



bespoke homes jamaica

RECONNECTING YOU WITH YOUR ISLAND

December 2012

Back To Your Heart

Issue 16

Giftng so children can eat

A third of children attend school without breakfast. Education minister Ronald Thwaites has repeated his call for parents to pay greater attention to the nutritional needs of their children. "Nutrition is very important to successful education...so when the results don't come out..., you can't beat the (child) and call them dunce."

Californian rapper Snoop Lion (formerly Snoop Dogg) has started a charity aimed at feeding inner-city children. The Mind Gardens Project is providing residents with the means by which to grow their own food. Already there is action in Trench Town and Tivoli Gardens.



Minister Thwaites has also predicted that by 2015 the Grade 4 literacy target will be 100% achieved by children around the age of ten. He will need as much help as possible from parents, teachers, gifters and others. Usain Bolt has auctioned his gold Nissan and other memorabilia to support his educational charitable foundation. See www.usainbolt.com/foundation. The event raised US\$193,000 for the charity.

Tourism diversifying

Stopovers from central and south America rose more than two-thirds in July, after some visa restrictions ended and new flights started. The Mexican chain Karisma Hotels recently took over Beaches Sandy Bay. Next year direct flights from Moscow will begin. Meanwhile, readers of the British Travel Awards' "Check In" magazine voted Jamaica their "Favourite Worldwide Destination".

NO KATCHE NO HAB-E

Being successful requires hard work & perseverance

Christmas greetings

We at Bespoke Homes Jamaica wish you and your family a pleasing Christmas and a happy and healthy 2013. As we look forward, we can all reflect on the great achievements of the year just gone. The Newsletter reports more sporting success; but also, at this time of giving, lots of ways that persons and groups are giving much time and money to help others.

New sporting fences crossed

In a year of such sprinting success, we are pleased to report other areas of magnificence. After 135 years of test match cricket, Chris Gayle became the first player to hit the first ball of an innings for six. In that series in Bangladesh that West Indies went on to win 2-0, Shrivnarine Chanderpaul of Guyana returned to top the world batsmen's rankings at the age of 36.

Jamaica saw its first world boxing title gained on home soil when Nicholas Walters beat Columbian Daulis Prescott to win the WBA featherweight title in December. The island also joined for the first time the International Fencing Federation, with the hope of gaining a place at the 2016 Olympics.



Following his Olympic successes, Usain Bolt was named the IAAF male World Athlete of the Year, for the fourth time. The French daily newspaper L'Equipe named Bolt the Olympian Sportsman-of-the-Year. Despite strong competition from Michael Phelps of the USA and David Rudisha of Kenya, Bolt won the BBC Overseas Sports Personality of the Year award, for the third time in five years. Bolt's coach Glen Mills gained the IAAF Coaching Lifetime Achievement Award.

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Local food for all

Don't you always think why don't Jamaican hotels use more local produce? Well, much more local meat will now be supplied to hotels by Caribbean Producers Jamaica - previously just an importer of gourmet food. Its new plant in Montego Bay may also lead to more prime cuts of meat in local supermarkets.



Don't you always think why doesn't Mandeville have a greater choice of restaurants? Well, the Star Grill has just held its official launch. In South Race Course Road, the wife and husband team offers gourmet dining on the upper floor and a fast food menu downstairs. Further innovation in Mandeville sees a local entrepreneur producing honey wine. With three varieties of her Buzz Honey Wine, Grace Foster-Reid has just started supplying supermarkets in Kingston and Mandeville. See www.ecofarmsjamaica.com.

Another unusual experience can be had at the El Centro "mini-mall" in Kingston. Each of the eight small businesses therein is run by a female, each with its "own delicacy". Unlike many American-style plazas, the mini-mall has more of a European feel. The businesses include a wine-and-cheese store, a cafe, a tearoom, a china shop, a shoe and clothing boutique and an art gallery. If you want a greater variety of coffee, tea & wine, this place is for you, at 8 Hillcrest Ave.

Religion and the Census

Jamaica's Census results showed that three-quarters (2m) of the island's population describe themselves as religious. The UK's Census found that a quarter are now atheists.

Crime & corruption

From being 99th on the Corruption Perception Index in 2009, Jamaica has progressed to 83rd in the latest list of 174 countries compiled by Transparency International. That is just three places behind Trinidad & Tobago, but 68 behind Barbados. Even so, Jamaica is 56 places ahead of Nigeria. Somalia, Afghanistan and North Korea share the 172nd spot.

For the nine months to September 2012, overall crime fell by nearly a tenth. Commissioner Ellington has applauded his force for progress in the seizure of drugs & guns. Meanwhile, Clarendon police have emphasised the gains being made through community policing. Community organisations in most police districts have made a big difference, along with the Gang Reduction and Prevention Education Programme.



Gifting after Sandy

Hurricane Sandy is now reckoned to have cost Jamaica some J\$2 bn (£14m) in damage, mostly to 37,000 banana growers in the east. A fifth of the unripened Blue Mountain coffee crop was also lost. The People's Cooperative Bank is offering banana growers access to \$100m of loans at low interest.

Some 2,800 houses were severely damaged, while 2,300 had minor damage. For the former, the government is offering vouchers to homeowners worth J\$60,000 (£430).

Many of the badly damaged houses did not meet parish building standards. Where houses had been retro-fitted with a newly designed aluminium roof - following Tropical Storm Gustav two years ago - the roof withstood the force of Sandy.

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Focusing on Manchester

Manchester is the sixth largest parish by area and has a 190,000 population. Mandeville is the only parish capital not on the coast or a major river. It is located at a height of 626 metres – not far off the 840m maximum height in the Carpenters Mountains. Smokey Hole Cave in Cross Keys is the deepest cave in the island, at 195m. The Gourie Cave is said by some to be the longest.

Manchester is the bread basket of Jamaica and has long gained much from bauxite. One of the oldest hotels in the Caribbean, the Mandeville Hotel, opened in 1875. The oldest parish library, dating from 1938, was also the first Free Library.



Now plans are afoot for Mandeville to play a big part in the island's future ICT developments. Within 24 months, up to 200,000 sq ft of office space is expected to be devoted to ICT. Skilled human resources, the golf course and the closer proximity of the east-west toll road are particularly important. Despite these prospects, it is only weeks ago that electricity finally reached Adams Valley, in the north-west of the parish.

Gifting for skills & survival

The latest grand charity ball of the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce was held in November. Since 1990 the event has helped to fund the JCC's Inner City Development Committee, providing key skills, including community leadership, entrepreneurship, interpersonal skills & conflict resolution. A graduate of the programme, Tracey-Ann Samuels, emphasised that: "We have received the foundation needed to begin... to be the true leaders... the backbone of our society".

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Change blowing in the wind

Responding to the government target for a fifth of energy to be derived from renewables, Clean Alternative Energy Ltd is applying to build eight wind turbines in Great Valley, Manchester. It will make money both by selling electricity to the national grid and by selling carbon credits to Europe. The project will increase the present 3% of energy from wind by more than a half.



Financial institutions are now competing strongly to offer green energy loans to individuals, who can cover the cost over just a few years, including by selling any surplus to the grid. Now that the government has ended the monopoly of the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica to develop renewable projects, companies can apply for projects to supply up to 115mW to the grid. Despite good progress on renewable energy, we need effort on recycling. Jamaica produces an average of 2.2 pounds of municipal waste per person per day. Plastic and paper recycling would be a useful start.

There is good news on fish supplies. The government is taking measures to safeguard fish, building on the 14 sanctuaries already established across the island. Six of those will gain from US\$400,000 from the UK Department for International Development (DfID) under the CFISH initiative. The Caribbean Climate Change Centre is leading implementation.

Meanwhile, the world's fastest man has been trying to help the world's fastest animal, the cheetah. Usain Bolt hosted a fund raising gala at London Zoo and donated the shirt he wore in winning the 100m at London 2012.



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Investment opportunities

Kingston 11: - J\$12m (c. £89,000)

A repair shop of 2 bays for 12 cars. 2 buildings with bathrooms & kitchenette. Nr Spanish Tn Rd & M. Garvey Dr.



Busy Park, St Catherine: J\$7.25m (c. £53,000)

This lovely, great value 2-bedroom, 1-bathroom house with open plan living has land for further expansion. 5 mins from the highway.



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BHJ – “Helping You to Get Back to Your Heart in Jamaica”

Here at Bespoke Homes Jamaica we bring only positive news. Let's work for a better Jamaica - a better future for all of us. And if your heart is in Jamaica, we can help you get back to it.

St Ann: Runaway Bay: - US\$499,000 (c. £320,000)

On a slope with commanding views of the sea is this 7-bed, 5-bath house of 6,000 sq ft. On beautifully landscaped land with features like the elegant dining room and wood burning fireplace. Fully furnished.



St Catherine: Green Acres: - J\$27m (c. £200,000)

A great 4-bed house with helper's quarters. Lots of splendid internal features. Fantastic verandah and roof spaces from which to enjoy the magnificent views



St Thomas: Sun Valley, Albion: - J\$9m (c. £66,500)

This 3-bed comprises a 2-bed house plus a 1-bed flat and a carport. Covering 1,390 sq ft, the property offers great value for money. Close to shops & just 2 miles from Yallahs.



St Thomas, Yallahs main road: mini plaza:-J\$24m (c.£178k)

Commercial. A mini plaza of three food businesses and a mechanics' workshop. Land of 52,200 sq ft stretches to the beach. Located in Yallahs Square, next to the Magistrates' Court.



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