

Junior Centres' Newsletter

March 2009

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Christmas Extravaganza



Christmas Extravaganza is our way of engaging the children in the festivities of Christmas. On such occasions, one gets a chance to see the work and development of the children over the semester, as well as, how what they have learnt is interpreted and interwoven into the final pieces/ performances of the Christmas productions from the various programme areas.

The functions were well organized and well attended. The East Street Centre held their event on December 4th, hosted by Miss Sheryl Simms (Speech and Drama Tutor); Greater Portmore Junior Centre on December 5th, with Miss Alafia Noel (Speech and Drama Tutor) as MC, and Half Way Tree Centre on December 10th hosted by Miss Fatima Alamin (Speech and Drama Tutor).

All three activities were accompanied by exhibitions/ displays of the students artwork, which was viewed by parents/guardians as well as other attendees at the functions. The performances, it was widely felt, were entertaining and provided a wonderful evening's enjoyment.

The students must be commended for their effort and participation during the semester and the tutors must be recognized and thanked for the performances which demonstrated their commitment to helping to nurture, expose and develop the artistic creativity of the children

both in the performing and visual arts.

Special presentation:

A special presentation was made to Miss Gaverly McGowan at both the East Street and Greater Portmore Junior Centres' Christmas Extravaganza. Miss McGowan, now retired, has worked closely with both Centres in the past and has contributed 46 excellent years of service to the Institute of Jamaica.

See below for pictures from the events held



Greater Portmore Junior Centre:
Dance piece entitled, "Merriment"
Choreographed by Vincent Douglas (Tutor)

Half Way Tree Junior Centre:
Drumming piece entitled, "Drum Medley
Rasta Man"
Tutor: Mr. Damion Ramsook

Greater Portmore Junior Centre:
Dance piece entitled, "Celestial Dream "
Choreographed by Vincent Douglas (Tutor)

Girls' Day '08

Each year, our boys and girls are recognized and given some form of advise/food for thought that they can take with them and utilize for the rest of their lives. This year our girls were recognized; Girls' Day 2008 was celebrated on October 24th at the Greater Portmore Junior Centre, November 19th at the Half Way Tree Junior Centre and November 26th at the East Street Junior Centre. The theme for Girls' Day varied among the Centres, however, the aim was standard throughout;

to encourage our young women of the future.

At the East Street Junior Centre the speaker was Miss Joan McDonald, Personal Relations and Grooming Consultant and Miss World 1978. Miss McDonald spoke to the girls about "Grooming for Success." This encouraged the girls to accept their inner, as well as, outer beauty. Miss McDonald was very engaging and her audience responded well to the words and wisdom she bestowed upon them.

At the Greater Portmore Junior Centre, the guest speaker was Miss Jennifer Anderson, Manager, Prepay Advance Limited. She encouraged the girls to endeavour to be the best that they can be. She provided helpful tips on how they can make the most of what they have in order to achieve what they want.

The speaker for the Half Way Tree Junior Centre's Girls' Day was Miss Kalisia Findley, Lawyer, she spoke on the issue of *Success*,

and the importance of working towards achieving one's goals.

The girls were also awarded Certificates of Participation.

The ultimate goal of the Girls' Day activity was to let the girls see how they can impact positively on society by being positive about themselves and working hard. It is expected that having the mental capability, not just a high IQ but, also the psychological energy and motivation to deal with the obstacles/ challenges that they may encounter, will gear and steer them in the right path.

The Girls' Day we anticipate, would also help them feel proud of their biological status—being girls; moving towards womanhood to empower themselves as they look to the future, ready, willing and able to play constructive roles in society. Being able to feel good about themselves, by having self confidence and the inner drive to succeed.



Miss Kalisia Findley, Lawyer (left) presenting Girls' Day Certificate of Participation to Shevania Burnett of the Half Way Tree Junior Centre



Taynia Henry (left) of the Greater Portmore Centre being presented Girls' Day Certificate of Participation by Mrs. Maria Ashman, Administrator, East Street Centre

Parenting Seminar

Parenting seminars were held at all three Centres. The events took place at the Greater Portmore, East Street and Half Way Tree Centres as follows: November 20th, November 5th and November 11th, respectively.

For the East Street Centre, Mr. Richard Williams, Community and Intervention Coordinator

from the Early Childhood Commission presented on *Parenting the Young Child*. He traced the stages in the developmental process of a child, and how they react to their social environment during these stages of their lives. He also offered suggestions/ tips as to how parents can help during this developmental process. If parents better understand these stages, they are more equipped to provide the best

emotional support.

At the Half Way Tree Junior Centre, the theme was *Parenting and Child Development*; this theme was addressed by Mr. Richard Williams, Community and Intervention Coordinator at the Early Childhood Commission and Miss Winsome Smith, Manager at the Glen Hope Children's Home.

The Greater Portmore Junior Centre's theme was *Crime and Your Child*, this was a panel discussion involving: Miss Tanesha Gayle, Guidance Counselor for the Saturday Programme at the Greater Portmore Junior Centre, Mrs. Sachae Mitto-Wilson, Programmes Officer at the Greater Portmore Junior Centre and Inspector Rose Gardener from the Mediation Unit/ JCF.

Library

The Junior Centre Library is the oldest and first lending Library for children in Jamaica. It was started in 1940 by Mr. Robert Verity. Today, it stands as the only lending Library in the Downtown area, serving children between the ages of 6—18 years. This year, the Library and East Street Junior Centre celebrates 69 years of service to the Downtown community and surrounding areas.

The Junior Centre's Library has been working to

improve its collection and the services that it extends to its patrons. In doing this, the hope is to improve the current collection, with the introduction on a quarterly basis of new books for children. The Library has also been involved in various outreach activities to promote the use of the library (thus increasing membership). One very successful outreach activity that took place this quarter, was carried out on

December 3, 2008 at the Bob Verity Hall (upstairs the East Street Junior Centre). The New Hope Preparatory School was invited, and a total of 21 boys and girls accompanied by their teacher participated in this activity. The visit included a tour of the Junior Centre and an overview of its activities, an introduction to the Library and its services, and finally and most enjoyed by the children, a Christmas Story-telling session.

This session was done by Miss Sheryl Simms (Speech and Drama teacher) of the East Street Junior Centre.

The Library has also been instrumental in educating the children of the downtown and surrounding communities through the various displays mounted on a quarterly basis.

Students of the New Hope Preparatory School enjoying the Anancy stories being told by Miss Sheryl Simms.



Front & Centre: Miss Sheryl Simms—Speech & Drama Tutor, East Street Junior Centre.



Heritage Exhibition: "Celebrating our Past as we look to the future," displayed at the East Street Junior Centre Library.



Student using computer service provided by the Library (East Street Junior Centre).



Lunch Hour Concerts

Institute of Jamaica

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Junior Centre

Mission Statement

To provide the facilities for young people to acquire knowledge and develop skills in the various art forms so as to foster their intellectual, aesthetic cultural growth.



Programmes Offered

- Art and Craft
- Papermaking
- Speech & Drama
- Music
- Needle Craft
- Drumming
- Sign Language
- Computer Skills
- Reading
- Heritage Fun-time
- Personal Development
- Dance



A series of Lunch Hour Concerts were held by the Programmes Coordination Division. These included:

- UTECH Performing Arts Ensemble presenting "Concert In Praise" directed by Mr. Winston "Sparrow" Martin on October 2, 2008 in the Lecture Hall.
- The Edna Manley College's, Jamaica School of Music under the direction of Mr. Maurice Gordon on November 6, 2008 in the Lecture Hall.
- Mr. Alvin James Brown (A.J. Brown) well known vocalist performed in the Lecture Hall on November 13, 2008.
- The National Culture Group for the Blind performed folk

and African songs on November 27, 2008.

- The Carol Reid and Friends Lunch Hour Concert was held on December 4th, 2008. This Concert included performances from Mr. Harold Davis, Craige Henry, Tafane Bushsaecab and Karen Smith.
- The Lunch Hour recital to commemorate the centenary of The Royal School of Music examination in Jamaica was held on December 11, 2008 in the Lecture Hall, and was hosted by Mr. Vivian Crawford, Executive Director of the Institute of Jamaica.



A.J. Brown in performance at the Lunch Hour Concert, I.O.J Lecture Hall

Retirement of Miss Gaverly McGowan

Miss Gaverly McGowan retired from the Institute of Jamaica after 46 years of service. Miss McGowan has been the main organizer of the popular Lunch Hour Concerts held at the Institute of Jamaica over the years, as well as, the chief organizer of the Art in Preparatory and National Art in Schools Exhibitions held annually.

Miss McGowan came to the Institute in 1962, when she was invited by Mr. Robert G.B. Verity, then supervisor of the Junior Centres and Deputy Director of the Institute of Jamaica; her chief tasks being to assist with the Art Exhibitions, booking and overseeing the use of the Lecture Hall, as well as, during this time becoming involved in the activities of the East Street and Half Way Tree Junior Centres. Miss McGowan was the keeper of the Art collections which comprised over 200 works of Art done by Jamaicans. Such works of Art were displayed within the Institute, as the National Gallery did not exist at the time.

Miss McGowan, in 1996 was asked by then Executive Director Dr. Elaine Fisher to establish and begin operations of the Greater Portmore Junior Centre, which was given to the Government of Jamaica by the Matalon Family.

Prior to her retirement, Miss McGowan was Programmes Manager with responsibility for the Art in Schools Exhibitions, the Lunch Hour Concerts, and oversight of the use of the Lecture Hall, the Exhibition Gallery and the Musgrave Medal Awards Ceremony.

As the good byes were said, she was thanked for her contributions and creative skills. Though she will be greatly missed, we wish for her a happy retirement.



Miss Kerri-Ann Palmer (right) presenting a gift from the Greater Portmore Junior Centre to Miss Gaverly McGowan during the Christmas Extravaganza.