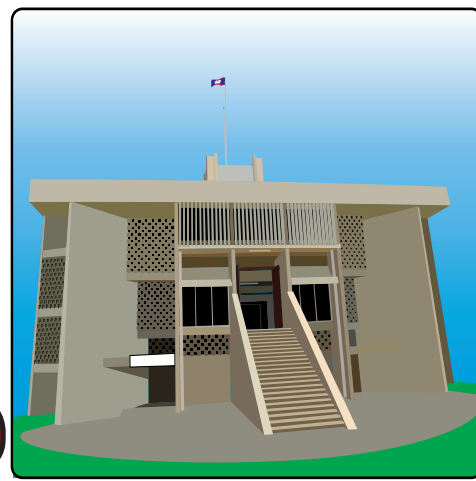




Capital Weekly

From the Heart of the Nation to the Soul of the People



No. 024

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BIG John!

Saldivar's Splendid Debate Performance

It was another good night for Plus TV, another great opportunity for the residence of Belmopan, and a big night for UDP incumbent John Saldivar.

It was the debate among the three general election candidates vying for the position of Belmopan Area Representative now vacant since the Prime Minister advised the Governor General to dissolve the National Assembly one month ago and set the election date for March 7, 2012.

Like the mayoral debate held a couple weeks earlier, the event was organized by Belmopan-based national television station Plus TV, broadcast live on that station, and hosted by its popular morning show hosts Louis Wade and Patrick Jason Andrews.

It was a feisty and entertaining three-way bout featuring the UDP's John Saldivar, the PUP's Amin Hegar and Independent Green Party Candidate Richard Smith.

From the start, Saldivar took charge, establishing himself as the legitimate Belmopan representative, born and bred in the nation's capital (Hegar is a former Area Representative of Cayo West, defeated and retired by Erwin Contreras in the 1998 General Elections; Smith is a registered voter in Cayo South).

"Let me welcome the visitor to Belmopan", Saldivar remarked at one point, referring sarcastically to the eye Doctor from the West whose vision and



Hon. John Saldivar

insight was being severely tested.

As to the Pastor from Roaring Creek, he had a few good lines and evoked some hearty laughs and applause, but on the substance of the issues, it was clear that both he and Hegar were out of their league, going up against a heavy-weight like John Saldivar.

Early in the bout, Hegar made the mistake of throwing some jabs and upper cuts at Saldivar, but none of them connected, and every time he made his move, Saldivar countered with some over cuts that landed smack on the forehead. Such was the case when Hegar dared

to raise issues such as nepotism, cronyism and whistle-blowing. Indeed, as Saldivar pointed out, it is the politicians whose run Hegar's party, the PUP, that are the masters of nepotism and cronyism in Belize, and it was they who enacted anti-whistle blowing legislation in this country.

But the first knockdown of the evening came when Hegar accused the UDP Government of using RECONDEV for political purposes and promised that if elected, he and the PUP would disband the statutory body. Saldivar countered swiftly and effectively, exposing Hegar as the one

playing politics with the issue in what he described as a characteristically PUP fashion. He compared and equated it with one of former PUP leader Said Musa's disingenuous moments back in 1998 when he promised to abolish the Value Added Tax (VAT) if elected, but failing to indicate what he would put in its place. When Musa got elected, Saldivar recounted, all he did was to bring back the same tax (VAT), only by a different name. In like manner, Saldivar drew he parallel, Hegar is now promising to disband RECONDEV, but neglecting to say what he would replace it with.

Hegar's response was exceedingly weak, in fact, hardly audible, let alone comprehensible. He was hardly back on his

(Continued on Page 3)

**Empowering
Grass-Roots
People**



Story on Page 8

From the Desk of the Chairman

Noise-Makers versus Vote-Bringers



Delroy Cuthkelvin
Chairman, Editorial Board

Our friends at a local Radio and TV Network that is considered one of the so-called media giants in Belize have been running an election-coverage promo in which they assert that on March 7, *"The noise stops and the voting starts."*

Ironically, that same media organization has been responsible for generating some of the loudest and most meaningless noise ever since we entered the election season, and especially since the date of the General Elections were announced by PM Barrow.

No personal disrespect intended, but one of the main reasons we haven't had much to say ever since the election frenzy began is that there is so much noise in the market, so to speak, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get any sensible message across the overcrowded airwaves.

Besides, we have too little regard politically

for the so-called media-moguls who claim to shape public opinion, and too much respect for the Belizean People, who in their unfailing wisdom, we are convinced, have already made up their minds what is best for them and their Country.

Politics, like any other activity, is a discipline in its own right, and has its own professionals, its own stars and its own heroes. There are some in our society who, by virtue of their name recognition and connections, have unlimited access to media and publicity; but that in itself makes them neither experts nor professionals, let alone stars or heroes, where the science, or sport, of politics is concerned.

The true professionals and heroes during this season, and especially on Election Day, are those who have worked the political machinery, who know how to connect with the electorate on the issues that matter, who have mastered the science, or the art, of bringing out the voters to support their candidate and their party.

This is no conceit on our part, but when we consider all the factors going into these elections, we find it hard to conceive how the UDP, having hit all the right chords, and having the kind of tried and tested machinery that it does, can fail against an Opposition Party that clearly does not have its act together, and worse, to a group of 'independent' pseudo-intellectuals who claim to be so much smarter than the rest of us

that they don't even need a political machinery to truly contest a national election.

On top of all that, or course, is the fact that Belizeans clearly approve overwhelmingly of the proven, pro-Belize, pro-people agenda of the UDP under Dean Barrow's leadership; that the PUP is clearly the same party that, as the government, was selling us out less than five years ago, showing no remorse and every intention of doing so again if ever given the chance; and that the third-party/independent elements have neither the track-record nor institutional capacity to run a country one way or the other. We are convinced that the Belizean electorate in 2012 is not only fair, but also practical. That, again, on both counts, is in the UDP's favor.

As to the fly-by-night, so-called pollsters, one of our party colleagues put it most aptly when he suggested that someone should conduct a poll on who actually believes the polls being conducted in Belize by persons who are clearly not independent and have an obvious axe to grind.

Those who made the aforementioned proclamation should heed their own warning: indeed, on Election Day, the noise stops, and the voting starts! The real professionals, the real experts and heroes on that day are not the noise-makers but the vote-bringers.

Happy Elections, everyone; and may God Bless Belize!

CARICOM YOUTH Ambassador Campaign



Kera Bowen

The CARICOM Youth Ambassadors' Program (CYAP) is represented in Belize by Dylan Williams and Kera Bowen both CARICOM Youth Ambassadors. In keeping with its mandate to "Ensure that youth have a voice in the decisions that affect them" Belize's CARICOM Youth Ambassadors have developed a communication strategy to encourage youth to exercise their right to vote and participate in Belize's democracy.

The CARICOM Youth Ambassadors recognize that youth of Belize constitute almost half of Belize's population and their participation in the general and municipal elections is crucial in influencing the future of Belize.

The CYAs also recognize that it is your constitutional right to participate in your country's governance and democratic process. The CYA therefore challenge youth and the citizenry to participate in an apolitical manner and vote.

The CYA will launch its VOTE 2012 Campaign via a Public Service Campaign to be aired daily on local radio, television and other media leading up to the Municipal and General elections on March 7, 2012.

Capital Weekly

*From the Heart of the Nation
To the Soul of the People*

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BIG John!

Saldivar's Splendid Debate Performance



The PUP's Amin Hegar

(Continued from Page 1)

feet in time for the count of ten; and from that point onward, he found himself consistently on the ropes, dodging devastating blow after devastating blow.

It soon became clear that Green candidate Richard Smith was capitalizing on the decisive beat-down of Hegar at the hands of Saldivar. Effectively asserting himself as the second best contender in the fight, Smith was creating his own little side show, and as we noted earlier, evoking some good laughs and applause from the audience who were quite amused by his pleasant sense of humor, even if not particularly impressed with the substance of his points and arguments. At one point he even appeared to be attempting to tag-team with Saldivar, offering to collaborate with him on sports and other community projects for the benefit of the Capital City and its residents.

All in all, it was a pretty good night for Smith, although he found himself momentarily disoriented by a good jab from Saldivar, who pointed out that Smith was not a voter of Belmopan; something which, legally, does not disqualify him from seeking the position of area representative for the constituency in question, but which, judging from the reaction of the audience, is in fact a valid issue to them.

Unable to dodge the consistent battering by Saldivar, Hegar soon attempted to distance himself from the shameful record

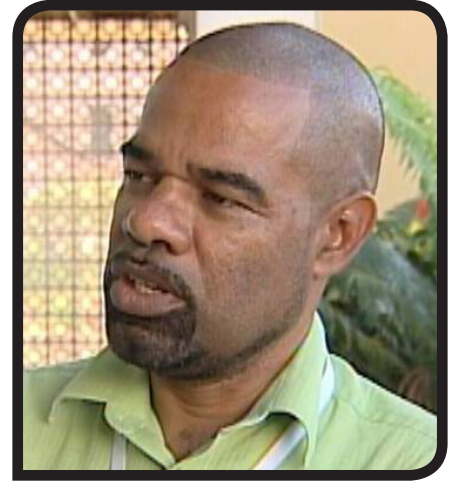
of the last PUP Government, claiming that this was a new PUP. That one takes the cake, Saldivar responded, questioning how the present PUP could ever be considered a new party when it is the same old people that are leading and controlling it.

Unable to defend his and the PUP's past, Hegar then attempted to daub the UDP with the same brush, accusing the current government of corruption; but Saldivar quickly demolished

his argument, drawing a sharp contrast between the PUP and the UDP's style of managing the Nation and the People's affairs. "We work the money," Saldivar stated. "We don't steal the money."

When Hegar attempted to score points by stating his position against offshore-drilling, Saldivar exposed his and the PUP's hypocrisy, citing the fact that it was the last PUP Government that issued every existing

(Continued on Page 7)



Independent, Richard Smith



February 15, 2012

Logo/Slogan Competitions

Participate In The Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project Logo/Slogan Competition!

The Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project is a project funded by the Government of Belize partly through a Grant from The European Union. The Project Execution Unit was established in January, 2012 and is housed at The Agricultural Show Grounds, Hummingbird Highway, Belmopan City. This Unit, in collaboration with the Belize Agricultural Health Authority, the Belize Livestock Producers Association and other stakeholders, has launched a public awareness campaign seeking to educate and sensitize Cattle Farmers and the Belizean public about the importance and benefits of this project, including the need to get their livestock tested for Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis so that they meet the bovine animal health standards that will enable them to export live cattle to Mexico.

Terms of the LOGO/Slogan Competitions:

- ❖ Competition is open to (High School) Students ages (12-17)
- ❖ An Individual may submit one (1) entry only
- ❖ Logo/Slogan should incorporate elements related to the principal objective of the Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project
- ❖ Participants are encouraged to be highly imaginative, inspired and show foresight in their submissions.
- ❖ All entries must be original, unpublished, and not submitted or accepted elsewhere between start and end of the Competition
- ❖ Logos must be submitted in JPEG or PDF format
- ❖ Immediate relatives of the members of the evaluation committee shall not be eligible to submit an entry
- ❖ The Committee would not be obliged to accept a winning submission in the unlikely event that there are no suitable choices.
- ❖ In the unlikely event of a tie, winner will be selected by a blind draw.
- ❖ The Winning entry and all rights thereafter becomes the property of the BNSCP- Project
- ❖ The deadline for the submission of entries is on or before March 16, 2012 at 4.00 p.m.

Submission of Entries for BNSCP LOGO/Slogan Competition:

Submission of the Logo/Slogan can be sent via email however two (2) copies must be on CDs either hand delivered or by mail to BNSCP- Project. Entry packages SHOULD BE ADDRESSED AS FOLLOWS: Logo/Slogan Competition, Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project, P.O. Box 169, National Agricultural Showgrounds, Hummingbird Highway, Belmopan, Cayo District.

Prizes:

The winner of the BNSCP LOGO/Slogan Competition will receive a prize of \$500 from the BNSCP Project.

Kindly note that an information package outlining the project overview and objective is available electronically and will be facilitated to all interested individuals upon their request.

For more information on the campaign, please contact Kay Garnett, Administrative Assistant at the Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project, Tel: (+501) 822-2143/1283 or email at kgarnettcattlesweep@gmail.com or cattlesweep@gmail.com We look forward to receiving all of your submissions, which we trust shall be creative, innovative and exciting.

It's DigiCell's Countdown to Elections



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A Breath of Fresh Air

WAVE Radio & TV Airs Insightful Election Show



The WAVE Radio and TV Pre-Election Show, this edition featuring Steve Duncan, Marilyn Williams and Mike Singh

Ever since the likelihood of Early General Elections became real, the UDP haters and those sponsored by special interests have been on the loose, crowding the airwaves with their lies and vitriol.

Since the Elections were announced, the noise and malice has intensified exponentially so much so that it's next to impossible to engage in a sensible discourse anywhere throughout the regular talk show circuit.

It was, therefore, like a breath of fresh air when WAVE Radio and TV broke through the foul smell of negativity and political malice with a new pre-election show featuring a panel of knowledgeable and mature experts, discussing the pertinent issues of the day and focusing Belizeans on what really matters going into these elections.

The show debuted on Sunday, February 26, and has featured persons like Marilyn Williams, head of the Financial Intelligence

Unit (FIU) at Central Bank; Mike Singh, head of BELTRAIDE; Steve Duncan, General Manager of the Heritage Bank; Kenrick Ysagueri of the GST Unit; and Diane Haylock, President of NICH.

A second show was held on Tuesday, February 28, and another on Thursday March 1.

The next show is scheduled for Sunday March 4.

Panelists on the show have presented nothing but the facts, establishing beyond a shadow of doubt what the true state of the Nation's af-

fairs is and all that is being achieved by the pro-Belize, pro-People policies of the Dean Barrow UDP Administration, and totally demolishing the false claims and baseless assertions by the haters and traitors who have sold out to special interest and who have been making much noise across the so-called independent media.

Kudos to the organizers and panelists of the new show! It is, indeed, a breath of fresh air bursting through the foulness of deceit and vitriol.

We are Keeping

Our "WITZ" with us.

We are Staying RED!



By Zelda Hill

Never before, as in recent times, have world governments been confronted on every side by world problems, national problems, social problems and moral problems that they are unable to solve. Our country is no exception with problems such as staggering debt commitments, territorial claim by Guatemala, escalating crime, high unemployment, broken families and overall moral disintegration.

Although you may believe that the new government which will be elected on March 7th has the answers to Belize's problems; be advised - they don't! Governments need the help of every sector and social institution of society, including the Church, as it executes its God-ordained authority to govern justly, guard liberty and secure the rewards of our industry.

The Church's role in government is crucial to the well-being of a nation. And even when the Church endeavors to assume a more involved role in governing, the value of prayer should never be underestimated. Praying for government leaders has for ages been a maxim and practice of Christianity and its rewards are mutual to both Church and State.

Church history validates that praying for the government was not dependent on whether the leader was good or bad but on whether one desired a peaceful life. The Church Father, Tertullian, who believed that the world needed Christianity for its wellbeing, wrote in his Apology, a defense of the Christian Religion: "We pray for all the emperors, that God

may grant them long life, a secure government, a prosperous family, vigorous troops, a faithful senate, an obedient people; that the whole world may be in peace; and that God may grant, both to Caesar and to every man, the accomplishment of their just desires."

Naturally, if the state is not safe, the individual cannot be secure. Self-preservation is an instinctive need for each human being and our desire to live in quiet and peace should compel us to pray for our leaders and our nation. A good leader needs our prayers so that he contin-

sity and economic stability.

The Scriptures warn that such persecution will be prevalent in the last days. In Belize Christians are free to worship and to proselytize without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death. It was a rare but nonetheless strange and startling experience to witness the infuriated reactions from certain sections of the public who opposed the churches' reaction to UNIBAM's challenge to Belize's Criminal Code. The Church desires the freedom to proclaim prophecy, to advise against immorality and to perform its redemptive role in

sion to God by Abraham on behalf of Sodom reduced the numbers to 10. Sadly, God could not find even 10 righteous people in Sodom and the wicked city was destroyed by fire and brimstone (Genesis 18:2-33; 19:24-25). Daniel was among his exiled people in Babylon when he poured out his soul in fervent prayer to God and earnestly pleaded for the restoration of his people. God responded immediately to assure Daniel of the speedy release of the Jews out of their captivity (Daniel 9:1-23). A nation is indeed privileged when it has righteous people who intercede on their behalf in times of tranquility and in seasons of threatening calamities.

The belief that Christians should not be involved in government is neither endorsed by the history of the Christian Church nor by Scriptures. It is rather sinful when the Church neglects to pray for the government since our leaders are in authority by God's will. As sojourners in a temporary system we look forward to the perfect reign of peace and righteousness when Jesus Christ will govern on earth. But for now, we pray for the election of godly leaders and that godless leaders will not hold positions of government. Belize, let's pray that on March 7th and onward our government will be comprised of people who will yearn for a pure heart, a good conscience and for faith in Christ and that they will rule in the fear of the Lord and find wisdom and direction in God's truth.

Naturally, if the state is not safe, the individual cannot be secure. Self-preservation is an instinctive need for each human being and our desire to live in quiet and peace should compel us to pray for our leaders and our nation. A good leader needs our prayers so that he continues to do well and a bad leader needs our prayers so that his evil decisions and actions can be prevented.

ues to do well and a bad leader needs our prayers so that his evil decisions and actions can be prevented. The prayers of the Church for our authorities should be provoked by the desire of everyone to "lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty" (1Timothy 2:1-2).

For the Gospel to be propagated, Christians need the protection of a 'godly' or a 'god-fearing' government. Christianity is being outlawed in various countries of the world as a consequence of anti-Christian governments. Recently after the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was ousted, Christian intolerance escalated and today Christians are being persecuted in Egypt by certain Islamic sects. Christians had received some form of protection under Mubarak's leadership although he was not a Christian. Observers say that the exodus from Egypt of over 100,000 Christians as of March 2011 in response to the persecution will detrimentally affect Egypt's demographic diver-

the society. But the duration and extent of such freedom will be determined by the Church's efforts to reach the lost and the fervency and consistency of the prayers of the righteous people of Belize.

The Scriptures also show that God's attitude towards a nation and His blessing or judgment is dependent on the relationship He has with its citizens. The wicked are often spared for the sake of the righteous as is evidenced in the Bible on several occasions. When God told Abraham about His plans for Sodom, His actions were dependent on how many righteous people He found there. God would have spared Sodom if He had found 50 righteous people at first but the pleading and interces-

Capital Weekly

*From the Heart of the Nation
To the Soul of the People*

BIG John!

Saldivar's Splendid Debate Performance

(Continued from page 3)

oil-exploration license, onshore and offshore. "I believe in drilling responsibly," Saldivar stated.

Saldivar scored another knockdown when the issue of a virtually unknown plan referred to as the 'Galden Plan' was raised. Grasping at straws, Hegar attempted to make a comeback, accusing John Saldivar and the UDP of lacking ideas, and praising the other Saldivar, the PUP one who is the purported architect of the obscure plan.

That attempt proved almost suicidal for Hegar, however, as Saldivar questioned how it is that one of Arthur Saldivar's colleagues could now be praising him when not one of them supported his recent bid for leadership of the party in the wake of John Briceno's resignation.

That stunning counter-punch surely sent Hegar to the canvass once again. And when he attempted to get back up, he was told by the moderators that his thirty-seconds allotted for a rebuttal had expired.

On the issue of Immigration Hegar clearly dealt himself an auto-blow as he first contended that it is the PUP that welcomes immigrants, then turned right around and contradicted himself by condemning the UDP for regularizing their status as legitimate Belizeans who had earned their citizenship.

When challenged by Richard Smith on the issue of allowing the Public Service to operate without fear or favor, Saldivar noted that Smith was correct in pointing out that such is the way things ought to be, and that's how they *are* under the current UDP administration. He substantiated his assertion by noting that a particular public servant of Belmopan had just been promoted in spite of the fact that he is the son of a former PUP Cabinet Secretary.

Having proven that point, Saldivar went on to state categorically that if Smith was suggesting that as elected politicians they



Honourable John Saldivar, UDP Belmopan standard-bearer

should hand over the responsibility of governance entirely to the public officers, he would certainly not be in agreement with that. "There is no system in the World where elected officials hand over governance to non-elected people."

(We must pause here to state that we have personally observed how the Public Service operates under Saldivar's leadership as its Minister, and we must concede that Public Officers are being treated with the greatest respect ever, something they no doubt deserve, considering the vital, indispensable role they play in the management of the Nation's affairs.

As the debate progressed, Hegar dared again to raise the issue of cronyism, and he was immediately silenced by Saldivar who reminded him which government issued 30 Million from the people's money to one company in one single day. "That's not how we are going to address this Country's need for viable investment and sustainable economic activity," Saldivar stated.

Saldivar closed off the debate by noting that as an area representative he had kept his pledge to the residents of Belmopan, which includes staying in touch with them through neigh-

borhood meetings. "They know that, because they live here," he reiterated, implicitly reminding the audience of Belmopan residents that his two political opponents on the stage don't live here.

"I have attended this debate out of respect for PLUS TV and the residents of Belmopan, but the People of Belmopan have already made up their minds," Saldivar concluded.

Indeed, it was another good night for PLUS TV, a great opportunity for the people of Belmopan, and a really big night for John Saldivar.

If the debate is any indication, Saldivar is poised to receive another term as area representative for Belmopan in the General Elections which are now only days, indeed, hours away.



**The Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project
Supply of Cattle Identification and Mounting Equipment
Our ref.: EU/BNCSP/IO # 01 of 2012
BELIZE**

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the European Union and intends to apply part of the proceeds to payments under the Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project for the Supply of Cattle Identification and Mounting Equipment.

The goods to be supplied and delivered are:

1. 100,000 ear tags (flag type)
2. 80,000 Electronic Identification (buttons) with electronic chip
3. 20,000 ear tag (button type) without electronic chip;
4. 7 Stick riders for Electronic Identification Ear tag;
5. 50 Universal ear tag applicator (pliers) for cattle,

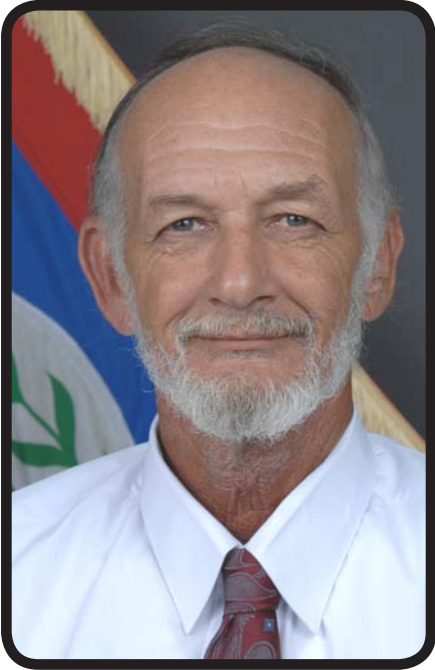
The tender documents can be requested from the email address ssalazarcattlesweep@gmail.com.

Sealed tenders must be delivered to the Office of the Belize National Sanitary Cattle Plan Project located on The National Agricultural Showgrounds, Hummingbird Highway, Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize, Central America.

The deadline for submission of tenders is March 26, 2012 at 11:00 a.m. Belize time. Followed by the Public Opening at 11:30 a.m. Belize Time. Tenderers or their representatives are invited to attend.

Empowering Grassroots People

200 Leases in San Juan/Cowpen



Hon. Melvin Hulse
Stann Creek West Area Rep

It was a happy day in the village of San Juan last Wednesday as over two hundred res-

the people have been living here for twenty-five years, and no one in San Juan and Cowpen had a single lease for the place they have been living; and to me that is almost criminal on the part of those who should have taken care of their need.

The reason it just got done now with me is because this is the first time that San Juan and Cowpen are in Stann Creek West with me. (My boundary used to end at Red Bank.)

But when I got in and I came here, all those people who have been living in those houses in San Juan, the whole of Cowpen, the people living in there, even the chairman, the plan was never authenticated, not one person



Melvin Hulse issuing land-lease to a long-time resident of cowpen

Speaking with us, village leader Javier Bejerano said, "We have bout twenty five years that the people are asking any minister who go in to please survey the area for them, but right now this day has reached, and we are happy for the farmers.

So, to us, it's a very, you know, it's a very happy day; and thanks to God, and thanks to Minister Hulse, and thanks to the UDP Government, because they are putting a lot of effort to accomplish all the things that we deserve as Belizeans."

What Melvin Hulse has just done for the people of San Juan is something he has been doing for thousands of residents throughout Stann Creek.

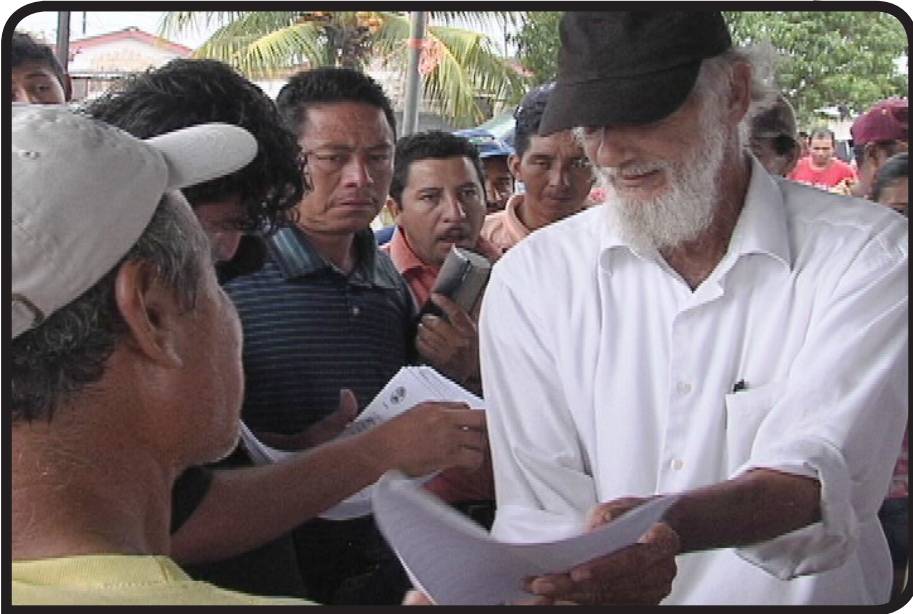
"I inherited a constituency where people were not getting their lots. When I left in 1998, virtually all those at the age of eighteen had a

house lot. What you have to appreciate now is that when I left, many of these people were 10,11,12,14 years old. I have come back now ten years later and they are in their twenties.

If the previous two area reps had been doing this in a methodical way, there would not be a necessity to now create almost immediately four to five thousand lots. That is sad. And you go village by village, you will find that a lot of young people are living in their parents' homes; a lot of young people who have gotten married and have their kids, have had to build their little homes on their parents land, and it is almost criminal that they were not afforded the opportunity to own their own land.

So what I have done, I have already expanded in Mango Creek, I have expanded Red

(Continued on Page 9)



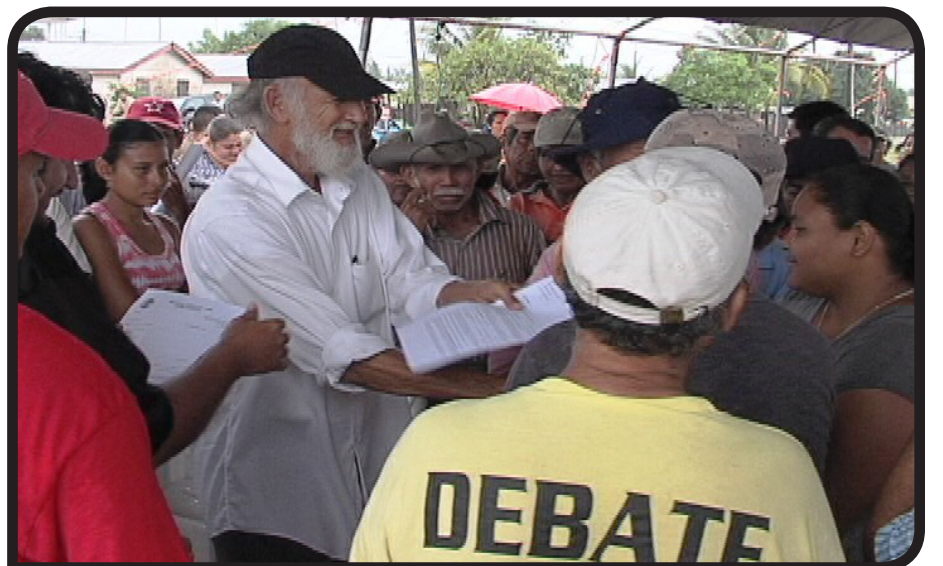
A Happy San Juan Resident receives lease documents from Hon Hulse

idents received their land papers, thanks to the determination and hard work of Honorable Melvin Hulse.

"San Juan and Cow Pen are a special case," Hulse told us. "Yes, I am absolutely pleased that I am able to make a difference in grass-root people's lives in the other villages in Stann Creek in which people have gotten their lots, because that is how you empower people and you give security to people, having people own their lots, and that they were being deprived of many years. But, the biggest pleasure I get in San Juan and Cowpen is because

living in Cowpen who have their homes on their lots, who have their children born in their house, not one of them has ever held papers for their lots. That has been rectified.

I have encountered 25 people who have been working a piece of land doing their farming for that amount of years; they now have possession of it. It is surveyed, the plans authenticated, and they own it. That is how you empower people, and that is why I get such pleasure in regularizing the situation in San Juan and Cowpen. And that allows them now to move forward."



Melvin Hulse issuing more land documents to residents of San Juan

Empowering Grassroots People

200 Leases in San Juan/Cowpen



Village Leader Javier Bejerano assists in handing out lease documents

(Continued from Page 8)

Bank, Maya Mopan, George Town, San Roman, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Sittee River, Hopkins, Silk Grass, Pomona, Hummingbird and Middlesex.

No village has gotten all the lots they need, because

finished every one get a hundred; we start again, and we make sure that it is finished.”

Indeed, in the past year or so, hundreds more throughout the constituency have finally gotten their land papers, while hundreds of

If the previous two area reps had been doing this in a methodical way, there would not be a necessity to now create almost immediately four to five thousand lots. That is sad. And you go village by village, you find that a lot of young people are living in their parents' homes; a lot of young people who have gotten married and have their kids, have had to build their little homes on their parents land, and it is almost criminal that they were not afforded the opportunity to own their own land.

there must be a sense of equity and fairness, because they all have the same need. So, as the money has become available, we have made sure that each area has been able to get their part of the pie. So when that is

other new lots have been issued with immediate documentation; 400 in Independence/Mango Creek, 100 in Red Bank, 100 in Maya Mopan; 50 in San Roman, 50 in Santa Rosa; 100 in Santa

Cruz; 100 in Sittee River; 70 in Hopkins; almost a hundred in Pomona; 40 in Middlesex; 100 in Hummingbird Community; and survey is underway for distribution of lots in Silk Grass and Valley Community, as well as in Steadfast where the land is already cleared.

Talk to anyone who knows the history of Stann Creek West, and they will confirm to you that before Melvin Hulse, there was no such thing as land ownership in any significant and meaningful way to the common people. Prior to Hulse's entry into electoral representation in that constituency back in the late eighties, early nineties, the big, wealthy companies owned huge tracks of land and the regular folks had nothing.

their documents to the bank, own their farms, sell their produce for an income and send their children to school to become doctors, lawyers, accountants and engineers.

It is no exaggeration to state that in most areas Hulse actually created villages where previously there were only 'estates'.

After he left politics in 1998, virtually nothing happened in Stann Creek West in terms of village expansion or issuance of land to the common people, although there were obscene land grabs by successive PUP area representatives and a 'handful of well-placed individuals.

Since Hulse returned in 2008, he has been working tirelessly and lobbying funds



Melvin Hulse issuing lease document to a young landowner

They and their families were beholden to these wealthy companies for which most of them worked. Sing the master's tune, remain slavishly loyal to him, or you're gone, evicted without notice from the premises you call home, but which was never, and would never be truly yours.

Then came Melvin Hulse, and suddenly people in Stann Creek Rural, now known as Stan Creek West, began getting their leases and titles to their land. They suddenly became empowered and independent, being able to take

from Cabinet and anywhere he can to pay for land acquisition and surveys in order to expand villages throughout the constituency and issue land particularly to first time owners.

Politics is too often a game of dependency and control. If there is one way to truly empower people, giving them dignity, independence and freedom from abuse and exploitation, it is through land ownership.

In this respect, Melvin Hulse might not be as much a politician as he is a revolutionary and liberator.



Melvin Hulse issuing lease document to a young mother

THE PRIME MINISTER'S TOUR CONTINUED IN DANGRIGA, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2012



THE PRIME MINISTER'S TOUR CONTINUED IN LADYVILLE, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2012



Montero Delivers Again!

Ground Breaking for Santa Elena Library



Hon. Rene Montero



Breaking ground for the Santa Elena Library extension project

A project that will result in the complete renovation of the Santa Elena Public Library in the Cayo District was officially launched on Monday February 27, 2012.

The project is being implemented by the Social Investment Fund and financed through a loan from the Caribbean Development Bank with counterpart funding from the Government of Belize and the community of Santa Elena.

The project entails the rehabilitation of a two storey concrete building, which houses the library, and the construction of an extension to the existing building which will serve as a computer resource centre.

The work scope includes the repairing of roof leaks, replacement of all eaves, fascia and ceiling boards, erecting a veranda block wall railing, installation of gutters, downpipes, water breakers, installation of new windows and solid timber doors, rehabilitation of the electrical and plumbing systems, the tiling of the floor and

repainting of the entire building.

The new extension includes the construction of a fully air-conditioned ground floor concrete building with

As part of the project a 6ft chain link fence will be erected around the compound's perimeter. The extension will have a floor area of 650 sq ft and

established in 1990's as a settlement, which later became village after which it formed part of the twin towns of San Ignacio/ Santa Elena in the late 1970s.



Supporters of Hon. Rene Montero at the ceremony

an insulated galvalum roof, reinforced concrete tiled floor, reinforced masonry block walls, galvanized aluminum louvered windows, burglar bars, solid timber panel doors and a male and female bathroom.

will be able to accommodate 15 computers along with a study area.

The Santa Elena Library is strategically located in the town, and serves approximately 1,500 persons on a monthly basis.

Santa Elena was

Santa Elena is approximately 22 miles from Belmopan City and has a population of approximately 13,000 people. The town is growing very fast and has 5 primary schools, 2 high schools and 3 pre-schools. There is only one library in Santa Elena which caters for the growing population.

The guest speaker at today's launching was Hon. Rene Montero, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Co-operatives. Other speakers included representatives of the Social Investment Fund, the Belize National Library Service and Information System as well as the Mayor of San Ignacio and Santa Elena.

(Information and photos provided by Mr. Mike Hernandez Jr. (Sr. J.P.) Director of Public Relations for the Social Investment Fund.)



The Santa Elena library will be renovated and expanded under the SIF project

Gabriel Martinez Delivers

Libertad Village Health Center Inaugurated

Almost 6,000 residents in four villages in the Corozal District now enjoy better health services with the construction of a new health centre in Libertad Village. The centre was officially inaugurated on Friday February 24, 2012.

The new centre will serve the villages of Libertad, Concepcion, Caledonia and San Joaquin with quality health care,

governments, including Belize.

The two-storey health centre measures approximately 32 ft wide by 53 ft long with a total floor area of 1,696 sq ft on the ground and 1,440 sq ft on the first floor. The upper floor will be used as the Doctor's quarters and is equipped with living and dining rooms, a kitchen, two bed rooms and a bathroom. The bottom floor will be used to provide medical services to the above-mentioned communities.



Cutting the symbolic ribbon to officially inaugurate the New Libertad Health Center



New Libertad Health Centre

including general medicine, pre-natal and post-natal and child health care services, breast and cervical cancer screening, outpatient services and emergency services among many others.

The clinic is equipped with male and female bathrooms, a treatment, examination and consultation rooms, a pharmacy/dispensary, an asthma bay area, a sterilizing room, a utility room, a waiting area for



The audience at the ceremony

The project was implemented by the Social Investment Fund at a total cost of \$406,000 in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. It was financed by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) under its Basic Needs Trust Fund 6 BNTF is a program promoting poverty reduction through socio-economic initiatives and community empowerment and is jointly financed by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and ten beneficiary

patients, a kitchenette and outdoor shower for the general public.

The ferro-concrete building was constructed with a reinforced concrete foundation frame, floor and roof. As part of the project a chain link fence was constructed around the perimeter of the health centre, an access road and parking space was also included. The community of Libertad contributed the landscaping for the facility.

The village of Libertad is located in the Corozal District some 7 miles south from Corozal Town. The village has a population

of approximately 1,727. Most of the villagers worked in the papaya industry and the Corozal Free Zone with a minority still involved in the sugar industry.

Gabriel Martinez, Minister of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development, representatives of the Social Investment Fund and the Libertad Village Council.



Libertad Culture Group making a presentation at the ceremony

The guest speaker at the official inauguration was Hon. Pablo Marin, Minister of Health. Other speakers included Hon.

Information provided by Mr. Mike Hernandez Jr. (Sr. J.P.) Director of Public Relations for the Social Investment Fund



Hon. Gabriel Martinez and Hon. Pablo Marin posing for the cameras

Setting the Record Straight Looking Beyond the Elections

*(The following is a portion of PM Barrow's Statement to
The Belize Chamber of Commerce, February 20, 2012)*



Prime Minister Dean Barrow addressing Chamber of Commerce

Someone once referred to the time of campaigning that precedes any general election as the silly season; and indeed we have become accustomed to expect cartoonish behavior and outlandish propaganda as a natural feature of the electoral landscape at this time.

In that vein, there is one issue that has perhaps most lent itself to this theatre of the absurd; that is, needless to say, the Economy. Accordingly, the false charges on this score have been legion, and certainly to hear the other side tell it, the government is in dire financial straits, and it is precisely because things are so bad (according to them) that I have hurriedly called an

election before the crisis can become common knowledge.

Ladies and gentle-

It should be clear by now, therefore, that I am proposing a radically altered relationship between government and the private sector; a new overarching paradigm must be created in which official bureaucracy and red-tape must be cut. Detailed rules of engagement and a carefully constructed road-map must be agreed; and a culture in government of quick, courteous and efficient service would be a sine qua non of the next UDP Administration.

men, let me immediately dispatch that particular piece of misinformation.

I have extracted from the Ministry of Finance the headline budget numbers for 2011/2012.

The approved estimates provided for recurrent rev-

enue of 784 Million Dollars. The revised out-turn shows that we actually collected 831.8 Million dollars.

Recurrent Expenditure was budgeted at 729.5 Million, but actually came in at 732.2 Million.

The upshot, ladies and gentlemen, is a Recurrent Surplus of 94.6 Million Dollars, as opposed to the approved estimate of only 54.5 Million Dollars.

On the capital side, Capital Revenue was 6.8 Million, as compared to the 5.3 Million budgeted; and Capital Expenditure was kept to 140.9 instead of the 160.4 Million projected.

Altogether, then, the numbers this fiscal year produced an 89.8 Million Dollar Primary Surplus, as against the 67.7 Million forecast. This represented fully 3 percent of GDP, as compared to the 2.2 percent that was budgeted.

And even after you add amortization and interest payments, Belize's overall fiscal deficit is only 22.4 Million or 0.8 percent of GDP, as against

accompanied by a 3 percent GDP growth, foreign reserves of 500 Million Dollars, loads of financial liquidity, and outstanding increases in Tourism, Citrus and Sugar earnings.

(I should take this opportunity to congratulate the President of the BTB for really what has been a phenomenal year. I see that we exceeded the 250 thousand mark in overnight visitors for the first time since 2007.)

I'm therefore proud to say that in the middle of dogged sluggishness worldwide, and especially in Europe, Belize has recorded stellar comparative gains.

Now, the upcoming fiscal year will be just as good, we think, with respect to economic growth, and that is why I can say in the most solemn fashion this afternoon that a re-elected United Democratic Party Government will ensure that there are absolutely no tax increases in the next budget year.

Of course, the Government of Belize numbers will have to cope with the step up in the Super Bond's interest rate to 8.5 percent over the next fiscal year. The payments will therefore go from 65 Million to 92 Million.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is on the basis of the statistics that I just finished reciting, and performance over the last four year that, on the whole, more than kept the ship of state afloat. It is on the basis of all this that my government has been able to achieve the unprecedented social strides that saw the stitching together of a safety net of historic proportions.

And it is that general

the 46.4 Million or 1.6 percent of GDP that was forecast.

Ladies and gentlemen, even if I say so myself, this is an impressive performance and constitutes the best fiscal record in ages.

Of course, the government numbers are also

(Continued on Page 15)

Setting the Record Straight Looking Beyond the Elections

*(The following is a portion of PM Barrow's Statement to
The Belize Chamber of Commerce, February 20, 2012)*

Continued from Page 14

safety net together with the targeted gang intervention initiative in Belize City that has resulted in the seminal reduction in crime and the murder that we saw particularly in the last four months of 2011.

Since we introduced that gang truce in September of 2011, the murder rate dropped something like 37 percent between September and December of 2011 as compared to the similar period the year before.

That reduction in the murder rate continues into 2012. We are at a total of 8 murders for the year so far, as compared to 2011 when, by this juncture, we had 14, with 6 in February of 2011, which was the lowest monthly murder rate for the entire 2011.

Well, already, in January of this Year, we had just (if I can use that word in connection with something as fundamentally tragic as a murder rate), we had just four murders and so far

in February another four.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the UDP Manifesto contains a message from me, and I would like now to read one excerpt from that message because of how important I think it is.

"In the first term, the UDP set great store by its pro-poor initiatives, its housing, education, employment and infrastructure drive. Government, as a matter of policy and deliberate strategy, became bigger. At a time of shrinking private sector activity because of planetary conditions, this was the right thing to do, the only thing to do. But the second term should see a gradually improving worldwide economic climate, with an eventual return to previous levels of foreign direct investment and international tourism activity.

This now requires greater emphasis on the Belizean private sector; and that Government should do more to ensure the kind of enabling climate that will spur greater job-creating and wealth-enhancing business activity in Belize.

(Continued on Page 16)



Kay Menzies of the Chamber of Commerce welcomes the PM



Setting the Record Straight Looking Beyond the Elections

*(The following is a portion of PM Barrow's Statement to
The Belize Chamber of Commerce, February 20, 2012)*

(Continued from Page 15)

This, then, will be the challenge for the next UDP Government: to consolidate and expand public sector investment in people and the Economy, while at the same time harnessing growth and development firmly to an enhanced driver's role for the private sector. (PM's Manifesto Message)

The point is, ladies and gentlemen, that I think the building blocks are in place and the foundation has been well and truly laid by Government's policies over the last four years. But we are now at a point where we must once

again recognize the Private Sector's pride of place in any truly sustainable leap forward.


It should be clear by now, therefore, that I am proposing a radically altered relationship between government and the private sector; anew over-arching paradigm must be created in which official bureaucracy and red-tape must be cut. Detailed rules of engagement and a carefully constructed road-map must be agreed; and a culture in government of quick, courteous and efficient service would be a sine qua non of the next UDP Administration.



Prime Minister Dean Barrow



Members of business community listening to the PM




Our FUTURE is Secure

with **RAMON WITZ**

and the

UDP





PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION



PUBLIC NOTICE

REVISION OF RADIO FREQUENCY SPECTRUM PLAN

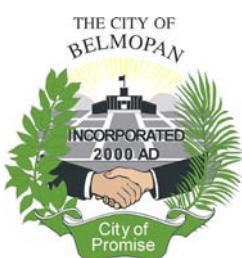
The Public Utilities Commission (PUC; the Commission) hereby serves notice this day, March 1, 2012, that, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by the Belize Telecommunications Act, Chapter 229 of the Laws of Belize, it intends to prepare a revised Radio Frequency Spectrum Plan for the Country of Belize.

The Commission is engaging the services of a consultant to assist in the revision of the current Radio Frequency Spectrum Plan. Under the Terms of Reference of the consultant, specific attention will be paid to the Band of Frequencies from 614 to 809 MHz (currently assigned to On-Air TV Broadcasting) and the range of frequencies 1990 to 4200 MHz and 5725 to 5925 (currently assigned to various Fixed/Mobile Wireless Services).

The Commission is inviting written comments and representations from interested persons in regards to its proposal to revise the existing Radio Frequency Plan. Deadline for submission of comments is 4:00pm on March 30, 2012.

Written comments and representations may be submitted to the Commission at its offices at 41 Gabourel Lane, Belize City, or by email to info@puc.bz.

Upon completion of the consultancy, the Commission shall consider the recommendations of the consultant and the comments and representations of interested persons in the preparation of the revised Radio Frequency Plan.



BELMOPAN CITY COUNCIL INCENTIVE PACKAGE 2012/2013



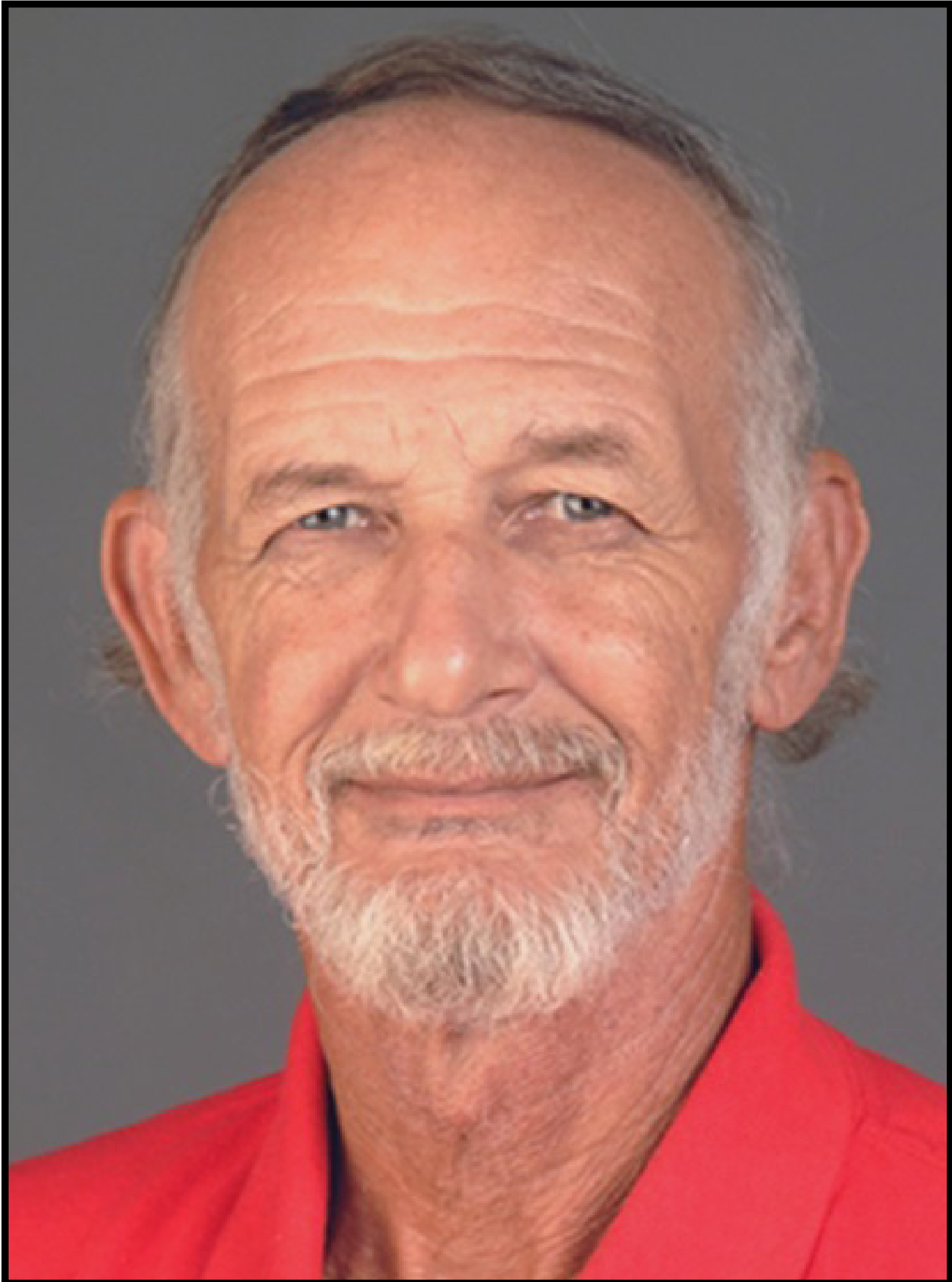
As of January 1, 2012, Property Owners in the City of Belmopan are eligible to participate in the following discount package:

- **15% Discount for full payment of 2012/13 Property Fees from March 1 and March 31, 2012.**

N.B. *Senior Citizens (65 yrs or older) are eligible for an additional 5% discount for properties on which they reside.*

**For more information visit your Belmopan City Council
Offices at 36/38 Trinity Boulevard, Belmopan City
Or call: 822-2271, 822-2319 or 802-3679**

Completing the WORKS In Stann Creek West



Helping Grass Roots People

La Ruta Maya 2012

Marking the End of the Mayan Calendar



By Reynard Garbutt

Last Year's 14th paddling of (the) La Ruta Maya Belize River challenge still remains in the minds of all the fans that were on the Belcan Bridge and on the banks of the Haulover Creek to witness one of the most spectacular finish in the history of this mega-event.

The LA RUTA MAYA now going into its 15th year has become Belize Biggest four-day sporting event under the watchful eyes of Mr. Roberto Harrison, the president of the La Ruta Maya. With the input of him and his committee, the race has surely grown over the years. It went from a one category race in its inception, to seven different categories today, and has also brought back the history of the Old Belize River to the younger generations of Belizeans.

The Old Belize River was for a long time the only means of transportation from Belize City to San Ignacio, so when the la Ruta Maya committee decided to start this race, the Old Belize River, at least for four days, came to life once again.

This year, Day One of the race will start on the 9th of March at 7 A.M. from underneath the Hawksworth Bridge, making its first stop at Banana Bank. This journey will take the paddlers a little bit over 46 miles and about 5 hours to complete.

Day Two, the longest of the four days, will get started at 6 AM at Banana Bank March 10 and finish in Double Head Cabbage. This leg covers a distance of about 67 miles and will take the first canoe to cross the finish line about 7 hours.

Day Three will start at Double Head Cabbage at 8 AM on March 11 en route to Burrell Boom, a distance of about 39 miles, and will take the first canoe about 3 hours and some 59 minutes to finish.

The final day, Day Four, will get started at 9 AM on March 12 in Burrell Boom, heading to Belize City for the overall final finish, that leg being a distance of about 25 miles, which will take the first canoe about 3hrs to finish.

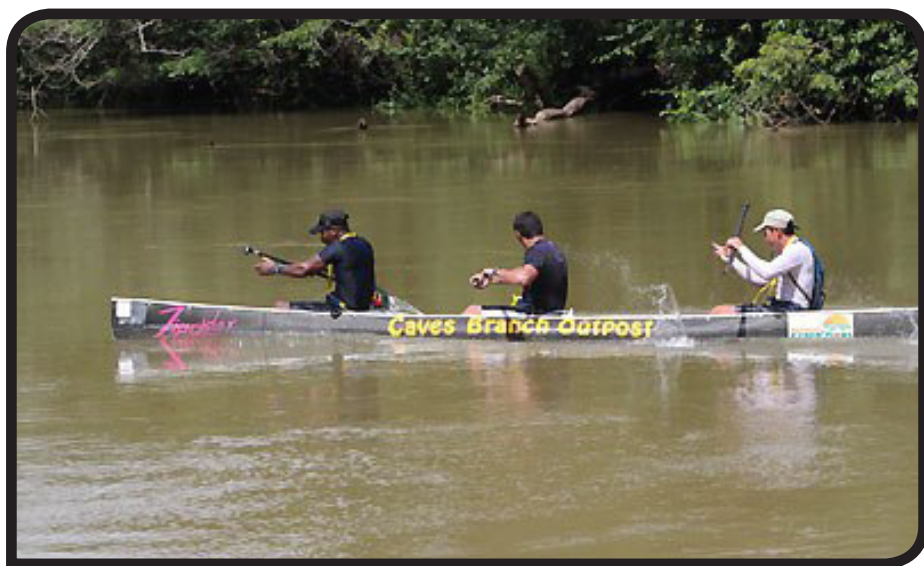
In speaking to us, the

President, Mr. Harrison, said that the foreign competitors for this year will be many and will have a significant impact on the race, and that he expects to have more canoes overall in the race this year. Last year, 93 canoes started the race, with 91 finishing.

In the Elite Category, it was the Zip Rider Caves Branch canoe who in a spectacular sprint against the Belize Bank canoe on the last day edged out the Belize Bank canoe by a mere one second to win the overall race. Be-

in the elite category line up come the 9th of March. Team Peace Makers, who won the female category, will be back to defend their title. Also, team Crime-Fighters representing the Police will be back to defend their title in the Pleasure Category, having last year dethroned the 2010 champion Print Belize. We will also be seeing the champion from Masters-Mixed, Intramural, Family and Dory Categories.

Over the years, according to the President, Roberto Harrison, the La Ruta Maya



Zip Rider, 2011 Elite Champions barely edged out Belize Bank

lize Bank had entered the final leg of the race trailing Zip Rider by three seconds.

With about fifty yards from the finish, Belize Bank managed to open a gap of about four seconds on the Zip Rider canoe to take the lead in the overall standing, but with all they had in their tanks left, the Zip Rider canoe mounted one the most exciting finishes I think you will ever see in the Belize La Ruta Maya River challenge, to close the gap and beat the Belize Bank canoe by one second to the finish line.

This year, according to the President, we will once again have the opportunity to see all the teams that took part

has also garnered a huge fan base that follows this prestigious event from start to finish; and this the year, he says, the event is a special one because it coincides with the end of the Maya Calendar.

The Mayans were, of course, living in Belize and using the Old Belize River. Mr. Roberto Harrison thanks all those who have invested in the LA RUTA MAYA to make it a success over the years. He also expresses thanks to the paddlers who invest a lot of time on the river practicing to give the loyal fans a good show come game day.

GOOD PADDLING,
GUYS AND GIRLS!



A record number of canoes expected to enter the race this year

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UNITED & STRONG UDP in BELMOPAN



John Saldivar

Area Representative



Simeon Lopez

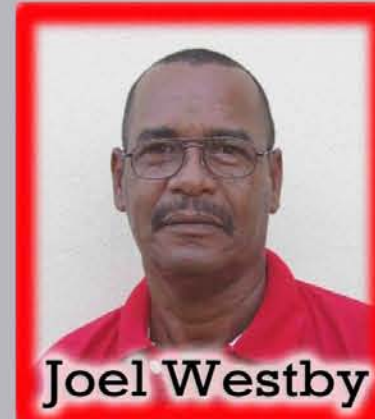
Mayor



Tita Balona



Steve O'Brien



Joel Westby



Victor Perdomo



Amilcar Umana



Anna Guy

Councillors

Wednesday March 7th



UDP - Down the Line!