

Sweet TnT

MAGAZINE

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Issue #15 April 2015

Easter fun!

Sisters Janae and Zuri Algernon, ages eight and two, have a ball for Easter on a camping trip with their family at the Orosco River in Matura. See page 5.

Thanking the women
in our lives

Let's go fly a kite

Short story:
My Dog Life

The man could
bubble a pot

All that Tobago Jazz

Art at the Oval





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Sweet TnT
MAGAZINE

Lifestyle
Creole Language
Food
Places

Trinidad and Tobago culture for so!



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Pretty Poui trees

A green band maxi taxi passes a row of fully blossomed pink Poui trees on Southern Main Road, Curepe on March 24. Poui trees are spotted in pink and yellow all over Trinidad and Tobago as we approach the end of the dry season.



Editor's note

The cutie pies on the cover of the April issue ideally represent the sweetness in Trinidad and Tobago that *Sweet TnT Magazine* aims to portray. Our culture-seeking writers went all out to share their personal experiences and those of their friends and families to show readers that our country is indeed a gem.

The Lifestyle section is filled with jovial articles and images on Women's Day, Easter activities, an upcoming musical, a Tobago jazz experience, a note on Autism Awareness, tributes to very special pets, and interviews with a principal and a Curepe hairdresser. The Dry Season is also highlighted with photos of Poui trees and bushfires.

In the Creole section, a local novelist's two books are featured once again, and there is a delightful short story, poem and comic. The Food section features an amusing family story about a man who could "bubble a pot", a catering business in Port of Spain, and foods on the menu for Good Friday.

Scenes of the lively Maracas Beach and the artistic strip of talented works posted at the Queen's Park Oval are featured in the Places section. Thanks to our readers, fans on our social networking sites, advertisers, writers and contributors for continuous support. Congratulations, team!

Enjoy!

Joyanne James
Editor

Sweet TnT
MAGAZINE

Credits

Editor

Joyanne James

Graphic/comic artist

Andrina James

Marketing representative

Jevan Soyer

Feature writers/photographers

Marc Algernon
Nadia Ali
Marissa Armoogam-Ali
Jamie Gangoo
Kielon Hilaire
Nerissa Hosein
Joyce James-Pitman
Candida Khan
Omilla Mungroo
Annisa Phillip

Accountant

Patricia James-Wilson
Semaj Consultancy Services
Bon Air West, Arouca

Webmaster

Neil Singh
Net Control Ltd, 76 Main Road, Montrose, Trinidad

Printer

TechXpress
579 First Street, Edinburgh 500,
Chaguanas, Trinidad

Publisher

Culturama Publishing Company
31 Maitagual Road, San Juan, Trinidad
Phone: 747-8560, 782-4808, 340-4085
Email: contact@sweettntmagazine.com

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From left are Shereen Dupraj, Zanifa Ali, me Nerissa Hosein and Zorida Manwah at a family luncheon.

Thanking the women in our lives

By Nerissa Hosein

We celebrated International Women's Day on March 8. While this is a relatively quiet day in T&T, many women all over the world are still fighting for equality, for freedom, for basic human rights and a chance to be heard.

Let us take a moment to appreciate Sweet T&T where our voice as a gender is heard. We as women are respected and loved as this is our given basic rights as humans.

Take a moment to thank the women we have in our lives, be it mothers, wives, aunts, friends or daughters and appreciate all that women do to make this country and this world a better place! Also, take a moment to represent and respect all those women globally still fighting for their say in their own life!

Women - International Day 2015

A woman's worth can never be measured
Since the beginning she has fought the battle
and never surrendered
She has borne her pain in silence
She has carried all her burdens without
defiance

A woman's strength is forever growing
She is the nurturer of all and everything
She carries many titles in her crown
Mother, Wife, Friend, Daughter and she
has never let her loved ones down

A woman is a special creature
She knows no fear or danger
She protects fiercely, loves unconditionally

Woman she is, a force to not take lightly
Women are the caregiver's of this life
Treat them well and give them no strife
For they are the mothers of tomorrow
And they are the end of all the world's
sorrow

To all the wives, mothers, daughters, sisters,
Aunts and grandmothers
Take your recognition
The world would not be this strong
without your contribution.

Happy International Women's Day 2015!

— Nerissa Hosein

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The kids pose for a photo while having fun at the riverside in Orosco. From right are Marques, Zuri, Janae, Hannah, Ayoki and King.

By Marc Algernon

Camping for Easter

As we drove off I looked at the sad faces of my kids and smiled. No more Dora, no more cable TV, no more tablets, in short, no more technology. For the next four days we would be sleeping underneath the stars.

Now let me introduce you to my family so we won't be strangers anymore. My loving and patient wife Isha, my first born and heir to my throne, my son Marques 11, my three daughters Hannah nine, Janae eight and Zuri two. Lastly, my niece and nephew Ayoki, six, and King, four.

The car was packed to capacity. The trunk, bursting with camping gear and supplies. We had a thousand snack stops and a million bathroom breaks.

The drive took three hours instead of two. We drove all the way up to Matura, my wife's hometown. We stopped by her grandmother, Hilda. Her house was always warm and welcoming. Here is where we filled up all the water we would need. I also had the help of Isha's cousin, Bryan. He was a jack of all trades and always willing to help out.

Bryan and I left the family to construct the camp site. We chose a really nice spot on a beach called Orosco well known for its turtles, but what a terrible road! We set up camp close to the majestic river of Orosco. The sea was very rough but we had no intention of bathing in the sea, not with a river like that so close by.

We took some time to construct our sleeping tent which was

enclosed. In this we packed all the clothes and sleeping supplies. Then, in front of this was a canopy tent. This housed our crude kitchen, a sitting area and a changing room. The rest of our supplies and coolers and food went under there. We enclosed the sides with coconut leaves which we cut and stuck in the sand. It was a beautiful camp site if I may say so myself. My kids were going to love it. We then made a three stone fireplace and collected a large stack of firewood. I could charge admission to this place.

We jumped in the car to go pick up the patrons, mi familia. They made pelau while we were gone. We left Bryan and Hilda after many handshakes and good-byes and we took off down that bumpy, terrible road.

Orosco had many other families camping but the beach was so huge that nobody was close enough to cramp the other. My kids screamed their approval as they entered the campsite. My wife even gave me the "well done" hug.

It was already dark by the time we settled into our campsite and I had the pleasure of lighting our huge bonfire, without the use of pitch oil. The kids all sat

around the fire and sang songs and ate snacks, complaining about the fact that we forgot to buy marshmallows.

One by one they slumbered off to bed, much earlier than I expected. They cozied down in their sleeping bags and drifted off to their sweet dreams of adventures yet to come. Isha and I had the grown-up lime next as we toasted a glass of wine, or maybe a bottle. Thus ended our first night camping in the majestic Orosco.

The next morning there was no sleeping in late as it seemed the kids were up with the crack of dawn. They didn't want to waste any more precious time of their vacation sleeping when there was a whole world waiting beyond the zipper of our tent.

Since there were six kids, I split them up into teams of two and gave each team a chore while we prepared breakfast. One team had to gather more firewood, another to wash all the wares from dinner.

After breakfast we packed a large basket with food and snacks. We picked up the cooler filled with juices and set off down the beautiful white sand on our way to the river. While we walked we found that the beach was littered with

colours of blue, purple and pink – jellyfish.

The river lived up to the rumours about it. It was fantastic. The kids had brought along the inflatable beds, balls, jackets and even a giant inflatable stingray that no one seemed to be able to climb on as it just capsized itself over and over in the water, unmounting its rider.

Oh did those kids have fun! They played many games that brought back many memories from my childhood. So much so that I actually joined them in a game of "sharkie" which I'm sure needs no explanation. The river was just so perfect for kids. There were so many nice shallow areas, with cool, clear, fresh water. Or you could crawl up on the sand and build yourself a mighty sandcastle.

Diving and swimming, swimming and playing as the hours slipped away. At dusk we picked up all the garbage and placed them in a garbage bag we had brought with us. We packed all the wet clothes in the now empty cooler and the deflated inflatables.

We crawled slowly back to camp and prepared dinner as night would soon be upon us. I made some "geera neck". The bonfire was big and they all sat around the fire recounting the events of the day. One by one they fell asleep and had to be carried into the tent. When the last one fell asleep I checked my watch – 8.30 pm – this had to be a record.

The last thing Marques said to me before he went to bed was "Daddy, you know what the best thing about today was?"

"What was it, Marques?"

"We get to do it again tomorrow and the next day and the next day and the next day. Best vacation ever, Dad." He gave me a hug and slumbered off.

See more Easter stories on pages 7, 8 and 9.



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Easter activities for the family

By Nerissa Hosein

As Easter approaches many of us may be wondering what to do to keep the kids occupied. If you're a work-at-home mom like me and you don't want to send them to a costly Easter camp but you want them to have fun you may be at a loss!

Easter is only two short weeks, I want my kids to enjoy themselves and not spend their days cooped up inside in front of the television so I came up with a few activities that they can do at home with me, have fun and it won't cost me my entire pay check!

1. PREPARE FOR ANNUAL EASTER HUNT

Every year my husband and I hide some Easter eggs around the house for our two sons to find them. They have tons of fun, not only doing this but prepping for

Keeping
T&T sweet!

A *Sweet TnT* series
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it. We have to stuff the eggs first (you can use baby marshmallows, Charles chocolates and nuts). The kids love doing that.

Then we can decorate the eggs, that's always a ton of fun. Then on Good Friday when the kids wake up, the hunt is on!

2. SWIM TIME

Invest in a kid's pool. Kids' pools are relatively cheap these days. Many variety stores carry them and you can get a nice size for a couple kids for under \$400.

It's a nice investment, it beats the heat, kids love the water and it keeps them active and away from the television and video games!

3. CRAFT MAGIC

Spending time with young minds and helping them nurture their craft is an amazing thing. My seven-year-old recently picked up the art of origami.

He can sit now for hours and make animals, mobiles, and so many other things. It keeps the brain sharp and building their imagination is priceless.

4. OUTDOOR FUN

For the parents who are working and don't get time to spend lots of time home, why not take one day and make it an outdoor fun time.

Many new outdoor activities are reasonable these days. Why

not hop on down to IJUMP or take them to the new Zipitt, Zip lining for kids? Or check out some of our local estates like La Vega?

Don't forget the kite flying fun on Easter weekend at the savannah. All kids love it! Make a family day of it, educate your kids on our country and its traditions and have fun while doing it. Most of these activities are relatively reasonable and offer a ton of fun.

As a parent, I find spending time with my kids to be priceless. It scares me how fast time can go by sometimes. They grow up way too fast and with the world these days I think the kids of tomorrow can benefit more from quality time, sports and family togetherness.

So Happy Easter to one and all, let's all spend time with our kids these next couple of weeks and enjoy their childhood before it flies by!



Ishmael, Saffiyah and Imran Hosein kite flying at Queen's Park Savannah.

Let's go fly a kite

By Nadia Ali

*Let's go fly a kite, up to the highest height,
Let's go fly a kite and send it soaring,
Up through the atmosphere, up where the
air is clear,
Oh let's go fly a kite.*

Those are the lyrics to a song from the famous "Mary Poppins" film. It's one that relates to the happiness of flying a kite watching it soar into the sky. Fortunately, it is something that is encouraged every year in the 90.5 Annual National Easter Kite Flying Contest held by at the Queen's Park Savannah.

It is definitely a great day out for the

whole family with freebies, food and freedom to watch entertainers and not forgetting, to fly a kite!

There are numerous categories to take part in each with a prize. The best category in my opinion is definitely the "Mad Bull" entries. These are the larger than large kites that arrive on the back of a truck waiting to be assembled and flown by a team – like five or more people to get this monster kite in the air.

In 2014, at the far corner of the entrants area a six-man team hooked up their Mad Bull to a pickup to try to get the kite off the ground. It was an amazing task to see as the kite slowly lifted upright and scarped across the dusty ground of the Savannah leaving the

team in a dust trail. But alas, it didn't get off the ground for long before literally crashing down on its corners.

Children with small kites were scattered on the Savannah accompanied by parents. The crowds hung around the main area in front of the entertainers' stage where there were sponsors giving out free stuff.

Of course, I went with my kite in hand ready to see it soar "*up through the atmosphere, up where the air is clear*". It started off well whipping its way up and up but as soon as I began to release the kite string at a pace it began to dip and dive, down, down down plummeting to the Savannah ground far away.

So, I collected it and sat to simply admire those kites that created a rainbow of colour in the sky and the joy on the faces of the persons flying them with pride.

Oh let's go fly a kite!



Colourful Mad Bull kite

Keeping T&T sweet!



Kesaun Williams, Dejaun Williams
and Nyron Anthony with their kite.

Kite flying season

By Annisa Phillip

Forget about bunnies and eggs, the real fun this season is kite flying. I remember when kite flying was a big part of childhood. When I was younger I watched as my older brother and his friends made kites – back then you made your own kites from scratch – they used paper, old cloth, stems from coconut leaves (known as cocoyea or cokiyea flex), thread and when there was no glue or tape they made a paste from flour and water as a substitute for glue.

I remember the first time I decided to make a kite myself, I figured that I knew what I needed to know based on observation. I had everything I needed so I folded my paper and formed my diamond shape and started working on the body of the kite. I had just finished the body when my brother told me that I was doing it wrong because I used the leaves of the coconut instead of the stem to make the “bow and arrow”... so much for knowing what I was doing. Thankfully, I can laugh about it as I now know better.

This Easter season made me remember

the days of kite making and kite flying. I even went looking for pictures of the last kite I made with my brother for my niece some years ago. We still kept it simple. It made me wonder if children these days still made kites or even flew kites. I was pleasantly surprised one Sunday afternoon to see that some still do. I was greeted by three young boys flying a kite in the church yard. I could not help but smile at the site. This in fact, encouraged me to make a kite myself and share this story for old time's sake. This time I got the material right, I am sure of it.

A simple kite is fairly easy to make:

1. Take a sheet of paper and fold one end over to the opposite side to form a triangle. Cut the excess paper at the bottom. When open, the folded section should be a square.
2. For added support use the thread to tie two coconut stems together in a spiral manner. Do this for another two of the stems.
3. Turn the paper so that a pointed edge faces you (it would look like a diamond). Take one of your tied stems and place it along the fold of the paper and secure with tape. Take the next stem (it should be about the same

length as the first), bend slightly and tie thread to both ends. It should look like a bow for an arrow.

4. Ensure that the bow can fit the paper comfortably and attach it so that the bow lies across the first stem. The body is complete.

5. A strand or strands of cloth tied together form the tail of the kite. This is attached at the bottom. The bottom of the kite is the edge of the paper that is below the string of the bow.

6. For the final part, thread a needle and use it to direct the thread to the centre. From the underside, pass the threaded needle through the paper, aim for a corner just above where the string of the bow intersects with the straight stem. Now pass the needle over the stem just above the string of the bow back to the underside. Leave about an inch from the paper on both sides of the string, cut and tie the ends together creating a loop. Repeat in the corners below the string of the bow.

7. Tie thread to the loops you just created and leave it attached to the spool. This is the flying line.

8. All done now the kite can be flown.



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Gospel musical

at Little Carib
Theatre in May

Mandisa Granderson

JCS Entertainment pays tribute to Mahalia Jackson and celebrates her life and music with its upcoming production, *Mahalia: A Gospel Musical*. With book, lyrics and music by Tom Stolz, the musical features the inspirational story of the life of Mahalia Jackson as it is intertwined with Martin Luther King Jr.'s.

The venue is the Little Carib Theatre and will run for a weekend beginning from May 7 to 10.

JCS Entertainment, led by John Henry Smith III, has evolved out of the local theatre company First Instinct Productions. Through his previous work as an Executive Producer, Smith has been the innovator behind musical productions in T&T over the past three years including "The Sound of Music" (2012), "The King and I" (2013), "Encore – Live From Broadway" (2013) and "Jesus Christ Superstar" (2014).

Mahalia: A Gospel Musical will be the first production of Smith's newest JCS Entertainment venture

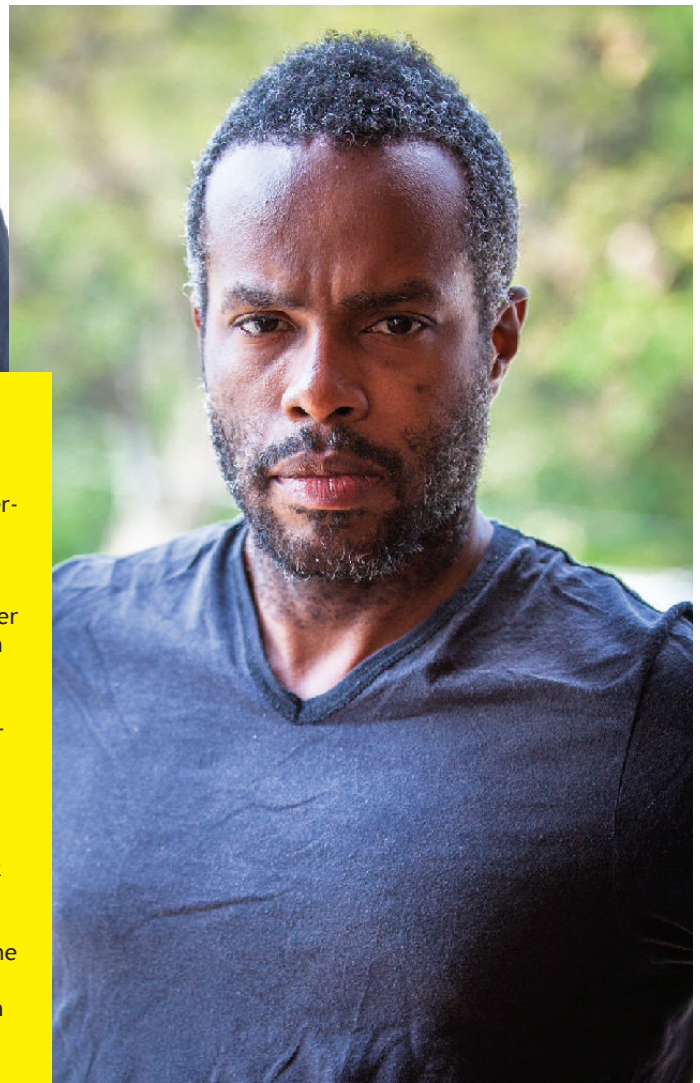
and promises to feature a powerhouse of vocal and acting talent with a cast of two different performers to play the singer at different times in her life.

Casting is ongoing but confirmations to date include Conrad Paris in the role of Dr Martin Luther King Jr and young Mahalia Jackson played by Mandisa Granderson.

The musical spans Jackson's life from her youth to Gospel stardom and immortality within the civil rights fight with traditional gospel songs like "Deep River", "Move on up a Little Higher" and the rousing, up-tempo "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho".

In between the thread of Mahalia's shining Gospel career, the musical interweaves the powerful speeches shared by Dr King, which called for an end to racism in the United States and inspired half a century of civil rights struggle.

For many, the soundtrack to that ongoing revolution was the powerful Gospel music of Mahalia Jackson.



Conrad Parris

By Nadia Ali

The quiet night gave way to what sounded like a crackling noise coming from the garden. Was it a wild animal creeping into our living space from the nearby acres of bushes or was it a chicken hawk sitting on one of the branches of the tree? Either way, I was going to investigate.

There in the distance was a line of bright light glowing under the dark sky. It was a line of bushfire that illuminated a vast area and was heading towards my house! Knowing the response of the fire service I opted for an early call, giving details of the location. Little did I know at the time that the services were on a period of rest and reflection for wage negotiations and went away unaware that I was on my own.

So, thinking it would take some time both before the fire services arrived or for the fire to be of any danger, I grabbed my camera and headed upstairs to get a better aerial view. The tall wild grass crackled and popped advancing slowly. The flames periodically shot high as if suddenly ignited by petrol.

The fire wasn't intense and there wasn't a huge blaze with thunderous flames. It simply advanced in a semi-uniformed straight line, quietly and almost in an organised form. This is said to be typical of flat grassland fires which rarely reach the same intensity of



"There in the distance was a line of bright light glowing under the dark sky."

firestorms.

According to the Forestry Division of Trinidad and Tobago, the term bush fire is defined as, fires burning in open, non-forested areas such as vacant lots in urban and semi-urban settings, roadsides and agricultural lands". It is said to occur between January to May/June in any given year when sweet T&T experiences the dry season.

As I stood upstairs looking out at the bushfire, half an hour had passed and I was beginning to get worried. So, I called the fire services again and waited. A further 15 minutes passed and it was time for action, so I put

down my camera and grabbed the garden hose. The neighbours came out and did the same. We stood in unity with hoses pointed and water spraying across the back fence which didn't seem to put a dent in the line of fire.

We could easily see the glow of light and hear the fire a lot more distinctly. It crackled, it simmered down and as we grew tired of holding our hoses the fire went out. Our brush with danger had come to an end and that night the rain fell hard and fast, as if to extinguish any further excitement with the dangerous yet beautiful bushfire.

By Jamie Gangoo

Hot cross buns, bobolees, kite flying and parched grass usually mark the month of April here in T&T. World Autism Awareness Day is another event in April that has started igniting the country, and by extension, the rest of the world. The event officially takes place on April 2, but the entire month, dubbed "Autism Awareness Month", is dedicated to the campaign.

Autism is an impairment of a person's communicative, emotional and social development. But, it's really not that simple to define. Symptoms vary from mild to severe. Here are some of the common characteristics an individual with autism may display, bearing in mind that symptoms will vary from person to person:

- has difficulty making friends and interacting with others
- repeats the same words or phrases
- has difficulty expressing feelings and avoids eye contact
- doesn't understand sarcasm and irony
- can't easily adapt to new routines
- has an unusual sensitivity to the environment (overstimulation, such as loud noises, may cause meltdowns)
- displays repetitive behaviours such as flapping hands and rocking

The main characteristics, though, are that persons' communicative and social interaction skills are impeded in some ways.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for the disorder. Despite this, the condition can be greatly improved if the following needs are addressed:

Light it up blue for Autism Awareness

- Early assessment or diagnosis by a *trained* professional

- Therapies such as speech and language, occupational and behavioural therapies

- Appropriate education and jobs

- Love, patience and understanding (which we all need anyway)

If these are attended to, it is very possible for persons to function in, and contribute to, society. Therapy is expensive and many families find it necessary to raise funds themselves.

To aid this, the autism community will be offering lots of entertainment, information and heck, even exercise opportunities, in return for the public's help. Last year, some readers may have seen popular places, such as Roxy Pizza Hut, illuminated with blue lights. This **Light It Up Blue** campaign was initiated by Autism Speaks - a US organisation dedicated to autism research and advocacy. Here are some ways that our local organisations are raising awareness and giving you more reasons to help a worthy cause in April:

- **The Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago.** The parent support group will be having an Autism Awareness Walk at the Queen's Park Savannah, as well as hosting a seminar and conference. For the rest of the year, you can also look out for movie nights, a golf tournament and a family day/bazaar, among other events. For the full schedule, contact

them at autismtt@gmail.com, phone 646-5506/225-6808 or follow them on Facebook.

- **The Right Start for Autism.** This early intervention institution is planning a *Light It Up Blue* mini concert, a sensory-friendly movie at Movie Towne and yoga at the Queen's Park Savannah. Thanks to them, you can also look out for Prestige Holdings Ltd. (KFC, Pizza Hut, TGIF and Subway) lighting it up blue again. You can contact rightstartprograms@gmail.com for more information or find them on Facebook.

- **Autism Tobago.** In Tobago, there will also be an autism walk, as well as media interviews and seminars at the Scarborough Public Library. The team will also be hosting parent-teacher conferences during the course of the month to raise awareness in various schools across the island. For more information, you can contact the chairman, Leila Rampersad at autismtobago@gmail.com or 710-4621.

- **The Blue Horse Foundation.** Hey, if it's difficult to partake in activities and all you can do is donate money, then Blue Horse is for you. This organisation collects money and allocates it to families that need funding for their loved ones' therapies. You can contact the foundation at bluehorsefoundation@gmail.com, call 760-4386 and keep updated with them on Facebook.

And remember to "Light it up blue" at your home, business, workplace, street, park... you get the idea!

Once the concert got underway, you can simply walk to the foot of the stage to take photos and walk back to your spot.

All that jazz in Tobago

By Nadia Ali

Tobago offers jazz under the stars in an open-air venue hosted on the picturesque beach of Pigeon Point. So, forget the stuffy confines of concert halls with tiered seating and tight leg-room space, opt for a Caribbean beach under the stars!

The tiny island has hosted a number of international artistes such as John Legend and Dionne Warwick from the USA, Sting from the UK and Ceci Mendez from Argentina. The jazz festival has allowed local acts to share the stage with some of the big names from the entertainment world. The headline act is generally on "World Music Night" and this year Jennifer Hudson, Kool and the Gang and Miguel will grace the stage.

With a plethora of hotels to choose from across the island, accommodation in the Sandy Point area will allow you to walk to the bus shuttle area which is located in the Buccoo Reef car park. It felt strange standing at a bus stop waiting for the shuttle bus amongst really dressed-up people. A number of ladies wore evening dresses, heels and carried a handbag, while most men were in shirts

and pants. Yet, there we were waiting for a maxi taxi to shuttle us to the venue. The transportation system was well organised and timely, as a full bus left within a few minutes an empty bus would arrive to collect patrons. The drive to Pigeon Point Heritage Park in the dark was a lot different to what it is in the day time. As the bus got closer to the venue the area became well-lit with crowds of people making their way to the entrance.

Once there, the wide entrance facilitated vendors selling quality local hand-craft and souvenirs. The entrance then opened into a big area with organised seating. There were people eating and drinking, chatting and holding seats for their friends. To the back of the venue were the sponsor tents and food and drink stalls. There were lines to receive the free giveaways and in particular umbrellas as there was a threat of rain.

One of the biggest advantages of going to a concert like this is the freedom to walk around and not be confined in a seat for hours. At any given point patrons are free to walk around, buy drinks and food which they can consume in their seats. You can also take your

shoes off and go for a midnight stroll on the night time beach while listening to the music. But, for me, the best thing is once the concert got underway, you can simply walk to the foot of the stage to take photos and walk back to your spot. Also, even if you are standing at the back of the seated area you can easily see the artiste on stage.

And of course, in the Caribbean you can expect to see, hear and feel the power of the towers of speakers throughout the venue. The crowd react differently to the headline acts and the local acts. There is a kind of dignified response – one might even say respectable when asked to sing along with a headline act, but when the local bands hit the stage the place erupts, people start singing and dancing in the aisles, probably making the tourists feel they are missing out on our headline acts!

Once it is finished there are lines of buses waiting to drop you back to the Buccoo Reef car park where you disembark and take a delightful early morning walk back to your hotel. Still on a buzz from a night where you shook your groove thing to the beat of jazz.

Curepe hairdresser Theresa: *I satisfy my clients and make sure they are happy*

By Omilla Mungroo

What is so remarkable about Theresa Thomas at Theresa's Caribbean Beauty Salon? Many of her existing clients will say, "It's like home. Theresa is like family."

Despite the fact that there are about six beauty salons in the area, Theresa says that competition is not an issue. "I satisfy my clients and make sure they are happy with the services they receive. So far, there has been no complaints and I am also thankful for having a loyal staff who stand by me and who I can trust."

The salon sits in the heart of Curepe where we in Trinidad call a little New York, since it is like a central port where people from the North, South, East and West pass through on a daily basis.

Having completed a cosmetology course at Arima Senior Comprehensive School, Theresa went on to further her training at Magic Fingers Salon in Port of Spain, Trinidad. She admits that in her early days as a hairdresser she worked under a trainer and was a bit timid but gained confidence as her clients were satisfied and pleased with her work.

"That was in 2007," she said, in her soft spoken voice. "This shop in Curepe was opened about seven years ago and I have never been a victim of crime or anything of the sort, thank God!"

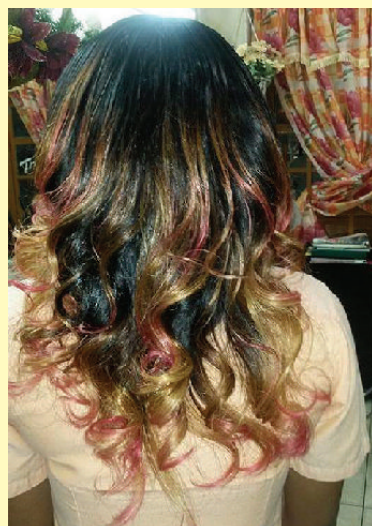
The salon offers all types of hair services; haircuts, weaves, braids, relaxers, colours, streaks, latest hairstyles for graduation, weddings, and too, you can receive important tips on how to care for your hair. The staff exhibits the same professionalism with all clients and share the same values. They are also just as capable and skillful.

"The best thing about owning



Theresa Thomas, left, with talented staff members.

my own salon," smiled Theresa, "is the time I get to spend at home with my family." Again it was plain to see how important family is to this amazing lady. She said that the main thing that most clients notice when they come in the shop is the sense of feeling accepted and like



family as everyone is treated with the same respect.

When asked what advice she would give to those who wish to enter into cosmetology, she grew serious and continued. "Well, you really have to love what you are doing. Many people these days get into this field because of the money but they don't persevere because it is hard work. If you don't like it, there is no point getting into it. You are dealing with real people and they will know when they are not getting what they are paying for."

Theresa's staff comprises of two other hairdressers all very loyal.

Today, women and men come from all over the country and dare I say the Caribbean, to get their hair done. They all leave satisfied and return in confidence to get the same family-like treatment. Theresa is humble, yet very professional in her approach.



By Kielon Hilaire

Ask UWI degree holder, Kezia Reece, "So what do you do for a living?" and she'll simply tell you, "I own my own school." Kezia graduated from the University of the West Indies with a BA degree in English Language and Literature with Education.

Her mother wanted her to become a lawyer, but her grandmother always believed she would grow up to be a teacher. Turns out grandma was right. Kezia followed her calling, which did not officially become her passion until she had some rather interesting experiences as a teacher in the US. She eventually became not just a teacher in Trinidad but the successful founder of her own pre-secondary school. Now, her mother could not be any happier, especially as her daughter is still so young to boot.

Known as Miss Reece by her students, Kezia started Athena's Pre-Primary School in 2006 but by 2008 the school was upgraded to the Athenian Pre-Secondary School due to her yearning to reach out to a much wider range of students. The school is located in St Augustine and facilitates students from First Year all the way up to Standard Five.

A great inspiration

Thriving on the watchwords, "self control, self awareness and self confidence" it should come as no surprise to any logical thinking person that each year Kezia's students do well whether they are within the early classes or are on the Secondary Entrance Assessment level.

Yet, she hardly mentions it because, to her, students – or people for that matter – who apply certain principles to their life will always make it to the top at some point regardless of their past or present circumstances. Kezia then took the opportunity to brag about her seven-year stay at North Eastern College and of all the hard work she had to put in so that she would eventually become successful.

Speaking of circumstances, Kezia drew great inspiration from her mother who had her when she was really young and raised her as a single parent. Today her mother,



Photos by Sheldon Moore

The selfless principal



Katyann Marshall, has a master's degree and is pursuing her doctorate after long finding renowned success in her field. Kezia claims that her mother never let her pity herself and was a strong advocate that education is the key to solving all problems and overcoming any obstacle. Arguably because of this, Kezia now sees herself as a disciplined, no-nonsense kind of person as well as a perfectionist, which often causes her to be misunderstood as she views much in the world differently.

She explained that she feels personally responsible for each child under her watch and always feels there is more she can do, irrespective of how much has already been done. She believes that in today's world children are

constantly robbed of a good, solid education and exposure to quality culture because society is now filled with extremists.

She said, "Extremists are unable to strike a proper balance between child-centred education and discipline. And I believe we can respect the child and still impart discipline because at the end of the day children still need rules. Lack of rules results in a gradual loss of culture and identity." What a shame, especially when you consider that Kezia has experienced a variety of cultures and strongly believes that T&T's true culture is undisputedly number one.

Kezia also revealed her personal secret for allowing children to thrive in any environment.

"Many people ask me, so how do you do it? And I tell them, I consistently revisit my childhood to mesh my past experiences with my future wishes. Everyday will not be perfect but if you really consider what it means to be a child then you would know just how much laughter and being silly means to children. So if getting children to become forward thinkers means also allowing them to embrace old traditions and culture then so be it. Hopscotch, jump rope or moral, anyone? After all, all work and no play does not make Jack or Jill a brighter student. I am inspired by my pupils, parents and staff because they are all open to embracing my wacky ideas because they know of my greater vision for everyone and society as a whole. For instance, at our school, we actually tell our kids thank you for the opportunity to be their educators."

At the end of the day Kezia believes that the children's needs are most important. She is steadily hard at work and hopes to soon make even more progressive changes to her school, such as installing a pool and auditorium and offering scholarship places to those children whose parents cannot afford but would like their child to enter the beloved school, usually by referrals.

"I am a strong believer in faith, love and God, so combine that with hard work and commitment and I know anything can be done. If I was forced to choose on behalf of the children I would gladly make this belief my one and only selfish principle."

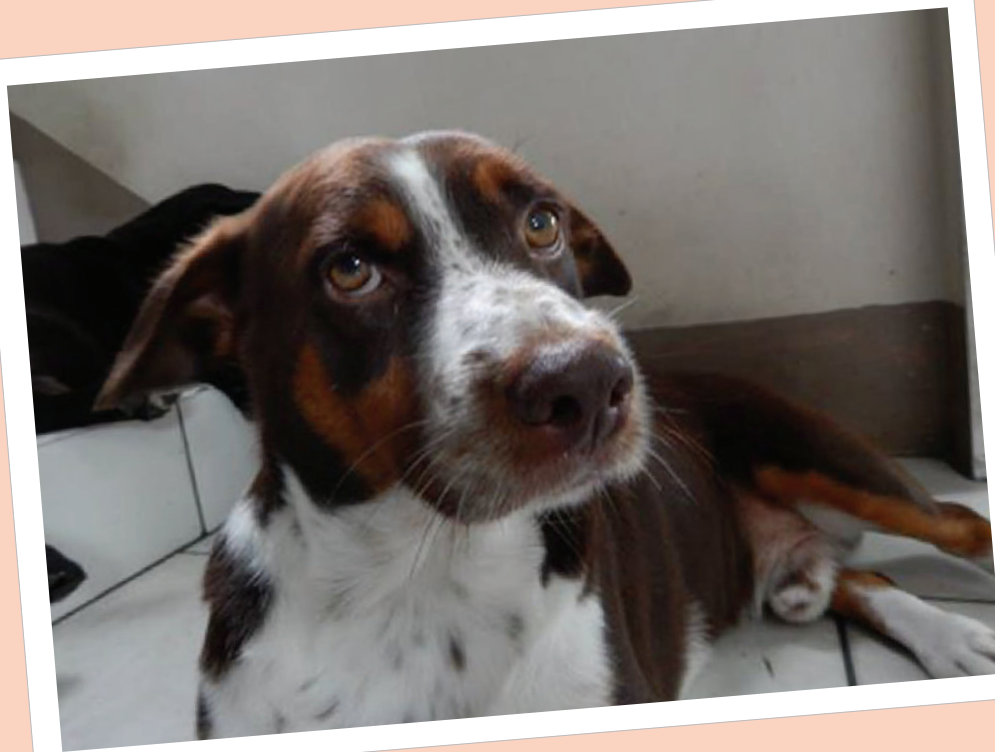
Pets

My lowie pies!

By Candida Khan

Ever heard the saying, “A dog is a man’s best friend”? I have two puppies of my own. I am a complete animal lover. My puppies are really about six years old, but I still call them puppies because they are of a small breed. One of them is called Simba and the other Sparky.

Can you guess which dog is Simba and which is Sparky from the pictures? They are the sweetest pets ever. My puppies are mix breed brothers. They are pompey mixed with rottweiler. Weird combination right?

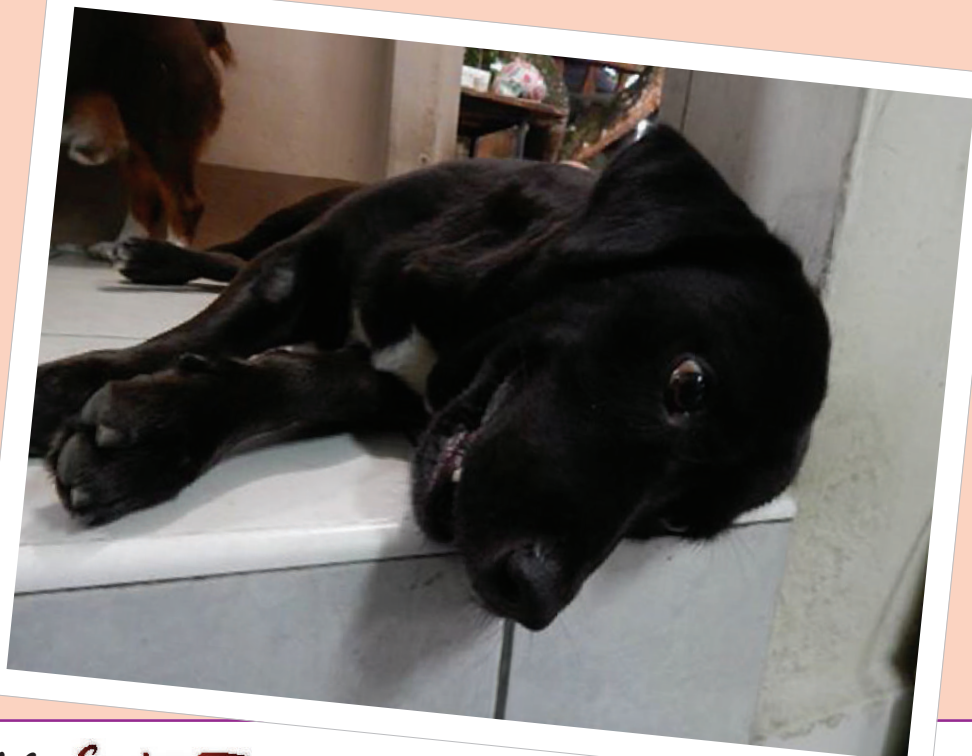


Ever realise how dogs can never not love their master? When I’m sad, they seem to know to come over and cuddle. When I get home after work, guess who is there to greet me at the gate? They are the perfect pets. I love them so much! Most of the time they just want to play or be loved. They

have adventures in the land behind my house. They love to play fetch with tennis balls. I taught them to sit and wait before I throw the ball. They really are smart animals.

My dogs are completely different, even though they are brothers. Simba is more energetic than Sparky. Sparky has sorrowful eyes and he is more cuddly, jealous and flubby. Simba is fit and he loves to run and play. He is also very curious when it comes to other animals. One thing they have in common is that they hate flies. They are always trying to catch it. Sparky has a strange addiction to ice. Once he hears the ice machine, he immediately becomes alert and shows his tongue. He loves to catch ice cubes and eat them. Having two dogs is the best. They are my best buddies.

I am completely against animal cruelty. I can’t imagine who would want to hurt such a sweet animal. Pets in general are always there for you, especially dogs. They love you no matter what you do and you can rely on them when people let you down. Did you know that studies show a correlation between pets and longevity? Why not adopt a pet! They can help reduce depression and improve your mood. I could always count on my doggies to make me feel better.



Pets



Meet Cici

TTSPCA kitten now international feline model

By Nadia Ali

From humble beginnings as a homeless, tiny kitten that was up for adoption by the Trinidad and Tobago Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (TTSPCA) Cici has grown into a beautiful cat that has graced the pages of glossy cat magazines around the world.

Her tiny frame has matured over the years into an ideal 10 pound mature cat. Her once bland looking fur coat has developed into deep, rich shades of brown which are highlighted with orange and white. She is what's known as a Calico cat or a Tortoise Shell cat which refers directly to the colour of her coat. This breed of domestic cat has patches or part-coloured fur on its predominately white coat of feline beauty.

Cici has been published both in print and online, gracing the pages of glossy cat magazines and has been selected as

the model feline to complement features and article about cats on the internet.

Her rise to fame began at around the age of five when her photo was chosen as a runner up in a local BP Photography Contest. The photo went on to be part of a winner's exhibition that was setup like a travelling art exhibition put on at Trincity Mall.

Since then, Cici has gone on to appear in I Love Cats Magazine which originates in the USA. Her photo was used to illustrate a piece on cats in the garden.

Her image has even made its way across the ocean and appeared in the UK's favourite cat magazine, Cat World.

On the internet, Cici has appeared on the Guardian Angel Kids website where they used a rather serene photo of her to complement a piece on how cats purr.

To top it all, a story called, "The Chosen One" was one of 80 pet stories

selected to be published in an anthology called 'Nurturing Paws' edited by Lynn C Johnston. In the story, I tell of how we came to choose Cici at the TTSPCA as a new member of our household.

Our kitty has come a long way from those ear piercing squeaks that she used to make to now communicating in the meow language that allows her to be understood. Now, at the ripe old age of 12 cat years which is the equivalent to being 64 human years old, she is considered a senior citizen. She is a favourite at the veterinarian clinic on Old Southern Main Road where she receives regular checkups and needed vaccinations to ensure all is well.

She has grown old gracefully, snoring when she sleeps and chooses to stay indoors more than venturing outside. Cici, the once homeless kitten has become an international feline model flying the Trini flag and making sweet T&T proud!

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The Stolen Cascadura

Medical doctor Beverley Ann Scott, writer of *The Stolen Cascadura* and *Is America She Gone*, was featured in past issues of *Sweet TnT Magazine*.

In her interview she shared the challenges she faced while writing the Creole language which is very common for many local writers. Following are excerpts from her interview on her first book and preface from her second.

See full text in Issues #3 and #4 on www.sweettntmagazine.com

“The *Stolen Cascadura*, launched in 2007, is a West Indian novel set in Trinidad which revolves around characters from different socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The main characters come from two different backgrounds. Some are from the Beetham while others are from the more affluent parts of Trinidad and then there are those from the East. Their lives become intertwined in true Trinidad fashion and in some instances irreversibly changed. The book deals with the issues of class, HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, and vagrancy. It deals with these issues in an entertaining way and uses simple language which makes it easier for the average person to read.

Most of the feedback has been good. Readers have been very vocal about what they like and dislike about the novel. This really encourages me and challenges me to keep writing and to do better. I don't expect



Beverley Ann Scott with her first book *The Stolen Cascadura* sold on Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/The-Stolen-Cascadura-Beverley-Ann-Scott/dp/143433287X>

my work to appeal to everybody but I do enjoy getting feedback from my readers, both the good and the bad feedback because that way I know when I've done something well as well as when I need to improve on something.

Standard English and TT Creole

I used very simple language in *The Stolen Cascadura*. My writing style is extremely simple. I do not know how to

write any other way. I try when I am writing to imagine my characters as they speak and act and move as if they were real persons. So my writing reflects that simplicity. I do not use Standard English throughout. I use local dialect or what some call Creole. This makes my characters more alive and so it is easier for my readers to identify with them.

Most of the characters in the novel spoke Creole but because the novel deals with issues of class among many others, I tried to distinguish some characters by having them use proper English all the time. Socioeconomic status was a determining factor in deciding who would speak more Creole and who would not. I wanted everybody to speak some Creole because I think in our culture everybody speaks some Creole but I needed to make a distinction between certain characters so I could not allow everybody to speak Creole all the time.

I tried to use speech for each character that would help portray that character better. So for example in portraying a bandit, I used the type of language that I would expect a bandit to use. In portraying a wealthy lady who was important in society I used the sort of language in keeping with that character. Socioeconomic status played a big part as did the level of education of the character and the setting in which the person was speaking. For example even though the character Eddy was from the Beetham, he was going to QRC and was surrounded by young men speaking in a certain way during the day time. So I tried to straddle his character between some good English and some Creole.”

Is America She Gone?

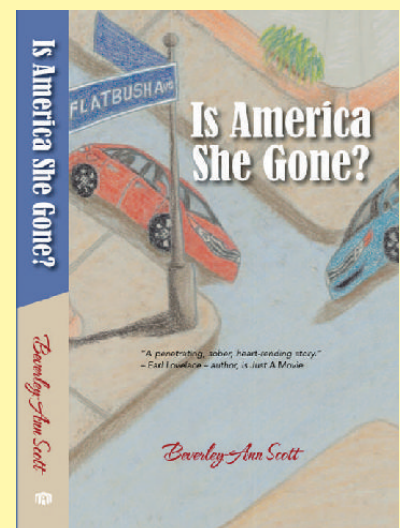
Preface

“*Is America She Gone?* portrays the life experiences of a single mother who leaves Trinidad to work in the United States illegally for six months. The novel is set between Trinidad and Brooklyn, New York and debunks the myth that all immigrants are able to live a charmed life and enjoy a better standard of living in the United States.

The social impact of West Indian immigration and some of the long-term consequences for family life are examined. The phenomenon of “barrel children” and their fate in a society that suggests they be more grateful for the contents of a barrel than the presence of

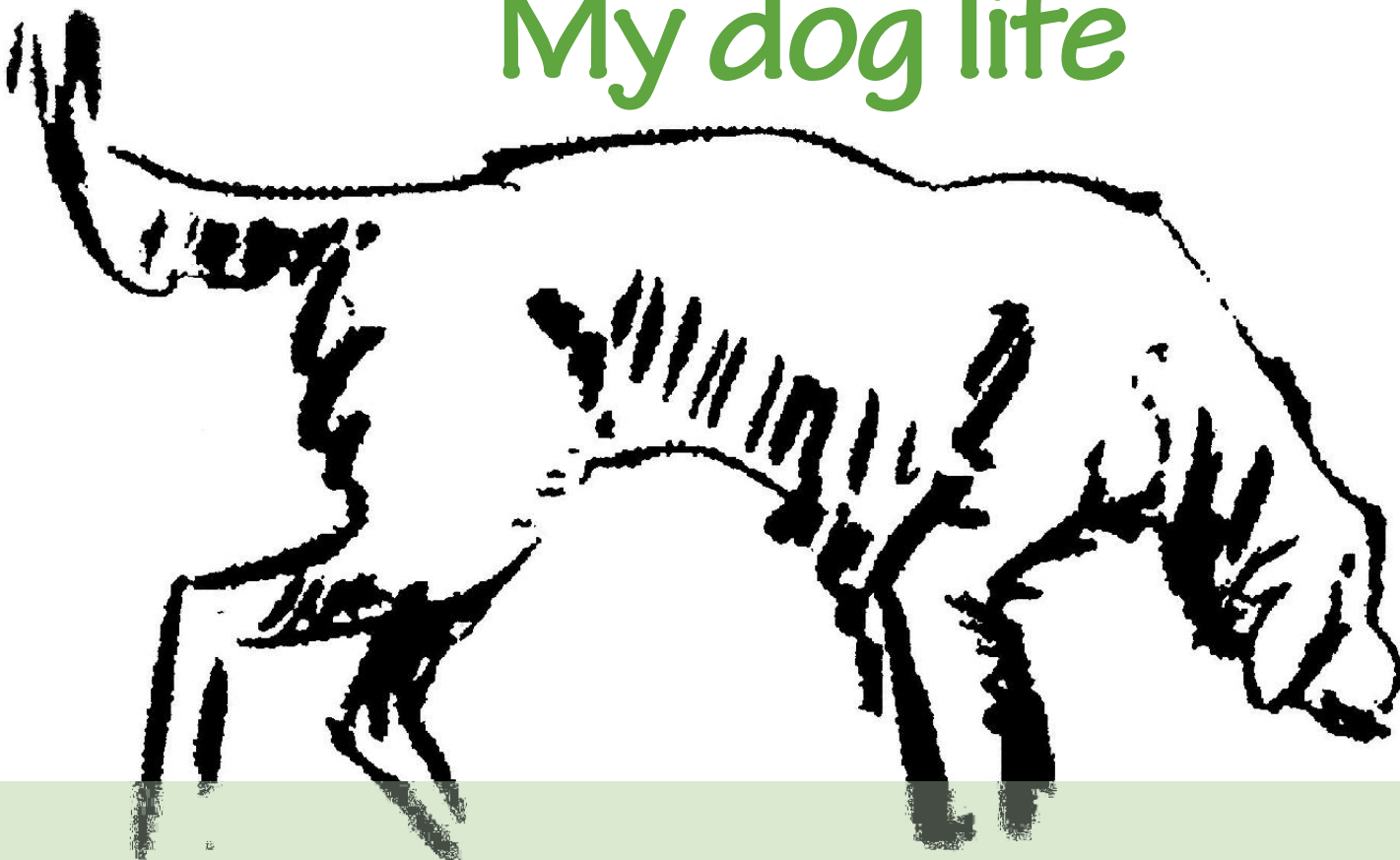
their parents is explored. Many West Indians have been able to preserve family and cultural values during the process of immigration but many have also abandoned cultural and family values in an effort to belong. This issue of identity disownment and redefinition continues to be a challenge to immigrants even today.

Is America She Gone? forces us as West Indians to examine our Caribbean identity which is as diverse as our cultural heritage. No matter where we find ourselves in the world, we create a new history every day as people of the Caribbean. It is my hope that this book will encourage all Caribbean people, and in particular those of the diaspora, to embrace their unique identities and share them with the world.”



Is America She Gone? is sold on Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/America-She-Gone-Beverley-Ann-Scott/dp/1477282777>

My dog life



By Joyce James-Pitman

Oh what a dog life! I lived with a master who always said that I was worthless, but because of my size and ferocious look, he thought I could scare off intruders on his property. So I developed a barking skill. I barked at everyone who passed by. At the front of the yard, I would go to and fro so I would look good in the eyes of my master.

I knew he was quite pleased as I heard him telling people, "That's my dog, Devil." But in my mind I was a bit confused on how to react when people came to the gate.

My master had always talked about wanting a bad dog that would bite any intruder. He spoke about ways to make a dog a killer and also what he did with the dog when it was tame. He talked about a few that he got rid of by taking them to an unknown place and leaving them there, hence my reason for putting on a show.

I have even worn out the grass from one end of the property to the other. I was so confused, I didn't know who to attack as they entered the premises as it seemed as though everyone who came to the house was my master's friend. I did my usual barking until I was told to get to the back. I must say this type of dog life went on for years until my master passed away.

Never in my wildest dog dreams did I

Life was good until All Fools Day!

think my life would change so drastically. First my late owner's daughter came into my life and changed my name to JD which stood for Jonas' Dog.

The name was quite pleasing to my ear and I felt less dramatic on my job as the years had mellowed me into accepting the people who came in and out of the property as my owner's friends. All I did with my tired old self was eat, sleep and just be plain lazy.

I cannot say much about what really happened but as the changing of the guard continued, a morning I awoke and found that I had another owner. He was quite a guy who loved his belly, so my luck had also changed for the better.

There was food aplenty so I was satisfied, except that I needed a bath. But after living so many years with a dog smell, it was no big thing, I had adapted to the scent. That is what I thought, until my master Andy introduced me to a beautiful female dog, so now you can imagine my self-consciousness.

I knew I could not do anything about it by myself, so I allowed it to slide past as

everything else and just thanked my lucky stars that I was about to have some kind of enjoyment in my life.

Boy was I lucky! Six months later my lady friend was expecting the birth of my children. Was I a proud papa. The following year, I saw some die. One son has who has grown up has been described by people as a replica of his father... ME!

I wished to say that I had my fill so I could have settled down to a priestly life as my age was telling on me, but I had to give it one more shot. My woman became pregnant again and I really don't know if I will be alive to see the birth as it is very difficult for me to move around now. They say, "When bull old he does shit his tail," but the saying also goes for dogs.

By the way, on April 1 which I heard was called All Fools Day, I was struggling to get up from my behind which took me a good half of an hour without a cane as the old humans do. I saw three of my human friends, my former owner Jonas' daughter, my present owner Andy, and Jonas' granddaughter looking my way and calling me "a dirty old dog". This meant "dirty old man" as in human standards which they called me just as I was about to be a father for a second time.

As it was All Fools Day, I hoped that they were not going to take their words seriously to call the pound to put me to sleep as I heard them saying.

I would have been quite happy to live out my life in the comfort of my master, my wife and my children.

Man and me

My life was so exciting as those long minutes went by
It only took a few seconds before I learned to fly
My stomach was always full as food was everywhere
There was food on this side and more over there

My prey was a lot bigger and different looking from me
Some left my meal exposed, others were stingy
Life became a horror when my entire family was killed
Mom got sprayed in the air and Dad got his blood spilled
My sister died on her way to school
And my brother got splat while playing the fool
I was left alone with all my relatives
We had to fly for our lives like fugitives

All our prey were happy and their families were alive
They did not understand we all wanted to survive
Sometimes we tried to be friendly by "singing" in an ear
But I guessed they got angrier as we had to flee in fear

If I was only bigger and a lot stronger like them
Maybe life would have been easier living just as men
I flew across the world wishing I was a man
Thinking no one will hurt me being high in this land

But I was wrong with what I thought
I saw men against men in war they fought
Women killed unborn babies that were their own

Some people poisoned themselves with gramoxone
They lived by laws to prevent crime
And if they broke any they served the time
Some lived rich while others lived poor
Some asked for nothing, others wanted more
They argued over religion, politics and race
While vagrancy became a shameful disgrace

The thought of being a man was really not so great
I did not understand why they lived with so much hate
My life went on as usual around these dreadful men
They killed all my relatives and now my best friend
I continued living around them knowing my time was near
They say I am a mosquito, man's worst nightmare

— Joyanne James





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By Marissa Armoogam-Ali

I was recently adopted into a group of friends who were originally my sister's friends. Now it seems my house, to my pleasure, has become the "round-up" spot for every occasion and celebration. Friends, cousins, brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews all merge into one loud and fun group of people who can be found in batches throughout my home and yard on any given weekend.

Now all this entertaining can get a girl tired, but recently the men of the group have become quite forward in their willingness to wear an apron and get behind the stove. Of course there have been no complaints from the women folk. About a week ago these new found chefs came over and surprised us with a menu of provision and duck... now let me just say since the beginning of time there has

So the man could 'bubble a pot'

never been a provision and duck like this one!

These three men, Sat, Vishal and Shawn, made magic in the kitchen that Saturday. The entire house was filled with the aroma of the tasty curry and a spicy pepper which permeated the air, the little children ran out the house coughing loudly. I turned to my sister-in-law Vernessa and congratulated her on teaching my brother Shawn these commendable cooking skills, her response was "but hey, de man cud bubble ah pot".

I shared this experience the following Monday with my co-workers and they all had almost the same comments, all along the lines of "but girl, you don't know men are the best cooks" and "girl, when a man boil a pot, you does know".

Since then I have the immense pleasure of eating the food these willing cooks have been preparing for us weekend after weekend, and now I have gathered enough evidence and earned the boasting rights to say that indeed, these Trini men could really "bubble a pot".



Cuisine in a pot!



Cuisine In Ah Pot team: Promoting healthy eating habits

We at Cuisine In Ah Pot, located at No. 32 Hermitage Road, Gonzales, Port of Spain, bring a different approach to the restaurant and catering business. We are about creating a unique fresh outlook to the food industry, providing customers with fresh food off our menu every month on our lunch menu between 6 am to 2 pm.

We also provide a personal chef's service doing weddings, business events and other occasions. Our concept is Caribbean and International cuisine. We encourage people to eat a healthier and fresher cuisine which we eat in Trinidad. Our slogan is excellent services, excellent product. Our team consists of people with strong leadership skills that not only put their best foot forward but excel in their craft.

Some of our best jobs are working for the Chief Justice, Police Service, President of Corporation or on a movie set. The worst was the first catering job in Atlanta where we went to the wrong building.



Saltfish and avocado dish



Scrumptious pastry



Delicious corn soup

THE TEAM

Henrietta David Jones – CEO for 40 years and counting, started the business from her home kitchen and has turned the brand into an international sensation.

Keno Jones – VP of Operations has worked for large restaurants in the United States and the Caribbean for more than 22 years. He brings kitchen/staff training and menu collaborations to the establishment.

Ebo Jones – VP of Human Resources as well as a successful lawyer and with his passion for law and people, he executes the business' policies and procedures with flair.

Ackedo Jones – VP of Finance who has been in banking for numerous years brings fresh approach to the financial side and the growth of the business.

Angela David – Senior Accounting and Business Analyst maintains all the financial records to the business.

Contact: 1-868-702-1598 or 404-643-8925

Website: www.cuisineinahpot.com

Email: cuisineinahpotatl@gmail.com



The kitchen where all the action takes place.

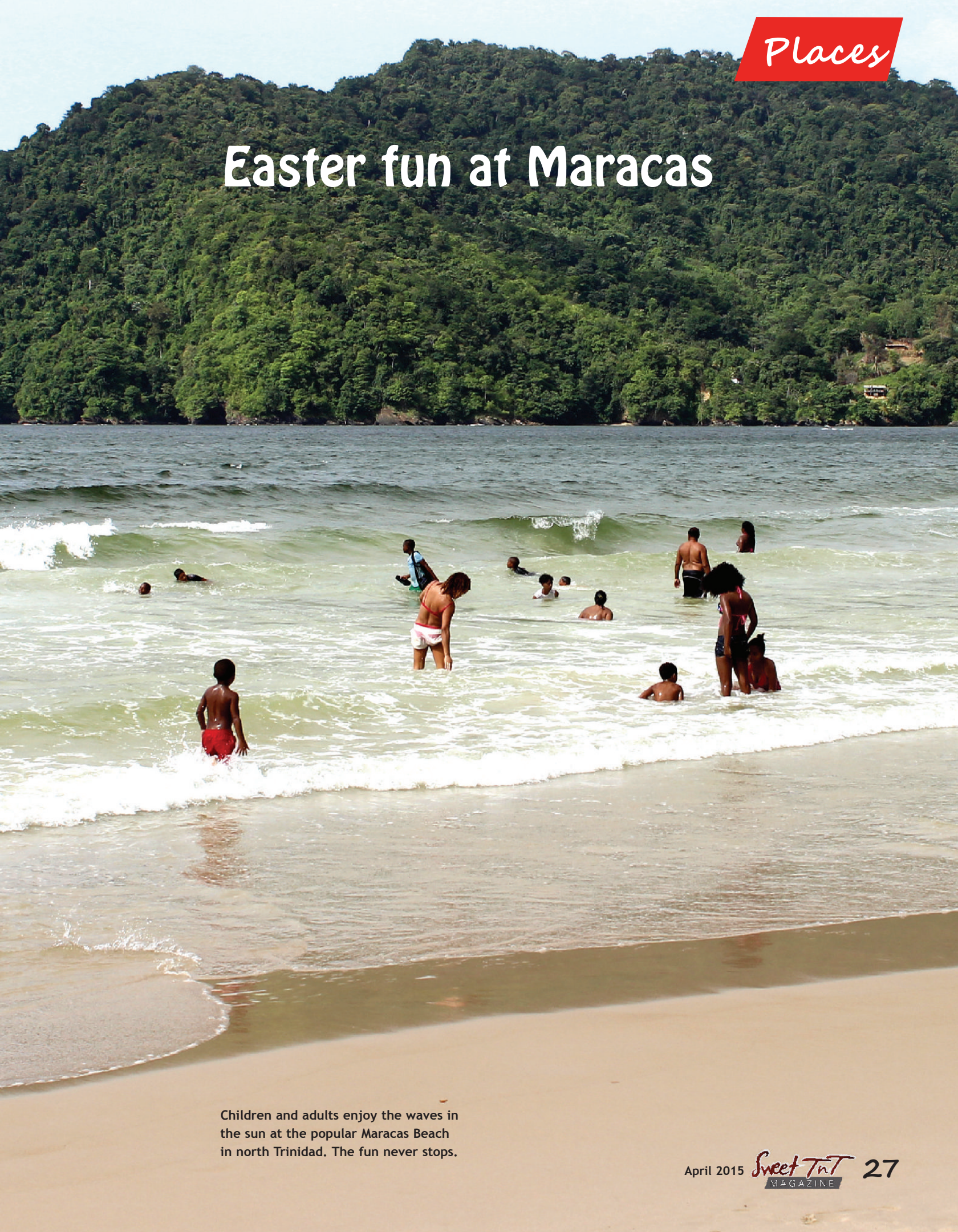


Good Friday foods

Photos show provision and fish on sale at the Tunapuna Market. These are usually a part of the dishes prepared by many local people on Good Friday celebrated on April 3 this year. Added to the plate in some homes might be some tasty macaroni pie and mouthwatering callaloo.



Easter fun at Maracas



Children and adults enjoy the waves in the sun at the popular Maracas Beach in north Trinidad. The fun never stops.

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Gadgeteer.





Sweet TnT Magazine shares delightful images of the artistic walls outside of the Queen's Park Oval on Tragarete Road and Elizabeth Street in Port of Spain. These works of local artists and photogra-

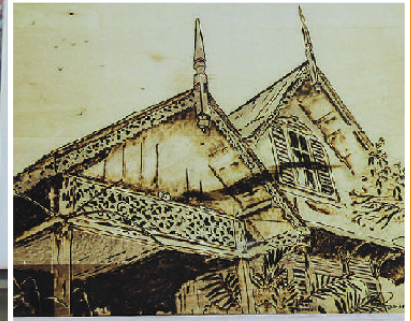
phers beautify the area and give a warm welcome to commuters passing them heading to St James in the west or back to downtown Port of Spain. See Pages 30 and 31 for more amusing images.





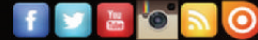
Wondrous display on **Tragarete Road**





Sweet TnT

MAGAZINE



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