

Local News

Freetown's Cha Cha Festival set for June 6-9

Freetown will host a Cha Cha Festival on June 6-9.

According to Angela Munnings, chairman of the Cha Cha Committee, "the objectives of the Festival are economic empowerment for the residents."

The event will feature a family reunion type setting with families and old scholars so as to "culturally sensitize other people, particularly our youth about our past," said Munnings.

She added that the Cha Cha Festival was named after the Thatch-heart, which is a component in the thatch tree. "This thatch-heart has an eatable substance that can be eaten as a raw product or with a salad. The thatch from the cha-cha can be used for decoration and also for plaiting and other art and craft products such as hats, baskets, fans etc."

The four-day event will commence with a bonfire and fish-fry on Friday, June 6. It will feature a children's yard ring play, rake 'n' square, storytelling, the quadrille, home cooking, native breads and tarts, nature tours, scullin' contest, games and fun for the family. The Cha Cha salad will also be featured, along



CHA CHA FESTIVAL – A Cha Cha Festival will be held in Freetown June 6-9. Pictured above at the press conference yesterday announcing the event are Ministry of Tourism representative Renamae Symonette, second from left and Festival Committee members.

with cakes, hats and tea.

On June 7, the event is expected to be officially opened by Tourism Minister Obie Wilchcombe and on Sunday, June 8, a worship experience will be held at Zion Baptist Church, Freetown.

Following the service, the public will be entertained by various church choirs, plays and storytelling. On Monday, June 9, the festivities will climax with entertainment by the Harbour Boys Junkanoo group.

Ministry of Tourism's

Renamae Symonette, said that the ministry sees great potential for the event.

"Cha...Cha...Freetown is now joining other communities to begin the journey for an improved Grand Bahama product," she said. "We want to get away from

inviting our visitors to attend cookouts, instead, we want our visitors to sample our food and drinks, to show them our dance and to have them listen to our music. Presentation is extremely important.

"Our mission is to create,

sell and deliver world-class experiences. Our tourism offices overseas promote a Bahamian experience, therefore, we must deliver. We invite you, the public to support Cha...Cha...and all of our community events," said Symonette.

Spelling Bee champ arrives in Washington

(From Page 1)

definitely spending some time studying Latin root, Latin Greek, the roots of words and their origins. We're also doing a lot of practice with the written test," said Rolle-Forbes.

She expressed her gratitude to the National Coach, Patronella Rolle, who also assisted greatly in preparing Joanne for the competition.

"We've really been pushing it. I think she is as ready as she will ever be. We watched last year's competition. It's not like you have a known list and you know where the words are going to come from, and even in my research of the material I got from Washington, there's a percentage of luck in it as to which word you will get," said Rolle-Forbes.

"But we've tried to cover all bases as far as possible. Our aim and goal is to win; and if we do not win, we definitely want to go the farthest The Bahamas has ever been before," she said.

"That is our hope and that is what we are working towards, but at the same time, I don't want her to feel so uptight and tense that if she does not win, she'll get so if we're not pleased with whatever her performance is," she said.

Freeport native releases debut mix CD

Leave it to a Bahamian to do something innovative that both confuses and intrigues the American music industry. While most of his peers in the US DJ community are releasing albums of techno music, full of studio tricks and computer effects, Freeport native, Patrick Rodgers, has turned his back on that approach completely. Better known to the American nightclub scene as DJ Ferret, Rodgers chose instead to release an album of quiet, relaxed trip-hop music; stranger still, he opted not to mix the song together as is customary with DJ releases - an unusual choice for his first release.

"I don't consider myself a musician," said Rodgers. "If I could make music, I would, but since I can't, I won't be

arrogant enough to disturb the songs that these musicians have created. Their music speaks for itself, just the way they recorded it." Bands from around the world submitted music for the first DJ Ferret release, which is titled, "DJ Ferret Presents Noir: Smooth Female Trip Hop," and is due in stores soon. Those who ultimately made the cut came from Japan, Russia, England and across the USA.

The term "trip-hop" was coined to describe a style of music that began in England with bands such as Massive Attack, Portishead and Tricky. The music grabbed the public's attention by blending elements of hip hop, jazz and electronics to a slower tempo, often fronted by haunting female vocals. The most

notable breakout song from the trip-hop genre was Portishead's "Sour Times" (Nobody Loves Me), which layered the sultry voice of Beth Gibbons over dark music that sounded as if it came straight from a James Bond film.

Of "Noir: Smooth Female Trip Hop," Rodgers says, "it's music for relaxing, for quiet moments. The female vocals definitely lend an element of sensuality to it, but it's very respectable. It's music that I know young men will want to play for their lady friends, but I also know that my parents, who still live in Lucaya, will have nothing to scold me about when they get their copy."

Asked about his atypical choices for a debut release,

Rodgers recalled, "at the Grammy Awards this year, so many of the nominees that we saw on stage were not really doing anything different or unusual, musically speaking. Many of the people around us got up to get drinks or check their cellphone messages during the performances, but nobody went anywhere when Noah Jones was on stage. Everyone respected the fact that she made music that was not considered "commercial," yet she achieved success. Afterwards, I spoke with many attendees who repeated that they were tired of the industry duplicating itself over and over again. Since I had the same complaint, I thought I would put my money where my mouth is and try something unexpected."

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