

# AfroPanamanian Newsletter



*English opens doors. Read the Newsletter*

[www.afropanameniannewsletter.mex.tl](http://www.afropanameniannewsletter.mex.tl)

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

No.3 Vol. V

April 2014

ISSN 23088524



*Daughter of Panamanians:*

*Ursula M. Burns: Xerox CEO*

Anecdotes

Controversy

Poetry

## LOS AMIGOS :

**Por la superación de la Etnia Negra  
(Incorporated to SEAPAT EVENTOS, S.A.)**

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 (R.I.P)**

**Assistant: Ines V. Sealy**

#### MEMBERS

**President  
Roberto L. Alleyne**

**Treasurer  
Fernando A. Goldson**

**Others  
Ines V. Sealy  
Dilsia Alleyne  
Roberto L. Alleyne  
Cecil V. Reynolds**

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*

#### *ADVICE FOR LIFE*

\*\*\*

**Always put yourself  
in others' shoes.**

**If you feel that  
it hurts you,**

**It probably hurts**

**the other person, too.**

*Unknown*

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

*If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please type REMOVE and reply to afropanamaniannewsletter@gmail.com*

January feedback (in reply to “Man smart, woman smartah”)

God may have created man before woman, but there  
is always a rough draft before the masterpiece.

Feb-March feedback

<p>Dear Ines,</p> <p>Thanks for the write up you did in the newsletter concerning me. What a pleasant surprise. That was so kind of you, someone called to tell me about it. I keep all that you send in a folder and refer to them from time to time, especially the poetry.</p> <p>I am back in Michigan and I have to adjust to the cold again, brrrr</p> <p>Keep up the good work.....</p> <p>Gracias, Christina McGrinson</p>	<p><i>You're welcome Christina. Apparently you haven't seen it. For international women's day we try to honor some of our own. The article was pulled from the internet, adjusted to suit. The idea is, it will go down in Panama's history.</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>Hi Ines, That was a great article on <b>Clara O Wattley</b>. She was my 6th grade teacher, and later my geography teacher in high school. Educator extraordinaire and a wonderful lady all around. Thanks again. Keep up the good works. Leo</p> <p><i>Thank you Leo.</i></p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Information on Pharmacy changes for Canal Zone Retirees (*contributed by Mario Small*)  
See the following AXA web page:

[http://www.panamacanalareabenefitplan.com.pa/en/members/member-news/14-04-02/Announcements\\_of\\_New\\_Pharmacies.aspx](http://www.panamacanalareabenefitplan.com.pa/en/members/member-news/14-04-02/Announcements_of_New_Pharmacies.aspx)

**LEARN YOUR VOTING SITE AND TABLE FOR THE ELECTIONS ON MAY 4, 2014:**

(*From Cybernews by Carmela Gobern*)

Verificate para poder votar este 4 de mayo de 2014:

<http://ve.tribunal-electoral.gob.pa/cinteext/Verificate.aspx>

----- **A HEART FULL OF LOVE**

Jamaican woman has 32 kids (*contributed by Mario Small*)

[http://msnvideo.msn.com/?channelindex=3&from=en-us\\_msnhp#/video/5f2def9d-2af3-4476-9a40-c3c39a96aca9](http://msnvideo.msn.com/?channelindex=3&from=en-us_msnhp#/video/5f2def9d-2af3-4476-9a40-c3c39a96aca9)

----- **IDB & JICA** promote finance for renewable energy and energy efficiency in Central America and the Caribbean (*contributed by Theo Chambers*)

[http://prcaribbean.com/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=189:idb-jica-to-promote-renewable-energy-and-energy-efficiency-in-central-america-and-the-caribbean&Itemid=256](http://prcaribbean.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=189:idb-jica-to-promote-renewable-energy-and-energy-efficiency-in-central-america-and-the-caribbean&Itemid=256)

-----

Find articles and videos of afrolatinos all over the American continent at: <http://afrolatin@project.org/>

-----

**HE LEFT US “HOLDING THE BAG”.**

When Jose “Cheo” Feliciano crashed his car the morning of April 16, 2014 he left Panamanians “holding the bag”, since he was scheduled to sing, once more, with Oscar De Leon, in Panama on April 30.

Panama is a country he loved dearly, which he considered a second home, for which he had written several songs, and in which one of his sons still lives. May he rest in peace.

**Helping to fix Panama: continuation of “We put the cart before the horse” coming from 2013**

**No cars imported for 5 years. What???**

by Ines V. Sealy  
December 31, 2013

Traffic jams are everywhere,  
don't you see the need for care?  
While you are sitting in line waiting,  
on both sides there are lots with cars selling.

Areas with cars parking  
while their owners are inside working,  
or at the Mall shopping; or eating.  
There are just too many cars in Panama.

Check out the garages in houses  
3 to 5 cars parked there poses  
1 for each member of the family  
and 1 extra, in case of calamity.

Some over and underpasses have been built  
to correct the troublesome situation,  
some relief has come to the public  
from all this traffic jam complication.

The traffic engineers granted by the State,  
to, better traffic movement create.  
Where may they be?  
Doing some menial job for a fee.

5 years no cars imported  
selling off those already accepted  
(for sale, sitting in lots here & there)  
would alleviate the crush  
of traffic when comes time to rush.

--0--

**“THE LAW”**

by *Albert Ward*  
from his book *HUMAN* 1959

To be within the law,  
One has to be guided  
By remote control,  
Just like a human robot  
Operated by the unseen  
Hand of destiny.

**ROADS**

by Ines V. Sealy  
March 29, 2014

A country that wants to import tourism  
must provide the proper infrastructure.  
We are going towards the first world  
but, backward in providing roads to get there.

We build hotels & motels here and there  
but the roads are intransitable if you want to go  
anywhere,  
Beds & preparations are ready  
but no clients to keep it steady.

In the metropolis there's the new bus system  
and the new subway  
They are setting lanes for busses only  
but the asphalt in the lanes is so hole-ly

Both urban and rural  
bad roads spoil vehicles` parts and tires  
Airports in all the provinces  
unequipped for their uses.

Wholesale & retail handicraft producers  
prepared for sales that are not forthcoming  
Traffic jams and protesters  
causing problems from early morning.

Well, what do you expect?  
What is the prospect?  
In this country where,  
the cart is put before the horse?

-0-

**Progress?**

by Ines V. Sealy  
3/26/2014

In this the year 2014  
Panama is back in the year 1906  
The Canal is in full expansion  
But our health is back to Yellow fever  
Malaria & Tuberculosis.

Panama could probably use another Gorgas  
to once more eradicate these illnesses & mosquitoes  
maybe even dengue  
to save the lives of our John Public  
while our authorities are busy playing politics.

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

**Welcome To The Largest Online Scholarship Directory!** (Contributed by Dr. Marco Belizaire)

<http://www.scholarshipsonline.org/>

The site features the latest scholarships, education grants, and financial aid opportunities. Every year, more than \$50 billion dollars in such college funding is given away by corporations, organizations, and government agencies.

-----

**Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Foundation offers scholarships in Barbados.** (contributed by Sharon & Theo Chambers)

These awards are available in four categories, including the commemorative Arley Sobers and Audrey Palmer Hawks scholarships, named after outstanding past senior leaders of the CTO. Citizens of CTO member countries are being invited to apply for the annual scholarships and grants.

Since 1998 the CTO Foundation has provided 89 major scholarships and 124 study grants to deserving Caribbean nationals... Its main aim is to provide scholarships and study grants to students and industry personnel who are Caribbean nationals, from CTO-member countries, who wish to pursue studies in the areas of tourism/hospitality and language training.

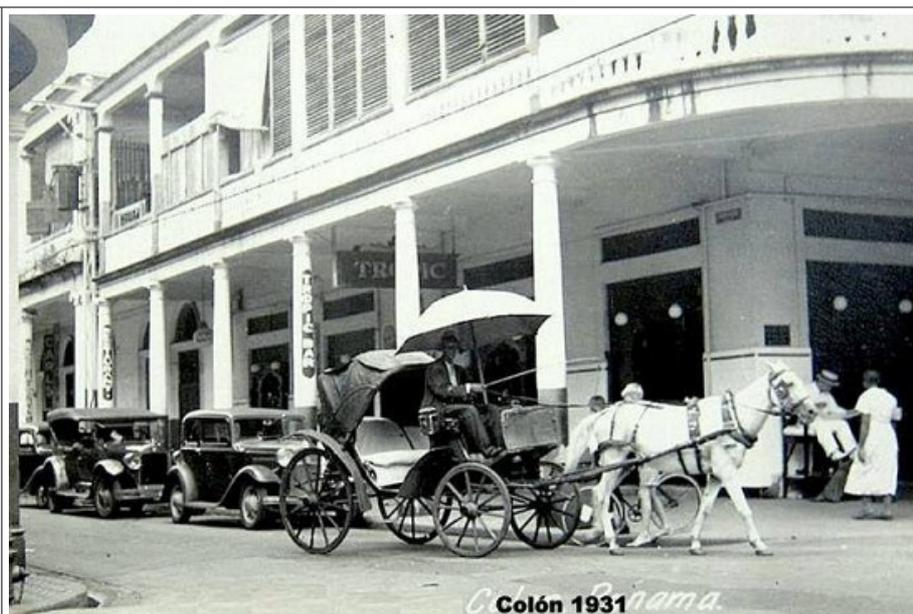
*AfroPanamanian Newsletter would suggest that Panamanian scholarship organizations join up or network with this Foundation for the benefit of young people.*

*Study can be done at a distance (correspondence courses):*

Scholarship recipient, Kerwin Hinson of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Tourism Authority is currently pursuing a Professional Marketing qualification via distance learning through the Professional Institute of Marketing and Business Studies in Trinidad. He praised the programme stating, "Receiving this award will help me to achieve my set goals for both my personal and career development. I am grateful to the staff of the SVG Tourism Authority for their continuous support and the CTO Foundation for making me the 2013 recipient of the Audrey Palmer Hawks Scholarship."

CTO has offices in Barbados, New York and London. Interested persons are invited to visit [www.OneCaribbean.org](http://www.OneCaribbean.org) for details on the scholarships and grants, as well as instructions on how to apply. *CTO can be followed on the networks.*

**DISSAPEARING THINGS:**



Colón Panama.  
HORSE & BUGGY

April 2014

*Being 2014 the celebration of 100 years of the opening of the Panama Canal, here is a plea prepared by Professor Charles L. Barton (R.I.P.) from his sick bed. In this article, dated 1997, we are emphasizing our sincere conviction that a public manifestation should be awarded on the part of the **Government of the Republic of Panama to the West Indians who dug the Panama Canal**; if one of the Panamanian governments does something about it, Prof. Barton will probably be able to rest in his grave:* PANAMA WILL HIGHLY REGARD HER 5-MAN CANAL STORY

LONG AFTER THE YEAR 2000:

Frenchman, Colombian, North American, Panamanian, West Indian

by Charles L. Barton (R.I.P)

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the world dreamt of a canal waterway across Central America. Nearing the close of that century, the plucky Frenchmen discarded the dream and negotiated with the Colombians to cut a waterway across his protectorate country, the isthmus of Panama.

With a handful of West Indians and lots of money, the Frenchmen made an attempt at a canal, but soon failed to make headway.

Very early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Panamanians gained independence from Colombia and negotiated with the North Americans to construct a waterway across the Isthmus of Panama.

We should mention here that small groups of laborers from other cultures such as the Chinese, also arrived in Panama to offer their services.

But these laborers, very soon after realized that they could not endure the rigorous labor conditions, the deadly jungle diseases and the devastating yellow fever. Thousands died and others return home.

After about ten years of hazardous labor and enormous sacrifices of human blood, with thousands of West Indian lives lost, the North Americans successfully constructed a lock canal in Panama.

Now that we can base our argument here upon the facts presented in the previous paragraphs, we feel quite proud in discussing the recognition, the gratitude and compensation so rightfully earned by the West Indian canal builders.

We are emphasizing our whole-hearted convictions and make bold to say that without the courageous participation of West Indians, with the tremendous loss of their lives, the canal now owned by Panama forever, would not have been built.

The canal construction was a stupendous undertaking. It was a transaction between nations which will become, after the year 2000, an international concern with the government of Panama on the one hand and the rest of the world on the other.

It is also quite necessary to mention how the North Americans, as bosses on the canal construction jobs, were the eye-witnesses of the peril and the suffering of the West Indian laborers.

And so much so that after the opening of the canal and at least during the past sixty years of canal operations, the North Americans have been making positive gestures of gratitude to West Indian survivors. We are aware that the federal government of the United States and their civil institutions have been very considerate of the West Indian survivors and their dependents.

At the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Panama is officially declared as the sovereign owner and the total beneficiary of the canal.

However, such a declaration of ownership did not mention any specific redress nor compensation, neither has recognition been awarded publicly (by the Government of Panama) to the renown and world-famous builders, **the West Indians**.

... A few years ago, the grand-children of West Indians, born in the Republic of Panama, began to subscribe generously toward erecting a West Indian Museum in Panama. Such a gesture will pay tribute to their grand-parents and only be considered as a family blood relationship.

**In other words, the Government of Panama, potential owner of the Canal, should visibly recognize the heroic contributions of the West Indians, which finally brought total benefits to the Republic of Panama.**

*He felt that the monument should be inscribed:*

DEDICATED BY THE  
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

“In national recognition of the immeasurable  
contribution of West Indians to the construction of the Panama Canal”.

*Among the outstanding jazz musicians featured in the November 2011 issue of the AfroPanamanian Newsletter, in celebration of St. Cecilia (Musician's) Day,*

**Gladstone B. Gordon**



*Gladstone "Bat" Gordon was included, highlighting his musical career, but now that he has passed on March 19, 2014 with his devoted wife Stephanie at his side, we want to fill in the personal side to his biography taken from his obituary:*

"Bat" was born in Colon, the Republic of Panama on November 22, 1927, Gladstone, the last of four children born to Joseph and Hilda Gordon, West Indians, grew up in Fort Randolph, Canal Zone.

He graduated from Silver City Junior High School attended Normal School in La Boca and acquired an A.A. degree in Business Administration from Florida State University, Albrook Field, Canal Zone.

On March 29, 1952 Gladstone was united in marriage to Stephanie. From that union they were blessed with 2 sons Gregorio and Gervasio.

In 1980 Gladstone retired as Administrative Officer from Panama Canal Engineering and Construction Division, migrating to the United States in 1985, he resided with his family in Freeport, Long Island for many years.

*This part of the biography is important for ancestry researchers to find roots and relatives.*

Gladstone was pre-deceased by his parents, sisters: Merlin, Hazel and brother Bertram.

Beside his immediate family, Bat will be missed by: cousins Joy Lawson, PancyMay Scroggins, sisters-in-law, Elnora Gordon, Genevieve McPherson; in-laws Ezra and Eusebia Dove, Roberta and Peter Bayard; nieces Lydia Isaacs, Paula Franklin; nephews Felipe Gordon, Marcelino Gordon, Carlos Skeete, Alfonso Gordon, Rogelio Gordon, Orlando Gordon, Pierre Lazarus, relatives and many friends.

**Writer's Day April 25**

*Lots of people would like to write their bio, would like to get it published. They have ideas they may have written down on paper, but are afraid to even try to publish.*

*Obtaining information to write what is past, is very tedious and time consuming. The sources are far apart and not easily accessible. For Mario Molina to obtain the facts he records in his book LA TRAGEDIA DEL COLOR EN EL PANAMA COLONIAL 1501-1821, he had to travel to the archives in Colombia. Language is another barrier. To be extensively read, both languages are indispensable so that English-speaking avid readers and Spanish-speaking obligated readers may have access to the information offered.*

*Schools are of no help when it comes to promoting a book. Its content could be the best, but the teachers do not promote reading as a basic part of education. Textbooks and workbooks are the fare for the schools these days. Research has now even been relegated to downloading something from the internet and printing it out to turn it in. Check to see if they even read one of the paragraphs, **Surprise!!!** One way or another.*

*Even Theses have been almost ousted from graduation from the University, since they have to be defended.*

*But, as parents, even if reading is not promoted at school, at home we can promote it by making the books available or by setting aside a time for reading. There are so many distractions these days: work schedules, TV, computer, laptop, tablet, games, there is no time for togetherness. The living room has become the TV room, or, each room has its TV, or each member has his/her laptop, tablet. We even communicate with each other sitting side by side, on the internet. We don't really need each other anymore. **How many still have at least one meal together at the table?***

*When we went to school, the books that were available to us were to be found in the few libraries that existed, and to read them one had to spend time in the library. But with so many things going on these days, who has time to spend, seated in a library? Prices were always a determinant, whether to buy a book or to buy food. But within ones budget, if one becomes serious about reading, a small amount can be set aside for the purchase of at least one book per fortnight, making the effort to read it. There could be a time for group discussions of what has been read.*

- *These sessions may inspire our young people to be writers.*
- *Making publishing a little more accessible could also help.*
- *Encouragement and guidance from us old fogies could be used to pave the way for more research and writing.*

*(Contributed by Juan Fagette - Excerpted from Ms. Burns' Biographies)*

**Ursula M. Burns** (born September 20, 1958) serves as Chairman and CEO of Xerox. Defining herself today, she says, "I'm Ursula Burns, mother of two and wife of a great guy. I happen to be the CEO of Xerox Corporation and the chairman of the board."

According to a Forbes report, Burns was a wizard with numbers from a young age.

Looking toward college, and the need to pick a major, she went to her school's library one day to look up top-paying jobs for people with math or science degrees. From there she plotted her course to a degree in mechanical engineering, and attended Polytechnic Institute of New York and graduate school at Columbia University, defying the teachers who had been steering her toward a more traditional career in nursing or teaching.

Ursula graduated from college nearly 30 years ago, when "women CEOs were non-existent" and "black women CEOs were unimaginable," as she told this spring's graduating class at Rochester Institute of Technology.

"I can assure you that at my commencement, no one was pointing at me and predicting that I would become CEO of anything," she said. The audience had to laugh.

Just a day before, Burns had been named CEO of not just any company, but **Xerox (XRX)**, a \$17 billion industry leader. She moved into the top spot in July, taking over from Anne Mulcahy, who had led the firm for eight years. With the change, Burns became the first black woman to be named CEO of a Fortune 500 company. The transition also marked the first time a woman CEO had stepped aside and named another woman as her successor.

Burns started at Xerox in 1980, when she took a summer intern position in the company's engineering department. She then used her brains and what insiders called a "no-nonsense New York" attitude to work her way to the C-suite, overseeing several areas of the company -- engineering, manufacturing, product development, and marketing -- along the way.

But the distinguishing traits of Burns' corporate rise didn't end there. As the press prepared biographies of the new leader, they uncovered a success story remarkably different from that of her predecessor: Where Malachy, the daughter of a New York publishing house editor, had grown up in a middle-class Long Island, New York, home, Burns had spent her early years on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in a low-income housing project called The Baruch Houses

Surprisingly, Burns has been known to talk about her early life in the projects with some fondness. In those days, the idea of high-density subsidized housing was still new, and the experiment held some promise.

The daughter of Panamanian parents, Burns was raised by a single mother, she was one of three children who shared two absentee fathers. To pay the bills and send her children to Catholic school, Burns' mother, Olga, ran an at-home daycare center and took in ironing.

Speaking to a YWCA Women Empowering Women lunch in Rochester, Burns said:

"We were poor, for sure, but we didn't know it. We just didn't have a clue how much trouble my mom was having raising us three, which I thought was the miracle of this amazing woman."  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0ITK4xN87k>

"She gave us courage. She gave us will and love. I can still hear her telling me that where you are is not who you are. If you're in a bad place, it's only temporary and shouldn't change the core value of what you can bring to the world."

