

## EDITORIAL



Dr. HUBERT MINNIS  
PM

### All Hands On Deck



FREDERICK MCALPINE  
MP

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### YOUR WEATHER

**84°F**  
Mostly cloudy and breezy with showers and a thunderstorm

SUNRISE: 7:08 a.m.  
SUNSET: 6:58 p.m.  
HIGH TIDE: 7:21 a.m. - 7:43 p.m.  
LOW TIDE: 1:12 a.m. - 1:32 p.m.  
WINDS: ESE at 00 mph

See Page 10 for full round-up

## PLAYTIME SPORTS

Explorer's Way, Freeport  
Telephone 351-6935

*National Heroes' Day Sale*  
**STARTS TODAY**  
**15% OFF STOREWIDE**

DO NOT FORGET OUR SALE TABLE 25% - 50% OFF  
SALE ENDS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2017

**BUSINESS HOURS: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.** LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

# Deteriorating conditions

## Local attorneys 'raise the bar' on state of Garnet Levarity Justice Center

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**BAD CONDITION** – Local attorneys continue to voice concerns over the state of the Garnet Levarity Justice Center.

(Photos: Jenneva Russell)

The Garnet Levarity Justice Centre, the local courthouse in Freeport, has been a prominent landmark in the city for a number of years; however, the deterioration of the physical structure remains a growing concern for those who utilize the building on a regular basis.

Recently, *this daily* had the opportunity to discuss the state of the government building with several attorneys, who frequent the building for their professional duty in the judicial system.

Noted attorney Carlson Shurland said that the current condition of the courthouse is indeed an "eyesore" and must be addressed in the shortest time frame possible, as it leaves a bitter taste in the mouths of both locals and guests to the island.

He noted that the apparent lack of respect and attention given to not only the government buildings, "but that of our entire judicial system as well.

"I am looking at the physical structure of this courthouse and it is so embarrassing. I do not blame the present government, I blame the previous government, but I am not sure that I can blame them either. I believe another entity has a role in how these buildings are maintained. I remember when it was first built, it was almost considered the flagship of how Family Island courts should look," said Shurland.

Admitting that the building has endured Hurricane Matthew as well other hurricanes in the past, Shurland said that he is of the view that if continuous preventative maintenance was performed the courthouse may very well, not be in the state in which it is today.

"What is really disturbing to me is that the air condition in the Supreme Court has not been working for quite some time and now the Registry closes at 1:00 p.m. every day, because the air condition is not working," Shurland alleged. "Even that is a cost prohibitive way to operate, simply because you have people coming to work from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., if you look at the trade off in terms of salaries. "Tourists pass on this Mall Drive, the tour buses bring them

by the courts and what are they looking at? They are looking at a building that looks like it really and truly needs to be demolished and rebuilt again. That is embarrassing, not only for Grand Bahamians, but it represents the entire Bahamas – in terms of how we maintain our public buildings," the attorney maintained.

Asked about his recommendations to the growing state of the courthouse, Shurland responded, "My recommendations to the government is to get some engineers in here to look at this building and decide what is necessary, and allocate the resources, financial and otherwise, to have this building brought back to the standard that it once was.

"This is a beautiful building, once it is fixed. There are all kinds of rotten wood, the columns are exposed, ceilings are falling in, weeds are growing all around the building, the landscape is a mess. Everything about this building has to be re-configured, in order to make it presentable.

"A little bit of paint, carpentry, landscaping work, it is all cosmetic. As it is, it is a total and complete eyesore. I am embarrassed to even be a part of this building. I am not embarrassed to be a part of the judicial system, I am embarrassed to be a part of this building, because when I am leaving, sometimes, I see the tour buses coming by and I see people taking pictures. "I'm thinking, this is something that is going to be all over the world, persons will say, 'look at how The Bahamas takes care of their edifices that are so important in their rule of law and as a democratic society.'"

Local attorney and former Senator in the Christie-led Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) administration, Tanisha Tynes, said that she too would like to see the courthouse transformed and the upkeep of the physical structure maintained.

She noted that the present state of the building does indeed paint a negative light on public buildings throughout the island. Tynes is also of the view that it

will leave a bitter taste for many, with respect to the internal proceedings within the courthouse and the judicial system.

"As a country, we have a bad record when it comes to the maintenance of our buildings. This building was first constructed by the GBPA and then handed over to the government of The Bahamas. From then, until now, there has been little ongoing maintenance and it has always been patch work.

"Now, we are at the state where you can see that we are at with pipes being exposed, windows are boarded up when there are individuals who are claustrophobic, who work inside the building," she claimed.

"The air conditioning system sometimes is working, sometimes is not. We need a better system and I am calling on The Ministry of Works to maintain our government buildings. The buildings can be beautiful ... when the tourists come, it will be a great conversational topic for the tour guides. (Continued on Page 2)



CARLSON SHURLAND  
Attorney



GLENDIA SWEETING  
GBPA Business Development Officer

## GBP VPA motivated by CCEI Program and Blue Marlin Project

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Grand Bahama Principals Vice Principals Association (GBP VPA) members recently held a general meeting at the Sir Charles Hayward Children's Library, where they discussed several pertinent topics inclusive of the Grand Bahama Port Authority CCEI Program and the Blue Marlin Project.

On hand for the meeting was Gia Walker, GBP VPA President;

District Superintendent for East Grand Bahama Yvonne Ward as well as GBPA Business Development Officer, Glendia Sweeting and VKR Insights Principle Valdez K. Russell, who elaborated on the growing success of both the CCEI Program and Blue Marlin Project among high school students across the length and breadth of the local community.

Presenting the facts surrounding the CCEI Program Sweeting stated, "The CCEI Program, which began last year was indeed a tremendous success, as

we received great support from the Grand Bahama Principals Vice Principals Association (GBP VPA).

"Our team would have worked closely with principals and teachers from high schools across Grand Bahama training them and driving the CCEI Program throughout the year.

"By the time graduation arrived this past June just over 600 certifications would have been achieved by students throughout the community, which has been a phenomenal effort by everyone (Continued on Page 2)