
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LIVE INSIDE CAHAL PECH NIGHT CLUB
A kindergarten pupil told his teacher he'd found a cat, but it was dead.

"How do you know that the cat was dead?" she asked her pupil.

"Because I pissed in its ear and it didn't move," answered the child innocently.

"You did WHAT?!?" the teacher exclaimed in surprise.

"You know," explained the boy, "I leaned over and went 'Pssst!' and it didn't move."

***************

A little boy is sent to bed by his father. Five minutes later.... "Da-ad..."

"What?"

"I'm thirsty. Can you bring drink of water?"

"No, You had your chance. Lights out."

Five minutes later: "Da-a-aaaad..."

"WHAT?"

"I'm THIRSTY. Can I have a drink of water??"

"I told you NO! If you ask again, I'll have to spank you!!"

Five minutes later... "Da-aaa-aaaad....."

"WHAT!"

***************

One day the first grade teacher was reading the story of Chicken Little to her class. She came to the part of the story where Chicken Little tried to warn the farmer. She read, "... and so Chicken Little went up to the farmer and said, "The sky is falling, the sky is falling!"

The teacher paused then asked the class, "And what do you think that farmer said?"

One little girl raised her hand and said, "I think he said: "Holy Shit! A talking chicken!!!"

The teacher was unable to teach for the next 10 minutes.

***************

A little girl, when asked her name, would reply, "I'm Mr. Thimpson's daughter."

Her mother told her this was wrong, she must say, "I'm Jane Thompson.

The Pastor spoke to her in Sunday School, and said, "Aren't you Mr. Thompson's daughter?"

She replied, "I thought I was, but mother says I'm not."
brother would remain in police lock up under investigation in connection with the crime.

Given that he was extensively interviewed and that he could not be implicated, although it seemed unfair at that point, there was not much that could be inferred from Aguilar’s words said within their legal rights to hold anyone for 48 hours. By this time they were fully aware that my brother was in no way linked to the crime. However, it was evident that Aldana instead elected to abuse this legally afforded privilege.

When it became even more evident by the evening hours on Monday, 3rd September that my brother was not the person they were looking for, Mr. Magdaleno asked Aldana and Corporal Sanchez to provide Aguilar with the words “Insulting or threatening words” Mr. Commissioner, is that the legally afforded privilege.

Aguilar was clearly guilty of assault and battery and he was “Insulted” or “Threatened” and in the process extracted a statement from him? It appears to be evident here that Aguilar was fully aware and was coerced by an individual to whom he was indebted and that this person was seeking due payment. Mr. Commissioner, if Aldana and Sanchez’ action is not tantamount to malicious prosecution, then pray tell, what is?

The unfortunate aspect of the action on the part of Aldana and Sanchez, Mr. Commissioner is that these are no ordinary policemen. These two individuals are at the helm of this community’s all important Crimes Investigation Branch and Special Branch respectively with junior officers under their supervision. It is often said that we lead by example. I am confident that you agree that they are giving no one under their supervision?

Getting back to the issue at hand Mr. Commissioner: with the threat of hurricane Felix, I had to rush to Belize City on Monday evening to take-care of my brother’s family as, in being police lock up, he could not do so himself. Whilst in Belize City I also took the opportunity to enlist the services of Attorney Richard Stuart on instructions that he ensure that my brother not be detained beyond the legal 48 hours without being formally arrested and charged especially as I have made it known to my brother that he should consult and contact a lawyer if he is therefore to be formally charged. So I have to get in touch with my friend Richard Stuart on behalf of my brother and his family who are awaiting his release and will not accept that my brother is in police lock up under investigation in connection with the crime.

I contacted Mr. Magdaleno and showed extremely poor management and in the process extracted a statement from him? It appears to be evident here that Aguilar was fully aware and was coerced by an individual to whom he was indebted and that this person was seeking due payment. Mr. Commissioner, if Aldana and Sanchez’ action is not tantamount to malicious prosecution, then pray tell, what is?

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to eat the food he gets from the outside, could have managed to bend those solid burglar bars without the policemen on duty being alerted of the violation taking place.

San Ignacio police has subsequently issued an APB (All Points Bulletin) and are seeking the public’s assistance in the recapture of this escaped prisoner whom they also believe could assist them in the investigation of several incidents in and around the Santa Elena area.

At the time of the robbery, the store owner, Zhao Zheng Rong, 37, Belizean Chinese merchant of the same address, was not present at the store. After the incident his cousin, the cashier, called him and told him about it. He then placed a call to the police and reported the incident to them after which he sped off to his store with the policemen arriving a few minutes later.

Store owner Zhao Zheng Rong reported that apart from the cigars, camera and handheld computer, the robbers made off with about $2,300 in cash and about $1,500 in Digicell and Smart pre-paid telephone cards.

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BENQUE VIEJO TOWN, Cayo District, Wednesday, September 5, 2007:

Swift action on the part of Benque Viejo Police today led to the apprehension of three male persons suspected to be involved in the robbery of a Texaco Gas Station in that municipality.

Police reports that it was shortly after 7:00 p.m., on Wednesday, September 5, 2007, when they responded to reports of a robbery in progress at the Texaco Gas Station located at the corner of Victoria and George Streets in Benque Viejo Town.

Upon arrival, the police team saw three male persons fleeing the area. The police immediately set chase and saw when all three of them jumped into the nearby Mopan River and began swimming across. Despite the darkness in the area police likewise jumped into the water resulting in the apprehension of two of the suspects.

An on-the-spot search one of the individuals led to the discovery of a magazine containing 9 live rounds of 9mm ammunition inside his pants pocket.

A search of the immediate area resulted in the discovery of a chrome 9mm pistol complete with a magazine containing 9 live rounds of 9mm ammunition as well as a sawed off shotgun loaded with one live cartridge.

Not satisfied with having apprehended only two of the suspects, police extended the search to a wider area and in so doing, they came upon the third suspect, soaking wet and hiding in the bushes.

A subsequent investigation revealed that the man held on the gas station clerk and made off with an undisclosed amount of cash, BTL and Smart phone cards and several packs of cigarettes.

The detainees were identified as Rafael Martinez, 19, of a Benque Viejo Town address; William Pagett Jr., 18, of a High Street address in Santa Elena Town and Thomas Ivan Caretella Jr., 23, of a Cristo Rey Road, Santa Elena Town address.

All three suspects were transported to the police station in Benque Viejo Town where they were formally taken into custody.

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Happy 10th September!!!

From Mayor John August & Councilors of San Ignacio/Santa Elena Town

As we prepare to commemorate the 209th Anniversary of the Battle of St. George’s Caye on Monday, September 10, 2007, please allow me to take this opportunity, on behalf of the San Ignacio/Santa Elena Town Council to wish everyone, especially the residents of San Ignacio/Santa Elena a truly Happy, Safe and Enjoyable 10th September.

We encourage you to take part in the planned activities for the season and especially encourage you to participate in official ceremonies marking this historic occasion which begins at 9:00 p.m. on Sunday, 9th September with the flag raising ceremony and fireworks display at the Colombus Park followed by a big jump up on Burns Avenue in San Ignacio.

Activities continue at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 10th September at the Macal River Park with the Inspection of the Guard of Honor, Float Competition and Parade through the principal streets of San Ignacio and Santa Elena, culminating with a jump up also at the Macal River Park. We also encourage you to enter the float and best decorated vehicle competition to win cash prizes.

Have a Happy, Safe and Enjoyable September Celebrations from the Mayor, Councilors and Staff of ther San Ignacio/Santa Elena Town Council.