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THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Citizenship for sale ... be careful before making that plunge

David Jessop

IN THE Eastern Caribbean, the offer of citizenship in return for a sizeable investment has become an important element in economic recovery. Although different countries have different schemes, the investment related to the sale of citizenship is often in a property and increasingly in the part-ownership of a hotel or tourism facility.

For some countries, overseas developers have emerged to package the sums associated with new citizenship into financing the construction of new hotels, timeshares or other forms of tourism-related schemes; sometimes employing third-party agencies to seek out 'investors' who can then be grouped together.

Citizenship schemes, of which there are many globally, provide pass-



JESSOP

ports either in return for payment or an investment. Depending on the country concerned, the cost can rise to US\$1.5 million or more, with requirements that range from the

challenging to the simple or non-existent when it comes to residence.

Among those most interested in buying a nationality are newly wealthy Chinese and Russians entrepreneurs, citizens of the Middle East, the former Soviet Republics and Africa, and US individuals who want to escape an ever-

widening tax net.

Late last year, Grenada became the latest government to announce a citizenship programme. To help try to put the nation's fiscal house in order, government announced it will bring forward a proposal for a programme estimated conservatively to bring in US\$10 million per annum.

Antigua has a similar a scheme, as do Dominica and St Kitts-Nevis, which offer investment variations on citizenship without a residency requirement.

In contrast, St Vincent has said that it will not follow other Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) nations. Its prime minister, Dr Ralph Gonsalves, has said that the position of citizen is not for sale, indicating instead that he prefers to see the privilege granted to those who invest, reside and then later apply.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

That said, the thousands of agency websites selling citizenship suggest that such schemes enhance investment in tourism, encourage non-domicile residence and result in top-end tourism and extended stays.

Whether this is the case or not, it is clear such programmes are now becoming more closely related to tourism development.

In Antigua, just two days after

taking office, the island's prime minister signed an agreement that will see a Chinese real estate development group invest up to US\$2 billion to construct several five-star hotels, over 1,300 residential units, a casino, a conference centre and a 27-hole golf course on Guiana Island. It is also reported that Yida Zhang, the principal of the company concerned, is seeking approval under Antigua's Citizenship by Investment Programme for investors in the project to acquire Antiguan citizenship.

What, however, is not widely understood is that while such schemes, if well crafted, may provide a boost to tourism investment, visitor arrivals and an improvement in the quality of the product, they also have a potential downside for the citizens of the countries concerned and the region.

Such programmes are extraterritorial in their effect as the offer of an OECS passport allows the new citizen to move freely within the region, and in some cases, beyond

to the Schengen area in Europe, to Canada, or to other parts of the world that do not as yet require visas.

Not only is this creating unease within some countries and the suggestion that there is a need to examine the implications in relation to free movement and national security, but it is also clear that external partners are watching closely the development of such programmes.

All Caribbean nations should consider carefully the implications and risks that may emerge from the understandable desire to create new sources of revenue and tourism investment. Worse, if economic citizenship without any significant residence requirement or the most detailed and exhaustive of checks were ever to be proved to have facilitated criminality or terrorism, the measure will not only have become self-defeating for the country concerned, but also potentially damaging to the region as a whole.

MoBay Jerk Fest hails Gleaner's Janet Silvera

Karrie Williams

Gleaner Writer

WESTERN BUREAU: SENIOR **GLEANER** writer, Janet Silvera, proved that hard work and commitment will be rewarded, following her receiving an Excellence in Journalism award from the LIME Montego Bay Jerk Festival committee on July 6.

The award was given to Silvera at the official launch of the fifth annual staging of the festival, held at the Riu all-inclusive resort in Ironshore, Montego Bay. The festival, which has been growing from strength to strength each year, acknowledged Silvera, particularly for her work in the hospitality industry.

An elated Silvera confessed that

the recognition came as a surprise and expressed her appreciation to the festival and everyone else who has supported her career.

"It is a good feeling to know that you are being recognised by the people that you work with on a daily basis," she said. "Tourism is my love; so I want to congratulate the Jerk Festival for highlighting what is so special about Jamaica ... thanks to everyone, including my media colleagues who continue to support me in everything that I do, thank you very much."

Though not present at the launch, **Gleaner's** editor-in-chief, Garfield Grandison, sent congratulatory sentiments to Silvera and lauded her achievements in promoting Jamaica's tourism sector.

"This award proves yet again that Janet is one of the best hospitality writers locally, regionally and indeed internationally," Grandison noted.

Described as a natural-born writer, Silvera was hailed for her work in building the island's premier hospitality news magazine, **Hospitality Jamaica**, a **Gleaner** bi-weekly publication.

A graduate of Mount Alvernia High School in Montego Bay, St James, Silvera has spent more than two decades in both the tourism industry and as a journalist. She has received numerous awards and other accolades over the years for her work and has also been featured on the American-based Travel Channel.



PHOTO BY STEVE BROWN

Sharon Parris-Chambers (left) joins Marcel Allen in presenting Janet Silvera with her Excellence in Journalism award, courtesy of the LIME Montego Bay Jerk Festival.

Caribbean arrivals up, visitor spend trending positively!

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

VISITOR ARRIVALS to the Caribbean is up in the first quarter of 2014 and so is visitor spend, said the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO).

Figures released by the CTO at Caribbean Week in Toronto, Canada on June 25, show a 2.2 per cent increase in stopover arrivals between January and March 2014, with cruise visits to the region up by 2.3 per cent.

According to CTO chairman, Beverley Nicholson-Doty, the Caribbean tourism sector has recorded improvements when compared to the corresponding period in 2013.

Visitor spend was also trending upwards, she announced, noting the increased arrivals and improved average visitor spending in the accommodation sub-sector so far. A rise of around four per cent in total spend region-wide is predicted this year.

"The accommodation sector also performed better during the first quarter than it did the same period last year, with average daily rates



DOTY-NICHOLSON

and room revenues recording growth," she told the media, adding that this was an extremely good indicator for the region in terms of people spending both on their way to the various destinations, and also while at the destinations.



MCNEILL

Regarding Canada's performance, Nicholson-Doty announced that arrivals from this market were up 3.3 per cent in the first quarter, with 1.3 million Canadians coming to the Caribbean.

The United States, with just

under 3.5 million visitors, continues to be the largest provider of tourists to the Caribbean. However, the Canadian market grew at a faster pace during the first quarter. The European market also improved, with 1.5 million visitors coming to the region between January and March 2014.

Following her comments, Jamaica's minister of tourism and entertainment, Dr Wykeham McNeill, also had good news about the buoyancy Jamaica was experiencing in the first six months of 2014.

REASON TO BOAST

"Stopover arrivals are near the one-million mark, a 2.2 per cent increase over the same period last year," he boasted during a welcome luncheon for America's largest domestic carrier, Southwest Airlines.

In 2013, the country made history when it welcomed two million stopover visitors, a 1.1 per cent increase over the previous year.

In May, during the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), annual general meeting, the tourism minister said the sector continued to do well and was poised for growth.

He attributed the successes in no small measure to the spirit of collaboration and inclusion of the sector.

Confident that things can only get better, Dr McNeill said the sector has been attracting high levels of investment, many of which include upgrading the product or constructing new rooms.

His optimism, he said, is heightened by the bill before Parliament that is designed to provide greater variety by introducing the option of timeshare vacations to Jamaica's product offering.

Even while the hotels are upgrading and the numbers are increasing, the tourism minister is assuring the country that much work is being done to improve and enhance the visitors' experience at particularly the Sangster International Airport.

"Great improvements have been made to reduce waiting time to enhance the users' experience. These improvements have received international recognition, with the airport receiving the first-place award in passenger processing from the Airports Council International," he said.

Over the next five years, several millions dollars will be spent on the introduction of new technology and to re-engineer the operations at immigration. Customs and immigration forms are also being simplified, he said.

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**PHOTO BY
JANET SILVERA**

From left: Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment's Janice Allen; Rondel Village's Carolyn Wright; the Jamaica Tourist Board's Tony King; and Jamaica Tours Limited's Maralyn Monteith, at a dinner at Senator Noel Sloley's home in Spring Farm on July 1.

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

ANYONE WHO visits the Half Moon Beach property in Orange Bay, Hanover, will agree that it is not only a nature lover's paradise, but also a writer's sanctuary.

Half Moon is not one of those properties with a fancy entrance or gateway, but upon navigating the short unpaved roadway which leads to the beach, this is where visitors come upon what many agree is a sight to behold, and a place where the senses come alive.

For more than 20 years, the Half Moon Beach offered mainly snorkelling, catamaran tours and general beach access as its key activities, in addition to overnight accommodation. But this year, the owners have expanded by introducing three new rafting tours, a motorboat tour, as well as horseback riding.

Half Moon has the distinction of possessing some of the most spectacular coral reefs in Jamaica, so on the Snorkelling and Bamboo Rafting Tour, coral reef enthusiasts and snorkelers will be escorted by one of the attraction's trained lifeguards to the various snorkel sites to view the flora and fauna of the underwater.

"There are a lot of fish out there – parrots, yellow tailed snapper, red snapper, grunts ... many different types of fish here and an occasional barracuda or two," owner of the property, Andrew Marr, quipped during *Hospitality Jamaica's* recent tour of the property.

RAFT CRUISES

The Honeymoon Bamboo Raft Cruise takes guests out to one of the tiny private islets off the mainland, for a pre-dinner rum cocktail, then on to a private beach where an exclusively assigned chef prepares grilled lobster and serves champagne, after which guests raft back to the mainland while watching the sunset.

In addition, the one-hour Romantic Bamboo Rafting tour takes guests along the coastline, out to the adjacent islets and stops along several strips of secluded white-sand beaches which are strewn along the coastline, where they get to swim and enjoy cocktails.

The other excursion is the motor boat tour, which treks up the Salt Creek River and into the quietness of the mangroves, for bird-watching, followed by a trip to the reefs for snorkelling.

Over the years, the property has been an ideal spot for persons who want to host small group parties and weddings, as well as honeymooners. Just recently, it was the



PHOTO BY CLAUDIA GARDNER

Several visitors enjoy themselves in the waters of the Half Moon Beach in Orange Bay, Hanover.



One of the gazebos at the Half Moon Beach.



The interior of one of the cabins at Half Moon Beach.

... showcasing the real Jamaica



One of Half Moon Beach's chefs prepares jerk chicken for guests of the property.



A picturesque view of the Half Moon Beach property.

place of choice for the filming of part of a German television sitcom.

"We have had shows here with 2,700 people. But really what we focus on is small groups that want to have a party with, say, 10 to 20 people who want to have a private dinner on the beach, or birthday parties. And if you have a group like that, you basically have the place to yourself. When we do weddings, they book all the rooms," Marr said.

"It's not like you are in Negril and every five feet, there is somebody else there. We get things like yoga retreats and people that want to come and be together as a group, spend a little more time together, get to know each other better," he added.

RUSTIC SPLENDOUR

Half Moon features seven rustic wooden cabins, each with its own private space, sheltered betwixt a mass of Jamaican sweet almond trees. All the cottages are ocean-front view, some less than five feet from the shore, and are equipped with hot water, refrigerators, and other basic amenities.

"There is no air conditioning and no TV. We are more in keeping with nature. They all have ceiling fans, bamboo furniture, and are quite comfortable and nice. Rustic – nothing fancy," Marr said. "We are trying to keep the place in its natural state. So we don't cut down trees; we enhance what's here. We try to plant more, instead of destroying what's here."

"If you even look from here (the beach), you can't even see a cabin. So even if you are coming in by boat, you can't see. We have a lot of repeat guests. I would say this is the real Jamaica. This is the Jamaica that everybody wants to come to. We want people to come and feel rejuvenated," he added.

The relatively shallow, azure waters of Half Moon Beach are among the most tranquil, and one of the prettiest shades of blue a visitor to the island will ever see, and where the water appears to meet the sky at the horizon is utterly majestic.

The main beach strip is several hundred metres in length and consists of sparkling white sand, which would be the envy of many beach resorts in the world. It comes as no surprise then that Half Moon Beach is among the chosen few of which photos have been taken to promote Jamaica as a beach destination.

Half Moon also has a restaurant where breakfast, lunch and dinner are served. A nature trail with footpaths is also open to all guests who visit and wish to explore sections of the property, including the garden where a variety of fruits and vegetables, and even sugar cane, are cultivated.

claudia.gardner@gleanerjm.com

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Riu says thanks with a fish fry

Riu Montego Bay and Riu Palace hosted a fish fry for its staff recently, in recognition of their hard work in the first quarter of the year. The resorts exceeded guests' expectations, and this was their way of saying thanks.



Bellmen Hugh Watson (left) and Derron Forrester.



PHOTOS BY DI FOTO SHOPPE

From left: Oshane Vival, Trudy-Ann Smith and Jamil Morrison get down to some serious fish eating, but not before smiling for the camera.



From left: Serving up some good snapper are Seduri McIntosh, Derrick Forrester, Cleon Johnson and Marlon Hew.



From left: Sheldon Henry, Seduri McIntosh, Courtney Johnson and Robert Thompson at a fish fry hosted by RIU Palace and RIU Montego Bay for its staff recently.



Nicolas Davis (left) and Julio Adams.



Lenroy Hamilton (left) and Troy Clarke at the RIU Palace and RIU Montego Bay Fish Fry.



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JTB launches Jamaica House at Glasgow 2014

SCOTLAND-BASED MEDIA were treated to a Jamaica House preview at the exclusive launch of Jamaica House 2014 on July 2. The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), in association with Barrhead Travel, held the launch at 29 private members' club, the venue that will play host to the Jamaica Tourist Board's VIP events during the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games (July 23 and August 2).

More than 30 guests were welcomed into the private members' club, including co-sponsor Barrhead Travel's chairman, Bill Munro, and representatives from Virgin Atlantic and STV, also key sponsors for Jamaica House 2014. The host venue was decked out with balloons and bunting in the iconic black, gold and green Jamaican flag colours, and a steel band played throughout the afternoon, adding to the Jamaican spirit at 29.



(From left): Caroline Donaldson, business development manager at Barrhead Travel and co-sponsors of Jamaica House 2014; Elizabeth Fox, regional director, UK and N Europe at Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB); Bill Munro, chairman of Barrhead Travel; Lesley Temple, communications and PR manager at Barrhead Travel; and Torrance Lewis, district sales manager at JTB pictured at the media launch of Jamaica House 2014 at 29, Glasgow.



Renown Jamaican chef, Levi Roots, hosted a cooking demonstration for the culinary team at 29 on how to cook Jamaican jerk chicken and patties.

HISTORIC LINKS

Sir Geoff Palmer, who was acknowledged in the Queen's Honours list and knighted recently, also joined the launch line-up. Sir Geoff outlined the historic links between the Games host nation and Jamaica, before moving on to give a master class on Jamaica's iconic tippie – rum, explaining the synergy and fusion between Jamaican rum and Scottish whisky. Elizabeth Fox, JTB's regional

director for UK and North Europe, said, "We feel excited about the warm reception Scotland is sure to give to Jamaica's athletes during the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games this summer. This is the third Jamaica House that the JTB has hosted, and the close historical links shared between Jamaica, and Scotland makes the occasion particularly poignant for us."

"Jamaica House 2014 will become Scotland's hub for all things Jamaican, so those in Glasgow for the Games should come along to 29. It will be the best place in Glasgow to support Jamaica's athletes and visit Barrhead Travel's pop-up travel agency, where there will be some great deals on holidays to Jamaica.

We're really looking forward to our private events on July 31 and August 2, where we will host our VIP travel partners and reward those journalists and clients who have supported Jamaica over the years to help make our island one of the most popular holiday destinations for Brits to jet off to," added Elizabeth Fox.

Jamaica has a long history of involvement in the Commonwealth Games and was in fact the host nation in 1966.



JTB IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

Dennis Morrison, chairman of the board of directors at the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), brings the welcome at the reception in recognition of Southwest Airlines' inaugural flight to Jamaica on July 1. The partnership between Jamaica and Southwest Airlines will see the island benefitting from daily flights out of gateways in the United States. The Baltimore/Washington route will operate twice daily from Baltimore Washington International, while there will be daily flights out of Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International and Orlando's International airport into Montego Bay. The JTB was instrumental in formalising the agreement to have Southwest Airlines expand its services to Jamaica.

Jamaica retains Canadian travel industry prestigious award

FOR THE ninth year in a row, the Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) Canadian operations have been honoured with the coveted Agents' Choice Award for the 'Favourite Tourist Board' in Canada. Through these same awards, travel agents collectively recognised Jamaica as the Favourite Honeymoon Destination for the sixth consecutive year.

The awards are presented by Canadian **Travel Press** and **Travel Courier** publications following a survey of certified travel agents across the country. This marks the 15th annual Agents' Choice Awards in which participants were surveyed on their favourites across 28 travel categories. This year, more than 5,200 Canadian travel agents cast a vote in the survey, making the awards the largest of its kind in Canada.

"We consider it an outstanding achievement for the JTB team to be honoured by

our Canadian travel-agent partners," said Dennis Morrison, chairman, the JTB. "This recognition by the Agents' Choice Awards is a reflection on the quality of our work and validates our continued commitment to promoting Jamaica as the ideal vacation and honeymoon destination for Canadians."

"While these two awards certainly reveal Jamaica's growing presence as well as the strong partnership between Canada and Jamaica, it is also a reflection of the enthusiasm and determination of the JTB in Canada," continued Morrison. "With the help of our travel-agent partners across Canada, this past year has been another milestone in Jamaica's tourism history with visitor arrivals from our Canadian friends showing steady growth. These awards encourage our team to continue delivering the first-rate product travellers can expect from Jamaica."

SUNSET rewards its staff

Karrie Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE SUNSET Beach Resort, Spa and Water Park in Montego Bay raised the bar in recognising employees with a grand staff awards ceremony, staged at the promenade of the 406-room all inclusive hotel recently.

In a real Hollywood-type glitzy affair, complete with red carpet, elegantly dressed escorts, paparazzi-type photographers and a delicious food and drink spread, the guests of honour were royally treated by their managers.

Several awards were handed out at the ceremony, with a combination of prizes being awarded to individual winners. Cash rewards, gift baskets, weekends for two at an all-inclusive resort, and certificates of recognition represent the bag of prizes taken home by awardees.

Among the lucky winners were Navlett Williams from the Laundry Department, who won the Manager of the Year Award; Steve Lawrence from Guest Services took home the Managing Director's Award, while Neville Matheson from Sanitation won the General Manager Award. Carlena Allen-Dennis from Entertainment walked away with the Guest Choice Award, while Sonia Johnson from Housekeeping won for Courtesy and Smile, marking her second consecutive win of this award.

SUPPORTIVE TEAMMATES

As the names of each winner were called out, fellow employees erupted in loud cheers, signalling their approval. Those cheers got even louder when Tadgewayne Dobson from the Kitchen Department was announced the Most Improved Team member. Edward Fairclough from Engineering won the award for Most Outstanding Team Member; while Sonia Thompson the award for Shift Leader of the Year. When all individual awards were completed, the accounting department emerged winner of the coveted Department of the Year Award.

In addition to the main awards, several incentive prizes were also



Human resources manager, Doreen Palmer, is joined on the red carpet for a photo op by sales and marketing executive, Alisteer Nelson, at Sunset Beach Resort, Spa and Waterpark Staff Awards.



Stylish couple, Jordi and Keturah Reid are all smiles at Sunset Beach Resort, Spa and Waterpark Staff Awards.



General Manager Evatt Bloomfield presents Navlette Williams with a gift basket which constitutes just one of the many prizes she received for winning Manager of the Year at the Sunset Beach Resort, Spa and Waterpark 2013 Staff Awards.

handed out, recognising a wider pool of staff for their dedicated service to the hotel.

Adding to the excitement of the evening was a scintillating performance from reigning cabaret queen, Karen Smith; who went around the promenade intimately serenading employees. Had the event been a concert, Smith would inevitably be called back for an encore, as she

had many of the employees getting out of their seats and on to the dance floor throughout her set.

Mayor of Montego Bay, Councillor Glendon Harris, who was the night's guest speaker, thanked the employees for their efforts in building Montego Bay and by extension, the island's tourism industry, encouraging them to continue striving for even higher levels of excellence.



PHOTOS BY KARRIE WILLIAMS

From left: Chenelle Budram (front office intern) and the HR team of Kerene Kirlaw, Danielle Godson and Dorianne Darmand are a show of elegance at Sunset Beach Resort Spa and Waterpark Staff Awards.



Bertral Gordon presents Sonia Johnson with a plaque for her second consecutive win of the Smile and Courtesy award at the Sunset Beach Resort, Spa and Waterpark 2013 Staff Awards.

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

YOU SEE Gloria 'Mama G' Simms, going around, sometimes barefooted, in her traditional burlap attire and matching headwear accented with natural material, and right away she reminds you of another woman with her regal bearing and no-nonsense demeanour.

That other woman is national heroine, Queen Nanny of the Maroons.

So, it came as no surprise when the producers of the full-length documentary, **Queen Nanny of the Maroons**, selected her to play the role of Nanny. Other names were mentioned, but according to Roy T. Anderson, producer, Mama G was the natural choice. "She embodies everything that symbolises the qualities that Nanny had ... quiet humility, strength, spirituality, the total package," Anderson said.

According to him, other names were tossed around, but it was Mama G whom he saw "without a doubt as the 21st century reincarnation of Nanny".

He is happy with the choice he has made, especially with the fact Mama G was recently installed paramount Maroon chief (gaa'mang) by the Okanisi Maroons of Suriname.

She was hand-picked by the gaa'mang of another tribe, who was impressed with Mama G when she visited Suriname last year. Thus, for Mama G, she believes she was selected "because people see the image of Nanny in my daily lifestyle, the way I live, the way I move. It's a very honourable role to play", she said.

STRENGTHENED WOMEN

Mama G told **Hospitality Jamaica** that one of the reasons she accepted the role was to help strengthen women to identify themselves with the image of Nanny, a strong African woman who resisted the oppressors.

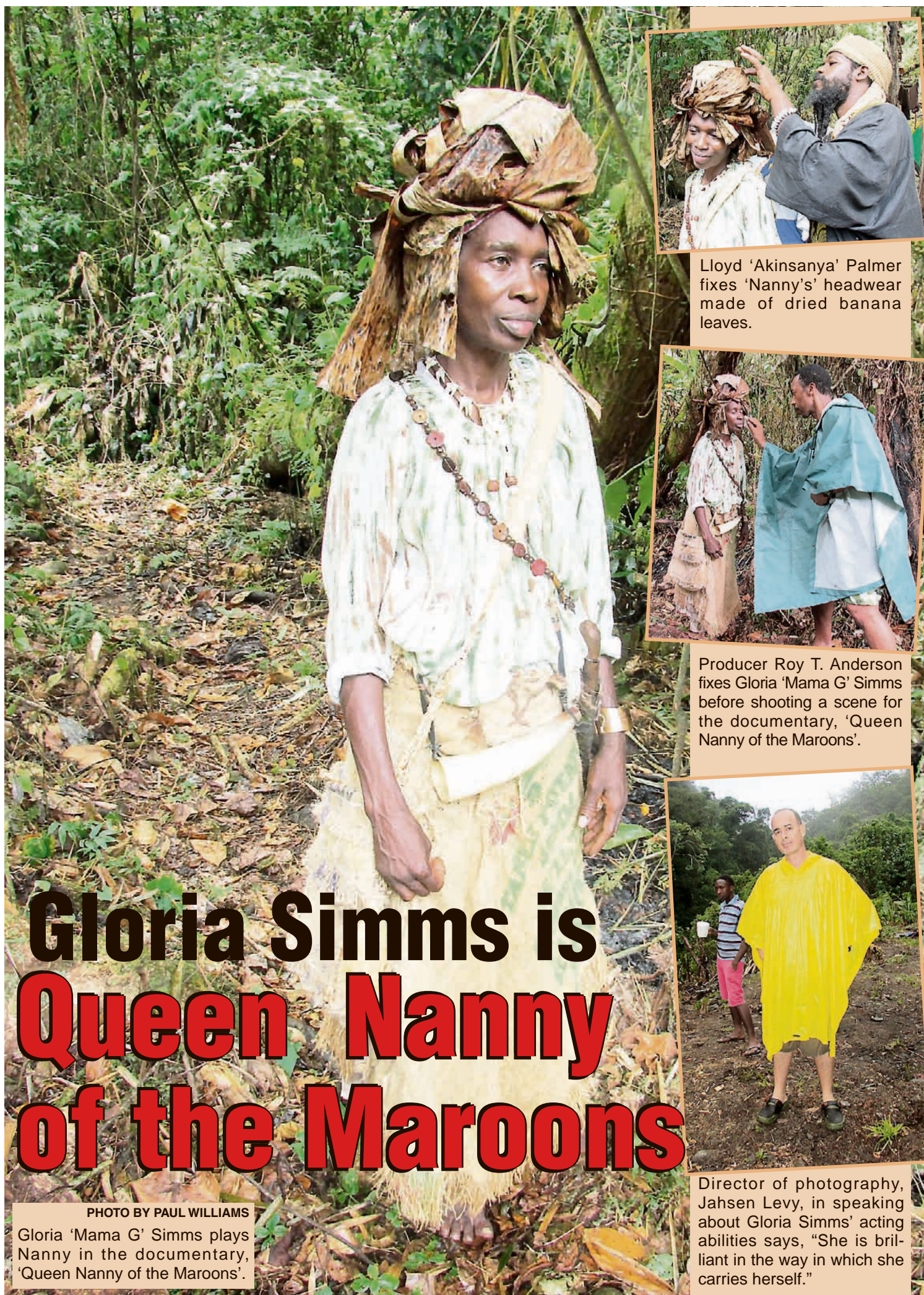
"That is the main reason for doing this movie," she said.

This is her first major acting role, and Mama G believes she was born to play Nanny. At first, she said she was a little nervous, but she just listened to and obey the directors. "They believe I am natural ... I believe it (performance so far) is good, and I am doing my best," she said.

Director of photography, Jahsen Levy, in speaking about Mama G's acting, also believes, "She is brilliant in the way in which she carries herself. I have never met Nanny, but in meeting Mama G, mi feel like mi meet Nanny ... at minimum, the softer side of Nanny."

Anderson concurs, stating, "Mama G's appearance is magnificent!"

Nanny's domains were in the rugged terrains of what is now known as the Blue and John Crow Mountains. She



Lloyd 'Akimsanya' Palmer fixes 'Nanny's' headwear made of dried banana leaves.

Producer Roy T. Anderson fixes Gloria 'Mama G' Simms before shooting a scene for the documentary, 'Queen Nanny of the Maroons'.

Director of photography, Jahsen Levy, in speaking about Gloria Simms' acting abilities says, "She is brilliant in the way in which she carries herself."

Gloria Simms is Queen Nanny of the Maroons

PHOTO BY PAUL WILLIAMS

Gloria 'Mama G' Simms plays Nanny in the documentary, 'Queen Nanny of the Maroons'.

resided in Nanny Town, which is still today one of the most remote parts of Jamaica, and to put the film into its true environmental context, the producers brought a team including Maroons from all over Jamaica, park rangers, Jamaica Defence Force soldiers, hunters and guides and the **Hospitality Jamaica** team on a four-day expedition to Old Nanny Town.

"This is an environment that Mama G claims as her own," Anderson said.

He was particularly impressed with the fact that she trekked to Old Nanny Town barefooted, "up the precipice, across the river, down embankments".

Mama G is special, he said. Levy, who said the trek to Nanny Town was "unequivocally the roughest trip" that he has ever made in his life, was equally impressed with Mama G's physical fortitude.

SELF-MADE COSTUMES

She "went barefooted on mud, rock, sticks, slide down, climb up, dig her toe in the ground like a real Maroon", Levy said about the woman who used natural material she found on the set and in the bushes to dress herself just like Nanny did. He was even more amazed that Mama G used material she got from the production, along with some of hers, to make her own costumes.

Mama G sees the sometimes brutal terrains as the place in which Nanny's spirit dwells. She said it was appropriate to do justice to Nanny's spirit. "People seeing the documentary will get an idea of what Nanny had been through ... and they must not take it for granted now that they are living in certain luxury," Mama G said.

Having landed the role of a lifetime, this has not changed her, and she does not think it will have a big impact on her personal life.

She said she doesn't feel any different playing the role of Nanny,



PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

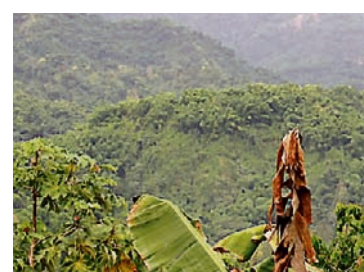
From left: The West brothers, Gerald, Ewart and Clinton, real-life hog hunters of Portland, are also hog hunters in the documentary, 'Queen Nanny of the Maroons'.



From left: Director of photography Jahsen Levy; production assistant, Maurice Lee; producer Roy T. Anderson and production assistant, Tajay McLeod getting ready to shoot a scene on the set of 'Queen Nanny of the Maroons'.



Some members of the film crew of 'Queen Nanny of the Maroons' returning from Old Nanny Town, way in the hills of the Blue and John Crow Mountains.



'Queen Nanny of the Maroons' was partly shot on location in the rugged and precipitous terrains of the Blue and John Crow Mountains.

because she has always been on the frontline working for people.

Being on film is another way of telling the story of the Maroons.

"I don't really feel like a star, but I feel honoured and humbled ... I don't see a star. I see someone who wants to do something to save the people, and what does it take? Show me and I'll do it," she asserted. Even after the film has been screened, Mama G said stardom will not be swirling around her head because "the spirit will not allow it".

FOR MANY years the Diageo Learning for Life programme has assisted in shaping the lives of thousands of underprivileged and unskilled individuals by providing them with the talents and expertise needed to become employable.

Learning for Life graduates have gone on to add value to many businesses, aiding in nation building while encouraging others to be a part of the programme. They continue to spread the word about its many benefits.

According to Dianne Ashton

Smith, head of corporate relations at Red Stripe, "Our students are always grateful for the opportunity to take them out of a life of hopelessness to a life where, to borrow the words of Ernie Els, 'they feel like they can start winning again'," she said.

"We are proud to say that of the 11,000 graduates enrolled in the programme since it started, approximately 40 per cent are gainfully employed, some on the Carnival Cruise Lines, some running their own micro-businesses, and others employed by a number of our own

customers who own and/or operate supermarkets, hotels, restaurants and bars." Ashton Smith added

Last year, over 3,000 students graduated from the programme, which has become increasingly more expensive to run. This year, through a partnership with Johnnie

Walker and the Tryall Golf and Country Club, a charity golf tournament will be held on Saturday, July 19 in Hanover.

The tournament will commence on Friday with practice rounds all day, followed by a welcome reception at 7 p.m. On Saturday, July 19 the tournament will tee off at 8 a.m., followed by an after party and awards ceremony at 6:30 p.m. at the Beach Terrace.

The entry fee for the local Golf Classic will be \$20,000 and registration is currently under way.

Johnnie Walker to host charity golf tournament



AROUND JA WITH PAUL H. Me, the crew and the 'Cricket' on Sambo Hill

For Tajay McLeod, walking up and down brutal Sambo Hill was a walk in the park.

PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

AS IF the 'near-death' wild-hog hunt experience in the hills of Zion, Portland, earlier this year were not enough, on Friday, June 20, I, the ageing adventurous one, embarked upon another hilly trek, this time to Sambo Hill in the said parish.

From the get-go at Charles Town, it was up, up, up, and in order to prevent cramps, I was at my slowest best. Soon, a television producer and I were at the back, struggling very early in the journey. Luckily, I had only a small camcorder and two small bottles of water.

Before we were left alone, we were given instructions as to what to look out for so as not to get lost. In addition, modern-day and primitive technologies were used to keep us in touch. I had no functional phone on me, so I used my big voice, which was to add a very interesting story to the trip.

At a certain point, we saw a little house in the middle of nowhere. We were at a fork on the trail. Two roads before us, pick one. On the right, we saw the marker that was left for us. So we turned right. By now, we were very exhausted. As we went up, we heard voices. So the rest of them was waiting for us? Then I realised they were asking for people who I had thought were well ahead of me.

That was when the technologies, the shouts and the phones, came into play more than ever. Four people were 'missing'. They had taken the left path at the fork. While we



The beginning of the long trek to Sambo Hill.

were waiting for them, I got the idea to walk up the path alone, just to give myself a push, and time to embrace nature. That joy at times was spoilt by the scent of rotten mangoes. Soon, the rest of the crew caught up with me, and I apologised for my waywardness.

AFRICAN ANCESTOR

And after a while, I was at the back once again. Actually, three of us were. But we were not alone. Behind us was a little man, and when I saw him with a machete, I said to the other two, "Look pon Quaco, look pon Cudjo, look pon Quao."

But they pressed on. I stopped and when he was face to face with me, I saw my African ancestors. I approached him and hugged him around his left shoulder, just like that.

He joined us, the stragglers, and I chatted with him, as we navigated the rocky terrains, to find out who he was. But, the little man, who moved like a surefooted mountain goat, went ahead of us, up the brutal paths of steep inclines, scattered milk-white rocks, slippery bamboo leaves, rotten mango odour. The worst part was a winding path of uneven stones on a steep terrain. Fortunately, there



Orville Beckford, who lives in the Sambo Hill area of Portland, guided Hospitality Jamaica writer, Paul H. Williams, down rugged Sambo Hill under the cloak of darkness on Friday, June 20.



A rugged path up Sambo Hill, Portland.

were trees to hold on to. My legs were fine, but I was so tired, I felt like sleeping on a carpet of bamboo leaves.

Yet, I enjoyed walking under the dream-like arbour created by bent rose apple trees. As short as I am, I had to bend my head at times under these seemingly weeping trees. The story is that they have been curved by the weight of the cacoons that hang from them. Cacoons are huge seeds grown in pods that hang from vines. The Maroons used them as food and to send messages by tugging their vines.

Nowadays, cacoons are stewed and eaten,



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

The crew that trekked up Sambo Hill in Portland on Friday, June 20.

and are also used to make costume jewellery. In my weary state, they were pretty to behold, but too heavy to carry. I could only carry myself to the peak of Sambo Hill from which offers fantastic views of the Portland coastline to the north, and breathtaking valleys and mountains to the south.

They were worth the trudge.

The film crew was already shooting when I reached. We were now on a slope of sorts, with the community of Bybrook way, way below. The meandering Spanish River was hardly visible. Mountain peaks rose over yonder. More peaks were behind yonder – cloud-covered ones. A jackass brayed several times, perhaps telling us the world is not level.

There were refreshments amid the shooting and the laughter, and the little man,



Buff Bay and its environs from Sambo Hill.



Jahsen Levy (left), director of photography, and Roy T. Anderson, producer of the documentary, 'Queen Nanny of the Maroons', setting up their cameras to capture footage of the Bybrook community in Portland.

who told us his name was Orville Beckford, was in the party. And as evening shadows crawled over the hills, we were ready to leave the mountain that we had conquered. The descent was expected to be easier, but it was weak knees against gravity for me. I wanted to pass the stony, winding section before dark, and it was now twilight, so I started the journey back first.

PERFECT STRANGER

Before long, night came. In the dark back to Charles Town, Orville was with me. The others had left us, but he said he would never leave me. My left knee hurt, but I was still in good spirits. Orville guided me over the loose rocks. He even cut a piece of still for me to steady my movement, and at points when it got really rough in the dark,

he held my hand lest I fall. Who was this perfect stranger whom I had embraced upon first sight?

He lives in the little house near the fork in the road where some crew members 'diverted' to the left. He was minding his own business when he heard the shouts we were making. So, he grabbed his machete, and went to see what the matter was. It was with that same machete that he cut a piece of sugarcane when we reached his yard. It was to bring up my falling blood sugar levels.

As I chewed, I reflected on what it would have been for me alone in the dark if Orville had not appeared in the pictures. It would still be fine, I suppose, but Orville made it better the night when I scrambled down Sambo Hill. Back in Charles Town, I learnt that people call him 'Cricket'.

Jamaica Inn's Ocean Spa honoured in 'Travel + Leisure' 2014 World's Best Awards

TRAVEL + Leisure, one of the most celebrated travel magazines in the United States, revealed last week that Jamaica Inn's Ocean Spa was the top hotel spa in the Caribbean, Bermuda, and The Bahamas and No. 6 in the world in the Travel + Leisure 2014 World's Best Awards.

General manager, Kyle Mais, commented on the accolade, stating that this was an incredible accomplishment and honour for the hotel and its newly renovated Ocean Spa.

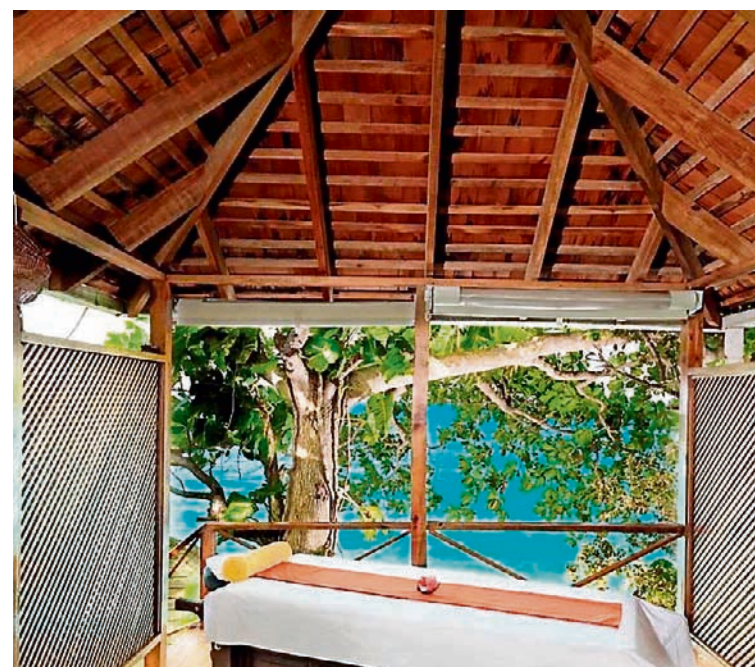
"Admittedly, we are blessed with an amazing setting. However, just a year ago, we embarked on an ambitious journey to become one of the finest spas in the industry and I am so proud of my team for believing in themselves, relentlessly pursuing excellence – and in so doing, taking the overall guest-satisfaction levels to a whole other level. This really does feel somewhat like a David-and-Goliath achievement, encouraging the team to push the boundaries of products and services even further to better serve our guests."

Now in its 19th year, Travel + Leisure readers voted on their favourite hotels, resorts, spas, airlines, cruise lines, tour operators, rental-car agencies, and more, in the annual World's Best Awards survey, honouring the best of the best in travel.

Results are available now on TravelandLeisure.com and will be featured in the August issue of Travel + Leisure on newsstands July 18, 2014.

Located in beautiful Ocho Rios, Jamaica Inn boasts an eight-acre property situated on a private cove with an offshore reef two miles east of the town centre. With a 700-foot private white-sand beach considered to be one of the best in the Caribbean, this boutique hotel is the perfect getaway for the traveller seeking unassuming style and great service.

Family-owned since 1958 and boasting a roster of famed guests including Marilyn Monroe, Ian Fleming and Kathryn Hepburn, Jamaica Inn offers timeless elegance and relaxed luxury on the best white-sand beach in Jamaica.



Tree House at Jamaica Inn.

Camp Half Moon and Teen Summer Camp to come

CAMP HALF Moon is back and just in time for the long summer holidays. Children visiting Half Moon, the luxury resort located in Rose Hall, will have an action-packed activity programme when they join Camp Half Moon.

Developed for children four to 12 years, Camp Half Moon will be available Mondays-Fridays, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. July 14 through August 22. The five-day camp will include golf, horseback riding, arts and craft, tennis and watersports.

Participation in Camp Half Moon is US\$55 per child daily, and includes all activities, lunch and snacks as well as tax and service charges.

For the first time, Half Moon will introduce the Teen Summer Camp, July 21-31, Mondays-Fridays at the Royal Pavilion from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Participation in Teen Summer Camp is US\$55 per teen per day. Registration must be by July 18, 2014. Teens will enjoy such activities as archery, environmental



awareness, recreational swimming, tae kwon do, and much more.

"We recognise that during the summer holidays, parents are often challenged with finding a vacation solution the entire family will enjoy. Camp Half Moon and Teen Summer Camp were designed with them in

mind," said Aram Zerunian, Half Moon's general manager.

"Parents can enjoy all of the amenities and activities offered at our 400-acre property, while their children enjoy the excitement of Camp Half Moon and Teen Summer Camp, under the attentive eye of our internationally trained and certified professional child caregivers," he added.

Half Moon is a 60-year-old, 400-acre legendary resort located on Jamaica's North Coast. The resort

features two miles of private, white-sand beach with 197 spacious rooms and suites. Additionally, the AAA Four-Diamond resort offers 31 expansive four-, five-, six- and seven-bedroom villas all with private pools and personal staff of butler, cook and housekeeper. In addition to spacious accommodations, Half Moon also offers guests a wide variety of amenities and activities including the multi-award winning Fern Tree, The Spa at Half Moon, a Robert Trent Jones Senior-designed 18-hole golf course, Half Moon Golf Academy, Spinning studio, 13 lit tennis courts, equestrian centre, fitness centre, 54 swimming pools, a teen activity centre, the colourful Anancy Children's Village, water sports, dolphin lagoon, and more.

Sandals' awards top GSAT performers



TOP MALE STUDENT

Kings Primary School's Top Male Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) performer, Maliek Feare (left) proudly accepts gift items courtesy of Sandals Whitehouse from public relations manager, Jervene Simpson. The occasion was the institution's school-leaving ceremony held on July 4. Feare was awarded a place at the prestigious Munro College in St Elizabeth and emerged at the top of his class in his recent internal school exams. Kings Primary is one of the many schools in the Caribbean that enjoys a rewarding partnership with the Sandals Foundation and Sandals Resorts International, and recently received a brand new library and computer room, a school facelift and stands to benefit from a Sandals Foundation's Literacy intervention initiative in the next school year.



TOP FEMALE STUDENT

Top Female GSAT performer at Kings Primary, Jodian Fowler, proudly collects her congratulatory prize from Sandals Whitehouse's public relations manager, Jervene Simpson during her graduation ceremony recently. Fowler will be attending the highly revered Manning's School in September.

Sandals' signature guest



Peter Coville (centre), Sandals signature guest, is awarded with a prize of a complimentary week's stay at a Sandals of his choice from Sandals Montego general manager, Carl Beviere (right), and long-standing employee, Dalton Smith.



Southwest Airlines captain, Mark Schulz, accepts a gift from Minister of Tourism and Entertainment, Dr Wykeham McNeill.



From left: MJB Airports Limited's Elizabeth Scotton and Southwest Airline's Gad Wavomba and John Kirby at the reception at the Sangster International Airport welcoming the first Southwest aircraft.



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

Passengers aboard the Southwest Airlines flight don their snorkeling gear inflight en route from Baltimore Washington DC to Montego Bay last week Tuesday.

Southwest Airlines begins international service to three countries

DALLAS: THE EMPLOYEES of Southwest Airlines on July 1 launched an international future for America's largest domestic airline by inaugurating service to three Caribbean destinations from three of its US gateway cities. Southwest Airlines' first international departure, Flight 1804, from Baltimore/Washington to Oranjestad, Aruba, followed by Southwest Flight 906 to Montego Bay, Jamaica, where its first-ever scheduled international arrival was planned for just after 11 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time. A midday flight from Baltimore/Washington to Nassau/Paradise Island also brought Southwest Airlines' legendary customer service to The Bahamas. To commemorate the beginning of a historic chapter for the carrier, Southwest Vacations is offering up to US\$200 off select travel packages



MBJ Airports Limited's CEO Anthony Allicastro and the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's (JHTA), new president, Nicola Madden Greig at a reception at the Sangster International for Southwest Airlines on July 1.

booked now through July 14, 2014, for travel July 4, 2014, through January 4, 2015 (blackout dates apply, three day advance purchase and minimum stay required. The bundled travel packages featuring combinations of air, hotel, car, and activities can be booked now at southwestvacations.com. "Thousands of our employees have a hand in launching the flights which begin to bring our convenient and affordable way of air travel to the world, and broaden the horizon for more than 100 million customers who fly with us every year," said Teresa Laraba, Southwest's senior vice-president of customers, during a Caribbean-themed celebration and news conference near the departure gates at Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. "We've grown through four



Chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board, Dennis Morrison (right), putting the finishing touches to his speech, while Southwest Airline's chief marketing officer, Kevin Krone, looks on during a reception welcoming the airline's inaugural flight to Jamaica last week Tuesday morning (July 1).



Deputy director of tourism, Sandra Scott (right), and regional manager of the Jamaica Tourist Board, Rosemarie Johnson.

decades of profitable service to carry more domestic air travelers every day than any other airline, and this next chapter plants a flag for Bags Fly Free (r) and No Change Fees in foreign sand." Customers on the carrier's inaugural international flights from Baltimore/Washington joined those in two other gateway cities of Atlanta, and Orlando, who celebrated alongside employees with commemorative beach balls, snorkels and masks. At the company's corporate headquarters in Dallas, employees staffed a command centre in the pre-dawn hours to monitor operational performance and new technology systems developed in partnership with Amadeus, a leading technology provider to the global travel industry. Its Alta suite of technology solutions is powering Southwest's reservations, inventory, and departure control functions for international flying. "We are extremely pleased that our next-generation technology has enabled Southwest to achieve its goal of international flying. Amadeus is committed to delivering the solutions and services that help our customers connect, serve, and manage the evolving needs of the 21st Century traveller. We are very proud to be a partner of Southwest in achieving this significant milestone today and look forward to continuing to shape the future of travel together," said Julia Sattel, senior vice-president, Airline IT, Amadeus. Southwest Airlines previously announced details to convert by the end of this year all international service offered by wholly owned subsidiary AirTran Airways, including flights to Mexico and the Dominican Republic.