

# Sweet TnT

## MAGAZINE

[www.sweettntmagazine.com](http://www.sweettntmagazine.com)

Issue #16 June 2015

### The big day!

Curt and Shivonne Danclair  
on their wedding day  
on December 6, 2014.  
Little Kyla Baptiste makes  
a pretty flower girl.  
Photo: Anthony De Bourg  
See page 4



- Father's Day tribute
- In love since 2000
- Grow your own food
- The 'shilling phone'
- Fort King George





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**Sweet TnT**  
MAGAZINE

Lifestyle  
Creole Language  
Food  
Places

Trinidad and Tobago culture for so!



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## Moruga

View of the sea from  
the village in Moruga.  
See story and more photos  
on pages 26 and 27.  
Photo: Marika Mohammed

## Editor's note

It's June month and the air is filled with plans for weddings, graduations, Father's Day celebrations, and the usual lively activities that make Trinidad and Tobago a comfortable place to be. It's just a matter of time before the few bad grapes of our nation wake up and start living like true Trinbagonians so we can proudly say that this is sweet T&T!

Our June 2015 issue is very entertaining as usual. In the Lifestyle section, we share some love stories from strong couples, a birthday lime, something for the great fathers, a hiker's experience, an interview with a barber who operates from his backyard, a successful gospel concert, an upcoming art exhibition, and be prepared for this one, a caterpillar feature! While caterpillars may be pretty colourful but gross at the same time, they live in our backyards here in T&T and are part of our culture.

As for the "Creole Corner" section, the name has been changed to "Local Writings", a name that would definitely cover any writing style chosen by a local poet, author, or storyteller. There are two very interesting short stories, a commentary on "long-time" teachers, and an interview with an author who tells her story about hope after being shot in the face! The Food section has displays of mouthwatering home cooked dishes, and gardens at a home and on a farm. As for the Places section, we take you on a visual trip to Tobago, Moruga, Port of Spain and Tacarigua.

Congratulations team and thanks to all our contributors and supporters.

Enjoy!

Joyanne James  
Editor

*Sweet TnT*  
MAGAZINE

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## Schedule for 2015

Sweet TnT Magazine is  
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# The big day

As love blooms in the month of June, *Sweet TnT Magazine* shares a delightful contribution from **Ramona Pitman** who shares with us photos of the Johns and Danclairs on their big wedding day, and the

Serrettes on their five-year anniversary (page 5).

Ramona feels fortunate to be friends with these couples who she says, "represent everything a real marriage should be".



Courtenay and Tedica John on their wedding day on July 24, 2011. Courtenay states, "Sometimes you search for the right things to do or achieve in life, get a good job, get married and start a family. When I saw my now wife Tedica David, I truly knew that my heart was indicted in a good manner. And from that time until now I have loved her the same way and even more than the first time we met. I know that I am at ease and at peace with my heart because she completes me. I have found the one whom my soul loves."



COVER PHOTO: Curt and Shivonne Danclair met on August 17, 2007. Shivonne says, "It was love at first sight. We met in San Juan after a football game, exchanged numbers, and soon after, we dated. I remember 'Danny' saying, 'If you know you are not serious, then we shouldn't exchange numbers,' lol. We got married on December 6, 2014 and we are both happily married. Photos: Anthony De Bourg



Bride Shivonne Danclair with family members, from left, Kathleen Danclair and Patrick Small with little Kaliah Baptiste. At her right are Mala, Nicki and Patrice Small. At front are children Malik Allamby and Kyla Baptiste.

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# In love since 2000

Lifestyle



Kenrick and Cindy-ann Serrette do a photo shoot for their five-year wedding anniversary at St Lucia Sandals on August 22, 2014. Photos: Snapshots at Sandals

Kenrick and Cindy-ann Serrette were married on August 22, 2009. Cindy-ann tells *Sweet TnT Magazine* their story.

My husband and I have been together since the year 2000 and we have grown together from high school. As a young but focussed couple we grew to love and understand each other by learning about each other's flaws and strengths and accepting them. Prior to 2000 we were friends for just about two and a half years and we understood that education came first!

Our wedding day was truly a most memorable day. I can remember each detail as though it was yesterday. Our Church service was at St James Pentecostal Church followed by a reception at the Horticulture Society which was so gracious to supply an overflowing foyer of



floral. I know that my Almighty God was most present. The peace, the love, the joy and happiness went beyond us, the wedding couple, and extended to all our invited guests and assistants. It was so captivating to see both families come together to witness our devotion and commitment to each other. The commitment to love each other for the rest of our



lives was such an effortless commitment made.

Why did we get married? What do two people do when they are willing to share everything, love unconditionally and are ready to move upwards together and build an empire? I guess they get married and that's what we did! We are still building the empire though... lol!

Simone at [trinidadweddings.com](http://trinidadweddings.com):

## We match couples with advertisers

By Simone Charles

Everyone loves to attend weddings; enjoy the scenery, to worship the bride's dress and stare at the wedding cake. We all praise the caterers and are in awe of the venue at which it is hosted. However, in order for this event to be executed exceptionally, the engaged couple needs advice on what will best suit their budget and how to incorporate what ideas they like.

I had the opportunity to chat with Simone Sant-Ghuran, founder of Trinidad Weddings. I saw a pleasant, motivated person with years of experience. Simone states, "At Trinidad Weddings we provide information about wedding vendors (advertisers) to brides and grooms who come to our site The Wedding Coach at [www.trinidadweddings.com/TWC](http://www.trinidadweddings.com/TWC) to find and book wedding vendors.

"Our job is to help couples find their perfect match with vendors. There is also a consulting service we have for brides and grooms who need one-on-one help. They can book a session with me so I can help them with their budgeting needs, vendor selections, vendor contracts and so on."

Many people have not heard of this type of service, perhaps they never thought that it would have been offered in Trinidad. My curiosity was now diverted to the very name of her business. Why just "Trinidad"? Simone mentioned that they wanted a URL that would give an immediate hint about their core business — which is promoting vendors for weddings in T&T. She states, "Although our name doesn't contain the word "Tobago" in it, we do have advertisers from Tobago and we



Simone Sant-Ghuran

Photo: Image 1st, Farringdon, London

encourage more of course! This is especially because we have recently seen much more interest from local couples who want to go to Tobago to get married and of course, they come to our site in search of Tobagonian vendors who can help them."

She also stated that she produces the TW Wed-Zine, a magazine that features both local and foreign bridal content. "We've covered various types of shows in Paris, London, Puerto

Rico and New York to name a few. The idea is to bring cutting-edge, global wedding trends to our reading and website audience." We also offer sponsored blogs on [www.trinidadweddings.com](http://www.trinidadweddings.com) and we've covered product launches that relate to the wedding industry — so beauty, alcohol and venue launches would all be included in that.

I asked Simone, "What motivated you to start this type of business?" She says, "After about eight years working in the corporate world, I just felt as though I wanted to be an entrepreneur and do more of the things I loved. At the time, my background was in Marketing, Public Relations, Human Resources and Event Co-ordination. I felt this skill set would help me with the idea I had for a wedding website; since my own wedding had happened recently.

"At that time, wedding planning was difficult and brides had to rely mostly on yellow pages and referrals. So, I thought why not make it easier for them by putting everything in one place? It wasn't without its challenges though, being a start-up was risky — since this was a time when internet business was very new to T&T (about ten years ago). Somehow I felt that the timing was right but the practical side of me had this confirmed by some market research that I had done by an independent company.

"What really helped me, apart from my skill set, was my determination to see the idea work and a genuine desire to help and promote small and medium-sized businesses. Today, from a little six-page website we built in mid-2004, we have grown to hundreds of web pages."





My aunts at right cheer me on as I enjoy the moment when my birthday cake is alight.

# A birthday fiesta at Rango's

By Nerissa Hosein

So you only get one birthday every year right! I always aim to make it memorable! I think it's so important no matter who you are to take that one day for you and spend some time making yourself happy.

As a stay-at-home mom I don't always put myself first. My kids and my husband take up most of my time and I have the best time making sure we grow together as a family. But MY BIRTHDAY is MY BIRTHDAY. I make sure and celebrate it every year.

This year I chose to go to dinner with family and friends. Of course being ever so budget conscious I tried to pick somewhere that we wouldn't break our bank

Keeping  
T&T sweet!

A Sweet TnT series  
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accounts, but we could have fun and enjoy the ambience.

Let me say I think I found it at Rango's Cookhouse and Bar in Price Plaza, Chaguanas! What a festive, happy place to have a birthday! We reached at 8 pm and were seated promptly.

Our ever-so-friendly waiter came to us almost immediately and started with our drinks order. Our menus were handed to us and the party had started. I must say our waiter, although I failed to get his name, was one of the highlights of my night!

He was so friendly, funny, outgoing and enthusiastic, that even though he spoke with a heavy accent and we couldn't understand him most of the time, he made us laugh.

There was Mexican style food such as tacos and enchiladas. They also serve lots of pasta dishes, seafood and the regular burgers and other types of sandwiches. It's a good mix and had something for all of my ten guests.

The food was excellent, could not have tasted better. We dined on many different items, my favourite

was the Buffalo wings because I just loved the spicy taste.

It was such a warm and cozy dining experience... and just when we thought it could not get better they asked for the birthday girl. Our waiter then proceeded to give all of us sombreros, the guys protested but wore them.

Mine was super large but funny and then they brought out a slice of cake with a huge candle and proceeded to sing Happy Birthday to me. Everyone was laughing and clapping. It was a wonderful experience.

I must say this place was absolutely perfect for a fun night out. I can't remember a time that I have gone somewhere and felt so relaxed and had such a great time.

Thanks to my family, friends and the staff at Rango's I had one of the best birthdays ever this year!



## Keeping T&amp;T sweet!

# Honouring the great fathers

By Nerissa Hosein

We hear many stories of dead beat dads and men who abandon their kids and their responsibilities on a daily basis. But as Father's Day approaches, let's take a minute to reflect on the men who do their parts in fulfilling their children's every want and need for there are many fathers out there who deserve to be treated as special and as honoured as we do our mothers on Mother's Day.

They are the men who get up at the crack of dawn and leave for a job they may not even like. They are the men who work hard long hours just to put food on their families' tables. They are the men who toil in the blistering heat just to buy that special gift for their loved ones. They may not be perfect but they are honest, decent, hardworking and loving men that take pride in their responsibilities.

As a girl I grew up with a very loving father. He is a man of very few words who has always been there when I needed him. He



My husband Muhammad Hosein with our two boys Zayn and Eshan.

takes behind his father, my dearly departed grandfather. My grand father instilled values in all of us to love our families, protect each other and to always be there for

each other. He was a hard worker all his life and passed that trait onto his sons. It was not easy when he died three years ago. But he left the best parts of himself in

all of us. My dad takes his kindness and his generosity.

Being surrounded by men like that it's no wonder I was attracted to my husband. He is a hard worker with a kind heart. He is the best dad I could have ever have asked for when it comes to my kids. He was also raised in a family with a strong patriarch. His father was a decent and kind soul, a hard worker that provided for his wife and seven children all his life. He, like my grandfather passed away a few years ago but his legacy lives on in his children. His sons have taken his kindness and magnified it to be strong yet caring men.

I feel honoured and lucky to be surrounded by all these men. So as we approach this Father's Day let's all appreciate the men that we call Daddy, Gran Daddy or Uncle. Let's make sure this Father's Day we take a moment to recognise them for all the hard work and dedication. Happy Father's Day to all! And to those in heaven, I hope you know you're all still cherished and remembered.

## A hike to remember

By Candida Khan

Kiral Khan, a young adventurous Trini, went on his first hike-a-thon on May 23, 2015 from Matelot to Blanchisseuse.

The hike was in memory of Derek Sookram and it is an annual hike led by the Island Hikers group. It included passing through beaches such as Madamas Bay, Grand Tacaribe, and Paria. The Ministry of Sport, Penta Paints, and Nestle have all sponsored items towards this Hike-a-thon 2015.

Kiral said that he completed the hike successfully and received a medal in the end. He rated it as "one of the most strenuous things I've done thus far". He noted that it was such a great experience, and it took him eight and a half hours to complete.

Kiral talks about his experience. "I left home at 2 am to arrive at the first point in Mt

Hope. Hundreds of hikers gathered and buses upon buses transported us to Matelot. The hike started at 7.30 am. I went along with my friend and soon realised that the hike was more challenging than expected. It was my first official hike."

He said that the trees were marked for guidance and that it was a race to the finish line. The path that was outlined was rocky and had many "up and down hilly areas" to climb.

"I saw a snake and many other animals. I just did it for the fun and experience. Some got injured and needed help to make it to the end."

He was happy to finish and was excited about his accomplishment. He states, "Walking in the burning sun required a high level of fitness." He said that he will compete in the next hike in 2016 with Island Hikers.



Kiral Khan on his first hike from Matelot to Blanchisseuse on May 23.





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# Faith works for Barber-Q

By Kielon Hilaire

Quintin Feveck is a valiant guy who is hell-bent on proving that his ultimate place in society can be whatever he wants it to be.

Quintin is a barber. Yes, a part time one too. And his "shop" is located in his backyard. So anyone who is reading this and is already frowning should probably go check to see if there is a "Celebrity Barber" showing on TV because Quintin's story is as real as it gets. Being the last of five boys, growing up Quintin had to prove his worth in many ways. He experienced his fair share of trials, he was frail, had an unorthodox personality and he even attended what was then known as the Five Rivers Junior Secondary School after sitting Common Entrance Examinations (now known as SEA). And at the end of it all he became a barber.

"I started after my brother told me that if I don't cut my hair he would not give me a mark," Quintin said, "so I told him, 'ok, cut it' and he kept his promise. Since then I kept maintaining my own hair. Realising what I could do, after that I started offering students marks in school for a fee to put towards buying a gift for someone. As soon as I got enough money I bought a barbering machine and I eventually took a leap of faith and started cutting my own hair. Then I eventually moved onto cutting other people's hair. Then at some point I became known as 'Barber-Q.' But this all started 12 years ago."

Quintin shared rich descriptions of some of his most fascinating times as a barber, including the first time he experimented with contrast and used different heights of the hair to create the illusion of shadows and the time when a client sat down in his chair



and told him to just put something strange in her head. He said that inspiration took its time to come that day, but when it came it came. "After the client told me that, I turned to stare at a pattern on my bed sheet then did some abstract work on her head. It eventually became known to be the 'BS Design'," Quintin said. "Today we still joke about it." And just to clarify, BS stands for



Quintin Feveck aka Barber-Q

bed sheet! Quintin also has strong selling points as a barber, particularly that you can call him by appointment for a haircut so that you don't have to wait in line and that clients always get exactly what they ask for. But there is a little twist to this story.

Quintin's true passion lies in the field of Engineering. He was accepted into the University of the West Indies (UWI) to pursue his BSc Degree in Civil Engineering which he is relentlessly chasing. He claims it is not easy waking up 2 am every morning to put in the hours as a student but at the end of the day he knows this is going to be worth it. "I chose Civil Engineering because I wanted to take that desire of mine to build things and step it up to building bigger things like houses. In time I would like to be part of a team that designs and builds a high-rise building in Trinidad or Tobago or some other part of the world." Quintin also advises that studying engineering is not for the faint of heart. He cautioned, "If this is your passion, chase it only after you make up your mind to give up sleep."

Quintin appreciates the fact that he started as a barber and that his most loyal clients support him on his path to becoming a full-fledged engineer. He knows that without their support he would not have made it this far, although he also knows that he has much further to go. But anything worthwhile takes time. He believes faith and work can bring miracles.





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# UWI art graduate to launch first exhibition June 13-28

## Portrait of An Angel

Kenwyn Murrar, painter, artist, visual philosopher was born in Trinidad and Tobago in 1979. His art is more than just influenced by the land of his birth; it is his expression of the confluence of fluidity, the submerged history, hybridity, and spirituality he rediscovers with each work of art.

Graduating with honours from the University of the West Indies in 2006 and currently a member of staff at its Department of Creative and Festival Arts,

he integrates the theories, ideas and words of the minds around him with his own meditations and ultimately translates these convergences into stunning visual works.

With a career which is distinguished between professional painting and portraiture; and his engagement with the Carnival arts, Kenwyn's work is inevitably a reflection, a reshaping, and a discussion of the Caribbean experience — an experience of one Caribbean aesthetic.

### Calendar of Events

Portrait of An Angel art exhibition will be held from Saturday June 13 to Sunday 28 at #19 Alcazar Street, St Clair, Port of Spain.

**Saturday June 13:** Opening Reception 6 pm-9 pm

**Saturday June 20:** Musical Showcase (Freetown

Collective and Soul Quarters) 7 pm-11 pm

**Sunday June 21:** Children's Open Day 1-6 pm

**Wednesday June 24:** Artist Talk "An Evening with Angels" 6 pm-7.30 pm

**Saturday June 27:** We Does Draw (open drawing session)

**Sunday June 28:** Closing Night Open Studio (various artists and artistes invited to share their process and work)

**Saturday July 4:** Artist Entrepreneurship Clinic: How to Jump Start your Career in Arts

*School tours and viewing of the exhibition are available every day!!*

## 'Mahalia: A Gospel Musical' a success



Cast members of JCS Entertainment's **Mahalia: A Gospel Musical** after the Friday, May 15 Gala performance at the Central Bank Auditorium. Photos: Eustace Dyer Photography



Lead cast member Llettesha Sylvester, who plays adult Mahalia Jackson, interacts with a young fan.



Lead cast member Mandisa Granderson, who plays young Mahalia Jackson, poses with her mother, Musical Director of the production, Lorraine Granderson.



# A caterpillar invasion

By Nadia Ali

The phone rang, "They're here!" is all the voice said, but I knew in an instant what my neighbour Osman was talking about. We had this thing where once a year we would call each other to say one specific thing... they're here!

It was the announcement of the black and yellow fat caterpillars that laid claim to the frangipani trees in both of our gardens.

When Osman and I first noticed them, we would call to discuss how best we could get rid of them. At the time we were unaware that these distinctive caterpillars were only after the green leaves of the frangipani tree and their presence would not lead to a hostile garden takeover.

Having discussed spraying them or squishing them, my little daughter and I would go out into the garden and pull them one by one off the branch with a tool and drop them into a bucket. It was later, through speaking to other people that I learned that the caterpillars were only after the green leaves of that one tree and would turn into a moth and fly away.

I wanted to find out more about the squishy invaders in my garden and did some research. The caterpillar's scientific name is *Pseudosphinx Tetrio* or the Tetrio Sphinx Moth. It is not indigenous to sweet T&T but originates from Central America. It is also more commonly known as the "Frangipani



A black and yellow fat caterpillar spotted in my yard.

Hawkmoth" across the Caribbean.

The caterpillars really do come out in their numbers and it is normal to find 20 or so devouring the leaves on one tree. Looking closely you can actually see it chomping away at chunks of the leaves with powerful movements that can move the branch. Once they reach their maximum length of six inches they become a pupa which is the hard case.

We never found any of the pupas which

are the cocoon-like shape things that the caterpillars spin to transform into the Hawk Moth. But sure enough after a while there would be an influx of big moths in the area.

So, if you notice the *Pseudosphinx Tetrio* on your trees, leave them alone so that they can fly home as the Hawk Moth and in no time your frangipani will be green and leafy once more, ready for the next caterpillar invasion.

## Transformation in San Juan



A 'boldface' caterpillar goes into a protective casing and occupies the lock of a gate at the backyard of a home in San Juan for two weeks. The transformation was captured gradually in two stages at left. However, the photo at right shows the empty cocoon after the presumably beautiful flying creature made its escape.





# When teachers used to run things

This is in tribute to the retired teachers of the St Joseph Government Primary School who taught between 1972 and 1978: Mrs P Belmar, Ms Martin, Ms D Punch, Ms M Grenaway, Ms Chase, Ms Peters, Mr Gill, and then principal Mr Martin (deceased).

When school days were indeed happy days:

- Nobody raised their voices to protest when being disciplined.
- The only crime was writing on the desks.
- Not a squeak when you get a

strap across your back, perhaps for talking in class or chewing gum or just clowning around.

- Discipline was a non-issue in schools.
- Parents parented.
- Neighbours lived like family and you couldn't break beech, somebody must see you and tell your parents.
- Sir or Miss came home to visit once in a while and knew your parents well.
- No knife attack or fighting.
- You had to line up in the hot

sun and stand straight as a needle.

- Finger nail inspection every morning.
- Uniform inspection every morning.
- You walked to your classrooms in single file.
- You were taken outside lots of times to recite and memorise times tables and spelling and vocabulary.
- Shoes were to be clean always, both boys' and girls' shoes.
- Not a protest for any raise in salary.

Yuh think it sorf? All of a sudden teaching get hard!

— Omilla Mungroo



# The Lord is my Shepherd

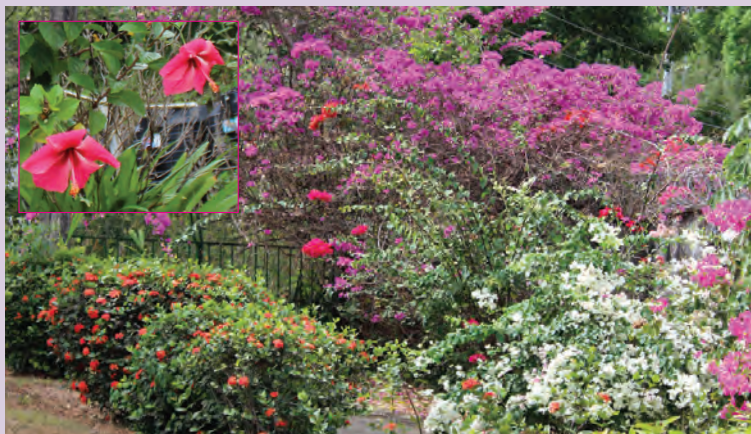
By Omilla Mungroo

I was spending the summer holidays at my father's parents' home in St Joseph. It was a beautiful, clear morning. The air smelt like the roses my aunt tended to that morning before she plucked about three of the pretty pink ones, to include with two red hibiscus for her morning prayer.

I was about eight years old then, and did not realise how solemn this ritual was for my aunt and my grandmother, who sat on the stairs at the front of the house, looking on. My aunt had had her early morning bath already; an important "must do" before her prayer at the "jhandi" flags. The jhandi was a spot where Hindus kept their flags planted and their small murtis or cleared out area for placing a lighted deya and other implements or water or flowers used in their worship.

I was raised in the village further up the road — where my mother's second eldest sister — the only Christian in the family — taught Sunday School. I had no idea that there were other prayers which I didn't know of, and rituals like those I was witnessing then.

The village I grew up in was a very close-knit community. Everybody knew everybody else, and children from the village were sent by their parents to the Sunday School my aunt taught, along with a Bajan woman who we all called



"Mother" simply because she was a mother to all. We sang songs, were told interesting stories, and learnt verses from the Holy Bible — a book I learnt to respect and treasure from a very early age.

Every night my mother's eldest sister who lived with my other grandmother's home, would recite the 23rd Psalm and it became the first entire Psalm I knew very well. Psalm 121 and Psalm 1 were memorised right after. I was now turning nine years old then.

However, this aunt, my favorite auntie, my father's sister, seemed really pleased with me for following her around that morning. I had taken an early morning bath myself, plucked two or three roses from her bounteous colourful flower garden, to pray with her.

She was tall, beautiful, with the most beguiling eyes I ever saw. Everybody said that I resembled

her, and so I felt quite smug and pretty myself, since at home I was never called pretty or beautiful or anything of the sort, except for some sparse compliments from my father when my mother was out of earshot.

She wore a white and dark blue floral printed dress that morning and had a piece of lace white cloth to cover her head whilst she knelt in front of the jhandi. I wore a green shorts and a coloured stripe top.

My grandmother had interjected, as I knelt with my hands cupping the flowers I held. "Why you don't lend her one of your orhnis?" She asked Auntie Rosie. "Oh yes!" Auntie replied. Then turning to me she went on. "You have to cover your head. You want an orhni?" I had no idea what an orhni was and what the fuss was about. It didn't matter to me but I said yes. And so I was given a white chiffon piece of

cloth to place over my head.

As I knelt beside my aunt I watched her face. She held the flowers in her hand so I followed suit. Her eyes were closed and her lips moved, but she whispered her prayer so I bowed my head, with the flowers cupped in my hands as I started to whisper my prayer too. When I was done I opened my eyes to see she had placed the flowers on the ground so I placed mines as well, and raised up from the kneeling position. She looked at me pleased and smiling.

Then I heard my grandmother, "You pray?" Her brows close together as she scrutinised my face. I nodded and then remembered the Bajan woman had always told me to speak and do not shake my head, so I followed with, "Yes, I pray."

My aunt looked at me with a more solemn stare, then asked, "You pray? What you say?" I was as confident and bold as a lion and I recited the entire 23rd Psalm then, to which my grandmother exclaimed, "Hare bapre!" which means "Oh my goodness!" in Hindi, but at the time I had no clue what it meant.

I was quite puzzled then. What did I do wrong? I thought I would be punished, then my aunt burst out laughing and hugged me, "That's okay. The Lord will understand."

I thought to myself with a smile, "He sure will! He always understands. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want..."



Author Caron Asgarali's message in her book:

# There is hope

## ...after everything is taken away

I was a Chemistry Teacher at the secondary school level for 21 years. Almost two and a half years ago I was shot and sustained injuries in the face, chest and shoulder during an attempted robbery in La Romaine.

I have since been declared unfit for permanent employment by the medical board and I have been asked to retire on medical grounds. I agreed earlier this year.

I am a divorcee with one adult son, 24 years old.

In July 2014, I published a book based on the incident of being shot.

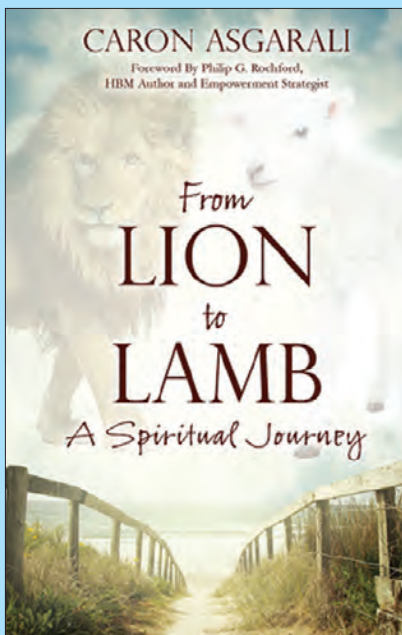
I have also been making public appearances and started writing a blog <https://educater.wordpress.com> to encourage others who may be facing their own challenges.

The title of my book is *From Lion to Lamb: A Spiritual Journey*. The book is based on the incident in which I was shot and the accompanying recuperation. It was written as a result of several factors: first, writing was a form of therapy or emotional release; and second it was written under divine inspiration.

In view of the second factor, the book was written using the Beatitudes of the New Testament as its foundation. Each chapter of the book is built around the principle of one of the Beatitudes. The book was launched on September 13, 2014 and I have since received good reviews from readers.

The book is commonly referred to as a memoir. It is told in a simple, factual style but in a conversational tone. The comment from readers is that they felt as though I was speaking directly to them. I stuck to English but because the book was printed in the USA, the spelling is American.

The content of the book



Cover of Caron Asgarali's book.



After being shot in the face, a happy Caron Asgarali, right, smiles happily with her mother Lynette Sinanan.



Caron, second from left, have fun with members of her family. From left: her mother, Lynette Sinanan, her younger brother, Warren Sinanan, and her elder brother Randall Sinanan.





Book signing with Mrs Chan Tack, Mrs Dabideen and Mrs Boyce.



Caron with Mr Philip G Rochford, life empowerment coach and the writer of the foreword of the book.

was not challenging – who could know my story better than I. However the challenges came when I needed to do the editing and publishing. Finding a good editor was difficult. I eventually had it edited by two other persons after many rounds of personal editing. Publishing was challenging because I really did not know where to start. I only knew that I wanted to self-publish.

I was fortunate to have been guided by our own son of the soil, author, 11 times over, Mr Philip Guy Rochford. I had asked Mr Rochford to write the foreword

for the book and he agreed. He also then offered invaluable assistance in the self-publishing arena.

The lessons of the Beatitudes are of paramount importance in this book. Of course I want people to read of the devastation of being a victim of a violent crime. But more importantly is that there is hope for anyone who may have had everything taken away from them in the blink of an eye.

I want readers to recognise that we will always have challenges in our lives but the choices we make to live with positivity will help us to emerge victorious,

better than we were before. It is my desire for anyone facing a personal or professional challenge to know that faith is a vital part of any restorative process.

Finally, I wish for the message of forgiveness to prevail. As Martin Luther King Jr said we cannot resolve problems of violence with violence. Instead peace, humility and love must prevail.

I would like for people to read this book because it may help anyone who is desirous of beginning their own spiritual journey or someone who may have already begun their own. It may

act as a vehicle of love, forgiveness and hope in a world plagued with hatred, violence and hopelessness.

The book is available at RIK nationwide, Signature Stationery in Valpark Plaza, PaperBased at the Normandie, and online at Amazon.com, (kindle or paperback)

Barnes & Noble and at <http://outskirtspress.com/book-store/details/9781478733614>. The downloadable version may be accessed via <http://outskirtspress.com/webPage/isbn/9781478733614>

## Launch of book 'From Lion to Lamb'

Local author Caron Asgarali has launched her first publication, *From Lion to Lamb, A Spiritual Journey* on September 13, 2014. The launch was held at the First Church of the Open Bible, Ruth Avenue in San Fernando. Approximately 100 persons were in attendance as Ms Asgarali unveiled the first of her books in the religious genre.

The programme began with a prayer led by Pastor Keith Simmons of the Open Bible Church. The National Anthem was played on pan by Carlos Ayers, a professional pannist and past student of San Fernando Central (Government) Secondary School, Mod Sec. The programme's items were dominated by either past or present Mod Sec students and teachers as Caron

had taught at that school for 15 years before being shot.

Mrs Anna Singh, Curriculum Coordinator (acting) with the Ministry of Education and past Mod Sec teacher spoke about the author. She enlightened the audience on the meaning of the title of the book, *From Lion to Lamb*, as she described the Caron Asgarali she knew through teaching.

She described a nurturing person who passionately and unswervingly stood for equity and justice but one who gradually and perceptibly changed the manner in which she attended to sensitive matters.

Ms Asgarali then spoke about a different journey, not a spiritual one, but the journey from inspiration to writing to publica-

tion. Another past student, Ayoka Bonas, did the first reading from the book. Her reading was appropriately pitched to evoke empathy and portray the sobriety of the content.

The mood of the evening was enhanced by a performance by Miss Amy Lalchan, present Mod Sec student, on the violin and also by the melodious singing of Neal Lalgee.

The writer of the foreword of the book, life empowerment coach and author himself, Mr Philip G Rochford was the next presenter.

He reflected on the evolutionary process involved in the book; he also provided further elucidation on its title.

The second reading from the book was done by host for the

evening's proceedings, radio personality and past Mod Sec student, Mr Fazeer Rojan; his piece was powerfully introspective.

A short question and answer session preceded the vote of thanks done by Caron's elder brother, Randall Sinanan and the evening came to a close with a prayer of thanksgiving done by another past student of Mod Sec, Mr Shazim Mohammed. The event came to a successful halt with fellowship, refreshments and a book signing.

The book, *From Lion to Lamb, A Spiritual Journey*, is available at RIK, Signature Stationery at Valpark and Mohammed's (1988) Bookstores nationwide. The paperback or kindle versions are also available online at Amazon.



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# The messenger

By Marc Algernon

She woke to the sound of a slight tapping on her window sill. Her efforts to ignore it had passed, as the tapping echoed even in her sleep. Alicia reluctantly crawled out of bed and slipped on her bedroom slippers. She crept over to the window and what she saw there made her heart beat ferociously in her chest.

There on her window sill was a bird. He looked like any ordinary bird. He was green with a yellow underbelly. But what surprised Alicia the most was his eyes. He had dark deep set eyes and he seemed to stare directly into hers.

"He must live in the Julie mango tree in the front yard." Alicia thought, since the branches of this massive tree stretched all the way to her window. Alicia raised her hand and hit the glass and the bird flew off and perched itself on a branch not far from the window; Still staring. Alicia turned to go back to her bed... her undisturbed slumber. But before she had walked three steps there he was again on the window sill tapping even harder than before. "What a strange bird to act this way," she thought. "Was he hungry?"

Alicia went to the kitchen and returned with a crix cracker crumbed in her hand. He flew off to the branch as she opened the window and he watched her place the crumbs the length of the window sill but Alicia was not taking any chances with this strange bird so she closed back the window lest he should have some crazy idea about flying into her room.

Alicia took a few steps back and sure enough to the window he returned. But he didn't eat. Not one crumb, he just stared at her. Now she was getting anxious again. What kind of bird is this, for surely birds sleep at night; Birds whistle sweet tunes, they hop around and look for food, always hungry... but this one just tapped and stared... it was as if he was trying to tell her something.

She moved closer to her window and looked at him closely. He really was an ordinary bird; Nothing pretty or unique about him. He stared deep into her eyes tilted his head slightly to the side and screeched so loudly that Alicia withdrew so quickly that she tripped. Down she went onto her bedroom floor. She lay there and laughed at how big a coward she was. She lay there and tried to muster enough courage to get up off the ground and face her fear that lay perched on her window sill.

Ten minutes later she peeked up at the window sill but he was gone. She stood up and went to the window but he had indeed left. She looked at the mango tree and lamented on how eerie it looked in the shadow of night. It was while focussed on this that she got her



A keskidee bird at the Botanical Gardens in Port of Spain.

third fright of the night.

The phone rang and made her jump. She ran to it though being glad to hear a familiar noise. But who could possibly be calling at three am? "Hello?!" she half expected to hear a screeching on the other end thinking that

the bird had probably decided to call instead.

"Alicia, Oh My God! Come down to the hospital quick. Your sister had a boy but there were some complications. She is very sick, we need you to give some blood."

The tears in Alicia's eyes were making it hard to see the road and she must drive fast. What could have gone wrong? She had a healthy pregnancy. She pulled into the parking lot and ran up the stairs of the Port of Spain General Hospital. She started to cry again as the hospital smell filled her nostrils and she was hit with the gravity of the situation at hand.

As she approached her sister's bedside on that maternity ward she already knew she was too late. Her mother sat on a chair sobbing. Alicia collapsed on the floor and cried and cried. She loved her sister dearly and wished she could have held her hand one last time.

Death is a silent predator. He takes no prisoners and he spares no one. He is the true definition of... sudden.

Never had Alicia felt so sad. So confused. Seven pounds nine ounces, already you could see he had his mother's face. "Junior" is the name that was chosen for him and he grew up with his aunty Alicia.

Alicia raised him as if he was her own as she could not have children. Junior grew up



Port of Spain General Hospital Maternity Department.





Julie mango tree at Port of Spain General Hospital.

strong and well-mannered under the care of Alicia.

As all things change eventually Junior became a man and moved out of the nest and started a family of his own but never forgetting the love shown to him by his aunt.

He borrowed Auntie Alicia's car one day and she trusted him to be responsible. He was taking out his family and Alicia was happy to help. That night there came a strange but familiar tapping on the window. She had not heard that noise in many years. Since the night her sister died. It was a sad reminder this bird.

She got out her bed and walked over to the window much braver than her younger years. She actually spoke to him this time. "Hello my old friend, I see you're still alive and haven't forgotten me."

He looked at her and tilted his head and she held her breath for the "loud screech" but it never came. He hopped around on the sill abit and started to tap again loudly. "What are you trying to tell me little bird? I never learnt to speak bird in school". He looked at her again. She felt like he was amused by her joke. Like he understood her...

He hopped unto the branch of that Julie mango tree that seemed to have gotten stronger with age. And he ruffled his feathers and screeched and screeched so loudly that Alicia turned on the light. He looked at her and flew away.

Alicia got a funny feeling in her stomach when the phone rang ten minutes later. She answered with a shaky "hello". "Goodnight

maam, is this Alicia Tribune?" a male voice on the other end asked.

"This is she..." Alicia started to feel even more upset.

"Maam, this is Constable Sookdeo of West End Police Station. Do you own a Ford Focus, licence plate PBA 1496?"

"OH My God!" All she could think about was Junior, was he dead!

"Your vehicle has been involved in an accident maam, we need you to come down to Wrightson Road opposite the Hyatt Hotel, immediately!"

"I'm on my way," was all she managed to say. She felt like crying. What had happened to Junior? Was his family with him when the accident happened? She felt she should have asked the officer some questions too. Oh God please let them be OK!

The highway was almost deserted at three in the morning. She must drive fast. Alicia knew she was too late the minute she saw the mangled wreck that used to be her keskidee yellow Ford Focus.

Her hands shook, as she opened her car door, the tears were already welling up in her eyes as she thought about her loving nephew.

The car had lovingly embraced a traffic light. Glass was everywhere. Besides the officers present, there were four young men laying down on the ground, all with blood on their hands and face and all with broken or dislocated limbs. They were being attended to by the ambulance and Alicia looked desperately among them for some sort of familiarity. Where was Junior?

An officer approached her and asked her name. When she said, "Alicia" the officer knew who she was. He quickly retuned with Constable Sookdeo.

Constable Sookdeo quickly explained to Alicia that the driver of the vehicle had been under the influence of alcohol and that the car had been overloaded with passengers. None of which was her nephew. Since she was the owner of the car she was contacted immediately.

She breathed a sigh of relief that Junior was not in the accident but felt heartbroken by the fact that her car had been broken beyond repair. She had so loved that car.

About an hour later Junior arrived and was completely shocked to see his aunt standing there after four in the morning. He knew he had to explain the events leading up to the fact that he was not driving the car that she had so generously loaned to him.

As he approached Alicia she slapped him... hard. Then she embraced him... tight. "Thank God you were not in that car, you had me so worried."

Alicia mustered up another set of tears. This time for the love she had for her nephew. Her sister's only child. The car was material, it could be replaced, Junior could not.

Later that day, Junior explained to Alicia that he had lent out the car to a friend at the end of the street to take his mom to the grocery. The friend however took the car to a party and left with his friends. Everyone in the car was drunk. The recipe was disaster... you know the rest. Junior agreed to work and pay



# An Artist Reborn

Local writings

By Marissa Armoogam-Ali

She held no value, tossed in amongst the tall grasses, left for dead  
Sunlight and moonlight blanketed her for time unknown;  
Thorny weeds climbed upon her — a trellis for their own.  
Was she to breathe just once, destined to die alone?  
An artist in his own right, his dreams like broken glass.  
He wondered as a lost child, a morsel did he crave;  
His gaze fell upon her, as she slept among the thorns  
Though she was unsightly, broken and unclean

A spirited soul was all his heart could see.  
Towards his sanctuary, his arms became her carriage;  
His canvas she became, day by day, hour by hour,  
With careful hands he polished her, his breath did she become.  
She grew stronger day by day; as life crept into her,  
At last! The day her life reborn — she sang with utmost grandeur.  
With skillful hands, he held her voice and took it to the stars.  
From thorny weeds to graceful splendour, no longer was she forgotten.  
Once again his dream did live, the artist and his canvas  
Once again his dream did live, the artist and his steel pan.

## THE MESSENGER

back for the car and soon he and Alicia was as good as gold again.

As this story goes, many years again passed. That bird was almost forgotten and seldom ever talked about. Junior grew into a strapping man, in his late 30s. Alicia had aged well too and though the wrinkles of time showed on her face she was quick as ever.

The world had changed too. Governments had come and gone. Infrastructure and development had risen up all over. It was a time for oil. It was a time where merriment and revel was abundant. With such abundance came crime. The country's murder rate had grown steadily over the last couple decades and showed no signs of decline.

Drugs were all over, gangs were formed and with it gangsters. Port of Spain, the nation's capital, was a gold mine to anyone who wanted to make a dishonest dollar. The surrounding communities were capitalising on the opportunities and the gangsters started killing each other for sway over the very lucrative drug trade.

It was a time where "the wrong place at the wrong place at the wrong time" was an everyday phrase. The Government seemed uninterested by such developments, so long as they can dip into the country's tilly, why worry?

Junior had been no stranger to these changes. He avoided trouble as best as he could for as long as any man can. But he had always had a habit of letting his friends have the better of him. It could be said he was easily influenced but I cannot say for sure.

Long since Junior had bought a car of his own. His two daughters were older now and it was necessary now that they were going to school. So he dropped his wife to work and his daughters to school and he would work taxi with his car. Dropping people home and to the airport. Anywhere, once the price was right.

Junior had a close friend called Damien. He had been one of the passengers of the car the night it had crashed and had always been a friend that Alicia has warned him about. He was just "bad company". Damien always had a hold on Junior as he had always looked out for him on the streets.

Damien had paid Junior five hundred dollars to drive him to a location to pick up a package and bring him back home. The five hundred dollars helped to quell the uneasy feeling in his stomach as he sipped on a stag and joked with Damien about school days.

They drove all the way up a narrow street,

to the top of a narrow hill. They parked in a small dirt track just a little way off the road. Junior sat and finished his stag while Damien went to pick up the package. The queasy feeling was still in his stomach but it was too late to change his mind...

There was a loud "bang!" on the glass... Alicia jumped out her sleep, so sudden that her heart pounded in her chest. Less than a minute later there it was again. Something at the window?!

Alicia drew out of bed quickly and drew back the curtains. Could it be?!

It was.

There he was, tapping loudly on her window with his beak. No not his beak... he actually had a stone in his beak and was hitting it so hard on the window that the glass had cracked.

Alicia's face beamed with joy for a few seconds by the sight of her oldest friend but it was quickly replaced with horror by the thought that filled her head.

Her hands went up over her face, "Oh My God! Something has happened with Junior!" she whispered to herself.

She rushed over to the phone quickly and dialed his cell number but the phone only rang and rang. She dialed his house and his wife answered. "Hello?"

"Hey, sorry to call so late, is Junior home?" Alicia tried to hide the anxiety in her voice.

"No Aunty Alicia, I'm sorry. He went on a job with Damien and I'm kinda wondering why he isn't answering his phone. Kizzy is up and says she can't sleep till her Daddy's home. It has me a little worried because she is usually snoring away by now."

"I'm sure he would be home soon, nothing to worry about. Just let him call me as soon as he gets home. OK!" Alicia hung up and closed her eyes tight.

"OH, please God!"

Alicia had never seen that bird behave like this. It scratched, it screeched, it hit on that glass so hard that Alicia thought he would kill himself.

Tears were rolling down her cheeks now as she dropped to her knees in front the window. "What are you trying to tell me?" she cried loudly. He looked at her for the last time, tilted his head to the side ever so slightly, hopped to the branch of that Julie mango tree, he screeched loudly at Alicia and flew away.

She knelt there and cried. She knew what was coming next. In the depths of her heart she knew what was coming next.

As that phone rang she did not jump. She walked to it as if rehearsed. She stood there listening to what was being said but she was in a semi-conscious state. She collapsed to the floor at the words she dreaded to hear.

Alicia drove slowly up that narrow street, up that narrow hill. She knew she was already too late. People were everywhere, gathered in groups. The media was pushing lights and cameras in their faces trying to get a heads up. There was no need to find a place to park as cars were strewn all over the place. The narrow road had been blocked off and an alternative route had been found.

Alicia exited her vehicle and walked slowly towards the scene. She was neither living nor was she dead. She was what the medical society would later come to call "a state of shock".

Constable Sookdeo showed her the body of her nephew, slumped over his steering wheel, one gun shot wound to the head and the body of Damien somewhere down the track, he had been shot 27 times.

She sat there on the ground, on the stony earth and she just let the tears flow. She thought about her sister, she thought about Junior's daughters. She thought about that bird... he was the Devil himself.

She stood there in the funeral a week later and cried as she always thought Junior would be the one to bury her. Not the other way around. How wretched life can be.

Right after Junior died that massive Julie mango tree in Alicia's yard turned brown and died. In the space of three days, it just died.

Alicia had become accustomed to death. She now sits on her porch, sipping tea, passing out her days. Remembering her life...

She woke to the sound of slight tapping on her window sill. She crawled out of bed and crept over to the window... "Hello little bird, where did you come from?" she admired his yellow underbelly.

The light in her room flicked on so suddenly that it made her jump. Her mother stood in the doorway. She turned back to show her the bird but he was gone.

"Come sit here on the bed," her mother said. She noticed the tear in her mother's eye almost immediately.

"What's wrong mom?"

"Kizzy, your Aunty Alicia just passed away..."





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We at *Sweet TnT Magazine* share photos of tomatoes and pumpkin grown in our own back yards. You should try it too.







## Sunday lunch at Ramona's

On Sunday, May 24, while most Trinbagonians were cooking up a storm just to full their bellies, Ramona Pitman was busy capturing the beauty of her scrumptious meal for readers of *Sweet TnT Magazine* to enjoy.

Her display of a "Sunday lunch special" is made up of rice, cheesy macaroni pie, juicy stew chicken, saucy pigeon peas, spicy callaloo, tender beet root slices, and of course a bowl of yummy potato salad.

Ramona says that her family can't get enough of her delicious meals so she gives them what they ask for.

Spoken like a true Trini!





## Friday food

Here is a popular Friday lunch prepared in many homes in Trinidad and Tobago. It is comprised of vegetable rice, lentil peas and steamed Tilapia fillets. This meal can be served with a cold glass of mauby drink.





Farmers harvest  
celery in  
Aranguez on  
Sunday, May 31.



Sweet peppers



Melongene

## Corpus Christi a day for planting

Beds ready for planting for  
Corpus Christi on Thursday,  
June 4 in Aranguez.





## Scenic Fort King George



Scene taken at Fort King George in Tobago. Photo: Chantelle Wilson



# Moruga

## A little village right off the shoreline

Photos: Marika Mohammed

### By Marika Mohammed

Moruga is a little village that exists right off the shoreline. Everything is in one spot, the police station, library and health centre. It may not sound like much to see. Compared to an urban area like San Fernando or Port of Spain where there are businesses and shopping going on, Moruga has something else in store.

It's known for its beautiful view of clean clear calm waters, fishing and country-like atmosphere. It's a long and fantastic drive and as you make your way deeper into Moruga you'll probably see things you won't see anywhere else in Trinidad. The town itself is a five-minute stroll since everything is right there next to each other and from the town is the beach which you can take in a great view.

The beaches are the main reason people go to Moruga. Yup beaches! You can drive continuously and see beach after beach after beach and yes they all have people. Every beach has its own treasure such as caves and crevices or rocks and hills in the water looking back at you like miniature islands. Another one has the iconic bridge that says Moruga!

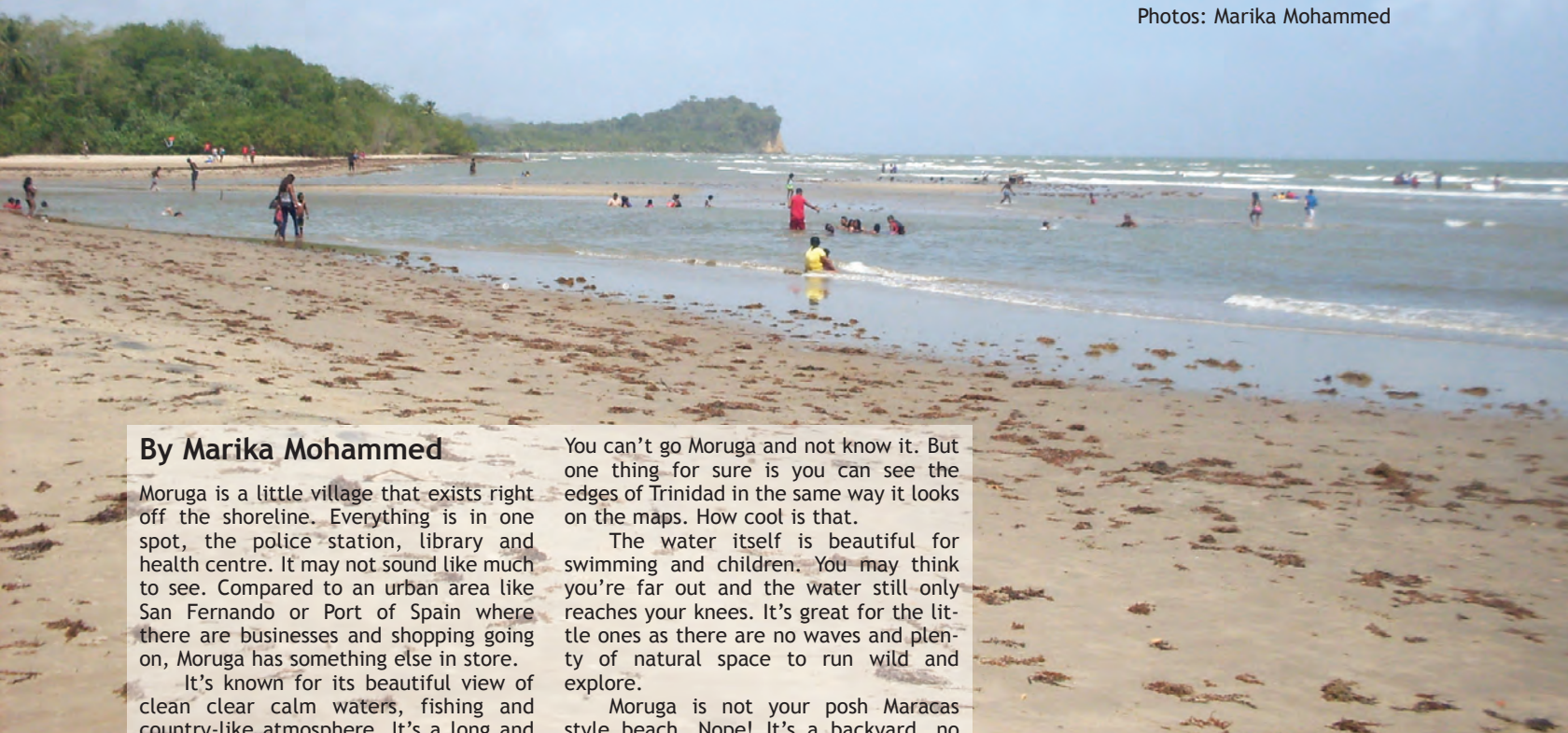
You can't go Moruga and not know it. But one thing for sure is you can see the edges of Trinidad in the same way it looks on the maps. How cool is that.

The water itself is beautiful for swimming and children. You may think you're far out and the water still only reaches your knees. It's great for the little ones as there are no waves and plenty of natural space to run wild and explore.

Moruga is not your posh Maracas style beach. Nope! It's a backyard, no food hut, no luxury bathroom and changing room villa. If you want a shower after that saltwater bath make sure and bring your own bucket and water. If you think there's a changing room with your name on it, think again. Pick a tree or if you can bring your own as well.

If you think you'll just grab something to eat in Moruga, let's just say you'll be looking for something to eat for a long time, maybe leaving with your belly in your hand.

It's not like other beaches in Trinidad with stalls, and upgraded bathroom accommodations but it has been around for years and people still love it!

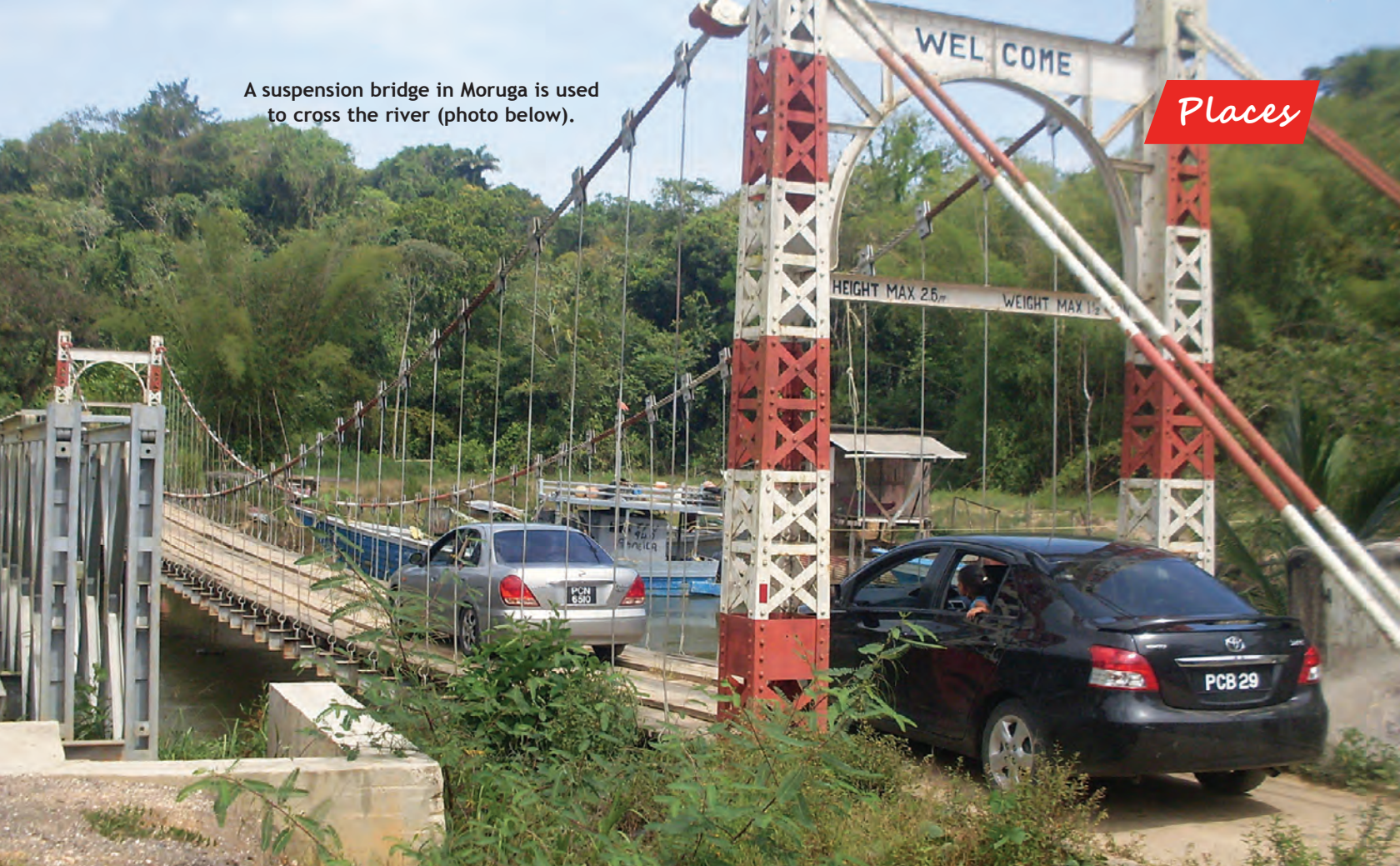


A statue of Christopher Columbus in Moruga.



A suspension bridge in Moruga is used to cross the river (photo below).

Places



Small boats are a common view in the village of Moruga.





Sno-cone vendor at Woodford Square, Port of Spain.

Globe Cinema at  
Green Corner  
(Park and  
St Vincent streets),  
Port of Spain.





View of the Waterfront in Port of Spain.



The San Fernando to Port of Spain ferry "Trini Flash" docked at the Waterfront Complex in Port of Spain.





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# 'Shilling phone' in Tacarigua

A fully functional phone booth stands strong at Dinsley Junction in Tacarigua during a time when it seems as though cell phones have put public phone booths out of business. These phones are well known by many locals of Trinidad and Tobago as "shilling phones".





# Sweet TnT

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