

TUESDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2022 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 175 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

# “HOUSING REVOLUTION” FUELS MASSIVE CONSTRUCTION STAFF DEMAND

*Story on Page 2*



The National Parks Authority has had to implement route changes to the Pillars of Hercules, pictured here, and other attractions, however full access to these sites remains open to the public. *Story on page 8*

# Local News



## Housing project, UWI expansion hurt by labour shortage

The shortage of skilled construction workers is slowing work on the housing boom that Antigua and Barbuda is enjoying and this will also affect the planned expansion of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus which is set to begin by year's end.

That's the assessment of both Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, and the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the UWI Five Islands Campus (FIC), Professor Densil Williams, during an appearance on Saturday's Browne and Browne show on Pointe FM.

Browne reported that twelve of the first allotment of "starter homes" which are being built at Oliver's are nearing completion, however, the pace of work has slowed considerably because it has been difficult to secure skilled construction workers to meet the demand.

"We have a problem, we do not have enough (skilled) construction workers on Antigua currently and that could hamstring not only this project, but the planned expansion at the FIC as well.

"What is happening is that a number of skilled workers have left National Housing and are moving to Barbuda

to seek employment with the PLH Project where they are working for a premium," the prime minister disclosed.

According to Browne, the work on the 400-home project has slowed and a national appeal has been made for construction workers to join the staff at National Housing.

"If there are tradesmen out there who may be unemployed and are looking for steady employment, then National Housing is the place to be. National Housing has had individuals working there since its inception and, whereas the government agency may not pay top dollar, the work and payment are steady. We need more work men, we need more skilled workers!" he said.

To address the shortfall in skilled labour, the prime minister disclosed that the government has contemplated recruiting workers outside of Antigua and Barbuda. This move, for the moment, has been abandoned as other options are explored.

Meanwhile, as he provided insight into the planned expansion of the UWI FIC, Professor Williams noted when the university started three years ago, it



*Prime Minister Gaston Browne*

only had eight acres of land. Since then, the government has acquired an additional forty-two acres to accommodate the university's expansion.

Professor Williams reported that funding for the campus' expansion, which will see the addition of classrooms, lecture theatres, dormitories, and an administration building, is close to being finalised. He indicated that the project will now begin before the end of 2022.

He too, however, has sounded a warning that there may not be enough skilled workers to complete construction within the planned time frame.

"To build out 42 acres of property is of itself a major economic activity for the country in the short term. I was thinking recently that the government may have to import labour because you may not have enough labour in Antigua to match the scope of the project," he said.

The UWI official is confident that the campus' expansion will aid greatly in the reduction of unemployment levels in Antigua and Barbuda, particularly during the construction phase.



*Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor Densil Williams*



## Detained man fined on cannabis charge

The man being detained by police in connection with last week's double murder at Pillar Rock was fined when he appeared in court charged with possession of 400 grammes of cannabis that was found when police searched his property last Thursday.

Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh imposed a \$10,000.00 fine on him on Monday.

He has until the end of December, 2022 to pay the fine, or in default, will serve 18 months in prison.

Shortly after Monday's case concluded, the man was again detained by police as investigations into the shocking murders con-



tinued.

He is reported to have given investigators conflicting accounts about his whereabouts when the two Royalton managers were murdered on Tuesday, 6th September, 2022.

The people he claimed he was with that night could not give account for where he was that evening, shattering his alibi.

As accusations continue to swirl, unconfirmed reports suggest that the man

now in police custody was deported from Canada after serving time there for murder.

A coroner's inquest into the deaths of Cesar Santos Ramirez, 36, and Ronaldo Emmanuel Sandoval Stone, 39, commenced on Monday.

It is alleged that one man was shot once, while the other sustained multiple gunshot wounds.

The bodies of the Mexican men were discovered in the swimming pool at Pillar Rock Villas in Yeptons.

Police responded to a call from the owner of the property who reported hearing gunshots being fired.

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# Local News

## Additional polling stations spurred by increased voter registration

The official list of electors who are eligible to participate in the upcoming general elections may see an increase of approximately eight thousand new registrants when compared with the 2018 general elections list.

Against this background, the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC) has signalled its intention to install additional polling stations which will make it easier for voters to cast their ballots.

ABEC's Chairman, John Jarvis, said the move is driven by the increased number of registered voters and the need to provide an atmosphere that will reduce the threat of spreading COVID-19.

"We know that the health protocols have been lifted,



*More than 20 people who have expressed interest in serving as Returning Officers in the upcoming general election began a rigorous programme that is being facilitated by ABEC's Human Resources Manager, Ian Hughes (foreground at the computer).*

but we have decided that in spite of this, we still want to go the extra mile to ensure an environment where people feel comfortable to

cast their ballots. We will be taking advice from the Ministry of Health on this matter," Jarvis explained.

With regard to the num-

ber of registered voters, he revealed that the current list of electors stands at approximately fifty-nine thousand,

*cont'd on pg 5*

## Man who escaped police, ABDF jailed

For the next 18 months, His Majesty's Prison will be the new home of Tony Henry, a repeat offender, who admitted to drug and gun charges in court yesterday.

The alleged incident occurred on 4th September at John Hughes during a joint stop and search operation conducted by the police and Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force.

Henry crashed his vehicle while trying to escape the officers, ran off into bushes and managed to evade authorities for a few days.

The defendant was found in Old Road late last week and was immediately charged with the possession of over 350 grams of cannabis, posses-



*Tony Henry*

sion of 8 bullets (6 metal jacket rounds and 2 hollow point 9mm rounds), possession of a modified flare gun and driving without a licence and insurance.

The 30-year-old appeared before the Magistrates' Court on Monday where he pleaded guilty to all the charges levelled against him.

Henry's lawyer, Sherfield Bowen, attempted to get him a non-custodial sentence but was unsuccessful because Henry had been convicted for similar crimes in the past.

Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh sentenced him to prison for 6 months for driving without insurance, 1 year for driving without a licence, 18 months for the drugs, 18 months for the bullets and 18 months for the gun. Since the sentences were ordered to run concurrently, Henry will only spend 18 months behind bars.



## Government committed to keeping cost of living down

The Antigua and Barbuda government says it will take measures from time to time to keep the rising cost of goods and services in the country under control. This effort to cushion the impact of global inflation is taking place in the face of the ever increasing cost of essentials, including food, in recent months.

One factor which is key in determining the cost of goods in particular, is the cost of fuel.

Last Wednesday in Antigua and Barbuda, gasoline enjoyed a welcome reduction of \$1.05 to bring its current cost at the pump to \$15.57 per gallon.

The government gave the assurance following this latest decrease that, "Further adjustments are to be made and all adjustments are to reflect the degree to which prices on the spot market decrease."

In a recent statement issued by the Cabinet, an examination of price decreases and price increases between 2004-2014 when the United



Progressive Party formed the government, indicated that adjustments to the cost of fuel were made 17 times. Over this 10-year period, gasoline cost \$16.45 per gallon at its highest and \$12.15 per gallon at its lowest.

It was noted that other measures have been taken to reduce the cost to consumers for other items. This includes a waiver on the taxes associated with flour, which in turn will keep the price of bread - a staple food in Anti-

gua and Barbuda - low.

While bread forms a significant part of the diet of all Antiguan and Barbudans, the consumption of the carbohydrate packed product increases the risk of developing Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs), such as hypertension and diabetes, which the country continues to battle. In light of this, the government's designated health agencies advise that bread, and other carbohydrate packed foods, as well

as fats, should be consumed in moderation, with the goal being the consumption of a balanced diet which includes all the food groups.

Fuel prices hit all-time highs this year with the start of the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Since then, the government has implemented subsidies for fisherfolk which will allow the cost of seafood, another staple in the Antiguan and Barbudan diet, to remain unchanged.

### *cont'd from pg 4*

an increase from the fifty-two thousand voters who were registered to participate in the 2018 general elections.

This figure is from the June, 2022, List of Electors and represents the total number of people who registered to vote up to April this year.

That figure is likely to increase as

the registration of electors is continuous in Antigua and Barbuda.

As a result, the list of electors is expected to top the sixty-thousand mark by the time general elections are called. The additional polling stations will allow ABEC to reduce the likelihood of long lines on polling day.

Meanwhile, Jarvis said he anticipates that the upcoming general elec-

tions will be one of the most scrutinised in many years.

"Already, you are hearing the comments on the various radio talk shows about heightened interest in the elections locally. I also expect that the government will also be inviting regional, and perhaps international observers, for the elections. So yes, more scrutiny for us," he declared.

# Local News



## Montserrat Premier reacts to Queen's passing, new King

By Shahein Fitzpatrick

Easton Taylor-Farrell, the premier of the British Overseas Territory, Montserrat says his country has joined the rest of the Commonwealth in mourning the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

The premier addressed this matter, as well as the accession of King Charles III during an appearance on *Pointe On De Streetz* on *Pointe FM* on Monday.

"I was informed of the Queen's passing on Thursday, September 9. Us members of the Commonwealth are all mourning her passing," he



Premier of Montserrat, Easton Taylor-Farrell [Photo: Government of Montserrat]

said.

The government of Montserrat has held two sessions since the Queen's passing, the Premier explained.

"On Friday morning, we came together to honour the passing of the Queen, and on Sunday, we gathered again to recognise the proclamation of

the new king."

Taylor-Farrell said despite the shock of the news of the Queen's death, Montserratians are coping and adjusting to the loss of the monarch and the start of the new reign of King Charles.

"We knew the death of Her Majesty was coming, but no one anticipated it to be so soon. I guess life is about living and dying, and we have accepted it as a part of life," he said.

Meanwhile, Taylor-Farrell said Montserrat will be represented at the Queen's fu-

*cont'd on pg 8*



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## Rastafari leaders condemn school's rejection of dreadlocked child

The chairman of the RasFreeman Foundation for Unification of Rastafari, Kiyode Erasto, has condemned the stance taken by a private, church-affiliated school that took the position that a 5-year-old they accepted to the school could not return until her parents "sort out something" with her dreadlocked hair.

Over the weekend, the organisation's Administrative Arm of the Nyabingi Theocracy Order said it "strongly condemns" the actions of the New Bethel Seventh-Day Adventist Academy in Liberta in denying the child entry to the school.

Noting that the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda protects all against racism including "cultural racism", Erasto said history should not be allowed to repeat itself, a reference to the time nearly a half century ago when Rastafarian children and children with dreadlocked hair, were not allowed to attend school unless they cut their hair.

"These inhumane actions should be cut off completely, and not allowed to push up their ugly head," Erasto said in a press statement.

The chairman of the RasFreeman Foundation also expressed confidence that the government would move swiftly to address

the continued "prejudice" against Rastafarian children and children with dreadlocked hair.

Last Wednesday when the matter drew the attention of the public, the Cabinet also weighed in condemning the actions of schools that engage in this practice. The Cabinet also expressed the hope that private institutions with these policies will seek to adjust them. It was made clear however, that if they do not and reports of children being denied access to education because of their hair continue to pour in, then the government is prepared to go to Parliament and enact legislation that will outlaw the practice altogether.

"With the acceptance of learning and education," said Erasto, "no one shouldn't be rejected based on how they wear their hair, as long as it is hygienic.

"Education is not attained by how you carry your hair; it is based on your ability to receive and analyse and put into practice the knowledge that was imparted to you."

The issue has sparked national debate which is only the latest in the larger regional discussion on whether antiquated policies on hairstyles should form the basis of schools refusing to educate children - particularly in the case of dreadlocked hair or other



*Jordan Mason's 5-year-old daughter was told that she could not return to the private school she was enrolled in because of her dreadlocked hair (Photo: Jordan Mason)*

natural hairstyles - and if this practice is discriminatory and therefore illegal.

Last week, at least two cases came to the attention of the public, however, the one involving the daughter of Jordan Mason has received the most public attention.

Mason enrolled his 5-year-old daughter in the New Bethel Seventh-Day Adventist Academy in Liberta. He claims that the school was aware she had locks when she was registered as her photographs had to be provided as part of the process.

At no time, according to Mason, did the school indicate that her hair posed an issue. It was only after her first day of school that he and his daughter's mother were told that their child would not be welcome back at the school unless her dreadlocks were removed.

Pointe Xpress contacted the New Bethel Seventh-Day Adventist Academy for comment, but we were told by a representative of the school that they would not be able to provide a statement on the issue.

# Local News



## New trail to National Park attractions



The National Parks Authority (NPA) has had to make changes to the trail to two popular locations within the Nelson's Dockyard National Park (NDNP).

An alternate route is now available for hikers and nature lovers to get to the Pillars of Hercules and Mermaid Gardens.

The old route ran through private property. The owners have fenced their property prompting the NPA to advise the public of the change and

new trail.

The inaccessibility of the old route has not created much of a problem as according to the NPA, "Several trails run through the scenic National Park and have become quite popular overtime. The National Park is able to make use of available options whenever circumstances like this arise.

"Trails to our favourite scenic spots are still very much accessible from the Horseshoe Battery trail

along the coast leading to the Pillars of Hercules. The trail continues up the hill to Fort Charlotte and follows the usual path thereafter."

The NPA offered the assurance that access to the popular off-road attractions within the National Park, including the Pillars of Hercules, Fort Charlotte and Carpenter Rock/Mermaid Gardens, has not been restricted and they remain accessible for the leisure and enjoyment of the public.

*cont'd from pg 6*  
neral in the UK.

"We highly respect the Queen, and we will continue

to acknowledge her [time] as our Head of State. Like many people worldwide, we will continue in a season of

mourning with eyes on the horizon as we look forward to the new monarch, King Charles III."

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II passed away on 8th September 2022, ending her 70-year reign at age 96.

On 10th September, 2022, her successor, Prince Charles, was proclaimed King Charles III, in the Accession Council at St. James' Palace in London.

King Charles has since approved a decree declaring next Monday, the day of his mother's funeral, a public holiday.

Tue 13   Day		Tue 13   Night	
88°	19% ENE 13 mph	80°	21% ENE 12 mph
Partly cloudy skies. High 88F. Winds ENE at 10 to 15 mph.		Partly cloudy. Low around 80F. Winds ENE at 10 to 15 mph.	
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# The world's oldest sourdough?

By Paul Feinstein

The search for the oldest sourdough starter spans continents and countries, science labs and libraries, and involves everyone from the Ancient Egyptians to Jesus Christ.

During the pandemic, many people hunkered down and explored the art of making bread for the first time. Some used dry active yeast or baking soda to find that perfect rise, while others dabbled in the wild world of sourdough starters.

But home bakers didn't just learn about making bread in its most natural form – they tapped into living antiquity. Sourdough starters, often referred to as mother dough, have a nearly 6,000-year history that spans the globe and are responsible for feeding the planet millions of times over.

This captivates bread-makers, scientists and researchers who want to understand how this elixir of life came about and what makes it so special – especially when the starter's owner claims a long and storied history. Because of this fascination, old starters have an almost mystical quality to them, and finding them and baking with them have gripped home cooks and professionals around the world.

The search for the oldest sourdough starter spans continents and countries, science labs and libraries, and involves everyone from the Ancient Egyptians to Jesus Christ. This is a quest to find the oldest mothers on the planet – living, breathing, bubbling sourdough starters that helped build the pyramids, fed the Roman Empire and nourished a gold rush.

For the uninitiated, sourdough bread is made with a sourdough starter. A starter is a leavening agent that helps the bread to rise when it's baked. In its simplest explanation, a starter is formed when you combine water and flour and allow natural yeasts and



Arianna Sikorski inherited a Klondike Gold Rush starter that's thought to date to the 1890s (Credit: Arianna Sikorski)

bacteria that are floating around the air to combine and begin to ferment. Over time, the yeast will consume the carbohydrates in the flour and convert them into carbon dioxide, which is what gives sourdough its bubbles.

Like yeast, the bacteria also consume carbs, but instead of bubbles, its by-product is lactic acid, which puts the sour flavour in sourdough. The result is a living organism that's tantamount to a pet that requires feeding and care with water, flour and friendly growing temperatures.

Like the bubbling sludge of a fermenting sourdough starter, the history of making sourdough bread is murky. According to historians and archaeologists, widespread bread making really took off around 5,000-6,000 years ago in Ancient Egypt. You can find hieroglyphics of farmers collecting wheat

and baking loaves all over tombs and temples. But were the Egyptians using a starter?

According to Dr Serena Love, a gastro-Egyptologist, it's not proven. "During the pyramid age, so 2,500 BCE, when the pyramids around Giza and that whole complex were being built, what we have is textual sources that say [workers] were given a daily allowance of bread, beer and onions. And when you're talking about 10,000 people that were living there, you are making a lot of bread."

While it's unknown whether the Egyptians were deliberately using an actual starter to make their bread, the bakers at the time might've stumbled on the way to use some of the flour/water mixture from the day before and put it into the next day's bake. So, ac-

**cont'd on pg 11**



*cont'd from pg 10*

cording to Love, "You could call it a sourdough, they're making bread, and then they'll take a bit [of dough] and use it for the next batch... They're still learning how to do this on a massive scale though."

For actual proof of sourdough baking, you have to fast forward a few thousand years to Ancient Rome and read through the texts of Roman historian Pliny the Elder around 77 CE. Professor Eric Pallant, author of *Sourdough Culture: A History of Bread Making From Ancient to Modern Bakers*, says that this is the first recorded instance of leavening with a bread starter.

"This is what Pliny the Elder is writing down. The Romans are basically saying, you can make bread and you can make it rise. And if you save some [of the dough] from yesterday, you [can] throw it into today's bread. That's the first written-down recipe where I'm fairly confident," said Pallant.

Michael Gänzle, a food microbiologist from the University of Alberta in Canada, who has been working on the science of sourdough for more than 20 years, backs up Pallant's research and adds a new ingredient to the mix.

"To my knowledge, the oldest document [that talks about] 'backslopping' is approximately 2,000 years old, and there are two sources. One is Pliny the Elder, who wrote about sourdough and explicitly makes reference to backslopping, which means using a part of the dough of the previous day and making the next sourdough," Gänzle said. "The second reliable source is the New Testament."

If you scour the gospels, you'll find numerous references to leavening, which would require backslopping to make bread. Some examples include Luke 13:20/21: Again He asked, "To what can I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven that a woman

took and mixed into three measures of flour, until all of it was leavened." Or, in Matthew 13:33: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."

Gänzle continued, "If you look at the story of sourdough [in the New Testament], the way the story is used implies that sourdough was used as a starter culture. And irrespective of what you think of the Bible, the fact that somebody in the 1st Century referred to [leavening]... means that [baking with a sourdough starter] was commonly done at the time."

Even though sourdough starters have their histories intertwined with Ancient Egypt and Rome, do any descendants of these original starters still exist today?

Sadly, there is no 23 and Me or Ancestry.com for sourdough. Professor Marco Gobbetti, a microbiologist from the Free University of Bolzano, Italy, is one of the world's leading scientists on sourdough and explains why it's not possible to scientifically prove the age of a sourdough starter.

"Today, we are using the most sophisticated tools to carry out this analysis. We can give names to lactic acid bacteria and to yeast, but we cannot understand how old the sourdough is," said Gobbetti. "Why? Since the life of a microbe is lasting not more than one day."

But that scientific fact hasn't stopped bakers and sourdough enthusiasts around the world from making wild claims about starters that are more than 100 years old or ones that date to the Middle Ages and beyond.

And there are stories. Like Seamus Blackley, the inventor of the Xbox, who scraped yeast off 5,000-year-old-Egyptian pottery and made sourdough with it.

Or the Israeli team led by Ronen Hazan, a microbiologist at the Hebrew

University in Jerusalem, who made beer from yeast found in ancient clay vessels. Then there are the sellers on eBay and Etsy who make claims of starters dating to the Black Death or to Silk Road traders more than 900 years ago.

So, if you can't scientifically determine the age of sourdough starters, where does that lead? Inevitably the place where stories are catalogued, which takes this quest to Belgium and the Puratos Center for Bread Flavour – the world's only sourdough library – which is home to some really old and really rare mothers.

The Puratos Sourdough Library, located about 90 miles south-east of Brussels, is run by Karl De Smedt, a baker who is tasked with preserving the world's rarest and oldest sourdough starters.

"What we do here is three things. We preserve the biodiversity of sourdough, we protect the heritage, and we offer a backup to those who give us a sample of their sourdough starter," he said.

De Smedt is working with professor Gobbetti, the sourdough microbiologist from Italy, to isolate yeast and bacteria strains and freeze them (which puts the microorganisms in a hibernating state), so they can be preserved in perpetuity. His findings mirror those of the other microbiologists around the world in that similar strains of yeast and bacteria show up everywhere, and there's no way to know how old any of the starters actually are.

"You cannot carbon date a sourdough. When I get a sourdough from someone, I have to trust them, he said.

But just because scientists can't technically find out the age of the starter, De Smedt still believes a few of the starters in his vaults have some age-old merit.

"I have a couple here. One is coming from the Klondike Gold Rush.

*cont'd on pg 12*

# Food & Drink



*cont'd from pg 11*

So, it goes back to 1896. One from Switzerland goes back six generations, and the bakery was founded in 1868. I have another one from Japan, which is from 1875. But they do not come with a birth certificate. So, it's impossible [to be sure], said De Smedt.

As a true believer in sourdough, and despite the current scientific barriers, De Smedt continues to search for rare and old starters.

"The quest for sourdough is to go out and find sourdoughs that are still around and that we could study here in the library. It's very difficult, because what is the rarest? We don't know that yet. I hope to encounter them."

For De Smedt – and many others – the stories behind the starters are perhaps more important than the starter itself.

Take Daniele Udit, a pizzaiolo from Caserta, Italy, who smuggled his family bakery's almost 70-year-old starter to Los Angeles and uses it to form the perfect crust on his neo-Neapolitan pies at his award-winning pizzeria Pizzana.

There's Ione Christensen, an 89-year-old home baker from Whitehorse, Canada, who claims that the crunchy, chewy sourdough waffles she makes at home comes from her starter that dates to the Klondike Gold Rush.

"Well, I can trace it back positively to 1898. That was when my great grandfather and his four sons left St John's, New Brunswick, in February of 1898 for the Klondike Gold Rush," said Christensen... And then it's been in our family ever since."

In Japan, the Kimuraya bakery uses a unique starter made with cooked rice, rice malt and water for their An Pan bread they've been making since the 1870s and loved by Japanese emperors and commoners alike.

The famous Italian chef and cookbook author Sara Papa, claims to have a starter from Milan that dates to 1848

and uses it for crackly, fluffy sourdough loaves.

And then there's Arianna Sikorski, an Alaskan who inherited a separate Klondike Gold Rush starter that dates to the 1890s and travels all over the world with it, sharing it with fellow bread enthusiasts.

"In terms of proof, we don't have a photograph of 1896 when it was first created in a tent somewhere. I can only prove what I saw when I was a kid in the sense that we always had it going. I lived in a cabin, that was our main source of food for quite some time. And my parents had always kept it active and alive," said Sikorski.

The list goes on of family stories and baker origins that are impossible to trace, and all come with their own folklore. But when it comes to verification, only a few have enough data to back up their claims.

"In my world, there are two credible reports for sourdoughs that are more than 100 years old," said Gänzle.

"One would be the Boudin Bakery in San Francisco. They will tell you that they have maintained their sourdough since the Gold Rush in 1849. And I think that's perfectly reasonable and credible. Because I do know if a baker hands over the bakery to somebody else in the family or outside of the family, the starter stays."

"The second documented case that comes with lab books and everything, there is a German starter culture producer called Böcker," Gänzle explained.

"They have, at least in Germany and in surrounding countries, pretty much the best reputation of selling a good sourdough starter culture. And they've been propagating their sourdough, I think, since 1906. And they have documentation that this sourdough has been continuously propagated over at least 100 years now. It's almost 120."

But one of the most interesting

tales of sourdough lore comes from a very unlikely place. In his search for the origins of sourdough, author Eric Pallant discovered a church in Syria that makes a fascinating claim.

"The Nestorians, who are in Assyria, insist, based on their scriptures, that their sourdough actually comes from the tears of Christ on the cross and his blood after he's been stabbed by the Romans. [The Apostle] John captured [that blood and tears] and [made] a sourdough starter. [From there] the Apostles handed out [that starter], and it is the Eucharist that's still being used by this church [in Syria]," said Pallant.

"So, when Jesus says, my body is bread, and my blood is wine – which are both products of fermentation – the Nestorians insist it really is!"

Was the "Holy Grail" of historic starters then hidden in plain sight all along, inside a church in Syria, back-slopped thousands of times and given as holy communion over and over and over?

It's unlikely. And whether or not it provides "everlasting life" to the pious churchgoers who consume it, the starter might have achieved a level of immortality – in the form of water, flour, yeast and bacteria – that rivals any story about the Fountain of Youth or the Cup of Christ.

So, who has the oldest starter in the world? The short, scientific answer is nobody. If you're a stickler for documentation, though, Böcker in Germany, Boudin in San Francisco, and possibly Kimuraya bakery in Japan have claims to the prize.

Anecdotally, the oldest, maybe hardest to believe starter might have traces of DNA from Jesus Christ himself.

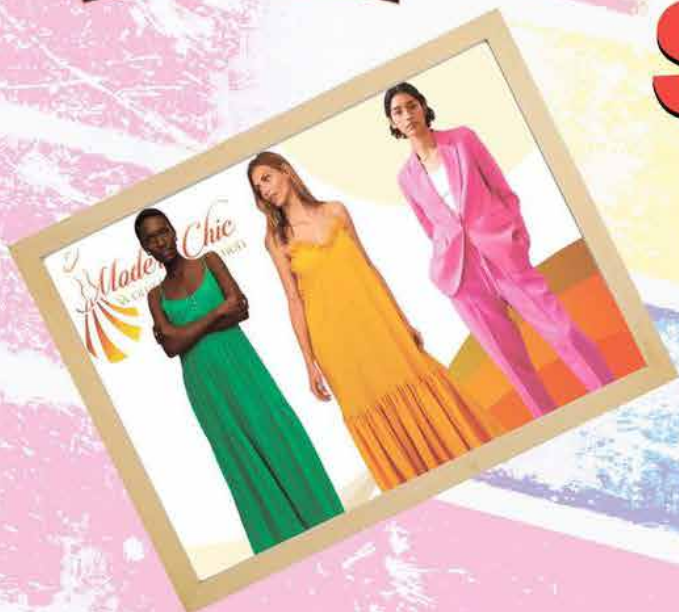
But if microbiologists ever find a novel way to verify the mythological claims of starter origins, the Puratos Library in Belgium might have to build a bigger wing for the oldest, rarest mothers on Earth.





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## The 'walking' statues of Easter Island

By Sarah Brown

Living on a remote, barren isle bestowed with few resources, the Rapanui needed to combine ingenious design with flawless sculpting to move the massive moai without any machinery.

The coastal winds whipped across my face as I craned my neck to see the 15 moai before me. Standing up to two storeys tall and with their backs to the choppy Pacific Ocean, the statues' empty eye sockets, once embellished with white coral and red scoria, gazed perennially across Easter Island. Their bodies were etched with enigmatic symbols, and their faces, with prominent brows and elongated noses, seemed both comfortingly human and formidably divine.

There are 887 moai scattered across Easter Island, or Rapa Nui as the islanders call it, and these 15 were standing on the Ahu Tongariki plinth, the largest ceremonial structure on the remote Chilean isle. Looking up at the overly large heads and legless torsos, I found it hard to imagine how these giant monolithic figures – which weigh up to 88 tons and were built at least 900 years ago – could have even got here. But it wasn't just me who was confounded: researchers have long puzzled over how these weighty moai were manually transported across the island.

Several theories have been proposed, including



using logs to roll the statues and even the far-fetched belief of extra-terrestrial help. However, it seems that the secret lies in the marriage of ingenious design and flawless sculpting, which enabled these humanlike statues to stand upright and rock forward from side-to-side while being guided by ropes, granting the statues the ability to "walk".

The movement would have been similar to the shuffle of a refrigerator being moved in a standing position, with each side inching forward one at a time. "But the Rapanui [the Polynesian peoples indigenous to Rapa Nui] went beyond that and actually carved the base of the statues and added certain angles in so that it was a better version for moving," explained Carl Lipo, an archaeologist specialising in the moai and lead author of a 2013 study into how the statues moved.

This was the first study

that successfully "walked" a five-ton replica, and the walking theory it proposed "melds oral history and science", according to Ellen Caldwell, art history professor at Mt San Antonio College in California who has expertise in ancient Oceanic art.

She notes that walking statues are a part of Rapanui oral traditions, with the word "neke neke" in the Rapanui language translating to "walking without legs"; and says that it is this phrase and such oral histories that Rapanui elders and descendants recall when answering how the moai were moved across vast distances without any machinery. Rapanui childhood nursery rhymes also tell stories about the statues walking; and legends say that a chief with mana, or supernatural power, helped the moai to walk.

"The oral tradition of the island talks about the moai walking from the

place where they were made to their final destination on top of the altars," said Patricia Ramirez, who has lived on Rapa Nui since she was five and now works there as a tour guide. "Traditionally, the only way history was passed down on the island was through songs, through chants, through games and through poetry. There are plenty of ancestral songs and stories that talk about the moais walking."

However, although locals have long spoken of them walking, it took foreign scholars more than two centuries to accept this way of transporting the moai. "It's really been just Europeans and other researchers sort of saying, 'no, there must have been other ways, it couldn't have been that'," said Lipo. "There was no way we could think of moving the statues other than having lots of people. This turns out not to be true. The

*cont'd on pg 15*





Fifteen moai stand on the Ahu Tongariki plinth, the largest ceremonial structure on Easter Island (Credit: Chakarin Wattanamongkol/Getty Images)

**cont'd from pg 14**

archaeological record really points to that."

Almost all the statues were created in the volcanic quarry of Rano Raraku before being transported to stone plinths (known as ahus) at different points on the isle's coastline. Lipo's study found that unfinished statues in the quarry and abandoned ones lying on the side of the island's roads – i.e., ones that needed to be moved – had wider bases relative to shoulder width compared to the statues standing on the ahus. They also significantly leaned forward by around 17 degrees, causing the centre of mass to be positioned just over the rounded front bottom edge. These adjustments allowed the statue to roll from side to side and be transported to their final spot.

"What's sort of stunning is that they're so far forward leaning, they couldn't stand up on their own because they would topple forward," he said.

These features indicate that the moai were modelled after "our own way of walking", said Lipo, explaining that when we walk, we rotate our hip and fall forward. "The Rapanui es-

entially created a structure that could do the same thing. As the statue leans forward, it falls and moves across the front to take a step forward."

The walking moai would have been supported and guided by ropes, with a group of Rapanui people on each side of the statue leading the steps and a small group behind steadying the movement. Once the statue reached its ahu, stone carvers would chisel in eyes and reshape the base to adjust the centre of mass, allowing the statue to stand upright by itself.

Why the Rapanui chose to walk the statues rather than drag them or roll them on logs came down to practicalities, according to Lipo. The weight of the sculptures would have crushed the logs, while dragging such huge moai would have demanded enormous manpower. On a remote, barren island bestowed with few resources, walking the statues would have been an efficient method. "You see the engineering that went into being able to make and move the moai with the least cost. The Rapanui people did it within the constraints of the island, basically by cooperation and ingenuity," he said.

My walk from the Rano Raraku crater to Ahu Tongariki was just 800m in distance, but I wasn't trying to guide an 88-ton moai with a few ropes. Other statues I visited stood on ahus up to 18km away from the quarry, making my bike ride there seem a breeze compared to the feats the ancient Rapanui civilisations accomplished.

Creating walking statues would have been a trial-and-error process. About 400 statues remain in and around the Rano Raraku quarry in various stages of completion, an indication that the stone carvers used the valley as an artistic laboratory to experiment with different prototypes before hitting on one that could be efficiently moved, said Lipo. "It really documents the history of craftsmanship, experiments, attempts and failures," he added.

Once a statue was ready, it would be led out of the valley and guided towards its ahu. The ancient roads leading out of Rano Raraku were concave, which aided and supported the moai's side-to-side rocking movements. However, not all moai made it to their ahus – some lost balance along

**cont'd on pg 16**

# Dominica to open trade depots in Caribbean countries

Dominica is moving to establish trade depots in Caribbean countries as the island seeks to solidify existing trade links within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Trade Minister Ian Douglas has said.

"As you would have heard during the presentation of the (national) budget, government is moving ahead with the establishment of trade depots in some of our neighbouring islands where we can have a presence in those markets," Douglas said.

He said as the authorities move forward to bring the initiative into fruition, they will work closely with stakeholders "to devise ways that even your small businesses can benefit from this initiative, grow and become more successful."

"This measure I believe demonstrates that this government understands the nature of contribution of the



micro, small and medium enterprises to the Dominican economy for ensuring that economic activity remains steady and continues to grow".

Douglas said that the Roosevelt

Skerrit administration is playing its part to ensure the growth of all sectors to remain viable "and in the long term make a positive impact on economic life in this country". (CMC)

*cont'd from pg 15*

the way and tumbled off the roads. Visitors to the quarry will see the ruins of dozens of abandoned statues littering the outer slopes and roadsides; it's the best place on the island to get a sense of the immense number of moai created.

Lipo's study found that these fallen moai have breaks consistent with falls from a vertical standing position, strengthening the theory that they walked.

Once the statue reached its destination and had been reshaped to allow it to stand upright, it would be lifted onto its ahu. At that point, the moai were sometimes topped with stone hats called

pukao to give them aringa ora (living face), or, in other words, "their human form", said Jo Anne Van Tilburg, an archaeologist specialising in Rapa Nui rock art.

Having a human-like appearance was important to the Rapanui, as the moai were used in rituals for the dead and to honour Rapanui chiefs. The Rapanui people believed the world of the living and the dead was continuous, explained Ramirez.

"They weren't content in only symbolically remembering their ancestors – they wanted to have physical images to represent them," she added. "And that's what the moais statues are. They are the faces of the dead ances-

tors."

Lipo noted that the stone carvers may have sung ceremonial songs while the statues walked to maintain the rhythm of the movement, with different songs for different sized figures to match the pace of the moai's movement.

However, little remains of the oral history of the Rapanui people to confirm this. "A lot of the songs and stories were lost due to colonisation and missionisation," said Tilburg. "The first contact with the Europeans devastated their culture. It's the same saga on all Polynesian islands."

Despite scientific research answering many of

the most puzzling questions about the moai, the lack of oral and written history keeps Rapa Nui shrouded in myth. But it's this element of mystery that lured me – and tens of thousands of other tourists each year – to this remote dot of an isle in the first place.

I pictured the 15 statues on Ahu Tongariki rolling side-to-side across the barren land, a celestial chant filling the air. Yet having walked the ancient unpaved roads of this south Polynesian island, these giant moai today stand unmoving and silent, their construction speaking volumes of the ingenuity of their past creators.



## President of UN General Assembly and Guyana's Foreign Minister, hold talks

CMC – Guyana's Foreign Affairs Minister Hugh Todd on Friday discussed a range of issues as he engaged in bilateral relations with the President of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (PGA), Abdulla Shahid.

The PGA, who is also the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Maldives, was in Guyana for an official visit that ended on Saturday.

During the meeting, Todd commended Shahid for stewardship of the work of the General Assembly during his tenure and committed to working closely with the Maldives at both the

bilateral and multilateral levels to build on the work that the PGA undertook during his presidency and to explore new ways of strengthening the relations between Guyana and the Maldives.

Shahid for his part thanked Todd for the support that Guyana provided to him in his role as president of the General Assembly and noted the key role that Guyana played in the process of the establishment of the UN Youth Office.

On September 8, the UN Member States unanimously decided to establish a UN Youth Office dedicated to engagement and advocacy for the ad-

vancement of youth issues across the United Nations in the areas of peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights.

Shahid is the first Maldivian to serve as president of the General Assembly and was intent on instilling hope to the membership by taking practical steps to address several of the challenges that are of concern to the United Nations.

He focused on issues of gender equality and women's empowerment, youth involvement in decision-making, financing for development, and climate change issues, among others.

## Jamaica launches project dubbed Operation Birthright to provide birth certificates for undocumented citizens

CMC – Prime Minister Andrew Holness officially launched the National Identification System's (NIDS) 'Operation Birthright' Project at Jamaica House in Kingston last Friday.

The initiative will provide birth certificate identity registration assistance to needy children and adults who lack legal and physical identification documents.

The \$350,000 government project aims to address the immediate concern among Jamaicans who do not have birth certificates, where it is estimated that 200,000 citizens are without legal proof of identity.

These people will have easier access to govern-



ment and business services if they have a birth certificate, and several institutions and personnel can recommend eligible people for the undocumented registration programme.

These include the head of the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities; senior officials of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development;

members of parliament; justices of the peace, and public officers.

Recommendations can also be made by a medical practitioner, minister of religion, police officer, parish councillor, dental surgeon, official representative of the Missionaries of the Poor, chief executive officer/coordinator of a registered civil society

organisation, and head of the Program of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH), among others.

The prime minister noted that it is important that every Jamaican citizen has access to a birth certificate that empowers the State to serve them better.

"It gives the State the ability to fulfil your right to the public goods that you are entitled to. So, it is such a powerful document," he said.

Mr. Holness stated that acquiring and having access to a birth certificate will make every Jamaican eligible for registration under NIDS when it is implemented.

*cont'd on pg 18*

# Regional News



## St. Vincent Teachers' Union apologises for saying there are no quality teachers in classrooms

CMC – The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers' Union has apologised for a poster that suggested there are no quality teachers in schools after over 200 educators were fired last year over the COVID-19 vaccine mandate.

The union received strong criticism on social media after the poster was released on Thursday evening.

The message was conveyed in a poster advertising a protest organised by the union for next week in Kingstown, as the union calls for the reinstatement of the teachers, even as it challenges the government decision in court.

The poster, which featured a prominent photo of union spokesperson Fiona Charles, said the union will be protesting against “no quality teachers,” “poor results for exams” and “no



Oswald Robinson

vaccination mandate”

Union President Oswald Robinson apologised in a voice note sent to union members and the general public on Friday.

In the voice note, which was obtained by the Caribbean Media Corporation, Robinson made a sincere apology on behalf of the

national executive of the union “for the error that went out from our poster today and even late yesterday evening, it was already in circulation.

“There was an error on it with regards to quality teachers. We are very sorry for the error that is on the poster. It should have been

‘we need more adequate, qualified teachers in the classroom.’”

“And we are sorry for this misinformation,” Robinson said, adding that a new poster was being crafted and that the national executive was scrutinising it and it should be released shortly.

He thanked teachers and supporters of the union for their support in the last protest, which was held in Kingstown on August 18.

“And we’re looking forward to your support again this Monday the 12th and Tuesday, the 13th of September, beginning at 10:30 a.m. We are expected to picket and also to march around the streets of Kingstown,” Robinson said.

### cont'd from pg 17

“So, this is an important step for equity, to ensure that every Jamaican, including those who did not have their birth certificate, gets a chance to participate in the NIDS. Once we have everyone participating in the NIDS fully, then we can increase the intensity of moving towards our digital society,” he explained.

Floyd Green, minister without portfolio in the Prime Minister's Office, who is responsible for NIDS, stated that Operation Birthright is the government's first

comprehensive approach to locating the country's most vulnerable undocumented citizens and providing them with a free birth certificate.

The National Identification System of Jamaica will provide a comprehensive and secure framework for the collection and storage of identity information.

This secure tool can also verify an individual's identity and facilitate the electronic signing of documents and secure access to a range of government services online.



## Barbados to seek another IMF loan, PM Mia Mottley to hold talks with OECD in Paris

CMC – Prime Minister Mia Mottley Friday announced that Barbados will seek a new loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) this month, telling Barbadians “these are indeed rough waters.”

In 2018, the Washington-based financial institution approved a US\$290 million Extended Arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for Barbados, noting then that the programme was aimed at helping the island restore debt sustainability, strengthen the external position, and improve growth prospects.

Mottley, speaking at a news conference, said her government decided to return to the IMF later this month “with the intent of starting a BERT (Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation) 2022 programme.

“This decision has not been taken lightly, but this is being done to ensure Barbados can continue its trajectory of positive growth,” she said.

“In addition to providing further means to stabilise our country, this programme will unlock critically important funding, giving Barbados a boost on the great progress we have already made, despite the hardships brought on by the global challenges,” Mottley said.

She told Barbadians “These are indeed rough waters, but this is not a race for the swift and I know we can and will endure and at the same time create a better society for every Bajan to live in.”

In September 2021, the government announced that the BERT programme had been updated to reflect the arrival of the coronavirus (COVID-19)



*Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley*

pandemic and its comprehensive response. The authorities said then that BERT was not a rigid set of targets, but a plan of action and behaviour that was measured and monitored.

Mottley defended the decision to seek assistance from the IMF, saying Barbados could have easily gone to the international market to raise the required funds.

“But I don’t want to go to the market when interest rates are being increased. We can go to the IMF and pay a fraction of what the market will ask us to pay,” she said, adding that the environment on the international market is not something the island would want to be involved with at this time.

“So, we know the reality that outside is overcast globally, and there is a possibility of not just some showers, but some hurricanes and earthquakes

and other things that are destabilising countries.

“All we are saying is, blame the government, we are playing inside the crease, we will step outside the crease to play a few shots when we can and we want to work with the private sector to trigger the growth that is necessary.

“There are things we are still not comfortable about as a government with respect to the facilitation of business, we are getting there,” she assured Barbadians.

Mottley, who announced that she will be in Paris on Monday before travelling to Washington, said she will have discussions in the French capital with the representatives of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on taxation issues.

## Pakistani PM says his flooded country faces food shortages

AP – Pakistan is grappling with food shortages after deadly floods left the impoverished country's agriculture belt underwater, the prime minister told the Turkish president by phone, as authorities scaled up efforts Monday to deliver food, tents and other items.

Shahbaz Sharif spoke to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan overnight to thank Turkey for dispatching food, tents and medicine by 12 military aircraft, four trains and Turkish Red Crescent trucks.

A government statement said Sharif briefed Erdogan about the government's relief activities and sought assistance from Turkey in overcoming the "food shortage." Sharif also sought help from Turkey on reconstruction



*Victims of heavy flooding from monsoon rains receive relief aid provided by the Allah-o-Akbar Tehreek political party, in Quetta, Pakistan, Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022. (AP Photo/Arshad Butt)*

work in the flood-hit areas.

More than 660,000 people, including women and children, are living at relief camps and in makeshift homes after floods damaged their homes across the country and forced them to move to safer places. Pakistan, the country's military, U.N. agencies and local charities

are providing food to these flood victims.

Pakistan heavily relies on its agriculture and occasionally exports its surplus wheat to Afghanistan and other countries. Now it is in talks to import badly needed wheat and vegetables, including to people not directly affected by floods. Meanwhile, the

price of vegetables and other food has started increasing.

Until last week, floodwater was covering around a third of Pakistan, including the country's agriculture belt in eastern Punjab and southern Sindh provinces which are the main food basket. Initially, Pakistan said the floods caused \$10 billion in damages, but authorities say the damages are far greater than the initial estimates.

That's forced Pakistan and the United Nations to urge the international community to send more help.

In response, U.N. agencies and various countries, including the United States, have sent more than 60 plane-loads of aid. Since last week, Washington has sent three military planes to deliver food.

## Ethiopia's Tigray forces express willingness to enter peace process

AP – The Tigray forces battling Ethiopian troops say they're willing to abide by an immediate cessation of hostilities and participate in a peace process led by the African Union, a significant shift to which Ethiopia's government has not yet responded.

The conflict in northern Ethiopia's Tigray region has killed an estimated tens of thousands of people and left millions without basic services for well over a year after fighting erupted in late

2020.

The Tigray authorities' statement Sunday night came after new pressure by the United States and others following the renewal of fighting last month that shattered months of relative calm. Witnesses have described heavy fighting along the region's borders.

The Tigray authorities had criticised AU mediation efforts under special envoy Olesgun Obasanjo, and their  
*cont'd on pg 21*



*Ethiopian military parade with national flags attached to their rifles at a rally organised by local authorities to show support for the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF), at Meskel square in downtown Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Nov. 7, 2021. (AP Photo, File)*



## With no clear winner, Sweden in a limbo after vote

AP — Sweden awoke Monday to the prospect of weeks of political uncertainty after neither of the country's blocs secured a clear governing majority in elections that saw another boost for a far-right party that is now the country's second largest.

With more than 94% of the ballots counted, the centre-right opposition that includes Sweden's second largest party, the Sweden Democrats, had a razor-thin edge over the governing Social Democrats and their allies in the centre-left bloc headed by Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, who has not resigned.

The result was so close that the election authority said a definitive outcome would not be known before Wednesday, when the uncounted votes, including those cast abroad, have been tallied. As of now, the preliminary results make it unlikely any party will secure

a majority of 175 seats in the 349-seat Riksdag, Sweden's parliament.

"It's incredibly close. It's basically a coin toss with 50-50 for both sides. So, we don't know at the moment," said Zeth Isaksson, a sociologist at Stockholm University.

The biggest winner of the evening was the populist anti-immigration Sweden Democrats, which had a strong showing of nearly 21%, its best result ever. The party gained on promises to crack down on shootings and other gang violence that have shaken a sense of security for many in Sweden.

The party has its roots in the white nationalist movement but years ago began expelling extremists. Despite its rebranding, voters long viewed it as unacceptable and other parties shunned it. But that has been changing, and its result in this election shows just how far it has come in gaining acceptance.



*Poll workers count votes at a polling station at Hästhagens Sport Center in Malmö, Sweden, Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022. An exit poll projected that Sweden's ruling left-wing Social Democrats have won the most votes in a general election Sunday, while a right-wing populist party had its best showing yet. (Johan Nilsson/TT News Agency via AP)*

The Social Democrats, who have been in power in Sweden since 2014, remain the largest party with 30.5% of the vote. Andersson said it was obvious that the social democratic movement, which is based on ideals of creating an equal society and a strong welfare state, remains strong in Sweden.

The conservative bloc was led during the campaign by the centre-right Moderates, who won 19%. Leader Ulf Kristersson told

his supporters that he stands ready to try to create a stable and effective government.

However, Sweden is likely to face a lengthy process to form a government, as it did after the 2018 election.

Andersson, a 55-year-old economist, became Sweden's first female prime minister less than a year ago and led Sweden's historic bid to join NATO following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February.

### *cont'd from pg 20*

new statement makes clear they expect "mutually acceptable mediators" along with international observers and experts to guide the process.

The Ethiopian government has said it was ready for talks anywhere at any time and without preconditions. Tigray authorities had demanded the resumption of basic services and the removal of hostile forces from neighbouring Eritrea, among other things.

The recent fighting has triggered new diplomatic activity behind the

scenes. The U.S. has played a leading role in mediating between the two sides, according to two diplomatic sources in Addis Ababa, who also said talks were expected in Djibouti. The sources spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak publicly.

The U.S., AU, United Nations and European Union welcomed the Tigray authorities' new statement, and the U.S. called on Eritrea and unnamed "others" to stop fuelling the conflict.

The AU statement notably referred to the "regional government of Tigray,"

while Ethiopia's government last year designated the Tigray authorities and their forces as a terrorist organization. The EU statement by foreign policy chief Josep Borrell also referred to the regional government and said "this opportunity should be seized by all. Now."

The renewed fighting has again cut off deliveries to Tigray of humanitarian aid, which had revived in a limited way during the lull in fighting earlier this year. Aid deliveries also have been suspended to parts of the neighbouring Amhara region affected by the fighting.

# Sports News



## Carlos Alcaraz wins US Open for first Slam title, top ranking

AP—Walking out for his first Grand Slam final at age 19, Carlos Alcaraz bumped fists with fans leaning over a railing along the path leading to the Arthur Ashe Stadium court. Moments later, after the coin toss, Alcaraz turned to sprint to the baseline for the warmup, until being beckoned back to the net by the chair umpire for the customary pre-match photos.

Alcaraz is imbued with boundless enthusiasm and energy, not to mention skill, speed, stamina and sangfroid. And now he's a U.S. Open champion and the No. 1 player in men's tennis.

Using his uncommon combination of moxie and maturity, Alcaraz beat Casper Ruud 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (1), 6-3 on Sunday to both earn the trophy at Flushing Meadows and become the youngest man to lead the ATP rankings.

"Everything came so fast. For me it's unbelievable. It's something I dreamed since I was a kid, since I started playing tennis," said Alcaraz, whom folks of a certain age might still consider a kid.

"Of course," he said, "I'm hungry for more."

Alcaraz, who will move up three ranking spots from No. 4 on Monday, already has attracted plenty of attention as someone considered the Next Big Thing in a



Carlos Alcaraz, of Spain, holds up the championship trophy after defeating Casper Ruud, of Norway, in the men's singles final of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022, in New York. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

sport dominated for decades by the Big Three of Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer.

"He's one of these few rare talents that comes up every now and then in sports. That's what it seems like," said Ruud, a 23-year-old from Norway. "Let's see how his career develops, but it's going all in the right direction."

The Spaniard was serenaded by choruses of "Olé, Olé, Olé! Carlos!" that reverberated off the arena's closed roof — and Alcaraz often motioned for the spectators to get louder. There were a couple of magical points that drew standing ovations, including one Alcaraz lost with a laser of an on-the-run forehand while ending up face-down on his

belly.

He only briefly showed signs of fatigue from having to get through three consecutive five-setters in the three rounds right before the final; no one had gone through that arduous route on the way to the title in New York in 30 years.

Alcaraz went five sets against 2014 U.S. Open champion Marin Cilic in the fourth round, ending at 2:23 a.m. Tuesday; against Jannik Sinner in the quarterfinals, a 5-hour, 15-minute thriller that ended at 2:50 a.m. Friday after Alcaraz needed to save a match point; and against Frances Tiafoe in the semifinals.

This was not a stroll to the finish. He faced a pair of set points while down 6-5 in the third. Could have been an

outcome-altering moment. But Alcaraz erased each of those point-from-the-set opportunities for Ruud with the sorts of quick-reflex, soft-hand volleys he repeatedly displayed.

"He just played too good on those points. We've seen it many times before: He steps up when he needs to," Ruud said. "When it's close, he pulls out great shots."

One break in the fourth was all it took for Alcaraz to seal the victory in the only Grand Slam final between two players seeking both a first major championship and the top spot in the ATP's computerised rankings, which date to 1973.

The winner was guaranteed to be first in Monday's rankings; the loser was guaranteed to be second.



## Inter-schools' golf programme reaping success

The inter-schools' golf programme being administered by the Ministry of Sports is bearing fruit and is producing some of the top junior players in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Ministry of Sports employs several of Antigua and Barbuda's top golfers as coaches and the golf unit is led by Otis Thomas, who is the coordinator of the schools' golf programme.

The other coaches that work in the programme have all represented Antigua and Barbuda at the national level, and like Thomas, they all come from the close-knit communities of Barnes Hill and New Winthropes, villages that are within walk-

ing distance from the Cedar Valley Golf Course.

They are coach Skey Anthony, Vincent James, Tedson Weatherill and Kimesha Anthony, who was widely regarded as the top female player in the OECS for several years. Kimesha Anthony, who joined the coaching staff in 2021, is also the only female coach in the programme.

Skey Anthony has partnered with coach Marlon "Boozie" George in creating the Striving For Excellence Academy, which is geared towards the development of junior golfers in Antigua and Barbuda.

The partnership between Anthony and George



*Antiguan junior golfer Keiohn James*

has been instrumental in players, who were first introduced to the sport via the inter-schools' golf programme, getting more opportunities to develop their skills by joining the Striving For Excellence Academy, which is based at the Cedar Valley Golf Course.

Anthony said three of the players that started to play golf in the inter-schools' programme are not only among the top players at the Striving For Excellence Academy, but are among the leading junior golfers in the nation of Antigua and Barbuda.

"We have Taj Barnes and he came from the Princess Margaret School. Taj has been playing for the past six

years. Taj Barnes is heading off to college next year.

"Taj Barnes is a pretty good golfer right now. He is really doing good and looking forward to going to college next year.

"Lexi Hunte is also from the Princess Margaret School so those are two of the current crop of top junior players that came out of the Ministry of Sports golf programme," Anthony said.

"Keiohn James, he is also one of our top junior golfers. He is actually ranked in the top 15 in the club. So we have a lot of positive coming out of the Ministry of Sports golf programme.

"Also with the help from  
*cont'd on pg 24*



*Antiguan junior golfer Lexi Hunte (Photos courtesy Striving For Excellence)*

# Sports News



## Good start for Transport Board in business league title defense

Cupholders Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board have made a successful start in defense of their Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Cool and Smooth Business Basketball League title.

The 2019 champions cruised to a commanding 71-37 victory over Fearless Crew in the second game of the business league's opening night double-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Sunday, 11th September.

Kareem Edwards scored 16 points and Russell Daley converted 15 for Transport Board, while Joel Christian sank 12 points for Fearless Crew.

Success too for Eye Mobile Antigua Vision Care as they made a winning start to their business league campaign by prevailing 59-54 against Pointe FM in the opening game of the tournament.

Adonis Humphreys shot a game-high 21 points and Teran Zachariah chipped in with 14 points for Antigua



*Teams assemble for the official opening of the ABBA Cool and Smooth Business Basketball League at the JSC Sports Complex on Sunday, 11th September, 2022. (Photo by Elwin Francis)*

Vision Care.

Pointe FM's challenge were led by Danny Perez with 17 points and Kevin Pimental with 16 points.

The two games were preceded by a march around the stadium by the participating teams and a brief opening ceremony at the same venue.

Coordinator of the business basketball league, former national team captain and point guard Carl "Bolie" Knight, welcomed the teams during his opening remarks.

"We have been gone

for about two years and we have been starving. I know that you guys and the fans just can't wait to play and to witness some real fantastic basketball action.

"So indeed, I just want to give God thanks and praise that he has spared our lives so that we could be back here so that you guys can do what you do best, to play this great sport of basketball and to entertain our fans here," Knight said.

"So I welcome all of the teams representing the various organizations. I want

to welcome all of our fans and sponsors and I know that it is going to be a great league this year.

"We are going to put our heads together and try to organize a great league for all of you and so I also want to thank all our referees and table officials. I also want to big up our sponsor, Cool and Smooth."

In his brief address, First Vice President of the ABBA Gibert Findlay said, "Business league basketball is all about having fun, representing the different organizations, but also play with respect. Play and have fun, but remember to have respect for the referees, the officials, for fellow team mates and the other teams as well.

"From all indications, I think we have 14 teams registered and let's just come out and have fun and represent your organizations proudly."

### *cont'd from pg 23*

coach Marlon, this has helped a lot in developing the young golfers. Coach Marlon and I came together and do our thing and we can see the improvement in the players that came out of the schools' programme."

Anthony said working in the schools' golf programme involves teaching the basics on the schools' playing fields, but being part of the Striving For Excellence Academy allows the players to get a lot more

practice time and the opportunity to utilize the actual golf course at Cedar Valley.

"I normally go to the schools where we teach them the basics at the school's playing field.

"I would then invite them over to the golf course like on a Saturday and those players who can make it during the week, I would also invite them to the golf course from 3:30 in the afternoon until 6:30 in the evening," Anthony said.



## Soccer resuming in Britain after pause due to queen's death

AP — Soccer was resuming in Britain on Monday after a pause over the weekend as a mark of respect following the death of Queen Elizabeth II, with lower-division games set to return to normal this week.

The Premier League, however, has yet to confirm when the top flight will be back playing again, with logistical issues likely arising ahead of the State Funeral taking place in London on Sept. 19.

The English Football League — which runs the three divisions below the Premier League — said tributes will be paid to the queen at grounds across the country when games in the second-tier Championship as well as League One and League Two resume from Tuesday.

A minute's silence will be held before matches, with black armbands to be

worn by players, flags to be flown at half-staff and the national anthem — “God Save the King” — to be played in stadiums.

“With a national policing plan now in operation,” the EFL said, referring to the days leading up to the funeral, during which the queen's coffin will lie in state in London, “the League and clubs will continue to work with forces in respect of any challenges that may emerge regarding policing of specific fixtures.”

The EFL said it will work on a “case-by-case basis.” Before that, play in the non-professional leagues resumed Monday, with soccer having completely stopped from Friday to Sunday — from the professional leagues all the way down to the grassroots.

Some Premier League teams will be back in action in European competi-



Team players stand on the pitch during minutes silence following the death of Queen Elizabeth II prior to the Group B Europa Conference League soccer match between West Ham and FCSB Steaua Bucharest at London Stadium in London, Thursday, Sept. 8, 2022. (AP Photo/Ian Walton)

tion between Tuesday and Thursday — Manchester City, Liverpool, Chelsea and Tottenham in the Champions League and Manchester United, Arsenal and West Ham in the Europa League or Europa Conference League — ahead of scheduled top-flight games on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Liverpool hosts Ajax

on Tuesday and Manchester City welcomes Borussia Dortmund on Wednesday.

Games in London appear most at risk because of the vast security operation surrounding the queen's funeral. The Premier League schedule has Tottenham hosting Leicester on Saturday, while Brentford hosts Arsenal and Chelsea hosts Liverpool on Sunday.

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the ABFA's Technical Centre at Paynters last Wednesday.

The game was decided by penalties after both teams had battled to a 3-3 draw at the end of regulation. English Harbour, now in the ABFA's first division, will clash with premier division side Parham in the second round.

Joseph said English Harbour, past winners of multi-premier division league titles, will be seeking to pull off another win over Parham when both sides meet in the knockout cup competition.

“When English Harbour was English Harbour, we use to murder them and so we are going to try and murder them again,” Joseph stated.

“It's a young squad and some of the guys are fairly new. We train every night and it is going good so far. I must say the players are taking the training very serious and they want to bang Parham, and so right now they are plugged in.”

Joseph has been instrumental in keeping the English Harbour Club together for the past several years. She said the team is currently without her

assistant Ian “Chicken Leg” Piper, who has been fulfilling head coaching duties with the club for several years.

“Ian has been part of the club for quite some time.

“He had to step out of the country for a bit and as soon as he returns, he will come back and help us out,” Joseph said.

“I do everything for English Harbour. I love the game; I love the team and I don't want to see English Harbour not playing no football. So I do my best to keep everybody together. When players leave, I try to get more.”

## Sports clubs get financial support from St. Paul MP



Garden Stars representative Cleveland Williams, right, accepts a cheque from Member of Parliament for St. Paul, Paul Chet Greene at the St. Paul's Empowerment Center in Liberta on Friday, 9th September, 2022.



Liberta Sports Club representative Stanley Warner, right, accepts a cheque from Member of Parliament for St. Paul, Paul Chet Greene at the St. Paul's Empowerment Center in Liberta on Friday, 9th September, 2022.

Three sports clubs in the constituency of St. Paul have been gifted with cheques to assist with their preparation for the upcoming football season.

Member of Parliament for St. Paul, Paul Chet Greene, made the donation of EC \$5000.00 each to the Liberta Sports Club, Garden Stars Football Club and the English Harbour Football Club.

Greene said the money comes from a partnership he established with the clubs to form a jourvert troupe to participate in this year's carnival and to share the proceeds with the clubs.

According to Greene, the exercise did not generate the expected amounts of



Manager of English Harbour FC Althea Joseph, right, accepts a cheque from St. Paul's community activist Gregory 'Driftwood' Athill, who made the presentation on behalf of Member of Parliament for St. Paul, Paul Chet Greene at the St Paul's Empowerment Center in Liberta on Friday, 9th September, 2022. (Photos courtesy Everton Barnes)

money because of a number of reasons, but he is happy to still be able to make the donations.

He noted that with the opening of the football season just around the corner, the money will come in

handy to help the clubs with their preparation.

Manager of English Harbour FC Althea Joseph, who accepted the monetary contribution, said the timely donation will help to provide some of the equipment

that will be required by the club during the season.

"The presentation was a very good one. The funds given would go a very long way in helping with the preparation for the season in providing nets, balls and other sporting equipment for the club," she stated.

English Harbour FC are through to the second round of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Joma Caribbean Cool and Smooth Knockout Cup Competition.

English Harbour booked their second-round spot in the knockout cup by prevailing 8-7 on penalties against Blackburn Palace FC in their first-round match at

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