

INFOCUS

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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POINT FORTIN GIRL HEADS EUROPEAN MARKETING TEAM FOR TECH COMPANY



Corinne Aaron and Team

THE ROAD DID NOT END AT SAN FERNANDO

As she settled down for her daily trek from Point Fortin to San Fernando to pursue her Secondary School education, Corinne Aaron must have often wondered what lay ahead for her. She would have had lots of time to ponder the possibilities as she traversed the bumpy terrain on a journey that would each day rob her of three hours of her precious time. Today as we celebrate the opening of the new highway from Point Fortin to San Fernando, we also pause to reflect on a young lady's career that has been nothing short of spectacular.

With a resume that includes RBC (Trinidad), Wachovia Bank, Hyatt, Adidas, Lovevery and Tesla, it was not surprising that last month Einride, a Swedish company at the cutting edge of freight mobility and a leader in digital, electric and autonomous technology in Europe, announced the appointment of Corinne Aaron as its Chief Marketing Officer. For her it has been a journey

unrivalled in accomplishment and mobility which began at such humble environments as Clifton Hill Primary, San Fernando Modern Secondary and Pleasantville Senior Composite Schools, the last chosen for its strong Art faculty at the time. It was there that she honed her skills at Graphic Arts Design, a field that would propel her so readily into the world of Marketing.

Straight out of school, Corinne began utilizing her still developing expertise with local companies, including a stint at a leading financial institution, before embarking on studies earning a Bachelors in Marketing and later a Master's degree in Integrated Marketing Communications.

But it was as Head of European Marketing at Tesla in Amsterdam that Corinne's talent became recognized within the industry, as she built a marketing team of 40 best in class marketers across 18 countries. During her six years at Tesla, the company "pene-

trated six new EMEA markets, unveiled four new automotive products, doubled the size of the organization, opened a factory in the Netherlands, launched a Gigafactory in Nevada, and created one of the most impressive portfolios of any company in existence today." As Corinne says: "Never a dull day in this role!" As Chief Marketing Officer at Einride, she sees her passion for clean tech and her experience in scaling brands within the EV and Automotive industries as complementing the company's goals of creating a greener, more intelligent future for the freight industry, and society at large, and expanding its presence globally. And yet Corinne has not forgotten her roots. Together with her children Maya and Luka she visits



Corinne Aaron with children Maya (left) and Luka

Point Fortin at least once a year to spend time with her parents Raymond and Joyce Aaron, who still reside there, and tries to take in Carnival as well. In interviews she never hesitates to highlight the profound influence that all aspects of her Trinidadian upbringing have

contributed to her success, be they family grounding, superb teachers or cross-cultural experiences, to name a few.

It is true to say that for Corinne, as it should for any budding young lady, the road never stopped at San Fernando.

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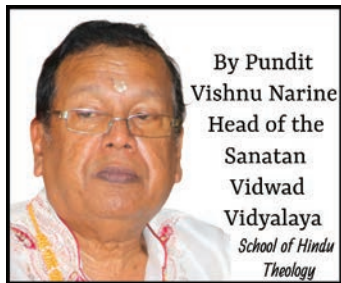
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THE HINDU VIEWPOINT



By Pundit
Vishnu Narine
Head of the
Sanatan
Vidwad
Vidyalaya
School of Hindu
Theology

In life's sojourn as human beings, we are expected to perform selfless acts from time to time. In this context, these acts are termed Yagyas and can be classified into five categories.

(1) DEV YAGYA

Here, recognition is given to the Gods. In Hindu Philosophy, there is One God, the Infinite, who projects Himself into Finite Forms. For example, Shree Ganesh, Lakshmi Maataa, Shree Hanu—maan, etc. are all projections. When we acquaint ourselves with

these Finite Forms, then we ought to have a better understanding of the Infinite.

In the performance of Dev Yagya, one makes oblations (like ghee) into the sacred fire (Hawan). These offerings are accompanied by incantations of special Mantras, depending on the Deity being worshipped. Of greater importance is the cognisance given to the message contained in these Mantras.

(2) BRAHAM YAGYA (also known as Rishi Yagya or Adhyaatam Yagya)

In this undertaking, acknowledgement of the teachings derived from the Holy Texts is expressed. The carriers of those teachings and life lessons are the Rishis and Munis (sages). They analyse and simplify the injunctions of the Vedas, Puraanas, etc.

Here again, oblations to the sacred fire are made. In this era,

the seven sages of note are Kashyap, Atri, Vasishtha, Vishwaamitra, Bharadwaaj, Jam—dagni and Gautam. Their names are taken with reverence as the offerings are made.

Whenever Yagyas like Dev Yagya are conducted in a community, we have an opportunity to participate. In such endeavours, participation may take the form of donations of resources/physical help and the like, so that one's involvement facilitates the hosting of this noble act. In fact, one's efforts towards this cause give entitlement to having performed these two Yagyas.

(3) SHRAADHA (observance of one's ancestry)

The legacy of an ancestry is riveted in the continuity of its rich traditions. There is a provision known as Pitri Paksha in the yearly Hindu Calendar that designates fifteen Lunar Days for the honour—

ing of ancestors. An elaborate ceremony known as Shraadha is performed whereby offerings are made with accompanying Mantras to secure a better hereafter for the departed souls.

Each month, however, on the morning of New Moon, one can make libations of water, black til and Akshat (white rice) on Kush Grass for the ancestors. There is a specific technique in the performance of this maneuver and it's not time-consuming. This simple act augurs well for the journey of departed souls in the hereafter. These recommended practices, apart from being the rites of passage, allow for reflection so that the propagation of rich traditions is fuelled and upheld.

(4) ATITHI SATKAAR (hospitality to deserving visitors)

Uninvited visitors at the gateway may take the form of the

destitute and needy as well as conniving people. Assistance rendered to the destitute and needy provides an avenue whereby we can indulge in selfless acts geared for the upliftment of fellow human beings. The aid may take the form of monetary donations, food supplies, other needs and even guidance at times.

(5) BHOOT YAGYA (looking after animals)

Feeding of cows, birds of the wild, fishes in the rivers and seas, and other animals in their natural habitat are particularly conducive to divine blessings. The reason is that we are able to assist in looking after God's creation. Further to this, many of the negative effects of the Grahas (i.e., negative rays of the Planets) are annulled by these compassionate feelings as the animals are fed.

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USING THE STEELPAN AS A 'MENTAL DETOUR'

Story and Photo by Kavita Ramcharitar

Nine-year-old Suri Gosine, a Standard Three pupil at the Trinidad Muslim League (TML) school in Liberville, Rio Claro, uses the steelpan as a "mental detour" for a break between school work and other activities.

"I play the pan because it is so relaxing, and it keeps you calm," she said.

Her statement falls in line with those of qualified experts who have been assessing the instrument's benefits for the past 50 years. Playing or listening to steelband music, they agree, has been shown to have a number of benefits for stress reduction and relaxation.

The musical experience, they claim, has the potential to affect change in multiple domains of one's being. It can be a physically and intellectually engaging, emotionally fulfilling activity that serves as a context for social bonding, as the soothing and calming sound of the instrument can help to relax the mind and body.

According to one publication: "The repetitive, rhythmic nature of the music can help to clear the mind and improve focus on tasks, making it a useful tool for students and professionals alike. Steelpan music can also have a positive effect on creativity and inspiration. The unique and otherworldly sound of the pan can stimulate the imagination and inspire new ideas, making it a valuable tool for artists and creative professionals."

Suri's numerous activities include playing Scrabble, being a member of the Red Cross, Scouts, and Choir, as well as swimming, and gymnastics.

She is on the school's Honor Roll, and has been awarded for being the best pupil for attendance during the academic term April–July 2023, and was awarded the Scout's Certificate of Excellence as a Deputy Sixer. She is the holder of The Pinna-col All Star Certificate of Achievement.

She has been involved in gymnastics for four and a half years, pursuing it to level two, and represented Trinidad and Tobago in the sport in St. Vincent. She copped first place as a pre-school graduate; won Republic Bank Competition "Let's Go Grow"; won The National Speak for WASA Competition 2023, placed first at primary level, and won the challenge trophy for Liberville TML.

Suri said she wants to become a Neurologist Surgeon because, "I want to help people."

Suri Gosine left, and mother Ansarah Gosine at their home in New Grant.



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Photos by
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THE ICE CREAM REVELATION

"SCOOPING UP LIFE'S HIDDEN LESSONS"

The title of a book, or any other published text or work of art, is a name for the work which is chosen by the author. It can be used to identify the work, to put it in context, to convey a small summary of its contents, and to pique the reader's curiosity.

The latest publication by Aaron Matthew Beharry is titled "The Ice Cream Revolution," and it certainly falls into the category of piquing the reader's curiosity.

In the heart of a bustling community, an unassuming ice cream truck operator named Jack embarks on an extraordinary journey. What begins as a quest to understand the significance of his own job unfolds into a revelation that spans across diverse professions. From serving frozen delights, to profound encounters with individuals from all walks of life, Jack discovers that every job, no matter how humble, weaves a vital thread in the tapestry of society.

According to Beharry, "The

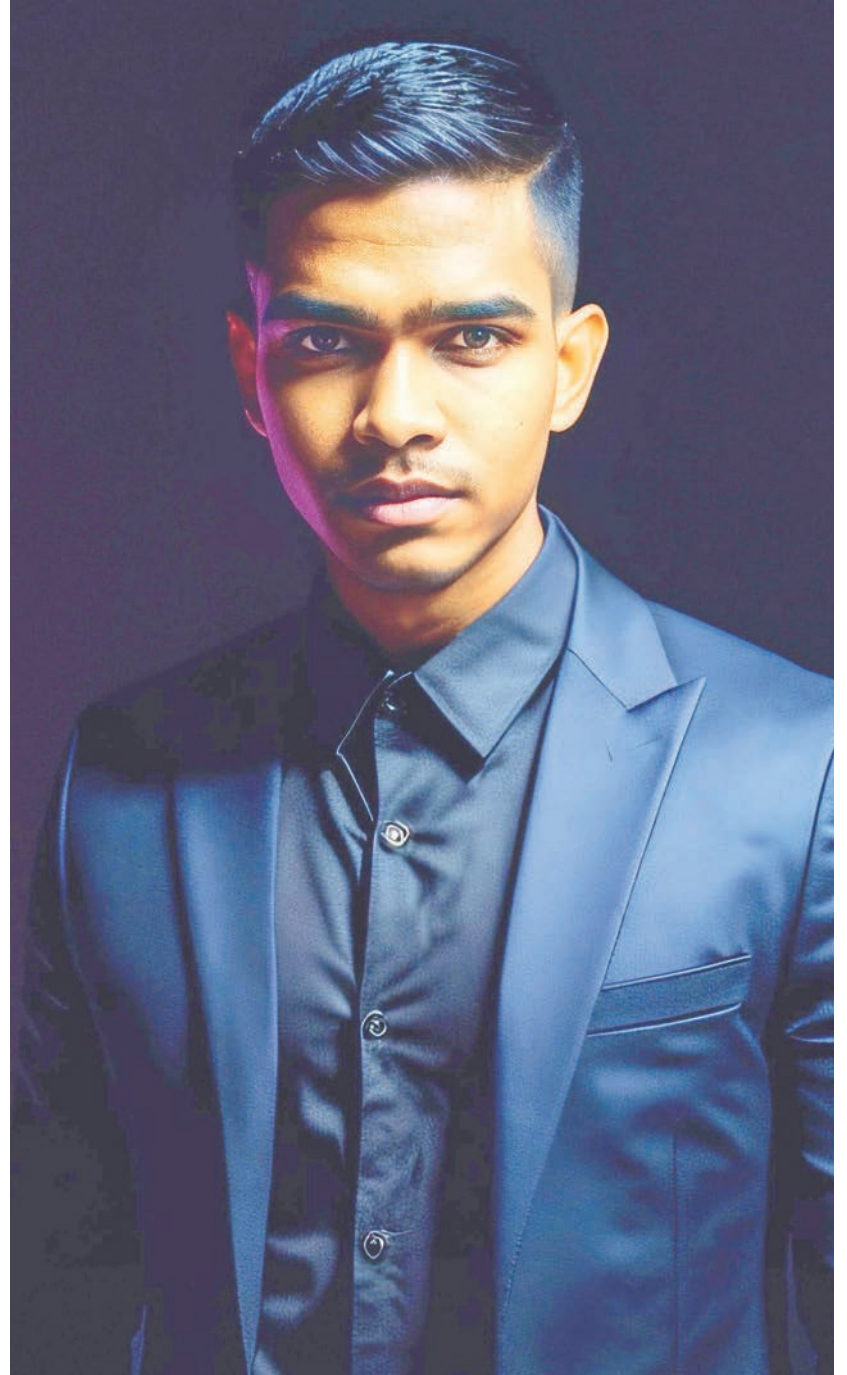
Ice Cream Revelation" is a heart-warming tale of respect, appreciation, and the interconnectedness of our working world, reminding us that every role, no matter how sweet or simple, plays a crucial part in our shared community.

"This story was a journey that I once took," he explained. "A journey of exploration into the intricate tapestry of work and its significance in our lives. Through the eyes of our protagonist, Jack, I ventured into the diverse world of professions that form the foundation of our communities. I learned that every job, no matter how seemingly different or humble, holds its unique value. Each role contributes to the well-being and progress of our society, and behind every job title, there is a person with dreams, aspirations, and challenges. This story is a testament to the importance of respect, appreciation, and understanding in our diverse world of work. It reminds us that we are all part of

this beautiful tapestry, each thread playing a crucial role in weaving our shared destiny."

Beharry is a multi-media contributor, renowned for his prowess as an Internet personality, podcast host, motivational speaker, author, and Creative Director of Falcon Atlantic Publishers Limited. His versatile talents span the realms of entertainment, self-improvement, and creative direction. He was a past student of the Trinidad and Tobago School of Photography.

He has etched his name in the annals of podcasting through an array of thought-provoking shows, each of which offers a distinctive lens through which to explore the various facets of life and the human experience. His literary prowess extends beyond podcasting, as he actively writes articles on vital topics and shares motivational anecdotes derived from his life experiences. His blog, Notes by Aaron Matthew, serves as a platform for inspiring stories and insightful reflections that touch the hearts and minds of readers.



Aaron Beharry

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CARIBBEAN AIRLINES ON THE MARK

CARING FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANTS DESERVE SPECIAL MENTION

Story by Kavita Ramcharitar

A journey home from New York City aboard Caribbean Airlines flight BW 521, on Sunday 15th October, 2023, deserves special mention.

Piloted by Captain Mark Robinson, the crew included Marlon Aparicio, Kevin Alexander, and flight attendants Sherry Ann Allum, Ryan Sookdeo, and Rachael Baldeo Warren. They deserve a thumbs up, especially the caring attendants who made sure everyone was treated to the light meal and beverages.

On the day of my departure, I checked in at the Caribbean Airlines counter at the Piarco International Airport at the appointed time. A few passengers were waiting to check in for the flight. The counter staff was very calm and professional.

On entering the aircraft what impressed me was how the caring female flight attendants assisted in placing luggage in the overhead compartments, especially for those who came in on wheelchairs, and others who were unable to lift.

The flight departed promptly and smoothly at 7.30 am. As a vegetarian I travelled with a light meal, but was offered a veggie

sandwich during the flight.

On the return trip to Piarco International Airport, the landing was smooth as silk. The baggage flow was timely, and at the customs checkpoint I came upon this pleasant female officer who enquired if I had any, fruits, and alcohol. I replied that I did not, and she said it was the first time she saw someone coming through customs without alcohol.

My trip to New York was very successful. I shopped for the things, I needed, and of course distributed the INFOCUS newspaper at Rock Fashions on Liberty Avenue, Queens New York. Every edition of the paper will be sent to Rock Fashions for distribution in New York.

I want to thank Pamela Ramdass Ramlogan, her mom Sumintra for accompanying me on my shopping journey, and also Krishna's daughter Anju and her daughter Simran. Also to friend Shamilla and technical assistant Allan, Balo Ramdass and Rakesh Rahaman of Rocks Fashions. It was a pleasure meeting with you all.

In a nutshell, my trip was well-spent.



Anju Singh and her daughter Simran Singh.



Pamela Ramdass Ramlogan, left, Kavita Ramcharitar, centre and Sumintra Ramdass.



Manager of Rocks Fashions Rakesh Rahaman, centre, Pamela Ramlogan, right and Syed Zubair Ali reads the Infocus Newspaper in New York.

AN EXPERIENCE OF “SPIRITUAL BLISS”

Lambodar Restaurant Flavoured Chai with a drop of love

A TRUE TASTE OF INCREDIBLE INDIA

Story and Photos by Krishna Maharaj

The Lambodar Restaurant, located on the S.S Erin Road, Debe (opposite M.S Foodcity), has been receiving high praise on social media platforms for its “amazing food, and friendly staff.”

“We had the pleasure of dining in for a birthday celebration with a large group of individuals,” wrote one reviewer. “I would like to thank firstly the courteous, efficient and knowledgeable workers, as well as management, for the wonderful time we had. I would definitely do this again. It was a magical evening. The ambience, the delicious food, all created an atmosphere that's fit for a birthday celebration, without the hassle. Thank you very much Lambodar team, will be back very soon.”

According to the owner, Lambodar is an authentic Indian and organic vegetarian restaurant that creates an experience of spiritual bliss.

“We believe the best authentic Indian dishes should give you a true taste and experience of incredible India,” he said. “A portion of great food, sprinkled with excellent service should

make you feel like you are wrapped in a warm blanket of love, bliss and full satisfaction. Lambodar Restaurant is distinct with its creativity, uniqueness and naturally-blended Indian spices by our chefs which sums up to the tasty food. Our special flavoured chai and drop of our love is suited to ease you of all tension. We are available for dine-in, takeaway and catering of food, snack boxes and sweet boxes. Don't hesitate to visit us for a true taste of Incredible India with our mouth-watering Pani Puri, Vada Pav, Chai, Mocktails, and much more. Your experience of spiritual bliss starts here.”

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Lambodar Restaurant at Pierre Road,
Ramleela celebrations.



The Ramleela Décor at Pierre Road Grounds Charlieville.



An employee shows the special Jars used for drinking Chai.



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AARON'S LOS ERRANTES

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Los Errantes (pronounced Los A Ran Tace) was founded in 2023 by Aaron Alexander.

An extremely talented musician, singer and songwriter, Aaron won the National Parang Association's Instrumental Competition in 2021.

His original compositions include an instrumental titled "Foreday Morning" that was

released in 2021. He also has covers of popular Cuban salsa songs such as El Carretero, Yay Boy and Canción del Mariachi.

As a resident of Moruga he has mentored and trained the Moruga Secondary School in the National Parang Association's Junior Parang competitions, in which they placed 1st in 2014, 2015 and 2016, as well as various Best

Village competitions.

It had always been Aaron's dream and goal to start his own band. With five core members, Los Errantes was born. They perform a variety of music including Contemporary, Salsa, Calypso, Afro beats, Parang, Soca Parang and Latin music. While the band has its main band room in Trincity, the members of Los Errantes come

from all parts of the country, from as far as Valencia, Arima and Couva.

Its members include Founder, Leader and Musical Director— Aaron Alexander, Cuatro player and Percussionist— Billy Wong, Bass Guitar Player— Andy Garcia, Singer, Cuatro Player and PRO— Jessica Alexander and Maracas Player— Simone Gordon.

Under the slogan "immerse

yourself," Los Errantes' long term goal is to have a successful band, by bringing together a group of musicians who love to play versatile music. In the words of their leader, Aaron Alexander "to tour and play music for the world; for people to be familiar with our original songs."

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GANSHYAM HAPPY TO HELP FEED THE NATION



Farmer and food crop vendor Ganshyam Ramroop says he loves doing agriculture because it allows him to help feed the nation. "Because of people like us, communities and the people at large, can have food on their tables," he said. "I have been doing agriculture for over 40 years." Ganshyam said he comes from a family that comprises 14 persons, all of whom are involved in agriculture. "We plant all types of agriculture, and we also mind pigs, fowls, and goats," he added. "I sell wholesale in Macoya and the Port-of-Spain Market. My produce includes eddoes, pepper, sweet potato, and baigan (egg plant)." Photo Kavita Ramcharitar

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AGRICULTURAL HERBICIDE

Tabla Sangam is an institution devoted to the preservation and progression of Hindustani classical music, particularly the art of Tabla. It was established in 2010 by Pandit Karan Ramsundar.

It strives to produce students who have a sound understanding of the art form and discipline in their riyaz; thereby perpetuating steady upliftment of the calibre of the musicians of tomorrow.

Some of the objectives of Tabla Sangam are: To create a basic understanding in individuals of all ages on the basics of tabla and accompaniment through theory and practical knowledge. To provide an avenue for individuals to be actively engaged in their school and cultural activities displaying the techniques of the art-form. To enshrine in individuals the benefits of the art-form which has been proven to improve qualities such as concentration, alertness, to have a calm disposition, to perform better at academics and be better all-round, disciplined individuals.

"We seek to preserve our Hindustani ancestral musical arts by embracing its natural evolution into a format which can withstand the fast-paced world in which we now function, whilst paying reverent homage to its roots," said Ramsundar. "It has become abundantly clear that the demands of secular life have, by and large, left our youth bereft of the warmth of our culture. In light of this, we have leaned into meeting them, the proprietors of our culture's days to come, in their comfort zone. The kids are more comfortable using devices? That's okay! But let's use those devices to connect with one another, and with our culture. Thereby, we have been able to foster a community of budding musicians where they have become friends, bonded over a shared love of music, culture and learning."

This year, Tabla Sangam

has been able to host two major events. The first, Immortalising Traditions, was a students' concert in celebration of Indian Arrival Day 2023. Over 100 students participated in presenting musical recitals before an audience of 500+ patrons.

The second event was a Hanuman Youth Yatra that consisted of a journey across Trinidad, visiting three mandirs to perform Hanuman Chalisa, a staple devotional song to Western Hindus, twenty-one times on Saturday August 26. It culminated at the Dattatreya Yoga Centre, the site of the world-famous 85-foot-tall Hanuman murti.

"We continue to forge ahead on the frontier of our musical culture," said Ramsundar. "Today, we are approaching Divali and we have many events and activities ahead of us. We strive in our pursuit of Immortalising Traditions. As time passes and we find new ways to preserve, propagate and perpetuate this ancient art, our only hope is that our contributions have ripple effects, reaching the generations that follow in a real and impactful manner."

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TRAYAMBAKESHWAR MAHADEV MANDIR DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

Pundit Satyanand Mahabir Dubey and members of the Trayambakeshwar Mahadev Mandir held their Diwali Celebrations 2023 at Caroni Savannah Road, Chaguanas.

The programme includes songs by Amanda Ramjattan, and Uncle Bayun, dances by six-year-old Vamika Roopchand, poem Valmiki Roopchand, Sari tying competition, modelling, and a distribution of gifts. Photos: Vision 2 Photo & Video Production

- 1 Pundit Satyanand Mahabir Dubey light the first deya joined by his wife Ambika, and daughter Siddhi.
- 2 Amanda Ramjattan lights deyas
- 3 Six years old Vamika Roopchand perform a dance.
- 4 Amanda Ramjattan and her parents Sally and Ramdin (Toddy) Ramjattan
- 5 Reshma Mykoo, right, and Jenny Mykoo
- 6 Uncle Bayun sing a bhajan accompanied on the dholak and dholak
- 7 Shivani Mahaboob assist with lighted deyas
- 8 Pundit Satyanand Mahabir Dubey and a devotee lights deyas



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MUSEUM SETS UP ANNUAL ROADSIDE CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

Every year since 2017, the Cocoa Panyol Museum sets up its Annual Roadside Christmas Display. This unique concept uses in its entirety, recycled materials to produce Christmas characters and traditional cartoon characters for the enjoyment of passersby and family-oriented trips to Flanagin Town.

Trash which is normally disposed

becomes transformed into amazing works of art and design. Hence, styrotex, plastic and glass bottles, scrap fabric and even old decorations form part of the raw materials used, much to the astonishment of visitors.

Why is recycling important? Our nine local landfills are "bursting at the seams". According to the GORTT National Waste Recycling Policy (2015),

1000 tonnes of waste are collected and disposed by Regional Corporation collections systems. That works out to be roughly 1.5 kg of waste per person daily.

The document states that in the Beetham Landfill (61 hectares), the characterization is as follows: 32.0% organics, 21.4% paper, 8.7% glass, 2.8% metals, 16.0% plastics, 8.2% textiles,

0.8% beverage containers and 1.8% other.

Everyone is aware of the negative effects of landfills, including the build-up of greenhouse gases, fires, toxic fumes, rodents, and other pests and diseases.

According to the policy, "human beings and communities are an integral part of the community of life which includes all

living things". Let us do our part to create a healthier life for ourselves, our communities and our nation. Recycle, reuse, re-purpose. Let us save the environment.

To view some of the recycled creations, visit the Cocoa Panyol Museum's Annual Roadside Christmas Display throughout December until New Year's Night. Further info : 733-5701.





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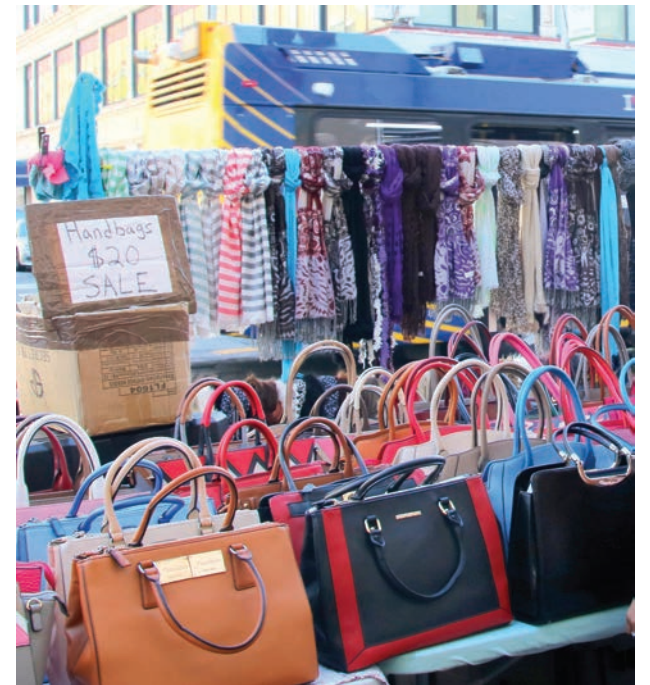



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HORSE RACING FROM THE ARCHIVES OF KRISHNA MAHARAJ



Hoofs off the ground at Arima Race Club.



Collision on the tracks at Union Park, Marabella.



Photo/Journalist Krishna Maharaj ready for action at Arima Race track.



At the Trinidad Turf Club Port of Spain



Jockey brace himself falling under horse at Trinidad Turf Club



Winning the big prize