

FLANKER DIGEST

Thanks NCB

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Christmas came early this year for the Flanker Peace and Justice Centre, particularly persons who use the Cyber Centre. On Saturday December 6, 2008 the National Commercial Bank (NCB) Foundation and Digicel Rising Stars Khalil, made good on their commitment to donate ten new computers to the community facility.



The donation brought cheers and smiles of appreciation from the approximately 100 children and parents who were in attendance at the handing over ceremony.

In addition to the handing over ceremony, the kids participated in workshops facilitated by the NCB staff and members of Khalil. The workshops generated discussion on various pertinent and timely topics. These included conflict management, violence prevention, sexual reproductive health, healthy lifestyles and HIV/AIDS.



Community youngsters using their new computers

The NCB Foundation also ensured that the participants were adequately refreshed for the entertainment that ensued.

In true Rising Stars fashion members of the community Marching Band and the Performance and Creative Arts Group thrilled the audience with music, song, drama, speech and dance. Not to be outdone, members of the NCB Foundation got into the act displaying their many talents. It was the dance-off between the community youths and the NCB team that drew the biggest cheers, with the home team stealing the show.

The highlight of the evening was however Khalil. The crowd favourite could do nothing wrong as diehard fans screamed for more. The group sang and danced up a storm with the audience harmonizing and rocking to every line. Overall, it was an 'edutaining' day and one that the kids will remember in more ways than one. Kudos to the NCB Foundation and Khalil.

Senior Citizens' Christmas Treat - By Tonya Pratt

The community senior citizens' christmas luncheon and treat was held on the grounds of the Flanker Peace and Justice Centre on the December 17, 2008.

The annual event, which was hosted by the Centre with the kind assistance of our local community business sector and representatives, brightened the holiday

season for 35 members of the Senior Citizens' Club.



Tonya interacting with seniors at luncheon

The seniors were served by volunteers from the community and members of the G-SAT/Homework Club. After partaking in a three course meal, gifts and grocery bags were issued to individual seniors accompanied by a hug and kiss from the staff and volunteers.

The final segment of the treat was an entertainment package, care of the community marching band. Seniors could be seen dancing and cheering on the band members in appreciation of their effort.

Flanker Peace and Justice Centre treats Staff and Volunteers

The Flanker Peace and Justice Centre celebrated its staff and volunteers by treating them to an unforgettable evening of fine dining and entertainment. The evening was also shared by well-wishers and supporters of the Centre and its activities.

On Wednesday December 17, 2008 the Brewery on Montego Bay's Hip Strip served as the venue for the Centre's first staff party.



Mrs. Nash exchange gifts with some Centre staff

The semi-formal, casually elegant event got on the way at 7:30pm with blessings from pastor Bracket and remarks from Mrs. Nash. Mayor of Montego Bay and councilor for the Flanker Division, Charles Sinclair and the representative from the Police Mobile Reserve brought greetings and best wishes. All the speakers highlighted the tremendous work being done by the Centre and pledged their support to its growth and continuation.



The Mayor and the director enjoying a dance

After the fine dining, the party moved into full swing with non-stop dancing accompanied by colourful animation. The dancing went unabated until midnight. Obviously pleased with the eve-

ning's proceedings, patrons demanded that a more regular recreation timetable be developed for the staff and volunteers of the Centre.

Christmas Treat Round-up

One of the obvious implications of the current financial squeeze was the poor support given to community Christmas treats this year. Many annual treats in the community were cancelled, scaled down or merged into other events.

Sandals Montego Bay annual treat was the most anticipated and the most missed as they scaled-down their efforts. The Flanker Peace and Justice Centre had to merge its Christmas treat with existing activities to get the event traction and support.

Pele Drive had the most outstanding treat despite suffering from similar challenges. While the offerings were not in abundance, the entertainment provided almost compensated for that short fall. The kids played in a foam pit and bounce-a-bout, and were presented with a stage show filled with fun and excitement.

While the season of treats was a disappointment to many of the children, the general sentiment was that of understanding and optimism for future events.

Christmas Day in Flanker

From Providence Heights to Red Dirt and everywhere in between, the Flanker Community was buzzing with activities on Christmas day. Christmas in Flanker is synonymous with cooking. The

pots were bubbling from as early as 6 a.m. in some areas. Many were awakened from their slumber with the sweet aroma of peas boiling in coconut milk, seasoned with escallion and thyme. The sorrel, which would have already been made, was just about fermented for the grand day. Also awaiting consumption was the Christmas fruity cake again being fermented with Jamaica white rum.

As the pots simmered many headed out to the beach. Others played football in the streets or table games on the roadside. However, the most popular leisure activity on Christmas day was hanging out with friends 'pon di corner'. The hanging out exercise usually includes a combination of music, drinking, conversation and laughter.

With the clock winding down to dinner time, people began moving around from pot to pot getting their appetites wetted by the wide range of pickings. If I were to act as judge and say which cooking took the trophy this year, the prize would have to go to Valrie at Headquarters.

This Christmas was more tranquil than previous years. The focus was on the quality of the activities as opposed to flamboyance. This witnessed a less hectic and more thoughtful Christmas where one could truly say 'tis the season to be jolly'.

Flanker Digest is a monthly publication with the aim of reporting on the issues and activities in the community. It is a free newsletter edited and compiled by the Youth Crime Watch of Flanker under the auspices of the Flanker Peace and Justice Centre.