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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2017

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JAMAICA

a diverse destination

Building a stronger Jamaica-Haiti bond

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

NEWLY-APPOINTED Governor of Rotary International's District 7020, Dr Robert Leger, said he is hoping there will be closer ties between Jamaica and his native Haiti very soon, including the resumption of direct flights between the two countries.

Dr Leger, who assumed the post of Governor on July 1 this year, made his comments in an interview with **Hospitality Jamaica** following his address to the Rotary Clubs of Lucea and Negril at the Charela Inn last Thursday. The general surgeon was in Jamaica on official club duties, which included familiarisation visits to all 26 Rotary Clubs on the island.

"Every time I come to Jamaica, I really feel at home. It is so green; the people are so warm and welcoming and you have this feeling to be at home that I like. That's why I like to come to Jamaica," he said, adding that he was impressed by the state of Jamaica's natural environment.

"You have a natural paradise that I hope Jamaica will continue to protect. You protect the



Dr Robert Leger, Governor of Rotary International's District 7020 (centre) and members of the Rotary Clubs of Lucea and Negril singing 'One Love', which was being played by the Charela Inn's resident band on Thursday night.

environment and I am so proud of you. And, I hope in my country, Haiti, they will try to do the same. We, too, have a beautiful country,

but there needs to be more effort to protect the environment," Dr Leger, added.

With respect to the resumption of direct flights between Jamaica and Haiti, Dr Leger said he was hoping that through renewed cross-cultural events set to be promulgated by Rotary this will be brought to fruition. At present, there are only two routes to get between both islands, that being via Miami, or via Turks and Caicos.

"With new facilities between the islands, I hope someday that there will be direct flights between both countries, so both people can go to each other's countries and enjoy being together. With Rotary, which is a big family, we hope the relationship can become even closer," Dr Leger said.

"I remember my first flight to go to study in Mexico, it was a direct flight from Port-au-Prince to Kingston and I changed flights from Kingston to Mexico. It existed



"It's two" exclaims a gleeful Dr Robert Leger, Governor of Rotary International's District 7020 as he discovers two packets of Blue Mountain Coffee in a gift bag presented to him by Melissa Stoddart (right) of the Rotaract Club of Negril. At left is Dr Leger's wife, Rosa.

in the past and I hope in the future it will exist again," he stated.

He added: "The language is our first barrier. We speak French and Haitian Creole and you speak

English. But now, with social media, things are easier and faster. I think that now we can manage and, with the new generation, I think things will change."



Newest member of the Rotary Club of Lucea, Sonya Sinclair (centre), listens as Dr Robert Leger, Governor of Rotary International's District 7020, reads her roles and responsibilities during her induction at a joint meeting of the Rotary Clubs of Lucea and Negril at the Charela Inn on Thursday. At left is president of the Rotary club of Lucea Neville Anderson.



A tour operator checks out the Island Routes booth.

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

Although predominantly an all-inclusive destination, Jamaica is anxious to showcase its diversity and growth in European Plan (EP) resorts, and this will be at the forefront of the upcoming Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX).

Set to take place September 24-26, JAPEX will be held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, which is expected to receive a multi-million dollar facelift to meet both JAPEX and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation conference.

Already, some 30 buyers, mainly from the USA and Canada, have signed up to do business at this year's event, says president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), Omar Robinson. While some 70 supplier companies, representing hotels, attractions and Destination Management Company (DMC) are confirmed to attend so far.

Both the JHTA and the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) are hosting the tourism event, which has become one of the leading travel industry programmes in the region.

"We have also sent out invitations to MICE (Meeting and Incentive) planners and are

working with the Jamaica Tourist Board to see if we can convince some of the players from the emerging markets," Robinson told Hospitality Jamaica on Sunday.

As is normal, the event will have over 100 travel agents, who will walk the floor over the two-day period, revealed Robinson.

SHOWCASE IMPROVEMENTS

JAPEX, he said showcases what the island has to offer, "it is a chance to showcase the improvements in the product, we have hotels that have added new rooms, new restaurants and new and upgraded attractions", he stated, adding that the trade show provides a platform for the small properties to interact with tour operators and travel agents, who they otherwise would not be able to access, because of the expense of travelling overseas to meet them.

"We also get an opportunity to showcase the diversity of the product, and show that although we are perceived as an all-inclusive destination, we are still a diverse destination that can satisfy the varied tastes of a diverse clientele."

Eighty per cent of Jamaica's resorts are all-inclusive, however, there is a growing the EP market, and it's a good time for Jamaica.



One-on-one business meetings at a booth at JAPEX 2016.

Christopher Issa of Spanish Court in Kingston is constructing a sister property on the Hip Strip, Gloucester Avenue, the Sandals Group has broken ground for a Marriott and Joe Bagdonovich is building the Renfrew in Kingston.

"There is still a demand for EP, the growth here will generate some rejuvenation in the restaurants, night clubs," argues Robinson pointing out that the reopening of the former Carol Cliff, is an indication that EP supports sustainability.

"That sustainability can only happen with EP properties opening

and remaining open," he stated.

One of the many assets Jamaica is renowned for, is its hundreds of attractions. When compared to other Caribbean destinations in the region, the island has a wider array. The buyers attending JAPEX will get an opportunity to experience aspects of this, said Robinson.

Held annually, JAPEX was last held year April, however, the trade show was moved to September, which the JHTA says is the best month to get greater participation of the international trade.

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JAPEX 2016 Opening Ceremony

'Shaken Not Stirred'

- a memorable and flawless function

HILTON ROSE Hall Resort & Spa last Monday, played host to over 100 qualified meeting planners who were in Jamaica for the seventh annual Caribbean Meeting and Incentive Travel Exchange (CMITE), staged in the tourism capital last week

Held under the theme, 'Shaken Not Stirred', Hilton Rose Hall pulled out all stops at a martini mixology cocktail reception, which saw mixers vying for coveted prizes, followed by a glamorous sit-down dinner complete with Bond movie music and screened footage.

Enlisting partners Jamaica Audio Visual, Tai Flora, and team members, Charmaine Deane, Hilton's director of communications and marketing, said with the end result was a memorable and flawless function.

"Guests were greeted with red carpet

entry via a tunnel with James Bond themed music and video," stated Deane.

Hilton Rose Hall was among a number of resorts that the meeting planners stopped at during their visit to Jamaica, which was organised by the Jamaica Tourist Board and Questex.

In the days, they had one-to-one business meetings with tourism stakeholders at the Hyatt Ziva and Zilara, and at nights they danced the night away at resorts such as Breathless.

Over the week nearly 1,500 one-to-one appointments made, said the organisers, pointing out that the unique event, which pairs North America-based MICE buyers to meet with Caribbean travel suppliers in the privacy of deluxe hotel rooms for individual, was a success.

"Bringing CMITE back to Jamaica was a vital part of our long-term MICE



Questex team (from left): Ashley McGovern, Jennely Popoter, Aileen McDermot and Melissa Schepp are pleased as a martini with the staging of the Shaken Not Stirred event at Hilton Rose Hall.



Cinnamon Hill Ballroom transformed into a Casino Royale James Bond themed event for the CMITE dinner hosted by Hilton Rose Hall.



Jamaica Tours Limited's managing director, Noel 'Sport' Slolely (left) and Jamaica's Acting Director of Tourism Donnie Dawson do not seem shaken to be in the presence of AFix buyer Nanci Gage.



Hilton Rose Hall's Andrea Wallace (left) seems pleased with the results of the Shaken not stirred Martini challenge with her group during the hosting of the CMITE's evening at the resort.



Hilton Rose Hall/Jewel Resorts Area Director of Sales Oral Heaven (2nd left) confers with fellow judges while Jamaica's Acting Director of Tourism Donnie Dawson (centre) samples the 'Shaken not stirred' martinis. The cocktail hour saw seven teams vying to be the best martini Champion.

strategy," said John Woolcock, groups & conventions manager for the JTB. "Questex is known for bringing high-value meeting planners to their events and this year was no exception. We couldn't be more pleased and look forward to the long-term results for Jamaica's MICE business."

Questex concurred, stating that they were proud to partner with the

JTB on CMITE for the second time.

"Our two organisations have nurtured our relationship for many years, and bringing CMITE back to where it all started seven years ago was just one of the logical steps in forging our relationship for continued success on both sides of the equation," said John McMahon, executive vice-president, Questex Travel Group.



John Woolcock (second from left) Groups and Conventions Manager Jamaica Tourist Board seems pleased to be in the company of 'Bond girls' Jovanni Davis, Candice McLeod, Karen Hall.



Fred Edson, Hilton Rose Hall's Director of Group Sales poses with Helms Briscoe (left) and Vickie Corder



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AUG. 29	General Orientation 2: All New Students Success Presentations Student Engagement – Sports	9:30 A.M.
AUG. 30	Faculty Orientation: All New Students Academic Advisement Course Selection and Registration	9:30 A.M.
AUG. 31	Faculty Orientation: All Returning Students Academic Advisement Credit Audits	9:30 A.M.
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THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Connectivity is in the air

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IT MAY seem perverse, but I enjoy the eight or more hours it takes to cross the Atlantic. Having done this almost all my working life, I look forward to the space, free from demands on my time, the absence of emails, and all of the daily issues that intrude.

This is because long-haul air travel offers something special: the freedom to think, write, sit back and even take long-term life decisions without interruption.

For this reason, I will not be among those eagerly awaiting the appearance before long of high-speed lower-cost broadband on most flights in North America, Europe, the Caribbean and Central America, and across the Atlantic.

That said, it is apparent from



David Jessop

numerous aviation industry reports that seamless connectivity in the air is now at the forefront of the minds of passengers and those who run

some of the world's major airlines.

Although free or low-cost in-flight Wi-Fi is presently offered on identified routes and locations by JetBlue, Emirates, Norwegian, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines, Air China and others, it is at present slow and to some extent unreliable, as it is based on an aircraft's downlink to multiple towers along the routes that they fly.

In the coming decade, however, all this will change as the on-plane technology is upgraded and a new generation of on-board Wi-Fi emerges that enables fast connections and streaming through aircraft uplinks to geostationary satellites.

Not only is this expected to revolutionise how we spend our time while travelling but, according to some industry experts, will see the end of airline-provided in-flight

entertainment systems as it becomes possible to stream, for a fee, or free in first class, Netflix, Amazon and material from other new content providers of everything, from movies to live news.

While the technology is not yet commercially available, recent announcements by Inmarsat, the London-based company which owns and operates maritime geostationing satellites, make clear that their objective is to provide some of the leading technical providers of Wi-Fi to airlines – Honeywell and GoGo – with a high-speed on-demand Wi-Fi service in the US, Europe, across the Atlantic and elsewhere.

For its part ViaSat, the US rival to Inmarsat, recently launched a satellite, ViaSat-2, using the Ariane space launch facility at Kourou in French Guiana, which is now

moving into a geostationary orbit. The aim, the company says, is to significantly improve speeds, 'and expand the footprint of broadband services across North America, Central America, the Caribbean'. It has also announced that the satellite will provide coverage for primary Atlantic aviation and maritime routes between North America and Europe.

According to Inmarsat, its ultimate aim is to allow airline passengers Internet access at speeds of up to 100 megabits per second (mbps). Even if such speeds are some way away, on-board uplinks to satellites will mean, once satellite services are available, that presently slow on-board download speeds of between 12mbps and 28mbps and signal loss from terrestrially based masts, will become a thing of the past.

RELIEVE COSTS

Inmarsat also says that once aircraft can connect with satellites not only will be their passengers have relatively fast access to emails and browsing, but it will relieve airlines of the presently large costs they incur in maintaining and running costly in-flight entertainment systems.

What is less clear is how the new on board technology will be financed. Some airlines such as Lufthansa presently make a small Internet access charge where the service is available, but recent trade press reports indicate that in future, some airlines may opt for the fee to be paid directly to the service provider, while others will establish their own tariffs.

How long it will be before fast Wi-Fi is the new normal also depends on resolving whether the presently limited number of satellites with launch costs, coming in at between US\$50m and US\$400m, will be able to cope, and the slow pace at which aircraft are being equipped with enabling technology.

As for me, I still intend to sit back enjoying eight hours untroubled by either the world I am travelling to or coming from.

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Chocolate Coffee Cake by Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa.

ASHLEY ANGUIN PHOTOS

From left: Christopher Tam and Tevaughn Wright of Heart Trust/NTA.

Pifa Colada mousse courtesy of Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa.

From left: Hillary Stewart (Round Hill Hotel and Villas) samples some of Jacqueline Reid of Caribbean Producers Jamaica's samplings.

A MUST-ATTEND *soiree* ON THE WESTERN CALENDAR

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

ROUND HILL Hotels and Villas served up a fabulous coconut veggie stew; Half Moon's suckling pig was a hit; and Goddard Catering's mannish water was among the favourites.

The seventh staging of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association Montego Bay Chapter's 'Fine Jamaican Cuisines' was a welcome change for the resort town's hoteliers to showcase the best of the best to the more than 500 patrons who turned out at the Rose Hall Great House venue last Saturday night.

The largest turnout in the history of the event, the one-night charity food affair has become a must-attend-soirée on the western calendar.

The RIU seafood paella had patrons returning for second and third servings, while those with a sweet tooth stood close to the Hilton Rose Hall booth.

Chocolate cake, piña colada, mousse, grapes, cheese cake, and banana flambé were among the tasteful treats that Hilton had at its



Half Moon's suckling pig was a hit with patrons.

large food booth, sending a signal to persons in attendance that they meant business.

The ideal venue for a food and wine event, the booths were spread

across the lush Rose Hall Great House property, allowing patrons immense space and room to mingle.

Wray and Nephew, Wisynco, Caribbean Producers Jamaica, and

Pure Country ran the bars, while Tai Flora took charge of décor. Smith and Stewart, Rose Hall Developments, Holiday Inn, Tryall Club, Secrets Resorts, Pure National Ice, Reggae Tech, Triple Glar Lighting, John Swaby Entertainment, JAMWEST, and Royalton White Sands were among the sponsors.

Held each year to raise funds for JHTA charity projects, this year, Omar Robinson, president of the association, said that the beneficiaries would be the Montego Bay Learning Centre in Catherine Hall; the SOS Children's Village – House Number 10; and a GSAT student, who is part of the 'Save the Children Programme'.

Some 80 students attend the



Above: Coconut Veggie Chunks prepared by Round Hill.

Left: Henrey Rose of Secrets Resorts placing the final touch on the food he served at the JHTA Fine Jamaican Cuisines event last Saturday.

Montego Bay Learning Centre said Robinson, adding that under the Save the Children Programme, the association adopted a child who is in high school.

"We pay for his books, some meals, and uniform," he explained. Each year, the event earns between \$750,000 and \$1 million, and projects such as the MoBay City Run, Robinson said, are helped.

"In addition to the GSAT scholarship, we concentrate a lot on the youth and education. Children in need, and see how we can help them," the JHTA president stated.

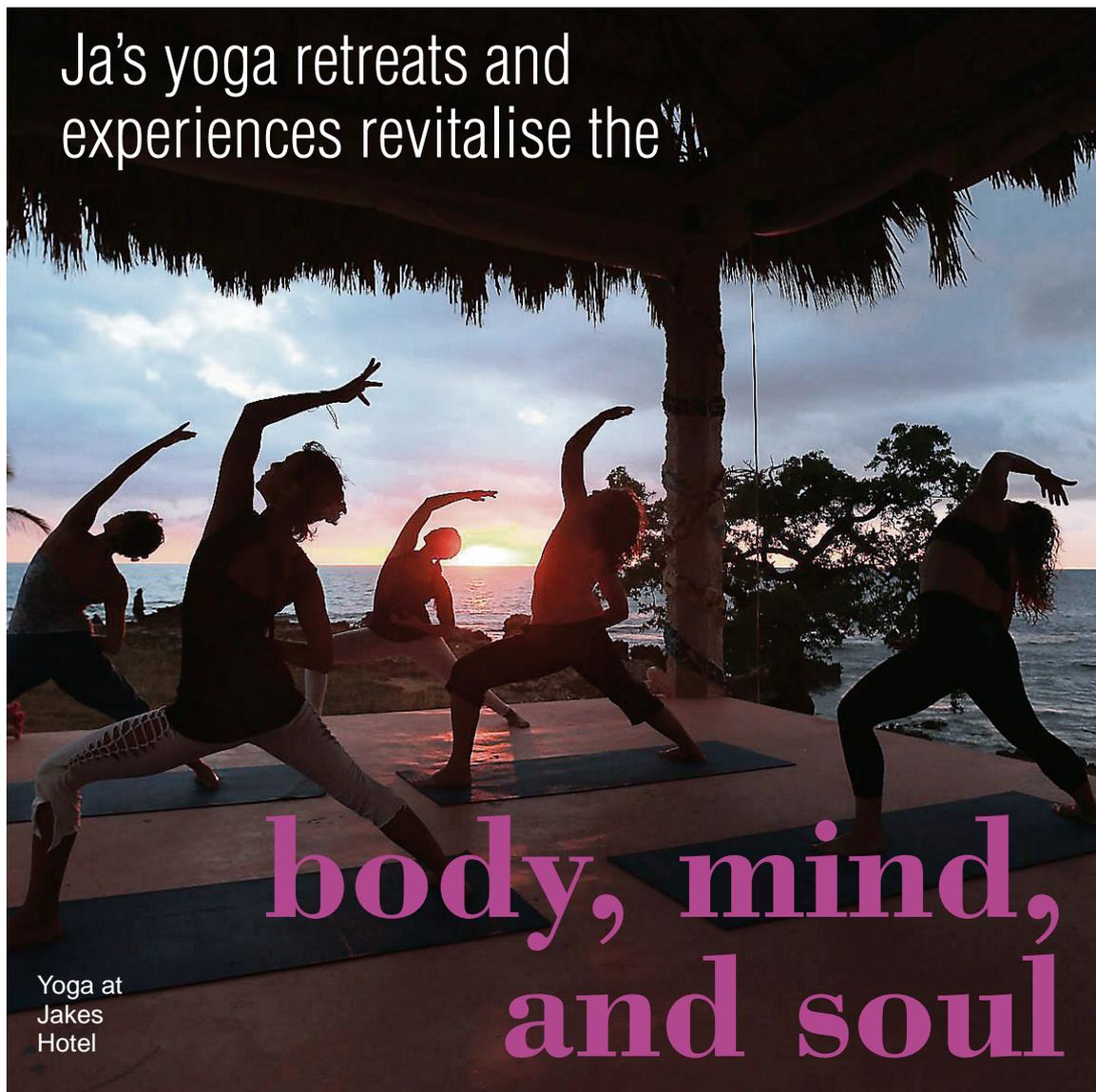
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RIU Resorts' (from left) Pedro Vargas, Shawn McDonald and Darine Boyer.



Lobster macaroni and cheese prepared by Round Hill at the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's annual Fine Jamaican Cuisines event at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay, last Saturday night.



WELLNESS TOURISM is increasingly popular as consumers seek to enhance their overall quality of life. According to The Global Wellness Institute, wellness tourism revenues grew 14 per cent from 2013 to 2015 — more than twice as fast as overall tourism expenditures (6.9 per cent). Jamaica has been ahead of the curve with its plethora of wellness tourism offerings – from hotel and resort amenities, farm-to-table dining experiences, digital detox retreats, holistic spa treatments, yoga centres, to alternative healing – that are sure to revitalize the body, mind and soul.

With National Yoga Month being celebrated in the month of September, the island is gearing up to offer travellers a meaningful getaway as consumers think about their wellness goals and vacation ideas. Below is a sampling of the island's yoga retreats and experiences that will have visitors and locals feeling rejuvenated, healthy and energised.

RETREATS

■ Mana Power Yoga Fitness Vacation (November 2 – 7)

Mana Power Yoga Fitness Vacation at Jakes Hotel provides a complete yoga and fitness vacation, where participants can relax and rejuvenate their body and mind. The retreat includes sunrise meditation sessions; daily power yoga and fitness classes; picnic on the beach; boat excursion to the Pelican Bar; daily

breakfast and dinner; 20 per cent discount on spa services; five nights accommodation; and airport transfers.

■ Yoga & Meditation at Round Hill (2018)

Escape to the beautiful private oasis of Round Hill, with beautifully designed rooms by Ralph Lauren, where guests are guided to refresh their life and create their goals. This yoga and meditation vacation includes daily yoga and meditation, three meals a day, including farm-to-table, beach barbecues, international and local fare; a trip to Mayfield Waterfalls; full use of pool, beach, tennis courts, nature paths and gardens; airport transfer (from Sangster International Airport, MJB); and most importantly, time to relax!

EXPERIENCES

■ Yoga Brunch at STUSH in the Bush

STUSH Yoga Brunch is held at STUSH in the Bush, an organic sustainable farm that offers intimate farm-to-table dining experience in the hills of St Ann. Resident yoga instructor Kayla Hanson leads themed yoga classes for all levels, followed by a gourmet-meets-rustic vegetarian brunch.

■ Jackie's on the Reef

Located in the West End of Negril, Jackie's on the Reef is a hidden oasis providing morning yoga and meditation classes, spa treatments, workshops, and retreats on an open veranda with the beach as the backdrop.



Marc Melville and Kingston Polo Club team with Chicago Oak Brook Polo Club and travel specialists.

Jamaica Tourist Board sponsors Jamaican team in international polo series

Chicago's Oak Brook Polo Club battles Kingston Polo Club in Drake Challenge Cup

FOR THE second consecutive year, Chicago's Oak Brook Polo Club welcomed a Jamaican team which played for the Drake Challenge Cup, one of Oak Brook's oldest and most celebrated trophies. Sponsored by the Jamaica Tourist Board the Kingston Polo Club played their match on August 6 and was captained by Marc Melville, as they challenged Chicago's Oak Brook Polo Club for the trophy.



A young fan showing off his Jamaican pride.



Mark McDermoth with travel specialist Karen Murdock.

CHTA joins forces with travel association worldwide to unify sector

THE CARIBBEAN Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is partnering with travel associations around the world to strengthen the tourism sector in the region.

President of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) Karolin Troubetzkoy disclosed that under the stewardship of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) the CHTA has joined forces with close to a dozen regional and national travel organisations to advocate for the sector among governments, legislators and economists.

The National Travel Association Coalition (NTAC), which comprises travel associations from Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, Egypt, Europe, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States, provides a forum for national travel associations to support each other and ensure the sustainable growth of travel and tourism. The CHTA and its regional public sector partner, the Caribbean Tourism Organisation, are both founding members of NTAC.

“We have also agreed to leverage NTAC to amplify the voice of the travel and tourism industry and emphasise the sector’s significant role as a major force for economic development, employment and sustainability to ensure that it is considered more seriously at the policy table,” said Troubetzkoy, execu-



TROUBETZKOY

tive director of the award-winning Anse Chastanet and Jade Mountain resorts in St Lucia.

Highlighting the importance of working together, she said there was much to gain by sharing best practices, including how advocacy for travel and tourism is enacted across the globe, particularly during election season.

The CHTA president said the coalition is considering centralised funding and collaboration on similar projects to improve cost efficiency, as well as the benefit of jointly seeking other sources of support.

SUPPORT EACH OTHER

“As we continue to build this resourceful network of associations, we can also support each other on common issues and share relevant reports and global perspectives on innovation disruptive models such as the sharing economy,” she asserted.

Tourism is one of the world’s largest economic sectors, contributing more than 10 percent to global gross domestic product. The industry now supports one in 10 jobs on the planet, according to the WTTC. Its impact on the Caribbean is even greater.

Members of the National Travel Association Coalition include ABTA – The Travel Association (United Kingdom), the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, the Caribbean Tourism Organisation, the Egyptian Tourism Federation, the European Travel Commission, the Japan Travel and Tourism Association, the Tourism Business Council of South Africa, Tourism and Transport Forum Australia, Tourism Industry Aotearoa (New Zealand), the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, and the US Travel Association.

CHTA Education Foundation awards more than \$130,000 in scholarships

THE CARIBBEAN Hotel and Tourism Association Education Foundation (CHTAEF) is awarding more than US\$130,000 worth of scholarships to nearly three dozen Caribbean students this year.

Including the renewal of 12 scholarships awarded to students last year, this academic year will record a total of 34 scholarships funded by the non-profit group. Seventy people applied this year and scholarships range, on average, from US\$2,000 to \$5,000 and are exclusively for tuition costs.

Universities such as Johnson & Wales provide matching grants for CHTAEF recipients, effectively doubling the scholarship awards.

The association set up the foundation 30 years ago to support programmes for the development and improvement of education and training in the tourism and hotel sector in the Caribbean. Scholar-



Neil Kolton, Director of Interval International (second from left), presents a donation to the Foundation at Caribbean Travel Marketplace earlier this year. At left is Nadine Rankin, Vice President of the Foundation; and at right is Karolin Troubetzkoy, CHTA President and Ernest Dwight, Chair of the Foundation’s Auction Committee.

ships are available to Caribbean students and industry professionals pursuing higher education or professional development in the

hospitality and tourism field and are awarded with support from CHTAEF sponsors and supporters. CHTAEF chairman Richard Kahn

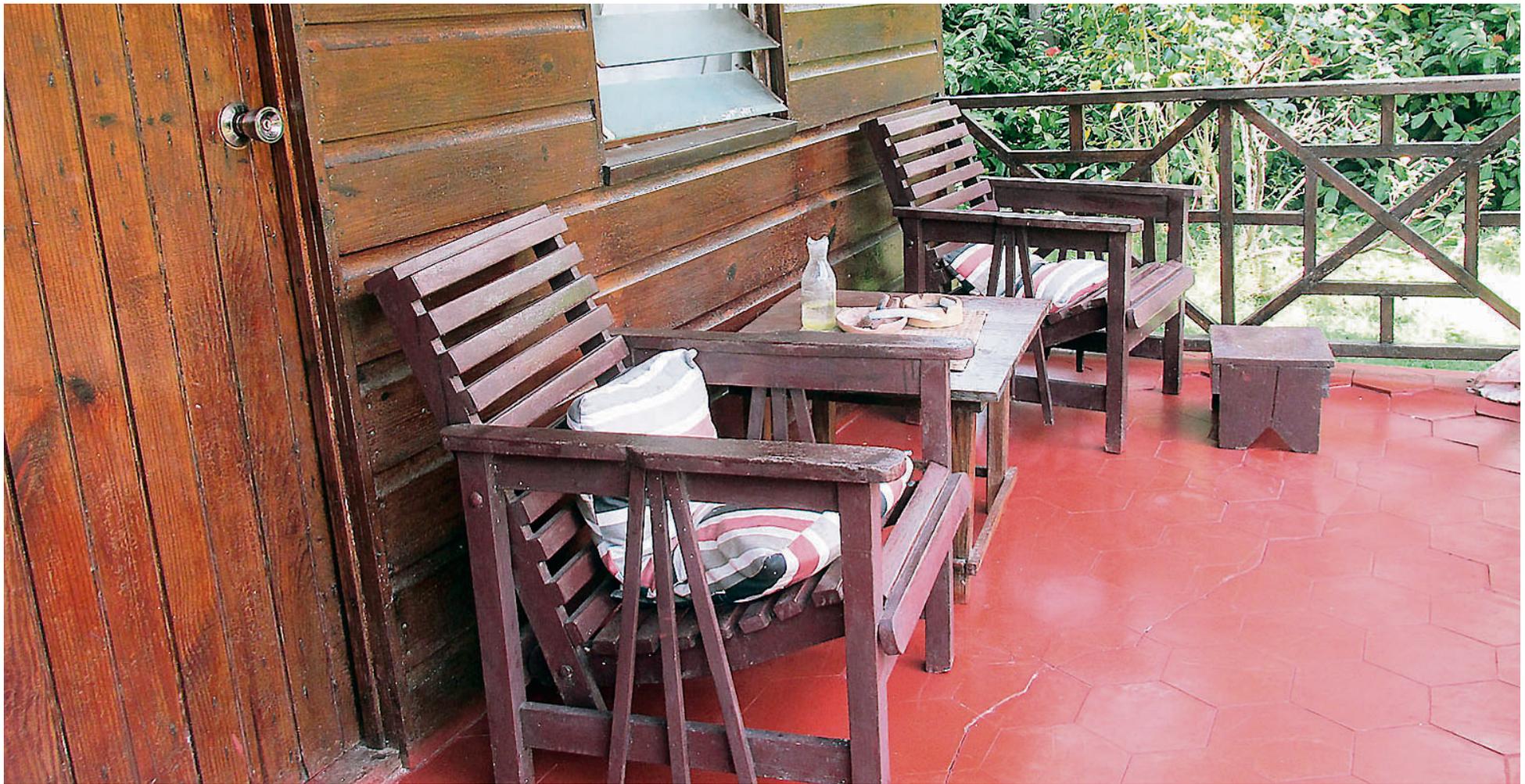
thanked the numerous hotels and resorts for their support of the foundation, but highlighted corporate partners Interval International and Virgin Holidays for their generous funding of Caribbean education.

“The hotel stays we receive from our CHTA members provide the value we use for The New York Times Travel Show Auction, which this year produced more than \$106,000 in revenue for the foundation,” he said, adding, “We couldn’t provide these scholarships without those funds.”

“Seeing these scholarships awarded to our talented Caribbean nationals is one of my most pleasurable duties,” enthused Karolin Troubetzkoy, CHTA president, who thanked national hotel and tourism associations across the region for their support throughout the process. “There is no better investment we can make than

banking on our splendid young people and industry professionals who will transform our sector with their dynamism, enthusiasm and intellectual rigor,” she stated.

This year’s winners include Cenita Liddie from Anguilla; Kia Harrigan from Antigua; Aruba’s Marc Anthony Ranis; and Forjee Jackson, Gabrielle Josey, Donovan Moss, Dwayne Sinclair, Antanae Taylor, and Kenria Taylor from the Bahamas. Additional scholars are Roberta Alleyne, Makayla Bennett and Christine Gibson from Barbados; Kendra Gajadhar from Guyana; Jamaica’s Dominique Haughton and Brianna Jureidini; and St Lucians Carleen Isidore, Stacy Lamontagne, Astrid Lindberg and Geni St Paul. St Maarten’s Nathalie Boston, Trinidad and Tobago’s Duncan Dwayne, and Jecoix Gittens of the US Virgin Islands were also in the winners’ row.



PAUL H. WILLIAMS PHOTOS

How much more nostalgic can this scene get?

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H. WILLIAMS

ITAL REST IS

really
ITAL

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

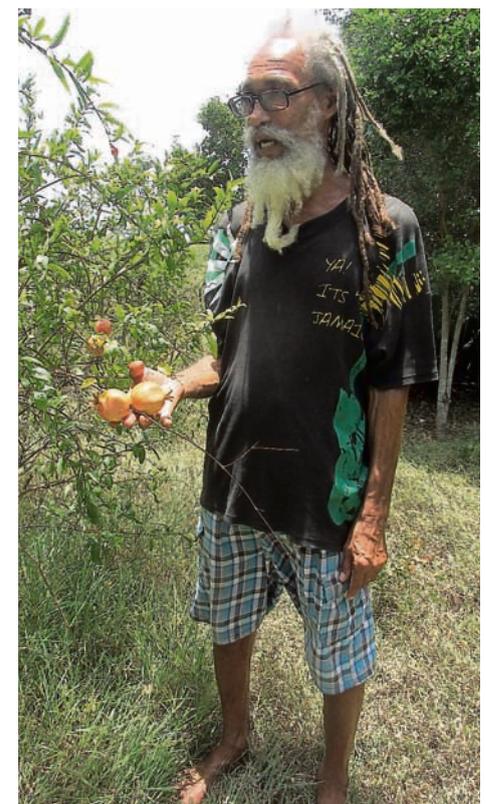
So, you want to get away from the city, the town, the noise, from everybody. You want to find a chill spot, away from the main road. You want to be surrounded by trees, and you want cool breeze to embrace and caress you, night and day.

You go searching on the Internet for that spot and call people in the know to see whether they are aware of such a spot. Nothing that you want comes up. Well, you

might just have to walk, to anywhere, to the Breadbasket Parish.

And, if in your search you chance upon Ital Rest Cottages, at Great Bay in Treasure Beach, you have found your spot. It is as rustic as they come, perhaps more than you have expected.

It took me quite a while to find it recently. Yet I didn't just 'buck up' on it. I went in search of it because of what I heard about it about four years ago. I actually missed it on my way to another destination, but found it



Frank Genus, one of the operators of Ital Rest Cottages in Treasure Beach, St Elizabeth showing Hospitality Jamaica some pomegranates. There are many fruit trees in the yard.



An outside shower gets you closer to nature at Ital Rest.



One of the units at Ital Rest Cottages in Treasure Beach, St Elizabeth.



Summertime and the living is easy for Opal Lowe-Rowe.



An inviting bed inside one of the units at Ital Rest Cottages at Treasure Beach in St Elizabeth.

on my way back. The first thing I said to Frank Genus, one of the operators, who met me at the gate, was, “Yuh need a bigger sign.”

Yet, it was the hundreds of almonds on the ground that caught my eyes. Couldn’t tell the last time I saw so many almonds in one place. Memories of my childhood days rushed by, memories of when we, children, spent half a day in the almond bush opening and eating almonds, memories of stealing Mama’s sugar to eat with the almonds we brought home. But the memories of the beatings I kept at bay. They were spoiling my moment.

As we entered the property, I instantly liked the place. It was the ‘yard’ of trees and unmanicured grass that grabbed me. It seems like a place where I could raise my unborn grandchildren. I snapped out of my reverie as soon as I saw the first cottage. Cool. It has a thatch roof, similar to the other one.

The two two-storey cottages, made mainly with board, are painted dark brown. All the units have verandahs. The verandahs that I liked were the ones with the bright-red floors, surrounded by board railings, and occupied by big, board armchairs. Childhood memories flashed again. Nostalgia.

But, forget me for now, as I go back to you. For, you, too, have found Ital Rest. You have got away from the city, the town, the noise, from everybody. You have found your dream chill spot, away from the main road. You are surrounded by trees, and there is cool breeze to embrace and caress you, night and day.

Now, you realise when the



A yard with grass and tall trees is as ital as ital gets.

operators say ‘ital’, they really meant ital. The units are devoid of amenities such as TV, radio, Internet, fan, AC, electric stove, microwave, blow-dryer, etc. They have no electricity. Why? Because it is ital. And at night, things get a little romantic as the rooms are illuminated by candle and lamp lights. Turn the lights down low, for breeze is blowing the curtains.

Equally appealing to me was the outside shower with no enclosure, only the pipe stands tall. This is in addition to the internal bathroom and toilet facilities. Yet, the biggest selling point for me is the fruit trees, and for this, the operators might not want me back after my first stay. I would be raiding the sweetsop, pomegranate, guinep, tamarind, and guava trees frequently.

And under some leafy shades you will find me drinking limeade, for there are enough limes on the ground to stone stray dogs. Not



At nights, the rooms in Ital Rest Cottages are lit by candle or lamp light.

even those were around anyway. Good. They and their incessant yapping would not be good for the livity at Ital Rest.

Jakes Hotel, Villas and Spa mixing sports with tourism

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

JAKES HOTEL, Villas and Spa has been on the hospitality landscape at Calabash Bay, Treasure Beach, St Elizabeth, for almost 25 years. In that time, it has grown to be synonymous with Treasure Beach and the Calabash Literary Festival.

The seaside, family-operated business is regarded by its chairman, Jason Henzell as “a cornerstone in the community”. Because, among other things, he said, “At Jakes, we have an incredible team. We take care of our Jakes family, and they, in turn take care of our guests.”

But the operators are not resting on their laurels, hard at work counting their blessings. They are giving back to the community. And through their non-profit organisation, the Breds Treasure Beach Foundation, and in collaboration with the Philadelphia Men’s Basketball League, based in Pennsylvania, USA, they have been hosting a basketball summer camp at its sports park for the past five years.

The main purpose of the camp is to engage and motivate youths in the parish through sports and social development. The objective is to get youths to go back to their communities and apply the life lessons learnt at



A participant baskets the ball during a session of the summer camp held at the Breds Treasure Beach Foundation Sports Park in St Elizabeth from August 14-18.

the camp. “It’s about empowering the youths,” Henzell said.

This year’s installation was held from August 14-18. Between 500 and 600 participants were bussed

to and from the park throughout the five-day event. When **Hospitality Jamaica** visited on Wednesday, August 16, about 400 youths were in attendance. It was Day Three and Henzell said that it was “fantastic” so far.

They were guided by 50 coaches, who have raised money to provide transportation, food, and uniforms for the campers. “The level of passion, interest, motivation, and inspiration they brought to our local kids is phenomenal,” Henzell said. And that is perhaps why the camp is an event that the youths have been looking forward to since its inception.

Yet, it is not only the youths who eagerly anticipate the camp, which has grown from year to year. According to Javid Genus, office administrator at Breds sports park, who helps to coordinate the event, it keeps the “community buzzing”. “It’s good not just for the sports park, but for the community as a whole, as the number-one destination for not just hosting



Basketball coach and photo-journalist Michael Kahler documented the 2017 basketball summer camp at the Breds Treasure Beach Foundation Sports Park on film.



Young women were an integral part of the basketball summer camp held at Breds Sport Park in St Elizabeth from August 14-18.

campers, but for tourism and social development, as well,” Genus said.

But the thrust is also about giving the coaches a chance to motivate and feel good about themselves, Henzell said. They pay their own fares to enjoy the warm Jamaican hospitality but are given

“a very, very, very big” discount to stay at Jakes. And this year, some of the coaches have been accompanied by their partners and children.

“So, it’s becoming more like a family affair,” Henzell said. “I can tell you one thing about tourism and business, whenever you start



Jakes Hotel, in collaboration with the Philadelphia Men’s Basketball League from Pennsylvania, USA, has been hosting a basketball summer camp at the Breds Treasure Beach Foundation Sports Park for the past five years.



Some of the participants in the 2017 basketball summer camp held at Breds Treasure Beach Foundation Sport Park in St Elizabeth from August 14-18.



Six-year-old Joe Wilkinson of London, England, said that he was having wonderful time at the basketball camp hosted by Breds Treasure Beach Foundation.

with a person, and then it goes to a couple, then to a family, that's when you know you are on to something successful."

The success of the programme, it seems, is the reason why some of the coaches and participants have attended every year. Coach Wendell Allen, who told *Hospitality Jamaica* that Treasure beach was "a great small town" is a three-time participant. He said that they could have gone elsewhere, like in "North



A coach teaching two of the basketball campers how to bounce and dribble the ball.

Philly", but they chose Treasure Beach because "there is something special about Treasure Beach that makes us want to come back".

Michael Kahler, coach and

photographer, a storyteller by way of photojournalism, came because he wants to learn about the Treasure Beach area and to document how "basketball can

push things along". He said that he loves the music and culture of Jamaica, and "it calls me. So when certain opportunities arise, you got to go."

SJF/SDC Back-to-School Health and Information Fair moves to Rose Heights

THE SPANISH-JAMAICAN Foundation (SJF) in partnership with the Social Development Commission (SDC) recently staged its 6th Annual Back-to-School Health and Information Fair under the theme "A Healthy Start is the Best Start" at the Rose Heights Basic School in Montego Bay.

Over 300 persons from Rose Heights and neighbouring communities benefited from the fair, sponsored by The SJF, which was founded in 2006 by Spanish investors in Jamaica. The SJF aims to promote education, cultural and environmental awareness, and contribute to community development. As in previous years, additional support came from SJF member companies RIU Hotels and Resorts, Hospiten, and Iberostar Hotels and Resorts.

A wide array of organizations again volunteered their time and shared their expertise. These included the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), the National Council on Drug Abuse, the Consumer Affairs Commission,



Community members of Rose Heights wait to access medical services during The SJF-funded Back-to-School Health and Information Fair in St James.

the Peace Management Initiative, the St James Public Health Services Department, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security,

HEART Trust/NTA, the Jamaica Kidney Kids Foundation, and many more.

Residents appreciated the opportunity to

have school medicals completed; have HIV tests courtesy of Jamaica AIDS Support for Life; as well as have blood pressure and glucose checks done by the Hospiten staff. Dental services were also included in the line-up courtesy of a supervised team of volunteer dental students from the University of Technology's College of Oral Health Sciences.

The children and the young at heart were engaged in animated activities, including dance competitions and face painting by Iberostar's much-loved entertainment team. Lively music added to the fun-filled party atmosphere. Prizes and surprises were donated by TBS Novelty Products Limited, while invaluable support was provided by Food For the Poor and MAG Chemicals.

SDC St James Parish Manager Randy Hayle, who attended the fair, highlighted the fact that "the partnership between the SDC and SJF is one that has yielded tremendous benefits in St James in terms of developing awareness and providing access to GoJ-safety net programmes and other social services." He also noted that "there has been a significant response from communities in accessing services and increasing support from partners of the St James inter-agency network".



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