

Save The Bays Gazette

Tuesday, April 21st | SPRING 2015

Uniting to:

- Stop Unregulated Land Development
- Pass an Environmental Protection Act
- Prevent Oil Spills
- Enact a Freedom of Information Act
- Support Marine Protected Areas

**Protect
Environmental
Rights!**



www.savethebays.bs



Save The Bays Praises Government for Attention to Oil Slicks.

Oil Slicks Continue to Plague Clifton Bay, Threaten 110's of Fish and Coral Reefs.

Published Oct. 7, 2014

With massive globs of oil bogging down beaches, choking fish, smothering marine life and coating dive equipment and divers with a slimy black mask, the country's fastest-growing environmental organization today praised government for taking action following the latest oil spill in Clifton Bay, but lamented it took a crisis to give rise to a wake-up call. "Respective governments have been given warning time and time again of oil leaks in Clifton Bay," said Save The Bays former CEO Lindsey McCoy. "Those leaks have gotten increasingly worse and in recent months have erupted into oil spills covering vast areas of Clifton Bay, one of the most valuable marine environments in The Bahamas, a place that draws hundreds, if not thousands from all over the world, to dive its reefs every year. Now, those reefs are in danger of being smothered and divers are coming up with their wet suits and gear covered with a greasy coating that is like something from a bad movie."

In a day when photos of the conditions can be e-mailed, texted and tweeted around the globe in seconds, the reputation of The Bahamas is at stake, she added.

The horror drove gov-



This photo, taken last October at Clifton Pier, shows oil seeping through a barrier presumably erected to contain it. The area suffers frequent spills and leaks of petroleum products and other toxic substances, most likely from one or more of the nearby industrial plants. However, in the absence of any official investigations by government, both the source of the leaks and the identity of the agencies that sporadically attempt to contain them, remains unclear.

ernment to act, she said, noting that Save The Bays with its more than 17,000 Facebook friends and followers welcomed Minister of Environment and Housing Kenred Dorsett's words today when he an-



Dead fish floating in oil slick

nounced experts had been flown in on an urgent basis.

"On Thursday past," Dorsett said, one day after the first new oil slick was spotted, "it was reported

to the Port Controller that there was a smell of oil and an oil slick seen in the Clifton area." The Port Department, he said, went out to investigate and found nothing. Two days later, it happened again

and another, a larger group including BEST Commission, and representatives from various ministries, went to inspect.

Oil in Clifton Bay dead fish October 2014 Stuart

Cove

"The assessment revealed that Albany had closed its beach restricting access to it by its guests," Dorsett said. "It also revealed that fuel had 'washed' alongside the coastline of Stuart Cove's operations and entered the canal, where their boats are docked. There was also evidence of oiling along the coast in the vicinity of the dive operation. The Government immediately engaged the services of Coastal Systems International Inc., a United States Environmental Firm to come to the Bahamas as a matter of urgency to assist in investigating and confirming the source/sources of the oil spill, assess the impact of the oil spill, to address the mitigation of this spill, advise on the preparation of an environmental management plan for the Clifton area and to make remediation recommendations."

"We applaud government for calling in consultants immediately, though we also believe that there are Bahamian firms perfectly capable of assessing the damage and preparing a mitigation and action plan," said McCoy. "But why did it have to take such a catastrophe to create a wake-up call? This alarm has been sounded for years and just like climate change, it falls on deaf ears until it becomes so dramatic that there is no longer a way to avoid dealing with it."

Again, said McCoy, the oil slick calls attention to the ongoing cry for a Freedom of Information Act and she urged government to share the findings from government consultants.

"If we were in most other countries and this



Photo shows oil slick in waters of Clifton Bay this weekend where divers were sending images of The Bahamas around the world. Save The Bays praised government for calling in consultants on an urgent basis but said years of reporting leakage had been ignored and urged more transparency, including sharing of results of consultants' findings.

happened, we would know where the oil came from. The cause and the cure would not be a mystery and people would not be complacent," she said.

"There would be a demand to know how it happened and for those who were responsible to be held accountable.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

SAVE THE BAYS RAISES ALARM OVER TREASURE CAY PROJECT



Before and after photos of acres of wetlands in Treasure Cay, Abaco. Left photo shows the wetlands in pristine condition while the right photo shows the destruction of acres of wetlands, slashed by heavy equipment on a site being developed under expansion plans by a resort known as Treasure Sands despite a cease and desist order by government.

Published Nov. 26, 2013

Save The Bays Raises Alarm Over Treasure Cay Project North Abaco Chief Councilor Requests EIA

November 26, 2013 | Community Partnerships, News, Unregulated Development

A surging environmentalist group is raising the alarm over what they call "yet another irrespon-

sible construction project" in the Family Islands.

Following a recent tour of the Treasure Sands Club in Abaco, directors from Save The Bays expressed concern and dismay over dredging off a world-famous beach.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS



Published Oct. 9, 2014

Less than two years old, the grassroots social and environmental advocacy group Save The Bays (STB) has recorded unprecedented success in fighting the scourge of unregulated development in The Bahamas, increasing sensitivity about environmental protection and attracting an ever-growing coalition of partner groups as it pushes for

a fairer, more transparent and sustainable way of life in the island nation.

The movement began in April 2013 with a small group of dedicated conservationists and human right advocates attempting to protect the unique historic, cultural and environmental treasures of the Clifton Bay area. Recognizing that many of their concerns flowed from a lack of important legislation, they

started pushing for a Freedom of Information Act and a comprehensive Environmental Protection Act.

Their numbers swelled and the campaign quickly became a full-scale, multifaceted and well-recognized movement.

In addition to attracting local attention, the tenacious group garnered support of renowned conservationists including marine artist Guy Harvey

and Fabian Cousteau, son of iconic explorer Jacques Cousteau, as well as a host of other environmentalists bent on halting environmental degradation in the fragile archipelago in time to preserve its treasures.

As organizations go, Save The Bays may be considered historic in the progress it has made in such a brief span of time. Never before have the courts dealt with so many cases involving protection of the environment; never before has the prospect of holding those accountable who damage or destroy marine resources been more real. Through education, social media, public meetings and legal action, Save The Bays is making its mark and its presence felt.

Here are a few highlights:

Bimini

Save The Bays has been called on to represent community action groups in cases where locals were neither consulted nor informed about developments that raised alarm. Such was the case on the tiny island of Bimini, a fabled diving and sport fishing mecca that inspired Ernest Hemingway's "Islands in the Stream". Filing on behalf of the local organization Bimini Blue Coalition, Bays' legal team took a case to the highest courts, twice gaining audience at the Privy Council in London demonstrating that, lacking proper permits, Malaysia-based conglomerate Genting dredged a huge swathe of seabed, damaging or destroying some of the most pristine and ecologically significant reefs in the region, forging ahead despite the stern warning of a local

judge.

Though a local judge eventually overturned the Law Lords' decision, the 'Battle for Bimini' set the

stage for unprecedented victories to come.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

UNSUNG HERO REV. C.B. MOSS

Clifton then, Clifton and more now

In 1998, when the Bahamian government engaged in talks with a South Carolina-based company that wanted to create a massive 600-home exclusive gated development complete with world class golf course, marina and clubhouse on land that would have barred Bahamians from one of their last pieces of beachfront and potentially wipe out the most significant physical remains of Bahamian history, one man raised his voice loud and clear to protect and preserve Clifton.

That man was Rev. C. B. Moss, a humble clergyman and defender of the rights of all Bahamians. The reverend with his quiet but intense style, his unwavering commitment, did not save Clifton alone. Hundreds of ordinary citizens, historians, dive tour operators, environmentalists, concerned groups, friends from abroad, and especially friends from Lyford Cay including those who helped fund the campaign for the preservation of Clifton, rallied around the cause. But his was a voice that rose above the fray and helped preserve the only remaining real estate that had once served as home to every



civilizations that had inhabited The Bahamas – the Lucayans, the Loyalists and the Africans who landed during the days of slavery. What was left was a priceless and irreplaceable tapestry and it came within a hair's breadth of being lost forever. The government that tried to sell the project to the public with a carrot of jobs was unseated in the 2002 election. Today, Bahamians have access to the beach and irrevocable rights to the artefacts of their past.

Rev. Moss continues to be a powerful ally in the environmental movement. Save The Bays is proud of the director who has helped shape history and to this day conducts boat tours to share the magic of the waters off Clifton and the Clifton story with all who are interested from working Bahamians after church on Sunday to internationally renowned scientists.

BOIL FISH OR OIL FISH?

You Decide!
LISTEN TO KB'S HIT NEW SONG

savethebays.bs/videos



ALARM OVER KKK PROTEST

New Year's Day spectacle highlights urgent need for hate speech laws

XENOPHOBIC MESSAGES and Ku Klux Klan symbolism on display at this year's Junkanoo parade, the centrepiece of Bahamian cultural life.

Published Jan. 22, 2015

The barbaric, hateful and intimidating demonstration which was allowed to poison our national cultural centerpiece, Junkanoo, on New Year's Day signals the rise of a shameful and dangerous tendency within our national public dialogue.

The hostile and xenophobic messages on display at this traditional family event, well attended by visitors from abroad, targeted Save The Bays (STB) chairman Fred Smith, QC, and renowned international businessman and conservationist Louis Bacon. Banners read: "Bacon is KKK" beneath an image of a burning cross, "Join the coalition to banish Ba-

con", "Fred Smith, Haitian infidel", and "Is Fred Smith a Bahamian or an illegal Haitian?"

That well-respected and prominent individuals should be allowed to become the victims of such malicious and reprehensible malignancies, paraded about in the public square, and that no one – from the police to the parade organizers to the politicians in attendance – saw fit to intervene, are to be regarded as enduring stains upon the conscience of this nation.

Mr. Bacon is a renowned and decorated philanthropist and environmental conservationist. He is a director of STB along with Fred Smith, who is a highly

regarded Queen's Counsel. Both men have spent decades leading efforts to protect the environment.

The Bahamas should be proud to have such esteemed and prestigious individuals leading the charge for environmental rights; instead we allow a gang of thugs to attempt to tarnish their names and reputations while thousands look on in person and untold numbers witness it via social media or other means, bringing shame and embarrassment to the nation of The Bahamas.

STB is not asking for special treatment for Messrs Bacon and Smith, nor anyone else; the fact is that every individual in The Ba-

hamas deserves the right to live their life without the specter of fear and intimidation hanging over their heads.

The heinous Junkanoo spectacle was but the latest in a series of malicious attacks on peaceful and law-abiding individuals. On December 5, a similar protest featuring identical banners and costumes, attempted to hijack an event in support of the passage of a Freedom of Information Act, organized by STB.

Controversial fashion designer Peter Nygard went on the record to deny he organized this December protest. He has yet to make any comment on the unseemly New Year's Day display or

on a "pro-Nygard" march held in July of last year, in which hostile messages against STB directors and associates were also on display. He has not denied any involvement.

On that day, targets included Joseph Darville also an STB Director, a universally respected veteran educator, who served as principal of a Catholic High School in Grand Bahama for 20 years. Newly appointed STB director Diane Phillips was also singled out by the group of aggressive male protesters, an experience that left her in fear for her safety, but undaunted.

A self-styled "Pro-Nygard" march through Downtown Nassau in July 2014 attacked Mr. Bacon, Fred Smith and Rev. Dr. CB Moss, an esteemed and influential member of the local clergy, as well as a former PLP Senator. Clearly the organizers and perpetrators of these reprehensible displays have no respect for any individual or institution.

We take note of Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Dr. Daniel Johnson's

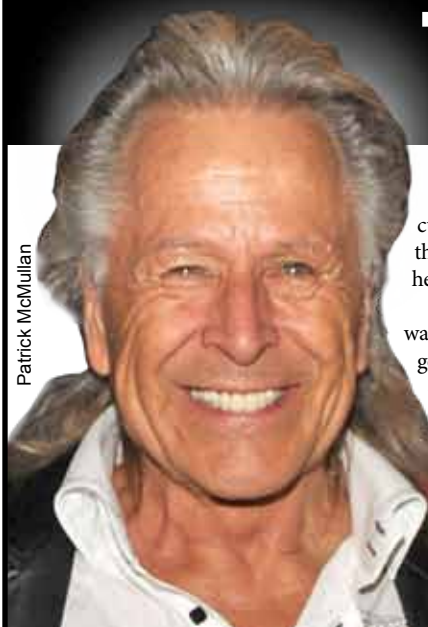
pledge to investigate the latest incident. While this should be regarded as a positive first step, a comprehensive and definitive response from government is also required. STB submits that if not dealt with promptly and decisively, this ominous new tendency could threaten this country's efforts to chart a course towards a more decent and tolerant future.

The Directors of STB and Rev C. B. Moss are all civic and like minded environmental leaders who are committed to preserving the beauty and natural resources of The Bahamas for future generations with environmentally sustainable development.

These repeated attempts to demonize and strike fear into the hearts of individuals – and particularly those advocating for greater individual rights, government transparency and respect for the rule of law – point to a desire to silence free speech, incite hatred and bring an end to socially constructive community activism in The Bahamas.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

Tide turning against Nygard



By James COVERT

Peter Nygard (left) stands accused of dredging up more sand in the Bahamas again — and this time he might get buried up to his neck.

The Canadian fashion magnate was caught illegally dredging the lagoon on his beachfront Caribbean estate in mid-December, according to lawyers for his longtime nemesis and next-door neighbor, New York hedge-fund tycoon Louis Bacon.

That's despite more than a decade of legal battles with Bacon and Ba-

hamian authorities that have focused particularly on the dredging, which neighbors and local environmentalists have blasted as an ecological threat.

In response, a Bahamian court is now weighing whether Nygard should be sent to prison for contempt of court, having allegedly thumbed his nose at a court order against any further dredging, according to legal filings.

Late last month, Bacon's lawyers submitted a private investigator's report that showed alleged pictures of workers dredging sand from a canal at one end of Nygard's property, then dumping it and spreading it around with backhoes and other big machin-

ery to enlarge the beach at the other end.

At one point, Nygard himself was caught by cameras, personally directing the work "in a light blue sweatsuit," according to the report.

"Do what I tell you to f--king do, and if you don't do the job right I will fire your ass," Nygard told workers, according to the report.

A spokesman for Nygard called it "maintenance" and said his lawyers believe the court injunction allows it.

"He is not disturbing or digging up the seabed but is simply moving sand that the currents have carried from the northwest of his property to the south-

east, clearing the channel at his marina dock so that his yacht has ingress and egress," the spokesman said.

But those permits specifically prohibited Nygard from using the sand to enlarge his own beachfront, according to lawyers for the Coalition to Protect Clifton Bay, an environmental group backed by Bacon.

The case took an even more bizarre turn this month as Nygard's lawyer in the Bahamas, Keod Smith, failed to appear for a Jan. 6 hearing on a contempt-of-court charge leveled against him last month after he had accused a judge of bias.

jcovert@nypost.com

BIMINI CONSERVATIONISTS 'PRICED OUT OF JUSTICE'

Court ruling forces Bimini Blue Coalition to discontinue battle to protect tiny island treasure from the scourge of unregulated development

Published Sep 5, 2014

Despite battling tirelessly to preserve the unique and ecologically significant marine habitat surrounding Bimini, a group of concerned citizens has been forced to admit defeat in the face of a court ruling ordering them to pay more than \$300,000 before the matter could be heard by a judge.

Bimini Blue Coalition (BBC), a small, grassroots conservation movement, had challenged the mega-

development being constructed on the tiny island by Resorts World Bimini, an offshoot of Malaysian conglomerate Genting, on the grounds that it had and would continue to cause significant damage to the vitally important surrounding marine environment, as well as Bimini's distinct culture and way of life. BBC also challenged the government for allowing the work to go ahead in the absence of necessary permits and approvals.

"Unfortunately, we have been priced out of justice," said BBC attorney Fred Smith, QC, after the government persuaded the court to affix \$600,000 in charges to the plaintiff to pursue the case, a cost Smith said was "a down payment proving we could cover the costs in case we happened to lose."

The Court of Appeal reduced the amount to \$315,000, still more than a small group like BBC can afford.

"We had no choice but

to surrender the case," said Smith, calling it a matter of serious concern for all Bahamians that concerned citizens with no personal axe to grind, who are seeking to defend the public interest, can be denied their day in court because their financial stature.

"The government and foreign developers with deep pockets can join forces to ensure that ordinary citizens are blocked from accessing justice."

At the local level, BBC



JUGGERNAUT - The mammoth dredger 'Niccolo Machiavelli', one of the largest and most powerful of its kind in the world, in the process of dredging a huge swath of the seafloor off the coast of Bimini to make way for a 1,000-foot pier and cruise ship terminal. Months later, the blanket of silt created as a result is continuing to affect the island's precious marine habitat. Advocacy group Bimini Blue Coalition has been forced to give up its court battle to bring the project to a halt over environmental concerns, due to a ruling that the group to pay more than \$300,000 before the matter could even be heard.

enjoyed some moral victories. When the dredging first began in March, it was criticized by Court of Ap-

peal Justice Abdulai Conteh,

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

SUPPORT THE CAUSE & LOOK GOOD DOING IT

Purchase a Save The Bays T-shirt and support the Environmental Fight

Visit our www.savethebays.bs for more info

Gov't slammed over failed anchor project policy

Published Jan 19, 2015

The government's continued support for the controversial "anchor project" policy of national development is the subject of a new video by prominent social and environmental advocacy group Save The Bays (STB).

The video, narrated by STB education director Joseph Darville, documents how the current administration promised to create sustainable local economies on each Family Island that would benefit Bahamians, only to revert to the short-sighted old model of mega-resorts owned by wealthy foreign interests.

"Anchor resorts and mega-resorts are continuing to flood our Family Islands, and as more and more invade our shores they are being kept secret from the Bahamian public," Darville said.

"But hold on, didn't we hear that Perry Christie and his government had abandoned the anchor project plan? Didn't they mention something about full-circle economies in the Family Islands? Something must be dead wrong, since all these new developments are like the old failing ones."

Darville noted that the developers of anchor projects, which are mostly



gated and exclusive, arrive in The Bahamas with promises of many jobs.

The projects move forward with the full support of local politicians eager to announce new employment opportunities.

Far too many of the projects go bankrupt and fail, he said, but only after destroying the local environment and culture - which the government has a duty to protect for the prosperity of generations of Bahamians to come.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

Save The Bays, reEarth Score Major Victory in Fight to Protect Dolphins

Eight dolphin penned in “inhumane” conditions to be released



Published Dec 15, 2014

Environmentalists scored one of their most powerful victories in Bahamian legal history when a Supreme Court judge ordered a tourist attraction to undo work on Crown Land done without proper procedure or permits and to be prepared to return eight penned dolphins now contained in an area that has been described as “inhumane.”

The 21-page ruling by Justice Stephen G. Isaacs in a case brought by reEarth and represented by the legal team of Save The Bays ran the gamut from restraining the Town Planning Committee from issuing site plan approvals without public consultation to quashing Prime Minister Perry Christie’s decision “to allow Blue Illusions to carry out the construction of the facility on Crown Land without site plan approval and to operate a captive marine mammal facility without a premises license

as required under the Marine Mammal Act.”

The judge’s ruling hit out at far more than the dolphin issue, though he noted the attention the penned



No longer a lone voice – Noted environmentalist Sam Duncombe, front, founder of reEarth, is pictured with Save The Bays attorneys from Callenders & Co, Martin A. Lundy, left, Fred Smith, QC, and R. Dawson Malone following a judge’s decision last week to allow for Judicial Review in the case against Blackbeard’s Cay. For 24 years, Duncombe has fought an often lonely battle to end the practice of dolphin captivity and build sensitivity toward environmental protection and preservation.

animals had brought to it. He cited all respondents – the Prime Minister in his capacity as responsible for Crown Lands, Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources V. Alfred Gray, Michael Braynen, Direc-

tor of Fisheries and Marine Resources, the Town Planning Committee and Blue Illusions Limited for violating rules of law, rushing through conditional ap-

provals, breaching statutory duties and ignoring numerous pleas for information which he said appeared to “have fallen on deaf ears.” According to lead attorney for Save The Bays Fred Smith, QC, Callenders

Freed Dolphins - Dolphins similar to these have been saved from inhumane treatment after a 24-year battle culminated in a major victory today in a Supreme Court ruling in a lawsuit brought by reEarth and handled by Save The Bays dealing with numerous issues surrounding the development of tourist attraction Blackbeard’s Cay, including a dolphin facility that reEarth director Sam Duncombe said violated terms of the Marine Mammals Act. The court agreed and cited officials for lack of public consultation and other violations.

Grand Bahama Managing Partner, the decision was important because of the anti-secrecy message it will send.

“Save The Bays has been lobbying for a Freedom of Information act and transparent government,” Smith said. “Until our governments do the people’s business in the open with the people’s knowledge and ability to contribute, we will not be a true democracy and we will continue to be surprised by developments that have been planned for us even if we do not want them in our own backyard. This decision is significant because it addresses the need to obey the rule of law and that includes public consultation.”

The Bahamas government which said it would appeal the decision by Supreme Court Justice Stephen Isaacs did not file an appeal in the allotted time nor did it request an extension. The developer has not filed an appeal.

Environmental Conclave: Leading Lawyer Urges Passage of Bahamas Environmental Protection Act



Published Feb 4, 2014

A leading environmental lawyer and consultant for Save The Bays has called for the urgent passage of an environmental protection act, saying it will not only protect a fragile and often threatened environment but could lead to new economic prosperity by unleashing a host of profitable enterprises.

Romauld Ferreira, popular TV show host and one of the Caribbean’s top environmental lawyers, said legislation and regulations that protect the environment “provide governments with the ability to develop industry in a manner which is sustainable and respects the environment.” Further, he said, legislation that protects also enables – unlocking incentives for the development of clean energy, green solutions, prudent waste management and construction without destruction.

Ferreira was addressing the National Environmental Conclave, a by-invitation-only, three day workshop organized by the Ministry of the Environment in conjunction with The Nature Conservancy, one of nearly 15 Save The

Bays community partners. “Our environmental legislative framework ought to consist of primary legislation attended to by secondary legislation establishing regulatory standards for all activities which impact the environment and giving the government the flexibility to respond in a timely manner,” Ferreira told participants. Without such a framework, unregulated development will continue to plague the country, with developers plowing ahead, sometimes without permits and oversight, without the public having an opportunity to comment on something that will change their very lifestyle, without retribution for felling protected trees or slashing mangroves and scouring wetlands.

Today, said Ferreira who has worked with leading international firms as an environmental attorney and consultant on several projects financed by the IDB and other international entities throughout the region, eight separate pieces of legislation are intended to deal with environmental matters. But without stiff regulations or dedicated resources, they are often ignored and compliance is far from ideal.

Passing the overriding umbrella BEPA with adequate regulations is the link in the chain that will pull the necklace together and better secure the beauty of the chain of islands, he said.

Minister of the Environment and Housing Kenred Dorsett opened the

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

Clifton-Western Bays Waterkeeper organization launched as part of fast-growing international clean water initiative

Published Sep 1, 2014

The full extent of the damage caused to Clifton Bay by frequent oil spills and other forms of environmental degradation may soon be made clear, as international experts are working with the new Clifton/Western Bays Waterkeeper on water quality issues in this ecologically significant area.

The effort is being spearheaded by fast-growing local social and environmental advocacy group Save The Bays, in

conjunction with the global Waterkeeper Alliance, a leading non-government organization (NGO) which coordinates more than 200 stewards of the marine environment, or Waterkeepers, who are assigned to rivers, bays, lakes and coastal areas around the world.

“Our waters define us. They are our source of industry and prosperity, the source of life itself in this beautiful country,” said Save The Bays director and proposed

Bahamas Waterkeeper Joseph Darville. “We are committed to doing all we can to protect our seas, and the wondrous diversity of life they sustain, both for their inherent value, and for the benefit of future generations of Bahamians.

“There can be no better partner in this effort than the Waterkeeper Alliance, which stands behind every Waterkeeper in the world as they fight for their community’s right to clean water, supporting them with scientific research,



strategic planning, and vital training.”

Darville said that while he has been nominated to be the official country representative for Waterkeepers, getting a Waterkeeper organization operational in the Clifton/Western Bays area represents a huge step forward in the effort to protect and preserve the waters of The Bahamas.

“Clifton Bay has been a prime fishing ground for

generations and is home to the island’s most significant reef system,” said Darville.

“The nearby mangrove forests are spawning grounds for countless species of marine life, which populate the bay and the surrounding areas, supporting our fishing industry and creating the conditions for countless economic opportunities for Bahamians.

“For years, this vital marine habitat has been under

siege from oil spills and systematic toxic leakages from the industrial complex and power plant at the southwestern end of the bay. The government has failed in its duty to investigate this travesty, and as a result the offenders remain unidentified and there is no record of the extent of damage.”

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

Save The Bays Environmental Facilitators, Education Team See Nature & Technology Work Hand in Hand at Cape Eleuthera Institute

Published Jan 16, 2015

It’s rare that a school visit elicits a response so effusive it sounds like something reserved for eyeballing an Orca, but then neither the school nor the students were ordinary when the education team from Save The Bays landed at The Island School, Cape Eleuthera recently for a scientific symposium.

It was environmental protection advocates meeting those who live, work, teach and breathe the environment, making the most of nature’s bounty with sustainable energy and renewables while sharing lessons they have learned with those will become the future stewards of a fragile



YOUTH ENVIRONMENT AMBASSADORS FACILITATORS from Grand Bahama, attend the science symposium at Cape Eleuthera Institute, thanks to funding from Save The Bays. Pictured l-r, Javan Hunt, Sharon Glover, Save The Bays education director Joe Darville, and Jensen Farquharson.

eco-system.

The hands-on, four-day, live-in training was made possible by a grant from the fast-growing environ-

mental movement Save The Bays. Like last year’s symposium attendance which was funded by the Moore Bahamas Foundation, this

year’s brought members of the education arm of Save The Bays, headed by Joseph Darville, and its Youth Environment Ambassadors

(YEA) Facilitators to the Cape Eleuthera Institute and The Island School.

The school, started in 1999 with six students and the philosophy “We live what we teach” has become a magnet for high school seniors from various countries who grow their own food, explore the coral reefs and the deep, interacting with sharks, sea turtles and other marine species, learning eco-management. All their surroundings, including living quarters, are textbook sustainable.

Jensen Farquharson and Javan Hunt listen on to students at the Island School and are intrigued during their exhibits

“The best part of this trip was actually seeing and

experiencing how technology/development and nature can live and work together in harmony and peace without devastation and destruction,” said Javan Hunt, Environmental Facilitator. “It can be done! And now I take with me this blueprint and will implement what I can in my personal life, teach those willing to learn and lead by example.”

Hunt echoed what environmental spokesmen have frequently said – that blue and green economies can provide untold numbers of jobs without endangering species or resources.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

Smith: Government stalling over FOIA

Save the Bay's legal director calls proposed 2016 date unacceptable, says public demands government transparency and accountability now



Published Sep 14, 2014

Prominent attorney Fred Smith, QC, has hit out at the announcement that there may be no Freedom of Information Act brought to Parliament until 2016, say-

ing the legislation is already long overdue and accusing government of stalling in an effort to avoid increased public scrutiny.

"It is simply unacceptable," Smith said. "Five years after the election promise and on the eve of the new election is far too long for the public to wait for transparency and accountability in government.

"An FOIA exists in some form or another across the entire civilized world. It is a disgrace that The Bahamas is lagging so far behind in granting its citizens the

fundamental right to know what is being done in their name and with their money by public servants and elected officials."

Smith was responding to the announcement by Minister of Education Jerome Fitzgerald that following his government's withdrawal of an FOIA passed just before the 2012 election by the former Free National Movement (FNM) administration, a revised version will not be presented to Parliament before spring 2016.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

PHOTOS FOR FREEDOM

Photos from FOIA Block Party



EMBASSY RECRUIT BACKS CALL FOR FOI ACT



The new US Chargé D'Affaires Lisa Johnson.

By **KHRISNA VIRGIL**
Tribune Staff Reporter
kvirgil@tribunemedia.net

Published Jul 18, 2014

THE new United States Charge d'affaires Lisa Johnson yesterday threw sup-

port behind the adaptation of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and pledged her country's help toward seeing the legislation implemented.

Ms Johnson is conducting a series of courtesy calls with

various government agencies and made the remarks as she visited Transport and Aviation Minister Glenys Hanna-Martin at Manx Dockendale Centre on West Bay Street.

She said: "Certainly we are interested in seeing implementation of that Act. I know that a number of regulations have to be put in place and some more work needs to be done on the public out reach and information campaign and we are prepared to help support that in any way that we can."

During her term as Chargé d'affaires, Ms Johnson said she intends to work closely with the Bahamian government on crime issues with a view that such relations will strengthen ties.

"We co-operate very closely with the Bahamian government on anti-crime initiatives (and) looking at crime and security issues. "We have terrific co-operation in that area we will be looking to increase trade and investment between the United States and the Bahamas."

Mrs Hanna-Martin said she was optimistic about the discussions.

"We are very pleased to welcome Ms Johnson to the Bahamas and trust that her service here will prove to be one that is strong and fruitful and that we will be able to achieve more things that are for the mutual benefit of both nations."

Ms Johnson also had a courtesy call with Education Minister Jerome Fitzgerald.

Continued online at www.tribune242.com



MORE THAN 60,000 PEOPLE REPRESENTED AT 1ST FREEDOM OF INFORMATION RALLY



DNA LEADER – BRANVILLE MCCARTNEY, leader of the DNA, called on government to enact “a Freedom of Information Act with teeth to create a real democracy.” McCartney was among leaders of civic organisations, unions and political parties who addressed the Freedom of Information rally in Rawson Square Wednesday. Among the groups represented were the TUC (Trade Union Congress), the Bahamas Public Services Union, BREEF, The Bahamas National Trust, The Bahamas Chamber of Commerce, the Grand Bahama Human Rights Association, The Bahamas Humane Society, the FNM, the DNA and many more. (Photos by Derek Smith Jr.)

Published Dec 2, 2014

Executives and members of some 20 organizations

representing an estimated 60,000 people packed Rawson Square in downtown Nassau earlier this year for the first Freedom of Information Act rally hosted by Save The Bays. Among the many speak-

ers at the event were the leaders of the other two major political parties in The Bahamas, as well as the secretary general of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), an umbrella entity representing more than 10,000 workers.

Free National Movement leader Dr. Hubert Minnis connected the lack of an FOIA to the degradation of the country’s precious natural resources through unregulated development, which has been given the green light by successive governments behind a veil of secrecy.

Using the example of the massive dredging operation that was underway at the time in Bimini, which experts say will destroy one of the most pristine and ecologically significant reef systems in the region, Min-

nis said renowned visitors Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ernest Hemingway must be “turning over in their graves” over what is taking place in that island.

Meanwhile, Branville McCartney, leader of the Democratic Alliance (DNA), said the FOIA passed but not enacted by the former FNM government was deficient and needs to be replaced, but urged government not to delay in taking action.

“The time has also come for our government to put an end to the culture of secrecy which has existed in this country for the past 40 years and the first step toward making that happen is implementing a Freedom of Information Act.”

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs



Downtown comes to life in the name of greater transparency



Charlotte Street North came to life in support of the enactment of a Freedom of Information Act. Organizer Save The Bays said the event showed that Bahamians mean business when it comes to creating a more open and transparent society.

Published Dec 11, 2014

A hub of activity during the day, downtown Nassau is usually quiet and unpeopled after the sun goes down.

Last Friday though, historic Charlotte Street North burst into life, light and sound as Bahamians once again gathered to call for a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in the name of greater transparency and accountability in public life.

Bahamian superstar

KB whipped the crowd into an FOIA frenzy. Bahamian superstar KB whipped the crowd into an FOIA frenzy.

The FOIA Street Party was organized by fast-growing social and environmental advocacy group Save The Bays (STB) in conjunction with a number of its community partners. It was the second successful event of its kind,

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs



Save The Bays Hosts Leading Environmentalists' Bahamas Tour

What the Experts found



Clifton Bay Tour – Six leading international environmentalists toured Clifton Bay off New Providence's southwest coast in late July with a small group of local concerned citizens as part of a visit hosted by the marine environment advocacy group Save The Bays.

Published Jul 30, 2014

Six leading international environmentalists travelled to The Bahamas in July 2014 to witness firsthand the state of marine life in a country known for the beauty of its turquoise seas. Hosted by Save The Bays, the group included the recipient of a U.S. presidential award for environmental conservation, marine environment researchers and administrators and prominent scientists committed to the survival of sea turtles.

“Having such experienced and committed conservationists survey the various threats to our marine environments points to the increased international attention that is being focused on The Bahamas,” said Save The Bays former CEO Lindsey McCoy.

“These international conservationists recognize the critical importance of safeguarding the Bahamian environment, and we are honoured they are taking the time out of their busy schedules to share their perspectives and expertise on how to protect our magnificent resources.”

Many of the attendees are members of the Waterkeeper Alliance, a global movement of 220 local “Keepers” that fight to stop polluters,

“The Bahamas is still one of the most beautiful places on Earth”

protect their chosen waters and champion clean water as a fundamental human right. The delegation includes Rachel Silverstein, Biscayne Bay Waterkeeper, Gabrielle Parent-Doliner, swim guides affiliate at Lake Ontario Waterkeeper,

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

KB: Man of the People Delivers Music with a Message

He burst onto the music scene with hits like ‘Bush Mechanic’ and ‘She Fat’ but now the man who brought humour to high energy song is making his mark in music with a message.

After years of being the top-selling musical artist of The Bahamas, Kirkland ‘KB’ Bodie has joined ranks with Save The Bays, serving as a director and lending his talent writing lyrics aimed at striking a chord

demanding accountability in ‘Hold ‘Dey Feet to ‘Da Fire.’

And in ‘Captain Kangaroo’ the theme is the hardest-hitting yet. Its fast-paced Youtube video tells the tale of what he declares is a lack of focused leadership and KB tells the story with lyrics and chorus “Captain, captain, what we gonna do, the ship is sinking with Captain Kangaroo... Bahamians ‘dey are scared de ship too fat...oh the ship in trouble, the country goin’ down.” The video got more than 1,000 hits in the first 24 hours after it was released.

“You can call my latest body of work Message Music. It speaks to the state of our nation, socially and politically,” said Bodie. “I have always included stories and messages in my songs, describing who and

how we are as a people. Things are changing so fast, now, more so than ever and we are in a time where we have to address social matters plaguing our daily lives which are growing worse.”

For the man who was inspired in his youth by legendary artists like Eddie Minnis and The Mighty Sparrow, he wants this part of his career to have serious meaning.

“I will continue to write social commentary and hold any present or future elected government official’s feet to the fire,” urged Bodie. “I welcome any of my musical and cultural brothers and sisters to join in on this Message Music trek to make a better, more productive Bahamas for us all.”

Canvasses with a Cause – Cerulean Art Show at Melia Raises Funds for Environmental Protection



Artist to Artist – Grand Bahama artist Melanie Darville, left, chats with Andros-based artist Judith Papillon at Cerulean, an art show benefitting Save The Bays.

Published Dec 10, 2014

When Andros-based artist Judith Papillon faces a blank canvas, she merely looks beyond it to see the cerulean sea that is her back yard. As she works re-creating the swirling blues and greens of the water, the powder-soft sand, the brilliant sky

above, her brush flows as smoothly, as gently, as the waves flow to the lee shore. The result – breathtaking visuals that make you want to sink your feet into the sand, dip your toes in the water and close your eyes to make time stand still.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs



with the Bahamian public. He’s called for an end to unregulated development in ‘Dey Sellin’. He’s

PM Urged to Officially Announce Bimini Reserve

Save The Bays calls on government to take action following local council's appeal for the island's unique marine ecosystem to be protected

Published Sep 24, 2014

Save The Bays is urgently calling on government to announce establishment of the North Bimini Marine Reserve (NMBR) to protect that island's unique ecological heritage even as talk of

wiping out the wetlands to create a golf course swirls. Scientists say the mangroves and swamp not only serve as the nursery for hundreds of species of fish and marine life that are so much a part of the island's culture and attraction but serve

as a buffer zone keeping the island safe from the winds and pounding waves that could sweep over the low-lying mainland in a hurricane.

The local council is also seeking the marine protected area, a request it put into writing. Two months after the formal



Aerial of Bimini

request was made, Save The Bays former CEO Lindsey McCoy said there has been no response amid growing fears that the island's sensitive mangrove forests may be under threat from development.

"A recently released image showing a golf course located within the NMBR boundaries has caused serious concern among Biminities," McCoy said. "This is an area of unparalleled ecological importance, the mangroves providing a nursery for the marine life throughout the northern Bahamas. "It must be protected at all costs, and I call on the Prime Minister to respond to the council and immediately grant their requests."

In the letter, the council asked that the Christie administration commit to ensuring developers do not construct a golf course on the island, prevent any further development on the northern tip of North Bimini, and move swiftly to establish the NMBR.

It added: "It has become commonplace that major developments occur on our island without notice to its residents or to this elected council. We therefore respectfully ask that you respond to these requests as quickly as possible."

McCoy noted government's failure to respond to the local council has only added to the fears of Biminities - particularly as the reserve has had formal approval since 2008, and only needs to be officially Gazetted.

In addition to STB and other local advocacy groups, the importance of the NMBR has been recognized by high-profile international conservation agencies including the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the global Waterkeeper Alliance and The Nature Conservancy, which said it has been working with government on the issue and will continue to support all efforts to make the reserve a reality.



**SAVE THE BAYS
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

SIGN THE PETITION

find it online at

www.chn.ge/15O68LY

NYGARD STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS

Court issues temporary injunction on approval process for controversial Clifton Bay development

Published July 21, 2014

Save The Bays (STB) is encouraged after the Supreme Court issued an injunction halting the approvals process for further work at the controversial Nygard Cay development, where it is claimed decades of unauthorised, invasive construction negatively impacted the surrounding marine environment.

The fast-growing social and environmental advocacy movement was granted an injunction restraining the prime minister and his Cabinet from making decisions on any applications by owner Peter Nygard until mid-August. In addition, both STB and a group of 103 Lyford Cay residents and property owners were given permission to apply for separate judicial reviews to examine whether Nygard built his imposing Mayan temple-themed resort in the absence of proper permits and the validity of the Government's so-called consultation process.

"This is an important day," said attorney Fred Smith, QC, director of legal affairs for STB. "It continues the work of our organization in upholding the rule of law in The Bahamas in the protection of human rights.

"We continue to attempt to teach the government that the public will no longer sit idly by and tolerate the destruction of the environment as a result of cozy relationships between



Unauthorised and destructive construction of artificial reef on Nygard Property

politicians and developers."

Smith called unregulated development a "deadly scourge" that is threatening to destroy the natural resources upon which future generations of Bahamians must depend. It comes about, he said, because of a system of reciprocal favours that has reached the highest levels of government.

Smith highlighted the 1992 letter sent to then-Cabinet minister Perry Christie by Peter Nygard, in which the developer emphasizes financial contributions he made to the PLP, asks that certain tasks be carried out quickly, then says he is willing to give further help to the country and party, as well as Christie personally.

In the letter, Nygard points out that his total contribution to the PLP up to then had been \$45,000, then asks Christie to help him finalize some "housekeeping" issues before he returns from Canada. Among them

was the renaming of Simms Point as Nygard Cay and the granting of a lease for the popular fishing spot and bird sanctuary Goulding Cay – both of which Nygard says he would appreciate the government "getting done quick" ahead of an upcoming Forbes Magazine story and Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous shoot at his development.

Nygard adds: "Obviously this whole world is based on one hand helping the other and you know I am prepared to do whatever is in my capacity to help out The Bahamas and the PLP party and of course yourself in any way that I can."

Smith said: "Today's ruling represents a substantial blow to the philosophy of development suggested in this letter. Bahamians deserve elected officials who will hold their precious land in trust for future generations, not give it away at fire-sale rates to their special friends, and then allow

those friends to develop it in any way they see fit, almost always to the serious detriment of the surrounding environment."

The leave to issue judicial review and the injunction came after the government's decision last week to extend its consultation process after acknowledging in writing that it was flawed.

Smith said Save The Bays was forced to file for an injunction after the government failed to respond to a July 7 letter requesting that no action be taken on Nygard's applications until STB's recently filed judicial review had been concluded.

STB's new judicial review names the prime minister, deputy prime minister, director of physical planning, the town planning committee, the minister of environment the minister of transport and aviation and the building control officer.

Smith said the court ordered an inter-party hearing of the injunction on August 12. In the meantime, the government's consultation process has been suspended.

As for the judicial review application filed by Lyford Cay residents and/or property owners, their request for a stay of the consultation process was granted and will remain in effect until the attorney general either successfully applies to set it aside or the trial of their judicial review ends.

Save The Bays is currently riding a wave of success, the



Lion head fixture at Nygard Cay.

Nygard Cay victory coming the same day as another Supreme Court judge ruled in the organization's favour and against a development known as Blackbeard's Cay. The court found a string of failures on the part of government during the approvals process and that a marine mammal enclosure

was created and had been operating in contravention of the relevant regulations.

Smith exclaimed in joy after receiving the Judgment; "Dolphins Have Rights Too!!"

The developer has six weeks to appeal.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

Court to hear 'smoking gun' evidence against Nygard

Concerned whistleblower set to present 1,000 hours of video footage

A discovery action filed in the New York courts will lead to the airing of evidence critical to seven different lawsuits filed against controversial fashion designer Peter Nygard, who is accused of, among other things, causing significant environmental damage to the pristine environment of The Bahamas in order to unlawfully double the size of his own property.

A concerned whistleblower has now come forward with evidence – including documents and over 1,000 hours of video recordings of Nygard – which the petitioners, concerned

neighbor Louis Bacon and Bahamas-based conservation group Save The Bays, say amounts to a 'smoking gun' and will greatly assist in their litigation against Nygard and others.

The whistleblower, Stephen Feralio, Nygard's personal videographer from 2011-13 is willing to cooperate, but due to concerns for his safety has been moved to a secure location.

The petitioners now seek this court's intervention to ensure that the evidence is produced under court order

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs



CAPACITY CROWD – Hundreds of Bahamians gathered at the BCOPU hall on Farrington Road to discuss Peter Nygard’s application for further expansion of his controversial development.

Packed town meeting says ‘No to Nygard’

Over 250 Bahamians declare their opposition to the further development of Nygard Cay, granting of any lease for lands claimed from the seabed without proper approvals



IMPASSIONED – Environmental attorney Romi Ferreira said the time has come to send a clear message that Bahamians will no longer tolerate secret deals that give away land to foreign developers without proper consultation with the public. Also pictured, from left, are Rev CB Moss of the Coalition to Save Clifton, attorney and Save The Bays director Fred Smith, QC and veteran political activist Paul Moss.

Published July 4, 2014

A packed BCPOU Hall resounded with spirited chants of “No to Nygard! No to Nygard!” as a town meeting to discuss the latest plans for a controversial Lyford Cay development swelled in numbers,

scope and energy beyond even the organizers’ expectations.

Citizens expressed their fervent opposition to more proposed works at Nygard Cay, where conservationists say unauthorised development is already harming the

vital ecosystem of the surrounding Clifton Bay and negatively impacting nearby Jaws Beach, one of the few public beaches left in Nassau. Many, particularly young Bahamians, came forward to ask how they could help convince government to

reject the plans.

Environmental attorney Romi Ferreira told them they must stand together like the heroes of the first battle to save Clifton Bay, an area of unique historical, cultural and ecological importance.

Drawing cheers and applause from the crowd, an impassioned Ferreira said the government’s failure to hold a proper consultation process over the Nygard Cay application – which also asks that land claimed from the seabed without permission be leased to the development’s owner, Canadian fashion designer Peter Nygard – is a prime example of what he called politicians’ disregard for the rights of Bahamians and willingness to sacrifice the public interest for the benefit of certain wealthy foreign “friends.”

“It’s time to send a

message,” he said. “No longer are we prepared to sit back and watch you and your friends destroy our country. We want all the structures removed from Nygard Point and the original coastline restored.” Ferreira told the crowd Peter Nygard has been allowed to grow his property from 2.85 acres to 6.1 acres without authoriza-

tion, and when told to cease and desist and reverse the work by the former FNM government, he failed to do so.

Nygard has admitted supporting the PLP financially in the run-up to the 2012 election and released a video called “Nygard Takes Bahamas Back” following the party’s win, he noted.

“A very wealthy foreign investor... being allowed to destroy Bahamian habitat for his own selfish purposes...”

Watch the Video online

www.savethebays.bs/media/video/

Save The Bays Youth Environment Ambassadors See Green Side of Heavy Industry



FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL leaders see heavy industry at work – Grand Bahama Shipyard, the largest in the Western Hemisphere, opened its doors with CEO Carl Rotkirch, far right, personally leading the tour and talk for the informative session of Youth Environmental Ambassadors sponsored by Save The Bays.

Published Jan 28, 2015

Some 45 young people in Grand Bahama in the past month witnessed the reality

of what their older counterparts said for decades was possible – the greening of modern heavy industry.

The youngsters, participants in a popular bi-monthly program called Youth Environment Am-

bassadors sponsored by Save The Bays, got the educational double dose with on-site tours, lectures and classroom visits by executives from two of the island's leading industrial suppliers – the Grand Bahama Shipyard and Grand Bahama Power Company.

“Grand Bahama is the heartbeat of industry in The Bahamas and, with the shipyard being the largest in the Western Hemisphere, it’s a real testing ground for how industry can serve the public’s needs without sacrificing the environment,” said Joe Darville Director of Education for the fast-growing environmental movement. “The presentations by both the Grand Bahama Ship-



yard and the Grand Bahama Power Company were lively, informative and interactive. But most importantly, they demonstrated how best practices can mitigate against any potentially negative impact on our health, well-being and on our environment, marine and terrestrial, even while operating in a massive industrial complex.”

While health and safety experts Nikita Mullings and Jensen Farquharson led the session from Grand Bahama Power, Grand Bahama Shipyard CEO Carl-Gustaf Rotkirch and Health, Safety,

Environment and Security Manager Kendrick Knowles led the session that included a tour of what has been called “a celebrated example of industrial and environmental symbiosis.”

Darville had especially flattering words for the shipyard where he worked for eight years.

“It is always my joy and delight to tout and celebrate the care and diligence with which all work is carried out in The Yard in order to safeguard our unique environment.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

Support the Cause
Every program, educational opportunity, event and legal action to defend our environment costs money. We can only continue championing the environment of The Bahamas with your support. Every dollar will be used to work towards a future of healthy reefs, sustainable development and a secure future for our most precious natural resources.

SAVE THE BAYS
COALITION TO PROTECT CLIFTON BAY

Visit us online for more info
www.savethebays.bs/donate

SAVE THE BAYS
COALITION TO PROTECT CLIFTON BAY

INVESTIGATES GUANA CAY

DYING BRAIN CORAL

Watch the video online
www.savethebays.bs/media/video/

Humane Treatment of Animals was the topic for the Final Session of the EARTHCARE/Save The Bays Environmental Education Programme.

Published April 7, 2014.

Ambassadors have learned about mangroves, pollution, habitat destruction, sustainable fisheries, climate change, invasive species and today, the humane treatment of animals. Today, I shared my experiences as a Dolphin Trainer on Grand Bahama and the many reasons why I am now an anti-captivity advocate.

Dolphins in the wild can travel up to 40 miles a day, dive as deep as 30 feet or more and most live in family units that remain together for a life time. The world wide thirst to see dolphins and whales in tanks



YEA and EARTHCARE Team Members

has caused these self aware beings to have to live under inhumane conditions as "slaves" to make their "owners" large sums of money. The Taiji drive hunt that is featured in the Oscar winning film, "The Cove" has

made the world aware of the captive industry's "dirty little secret" and the newest film, "Blackfish" has enlightened many more.

Continued online at www.savethebays.bs

TOGETHER
WE STAND



Save The Bays partners with existing Bahamian conservation, environmental and educational organizations on jointly agreed-upon initiatives.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Abaco Cares • Andros Conservancy and Trust
Bahamas National Trust • Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation • Bimini Blue Coalition
Clifton Heritage National Park • EARTHCARE
Young Marine Explorers • Friends of the Environment
The Island School • Lyford Cay POA
Responsible Development for Abaco • Save Guana Cay Reef
Swim for Ocean Survival • The Nature Conservancy
Grand Bahama Human Rights Association • reEarth
Citizens for A Better Bahamas
West End Eco Fishing Camp Association

Team work makes the dream work, save our environment



DIRECTORS

Dedicated on preserving the environment of The Bahamas for future generations.



Troy Albury



Bennet Atkinson



Louis Bacon



Hon. Nicholas F. Brady



Kirkland Bodie



Stuart Cove



Joseph Darville



Peter Douglas



Sam Duncombe



Romauld Ferreira



David Godfrey



William Hunter



Robert F. Kennedy, jr.



Diane Phillips



Fred Smith



Jessica Minnis



R. Craig Symonette



Gail Woon



Matt McCoy

STRENGTH *in* NUMBERS

The statistics are impressive and we are happy to share them with you.



17,299 Likes



110 followers



247 Followers



6,452 Signatures



561 Members



Save The Bays *for Us!*



www.savethebays.bs

