

KOTCH

CARIBBEAN

The Magnificence of
the Notre Dame Basilica

ANALYSIS OF T&T
2015 BUDGET

Recipes from
South Africa

JUMBY BAY
ANTIGUA

A GLIMMER
OF LIGHT ON
THE DARK
CONTINENT

Desi
THE ORGAN DOG

+

AN INTERVIEW WITH
Safiya Byars

**BEST PRACTICES WHEN APPLYING FOR
IMMIGRATION BENEFITS**

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Publisher's Note

Fellow Caribbeans:

Even as we continue our steady climb to a more robust economy in America, there is still much bemoaning of the manipulation and strategy used to control the distribution of wealth by the Federal Bank. That grumbling is combined with what is thought to be subliminal messaging from the Illuminate, and the outstanding but relatively few mascots that the media continue to bring to our attention as a signal of Black progress and high achievements.

The commonality in lyrics of certain songs are from dictates, I gather, which pay homage to the "gate keepers" of wealth, and further, the dumbing down of an unaware global society whose dreams and perspective remain elusive or stand far removed from their own true vision of self and life experience. Also, there are those whose miseducation is deeply skewed toward psychological influence and dominance, the continuation of which abuts prayer, while being subliminally fed a supremacy which some believe excludes them, even up to now.

My decision to incorporate the Caribbean into Kotch Magazine may have been superficial, but it is an effort nonetheless more glorious than the basis for federation. It is meant to deepen the understanding of the culture, struggles and triumphs of our islands and their natives; so closely woven, yet with distinctive beliefs, politics and habits inherently different from my own.

Mine, like Trinidad & Tobago, St. Kitts and Barbados among others, is still to some extent, left with the remnants of influence and indoctrination of British colonization that spared nothing in ensuring that we learned

about them, their murders, their debauchery, pillage and rape of nations. These are countries that they would have had us believe didn't exist, or were at best uncivilized to the discerning mind, until discovered by Christopher Columbus, stamped and noted accordingly in history.

Thankfully, we are at a happier more enlightened place from which I can now record more meaningful and current imprints of the lives of our Caribbean family, friends, neighbors or their offspring; near or far, be it eloquent, affluent or rife with joyous achievements in overcoming tests of continuous road blocks to achieve their life's purpose.

Guyana's global ambassador Mike Singh's thought-provoking article on the 2015 T&T Budget in this issue, speaks volumes of a political climate that, at its core, is not unique to T&T. This notion of putting people first or the training and empowering of our human capital seems to be lost on our political administrators. A belief in the proper maintenance of infrastructure and discipline appear to be non-existent, as well.

This has to be the ultimate evidence, from an epistemological standpoint, of brain washing in today's world, more imminent and threatening than that which obtains from the Federal Bank. It leads me to wonder, might I through awareness of my stark reality, willingly embrace such a leadership? For to lose sight of who I am and what I stand for, deems me non-existent.

One Love,

Marlene Daley

KOTCII

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Interview: SAFIYA BYARS

You came to America to school at age 18. What would you say has been your biggest challenge in adjusting to that experience?

Looking back I would have to say the biggest challenge for me and my

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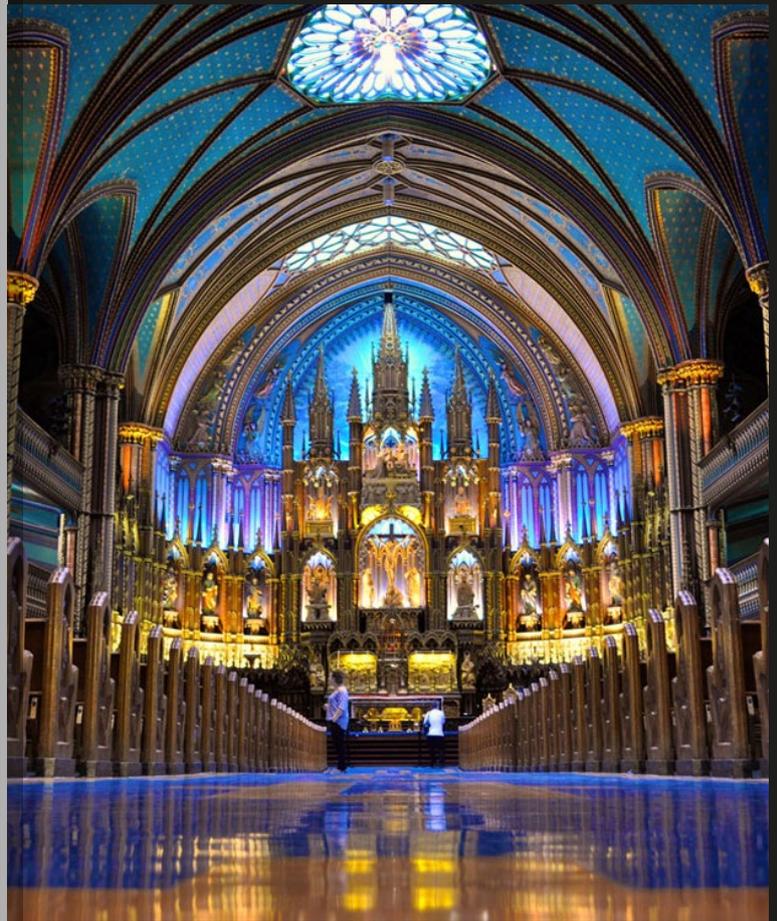
DESI

THE ORGAN DOG

MIRROR SPOTLIGHT

Notre Dame Basilica





The Magnificence of the Notre Dame Basilica

In the summer of 1989, we journeyed to Montreal Canada with excited anticipation of visiting the library at McGill University. It was summertime so despite this being our primary intention, we also wanted to see this historical city that stood apart, not just in architectural magnificence and old world charm, but also being the only French speaking province on this side of



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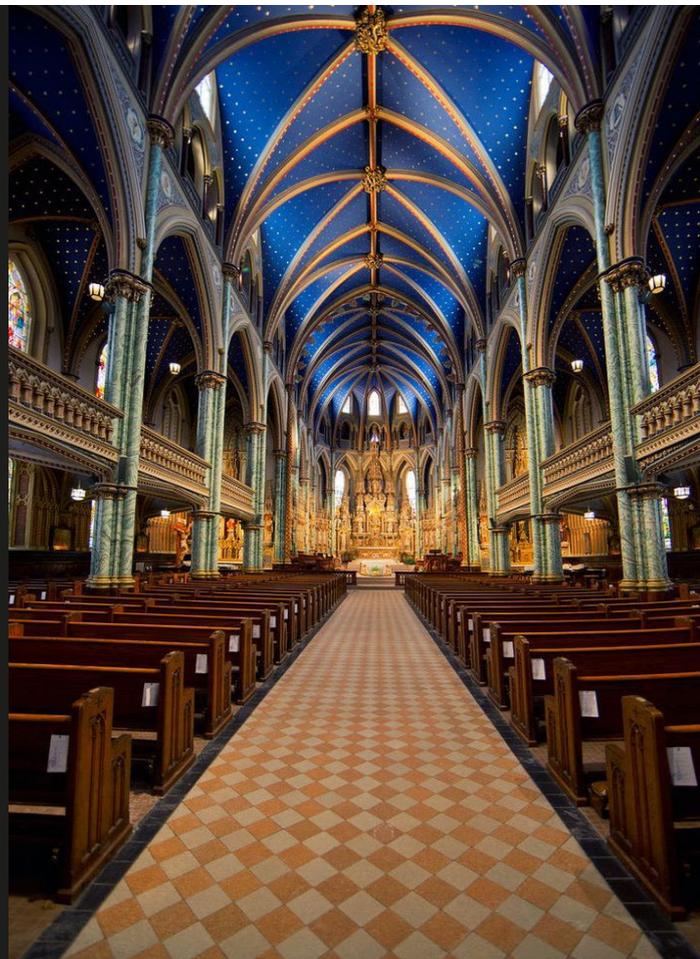


the world. My children and I drove through that part of the campus that was accessible to us but our hopes were dashed as the library and indeed most other areas of the campus were closed.

As we approached the cobblestoned heart of the city we were faced with the imposing structure of the Notre Dame Basilica, standing majestically across the road from us. I had no idea what to expect. Up to then, the most beautiful church I had entered was Scot's Kirk in Jamaica, to which we strutted from St. George's Primary school just up the road, in as uniformed a lined as could be expected of children, for choir practice. At seven years old

the structure loomed just as large as the Basilica did in my adulthood. As an islander I remained open to all new experiences of different cultures and heritage and admired conscious appreciation of preservation in historical statements through architecture.

We ascended the wide steps leading into the church, where, upon entering we were greeted by an enchanting sea of lighted white candles, each representing one of hundreds of charities that the church supported. As the dazzling lights resonated in the depth of my soul, a fleeting



thought led me to hope that that moment of reverence had impacted my children as it did me, for regardless of faith or denomination, I felt the presence of God in the Basilica.

As I continued to look around through teary eyes, the lights gradually diminished from my inner vision and brought the altar into sharper focus. The wonderful backdrop of art intricately inlaid in a profusion of stained glass with images that depicts scriptural passages and artistic expressions of Montreal's rich history was in full view. I noted as well that each pew had carved out heads on the shoulder height extension of the arm rests. My knees answered the call for near prostration as I kneeled in unrushed

prayer at the foot of the altar.

We caught up mid-stream with the guided tour and listened intently to the history of the church. We learned more about the thousands of 24 carat gold stars embellishing the blue vaulted ceiling, the details on Canada's largest sprawling gigantic piped organ, with 7,000 pipes that measure from 32 feet at their largest to ¼ inch at their smallest; and the bell in the west tower that weighs over 11 tons or 24,000 lbs. The acoustics in the church that seats 3,500 people allow voice to be carried without the aid of electronic amplification.

Originally built in the 1600s, this Gothic Revival styled French Canadian Roman Catholic church

was renovated in the 1820s by an Irish Protestant architect whose pride of work converted him to Catholicism and whose body is the only one that has been laid to rest in the crypt there. This is apt, for though its magnificence may be viewed by some as ostentatious there is something that signifies that the quintessential soul of the "creator" stands still.



Marlene Daley is the author of "A 3rd World Awakening" and "Spiritual Prose, Quotes & Notes."





TEST & TUNING



ANALYSIS OF T&T 2015 BUDGET



The recent national budget of Trinidad & Tobago that was unveiled for the Fiscal Year 2015 by the despotic People's Partnership Regime, is rivaled only in sheer size by that of The Civilian Conservation Corp that came into being during the year of the Great Depression in the United States in 1933. By then, the US President Franklin D. Roosevelt deemed it as part of his 'New Deal' policies. This specific presidential initiative came into being as a way to combat national unemployment across the United States during the 1930s and this included the large scale development of a number of national parks and public works, which later

on benefitted the nation as it laid the foundation for the modern US National Highway System.

The advent of World War II also saw the need for a significant rise in labor as the men went off to fight against the axis powers of Germany, Italy and Japan, wherein many women were forced to go out and work in factories, farms and even join the military as the collective war effort warranted. This led to further industrialization of the United States and Canada and cemented the role of women in the modern workforce thereby giving way to equal pay and a host of other important changes in today's workplace.



Trinidad & Tobago has never gone to war as an independent nation and could not withstand a full scale military invasion as most Trinbagonians are a party people with a debilitating carnival mindset more so inclined to dodge a few Carib bottles at a fete versus dodging a few bullets.

This is indicative of the cavalier attitude to national development and the notorious penchant for “mas and bacchanal” that have taken over the collective mind, body and soul of the nation. Today, any crap is foisted upon the hapless, unsuspecting tax payers of T&T by the self-serving ruffians in power.

In short, the people of T&T must wake up from their deep slumber because time and tide waits for no man and if they really care about the future of themselves, their families and loved ones, they must raise their voices in unison by denouncing this repugnant regime in saying, loudly, “enough

is enough.” It is time to rescue the nation because each and every passing minute, hour and day – the charlatans in power are bankrupting the country faster than the speed of light.

In fact, it will be most useful to have a huge sign in the immigration arrivals area of the Piarco International Airport proclaiming – “THE GREAT WELFARE STATE WELCOMES YOU – PLEASE FILL OUT YOUR APPLICATION TO BE PART OF THE GRAVY TRAIN.”

This is how the nation is today viewed by any self-respecting economist because the clueless People’s Partnership like past regimes has gotten away with the misguided concept that God is a Trini, oil will last for a few hundred years and a host of other fallacies to boot. The reality beyond the borders of T&T are very much different in that God is definitely not a

Trinidadian, T&T does not have adequate fossil fuel reserves to last beyond 2020 (if that long), and yet the poseurs as Ministers Kevin Ramnarine and Bhoje Tiwari (Dr. Strangelove) among others, continue to mislead the general public by not explaining the stark socio-economic realities confronting the nation in the undeniable fact that the future belongs not to oil and gas but to solar, wind, geothermal and thorium as new clean energy sources. Global warming is not some ole' talk but is a reality. Just take a serious look at what kind of climatic changes we have seen in recent times from Hurricanes Katrina that ravaged the US Gulf Coast, Hurricane Sandy in the New York/New Jersey area to the current devastating droughts across the fertile farmlands of California.

So, there are strident and consistent criticisms of this ill-conceived budget from a number of the nation's leading economists and business leaders including Dr. Roger Hosein, Professor of Economics at UWI, who dubbed it as a "make work program," Indera Sagewan-Alli, Executive Director of the Caribbean Centre for Competitiveness at UWI, and a former UNC Member of Parliament who preached the ongoing mantra of "Economic Diversification," to Mitchell DeSilva, Director of AMCHAM and Investment Banker at Scotia Bank, who expressed grave reservations about the sustained revenue side to fund all these goodies, in a recent appearance on the popular "Morning Brew" show with Hema Ramkissoon on CNC 3. Catherine Kumar, Executive Director of the respected Trinidad & Tobago Chamber of Commerce, also waded in with her tough criticisms and concerns about this highly unpopular budget dubbed the "Baby Mooma Budget," as it relates to the sudden rise in the minimum wage which distorts the local labor market and which, as we all know,

will have a most negative effect on the private sector's ability to compete in the global manufacturing sector.

The Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program (CEPEP) is also a major problem whether the citizens of this nation choose to believe it or not, because it is estimated that at least 20,000 persons are either employed directly or indirectly by this reckless social welfare mechanism that has ballooned out of control. These persons are unskilled laborers and the state thinks that this is a good solution to social ills. I have news for the so called People's Partnership (PP), Congress of the People (COP), United National Congress (UNC), People's National Movement (PNM), Anjuman Sunnatul Jamaat Association (ASJA), Maha-Sabha, The Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (OWTU), and even the Shouter Baptists; this is 20,000 perennial problems and 20,000 revolutionaries in waiting because the day the "Oil & Gas Economy" goes into free fall and the state can no longer afford to dole out tax dollars as part of this misguided largesse then the harsh realities will hit home. These people have no skills and in an increasingly competitive global economy where knowledge is power, they will find it hard to take care of themselves and survive, and therein lies the inevitable conflict with the state. It is shameful that funds that should be going into serious worker retraining programs and skills development is being wasted like there is no tomorrow on these "make work programs."

It is the social responsibility of each and every one of us to desist from littering, by using garbage bins and rubbish receptacles in our homes and public areas, to weed our parapets, to maintain a clean and healthy surrounding (work and home) because this is not only the respected norm but also common sense. Where is the national recycling program in Trinidad

& Tobago Madame Prime Minister?

Instead of rushing off here, there and everywhere on sightseeing jaunts and wild goose chases on scarce tax dollars, why not fix the very basic and obvious problems confronting the nation such as:

(a) Starting a credible national recycling program

(b) Addressing the issues of:

- asbestos infested places of employment
- dilapidated and unsafe schools
- failing healthcare delivery services
- zero accountability at Petrotrin as it commits several acts of environmental carnage against the general populace
- poor drainage and irrigation
- a landfill almost in the heart of the city that burns perpetually (Beetham)
- poor air & water quality by United Nations & World Health Organization Standards
- a failing society at large

This is an obvious case of putting the cart before the horse where national priorities are concerned. In fact, if one were to take into account what has just been explained above, there are power vacuums, and so this climate of hopelessness and despair coupled with the need to survive will push these marginalized sectors of society straight into the hands of the new power brokers that will seek to offer them employment and social services in exchange for services rendered. These new power brokers are already in full swing in places like Laventille, Morvant, Beetham, John John, etc. They are not the local YMCA, Lions, Rotary or Kiwanis – these

are transnational criminal syndicates with a firm Profit & Loss on narcotics, gun running, money laundering and people trafficking.

The Minister of National Security has gone on a major spending spree for all kinds of military hardware including heavy armored personnel carriers similar to what is used in Iraq and Afghanistan, fast attack marine craft (like those used by the US Seals), long range offshore patrol and attack vessels, floating bases and even Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (drones that are used in Afghanistan, Iraq, etc).

No one should be surprised if the next thing one finds out is that T&T is purchasing 100 Apache and Blackhawk choppers, a fleet of F16 fighter jets and an arsenal of Stinger surface to air missiles because there are indeed some folks within the governing People's Partnership with a vested interest in this sudden arms build-up by a traditionally peaceful nation.

The sales of these expensive weapons mean that someone locally, in the corridors of power, is brokering the deal for the major arms and weapons suppliers and in exchange is getting a princely sum 'for services rendered' to the global military-industrial complex and only God knows if they are encouraging T&T to arm itself so it can invade nearby Barbados or Guyana, as much as it sounds comical. The billion dollar question is; where do we go from here and what leadership alternatives are there to seriously choose from? This is what any right thinking and decent citizen of T&T should be pondering right now. Is it that T&T is being prepared as a possible staging ground for covert military action against the Nicolas Maduro regime in nearby Venezuela?

Mike Singh

Global Citizen & Humanitarian At Large



The Byars Firm show their clients the best ways to get their immigration cases approved the first time while reducing processing times and avoiding immigration red flags that result in delay, denials, and deportation. *"Keeping families together"*.

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IMMIGRATION | DEPORTATION DEFENSE | FAMILY LAW | ESTATE PLANNING



BEST PRACTICES WHEN APPLYING FOR IMMIGRATION BENEFITS

By Safiya Byars, Esq.

“Do not take a gamble on your case. Your immigration case has a direct impact on your life. You owe it to yourself and your family to ensure that your case is done correctly the first time.”

Family immigration law is an area of law that provides immigration benefits to family members. As I am writing this article I am currently preparing to serve as the chair for the 2015 Family Immigration Continuing Legal Education Class for immigration attorneys in the state of Georgia. In preparing for that program I have decided to list a number of issues that myself and my colleagues thought would be beneficial to you if you are getting ready to apply for your immigration benefits.

In the area of immigration most people are lulled into the comfort of relying on the internet, Immigration’s website, or their family and friends. Some individuals are lucky in that they rely on

these sources and receive an approval on their case. This is called gambling. As an immigrant myself, I tell my clients; “Do not take a gamble on your case. Your immigration case has a direct impact on your life. You owe it to yourself and your family to ensure that your case is done correctly the first time.”

If you have chosen to take a gamble on your case then this may mean that your case was not that important to you, or you already know that you do not qualify for the immigration benefit and you have decided to intentionally provide incorrect/incomplete information in the hopes that Immigration will overlook it and approve your case. A summary of the issues raised by myself and other attorneys are as follows:



At the Immigration appointment Immigration Officers have limited time in which they must complete an interview. They also have a schedule of interviews that they must complete for the day.

1. TELL THE TRUTH AND TELL IT TO YOUR ATTORNEY FIRST.

It is important to understand that everyone's case is unique. Whenever you are applying to Immigration there are two main concerns that you should have. The first concern should be the law. Does the law actually provide an immigration benefit that can benefit me? The second concern is the facts of your case. The facts of your case are what make your case unique. Everyone's situation is always a little bit different from another case. Facts that are extremely important usually are concerned with unauthorized employment, criminal arrests, convictions, and the details of your family relationship. However, the facts about your relationship with your spouse, is also extremely important if you are applying for immigration benefits based on your relationship with your spouse. As such, the best

time to tell the entire truth about your case is to your attorney. In addition, the best time to tell your attorney is before he or she files your case with Immigration. Your attorney will then be able to advise you on the best course of action. In some cases Immigration is able to forgive certain violations. However you must disclose to Immigration in order to be forgiven. The one caveat is, please disclose all the good and the bad information to your attorney first.

2. THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER IS YOUR FRIEND. DO YOUR BEST TO MAKE THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER'S JOB AS EASY AS POSSIBLE.

At the Immigration appointment Immigration Officers have limited time in which they must complete an interview. They also have a schedule of interviews that they must complete for the day. As such, Immigration Officers prefer to review cases that are organized. They also prefer when the applicants are prepared for their interview. Consequently, it is important to keep in mind that the Immigration Officers have limited time and therefore it would be beneficial to be thorough in your preparation. I have seen many cases that are delayed and then denied because the applicants were simply not prepared and/or they did not bring the appropriate documents to their interview. Immigration Officers take your case and their jobs very seriously and therefore you should take your case seriously as well. If you are not adequately prepared the Immigration Officer will assume that you are lying or committing fraud on your case. Once Immigration makes a finding of fraud against you your case will become substantially more difficult to be approved. As such the bottom line is to ensure that you are organized so that you will make the Immigration Officer's job as easy as possible.



3. MAINTAIN CREDIBILITY.

The best way to maintain your credibility with Immigration is to answer all questions in full. Before you answer any questions on your applications please consult an attorney. Most applicants do not realize that the immigration forms have language that states that when you sign your application you are signing under penalty of perjury. This means that if you answer a question with incorrect or incomplete information then you may have just committed perjury. Later at the interview if it comes to light that you provided incorrect or incomplete information the officer may consider this is to be fraud/misrepresentation. The best way to maintain your credibility is to remain consistent in your answers and documents when you initially file your case and then later on at your interview.



Safiya Byars is a native of Jamaica and is the founder and senior partner of the Byars Law Firm in Atlanta. She has recently been reappointed to serve as the 2015 chair of the Family Immigration Law Continuing Legal Education Class for immigration lawyers in Georgia, (State Bar of Georgia) for the third consecutive year. She is also the Vice Chair of the Immigration Law Section for Immigration attorneys in Georgia.

Disclaimer: This article is a broad overview. This article is not legal advice and should not be taken as legal advice. This article is provided as a public service and is not intended to establish an attorney-client relationship. Any reliance on the information contained herein is taken at your own risk. The information provided in this article should never replace informed counsel when specific immigration-related guidance is needed.

JUMBY BAY ANTIGUA

The speckled dots of isles that form the Leeward Islands on the map of the Caribbean, are hardly ever thought of as tourist destinations by their larger neighbors who were born, bred and influenced on a stew of looming first world images, so massive and broad in perspective, that they eclipse the peripheral vision for experiencing any other area of island paradise.

The mainland of Antigua, just 14 miles long and 11 miles wide, has its own allure as a tourist destination given places of interest such as the 18th century preservation known as Nelson's Dockyard, the bird sanctuary a stone's throw away on the island of Barbuda and the "powdery soft" beaches that the island boasts, but the pearl of the country is Jumby Bay Island.





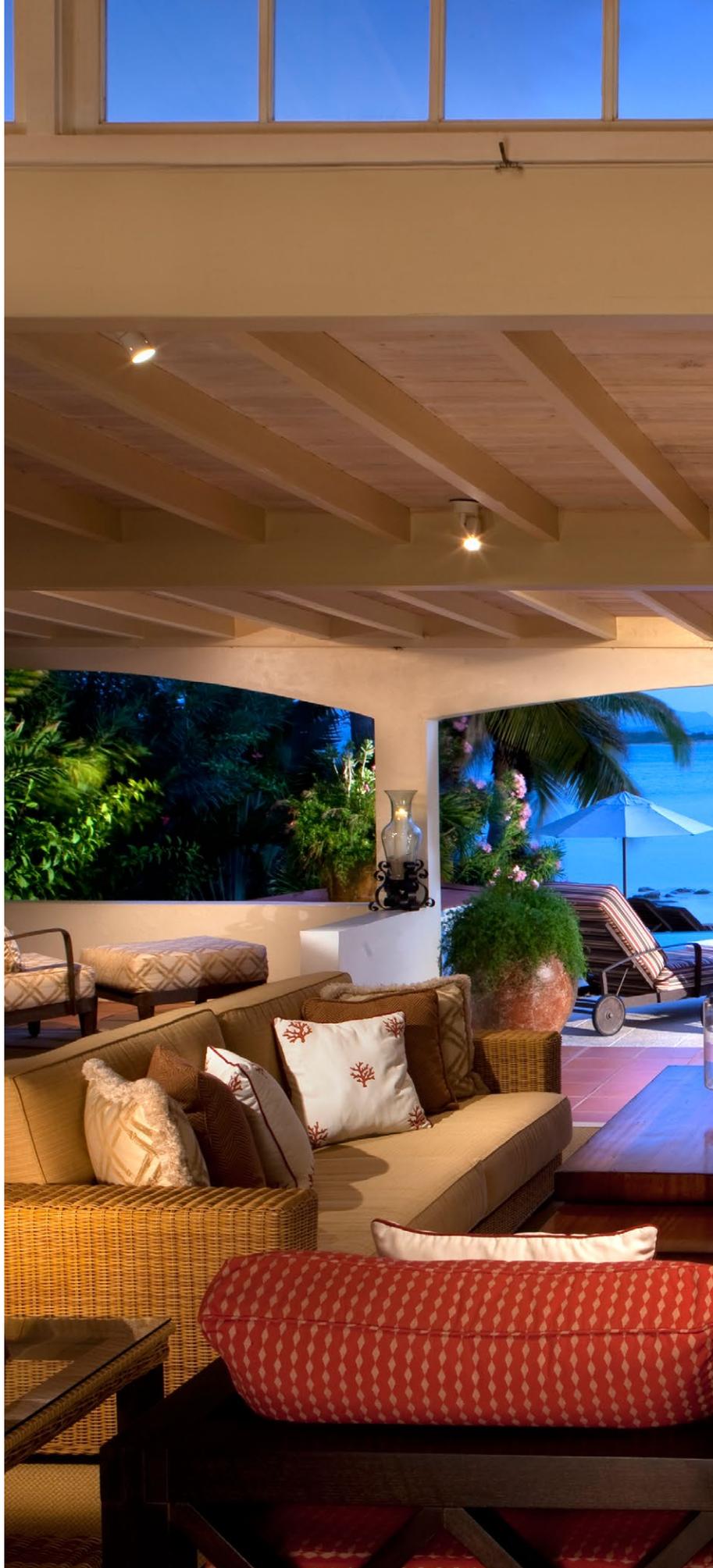
A secluded privately owned island spanning 300 acres, Jumby Bay, A Rosewood Resort tops it all with drop dead gorgeous villas that sit only two miles away. Accessible only by boat, this private island is so far removed from the regular hustle and bustle of life that it could be placed at a naturesque altitude, so to speak, teeming with the dream of the perfect balance and harmony of ecotourism aspirants.



The 7 minute boat ride from Antigua's mainland transports one to the island which remains a virginal escape with its landscape enhanced by flora, fauna and uniformed palm trees which render justice to what Admiral Nelson must have seen when it was first discovered in 1784.

Jumby Bay's plethora of fab beach houses and villas leaves the prospective guest in a spate of confusion for a choice. Though each has its unique architectural charm and particular décor identity their appeal of elegance smacks at the same level of the plateau, all replete with lush beautifully appointed landscapes. These villas are a decorator's dream. Jumby Bay's visitors who would prefer the experience of pure quietude and beauty may choose to bask in the sun on any one of the three dazzling white sand beaches, lavish in the experience of the Sense spa, bathe in the delightful infinity pool which gives the illusion of connectedness to the Caribbean Sea or just choose to relax in the ambiance of the garden while writing the next best-selling book, blockbuster movie or contemplating a major business decision.

Marlene Daley





KOTCH

CARIBBEAN

YOUR AD HERE

JAMAICA'S HOMEGROWN SAFIYA BYARS ESQ

You came to America to school at age 18. What would you say has been your biggest challenge in adjusting to that experience?

Looking back I would have to say the biggest challenge for me and my parents was making sure that we did everything to maintain my immigration status. My school, my classes and my new surroundings were all very conducive to my excelling in college and my new life in the United States.

Life lessons are sometimes the over-riding reason for our choices in profession. What led you to law?

When I came to the United States for school I was an international student. I first attended a small community college in Wadley Alabama before transferring to the University of Montevallo to complete my Bachelor's degree. My community college was located in rural Alabama, and I was the first international student to be admitted to their school. As a result of this the college was not equipped to provide me with the best guidance as it related to the maintenance of my student visa. I was fortunate in that I was residing with my father and my step-mother and they were able to help guide me. As I transitioned from different schools and then to law school my immigration status and the immigration process was always filled with uncertainty and anxiety. By the time that I enrolled in law school I knew that I wanted to help other people with their immigration problems. Immigration came very natural to me because I had spent all my formative years (sic) dealing with it. In addition to my

desire to specialize in immigration law my mother told me at a very young age that I was to going to be a lawyer. I listened to my mother.

In 2012 a group of young lawyers came together to sue their respective schools for false hope through inflating employment and salary data which they saw as a ploy to attract students. What are your thoughts on this?

This is interesting. I had not heard about this lawsuit until you mentioned it. I do not 100% agree with the students for suing but I do understand their frustration. When I was in law school, the projected salary packages that were presented to us by career services often did not square with what law firms were actually offering their new associates. Granted, there are still law firms that offer a six figure salary for their incoming new associates, however that percentage is extremely small. In addition, the associates who are lucky to attain that high salary immediately after graduation often find that their lives belong to their law firm. There is no work/life balance and in a few short years they will be leaving those positions to open up their own law firms or be working for a smaller firm so that they can achieve some balance in their lives.

In one of our previous conversations you said you are aware of the spiritual aspect of yourself. What is the distinction for you between being religious and spiritual?

My spiritual aspect is my connection to God. Throughout my life it has been



Safiya Byars

abundantly clear to me that God has provided a way for me when there was no way. When I was born my parents gave me two unique names. My first name Safiya has a significant meaning that is rooted in the Arabic, Hindi, and African cultures. In Swahili my name means first born, clear-minded, and pure. In the Arabic culture my name means sincere friend. I believe that my name is indicative of my personality and loyalty both in my personal and in my professional life. My middle name is Odinkaolisa and it means everything in the hands of God. Many of my Nigerian clients often think I am from Nigeria because my middle name is Nigerian and they always recognize the meaning of my middle name. In my life I can definitely attest to the fact that everything is in the hands of God. My name has provided me with many blessings and has always placed me in a highly favored position. I believe that God gave my parents the insight to provide me with these names and I have been blessed. For me being religious is simply a matter of following religious protocol of going to church etc. I think however, that one can be religious and still have no connection to God.

President Obama keeps referring to our “fractured Immigration Policy.” What is your interpretation of this fractured policy?

Our immigration system is broken. Over the years the United States government has passed various immigration laws in response to various crisis and political agendas. As a result we have a number of ad hoc immigration laws that conflict with current immigration laws that are still in effect. The end result is that the various immigration agencies have had to adopt internal policies to serve as a temporary band-aid to reconcile the conflicting laws. Internal policies are not the law and so these policies are fluid and they change according to the political climate of our country. In addition to the conflicting

immigration laws and ever-changing internal policies we also still have the old quota system that places a numerical limit on visas and the immigrant process to specific countries. As a result of this old quota system we have individuals from the Caribbean who are unable to acquire a visitor’s visa while you have other applicants from other countries that can simply purchase a plane ticket and arrive in the United States. You also have individuals from certain countries who are waiting for years to finalize the permanent residence process for their family members. All of these issues come together to create an environment where illegal immigration thrives because individuals feel that their immigration options are limited or non-existent.

Do you see this affecting family life, since the system as it stands force people into arranged marriages that are more often than not very costly? What are your thoughts on this contributing to dysfunctional families and reflecting an increased rate in divorces?

The fractured immigration system does place a great deal of stress on bona fide families that are comprised of United States citizens, foreign spouses and children. A prime example is a United States citizen husband that sponsors his Mexican wife and minor child. In the event that the child turns 21 years old while the case is pending Immigration places a longer processing time for that child that is now longer than the wife. The end result is that the wife can now join her husband in the United States while the child is now left behind to wait additional years before she can join her parents in the United States. As such, if the family members do not have a strong bond the family unit may terminate. Separation that occurs over the course of months or years has a negative impact on any relationship. In my practice we have seen multiple divorces

and estrangement of family members and children that have resulted from lengthy and costly immigration cases. Based on these issues I think the family immigration system does need to be reformed. However, we cannot place all the blame on the United States' immigration system. Individuals and families must also take responsibility for the decisions that they make about the future of their families and the role that Immigration will play in their lives. Families must be proactive and take an active role in educating themselves about the immigration process before they find themselves in situations where their hands are tied. In my practice I always advise engaged couples and newlywed couples to find out all the information about the immigration process before they proceed with their cases. I should add that Google and the immigration website would help greatly as well. Information and advice from family members and friends should not be the only sources of immigration education.

As an Immigration lawyer, what has been the most profound and emotionally disturbing case that you have ever handled?

There are many. However, my most recent case involves a lady from Liberia who fled to the United States to escape the civil war in her country. While she was in Liberia she was raped and some of her family members disappeared. She entered the United States on her tourist visa. While in the United States she applied for asylum so that she could be granted protection in the United States. Despite her best efforts Immigration denied her case. After her case was denied she was placed in deportation proceedings. While she was waiting for her court date she met and married her United States husband. While she was in deportation proceedings she had the unfortunate experience of working with two law firms that provided her with incompetent legal advice. The end result was that she was ordered deported twice by the Immigration

Court. My firm was the fourth law firm that our client hired. We were able to get her case reopened with the Immigration Court and her permanent residence processed through her United States citizen husband. While we were finalizing her case with the Immigration Court her husband died suddenly. We were able to complete the immigration process for her without her spouse and we were able to terminate her deportation case. Now after coming to the United States in 2000 she can now sleep at night knowing that she has legal immigration status and that she will never run the risk of being separated from her United States citizen daughter. It took us three years to complete the case. We are thrilled for our client.

I am so glad that you not only cited that case but you mentioned incompetence. I cannot stress enough how disappointed a great many people are who have paid lawyers and ended up feeling like they have thrown their money down the drain. Why is it so hard to find a good lawyer and how do you suggest going about it?

Personally I do not think it is hard to find a good lawyer. I think that most times clients are motivated to hire an attorney based solely on their budget and their desired outcome. If these are the clients' only two concerns then clients are going to find a wide range of attorneys who are willing take their case for a very small fee and these attorneys will not care about the outcome of the case. I would advise clients to first ask their family and friends for referrals. Then once they have received a referral they should visit the state bar's website or call the state bar to ensure that the attorney is licensed and in good standing with the state bar. Finally, clients should schedule a face to face meeting with the attorney and bring a family member or a friend to their appointment. In my practice we receive a large number of phone calls every day from potential clients who would like us to

answer questions and provide them with legal advice over the phone. An attorney who is willing to provide a caller with legal advice and quote legal fees over the phone without first meeting you and reviewing your documents is a red flag. In this case the attorney is not legally accountable to you and the attorney runs a high professional risk of providing you with the incorrect advice because he failed to review your documents or take the necessary time to learn all the facts of your case. In the end the person that suffers from the incorrect advice is the client. In some cases the client may suffer irreparable harm to his case. I know that clients must consider their budgets, however, if their case is important to them it is necessary for them to take the time to get a referral and make the time to meet with the attorney. A paid consultation with a reputable attorney is the most beneficial thing that you can do for your case.

Your law firm covers adoption, immigration and estate planning. How would you describe the legal system as it relates to that?

In my practice these three areas complement each other to provide the best protection for my clients. I love working with families and this includes both immigrant families and United States citizen families. In my practice my families are usually mixed, i.e., immigrant and United States citizens. In a typical case we begin with a couple who are newlyweds. Our first step would be to obtain the new immigrant status for the foreign spouse. Married couples typically produce their own biological children but in cases where they choose to adopt a child from another country we would now handle the adoption and the subsequent immigration process. Step three to the process would now be to ensure the protection of the family and the children by creating a will, establishing guardianship, trusts, and other necessary protection such as a financial powers of attorney, and a living will i.e., healthcare

directive. These three areas of law can provide great benefits to families provided that they work with an attorney.

Many lawyers have chosen to stay within the confines of duty. You have extended yourself to being Vice Chair of the Immigration Law Section and Chair of the Family Immigration Continuing Legal Education for the State Bar among other commitments. Is it passion that drives these causes?

Definitely. I enjoy the privilege to serve the State Bar of Georgia and my fellow attorneys by selecting speakers and immigration topics that will benefit and enhance the law practice of new immigration attorneys and paralegal staff in Georgia. When I was a new attorney I looked forward to attending the Family Immigration CLE every year. Now it is such an honor to chair the Family Immigration CLE and work with my co-chair, Monica Kinene, and the Immigration Section Chair, Dara Berger.

Would you unreservedly encourage youngsters to get into the field of law or do you see a need for precaution?

I would 100% encourage students to pursue law. It is still a field of study that will provide you with many different career options even if ultimately you do not practice law. My advice for anyone would be threefold. First strive to graduate law school with the least amount of debt. Second try to obtain internships and network with law firms prior to entering law school and throughout law school so that you can get a broader exposure to different types of law and practice. Finally, in addition to law school it would be beneficial to learn the basics of business ownership and business operations so that you will have a better understanding of running a successful and profitable business while you practice law.

Marlene Daley



A GLIMMER OF LIGHT ON THE DARK CONTINENT

When Nelson Mandela walked out of the Victor Verster Prison in February 1990 it triggered the start of changes to South African life that even the most optimistic of observers would not have predicted.

Overnight a country that had been a pariah state for years was suddenly unshackled from the burdens of apartheid, civil violence and international sanctions. Those changes have seen South Africa leaping to the forefront of the African economic scene and becoming a serious player in the international tourist market.

Though the long awaited African renaissance may have begun, there are formidable mountains still to be crossed before poverty can be wiped off the face of the South African map and there remain vast numbers of people living a ruthless hand to mouth existence where the threat of hunger is never far away. One of the main tools for changing that scenario is the powerful swing toward eco-tourism and the growing international awareness of South Africa's rich wild life heritage.

Far away from Cape Town with its renowned Table Mountain and celebrated wine lands, other parts of the Cape region

are far less famous and unemployment continues to be high with large numbers of people living in shacks in what the government refers to as informal settlements. For years this was marginal farming land affording poor grazing and unreliable rainfall. Today, forward thinking entrepreneurs are converting vast sections of this region into exclusive game reserves offering safaris and luxury accommodation to international tourists willing to pay top dollar to get a close up look at the big five and other wild animals that are once again wandering the southern tip of Africa.

"Lalibela" is one such reserve. It has two lodge camps and one luxury tented camp and plays host to both international visitors and wealthier South Africans. As one would expect at that level, the game viewing is superb, the guides knowledgeable and, when you are not being driven around the bush in open topped four by fours the tasty food is excellent.





The catering manager is Linda Keevy-Geldenhuys who has worked at Lalibela for the past nine years. Whilst catering in an exotic and beautiful reserve in the midst of the African bush may sound like a dream job it comes with its own unique array of problems. When you run out of an ingredient you don't just pop down the road to your local supermarket to resupply. Guests at that end of the market can be very demanding and dealing with glucose free, lactose free or vegan diets are all just part of a days work.

When Linda first joined the staff at Lalibela there was one central kitchen which supplied all three camps. With all the game viewing groups returning to their respective camps at roughly the same time, rushing meals from camp to camp became a logistical nightmare. On one occasion Linda sat in her car for half an hour, food cooling on the back seat, whilst a herd of elephants blocked the road with no regard to Linda's problems. It was this incident that finally instigated the decision to build a kitchen at each camp. That decision made however, staffing became another problem that needed to be overcome. Keeping good chefs was already proving difficult in such a remote and isolated area.

Linda decided that the best course of action would be to train some of the housekeeping staff to become cooks. It was a decision that did not meet with immediate approval from others in management. They were at first skeptical that these ladies, with limited education and little exposure to the extreme culinary requirements that would be placed upon them, would be able to make the transition into safari cooks. Several years later the issue is no longer under debate. Linda has more than proved her point.





Cynthia Tshula has been cooking at Lalibela for six years now. One of Linda's first trainees, she started off at the reserve washing laundry. She is now a fiercely proud cook with a passion for baking. Mamalinda Duku used to make a living as a seasonal fruit picker before she too started at Lalibela in the house keeping department. She has become an expert at two uniquely South African dishes, the Poitjie, a traditional but complicated African stew and Chakalaka which is a spicy stir fried vegetable dish.

This success story has not been without its hitches. Tears over burned dishes, overcoming a distrust that seems so

universal between management and workers and climbing a hugely steep learning curve are just some of the problems these ladies have had to resolve. Under the hot pressure cooker like conditions of their bush camp kitchens, Cynthia and Mamalinda have discovered talents, skills and passion they never dreamed were there or that they would be given the opportunity to develop. Somewhere in the process the three ladies have become friends. The bond that exists between them now provides not only some delightful meals but also adds further hope for the future of a country that once teetered on the brink of self destruction.

Mike Alexander



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FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO YOUR TABLE



ZESTY BILTONG* SALAD

INGREDIENTS: SERVES 6

1-2 cups (Romaine) lettuce, left whole or torn into smaller pieces, depending on leaf size.

4-6 ripe figs

250 gr. (8 oz.) soft chilli biltong, finely sliced

24 black pitted olives

Vinaigrette dressing

Parmesan cheese, thinly shaved

Paprika, to taste

Black pepper, freshly milled



METHOD:

On 6 individual side plates, arrange lettuce leaves attractively.

Slice figs into quarters and place on the leaves.

Scatter biltong over leaves and figs, and place equal amount of black olives on each plate.

Drizzle with vinaigrette and garnish with Parmesan. Dust lightly with paprika and grindings of black pepper.

CHILI MARMALADE

This can be made per taste from extremely mild to extremely hot as one can go from using very mild chili to very hot ones, or from removing the seeds and ribs to leaving them intact when slicing the chilli into eatable portions.

INGREDIENTS:

Chili, heat type, quantity and preparation per your taste

Basic syrup:

750 ml (3 cups) castor sugar

750 ml (3 cups) water

30 ml (2 Tablespoons) fresh lemon juice, strained

METHOD:

Place water and sugar into a non-reactive saucepan. Stir to dissolve sugar over low heat. Add lemon juice and chopped chilies, whatever chili or quantity you have chosen.

Sweep the inside of the pot at intervals with a wet (water) pastry brush to keep syrup from sticking to the sides. Boil syrup until thick and chilies have become translucent. Remove from heat and bottle in sterilized jars while still hot.

Makes 500ml (2 cups)



*Biltong is dried beef, or can be game ie. ostrich, kudu, springbock, etc.

*Chilli is the British spelling of Chili

Both recipes from **Heidemarie Vos** are from her commissioned book: **Chilli* South Africa** - Anderson Publishing

YOUR LIFE IS WHAT YOU THINK It!

By Michelle Hollinger



A quote from a Peace Pilgrim says, “If you knew how powerful your thoughts are, you would never think a negative thought.”

The vast majority of people won’t take a quote like that seriously, oblivious to its profound truth. What’s astonishing is the sheer number of thoughts that people

actually think. Human beings think, on average, up to 60,000 thoughts each day. 98 percent of those thoughts are recycled from the day before and the day before that. We’re creatures of habit and of the thousands of thoughts that flow freely through our minds day in and day out, 80 percent of them are said to be of the negative variety.

The self-help section of most bookstores is full of books promoting the merits of positive thinking, to the chagrin of cynics, who poo poo the topic and accuse those who believe that positive thoughts actually have an impact on a person's quality of life as being Pollyannas. The cynics may want to reconsider because a growing body of research says that thoughts do indeed affect all aspects of a person's life.

Scientists have isolated the part of the brain that deals with a person's ability to know where they are – referring to the region as a human's "GPS." And there are numerous medical studies that illustrate that a person's thoughts factor significantly in their ability to heal. When subjects are secretly provided a placebo under the guise of being given medication, their outcomes are remarkably similar, and in some cases better, than patients receiving actual medicine.

As it relates to money, people who are aware of the power of their thoughts and use them to create wealth are far more likely to remain wealthy. If an experiment were conducted where people like Oprah had all of their wealth dissolved, she and others like her would be able to quickly regain a highly prosperous life because the quality of their thoughts would attract prosperity.

As within, so without. Like attracts like. Thoughts held in mind, produce after their kind.

Conversely, those who believe that the presence of money in their life is a roll of the dice, and are ignorant about the correlation between their thoughts and their finances are more likely to be poor. And if a person in this category were to receive a large infusion of money from the lottery or other avenues, they are likely to lose it in a short timeframe because their financial circumstances align with their predominant thoughts.

As within, so without. Like attracts like. Thoughts held in mind, produce after their kind.

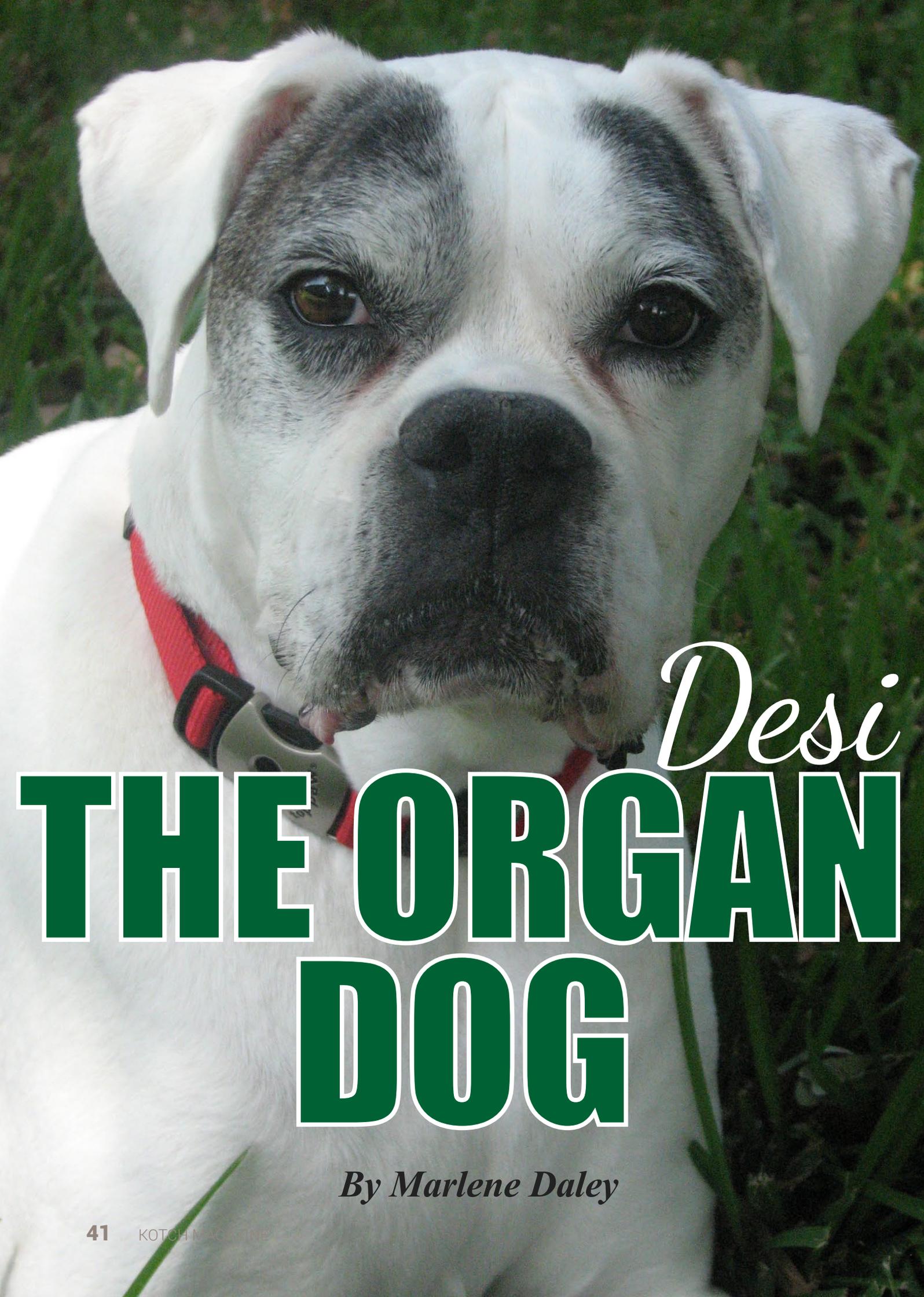
The good news about thoughts is that they are under a human being's complete dominion and can be changed at any time. Our minds are the only aspect of our existence that we completely control. Learning how to take control of thoughts is the most effective strategy on the path to authentic success because a person's expectations about life and their beliefs about failure and success all factor into what they are able to achieve. Expectations and beliefs are rooted in how a person thinks.

The person who believes in fatalism, that life just happens and they have no control over it will likely remain detached from their thinking and allow thousands to occupy space in their minds rent free, offering no value in return. Their health, wealth and relationships all reflect the quality of their thoughts, yet they believe that something external to their existence controls them. This person is a spectator to their own life and arrives at its end with unexpressed talents, unfulfilled passion and a list of "coulda, woulda, shouldas."

The person who is ready to take control of their thoughts is poised to live at a higher level, but they must first become aware of them. Setting the alarm on your smart phone or wristwatch for an hourly reminder to pay attention to how you're fertilizing your mental garden is a great way to become acquainted with what you think about, day in and day out.

This person's health, wealth and relationships are also a reflection of their thoughts, however, becoming aware is not enough. Perhaps it's time to browse the self-help section of the bookstore for positive thinking books that resonate.

Michelle Hollinger is a sociologist, columnist, radio show host and the author of the upcoming book, Your Life is What You THINK It.



Desi

THE ORGGAN DOG

By Marlene Daley

A subsection of Florida Statutes Law states that: All public accommodations including hotels, lodging places, restaurants, stores, places of resort and amusement, and any other place to which the general public is invited must allow accommodations to guide dogs, and that violation or denial of such rights would be a second class misdemeanor and punishable in accordance with such law.

Lynn Lingren is the proud owner of such a dog. For what was up to then her entire life, Lynn went through school and daily existence, coming out at the top of her class and living a life that, as far as she knew, was normal. Her parents knew that while growing up she was slower with speech and her father often said that she was speaking Chinese. They would later find out that the reason was due to the development of a sixth sense as she grew in her silent world.

While on a date at age 24, her suitor whispered in her ear and got no response. Lynn realized that she was seriously hearing impaired and that for these many years had been lip reading. This had obviously gotten worse over time. Numerous tests at institutions across America failed to detect or diagnose her condition until she went to the Mayo Clinic for more extensive examination that revealed that her deafness was not psychological, but a rare condition that affects only 1 percent of people in the world.

This rare condition does not damage the ears or brains but the nerve endings that link both. In her case 92 percent of her nerve endings had died. Her lip reading remains at 65 percent and is better understood by her if she carries the conversation. However, with the help of paid note takers Lynn graduated with an outstanding GPA, which placed her among the top 1 percent of graduates from FAU.

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Her diagnosis confirmed that she would eventually require the assistance of a help mate in order to avoid danger as she navigated her life. Enter Desiree, a two-year-old Boxer that would be trained to become her ears. Desiree had all the desired qualities as stipulated for such training by the Hearing Dogs of Florida, Inc., a state-wide, non-profit organization founded by Amelia Sargent, who saw a need to provide specially trained service dogs to serve as ears and companion to the deaf or hearing impaired.

Desiree's training included being taken to places where Lynn shops to get her ears attuned to alarms in order to usher her master to a place of safety in good time if necessary. Desiree alerts Lynn when the doorbell rings, when the phone rings and when the clock alarms. She guards and protects against prowlers or burglars and blocks the door to strangers. In addition to testing well in obedience and

temperament, Desi also understands some signing and was already neutered so that she can stay focused on her job.

The Hearing Dogs of Florida later collaborated with several South Florida Quota clubs, a nonprofit organization that works to increase public awareness of issues facing deaf and hard of hearing individuals. With the kind assistance of Dr. Phillips, Dr. Cole and the clinical staff at Cole Animal Clinic, Desiree remained healthy for many years, however, her

schedule is now being gradually reduced as she ages. On average, organ dogs are retired after 6 years of service. can become so bonded with their dog that anxiety attacks set in for both, if they are away from each other over prolonged periods. Desi's diet of lobster filets, chicken, filet mignon and puppy pepperoni has been curbed. She has been put on a special diet due to pancreatitis and Lynn now fearfully watches her mate in anticipation of the inevitable.

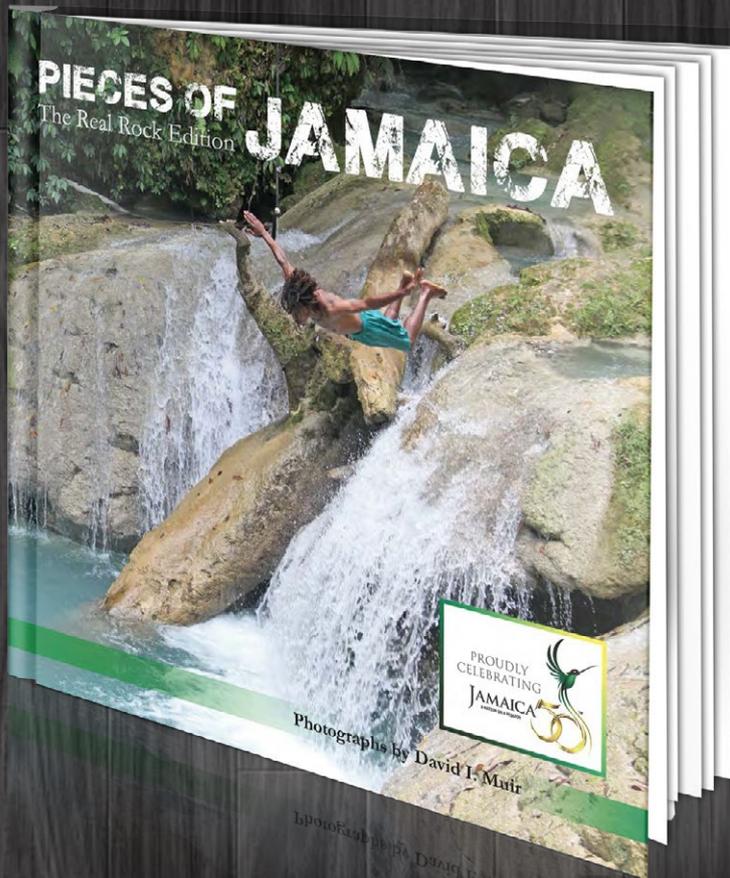


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