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WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2015

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Rampant breaches continue at Negril Marine Park

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

DESPITE THE existence of laws prohibiting the catching of fish and other sea creatures in the Negril Marine Park, community members say there continues to be rampant breaches taking place in the resort town's coastal waters.

During the last meeting of the Negril Resort Board recently, some residents complained that fishermen were carrying on the illegal activities, while eluding the marine police.

"There are people out there dropping pots ...," Mary Viera of Couples Negril, told the meeting. "Everyday, they are out there spearfishing; they are on the beach with the fish, with tiny fish like this," she said, demonstrating the size with her fingers.

The Negril Marine Park was declared in 1998 in a bid to protect the natural resources within the park, including, among other things, coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove communities and commercially important fish. The park's boundaries cover a total of 160

kilometres and extends from Davis Cove in Hanover to St John's Point in Westmoreland.

Hotelier Diane Ennevor said the situation was the same along the West End coastline, as fishermen, some of whom travel in large boats, could also be spotted in the area hunting for fish.

"We have a problem down in the West End also, where there are several fishing boats. They come there and they throw their nets right in front of my property. Like Mary said, they pick up these little fish. They (Jamaica Constabulary Force) need to police the West End because there are problems with spear fishing everyday, and also the nets. I think the regulations say the nets have to be a certain size, but they have tiny little nets; nothing can get out," Ennevor added.

"I think they (police) need to go more routinely, because you see, it's on a Saturday that they (marine police) pass, and so on a Saturday, you don't see any of the boats because they know that that's the day they pass. So we need to do sort of impromptu on different days so that they don't know the schedule," she suggested.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, the closed season for lobster is between April 1 and June 30. During that period each year, it is illegal to catch, buy or sell lobsters. The closed season coincides with the peak breeding period of the species and is instituted to allow the animals to mature and revive its population. It is also illegal to catch berried lobsters (with eggs) or undersized lobsters (under 3.5 inches) throughout the year.

CLOSED SEASON

However, according to Viera, there were men who were selling lobster on the Negril Beach during the closed season.

"There is a man on the beach everyday – sometimes there are two of them One (of them) everyday he walks; he has his knife in his back pocket, and he has his cardboard box which is full of the lobster and he walks up and down (calling) "lobsta! lobsta!", and he pull out the knife cuts it squeeze the lime on it and sell it to the tourists," she said. "Courtesy cops are right there and they can arrest. They have the powers to arrest and they sit right there and do nothing."

"Even better – a spearfish guy came up on a property last week, right at West End with large lobster, sold it to the guests and the guests took it to the kitchen and asked them to cook it and the owner said, if any of her staff cooked the lobster, she would fire them and explained to the guests that they should not have bought this, it's out of season," she added.

When **Hospitality Jamaica** spoke to executive director of the Negril Area Environment Protection Trust (NEPT), Keisha Spencer, she said her organisation had been conducting workshops with fisherfolk within the town to make them aware of the boundaries of the park, the new zoning plan and the activities which are not allowed there. She said the last workshop was held on June 10 and that the NEPT had staged familiarisation trips for the marine police.

She said some of the spearfishing activities were being done by persons who were unaware that this activity was illegal, thus necessitating efforts at public education.

claudia.gardner@gleanerjm.com



From left: The Digicel team of Howard Dyer, Ricky Purkiss, Sheri-Lee Smith, Audia Lawrence and Stephan-Chad Haughton at the Reggae Sumfest 2015 launch at Iberostar.



PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ANGUIN

Summerfest Production directors Joe Hylton (left) and Johnny Gourzong pose with VIP Attraction's Tameka Bryce at the launch of Reggae Sumfest at the Iberostar Rose Hall last Tuesday night.

Reggae Sumfest continues to boost economy

WITH A fledgling economy, business interests in western Jamaica are looking forward to this year's staging of Jamaica's premier festival, Reggae Sumfest, with anticipation that it will provide a much-needed boost. The event is a major revenue generator for Jamaica and has contributed significantly to the economy since its inception in 1993. Apart from being integral to Jamaica's tourism landscape, attracting visitors from all across the world, the event has continuously provided a major boost to the local economy in the west, particularly Montego Bay.

Reggae Sumfest attracts audiences from all across the globe and has solidified its reputation and position as the best reggae festival in the world. Summerfest Productions, creators of the festival, invest over \$100 million to stage the world-class event. According to Robert Russell, chairman of Summerfest Productions, "Each year, our costs go up and, as such, our expenditure on the festival increases. Through sponsorship, we are able to offset some of these costs, but the bulk of it, we bear."

"The benefits to the economy and to the sponsors are tremendous. This event has always been about showcasing Jamaican talent and putting Brand Jamaica on show. We attract many tourists to our shores during this time. This benefits the airline industry, hotel, restaurants, taxi and transport companies, vendors and many other business interests," Russell added.

The investment made by organisers of the festival translates into hundreds of jobs, new business opportunities and several other economic and social spin-offs.



Donald Martin (left) shares lens time with Iberostar's managing director, Philipp Hofer.

This in turn leads to greater economic benefits for the country as a whole.

For this year's staging, big-name acts such as Jennifer Hudson, Common and Yazz the Greatest of **Empire** fame have already been confirmed. The event is shaping up to be a great show with the organisers promising a revamped production.



From left: Jackie Norman, reggae artiste Mackie Conscious, and Marcus Stewart.



PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ANGUIN
From left: Olivia Dwyer, Al Robinson and Maia Chung at the Reggae Sumfest launch.



From left: Karique Smith, Warren Bellinfantie-Wellington, Kieran Cartez and Sandra Bellingfantie at the Reggae Sumfest 2015 launch.



From left: Melisa Lewis, Patrice England, Dahlia Martin, Courtney Forbes and Solaire Doeman.



From left: Customs' Claudette Coombs, UWI Western Jamaica Campus' Inderia Adjudah, and president of the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Gloria Henry.



From left: Nicholas Campbell, DJ Kentucky (Sean Stewart) and Leon Elliot at the Reggae Sumfest launch at the Iberostar in Montego Bay last week Tuesday night.



Ricky Teets (left), who is booked to perform at Reggae Sumfest 2015, poses with Darshon Lindo.

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David Jessop

ALITTLE over four weeks ago, I attended a conference in the English countryside for a small number of invited participants from the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and North America.

The discussions were wide-ranging in scope, but focused mainly on where the region might be 15 years from now, and where a younger generation of Caribbean professionals saw its future.

In general terms, there was a view that the future fortunes of the region may lie in economic convergence between complementary economies, rather than in trying to make existing models of economic integration involving every CARICOM nation work.

One consequence was that participants from the northern Caribbean, and in particular, from Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, argued that there may be greater future value in Jamaica, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic being in a closer economic relationship that might also involve Cayman as a financial hub. The suggestion was that there were better opportunities for growth through a more rational approach to economic integration between geographically proximate, complementary economies linked to much-improved

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Where will Caribbean tourism be in 15 years?

transport infrastructure. This was not meant to replace CARICOM, but to be a new route to economic convergence in the Caribbean basin.

ECONOMIC DRIVER

It was accepted, with some reservations, that tourism would for the foreseeable future be a significant driver of the Caribbean economy, and it was suggested by some of those present that the industry could be central to developing a new model of economic integration. As a start, it was proposed that the countries and the industry could begin to work out practically how multi-destination tourism might work among the four countries.

Such an approach, long discussed but rarely implemented, could, it was suggested, link Montego Bay with Grand Cayman, Havana and

Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic in a way that a two- or three-destination vacation could be constructed in a manner that was complementary.

This would involve challenges. Quality airlift would be required; there would need to be a single travel document that enabled visitors having entered one country to be able to enter the others without formality and form-filling; an agreement would need to be reached on visitor taxes at airports; and the offering would have to be sure to capture for the visitor the cultural difference of each location.

Such an approach, it was observed, would be a step along the road to closer economic integration, especially if it was used to promote inter-regional travel and trade. While there was a role here



JESSOP

for specialist tour operators, what was far less clear was who would bear the cost of developing such programmes and be able to underwrite the cost of the inter-regional airlift to at least make it initially viable.

What also emerged from a discussion of tourism's role in regional integration was the need to understand better what the wider Caribbean was doing and what the region had to offer.

NEW AIR ROUTES

A working group at the conference also heard an interesting description about how tourism and the consequent new air routes that are being developed might, in the case of major regional hubs, play a broader role in economic integration. Punta Cana at the eastern end of the Dominican Republic is now the busiest airport in the region and has plans to become a regional

transshipment point for high-value and perishable cargo. The thinking of the airport's and destination's private-sector owners is that its direct connections from South America, Europe, the United States and as far east as Russia, means that the location could become of value to many more South and Central American and Caribbean producers wanting fast transshipment to locations where high-value fruit, vegetables flowers, and seafood command premium prices.

It is already providing such a service, but believes that as the freight capacity of almost all of the 400-plus tourism-related flights it receives a week have significantly underutilised cargo capacity, that a much greater volume of Dominican and foreign produce and high-value manufacture items could be transhipped through the airport's growing cargo facility.

No doubt, the conference report will in due course spell out these and some of the other interesting ideas that the conference discussed, but it was clear from the exchanges that tourism will remain central to the region's future growth, even if this view is yet to fully take hold with electorates.



HEARING IMPAIRED EXCELLING IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Demar Hayles, the newest hearing impaired staff member at the Grand Palladium resort, converses with the resort's electrician and sign language interpreter, Gary Hemmings (left), in the lunch room on Friday.

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IN A society where research has shown that the hearing impaired are often overlooked for job selection, there are some members of that community who are making their mark in Jamaica's tourism industry.

Hospitality Jamaica recently had the opportunity to interview, via interpreter Gary Hemmings, six hearing-impaired members of staff employed to the Grand Palladium resort in Hanover, most of whom have been with the resort from the day it opened.

Among them is Sylvan Boyd, a 35-year-old from Grange Hill in Westmoreland, who is a past student of the Mandeville School for the Deaf. The father of a four-month-old said when he saw the hotel being constructed, he figured it would be all-embracing, and so he was confident at the outset that he would not only be able to get a job there, but get along with his co-workers. He was hired and started out in the stewarding department, moving later to the butcher shop.

At 34, his colleague, Edward Calbert, also started out in the

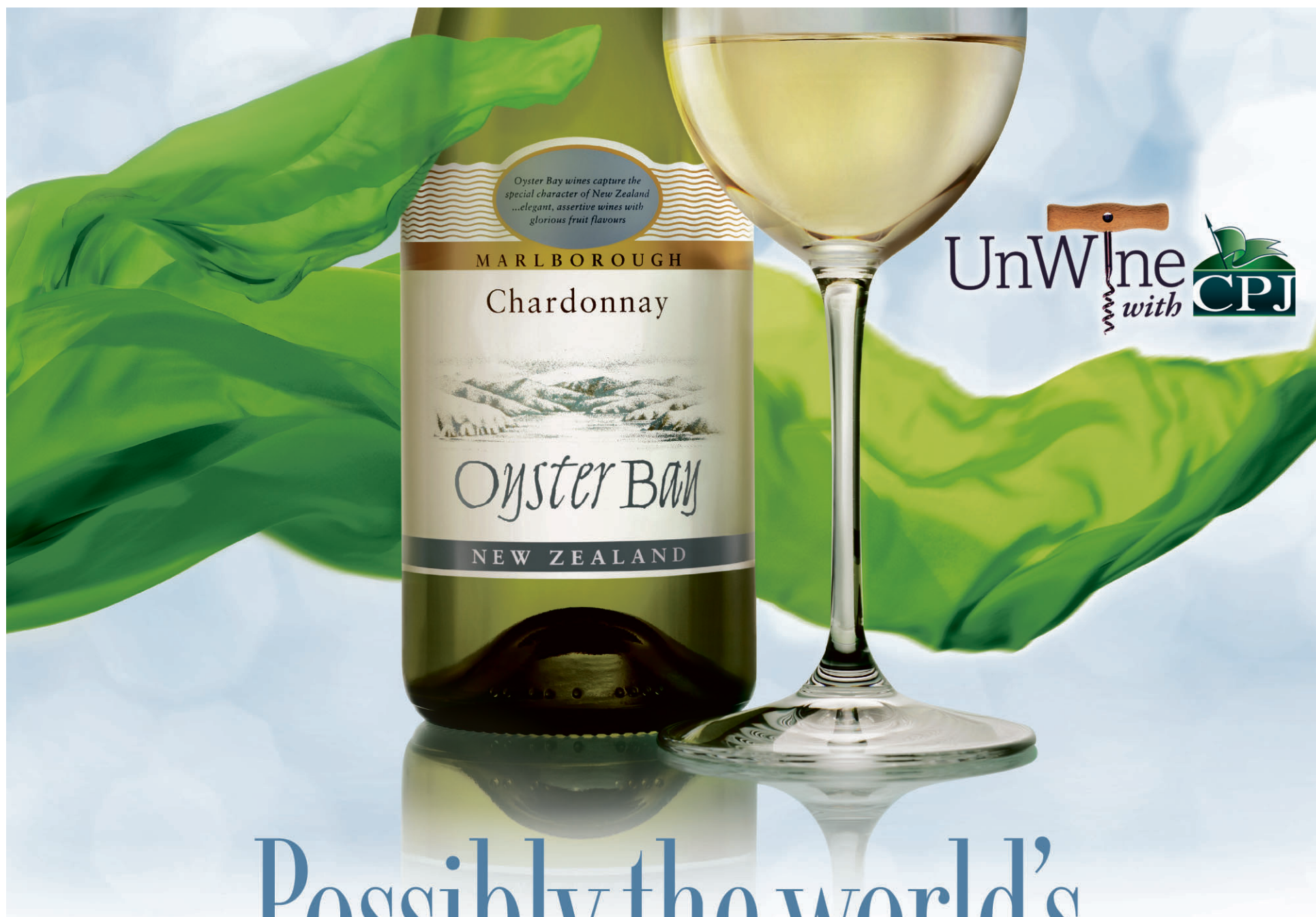
stewarding department and was later promoted to the position of cook. Prior to the Grand Palladium, the father of two worked as a gas pump attendant at a service station.

But there are others who have not had similar success. A 2011 paper, titled **A Sociolinguistic Profile of the Jamaican Deaf Community**, published by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, an international faith-based organisation, noted that more than half of the deaf community in Jamaica lives in poverty. The research paper also noted that "many are unemployed and have difficulty finding jobs, due to lack of communication access, necessary qualifications and the necessary social networks typically needed to find work in Jamaica".

Another article published by the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf also noted that after completing school, "the deaf go through difficult times" and that "employers do not know sign language and have no way to communicate with the deaf", and so many of them are jobless.

"No job means no money to buy food, clothes, or even soap. Without

PLEASE SEE **HEARING**, 13



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NEW ZEALAND
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Barbara Ellington and Janelle Oswald
Hospitality Jamaica Writers

WHEN WE heard that Ocean Spa at our island's very own Jamaica Inn hotel in Ocho Rios, St Ann had placed sixth in the list of Top 10 Best Spas in the World, we decided to put those results to the test.

Ocean Spa scored 96.00 out of 100, just one point behind St Regis Aspen Colorado in the United States of America, which scored 97.33, based on a **Travel & Leisure Magazine** spa survey.

The experience at the 48-suite and two-bedroom cottage boutique hotel begins upon arrival, as courteous staff greets you. From the lobby, you automatically have to pause to drink in the magnificent view of perfectly landscaped grounds and pristine white-sand beach. The vista is punctuated by visitors lounging on their towels or beach chairs, while others enjoy the pool and swim-up bar.



A selection of the natural products used at the spa.

Inside this classy blue and white boutique hotel lies a chic establishment with old school charm – where gentlemen are still required to wear long trousers and collared shirts after 7 p.m. and the staff knows all their guests by name. They have mastered the simple art of serving visitors for decades with its lavish, uncompromising first-class service.

Photographed by glossy fashion magazines like **Vogue**, **Elle** and **Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition**, the late Caribbean travel expert, Marcella Martinez, cancelled a Jamaica trip when Jamaica Inn was sold out or otherwise unavailable.

Known in the '50s as the jetsetter's destination of choice, Jamaica Inn has hosted Hollywood aristocracy and British nobility. Former guests include: Errol Flynn, Noel Coward, Vivian Leigh, Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller, Ian Fleming and artist/stage designer, Oliver Messel and the late British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill.



One of several breathtaking views at Jamaica Inn.



The entrance to the Ocean Spa, at Jamaica Inn in Ocho Rios, St Ann.



Gift certificates are also available at the Ocean Spa, Jamaica Inn.

Left: Upstairs this structure is where you will receive a most memorable massage to the sounds of the sea.



This bedroom features locally crafted pieces.

BLUE MOUNTAIN MOMENTS

This revitalising treatment begins with a gentle and invigorating scrub from head to toe that is absolutely blissful. Using grated coconut and Blue Mountain coffee granules, each brush stroke aids the removal of dead skin cells and circulate a healthy blood flow around the body. The sweet aroma of the treatment also stimulated all my senses helping to relieve stress and tension. It was rinsed off in warm water under an open-air bamboo shower and only colourful butterflies to keep me company.

Aa oatmeal, ground Blue Mountain coffee and coconut milk mixture was spread over my body, which softened and nourished my skin. I learnt that this secret formula removes impurities and dry surface cells, including cellulite. I was amazed by how sensational I felt from

the thick, organic substance left on my body, and I was wrapped in foil and left in silence to meditate with only my face exposed to the cool breeze entering the open air bamboo hut. This treatment ended with another warm shower (80 minutes cost US\$180).

My treatment concluded after I was led up an open-air tree house, where I had an Ocean Deep Massage with oil, focusing on my back, shoulders and feet. This replenishing massage literally sent me to sleep to the sounds of the sea crashing on the rocks below (50 minutes cost US\$120 OR 80 minutes for \$180).

My feet were also blessed and pampered with a deluxe Coco Cream Pedicure and I experienced the wonders of coconut finished with a hot peppermint towel and a fabulous, bright, sparkly polish (US\$65).



Jamaica Inn is a favourite with couples who want to make the ultimate statement with their wedding destination. This is an ideal spot for a reception.



Sebert Freebourne, a senior bartender, wears a courteous smile as he pours drinks.



The bartenders are courteous and always ready to serve at the bar where legend says Sir Winston Churchill taught author Ian Fleming to make the famous 'shaken, not stirred' martini.



The efficient and expert staff at the Ocean Spa: (From left) Tamara Brown Morris, therapist; Sheree Adams Jackson, spa manager; Yolanda Newby, therapist; and Tyrone Smith, spa attendant.

BARBARA ELLINGTON'S TREATMENT: OCEAN RITUAL

This signature spa experience begins with an organic pineapple and coconut body buff. This exfoliation will remove unwanted surface cells, smooth the texture and bring a glow to the skin. This is followed by an invigorating outdoor shower and a head-to-toe coco pure cocoon using Jamaica's finest organic coconut butter and milk and provide the skin with a new-found glow.

Once again, I showered under the clear Jamaican skies before the treatment concluded with an aromatic, blissful stone massage, guaranteed to gently melt muscle tension. It also left my skin feeling like a new-born babe.

For the purpose of this story, I got an added bonus of a pedicure, and an element that elevated this to stratospheric levels was the warm towel applied to the feet after they were scrubbed. Absolutely to die for!

I must confess two things. This rivals the best spa experiences I had in Bangkok, Thailand, and I was so relaxed that I dozed off about three times during the treatment. It is definitely worth the drive from anywhere in Jamaica. It lasts 120 minutes for US\$300.

JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD CANADA IS NUMBER ONE



Dennis Morrison (second right), chairman of the Board of Directors at the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), was elated to collect the Baxter Travel Media's annual Agents' Choice Awards from David McClung, president, Baxter Travel Media, which designated JTB Canada the Favourite Tourist Board in Canada. Sharing in the moment on June 24 were Paul Pennicook (right), director of tourism, and Philip Rose, regional director, JTB Canada. This win was truly momentous as it was the 10th year in a row that JTB Canada was winning this prestigious award. Baxter Travel Media are the publishers of 'Canadian Travel Press' and 'Travel Courier', two of the top travel-trade publications in Canada.

Jamaica fêtes diaspora at special appreciation reception

AS A thank you to the diaspora community, the Jamaica Tourist Board and the Norman Manley International Airport recently hosted a special reception in their honour in mid-town Manhattan. The hosts thanked them for being integral to the success of tourism in Jamaica's capital city, Kingston. A wide cross section of persons from this key target group – comprising members of alumni associations, businesses, clergy, community groups, not-for-profit organisations, and unions – attended the invitation-only event.

Jamaica's director of tourism, Paul Pennicook, in his remarks reiterated the importance of the diaspora to the island's tourism.

"You're our ambassadors and we thank you for your ongoing support over the years. We are happy to report that overall arrivals for the winter, that is, January through April 2015, are up five per cent," noted Pennicook.

The tourism director also advised the audience that 25 per cent of visitor traffic to Jamaica arrives in Kingston. He further noted that persons visiting the North Coast can now choose to arrive through the Norman Manley International Airport.

"Some of you may not know, but one-third of the north-south link of the highway is now completed. This has already chopped 25 minutes off the Kingston-to-Ocho Rios journey because persons are now able to bypass Mount Rosser. Additionally, the rest of that highway should be completed by the first quarter of 2016, and it is estimated that it will make the journey from Kingston to



Director Pennicook (sixth left) with the lucky winners.



PHOTO BY KWABENA BROWN

Jamaica's consul general, Herman G. LaMont (second right), and Alfred McDonald (right), senior director, commercial development and planning, Norman Manley International Airport, share the lens with Suzette Rochester, Florida manager, Victoria Mutual Building Society, and Andrew Lawrence, president/director of the Caribbean Trade Council Inc in Hartford, Connecticut, United States.



New York State Senator Leroy Comrie (left) poses with Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook during the Diaspora Appreciation Reception.

“You're our ambassadors and we thank you for your ongoing support over the years.”

Ocho Rios less than an hour,” emphasised Pennicook.

Among the government officials in attendance at the special reception were Ambassador Courtenay Rattray, Jamaica's permanent representative to the United Nations; Herman G. LaMont, Jamaica's consul general; and New York State Senator Leroy Comrie.

The reception comprised airline and hotel giveaways throughout the evening, along with live entertainment. Refreshments were supplied by Caribbean Food Delights, Country Kitchen, Golden Krust Caribbean Bakery & Grill, The Door Restaurant, Tower Isles, and Grace Foods. Participating airline partners included Caribbean Airlines, Delta, Fly Jamaica and JetBlue, who all donated tickets for giveaways.

Hotel sponsors included the Altamont Court, The Jamaica Pegasus, The Knutsford Court and Spanish Court hotels, which all donated weekend stays. VIP Attractions also donated lounge passes. Other partners include the Consulate General, Victoria Mutual Building Society and VP Records.

For more information about travel to Jamaica, please go to www.visitjamaica.com.

Marcia Morris is the JHTA's Supervisor/Manager of the Year

MARCIA MORRIS, executive housekeeper at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, is the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) Supervisor/Manager of the Year for 2014.

Morris surpassed five other finalists, taking home the coveted award at the JHTA Annual General Meeting at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay.

Named the hotel's top manager in 2014, Morris joined the Hendrickson Group in 1997 as a linen attendant at The Courtleigh Hotel and Suites. Within less than a year, she was promoted to housekeeping supervisor.

It has been upward mobility for the executive housekeeper, who was transferred to The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in 2012.

"Morris epitomises the many qualities it takes to be recognised as an industry leader. She is a natural leader and motivator and is held in the highest regard by colleagues, co-workers and clients alike, as can be evidenced

by the kind compliments she receives from her team members," says director of sales at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, Prudence Simpson.

For her staff, she can do no wrong and is well-respected.

"She cares for her staff. She treats us like her children. If any of us is ill, she calls 99 times to check how we are doing. She genuinely cares for people," said a member of her team.

According to the team member, Morris is constantly organising team-related events.

"We have a weekly praise and worship session in our department and she organises an outing for us annually."

Big on the benefits of education, Morris is known to encourage her staff to become qualified.

"She will always try to adjust our work schedule to accommodate our studies. She is always there for staff from all departments for their birthdays, weddings and deaths. She attends every nine-night, near or far. Morris



Marcia Morris, executive housekeeper of The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, was named the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's Supervisor/Manager of the Year for 2014.

is a no-nonsense manager, she works very hard and cares for the guests."

STELLAR SERVICE

In 2014, Morris led her housekeeping team in offering stellar service to several VIP groups, including head of International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde; head of IDB, Luis Moreno; Nation of Islam – Million Man March leader, Minister Louis Farrakhan, as well as annual groups from the Caribbean Examination Council, Caribbean Premier League Twenty20 Cricket, and the International Seabed Authority.

"Mrs Morris' attention to detail has been commended on many occasions by the VVIP's who have stayed in our luxury suites," said Simpson.

She is as active in her community as she is at work and is regarded as a very supportive individual in Linstead, St Catherine, where she grew up. Each summer, she uses her personal resources and arranges a festivity day for the community.

In the neighbourhood where she lives, she often prepares a meal and invites all her neighbours to partake. Morris is also an active participant in the annual Kingston City Run Charity race and the Maxfield Park Children's Home charity drive.



Marilyn Burrowes, president, Association of Jamaica Attractions.

Marilyn Burrowes named AJAL president

DOLPHIN COVE'S director of marketing, Marilyn Burrowes, has been named president of the Association of Jamaica Attractions (AJAL).

Burrowes, a vice-president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), has served in this capacity before. She headed the association from 2006-2008. As a result, this is familiar territory for her.

According to the new president, attractions are vitally important to Jamaica.

"It is the attractions that make Jamaica the most popular destination of the Caribbean," she stated, promising to continue the growth of the organisation by encouraging membership and licensing with the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB).

Hoping to entice new blood into the association, Burrowes says the reality of the hard economic times has seen the association reducing its 2015-2016 dues.

In addition, in her first speech to members, Burrowes said AJAL's voice will be heard, "ensuring we receive the recognition we duly deserve".

Along with her executive team, which includes first vice-president

Althea Bryan of Blue Mountain Bicycle Tour, and second vice-president Johnny Gourzong of River Raft Limited, Burrowes says the newly elected board aims to brand the association as the keepers of quality visitor attractions; seek industry discounts for its members; and encourage those already licensed with the JTB to get on board.

Rounding out the new executive are Mandy Sprague of Colourful Jamaica; Judy Schoenbein, Braemar Tours; Alex De Buono, Prospect Outback Adventures; Trina DeLisser, Half Moon Equestrian Centre; Jomo Pitterson, Dunn's River Falls; and Ryan Terrier of Island Routes.

AJAL arose out of a necessity to lobby issues pertaining to the planning and development of the attraction sector of Jamaica's tourism industry, and has been tagged a unique initiative in the Caribbean region.

Some 50 prominent attraction operations, covering areas such as heritage, adventure, watersports, cultural, nature and marine segments, are represented by AJAL.

With Burrowes' new appointment, AJAL says it is positioned to make a significant difference between 2015 and 2016 by means of representation and lobbying for the sector.



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EVITA'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT: WHERE THE *stars* DINE

Carl Gilchrist
Hospitality Jamaica
Writer

IT'S BEEN 31 years since Eva Myers opened Evita's Italian Restaurant and began serving meals from its mouth-watering Jam-Italian menu.

And as fine as the food is, it is matched by the clientele that dines at the restaurant, situated on Eden Bower Road, which offers a panoramic view of the resort town of Ocho Rios.

Over the years, Evita's has served stars from home and abroad, with the lot including movie stars, musicians, politicians and others.

Some businessplaces would love to have even one superstar on their list of customers, but check this list from Evita's, with photos on the walls of the restaurant to prove it.

From overseas, the list includes musicians such as LL Cool J, Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones, and members of the British reggae/pop band, UB40.

Actors such as Brad Pitt, Daniel Radcliffe, Dennis Hopper, Anthony Hopkins, Uma Thurman, Josh Lucas, among others, have dined at Evita's over the years.

On the politics side, US Senator Bob Graham; Haiti tourism minister, Joaquim Chissano; Kofi Anan, former secretary general of the United Nations; Princess



Eva Myers with a dish, fettuccine contessa



Miss Jamaica World 2013, Gina Hargitay (left), with her mom, Marlene Campbell-Hargitay (right), and Eva Myers.

Margaret; US Ambassador Stanley McLelland; Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the US House of Representatives; US ambassador, Andrew Young, among others. For good measure, throw in Paul Allen, co-founder of Microsoft.

Locally, the list includes musicians such as Sean Paul, Rita Marley, Cat Coore (Third World band), Carlene Davis, Tommy Cowan and Romain Virgo.

The list also includes Chris Blackwell, politicians such as current prime minister Portia Simpson Miller, John Pringle, Governor General Sir Patrick Allen and Lady Allen.

Add to the list media personalities Simon Crosskill, Anthony Miller and Sanjay, and also Miss Jamaica World 2013, Gina Hargitay.

Over the years, Evita's has received numerous awards, including the Corporate Award and Tourism Award from the St Ann Chamber of Commerce.

The most significant award, however, must be the knowledge that the product attracts people from all over the world.

Last year, two staff members, Sonia Buchanan and Andrea Rose-English, were awarded for being at the restaurant for 23 and 22 years, respectively.



Eva Myers shares lens with reggae star Romain Virgo and his mom.



Eva Myers (centre) and the two staff members, Sonia Buchanan (left) and Andrea Rose-English, who have been with Evita's for 23 and 22 years, respectively.

Work together to maximise sports tourism benefits – McNeill

MINISTER OF Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill has charged tourism and sports stakeholders to work together to maximise the potential of sports tourism and its benefits to Jamaica. He stated that “given the strength of Brand Jamaica and our prominence in sports there is no limit to the success we can achieve if we come together”.

McNeill was addressing the stakeholders at a JAMAICA Sport workshop held on June 25 at The Knutsford Court Hotel, New Kingston. The workshop introduced two models for evaluating the economic impact of sports events, Jamaica STEAM (Sport Tourism Economic Assessment Model) and Media PRO.

“The value of sports tourism is said to be over US\$600 billion internationally. Given Jamaica’s prominence in sport and the strength of our brand, we have to ensure we can get a slice of this pie,” said McNeill.

He pointed out that sports tourism affects the host country in two ways, the direct effect of atten-



Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill (second right) discusses the many benefits of using cutting-edge data-based evaluation models to boost tourism with (from left) director of research, Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance, Anthony Fisher; managing partner of Canada-based firm, The Data Jungle, Derek Mager; deputy director of tourism, Jamaica Tourist Board, Jason Hall; and director of sponsorship and marketing, Reggae Marathon, Diane Ellis. The occasion was a special workshop hosted by JAMAICA Sport to sensitise sports and tourism stakeholders to two new evaluating models – Jamaica STEAM and Media PRO.

dance of competitors, spectators and other accompanying persons and the indirect effect that comes from marketing the destination.

As an example of the power of sports as a marketing tool, McNeill cited the successful Jamaica House concept, an initiative that leverages the global focus on the Jamaican track and field team at major sporting events to market Destination Jamaica.

CONTINUOUS VISITOR INCREASE

To underscore his point, McNeill noted, “Prior to 2012, we had experienced four consecutive years of negative growth in visitor arrivals out of the UK (United Kingdom). In 2012, we hosted Jamaica House at the London Olympics.

“In 2013, we saw the positive impact in an increase in arrivals; in 2014, arrivals increased by 17.5 per cent, and since the start of 2015, we have had a 27 per cent increase in arrivals out of the UK.”

He emphasised that while not the sole reason for increases out of this market, the concept played a significant role in boosting arrivals.

The minister welcomed the intro-

duction of Jamaica STEAM, which will project and measure the economic impact of both sports and entertainment; and Media PRO, which will measure the media value and reach of these events.

“We want to ensure there is an empirical mechanism to ensure the sports events have maximum impact on tourism given our financial constraints,” said McNeill. He encouraged all sports organisations to embrace the use of these evaluation models to measure their events for various purposes including sponsorship.

The sport evaluation workshop was conducted by Anthony Fisher from the Canadian Sports Tourism Alliance and Derek Mager from Canada’s Data Jungle, who have a proven record in both fields.

JAMAICA Sport chairman, Chris Dehring described the models as “tried, tested and true” and said that in a very competitive environment it is important to professionalise sports investment and properly assess how the money is being spent.

JAMAICA Sport is a multi-sectoral body established in 2014 to examine the commercial opportunities provided by sports tourism; leverage Brand Jamaica and sporting events held locally and internationally to ensure that Jamaica maximises marketing and promotional opportunities while encouraging additional visitors to our shores.

HEARING

CONTINUED FROM 6

a job, living arrangements are often precarious. Many live at the mercy of others and are often abused,” the article noted.

Boyd, Edward and their co-workers, Adrian Gayle, Gary Muir, Nathan Gordon and Demar Hayles, use a variety of methods to communicate with their peers at the resort, including layman signs (universal signs), writing and lip reading.

Gayle, 32, is also a foundation member of staff at the resort which has his roots in Mt Salem, Montego Bay. He attended the Brown’s Town School for the Deaf, and serves in the Grand Palladium’s stewarding department. He had work experience before going to Palladium as he worked in a bakery in the Montego Bay Freeport.

“I love to work hard. I am not lazy,” he told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

The eldest member of the group is 48-year-old Muir. A cook, he has also been working at the resort since it opened. Originally from Barbican



Electrician at the Grand Palladium and sign language interpreter, Gary Hemmings (standing, left) poses with the six members of the Grand Palladium’s staff, several of whom helped to teach him sign language during his early days at the resort. With him are (at back, from left) Nathan Gordon, Demar Hayles and Gary Muir. Stooping (from left) are Adrian Gayle, Sylvan Boyd and Edward Calbert.

in Kingston, he is a graduate of the Lister Mair Gilby School for the Deaf. He spent several years as a food vendor before landing a job at the hotel. His colleague, Nathan Gordon, also started out in the stew-

arding department, but is assigned to the kitchen. He worked as a mechanic prior to his employment at the resort, five years ago.

Demar Hayles, the newest hearing impaired staff member, commenced

work at the hotel six weeks ago. He worked as a baker at a restaurant in Mandeville in the past.

For human resources manager at the Grand Palladium, Sheryl Wilks, the inability to hear and speak does

not impact her hearing-impaired team members’ on-the-job performance. She said the first hearing impaired staff member that came to an interview was hired and adjusted so well that it set the pace for the hiring of other competent members of the community over the years.

“I happened to meet one of them here who came for an interview, and I found it very challenging to interview him, so I had to write the questions. He in fact had worked before, but not in the hotel industry, but as a labourer He wanted to be a cook, but even our cooks have to be out on the line sometimes, but having heard all of that, I decided to try and see if it worked out,” Wilks said.

“I don’t even remember sometimes that they are hearing impaired at all. They work well just like anyone else. There is no problem communicating. It is hard sometimes to remember that they have that little impairment because they don’t let it get into the way of anything,” she added.

claudia.gardner@gleanerjm.com



Embassy of Japan workers enjoying traditional Jamaican food at the Seventh Annual Charles Town International Maroon Conference held from June 20-23.

Strong international presence at Maroon conference

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE CHARLES Town International Maroon Conference is known for its global presenters of scholarly papers, among other things. It is also a process which is a magnet for non-academic guests from all over the world.

At the seventh installation this year, held from June 20-23, in the Asafu Yard, Charles Town, Portland, there was once again a strong international flavour.

On Sunday, the 21st, the UNESCO cluster offices in Cuba and Kingston were represented by Robert Parua, officer-in-charge/programme specialist for education and culture. Parua is indigenous to Papua New Guinea.

In addressing the gathering, Parua said UNESCO was pleased to partner with Charles Town Maroons and their Colonel Frank Lumsden, the African Caribbean Institute of Jamaica/Jamaica Memory Bank and the Institute of Jamaica for seventh staging of the event.



A Chinese Embassy staffer knocks fists with a youngster from Charles Town.

"I commend the Maroon community for continuing to preserve and promote indigenous cultural and heritage values," he told the gathering.

Hiromoto Oyama, counsellor at

the Embassy of Japan, representing Japanese Ambassador Masanori Nakano, in mentioning Jamaica's nomination for the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park to be inscribed as a World Heritage



Colonel Frank Lumsden presenting counsellor at the Japanese Embassy, Hiromoto Oyama, with one of his paintings at the Seventh International Maroon Conference in Charles Town, Portland.

Site, said he himself had visited the Blue Mountains five times.

"We are doing this because as a culture-rich country, Japan strongly believes that culture should be an integral part of the nation-building process," he said.

Culture and national identity are the key to national development, in essence, he added.

The eastern presence continued on Monday, the 22nd when Chinese Ambassador Dong Xiaojun led a 22-member party on a tour of the Maroon complex, including the Asafu Yard and the Maroon Museum. They were entertained by the Maroon drummers, singers and dancers. It was a fun activity as the visitors were moved to dancing on stage with the Maroons.

For those who watched, it was heartwarming to see little children teaching the Chinese how to exe-

cute the Maroon dance movements, spontaneously.

The Chinese were particularly awed by the wrestling matches put on by the young Maroon wrestlers. This is the second year that the Charles Town Maroons have showcased a popular wrestling programme. Wrestlers are being groomed to enter international competitions. After the wrestling matches, the Chinese were treated to traditional Jamaican food served in calabashes, and drinks served in coconut-shell cups.

Colonel Lumsden, in an interview with **Hospitality Jamaica** regarding the significance of the Chinese ambassador's visit to Charles Town, said, "I am gratified that they would take the time to come and see for themselves ... We look forward to some cooperation



Colonel Frank Lumsden (right) presents a bench drum to Robert Parua, officer-in-charge/programme specialist for education/interim officer for culture in the UNESCO Kingston Cluster Office.



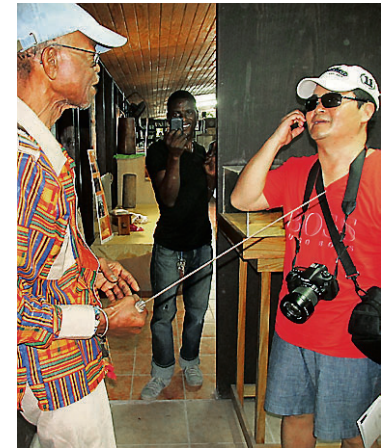
Young wrestlers and other members of the Charles Town community pose for the camera after some bouts of wrestling in the pit at Charles Town.



A Chinese Embassy staff member cooling down with coconut water.



Xia Zhishun, wife of Chinese Ambassador Dong Xiaojun, is about to enjoy her traditional Jamaican meal.



Charles Town's Colonel Lumsden talks to Chinese Ambassador Dong Xiaojun about how the Maroons use the machete in warfare, while Barlow Whyte (centre), Maroon drum maker, looks on.

in building relationships, between countries, among countries.”

Ambassador Dong in his response said, “We know that the Maroons used to fight against the occupiers, and we heard about their bravery. Since we were in this part of the country, I thought it would be a good and educational experience for me and my colleagues, and I was very impressed by the museum.”

Yet, what was most memorable for him was the “the spirit of the Maroons”, he said. “I think also the people, they were so friendly. That’s something we share, because Chinese people are also very friendly and hospitable,” the ambassador said. The Charles Town experience is a good way, he said, of promoting friendship between Jamaica and China.

Tuesday, the 23rd saw the arrival

of another overseas group, this time a television crew from South Africa.

The three-man crew is led by Stephen Jake Friedman, executive producer of a travel series called **Chasing the Sun**, which tells the story of the country through the people.

“My whole idea when I created this TV show was for people to come here and meet the people that we met, get more stories from them, have a drink with them, have a meal with them, and give back to the community, because it’s people that make the country, it’s not the country that makes the people,” Friedman told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

The story of the Charles Town Maroons is a long and colourful one, which the annual conference is helping to preserve.



A youngster from Charles Town teaches a Chinese Embassy staff how to do a Maroon dance.

The changing face of engineering

THERE WAS a time when the functions of the hotel engineering team were relegated to the heart of the house and given little thought except for those unpleasant occasions when structural amenities failed and guests were inconvenienced.

Today, however, the hotel engineering department has evolved beyond a traditional repair-and-maintenance function. At Sandals resorts, engineering teams are leading the way with more knowledgeable management, as the physical structure of their hotels change to meet new traveller demands. They are maintaining the physical plant so as to encourage guest retention and maximum returns on investment while monitoring spend on energy and other resources.

And how are the engineering teams doing this exactly? For the team at Sandals Montego Bay, a greater emphasis on training and a new approach to the hiring process are key.

"Sandals recognises the importance of developing their employees through training, which is why they created the Sandals Corporate University," says chief engineer at the flagship resort, Carwin Lawrence,



Sandals Montego Bay chief engineer Carwin Lawrence (foreground) and (background, from left) Devran McFarlane, Kamal Davidson and Haynes Lawrence.

"and more importantly, it is recognising that this training must take place as the brand continues to expand."

Lawrence also noted that the current expectations for new hires have also changed.

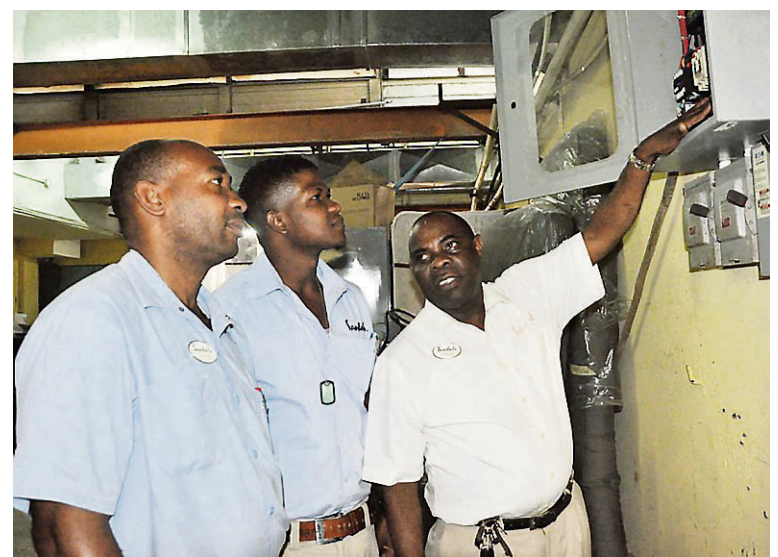
"Many years ago, you had persons who would only focus on one particular area of the operation," he says. "Today, we are looking for multi-skilled workers, we want to develop the most efficient team possible, and that requires persons with several skill sets.

"Approximately 95 per cent of my

team is multi-skilled," says Lawrence. "However, they each repeatedly focus on one particular area, so continued training will help to strengthen their knowledge and improving their skills in the other areas of the operation, while keeping them up-to-date with new technology."

GETTING RECOGNITION

Not only are the engineering teams within Sandals Montego Bay region adjusting well to the growing demands of their industry, but their professionalism and tireless



Chief engineer at Sandals Montego Bay Carwin Lawrence (right) points out something inside a breaker box to room technician Aaron Watson (left) and electrician Jermaine Bartley.

dedication to their jobs have, over the past year, brought them much-deserved recognition.

Earl Cummings, an air conditioner technician in Sandals Royal Caribbean's engineering department, is the current Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association Hotel Employee of the Year and Ultimate Team Member for the Sandals/ATL Group of companies. While earlier

this year, the engineering department at Sandals Carlyle walked away with the Department of the Year award for their resort.

This is certainly a new day for the 'maintenance men' of hospitality; they've shown just how important they are to the survival of the industry. They keep the wheels moving forward, and together; they are changing the face of engineering.

Ocho Rios Indian Association hosts health fair

Carl Gilchrist

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

KNOWN FOR their involvement in the tourism industry in the Ocho Rios area, the Ocho Rios Indian Association recently showed their love for the community with the 14th staging of a health fair at the Ocho Rios health centre.

The association introduced to Ocho Rios the Sathya Sai Baba Organisation, which collaborated with the Indian Association to host the health fair.

"We just came in as the team from the United States and Canada, as part of the Sathya Sai Baba Organisation in Jamaica, which is working with the Ocho Rios Indian Association, so it's a collaborative work," explained Dr Hari Conjeevaram, one of the several medical practitioners who made up the team.

The team consisted of several



PHOTO BY CARL GILCHRIST

A patient getting checks done.

specialists in the areas of general medicine, paediatrics, cardiology and gastroenterology.

Another team member, Bob Singh, who lives in New York, said the Sathya Sai Baba Organisation specialises in serving people.

"We come here as brothers and sisters serving each other; we're happy to have them here, we're happy to serve them," he said of the over 400 people who turned out to get free medical care.

Marvin Nolan of Three Hills, St Mary, was very happy for the opportunity to get some free medical care as he was able to save some money. He took his children along and they all got served.

"I'm so happy for this because what I am doing now would cost me pretty much over a hundred thousand (dollars) easily," he explained.

President of the Ocho Rios Indian Association, Bobby Thakurani, said the health clinic, now in its 14th year, was a way of giving back to the community.

He, along with his wife, who is a medical doctor, were quite involved in the process, along with several others from the association. Apart from the team of medical professionals from Sathya Sai, the Cancer Society's mobile unit was present, so, too, local medical personnel to do HIV and blood sugar tests.

"We are able to get 33 mammograms done, which we paid the Cancer Society to do," Thakurani said.

"We also offered free rapid HIV tests and HbA1c tests, which usually cost \$2,000 each. We offered them for free."