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Hospitality Jamaica

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2018

Conservation WORKS, but caring COSTS

FASHION, FOOD, AND FALSE HAIR

**CARIBBEAN NATIONS DESERVE
A PIECE OF THE TOURISM PIE**

Conservation works, but CARING COSTS!

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

FISHERFOLK AT the White River Fish Sanctuary (WRFS) in Ocho Rios are predicting they will reap a 1,500 per cent increase in fish stocks in five years, surpassing their original target of '500 in 5, by a thousand.



ABOVE: Guy Harvey (right) autographing a print for Max Patchen of Mystic Mountain.

LEFT: Everton Simpson, a fisherman who is now a coral gardener at the White River Fish Sanctuary in Ocho Rios.

joined hands with the sanctuary, and taking the decision not to prosecute so much as to educate fisherfolk, marine users (tour boats, divers, snorkellers, beach guests and others), the impact has been rewarding.

In fact, White River seemed to have joined line with other Jamaican fish sanctuaries being described as “quiet success story”, but Harvey and WRFS partners believe the time has come to “make some noise”, to galvanize investment and expand on what currently exist.

Projects such as ‘Adopt a Warden’ are among the efforts that the WRFS is pushing as it works towards sustainable development.

Guy Harvey’s visit to Jamaica was to make that push far more meaningful, and he didn’t disappoint.

“Marine conservation is good for business. The kind of sustainable business that countries like Jamaica needs,” he stated, but more importantly, he says marine protected areas, are not only good for business, but also increased climate-change resilience, increased biodiversity and productivity, protection of cultural values, environmental health, increased recreation and tourism livelihoods.

He added that sharks in the water in Florida are worth more in the water.

Giving a synopsis of the economic importance of marine protected areas, the marine artist and

The campaign, which was launched just over a year ago, has resulted in an outstanding impact on marine life in an area once badly depleted by overfishing.

“We are shooting for a 500 per cent fish biomass increase in five years, but I think we will get to 1,500 per cent in that time,” local fishermen Noel Francis and Raglan Brown stated, having already seen the fish coming back in the White River.

Both men are fishermen who are now two of 12 wardens that patrol the sanctuary. “We don’t have to travel far out, as we used to, to get good fish outside of the sanctuary borders anymore,” they revealed during a fundraiser supported by Guy Harvey, the world-renowned Jamaican ocean life artist and conservationist.

The event, staged at Couples Sans Souci under the banner ‘Protect, Restore, Engage (PRE)’, raised US\$28,000 that will go towards coral restoration, marine park conservation, patrol and enforcement, and education.

Since the White River Fishermen Association (WRFA)



The growth is evident from the number of fish living in the White River Fish Sanctuary in Ocho Rios.



Belinda Morrow outlining how to donate to the White River Fish Sanctuary.



Fishermen Noel Francis (left) and Raglan Brown.

founder of the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, impressed upon the guests in attendance that “conservation works”.

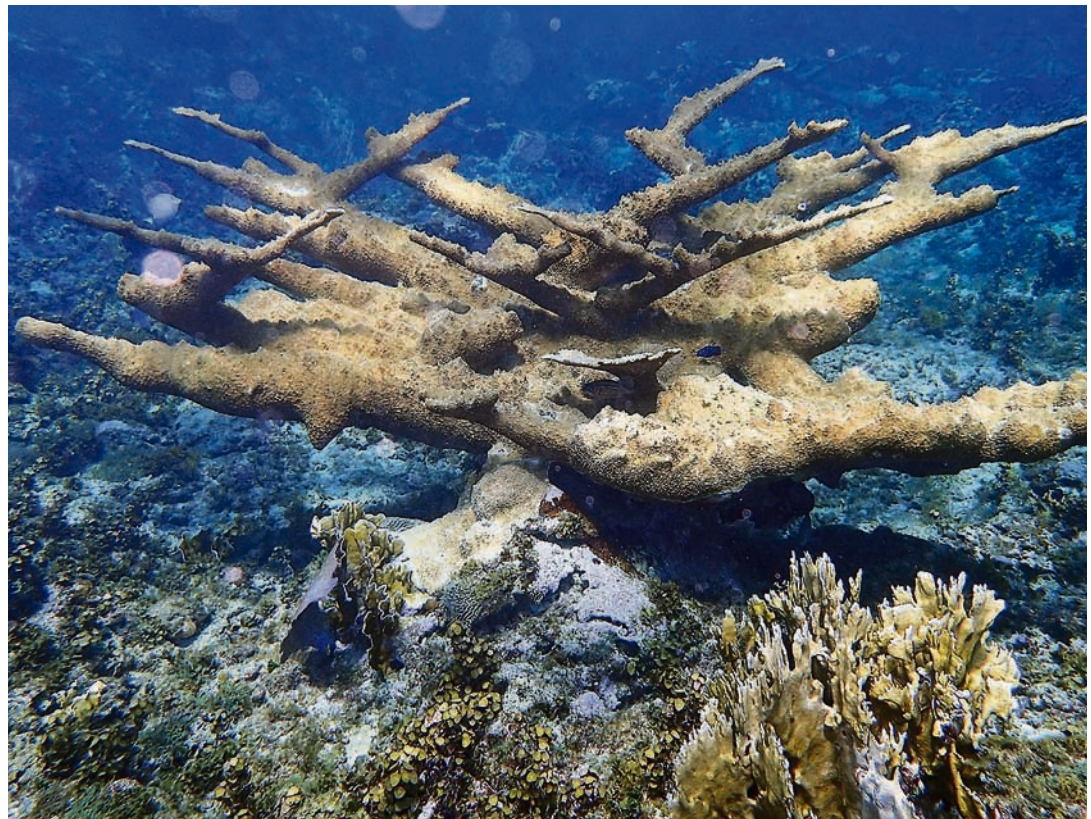
For example, in the Cayman Islands, one of Jamaica’s closest neighbours, a single stingray fetches US\$500,000 and 25 rays equal US\$17 million per year, Harvey argued, noting that in Florida and The Bahamas, the economic value of protecting sharks is also generating huge business.

“Shark attractions in Florida bring in US\$221 million per year, while The Bahamas are earning US\$113.8 million a year.”

According to him, tag-and-release tournaments for large sail fish like the Blue Marlin generate tens of millions of dollars in the Caribbean and Central American annually as well.

White River Fish Sanctuary board member Belinda Morrow in her speech, emphasised that they are many ways to get involved and help the sanctuary.

“Sign up for one of our glass bottom boat rides,” she encouraged. “Reduce, reuse and recycle your plastics. Volunteer your time. Buy your fish only from members of the



This coral is one of the many that the White River Fish Sanctuary is trying to protect from overfishing and pollution.

WRFA, whose members respect the sanctuary. Everyone can pledge to do something to help

in our efforts. It all adds up.” To help the sanctuary, go to www.whiteriverfish

sanctuary.reefsupport.org.

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J'can Bryanna Hylton cops win at Caribbean Tourism Youth Congress

Junior tourism minister impresses judges with original presentation



Jamaica's Junior Tourism Minister, Bryanna Hylton, photographed during the Caribbean Tourism Organisation Youth Congress in The Bahamas recently.

Janet Silvera

Senior Gleaner Writer

Nassau, BAHAMAS:

AUTHENTICITY, ORIGINALITY, and a demonstrated mastery of the subject matter, were among the winning combination that propelled Jamaica's Junior Tourism Minister, Bryanna Hylton, into stardom at the Caribbean Tourism Youth Congress in The Bahamas.

Hylton, a 17-year-old student of Westwood High School, in Trelawny, competed against 17 other dynamic youngsters from the region, taking home the coveted first-place position. Her presentation focused on 'Wellness and Rejuvenation – enhancing the Caribbean's Tourism Product Offering'.

Delivering her topic with immense confidence, Hylton highlighted the rich diversity and medicinal quality of the herbs in the region, telling the audience that the things needed to heal their bodies can easily be found in their backyards.

Backing up her presentation with extensive research, the young junior minister said the wellness industry was valued at trillions of dollars, and ripe to tap into.

Hylton did not win without stiff competition; however, her delivery, ability to articulate, professionalism and persuasive manner seemed to have won over the judges.

Created to inspire the region's next generation of tourism leaders, the Youth Congress, staged as part of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation State of the Tourism Industry Conference, now on in The Bahamas, has become one of the most dynamic and valued sessions of the annual event.

This year, 18 countries were represented, the largest group of junior ministers and commissioners in a number of years.

"As judges, we had a challenging time to reach consensus on the top performers, as we sometimes found ties across a few criteria. But



Jamaica's Junior Tourism Minister, Bryanna Hylton (centre), flanked by secretary general of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO), Hugh Riley, and permanent secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, Jennifer Griffith, after winning the CTO, Youth Congress.

overall, we got what we were looking for as it relates to authenticity, originality, and a demonstrated mastery of the topics," head judge Barry Brown told **The Gleaner**.

He revealed that the judges felt Jamaica and the other winners provided great original thinking, with recommendations unique to their destinations and cultural distinctions.

Based on the provided topics as well as a mystery topic revealed at

the session, Brown said he felt all represented their countries with "dignity and great ability".

St Maarten's Kiara Meyers placed second, while Martinique's Caroline Pain earned the third position.

Lauding the contestants, chief executive officer of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourist Association, Frank Comito, said all the youngsters showed a keen understanding

of tourism's importance and the need to protect, enhance, celebrate and share with the world the natural beauty, rich culture, and history of their home and the Caribbean.

"Bryanna impressed us with how she was able to effectively communicate this value, backed with facts and creative ideas for marketing Jamaica," he added.

Praising the CTO he noted that

all of the participating destinations are to be commended for supporting this important initiative.

"It is an investment in our future, as it opens the minds of young people to the incredible range of opportunities in tourism, now the world's largest industry, and how important it is that we protect, nurture and enhance it."

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Caribbean nations deserve a piece of the tourism pie

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

THOUGH TOUTED as one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors of the global economy, the tourism industry is not as profitable as it should be for Caribbean nations.

Instead, the global travel companies involved in packaging and selling travel to the region are the big beneficiaries, said Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas Dr Hubert Minnis also noting that the region needs to focus its attention on it.

“Tourism will continue to be a leading engine for development within our region. As such, we must ensure the greater retention of more tourism earnings within our region and the greater dispersion of wealth within our economies,” Minnis told delegates on Tuesday during his keynote address at the official opening of the State of the Tourism Industry Conference 2018, now on in Nassau, Bahamas, on Tuesday.

DEPENDENT ON SALES

The Bahamian prime minister pointed out that the global travel companies involved in packaging and selling travel have hundreds of thousands of employees outside the region, yet their annual returns depend quite heavily on their sales to our region.

“Only a very tiny fraction of their hundreds of thousands of employees is involved in local service delivery,” he noted.

In addition, he argued that most of these companies, many operating in First World countries such as the USA, Canada, the UK, and Spain, are involved in other sophisticated aspects of tourism that could engage the minds and talents of many of our very bright and energetic young people, including marketing, software development and other services.

“How can we attract more of the development and management of global tourism to our region to accelerate and increase the range and variety of those sophisticated jobs available for our young people?” he asked.

Minnis, like many other well-thinking regionalists, is of the opinion that the lack of opportunities has contributed to the issue of brain drain in the region and feels that far more talent could be

‘... We must ensure the greater retention of more tourism earnings within our region and the greater dispersion of wealth within our economies.’



CONTRIBUTED

Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas Dr Hubert Minnis addressing delegates at the opening ceremony of the State of the Tourism Industry Conference 2018.

retained if architects, engineers, artisans, attorneys, interior designers, energy specialists and software developers could find the right jobs in the region.

Minnis says that it is time for the

Caribbean to begin to own tourism related businesses in partnership with the foreign investors.

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Int'l tourism maintains strong momentum

ACCORDING TO the World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) latest barometer, international tourist arrivals grew six per cent in the first six months of 2018 after a record year of growth in 2017.

All world regions enjoyed robust growth in tourist arrivals in January-June 2018. The increase was fuelled by strong demand from major source markets, supported by an upswing in the global economy. It comes after record year-round growth of seven per cent in 2017.

“Today's release of international tourism data for the first half of 2018 serves as further proof of the sector's resilience and relentless growth trajectory. We continue to work with our many partners to translate this growth into better jobs, more benefits to societies, and more opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and destinations,” said UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.

STRONG RESULTS

By region, Europe and Asia and the Pacific led growth with a seven per cent increase in arrivals each. Southern Mediterranean Europe and South-East Asia had the strongest results in these regions, both welcoming nine per cent more international tourists.

The Middle East and Africa also recorded sound results, with arrivals growing at five per cent and four per cent, respectively, according to still-limited information available for destinations in these regions. The Americas saw three per cent growth in arrivals over the six-month period, driven by South America and North America. The United States continued to fuel much growth in the region and beyond.

On the demand side, France, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation all reported double-digit increases in outbound spending in Europe. India and the Republic of Korea drove growth in Asia and the Pacific, while the world's top source market, China, reported similar spending as in the same period last year.

The first half of the year accounts for about 45 per cent of annual international tourist arrivals. The second half represents 55 per cent as it is three days longer and includes the Northern Hemisphere high-season months of July and August.

Against a strong first semester, growth prospects for the remainder of 2018 remain positive overall, though at a slower pace, according to the latest UNWTO Confidence Index survey.

The index value for May-August and expectations for September-December are somewhat lower than the index value for January-April.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND TOURISM: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS



DAVID JESSOP

UNTIL VERY recently, the suggestion that artificial intelligence (AI) could be applied to tourism was likely to be seen by most in the industry as something close to science fiction. However, the extraordinary technological advances that have taken place over the last decade mean that very soon, it will become a pervasive commercial tool with benefits and dangers that tourism professionals will need to understand.

Speaking about this recently, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, said that digital technology would change the way in which the region addresses tourism. It would enable, he said, the industry to better understand visitors' needs and the industry's requirements, while enhancing its competitiveness and providing a seamless visitor experience. It was, he said, his intention that Jamaica should become a leading player in adapting to and creating digital solutions of the kind that have begun to transform the industry globally.

The application of AI to Caribbean tourism is likely to be far-reaching and to present challenges to the often conservative, bottom-line-oriented industry in the Caribbean.

At its most obvious, AI offers multiple commercial benefits.

First, it makes possible the accumulation of big data and the integration of databases and analytics with globally used platforms such as Google, allowing hotel, airlines and other providers to create a sales and booking experience that anticipates a client's interests and offers bespoke travel solutions. It is a function that is likely to accelerate as AI evolves and adopts conversational voice formats that result in visitors or agents being able to 'discuss' on line, preferences and options.

Second, AI will enable real-time interventions, for example,



rebooking, if a flight is delayed and could allow a hotel, restaurant or tourist board to advise in-market via a client's cell phone options based on their location and preferences.

Third, by harnessing data from valuable market segments such as millennials, AI can then, through social media, offer in a targeted and subtle way options for personalised travel and experiences that relate to an individual's lifestyle.

All of which suggests that the industry in the region will likely benefit directly in the short term though data accumulation and the purchase of related domestic and external AI services.

However, beyond this, there are many newer forms of AI that tour operators, airlines, cruise lines, financial services companies, hotel

chains, and Internet platforms are all now racing to control and integrate. This rapidly accelerating process suggests that in the longer term, the ultimate commercial benefits will principally go to the largest and wealthiest international players able to develop and own integrated AI platforms.

LONG-TERM FOCUS

For this reason, it may be far more important for the Caribbean to develop a long-term focus on those aspects of AI that are inward facing: that is, those that support in-destination efficiencies, inter-sectoral linkages, training, education, and a better understanding of the impact of taxation, so that the domestic industry, governments and citizens can truly benefit from AI.

Local AI use could, for example, see linkages enabling farmers and fisherfolk to understand demand on a daily basis; personal-tailored daily offerings being made to travellers on their cell phones; data-led understanding by legislators of the 'sharing economy' and cruise visitor spend; and a nationally utilisable mobile money system for visitors.

Some of these ideas are already being explored, but a much better understanding of the wider implications for the Caribbean is required.

For example, forms of AI used for personal profiling are already contentious globally. In a people-oriented industry like tourism, its unmediated and unregulated use raises issues that range from privacy to the legality of data ownership and possession. Externally deployed

big data also requires answers as to how information can be controlled and directed nationally to deliver Caribbean development and the retention of revenue.

All of which is to say nothing about the need, if full advantage is to be taken of the possibilities of AI, for countrywide 4G cellular networks or better, reliable high-speed broadband, and recognition of the region's woefully poor cybersecurity preparedness.

There is no doubt AI can bring new benefits for Caribbean tourism, but prudence suggests there is also the need for careful analysis of its longer-term risks. It is a role that Jamaica's newly established Global Centre for Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management should involve itself in.



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Kevin and Rebecca's 400 NIGHTS at Couples Negril

KEVIN AND Rebecca Ticehurst celebrated their 400th night at Couples Negril two weeks ago as the resort and its sister hotel, Couples Swept Away, celebrated their 20th anniversary. The couple, who hails from Heathfield in the southeast of England, first came to the resort 16 years ago and has made the hotel their second home,

travelling to Negril two to three times per year for stays which last between 14 and 21 days at a time. "We first came to Jamaica by accident. There was a deal on

and we came here and fell in love with it, and we kept coming back," Ticehurst explained. "From Europe, it is a long trek, and I know a lot of Americans come down for maybe four, five days. We tend to come for longer because it is a long flight," he explained. The couple has fallen in love with Jamaican food, and, according to them, they adore every aspect of the cuisine, especially jerk, so much so that they even make their own jerk chicken back

in England. But like most repeat visitors to Jamaica, the food is secondary as it is the warmth and friendliness of the people that keeps them enchanted with the island. "The food is always good, but the people are better. It is like coming back to friends. We walk in the door and we have people coming out from the kitchen saying: 'Hi Kevin and Becky, you're back!' And some of them we have never seen before, but they still know who we are and it's amazing. It is so, so good," said Becky.

"We have friends here; we have friends who we met while we are here. The people, friends, and our friends, who we met here keep us coming back," she said. "We know the gardeners; we know the cleaners; we know the back of the house and kitchen staff. We know everybody," she added.

For every off-property day excursion that is offered, the duo has done them all during the 400 collective days spent in Jamaica, spanning the last decade and a half.

"We have done all the trips there are. We go out sometimes with our friends. When we come in November, we do the Reggae Marathon. For the last four to five years, we have done the 10K. It is a great place to come. We have made lifelong friends here, and that's ultimately what brings us back," Ticehurst said.

"The food is always good, but the people are better. It is like coming back to friends. We walk in the door and we have people coming out from the kitchen saying: 'Hi Kevin and Becky, you're back!'"



Sandals South Coast General Manager Adrian Whitehead, who also participated in the event, encouraged the students to gather as much information and contacts as they could to help them to better determine what area of hospitality would suit them best. Thereafter, the students roamed the resort's grand ballroom, which had been transformed into a kaleidoscope of miniature display booths, showcasing various resort departments. Among the key departments presented were food and beverage, rooms division, watersports, weddings, landscaping, loyalty and travel and sales, as well as various revenue areas and administrative departments, like information systems, public

No limits in tourism

Students encouraged to think big picture at World Tourism Day Open House

"THE ONLY limit there is in tourism is the limit you place on yourself," was the statement reiterated by Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) Vice-President Robert Headley.

The JHTA official made the statement during an address to over 200 students attending a World Tourism Day open house at Sandals South Coast, which was part of the resort's Tourism in Schools initiative.

Sharing his own journey within the industry, from a mini bar attendant at Sandals Royal Caribbean to the office he holds today as vice president of the JHTA, Headley encouraged the students the big picture that considering a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. "As you prepare to enter this exciting industry, it is important that you know your island, explore and understand what Jamaica has to offer to the world," he said. He also encouraged them to look at how tourism connects the dots with other industries like transportation, craft and construction, and explore opportunities in emerging industries that are driving tourism, like tours and weddings, etc.

The Tourism in School initiative provides opportunities for students with an interest in tourism and hospitality to experience resort operation first-hand and interact with hospitality professionals in preparation for a career in the industry.

The event attracted final-year students from four high schools in Westmoreland, St Elizabeth and Manchester, as well as Shortwood Teachers' College and the HEART Trust/NTA in Culloden.

Sandals South Coast General Manager Adrian Whitehead, who also participated in the event, encouraged the students to gather as much information and contacts as they could to help them to better determine what area of hospitality would suit them best.

Thereafter, the students roamed the resort's grand ballroom, which had been transformed into a kaleidoscope of miniature display booths, showcasing various resort departments. Among the key departments presented were food and beverage, rooms division, watersports, weddings, landscaping, loyalty and travel and sales, as well as various revenue areas and administrative departments, like information systems, public



These fun-loving girls from St Elizabeth Technical have fun dressing up for photos inside the Epix photo shop booth at the Sandals South Coast World Tourism Day open house.



Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association Vice President, Robert Headley presents a student of Winston Jones High with a prize during a raffle draw at Sandals South Coast World Tourism Day open house.

relations and environment, health and safety.

Commis chefs in training, who were in attendance at the event, also had an opportunity to tour the resort's expansive kitchen facilities with resort Executive Chef Marco Goldin and his team. For Rogelio Grant, a chef de partie in training at Culloden Heart Trust, this experience was especially useful. "I found the tour of the kitchen facilities and its operation to be very informative as I, one day, aspire to work in a similar facility," said Grant. He described the atmosphere in the kitchen as very fast-paced.

BE PASSIONATE

"Everyone there seemed to know exactly what they were about and the stations within the kitchen were organised and easily identified," Grant added. "Chef Goldin also reminded us that no matter where we go, the rules of

the kitchen remain the same". His take-away for us was to ensure that food preparation is something that we're truly passionate about and then, just be prepared to work hard and always keep developing."

In keeping with the theme of the day, 'Tourism and the Digital Transformation', students also received instruction from resort Information Technology Manager Richard Griffiths on how Sandals Resorts was using digital technology to serve guests better.

Sixth-form students at Black River High, Annika Gray and Shevicka Laird, who we caught up with during the expo, expressed their gratitude to Sandals South Coast for hosting the event. "This is my first year doing tourism and hospitality and the World Tourism Day expo at Sandals South Coast really helped to open my eyes to what's available," said Gray.



President and CEO of the Port Authority of Jamaica, Professor Gordon Shirley; Hotel Director at Carnival Horizon Pierre Camilleri; and Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett.

Complacency is not an option – Bartlett

AS JAMAICA welcomed Carnival Cruise Lines' newest and largest vessel, the *Carnival Horizon*, and the country's minister of tourism, Edmund Bartlett, is warning that complacency is not an option.

Addressing an intimate group of cruise tourism experts during the ship's inaugural call at the Ocho Rios port on October 2, the tourism minister argued that the field was so competitive, the island must be cognisant that one mistake could be very costly.

The ship docked with some 6,500 persons.

"We have to be ahead of the curve in terms of the experience that we provide. We must always be able to enable a value proposition that is unmatched – and the good news is that Ocho Rios and Jamaica is doing just that," he contended. He however, argued that Jamaica has to ensure that there is a concomitant upgrading of its tourism infrastructure in keeping with global trends, and to, as far as is possible, stay ahead of its competitors.

"Stakeholders within Jamaica seaports, in particular, cannot afford to be complacent," he stated. The *Carnival Horizon* made its inaugural call on Jamaica approximately one year after it made its maiden voyage in the Mediterranean.

According to the ship's captain Luigi de Angelis, he is looking forward to making fortnightly trips to the island. He lauded the port managers for lifting the standard of the facilities.

For Bartlett, the presence of the *Carnival Horizon* brings perhaps the largest vessel to come into the island's waters on a routine basis. "That is going to add some value to our destination. That is going to add income to a large number of people in the community and we know we

are prepared for it," he added. He noted that the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) and the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) have played integral roles in the redevelopment and transformation of the port, which he said is set for future expansion.

ENHANCED EXPERIENCE

"We have done a lot of preparation by way of infrastructure development, and the TEF has worked very closely with the Port Authority and with UDC in helping to build out infrastructure, to enable the portside experiences that are so important for the port of call to be profitable for all," the minister said.

In concurring, president and CEO at the Port Authority of Jamaica, Professor Gordon Shirley said the enhancements and expansion at the port were in response to the feedback and reviews from guests, as it was crucial to the agency that the infrastructure of ports within resort towns be improved to guarantee a more enriching visitor experience.

"The Port Authority of Jamaica has always placed great emphasis on the reviews and information we have received about the guests' reaction to our terminal, and over the past few years, in response, a number of changes have been made, including the upgrade of the main terminal, the Turtle River Roads, the fishing village," Professor Shirley said.

"Ocho Rios for us has been the most exciting port. We are excited about the future for Ocho Rios. We are talking about making Ocho Rios even more commodious as well as even more exciting for larger ships to come in," he said.

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JTB among major sponsors of US college basketball tournament

Homecoming for Jamaica-born NBA Hall of Famer Patrick Ewing

IT WILL be a homecoming for Jamaica-born NBA Hall of Famer Patrick Ewing who is set to lead the Fighting Hoyas of Georgetown as they battle for championship honours during the Second Annual Jersey Mike's Jamaica Classic College Basketball event.

Set for November 16-18 at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in Jamaica's tourism capital, the Georgetown Hoyas are among eight of America's best college Basketball teams that will compete in this year's tournament. The other teams are Loyola Marymount University, Ohio University, University of South Florida, Central Connecticut State University, Austin Peay, Campbell University, and Florida A&M. All games will be broadcast live on CBS Sports Network.

This is the second consecutive year that the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) is partnering with the Jersey Mike's Jamaica Classic. Through this partnership, the JTB will realise one of its core mandates of hosting world-class events that showcase Destination Jamaica as a prime location for international events. According to Donovan White, director of tourism, "We are revved up to have the legendary Patrick Ewing, one of our own, perform his coaching exploits on home soil. Jersey Mike's Jamaica Classic offers a win-win opportunity for the destination. We will enjoy



At the recent launch of Jersey Mike's Jamaica Classic, organisers and sponsors pause for a photo op. Front row, from left: Frank Cuervo, vice-president, Van Wagner, sports and entertainment/Jamaica Classic; Jacob Ridenhour, executive director, Jamaica Classic; and Kristopher DaCosta, digital marketing manager, Jamaica Tourist Board. Back row, from left: Peter Mullings, head of technology and administration, Jamaica Tourist Board; and Karron Benjamin, interim general manager/director of operations, Montego Bay Convention Centre.

hours of visibility on a US national TV station, we will welcome a significant contingent of basketball players and their families to the island. At the same time, we are establishing Jamaica as a venue for non-traditional sports.

The Jamaica Tourist Board is very happy to be a sponsor for this event."

Head coach of the Fighting Hoyas, Ewing, who was born in Kingston, Jamaica, in confirming his team's participation, said,



"I am really looking forward to bringing my Georgetown team to my birthplace, and we hope to bring some great basketball and excitement to Jamaica." Georgetown's roster has additional connections to Jamaica as guard Jagan Mosely's father is from Brown's Town and guard Jahvon Blair's late father is from Montego Bay.

Executive director of Jersey Mike's Jamaica Classic Jacob Ridenhour noted that they are excited to be back in Montego Bay. "A number of the teams that will participate have players of Jamaican heritage. While the tournament does boost tourism, it's more about the scholarships and opportunities which are available through basketball so Jamaican youth can be motivated and aspire to play in college or become a pro like Ewing."

This year's tournament builds on the successes of the inaugural launch in 2017, which brought the games and the destination to the eyes of the 60 million CBS Sports Television viewers for 14 hours.



Christopher Dobson, district sales manager, Midwest USA, Jamaica Tourist Board, delivers a comprehensive update on Jamaica to an enthusiastic group of agents at Delta Vacations University.

JTB shines at 25th staging of Delta Vacations University trade show

Destination Jamaica was on show at the 25th annual Delta Vacations University trade show and conference held from September 22-23 at the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. With close to 2,000 travel agents in attendance, Delta Vacations University is one of the longest-running and most respected educational events for travel agents in the United States.

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) kicked off the event with a sponsored breakfast on Saturday, where Christopher Dobson, JTB's district sales manager, provided updates on Jamaica's tourism product offerings and the current Join Me in Jamaica digital marketing campaign. This was aug-



From left: Sean-Pierre Webster, business development manager, Midwest USA; Oral Chambers, business development manager, Northeast USA; and Christopher Dobson, district sales manager, Midwest USA, of the Jamaica Tourist Board interact with participants at the Delta Vacations University trade show.

mented by a two-day series of training sessions focusing on sales and

marketing techniques highlighting things native to the destination.

Bartlett gifted with copy of hit album 'Tropical House Cruises to Jamaica'

Carl Gilchrist
Gleaner Writer

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER of hit reggae album **Tropical House Cruises to Jamaica**, Sean 'Contractor' Edwards, recently presented a copy of the album to Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett.

Contractor used the occasion of the inaugural trip of the cruise ship *Carnival Horizon* to Ocho Rios to present the album.

In accepting the gift, Bartlett congratulated Contractor on the success of the album, which spent 19 weeks on the **Billboard** Top 10, including four weeks at number one.

The album features a line-up of Jamaican and international artists, including Ed Sheeran, Mojo Morgan, Sean Kingston, Damian

and Stephen Marley, Wyclef, Capleton, Sizzla, Lee' Scratch Perry', among others.

"Reggae music is one of Jamaica's most valuable export products, so I was thankful to be able to present the album *Tropical House Cruises to Jamaica* to Jamaica's world Tourism Minister of the Year," Contractor told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

He said the presentation was made possible through the efforts of marketing consultant Judie O'Sullivan.

Contractor, who is also a recording artiste and appears on the album, said he expects to hold discussions with the Jamaica Tourist Board on expanding the market for reggae music to tourists coming to Jamaica.

Caribbean launches 'The Rhythm Never Stops' marketing campaign'

CARIBBEAN TOURISM Organization (CTO) and Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) partner on regional marketing

Inspired by the Caribbean's sounds and sights, the region's leading tourism entities have joined forces to launch "The Rhythm Never Stops" – a vibrant marketing campaign enticing travelers to revel in the Caribbean's incredible natural beauty, diverse cultures and hidden treasures.

The CHTA and the CTO unveiled the fruit of months of collaborative efforts to showcase the Caribbean in a new, dynamic digital campaign which started on Wednesday, October 10.

Supported by a select group of destinations and private-sector partners, the video presentation targets social media, including and Google Display. It features the electronic dance music of **Lean On** by Major Lazer x DJ Snake, (featuring MØ), one of the most-streamed songs of all time on Spotify.

Hugh Riley, secretary general of the CTO, said the Caribbean aims to be the world's most desirable tourism destination.

"In undertaking this collaborative marketing thrust, we hope to reinforce the power of 'Brand Caribbean', definitively showcasing and celebrating our diverse cultural appeal through a campaign that will encourage

visitors to find their own rhythm in the Caribbean," he said.

Frank Comito, CHTA director general and CEO, pointed out that from Bermuda in the north to Barbados in the south, the region comprises more than 30 countries, territories and overseas departments, offering constantly evolving rhythmic segues for travellers.

"Visitors, past and present, have not been introduced to the offerings of our vast and diverse region. We will change that by highlighting the charms contained in the million square miles of Caribbean Sea, home to French, English, Spanish, Dutch, Creole, African, Asian, American and many other cultures," he said, encouraging residents and visitors to experience more of the region's rhythms.

The initial phase of the online campaign runs for 12 weeks. It highlights destinations such as The Bahamas in the north; Cayman Islands and Jamaica in the western Caribbean; the French department of Martinique and its eastern Caribbean neighbour St Lucia, as well as Grenada and Trinidad & Tobago in the south.

Both CHTA and CTO will track results of the digital advertising and social media-sharing campaign and continue to encourage other tourism-related entities to get on board with their longer-term collaborations.

Phase two of the campaign will be announced soon.



Sean 'Contractor' Edwards presents a copy of 'Tropical House Cruises to Jamaica' to Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett.

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OUR HERITAGE IN BUSTS AND STATUES

Basil Watson's impression of National Hero Alexander Bustamante mounted in Emancipation Park in St Andrew.



An interesting representation of track and field legend Usain Bolt along Gloucester Avenue in Montego Bay.

Paul H. Williams
Gleaner Writer

EVERY NATION has a story, great or small, be it one of struggles, conquests, failures, redemption or triumphs. And at the centre of each narrative is a man or woman, men or women, who have made indelible marks, whether tangible or intangible, upon the land or psyche of the people.

Jamaica's story is one of the idyllic life and the decimation of the Tainos, Spanish and English colonisation, chattel slavery, Emancipation, and Independence. It is as colourful as colourful gets.

And like all great nations, we have a pantheon of heroes and heroines, men and women who have made a significant contribution to our sociopolitical and economic development.

Some have been conferred with national honours and have had roads, buildings, schools, parks, etc, named after them. Yet, one of the



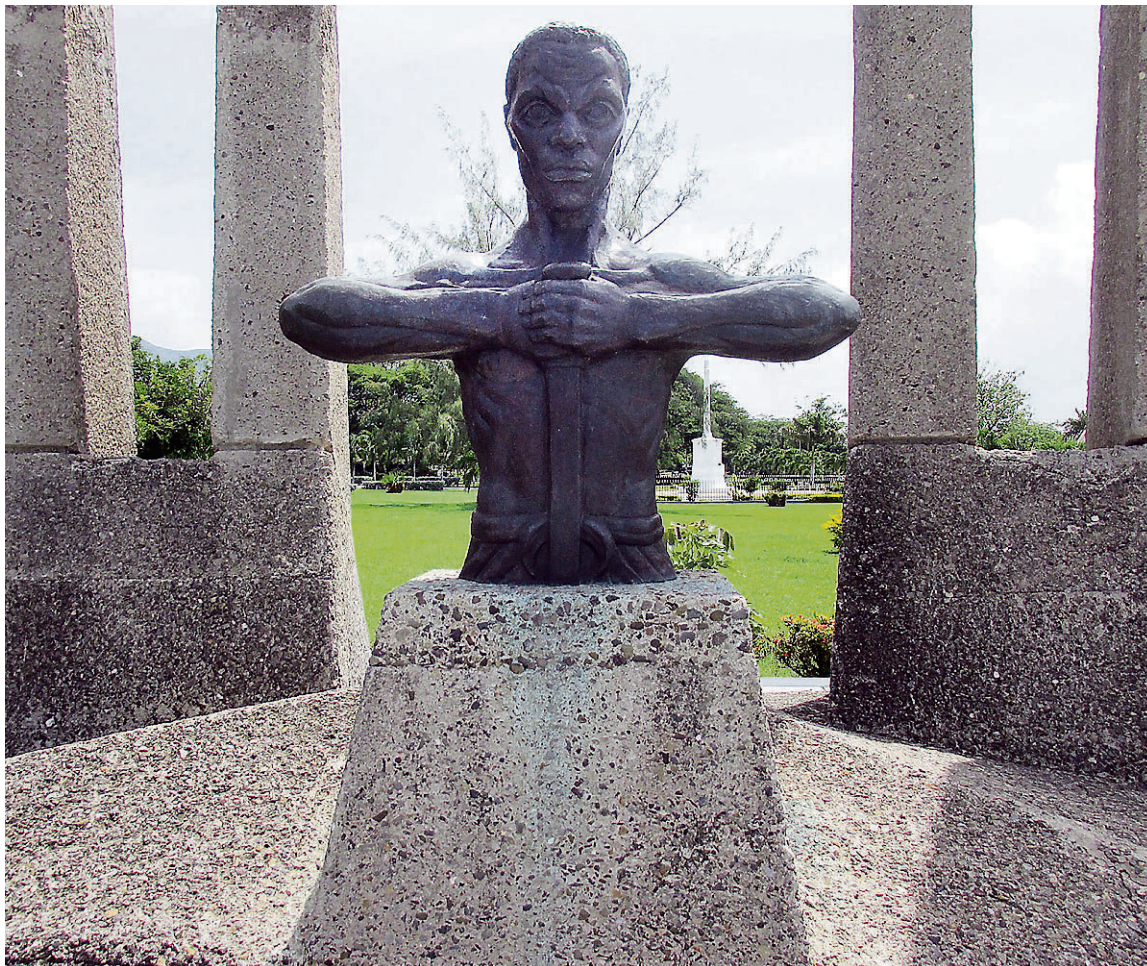
The first controversial bust of National Hero Marcus Garvey that was mounted at the Mona campus of The University of the West Indies last year.

biggest ways in which they are immortalised and remembered is with statues and busts of their likenesses.

As with other parts of the world, tourists come here to see artistic representations of our cultural and political icons. The number of such images has grown over the year as the country seems to be developing a love affair with statues and busts.

Our national heroes seem to be the ones more than any others who have inspired our sculptors. National Heroes Park is replete with monuments built to preserve the memory of the six men and one woman who are deemed to be the most deserving of our highest honour for various reasons. A few months ago, bronze busts of these heroes were mounted in Emancipation Park in New Kingston.

Several non-national heroes, especially track and field athletes such as Herb McKinley, Merlene Ottey, Usain Bolt, Bob Marley, and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pyrcce, have had their likeness permanently imprinted through sculpture. The biggest structure of them all is



Paul Bogle's statue was created from the physical appearance of a man named Bagan.

one of our cultural icons. It was mounted recently in the middle of Gordon Town Square in east rural St Andrew. At the unveiling, Prime Minister Andrew Holness reiterated the connection between culture and economics.

It is to be noted, however, that some icons, for whatever reasons, are more represented than others. Chief among these is Marcus Garvey. From east to west, north to south, there are images of our first national hero. From the paintings, to the busts, to the full statue in the front yard of the parish library in St Ann, where he was born, Garvey is represented. The measure of the man and the impact of his messages transcend national borders, and so do his images.

Last year, one such image, right here in Jamaica, caused much public debate and widespread condemnation for the sculptor, Raymond Watson.

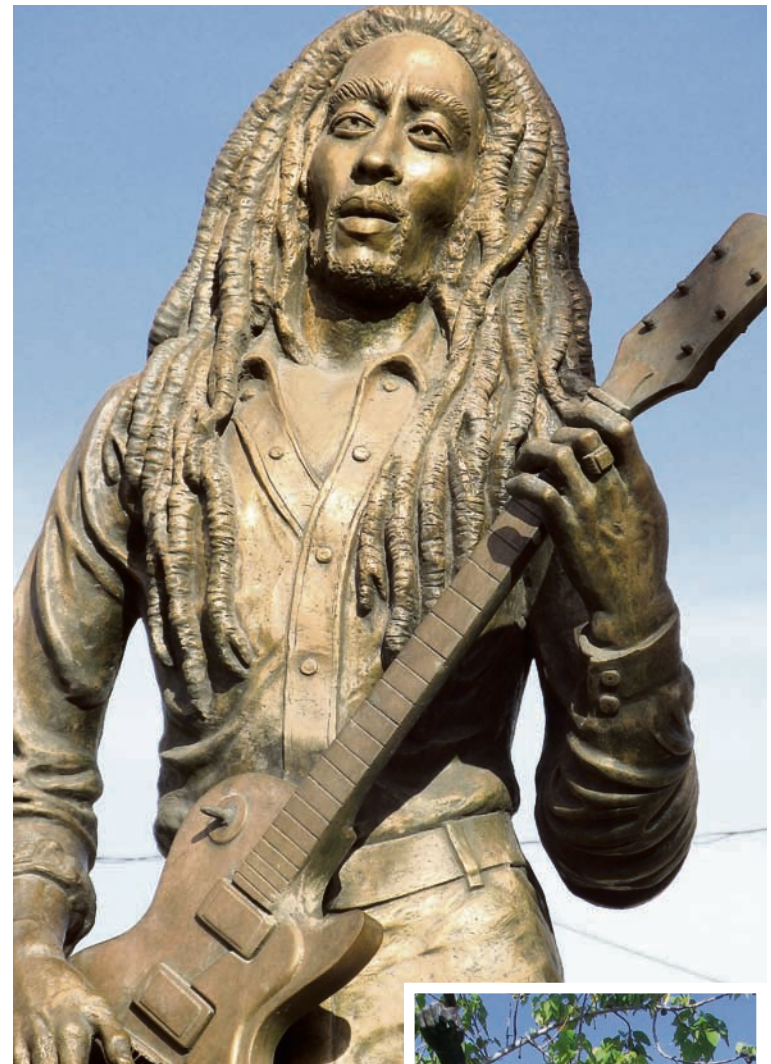
It was generally felt that the image disrespected, dishonoured and misrepresented the 'Black Messiah'. After weeks of pressure, the people at the Mona campus of The University of the West Indies who had commissioned it were forced to replace it. But, the replacement did not cool the ire of the public. One night it was extensively defaced. It was



The recently unveiled bust of cultural icon Louise Bennett-Coverley in Gordon Town, St Andrew.

eventually cleaned and is now under constant security. Yet, that ado was not the first

firestorm over a sculpture. Decades ago, Christopher Gonzales' impression of reggae superstar



On any given day, tourists can be seen taking pictures with this Bob Marley statue in the background. It is located near the National Stadium in St Andrew.

Robert Nesta Marley was ridiculed and rejected. The public could not understand and embrace the imagery of Marley rising from the roots of a tree with his guitar. It was replaced and is now mounted, perhaps permanently, at Island Village in Ocho Rios, St Ann, where Marley, too, was born.

Another vexing statue is that of Paul Bogle from St Thomas in the east. For years, it is in Kingston and not on the mount in front of the ruins of the Morant Bay Courthouse. The people of St Thomas say they do not want it back because it not an image of Bogle, but that of a man named Bagan, who, the sculptor Edna Manley believed, was an excellent representation of Bogle.

Controversy or not, busts, statues and monuments are artistic symbols of the people and things that help to make us who we are. Unforgettable parts of our story, our history, our heritage they are. And in this, our Heritage Month, why not go see them and reflect.



The public did not understand the imagery of Christopher Gonzales' sculpture of Bob Marley.



Donnet Phillips, public relations consultant to the Nigerian High Commission, looks regal in her traditional Nigerian get-up.

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H
Fashion, food
& FALSE HAIR

ON MONDAY, October 1, Nigerians in Jamaica observed their Independence Day with a reception at the residence of the Nigerian high commissioner to Jamaica, Belize, and Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

One of the things I looked forward to seeing was the fashion, and I was not disappointed. Nigerians and guests alike had gone to dazzle. It was such a thrill to see people in outfits that were so full of vibrancy, betraying their fashion sensibilities. And the brief downpour that came just as twilight approached could not cramp their style.

From the headpieces, to the shoes, to the accessories, there was so much artistry, diversity and flair. And the women had nothing over the men. A bonus came by way of a fashion show in which Nigerians in traditional outfits strutted on the catwalk with Saint International models, who showcased fashion from various Nigerian ethnic groups.

However, the anticipation for the food was not high at all. My relationship with food is not very good. And at this stage in my life, if I could divorce myself from food, I would. Yet, there was a lot of food at those celebrations, and my taste buds would have rioted if I have not sated them, so I let them have their way. They thoroughly enjoyed the food, especially the reddish rice.

Musical entertainment for the evening was provided mainly by a band from Pembroke Hall High School. The lead female singer, who was briefly accompanied by Christopher Martin, has a dynamism that belies her age. The lead male



From right: Nigerian cultural diplomat Alao Luqman explaining his artwork to patrons Georgiann Shepherd and Sandrina Davis.

AT TOP: From left: Igbo dancers Eucharia Chukwurah, Dr Ndidi Tyoke, Lilian Nwokocha, Joy Uzoamaka Eze and Bianca Udeagha.

singer also gave a good account of himself. And the evening would not have been complete if the colourful Igbo women dancers had not got a chance to show off their moves.

Near to the end of the event, I saw two

young women stuffing some kola nuts (bizzy) into their bags. The nuts were there for the taking as they are quite popular





Nigeria cultural diplomat Pendor Peji displaying some of his artwork.

with Nigerians.

When I saw them taking the nuts, I got an idea to get some myself as I love 'bizzy tea', not for the caffeine I heard it contains, but for the taste. As I reached the table where the young women and a young man, not Nigerians, were, I greeted them. The young woman with her back turned to me wore a 'ponytail'. In turning around when she heard me behind her, she

flashed the ponytail in a sort of faux glamorous way.

The next thing I knew, the ponytail struck me with a force that tore my reading glasses from my face. The glasses fell on to the wet grass. She did not realise what had happened until I exclaimed that no one move lest they step on to my glasses. It was dark, and so, phone flashlights were turned on.

In a few minutes, a friend of

mine found the glasses, and by then, a smile was on everybody's face. The young lady with the ponytail and I exchanged some pleasantries. I was sarcastic, but she didn't pick it up. If she had, she would have realised how much I hate false hair and that her knocking of my 'false eyes' from my face was another reason to.

Back home, I went straight to the laptop to view the pictures.



Christopher Martin and a student from Pembroke Hall High School entertaining the gathering.

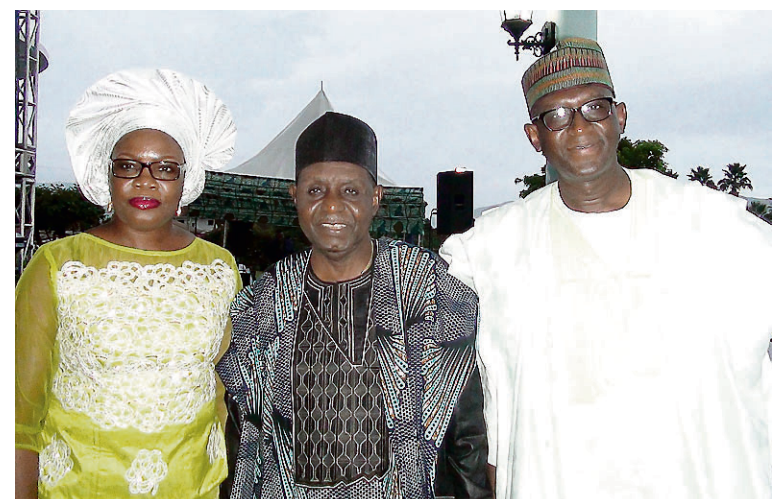
And something struck me. I did not take any pictures of the food (outside of the kola nuts). I also forgot to take pictures of the 'horse mane' that nearly blinded me. Of fashion, false hair, food and forgetfulness. It was an evening to remember.



Saint International models showcasing traditional Nigerian outfits.



Kola nuts (bizzy) were also on offer.



From left: Nigerian High Commissioner to Jamaica, Belize, and Haiti and Dominican Republic Janet Omoleegho Olisa, her husband Dada Olisa, and Minister Ibrahim Zanna.

FDR named in **TOP FIVE BEST** family resorts

Carl Gilchrist
Gleaner Writer

THE HOTEL that is renowned for its nannies, Franklyn D Resort (FDR), has been named among the top five all-inclusive resorts for families for this year.

In an article published recently on the website www.trekibible.com, FDR, a beachside resort located in Runaway Bay on Jamaica's north coast, was named number two in the top five resorts for families in a survey spanning vacation spots in the Caribbean and North America.

"We are extremely delighted to be listed in the top five resorts for families this year, even more so as we were placed in the top two,"

said a spokesperson from the hotel.

"At FDR, we take pride in consistently offering world-class service to our guests, thus effecting a high level of repeat clientele who have become accustomed to our warm hospitality. Parents love us, their children love us, our vacation nannies are fantastic, and we aim to continue being the consummate professionals at what we do as we aim to be number one in the world."

The exciting news is yet another feather in the cap of the hotel, which has also captured several other awards during 2018.

In June, FDR was honoured with a place in TripAdvisor's Hall of Fame category after earning a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for the fifth consecutive year.

Earlier in the year, FDR had



received the TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Award, for which winners are determined based on millions of reviews and opinions from TripAdvisor travellers across the world.

On April 26, **The New York Times** published an article hailing the amazing service offered by the

nannies at the FDR, the writer mentioning vacation nanny Lisa Dixon by name.

The top-five resort list comprises four resorts in the Caribbean and one in the US.

The top five family resorts to go this year, according to Trekibible, are:

Resort, St Lucia

2. Franklyn D Resort and Spa, Jamaica

3. Iberostar Bavaro Suites, the Dominican Republic

4. Beaches Resort Villages and Spa, Turks and Caicos

5. Tanque Verde Ranch, Arizona, USA

Sandals Resorts hosts 9th Annual Independent Travel Consultants' Conference

OVER 130 international travel agents were welcomed to Jamaica's eastern parishes as Sandals Ochi Beach Resort (SOBR) and Beaches Ocho Rios played host to the Ninth Annual Independent Travel Consultants' Conference on September 28 – October 3.

The five-day conference, designed to showcase Destination Jamaica and the Sandals brand, included travel agent portal training, a Sandals WeddingMoon Workshop, a marketing forum to help agents grow their business, and familiarisation tours of Sandals Resorts and Beaches resorts in Montego Bay and the Ocho Rios region.

Gebhard Rainer, CEO for Sandals Resorts International, and Ramel Sobrino, general manager for SOBR, greeted the agents during the welcome cocktail party. Rainer, in addressing the gathering updated the agents on the



Travel agents 'pack for a purpose' and donate school bags and supplies to Sandals Foundation to be distributed to schools in the areas of Sandals resorts. The occasion was the Ninth Annual Independent Travel Consultants' conference held at the Sandals Ochi Beach Resort.

company's product and its expansion plans. He also encouraged the partners to take full advantage of the opportunities to see and experience the other resorts

and wider Jamaica and thanked them for their continued support.

Delegates were also given plenty of free time to explore and discover for themselves why

Sandals has maintained, for 25 consecutive years, the title of the Caribbean's Leading Hotel Brand by the World Travel Awards.

A special guest appearance from

Gary Sadler, vice-president of sales for Sandals, North America, was, for many, a highlight. Sadler, who implemented the conference 10 years ago and had traveled from Miami just to speak to the attendees, shared his immense passion for Sandals Resorts and reiterated the brand's dedication to the travel agent community.

Each of the travel agents was encouraged to 'pack for a purpose', a reference to a Sandals Foundation event in which visitors bring a child's backpack filled with supplies to donate to schools in the area. As a result of this initiative, more than 130 children will be heading off to school with some of the basics so many others take for granted. Children from Exchange All-Age and Ocho Rios Preparatory schools were on hand to accept some of the donations and to show their appreciation with entertaining cultural performances.