



NATIONWIDE

A publication of the Department of Information Services



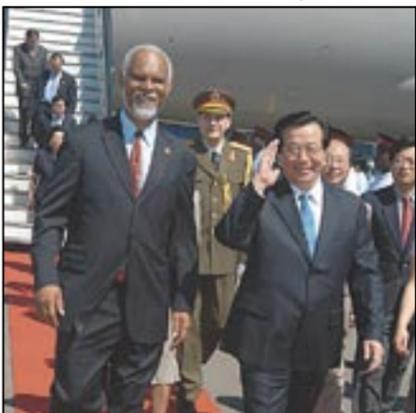
Water Bill passed
- page 7



Bay Gardens: Best Hotel
- page 2



French boat coming for
Independence - page 6



China Trade Forum
- page 3



PM Guyana Flood Appeal
- page 2



Welcome our PM

St. Lucians in French Guiana



Economy, People attract The Landings

At a time when countries in the region are competing for limited foreign investments, St. Lucia's strong economy and friendly people are its greatest pull factors, having been responsible for attracting The Landings, a US\$130-million resort marina, which was launched at Le Sport Body Holiday last week.

This came at a time when many believe that the economy is weak and the

people are unemployed and prone to criminal activity. But all this is far from the truth, if what investors say is true.

Economy and people

Chief Executive Officer of The Landings, investor Frank Heaps, who has worked on St. Lucia's physical development plan and social and economic surveys around the world while working with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), told

the local media that St. Lucia was the fourth most beautiful paradise island in the world, and its people are among the most beautiful. He also pointed out that St. Lucia had one of the best beaches in the world, there were sewer and water mains next to the property, and that the island had the best infrastructure in the region to support the yachting industry.

Continued on page 8



"Take ②" - A fifteen minute news review of the week.
Every Friday at 6.15 p.m. on **NTN**, Cablevision Channel 2.

Government Notebook
A fresh news package
daily
on all local radio stations



St. Lucia and Bay Gardens win Tourism Awards

St. Lucia has captured two coveted prizes at the Second Annual Crystal Star Awards presented by Caribbean Star Airlines last weekend. St. Lucia won Destination of the Year and Bay Gardens, Hotel of the Year.

Held at Antigua's Sticky Wicket resort, Caribbean Star Airlines invited the award nominees, tourism officials and regional media to be part of the celebrations, to recognize the achievements of the winners and the growth of Caribbean Star.

Chief Operating Officer for Caribbean Star, Edward Gilkes said, "Five years ago, nobody knew us, five years ago, they looked at us as a product that would perhaps drop out of the skies within a year. Four and half years later, we are now even a better household name than West Indies Cricket, because we are performing."

Carrying more than 600,000 persons last year alone, the airline now operates 100 daily flights with a fleet of 10 aircraft serving 14 Caribbean destinations, stretching from Anguilla in the north to Trinidad and Tobago in the south.

The Crystal Awards recognize the efforts of travel agents, who sell Star Vacation packages to destinations served



Bay Gardens Hotel

by Caribbean Star. St. Lucia captured the award of Destination of the Year. Receiving the award was Director of Tourism Hilary Modeste.

In his acceptance speech, Mr. Modeste said, "This business is a lot about partnerships, that's how you develop tourism. As a destination, we have the product, but then there are the partners with whom we have to work

very closely so that we can deliver this award winning product to our consumers. Certainly, Caribbean Star has been a great partner, one that we appreciate".

The award of Travel Agent of the Year was won by Junica St. John of Whitchurch Portsmouth Travel Agency in Dominica; she won a Suzuki Liana motor vehicle. St. Lucian nominee,

Dawn Adbomra came fourth.

Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) President and manager of Bay Gardens Hotel Berthia Pearle, in her acceptance speech for the award of Hotel of the Year, noted that greater emphasis needed to be placed on beefing up inter-island travel. She said, "I have always been a great proponent of inter-Caribbean travel, and I still maintain that not enough is being done for us to grow that market. As it is now, we really have not begun to scratch the surface of really making it affordable for our Caribbean brothers and sisters to travel within the islands of the region. Before the Bay Gardens was built, we made a conscious effort to go after the Caribbean market, to offer our Caribbean family the same level of excellent service and quality we offer to our international visitors".

Caribbean Star, part of the Stanford Group was founded in 2000, and has grown substantially since then. Its fleet includes seven new 50-seat DASH 8-300 aircrafts with all-leather seating, and by year-end, there are plans for a further three to replace the existing 37-seat DASH 8-100's, giving the airline the newest fleet in the Caribbean.

Caribbean Sun, a sister airline was launched just over a year ago, serving the northern Caribbean.

Saint Lucia at CWC 2007 Venue Summit IV

Chairman of World Cup Saint Lucia Inc. Dr. James Fletcher is leading in local delegation to the fourth venue summit for Cricket World Cup 2007. This special meeting of chairpersons and chief executive officers of Cricket World Cup Local Organising Committees (LOCs) is being held in Orlando, Florida from February 02nd to 05th 2005.

At that meeting, the members of the LOCs from the Caribbean region will be brought up to date on the preparations at the regional level for the hosting of the ICC Cricket World Cup in the Caribbean in 2007. While in Flor-

ida the LOC representatives will be exposed to the wide range of activities and issues involved in the preparation of the Super Bowl. The Super Bowl is one of the biggest one-day sporting events in the USA, where issues of security, transportation, accreditation, VIP hospitality and match-day operations are addressed in a highly sophisticated manner.

The Saint Lucia delegation also includes the venue development director Claudius Francis and architect Claude Guillaume, who will lead the work on the upgrade of the Beausejour Cricket Ground in preparation for CWC 2007.

PM calls for Guyana Flood Appeal

The Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony Chairman of the National Emergency Management Organisation [NEMO] has activated NEMO to respond to the Flooding in Guyana.

Fellow CARICOM State and member of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency [CDERA], Guyana has experienced flooding in the majority of its parishes. A state of disaster has been declared by the President.

NEMO together with the Guyana/Saint Lucia Association and the Saint Lucia Red Cross thus launches this appeal to the Nation to open their hearts to yet another sister State affected by a disaster.

Items may be taken to the Saint Lucia Red Cross Building at Vigie in Castries or to any Post Office. Write "NEMO" on the package and at no cost to you the Postal Service shall deliver your contribution to NEMO. NO CLOTHES HAVE BEEN REQUESTED.

The needs list to date include the following: Pampers [Adult and Children], Sanitary Napkins / Tampons, Baby Food, Baby Formula, Feeding Bottles, Large Garbage Bags, Laundry Soap, Toilet Soap, Toilet Paper, Scrubbing Brushes, Bottle Water, Plastic Plates [with cutlery], Hair Shampoo, Plasters, Bandages, Disinfectant, Buckets, Blankets, Tooth paste, and Tooth brush. NO CLOTHES HAVE BEEN REQUESTED.

Saint Lucia Prepares to Observe 26 years of Independence

Saint Lucia's twenty-sixth anniversary of Independence will be observed on February 22nd under the theme "Working Together With Pride to Build Our Nation".

A number of events have been planned to mark the observance, including a National Ecumenical Service on Friday 18th February at 2:00pm at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception; the National Sports Awards scheduled for the National Cultural Centre on Saturday 19th February at 7:30 p.m. and a concert of Praise and Inspiration to be held on Sunday 20th February at 5:00 p.m. at the National Cultural Centre.

The Royal St. Lucia Police Force and other uniformed groups will stage the Independence Day Parade at the Mindoo Philip Park on Independence Day starting at 9:00am. Independence Day will also see nominees for national

service awards receiving their various honours at the Order of Saint Lucia Investiture Ceremony to be held at Government house from 3:00 p.m.

Other activities planned include the St. Lucia Athletics Association Independence Track and Field Meet at the National Sports Stadium from 10:00 a.m. on February 22nd, and a number of community activities island wide.

Independence celebration began with activities to mark Nobel Laureate Week from January 23rd to the 29th. Nobel Laureate Week highlighted the achievements of Nobel laureates Sir Arthur Lewis and Honourable Derek Walcott.

Sir Arthur Lewis was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1979 and Honourable Derek Walcott received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992. Both Sir Arthur and Honourable Walcott were born on January 23rd.

A container is scheduled to leave Saint Lucia on Thursday February 10, 2005. We urge all Saint Lucians to open their hearts to fellow Caribbean people.

Contact the National Emergency Management Office, P O Box 1517,

Castries, Saint Lucia. Tel: 758-452-3802/Fax: 758-453-2152; E-mail (main) eoc@candw.lc / (alternate) slunemo@yahoo.com; NEMO's Web presence: <http://www.geocities.com/slunemo>.



Guyana floods



: Bringing state-of-the-art Network to St. Lucia

The Government of Saint Lucia has issued a submarine cable landing licence to Antilles Crossing (St. Lucia) Limited.

Antilles Crossing, (St. Lucia) Limited is a subsidiary of Antilles Crossing, LP, a joint venture between Light & Power Holdings Limited of Barbados and Leucadia National Corporation. Antilles Crossing, LP plans to construct a state-of-the-art 40-gigabit per second (Gbps) network from St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands to Vigie Bay, Saint Lucia and subsequently to Needham's Point, Barbados.

Once constructed, the cable system

will be able to transmit over three million simultaneous telephone calls—greatly expanding telecommunications and data capacity and quality in the Eastern Caribbean.

It is expected that telecommunications carriers in Dominica, Martinique, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada will be able to microwave their signals to Saint Lucia for transport to networks around the world via Antilles Crossing.

Antilles Crossing received U.S. Federal Communications Commission approval to land the cable in St. Croix

on January 15, 2004. In addition, the company has received authority to land its fibre in Barbados and expects final regulatory approvals to operate the cable in February from the Government of Barbados. Once the final approvals are received and Antilles Crossing has finished its final assessment of the regulatory environment, it will be in a position to begin construction. Once construction is started, the system is expected to be operational within seven to eight months.

The range of telecommunications services to be provided by Antilles Crossing will include: (1) Circuit-

switched long distance at competitive prices; (2) International private line and data services, including bandwidth on demand; (3) High-speed fixed wireless Internet services; (4) Data warehousing, business continuity and disaster recovery services, and (5) Wholesale capacity to other carriers.

The completion of the Antilles Crossing fibre will improve the competitive position of the new cellular carriers and help data and Internet users by removing service related problems such as signal latency (time lag) and packet loss resulting from satellite transmission.

Secondary School graduates now serving as Caregivers

The St. Lucia Chapter of the Roving Caregivers Program was officially launched at the Greenfields Inn in Dennery on Tuesday. The implementation process began in September 2004, and included the extensive training of 15 secondary school graduates who are now serving as caregivers or rovers in the communities of Auxlyon, Dennery Village, Monchy and Riviere Mitan.

The Roving caregivers early childhood home visiting program originated

in Jamaica, and is a non-profit initiative designed to provide early stimulation and enrichment to young children, who have no access to early childhood education. The program was implemented in St. Lucia, following a recent Social Protection Review, which indicated that 39% of the nation's children from ages 0-4 years were living below the poverty line, while 20% had no access to day care services.

Education officer for early childhood education Mrs. Marguerite Gus-

tave said the program had so far proven to be successful.

"Some of our successes of the program include the commitment of Rovers to the task of educating and stimulating children in their care, an increase sense of responsibility and improvement in self esteem. Expression of satisfaction from community members who have indicated improved social skills and development in language patterns of children in the program. The inclusion of three male rovers in the program we consider a major success despite the attitude of male to ECD programming in St. Lucia", said Mrs. Gustave.

Senior Programme Specialist of the Van Leer Foundation Mr. Hubb Schreurs, said the Rovers Caregivers program had the potential of bringing men and women together in social and economic development activities. He believes that the projects set an example

for integrated services at the family level.

"Overtime, I do believe that this project could be considered another learning ground, a resource for many currently active in the more formal education institution, as it tries to incorporate recent thinking on child rearing, socialization, and parenting theories and practices", Mr. Schreurs said..

The program will be replicated in the communities of Bruce Ville, Boisdén, Anse la Raye and Augier, and is funded by international and local agencies. International donors include the Bernard Veer Leer Foundation, the Caribbean Support Initiative and the United Nations Children Fund. Among the local funding agencies are the Poverty Reduction Fund, the Basic Needs Trust Fund and the Ministry of Social Transformation, Culture and local Government.

Vice President of China arrives in Jamaica for Trade Forum



Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister, K.D. Knight (left), escorting Vice President of the People's Republic of China His Excellency Zeng Qinghong (right) across the tarmac after he arrived at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston by special aircraft this morning (Tues. Feb. 1) on an official three-day visit to the island.

Vice President of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Zeng Qinghong, arrived in Jamaica today (February 1), following a three-day visit to Trinidad and Tobago.

The Vice President is on his first official visit to the island to attend the China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Co-operation Forum, which will be held at the Jamaica Conference Centre in Kingston from February 2 to 3. As a supporting event of the Forum, the China-Caribbean Trade Fair will be held at the National Arena from February 2 to 5.

In a statement, issued on his arrival at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston, Vice President Qinghong expressed pleasure at being in the island.

"I am very pleased to pay an official visit to Jamaica - the land of wood and water. I would like to extend my highest tribute to the great Jamaican people and convey to you the cordial greetings and good wishes from the Chinese people", the statement said.

He noted that although China and Jamaica were geographically distant, friendly exchanges between Chinese and Jamaicans dated back to one and a half centuries ago.

"Our two countries shared similar historical experience and are now both striving to build a better future. I sincerely wish Jamaica prosperity and its people well-being, with constant new progress on their road to development," Mr. Qinghong said.

The Vice President noted that since China and Jamaica established diplomatic ties 32 years ago, the mutual understanding has been continuously

enhanced, and mutually beneficial co-operation steadily expanded, as evidenced by good co-operative relations in various fields.

"Facts prove that it serves the long-term and fundamental interests of both peoples to strengthen China-Jamaica relations. The Chinese Government and people value their traditional friendship with Jamaica," he added.

"The purpose of my current visit is to strengthen the mutual trust between China and Jamaica, expand consensus, deepen co-operation and seek common development. I shall have an in-depth exchange of views with Prime Minister Patterson on strengthening bilateral relations, and on international issues of common interest," he explained.

The Forum, which has as its theme: "Promoting Friendship and Partnership for Common Development", will be divided in two parts to facilitate government-to-government exchanges and business-to-business deals.

The inter-governmental exchange will address issues relating to trade and investment, human resource development, agriculture, fisheries, science and technology, finance as well as tourism and transportation, while the business conference will concentrate on

At the opening ceremony of the Forum, to be held at the Jamaica Conference Centre on February 2, Prime Minister Patterson and the Vice President will address the gathering.

China is expected to send a 100-member governmental delegation headed by Vice Minister of Commerce, An Min, and a group of 165 entrepreneurs from 70 enterprises, who will be expected to cover areas of trade, investment, tourism, finance and transportation.



PM Anthony explaining a painting of the Pitons to President of the General Council of Martinique, Pierre Desert. PM's wife Dr. Rosemary Antoine-Anthony is at right

Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony last week returned to St. Lucia following a three-day visit to French Guiana, promising to develop closer ties aimed at ending the isolation of St. Lucians in the distant French territory.

Prime Minister Anthony, who was accompanied by External Affairs Minister Senator Petrus Compton and Consul General to the French Antilles Mr Cass Elias, met with the main leaders of the political and administrative structures in the French Overseas Department and also held several meetings with St. Lucians in various communities across the territory, which is located on the north-western shoulder of South America.

Dr Anthony and his delegation held major discussions with the President of the Regional Council Mr Antoine Karam, as well as with the President of the General Council Mr Pierre Desert and Mayor of Cayenne Jean Claude La Fontaine, on issues ranging from strengthening of ties with St. Lucian communities to cooperation and exchanges in such fields as business, culture and sports.

Regional Council President Karam, whose grandmother hails from Vieux Fort, noted that this was the first visit to French Guiana by a St. Lucian Prime Minister. He said his countrymen appreciated the role of St. Lucians who, "over three generations, worked hard and sacrificed tremendously to help build the territory."

He said "St. Lucia and French Guiana share several cultural ties that in-

clude the Kweyol language, Carnival and Jazz Festivals, all of which opened up avenues for closer cooperation."

An avid footballer, President Karam also suggested sports exchanges between St. Lucia and French Guiana, "beginning with a visit to St. Lucia by a team from Cayenne in the not too distant future."

In the case of General Council President Desert (whose wife is St. Lucian and whose daughter is also married to a prominent Vieux Fort businessman) said there was much interest among French Guianese business persons in exporting lumber and wood-related products to St. Lucia, as well as in development of tourism and cultural exchanges.

He said many St. Lucians experienced difficulties in accessing birth certificates and other relevant immigration documents from St. Lucia and welcomed the appointment of the Consul General in Martinique with responsibility for the French Antilles as a first step towards addressing those needs.

President Desert said St. Lucians were among his staff and Councillors and they worked hard and continued to identify with their land of birth or origin of their parents in a way that attracted the appreciation and praise of French Guianese. Said Monsieur Desert: "I love St. Lucians; I married one and so did my daughter."

The Mayor of Cayenne (capital of French Guiana), who PM Anthony also met on the first day of his visit, said he was "very pleased to have the honour of welcoming a Prime Minister of an independent nation to this municipal-

PM returns to French Guiana and negates the

ity; and more so because it is the Prime Minister of St. Lucia." He said it was "a great honour" for him and his Councillors.

The Mayor said St. Lucians are well

Lucia's experience with its annual Jazz Festival and said they would send representatives to attend and observe the 14th St. Lucia Jazz Festival in May.

Mayor Lafontaine identified cooper-



PM Kenny Anthony and delegation welcomed at Rochambeau

respected in French Guiana and "they carry themselves with respect and contribute to its growth, but they also maintain a great pride in St. Lucia, which they always consider their home."

Mayor Lafontaine, whose office coordinates the three-year-old Cayenne Jazz Festival and the territory's annual Carnival (Touloulou) said he wished to develop closer ties between his municipal body and St. Lucia's Cultural Development Foundation (CDF).

To this end, a representative of the CDF, Mrs Barbara DuBoulay, who was also a member of the Prime Minister's delegation, held meetings with the municipality's director of cultural affairs and other Carnival organizers, with a view to ensuring participation by groups from Cayenne in St. Lucia's upcoming Carnival 2005 in July.

The Mayor's office also indicated interest in learning lessons from St.

ation in development and promotion of Kweyol as another area of interest for his municipality. He noted that there are five variations of the Kweyol language spoken in French Guiana. Apart from the indigenous Guianese Kweyol, he noted those spoken by immigrants from Haiti, Martinique and Guadeloupe, Dominica and St. Lucia.

To this end, he said, "St. Lucia's experience in promoting the Kweyol Language and in organizing Jounen Kweyol activities could be very helpful to the efforts of French Guianese to unify the languages that are being promoted separately by groups of different national origins."

The Prime Minister's delegation also met with ACREDEG, an association of representatives of commercial, industrial, agricultural, tourism, fishing, timber, construction and gold mining interests, who expressed interest in



Foreign Service Officer Linda Brice (right) meets her sister in Cayenne (center) for the first time

from French d pledges to e Neglect!

exploring avenues for the development of commercial ties and investment possibilities in St. Lucia.

The Guianese commercial and private sector representatives noted that

However, the Prime Minister indicated that the French Government had opened the way for closer contact by generously relaxing the requirements for visas for travel by St. Lucians to the



Airport by St. Lucians sporting their national flag and colours

direct trade opportunities with St. Lucia were hampered by the cost and transit problems associated with transportation, but also expressed an interest in exploring how commercial ties could be developed.

To this end, the ACREDEG indicated that a delegation representing the Guianese timber industry would be visiting St. Lucia in March to explore avenues for business. They also indicated they would send a separate and larger delegation to Castries later to explore wider opportunities for joint investment.

There was some pessimism and scepticism expressed on the part of the Guianese business leaders about the likelihood and possibilities of developing direct commercial and business ties between French Guiana and St. Lucia, citing distance, competition from neighbouring Brazil and other factors.

French Antilles.

He said since then, direct contact between Martinique and St. Lucia had multiplied and resulted in thriving cross-channel business for commercial interests in both islands, as well as increased tourism flows both ways.

St. Lucia's experience with Martinique, the PM said, indicated that "where there's a will to do business, once pursued in the right way and with the right spirit, it can happen."

Prime Minister Anthony held two very lively and well attended meetings with large groupings of St. Lucians in Cayenne, during which they welcomed him and his delegation with cultural performances.

The St. Lucians explained what some of their problems were. Among those identified were Customs and Immigration regulations and lengthy in-transit stays in Martinique whenever



PM Anthony receives a welcome gift from Mayor of Cayenne, Jean Claude La Fontaine

they visited St. Lucia. Others identified property inheritance in the absence of the relevant documentation, while some recommended a series of student exchanges to help better inform the younger generation of the historic ties between the two countries.

There was also a proposal for the establishment of a Maison de Ste Lucie (St. Lucia House) in Cayenne, to better inform St. Lucian descendants about the history and culture of their land of origin.

The Prime Minister, who updated the St. Lucians in Cayenne on developments back home, assured them that after his visit, they "will no longer feel neglected" as the Government of St. Lucia would ensure they were served by the Consulate General in Martinique. He also said that steps would continue towards the appointment of a complementary resident Honorary Consul in Cayenne to attend to their immediate needs.

The Prime Minister said he appreciated "how St. Lucians live with honour, pride and dignity in a land that is not their own" and he was also "encouraged by the level of appreciation for their contribution to Cayenne's development as expressed generally by the people of French Guiana."

After being treated to special cultural performances that featured musicians of St. Lucian origin playing songs of La Rose and La Marguerite, the Prime Minister said he was "quite pleased that they also celebrate Independence and other national holidays, play cricket and in several other ways maintain contact with their St. Lucian roots."

During a visit to the Central Mar-

ket in Cayenne, accompanied by the President of the Regional Council and the Mayor of Cayenne, Prime Minister Anthony met several St. Lucians who were engaged in agricultural and livestock industries and who provided services of various types on Market Day.

A highlight of the Prime Minister's visit to French Guiana was a specially guided tour of the Guiana Space Centre at Kourou, from where European satellites are launched into space and where St. Lucians are also employed.

The PM and his delegation were allowed privileged access to the launch pad, the control centre and the location where the Ariane 5 rocket is being constructed and prepared for launching next month.

Dr Anthony was taken from Kourou on a visit to the tiny land-locked village of Saul, which is based in the centre of French Guiana, and which, along with neighbouring Saint Elie, are mining communities originally founded by St. Lucian miners in the last century.

On his return home, Prime Minister Anthony said he saw the visit as "the beginning of the end of the isolation of the St. Lucian community in French Guiana." He said the St. Lucia Government was also "ready and willing to work with the French Government and the local administrative authorities to examine areas in which mutually beneficial commercial, cultural and sporting links could be developed for further friendship and cooperation, in the interest of all."

He said he felt comfortable that his visit had "opened the way for closer cooperation, and negating the neglect of the past."



PM and Mrs. Anthony with a St. Lucian national and children at the Kindergarten School at the Mayor's Office in Kourou

Adelaide observes 20th Anniversary

It was a day of celebration for the Adelaide and Frances Memorial Home for the Elderly on Sunday, as the institution observed its 20th anniversary with a thanksgiving mass at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, followed by a parade on the Derek Walcott Square. Sunday's celebration brought together government

officials, the elderly and two visiting contingents from Martinique and Dominica.

Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony, who addressed the gathering in Kweyol commended Chairman of the Home, Mr. Augustus Justin for his contribution to the island's senior citizens. Dr. Anthony said that institutions like

the Adelaide and Frances Memorial were providing much need support to government in meeting the needs of the elderly. He however lamented that still too many of the island's aged are abandoned by their relatives.

Speaking in Creole Dr. Anthony said, "Nou ni pou fe sa nou pe' pou fe' jennenwasyon an ki ka vini an' konpwann yo passe' abandonnen' gwan moun yo. Yo passe' abandonnen fanmi yo, nou ni pou witounen' pou kilti nou te' konnet avan."

The Prime Minister announced that government would be increasing its yearly subvention to the Adelaide and Frances Memorial Home from \$60,000

to \$100,000.

The plight of the elderly abandoned by relatives was also a concern for Dr. Vaughn Lewis, who was invited to speak at Sunday's ceremony. According to Dr. Lewis, older folk are usually left alone unattended either because of extensive migration or employment. He added that there was need for institutions at all levels, which can provide solace and comfort to people who feel displaced and alone.

The Adelaide and Frances Memorial for the Elderly is observing its 20th anniversary under the theme "God is Real"

French ship "Francis Garnier" coming for Independence



The Francis Garnier

On the occasion of Saint Lucia's 26th Anniversary of Independence, the French ship "Francis Garnier" will visit Port Castries from 16th to 23rd February

2005. The public is invited to visit the vessel on Sunday 20th February from 2 to 7 p.m.

Moreover, visits can be organized during the morning of the same day,

for groups not exceeding 10 persons. Interested groups can call telephone number 455-6602 in order to schedule their visit on board.

The "Francis Garnier" is a light transportation ship of the French Marine, brought into service in 1974. It has been based in Fort de France since July 2004. It has just taken over from the "Champlain" that had to be disarmed.

With a length of 80 meters, the "Francis Garnier" has a displacement of 1300 tons at 15 knots. Its crew consists in 4 officers and 47 seamen. Its main activity consists in the transportation of Marine Corps in the framework of combined operations.

Operational all the year round, it carries out inter-arms training missions,

either on its own or together with our allied forces of the Antilles zone. To this end, it is able to welcome, accommodate and cater a Marine Corp of 120 seamen, and to load up to 20 vehicles, such as trucks, cisterns, and 4-wheel-drive vehicles.

It is also made to appeal in times of hurricane disasters. Its transportation capacity makes it a precious asset to carry earth moving machines, ambulances and humanitarian freight to disaster areas. As such, the "Francis Garnier" took part in the humanitarian rescue operations in Grenada and Jamaica September 2004, in the aftermath of hurricane Ivan.

The "Francis Garnier" is very useful in the Caribbean area, because it is a multi purpose ship with various qualities. It is able to carry out as well, traditional maritime surveillance or public utility missions, such as disembarkation missions, thanks to its ability to "beach", which means to voluntarily strand, in order to disembark vehicles and troupes.

Architects to approach new status with responsibility and sensitivity

Architects Awareness Week being celebrated this week (January 30 - February 5) has taken on added significance for its membership, with the recent passing of the Architects Registration Act on January 21, 2005.

So said President of the Saint Lucia Institute of Architects (SLIA) Mark Hennicart, who pointed out that along with its 9th Anniversary, the architects were celebrating the recognition now accorded to them through the Act.

"This achievement is momentous,

for architects have lobbied consistently for the profession to be recognised through legislation", Mr. Hennicart said, calling on the current 32 members of the Institute to approach their new status with responsibility and sensitivity.

He commended the government for its vision and recognition of the contribution which the practice of architecture makes to sustainable development, noting that the Architecture Registration Act now provides for the registration and regulation of the practice

of architecture, but more importantly however, the Act entrusts architects with a serious responsibility for the human environment.

In declaring Architects Awareness Week open, Minister for Physical Development, Environment and Housing, Honourable Ferguson John, who piloted the Act through Parliament said the Act would support the mandate of architects.

"In this Architectural Awareness Week, you will be asked to meet the

challenge of shaping an environment, which is sustainable, which is friendly and which will leave a legacy for future generations. It is that responsibility that has led this government to pass legislation empowering architects, and placing the future and the landscape of this country firmly in your hands," Minister John said.

Architects Awareness Week is being held under the theme: Sun, Sea and Architecture, reflecting the architects' role in tourism development.

OECS and Commonwealth Youth Programme explore new plans for Sports

The OECS Sports Desk and the Commonwealth Youth Programme's Caribbean Centre are exploring an initiative to develop a contingent of Community Sports Leaders in the sub-region.

Both parties are discussing an exercise to help individuals design and implement a strategic and structured sports programme for communities in OECS member states.

The concept is consistent with the agenda of both the OECS Sports Desk and the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) which involves the development of youth and communities by creating multi-disciplined individuals. Both institutions envision the programme as one that will complement the activities of sporting organisations.

Head of the OECS Sports Desk David Peterkin and the Regional Director of the CYP's Caribbean Centre Armstrong Alexis brainstormed the idea at the Castries based OECS Secretariat on Monday January 30th 2005.

Peterkin says the areas associated with the proposed Community Sports Leaders programme include basic rules of sporting events, club structure, coaching, working with different age groups and community leadership through physical education.

The programme is also designed to enhance the status of course conductors and master course conductors.

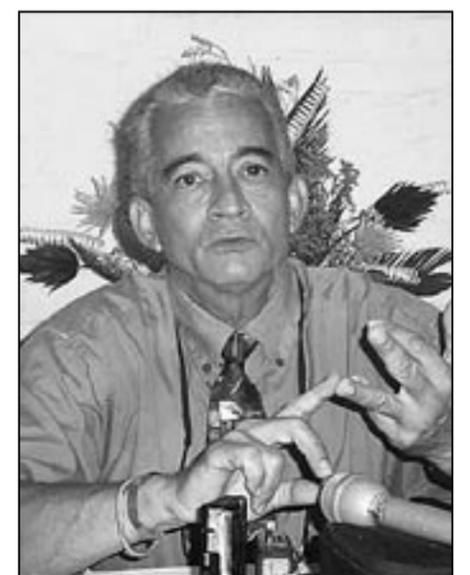
The two organisations also agree that there is an urgent need for Community Sports Leaders in the OECS.

However, the CYP has specifically

been pursuing the implementation of this programme since 2002 on the advice of its regional advisory board. Alexis noted that the CYP, not being sports oriented, sought the support of an organization with responsibilities for sports development. To this end, the OECS Sports Desk was identified as the organization that shared the similar kind of orientation with the CYP. The CYP believes that working with the OECS Sports Desk will yield the expected results.

Alexis says the Community Sports Leaders exercise will introduce the CYP's sports programme for the region.

The OECS Sports Desk believes that the gender inclusive Community Sports Leadership plan can also help to



David Peterkin

reverse the situation of male marginalization.

The proposed Community Sports Leaders initiative has already attracted the interest of several persons in the OECS. It will also involve the participation of other development partners.

Change the attitude towards Caribbean travel – Tourism Official

Director of Tourism, Hilary Modeste has highlighted the need for Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member countries to do more to ease the hassle facing nationals when travelling throughout the region.

According to the high ranking tourism official, it has become increasingly difficult to travel the region, not because of inadequate scheduling on the part of the airlines, but primarily due to the complex processing format and attitudes of Caribbean immigration officials.

“What is the point of having a special area that says CARICOM nationals, and when you get there, customs officers spend ten minutes looking at your passport and grudgingly allowing



L - R: Costello Michel, SLTB Chairman; Philip Pierre, Tourism Minister; and Hilary Modeste, Director of Tourism

you in. I think if we are very serious about this, and certainly the Caribbean, which is so dependent on tourism, then there has to be a different attitude on the part of our immigration people towards our visitors”, Mr. Modeste said.

His comments came in the wake of many CARICOM countries like St. Lucia, reporting record numbers of inter-regional travel. Mr. Modeste is of the view that these statistics could swell even further, with a more efficient and visitor-friendly processing system in place for regional tourists.

Mr. Modeste also underscored moves afoot at bringing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) on stream, which in itself, calls for easing of restrictions on the movement of labour.

Bill passed to enhance water quality and use

A Bill seeking to reconcile a number of key elements in the supply and use of water on the island was passed on Tuesday, February 1 in the first sitting of the House of Assembly for 2005.

The Bill came on the heels of the Prime Minister’s New Year’s Address in which he cited water as a major priority for his Government in 2005.

The Water and Sewage Bill, which replaces the Water and Sewage Act of 1999, came after a long and comprehensive process of national consultation, during which a national water policy was formulated. The bill looked at issues of quality of service and the protection and management of the resource base, attracting private sector investment.

Addressing the Speaker of the House, Minister for Public Utilities, Hon Felix Finisterre said, “It looks to, of course, give certain regulatory certainty so that the persons, who invest their money could be ensured of a fair return on their investment. Also, it looks at protecting the right and the needs of the socially vulnerable and poorest of our society; so no one is going to be left behind.”

The Bill also gives the State rights to rivers and ravines, thereby protecting the resource from harmful agents. It also makes provisions for the establishment of a Water Resource Management Agency to be located within the Ministry of Agriculture. The Agency would advise the Ministry on several issues including the consideration of

application licences and permits for use of water in water controlled areas.

“The water resources management Agency is expected to assume and continue to perform the functions of the Water Resources Unit, among others, whose activities were funded by the European Union, under the Stabex Funds and the Government of St. Lu-

cia. This project will eventually close on the 31st of March 2005”, the Minister informed.

The Bill was facilitated and directed under the terms of the 5th Water Reform Project, initiated by Government, and funded by the World Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank.



WASCO’s waster storage and treatment facility at Ciceron

British fine foods to the Caribbean

The British Caribbean Chamber of Commerce is leading a UK Trade & Investment sponsored trade mission of British fine food producers to the Eastern Caribbean. The mission will visit St Lucia from 3-6 February.

Sophie Grigson, celebrity cook and a familiar face on British TV screens, will be travelling with the mission to Barbados, St. Lucia and Antigua.

Sophie said. “I am delighted to be introducing some of the very best of British Fine Foods to the Caribbean”. Amongst the products available for

tasting will be fine preserves, biscuits and speciality teas and refresher drinks produced for HRH The Prince of Wales’s company, Duchy Originals. Products for Duchy Originals are made from the finest organic produce, beautifully packaged and presented.

Others participating are Bleikers Smokery of North Yorkshire, smokers of fine fish products; Mackenzie Yorkshire Smokery, smokers of quality smoked meats and pork products; The English Beef and Lamb Executive who will be bringing with them cuts of Spring Lamb from the Cotswolds and

pork products from Wales; and Womersley Fine Foods, showing hand made fruit and herb jellies, fruit and herb vinegars and chutney, that compliment the excellent meat and fish products available.

Working with local chefs from the islands of Barbados, St. Lucia and Antigua, Sophie has designed a special menu marrying the British products with local Caribbean products. She will be conducting a special masterclass for catering students at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College on Friday, 4 February.

The mission is delighted to have the support of the British High Commission and the Auberge Seraphine hotel in St. Lucia. The hotel will be hosting a brunch for specially invited guests from the food and drink industry. There will also be an afternoon tea for a local ladies charity group.

Resident British Commissioner, Kelvin Green, said “I am sure that the participating British companies will find an enthusiastic market for their high quality products in St Lucia.”

Profiles and contact details of the participating companies can be found on the web site for the British Caribbean Chamber of Commerce www.britishcaribbean.com.

St. Lucia observed World Leprosy Day on Sunday, January 30th

While the Ministry of Health continues to develop and improve its program for the control of Leprosy, health officials say they are concern that many persons still have a negative perception of the disease.

In a national address on the occasion of the 52nd observance of World Leprosy Day on Sunday, January 30th, Health Minister Hon. Damien Greaves

said the success of the Leprosy Control Programme will depend immeasurably on people changing their attitude towards the disease.

“We must change our perception of this disease and see it for what it is, that is, just another infectious disease, which is curable and does not kill. Here are the facts about Leprosy: there is a cure for leprosy and medication is free of charge. Patients who take their

medication regularly, decrease the risk for passing this disease on to a healthy person”, Minister Greaves said.

Global statistics reveal that over 500,000 new cases of leprosy were detected during 2003. In Saint Lucia, 13 new cases of leprosy were detected in 2004, a figure which according to Minister Greaves is high when compared to the size of island’s population.

“Every St. Lucian must make it his/her duty to learn about this disease. I am making a special appeal to those communities where Leprosy numbers are high; together let us fight this disease and win the battle against Leprosy”, he said.

Leprosy is one of the oldest recorded diseases, with affected persons suffering gross deformities. This year World

Leprosy Day was observed under the theme, “Uniting Forces in the fight against Leprosy”.



Section of Victoria Hospital housing the Leprosy Unit

Media given opportunity to question The Landings

Continued from front page

Putting it more bluntly to the small number of media personnel who turned up at a lunch meeting at Le Sport to provide an opportunity for them to question the investors and seek clarification on issues they are not comfortable with, was shareholder and Chairman of the Board of Directors of The Landings, Craig Barnard: "The Landings in St. Vincent (for example) is not worth a lot. But in St. Lucia, where the economy is strong, it is worth a lot".

Investment climate

But Mr. Heaps and Mr. Barnard are not the only ones who have seen enough merit in the economy and people of St. Lucia 'to put their money where their mouth is'.

Only late last year Gordon "Butch" Stewart, citing the island's favourable investment climate announced that his Sandals Resort International (SRI) outfit would bring its tally of resort properties in St. Lucia to four, with the construction of a US\$80 million resort alongside Sandals Grande.

For the same reasons, the economy and people, Chairman of Destiny Health and Wellness based in Canada, David Singh was enticed to bring his outfit to St. Lucia. And the same was the case for Steven Baker, President and CEO of United Network of the Eastern Caribbean (UNEC); and Patrick Casserly, CEO of E-Services.

The Landings' officials revealed and spoke on several pertinent issues relating to the project.

History

After working in St. Lucia in the 1970s, Mr. Heaps returned two years ago, at which time local entrepreneur, Barnard Johnson, who has developed properties around the Rodney Bay area, showed him the Rosewood site next to Sandals Grande. "The site looked just like the one in Barbados, where a similar, but smaller project was established", Mr. Heaps said.

Upon his return in December last year, he put an offer, "but did not get anywhere". "I identified another site, put an offer and was accepted; we paid US\$4.75 million for the 19 acre site; the selling price will not impact unduly, on property prices and inflation", he said. Pointing to the fact that all real estate prices rise over time, he compared a \$1 million apartment in Canada today, which was worth just \$27,000 in 1967.

The environment

Mr. Heaps assured that the Environmental Impact Assessment, undertaken by Smith Warner in Jamaica, one of the best in the region was favourable, given that there would be no outfall into the sea and all wastes would go to a treatment plant.

In addition, there would be no fuelling on the project compound for the 70 - 80 boats there, leaving this for Rodney Bay Marina to do, citing the immediate spin-off of the project. Also, only owners of the 228 units would be allowed to enter the project's harbour.

Benefit to unit owners

Pointing out that the project expects to spend over US\$1 million on marketing this year, four of the 54 units to be constructed in the first phase starting in November this year have already been sold. By the time Cricket World Cup

(CWC) comes around in 2007, some 150 units of 1, 2, and 3 bedrooms or 250 - 275 bedrooms would have been constructed. And assuming an occupancy rate of 60 per cent, the unit owners would yield a return of six per cent annually, which compares favourably with the rate of interest in the international economy.

Benefits to St. Lucia

In addition to enhancing the room count for CWC 2007, some 600 jobs will be created during construction,

and assuming a multiplier of four, an additional 2,400 persons will benefit. The property is also expected to pay for electricity, water and other services, and will contribute to the community as a good corporate citizen, siad Mr. Heaps.

In terms of foreign currency inflows to the island, it is assumed that The Landings will bring additional visitors to the island, thereby increasing the flow of foreign currency into St. Lucia. Statistics show that in 2004, total ex-

penditure by tourists increased by approximately US\$43 million from EC\$ 761.6 million to EC\$879.3 million. This includes expenditure on accommodation, meals and drinks, transportation, shopping, souvenirs, tours and entertainment.

Also, some six farmers will be adopted and assisted in growing food and vegetables for The Landings, a similar arrangement with what obtains at Le Sport. Mr. Barnard noted that vegetables eat up 25% and meats 20% of the food and beverage bill.



David Vitalis of the Mirror has the attention of The Landings officials. GIS' Chris Satney is at right and Micah George of The Voice in foreground. HTS' Candy Nicholas not in picture.

Adelaide and Frances Memorial Home celebrates 20th Anniversary

L - R:
Prime Minister
Dr. Kenny D. Anthony;
Augustus Justin; and
Mitchelle Chelmancy,
Mayor of Lorraine in
Martinique
attending the
Celebrations
at the Derek
Walcott Square



Senior citizens
enjoying a
meal during
the
Celebrations
at the Derek
Walcott Square

Secondary School graduates serve as Caregivers

"The implementation process began in September 2004, and included the extensive training of 15 secondary school graduates"



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. Feb. 5th - Fri. Feb. 11th, 2005

- The GIS speaks with the president of the St. Lucia Cancer Society - Sat. Feb. 5th, 6:30 p.m.
- "Sports in Action" - The GIS speaks with OECS Sports Director, David Peterkin - Sat. Feb. 5th, 8:00 p.m.
- "From the Archives of the GIS" Soccer Galore - China Vs St. Lucia - Sun. Feb. 6th, 6:30 p.m.
- Green Wealth: Caring For Our Environment - Mon. Feb. 7th, 6:15 p.m.
- "How to Fill In Your Income Tax Returns" - Tues. Feb. 8th, 7:30 p.m.
- Legal Issues of HIV/AIDS and Employment - Wed. Feb. 9th, 8:30 p.m.
- Rebroadcast: Latest Edition of Banana Bits - "Issues of Fair Trade" - Thurs. Feb. 10th, 9:00 p.m.
- DIWALI - A Cultural Tradition in Trinidad and Tobago - Fri. Feb. 11th, 6:30 p.m.

Remember to tune in for:

- GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.
- Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:
- Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm :
- Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 8:00pm (Kweyol Discussion):
- Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. (Min. of Ed. Prog).
- Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review)
- Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm - (Week in Review—Kweyol)

For the complete programme guide, log on to our website at www.stlucia.gov.lc and then click on the NTN icon.

www.stlucia.gov.lc

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