

AfroPanamanian Newsletter



English opens doors. Read the Newsletter

www.afropanameniannewsletter.mex.tl.

We encourage our web readers to feel free to use our links to find scholarships, jobs, grants and others.

No.10 Vol. II

November 2011

Donation

Panamanian Parades in the U.S.8

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qy2Q710T9xY&feature=player_detailpage#t=136s
<https://mail.google.com/mail/?shva=1#inbox/13302830a5c47f4d>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJJpG4kyJ8E&feature=related> (Panama's National Anthem)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3MLvpX-TLQ&NR=1> (Patria - Ruben Blades)

Controversy

Anecdotes

Poetry

LOS AMIGOS :
Por la superación de la Etnia Negra

A group of friends, in Panama, decided to join forces to work on the rescue of values, customs and cultural traditions bequeathed to us through our ancestors. These have been displaced by others, thus losing a large part of our Black Heritage. We are evaluating all these forgotten traditions and values and highlighting figures as examples for future generations.

“For Black history to be done right, we must do it ourselves.” Edward Gaskin

CREDITS

Editor : Sandra Patterson

Assistant: Ines V. Sealy

MEMBERS

**President
Anthony Cox**

**Treasurer
Fernando A. Goldson**

**Others
Ines V. Sealy
Sandra M. Patterson
Roberto L. Alleyne**

The editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by our collaborators

Cover Page: The stamp which appears on the cover was proposed to the Canal Zone Government by Mr. George W. Westerman (r.i.p.) accepted and issued in 1951 as a 10 cent postage stamp, used for years. Permission for its continuous use was given by his grandnephew, Cecil Reynolds.

Editorial

At the beginning of the XIX century and towards the first quarter of the XX, most of the colonies in the young continent were ruled by Spain.

Following the Haitian example those colonies decided to seek their independence.

Panama did her own on the 28 of November 1821 but did not maintain its status for long as it joined up to La Gran Colombia in a union that lasted many a years. They separated and reunited a couple of times before finally separating on the 3 of November 1903 with the blessings of the USA.

That is why Panama celebrates two birthdays in the month of November.

190 years separated from Spain, 108 years from Colombia.

***HAPPY BIRTHDAY
PANAMA,***

***MAY THE SUN AND THE HANDS OF
GOD ALWAYS SHINE UPON YOU!***

--Kindness is the language the blind can see and the deaf can hear.--

FEEDBACK (from October Newsletter)

Dear Ms. Sealy, I enjoyed tremendously reading the newsletter. I was amazed by the fact that Panamanian athletes obtained college scholarships to U.S. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); namely Savannah State and Morgan State. I guess that Historically White Colleges were not open to them. The story on Rod Carew was uplifting. I appreciated most the poem on trees—touching and powerful. Looking forward to the next newsletter. Very respectfully, Dr. Brooks B. Robinson

You missed Jorge Rodriguez Auerbac from Radio Programas Continental (RPC), Isabel María Kelly, Estela María Paz, (novelas). Arquimedes (Fats) Fernandez, Thomas Albert Cooper (Tomás Alberto Cupas, (sports (and Radio Variedades transmitting in English; nightly program, Juke Box Review. Station owned by Jorge Rodriguez Auerbac. Jorge Carazco: Teatro Presidente radio program, "Lo Tomas o los Dejas" Íbero Fernandes (Horse race narration from Hipódromo Juan Franco, and of course myself, initiator of "Juke Box Review" on Radio Variedades in Rio Abajo. John

Translated: Thank you, Ines for the newsletter. It is said that to Reminisce is to live, the truth is I enjoyed reading and remembered many of the persons and stories. Keep them coming.

Diana

----- *(from the guestbook on our website)*

Denise Viola (welch)

My father sent me one of your newsletters and I've been working my way through the archives, fascinated. It is now that I'm older that I appreciate all my parents taught me of my West Indian heritage and I'm so thankful they insisted on teaching me English FIRST. I can't relate to everything in the newsletter because of my age, but I find myself saying, "I remember that!" quite often! Again, thank you!

Dear Denise:

We're happy to receive your feedback, and to know that you appreciate our efforts. If you let us have your e-mail, we'll include you on our mailing list. We try to combine the present with the past so as to maintain your interest. Please feel free to share with your cyber-friends and encourage them to forward.

All of your editions are great, but there is something about this edition, it had a little of everything, things that at the time we took for the norm and we were making history. It is nice that the collection are preserved.

Thanks

Silvia P

Colon, Republic of Panama, and October 30, 2011 – Mr. Jorge Brathwaithe, PANAM Network is proud to announce the expansion of its Academic Award Program to include Escuela Porfirio Melendez. With this addition, five public schools are now supporting the Academic Program. The participating schools are Pablo Arosemena, Carlos Clement, Porfirio Melendez, Republica del Uruguay, and Colegio Abel Bravo. In each of these schools, award recipients overcame personal hardships and continued their drive for academic excellence. Twenty-Nine (29) students were able to maintain their B + average, as well as the endorsement of their teachers, and retained their PANAM Network Academic Award. For these twenty-nine (29) students, PANAM Network continues to be the difference day-to-day.

Additionally, PANAM Network is equally proud that the 2011 Composition saw the participation of all nine (9) public elementary schools in the often-forgotten City of Colon. This participation confirms the deep-held belief of the Officers and Board members of PANAM Network that despite the distressing issues confronting the City of Colon, people of goodwill can accomplish much, if only they are willing to take the risk and try. *(Contributed by Cecil Reynolds)*

OLDEN DAYS SAYINGS

What a headache she had! She tried “**Bay Rum**”, the headache wouldn’t go away. She tried “**Valorub**”, “**no soap**”. Try some “**nosedrops**”, she was encouraged, “*que va!*”. “**Last but not least**”, she tried “**Wintergreen**” on a diaper wrapped around her head. Did that solve the migraine?

Do you have a business or non-profit organization that you wish to announce?
Anywhere in the world.

This is the website you need to use. Send us an e-mail at:

afropanamaniannewsletter@gmail.com

Send us your logo, address, telephone, and a short description of what you do.
Whatever else you may think is pertinent to the announcement of your
business.

The cost is \$50.00 per year, payable in two payments of \$25.00 ea.

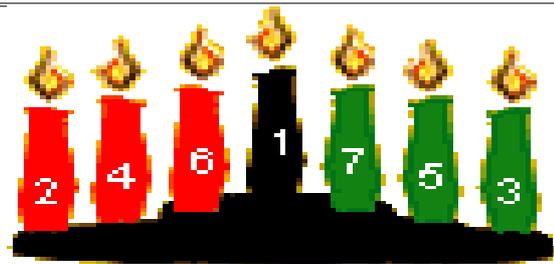
Kwanzaa

The meaning behind Kwanzaa colors are as follows:

Green: represents the color of Africa, as well as representing hope for the future and continued prosperity.

Red: represents the color shed by all African ancestors in the past that helped African Americans get to their present.

Black: represents the color of the African race



Come and Celebrate Kwanzaa with LOS AMIGOS
Bring a Platter to share and \$5
Friday Dec. 30, 2011 2-6 p.m.
Rio Abajo Methodist Church hall

AFRICAN FOODS

Most common staples in Africa are: yucca (manioc), corn (maze), millet, plantain, rice, sorghum and yam. Yucca is predominant in the Central equatorial Africa. Grains and Yam are more common in the template regions of the South, East and West Africa. In many of the regions, main staple is served together with a simple soup, stew or sauce.

For certain African towns fishing and collecting other SALT and freshwater species has been their staples forever. Notably, a large part of their meats are smoked or salted, although they are mainly used to flavor their foods. It must have been the only means they had for preserving products obtained in large quantities.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxjKSrv87Bs&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dt3W6jAXi9Y&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrxM49mQGhU> (ad)

Musicians' day became Law 4 of May 11, 1953, obtained from the government of Panama during the tenure of President Jose Antonio Remon Cantera... through the Hon. Deputy Alfredo Cragwell.

*During his academic years, Claude Morant, better known as **Black Majesty**, born in the City of Panama in 1935, was captured by the One-o'clock **calypso** radio program on Sundays produced by "The ukelele-playing Pana-Trinidadian Band", featuring "The Haitian Band", the "Martiniquian Band"; singing Lord Kontiki, Lord Panama, Two-Gun Smokey, Bing-bing, James, Swing-Papa, Lord Delicious and others.

Although he felt that some had a better voice than he did, he also felt that he could do better than they, and he proved it with themes such as: Black Majesty; Miriam; My Pony; Mon Cherie; Candyman and the Last Day of Carnival. And, while others were singing compositions of other authors, he sang his own inspirations. **Carlos Garnett's** sax was included with the guitar, tumba, ukulele & banjo for recordings, rattles were optional.

***Chino Williams and the Beachers.**

They began in 1966 as the Beach Boys in Bocas del Toro until they came to the capitol and realized that the name already belonged to another group.

They became the resident band of the *Rancho Grande* Garden for many years, but they also performed in other bistros, such as: Club Windsor, *Bohio* Agewood, *Club Clases y Tropas*, *Jardin Atlas*, besides Boat rides, alternating with the Combos of the era: The Dynamic Exciters, The Persuaders, The Silvertones, The *Mozambiques*, The Goombays, The Soul Fantastics, The Festivals, The Gliders from Colon, etc. besides, many international Bands.

Singer and author, Cecilo "**Chino**" Williams moved around in bands such as: The Beachers, Alberto Quintanar (R.I.P.), Cristobal "Toby" Muñoz, and his own band, LOS LATINOS (U.S.A.).

His ^{pieces}: My Mammy, One More Chance, Beachers White Christmas, *Corazon*, *Corazoncito*; *Mosaico Calipso No. 1*, Love in the Cemetery, Honey and *Media Vuelta*, are well known.

* Another good voice was **Leroy Gittens** who, born in Rainbow City, (Colon Canal Zone) in 1931, made his debut in 1955 at the Salon "W" down on Frangipani in the City of Panama. During his successful career, besides having his own TV show in *Buenos Aires*, Argentine "*Magia Negra*", he was contracted to perform in Mexico, where he also had his own TV show besides performing all over the country. Success on TV gained him the pseudonym "*El Chico de Panamá*" (*El negro que dio en el Blanco*).

He was chosen by RPC Channel 4 to represent Panama in the First Festival of Latin Music to be held in Argentine, but transferred to Mexico because of unforeseen problems. There, he won the first prize interpreting "The Last Romantic".

Trying to help other artists, he became a successful entrepreneur promoter of local talent, even importing international artists to perform at local bistros and halls. He is best known for his interpretation of **My Commanding Wife and the Lord's Prayer**.

*Born Isabel Green Harris of Barbadian parents, **Violeta Green** studied music at the National School of Music of Panama. Her artistic career began at the age of 7 singing at all her school's events. Approximately at 14 she was discovered by George "The Baron" Bryan, who presented her at all his activities featuring international artists giving her international and national exposure. She even had her own show on TV -- "*Caravana Camel*".

She entered the Jazz world through Victor Boa, who was of great assistance to her during her career, being her boulder whenever she was in need of support. She alternated with many artists and bands at the Hotel Continental, Hotel El Panama, Boite Maxim's, Club Zebra, Club Union, Panama Seniorial, Club La Mina, Club Florida, Boite Morocco, Boite Royalito, and Club '61' in Colon.

November 2011

***Jazz saxophonist Carlos Garnett** grew up in the Panama Canal Zone; he started playing alto Sax at aged 18, switching to tenor later, performing calypso and Latin music. In 1962 he moved to New York, working with rock groups before his interest in jazz.

Carlos disappeared from the commercial music scene through the 1980s but made a strong comeback in the following decade. Relocating to the Houston area, he started a new band releasing some fine records including "Fuego En Mi Alma", "Under Nubian Skies" and "Moon Shadow". He has performed with the likes of Joe Sample, George Thomas, Rick Porter, David Craig, David Marcellin, Erin Wright, Kyle Turner, Vernon Daniels, Paul English, Brennen Nase, Bob Henschen, Conrad Johnson, Marsha Frazier, Sebastian Whitaker, Joe Carmouche, Al Campbell, Phil Blackman, Carol Morgan, Carl Lott, Mark Townes, Hamilton Loomis, Jerry Johnson, just to mention a few. Carlos continues to play at jazz festivals and as solo artist now that he is back in his country.

Check him out among 100 others at: http://philbrodieband.com/muso_solos_saxophonists.htm He says: "Out of the mango trees of *Paraiso* to world reknown. Wow! HalleluYAH!!!!"

*While Garnett was abroad, the best **Jazz** saxophonist in Panama until he emigrated to the US in the '80s, was Gladstone B. Gordon, better known as **Bat Gordon**, a name which represented Jazz in Panama in those days, was given to him by Claude Haywood, at the beginning of his career.

He began his musical career playing in the Colon Bombero Band under Maestro Molina and the Colon Community Band under Maestro Reginald Prescott.

Born into a musical environment (his father was a violinist), Bat started studying the clarinet at the age of 14. He says: "My musical education was very informal, the more I learned, the more I wanted to learn", therefore, on his own he learned to play the Alto Sax, Tenor Sax and Flute.

He has played with the following combos and orchestras in Panama and abroad: Macombo 5, The Key Men, Metronome Combo, Jazz All Stars, Stone & Gravel. Orchestras: Victor Boa, Victor McDonald, Pipo Navarro & Clarence Martin

JAZZ

By Melvin Brown

*Black people life
Is the theme
and history of Jazz.
There is nothing more
authentically Black
apart from the skin itself.*

*Let us remember the all time greats:
Duke Ellington, Count Basie
Ella Fitzgerald and Organ Master
Jimmy Smith*

*Likewise on the local front
we have Carol Greaves at the Happy Hour,
Rubber legs, Danny and Bat Gordon
with his sentimental Tenor Sax.*

*Victor Boa is the Maestro, and Zaggy
love to do the Bibap (Beebop) Rhythm
so does Flowers.
If Barbara sing in duo
with Violeta Green
Lord it's a Music treasure.
The History of Jazz
is the History of Black People.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gR70XmI2j6w&feature=related> (calypso)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9DjqL3HM2o>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zUQyaMYFds>

* IN CASE YOU KNOW OF ANYONE WHO COULD BENEFIT FROM THESE OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE CIRCULATE-
AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCES - (Contributed by Joe French)

1. Wake Forest university has an opportunity for minority students to attend its MBA program for FREE, and so far, the response has been very poor. Please pass along this opportunity to your friends, families. This is a great school and a tremendous opportunity to attend a top graduate school.

See the details below the contract person is:

Derrick S. Boone, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Marketing, Rm. 3139, Worrell Professional Center, Babcock Graduate School of Management - Wake Forest University - Winston Salem N.C. 27109-8738 email: derrick.boone@mba.wfu.edu or visit www.wfu.edu Phone number toll free (866) 925-3622.

2. Black male Teachers needed. Do you know any black Males who are seniors in high school who want to go to college out of state for FREE? The CALL ME MISTER program offered by 4 historical black colleges in South Carolina, Benedict College, Chafin University, Morris College and South Carolina State University.

Details online application visit www.callmemister.clemson.edu/index.html or Call 1-800-640-2657.

3. Harvard University is offering free tuition to families of HONOR STUDENTS and their income is less than \$125,000 per year.

Visit www.fao.fas.harvard.edu or call 1-617-495-1581.

4. Syracuse University School of Architecture is desperately seeking young women and men of color interested in pursuing a 5 yr. Professional degree in Architecture.

Contact: mark Robbins, Dean School of Architecture, 201 Slocum Hall, Syracuse, NY 13244-1250 or go online at www.soasyr.edu/index.php

5. A free pair of eyeglasses from Target for any child ages 12 and under who brings a valid prescription for glasses from their doctor. You can find stores with optical departments at www.target.com

6. APPLY NOW - If you have/know young adults between the ages of 18-31 with a High School Diploma. Can earn up to \$100,000 and earn benefits. The Federal Aviation Association is taking application for Air Traffic Controller School.

* http://www.scholarships4students.com/women_scholarships.htm

***President Obama Donates Scholarships**

- President Obama donates some of his Nobel Prize money to scholarships.

President Obama is one of the 21 U.S. citizens and the fourth U.S. President honored with the Nobel Prize for Peace which is presented by a Norwegian Committee to those who excel in fomenting international harmony and world comfort.

He donated \$125,000 of prize money for master's scholarships in science, technology, engineering and Math. The scholarship will carry his name. Several of the 2-year scholarships have already been won.

There was no *Gamboa* during the days of the Spanish colonists. November 2011
No town at the present location of *Gamboa* was shown on maps of those days.

In this report we are going to get an overview of what happened "down the lines" during the Construction of the Panama Canal. We'll be seeing names of old towns and getting an idea of Trans-Isthmian travel in those days

Gamboa (taken from the 1953 Panama Canal Review) Composed by CZAngel, To be presented in segments.

Until *Gamboa* became the headquarters of the Dredging Division in the fall of 1936, it had, as a town played no important part in Isthmian history, either during the colonial period or the time of the buccaneers. It was not even a railroad stop until about 1911.

There was no *Gamboa* during the day of the Spanish colonists. In its approximate location was a small river town called Santa Cruz which historians believe may have been a place for discharging boats during low stages of the river. Three miles up the *Chagres* was *Las Cruces* where trans-Isthmian travelers of those days changed from boats to *burros* on their way to Panama City.

When the Panama Railroad was built in 1855 its route followed the west bank of the *Chagres* through *Matachin* and *Gorgona*, nearly opposite present *Gamboa*, to the river bridge at *Barbacoas*, 16 miles south of *Gatun*. No town at the present location of *Gamboa* was shown on maps of those days.

As a construction point for Canal work *Gamboa* (which means a tree of the quince family) first came into prominence when the French Canal Company began excavation.

French plans for a sea level canal called for a dam across the *Chagres* River at *Gamboa* to retain the *Chagres* in a large lake while a channel known as the east diversion, carried its waters to the Atlantic.

In 1887 when the French Company switched to a temporary lock canal, they continued planning for a *Gamboa* dam. This would have supplied water for the locks which were to be built at *Bohio Soldado* about 8 miles south of *Gatun* on the Atlantic side and between *La Boca* and *Paraiso* on the Pacific side.

Over the *Chagres* at *Gamboa* the French built a bridge over which materials were hauled across the river and to the nearby spillway. The bridge was about 365 feet long, the north span being a girder about 58 feet long. In a flood in 1890 this girder was carried away and the pier on which the channel end of it rested was tipped. When work on the Panama Railroad relocation bridge at *Gamboa* was started in 1907, the pier was righted and the two truss spans used for construction purposes.

Flood control for the *Chagres*, now provided for by Madden Dam, was an early concern of the American Canal forces when they took over the Canal rights in 1904. A large field party which was sent to look into the possibility of building a dam was abandoned when the lock type canal was decided upon, and plans were made to form *Gatun* Lake by damming the *Chagres* at *Gatun*.

With a lock type canal some provision had to be made to prevent *Culebra*, now *Gaillard*, Cut from flooding from freshets in the *Chagres* River. In 1908 an earth dike was built across the northern end of the Cut, approximately opposite the present location of the penitentiary. During the 1906 flood, the river had risen to 81.6 feet at *Gamboa*, but this was before the dike was built and before the Bas Obispo (about 10 miles north of Pedro Miguel) section of the Cut was completed.

Railroad tracks ran across the top of the dike, originally 73 feet above sea level. When *Gatun* Lake began to fill, in 1912, the top of the dike was raised and strengthened.

On October 10, 1913, the dike was blown up and the lake water permitted to rush into the partly filled Cut. **Details of the dynamiting have been told many times: How President Woodrow Wilson, in his White House office, depressed a lever, relaying electric current over land telegraph to Galveston and submarine cable across the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean to trip a weight attached to the handle of a switch in the Canal Zone. The weight threw the switch and set off the blast. Half an hour or so after the dike was broken a cayuco made the passage through, followed by three launches.**