

OUR CSA

VOL # 3
April 2011



CSA CELEBRATES 60 YEARS OF AGITATION FOR WORKERS RIGHTS

The St. Lucia Civil Service Association (CSA) was registered as a union on 16th May, 1951. The significance of 16th May, 2011 is that the Union will be sixty (60) years. The “Diamond Jubilee” is a milestone. In recognition of this milestone, the National Executive Committee (NEC) proposed, and the General Council approved, a plan of activities to be implemented throughout 2011, to observe the achievements of six decades of existence and to reposition the Union for the future.

As the CSA observes its 60th Anniversary, industrial relations for example Collective Bargaining, grievance handling and matters of representation, will remain the core services to be provided by the Union. As far as collective bargaining is concerned, close attention will be placed on negotiations that were due to take place in 2011. These include negotiations with the Government of St. Lucia, Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO), St. Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) and many others.

In terms of repositioning the Union for the future, the NEC has considered ways to improve and expand the benefits to be provided to members; revise the Constitution of the Union; reorganize, consolidate the Union’s branches, and increase training opportunities for union members at all levels. The NEC views the areas of benefits to members as important for renewing interests in the union, especially at a time when extenuating financial crises are eroding the economic power of members and potential members alike. In that regard, the benefits of the Group Medical Insurance which was received from CLICO will be transferred to another insurer. Additionally, the CSA will offer benefits in housing for members. This will take the form of a Housing Cooperative to be established. It is planned to make housing more accessible and to reduce the cost of acquiring housing.

Other areas of benefits to be pursued by the NEC as the CSA observes its 60th Anniversary will include: Group Motor Vehicle insurance, a pension scheme and a school’s book program.

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60 years of Agitation cont'd.

The existing Constitution of the CSA is in excess of 30 years old. During these many years only peace meal and cosmetic modifications were done to it. In the main, the Constitution in its present form has constrained the forward movement of the Union. A major undertaking to mark the 60th Anniversary and to reposition the Union for the future will be the adoption of a revised Constitution. A central aspect of the revised Constitution will provide for the election of officers and trustees of the Union at the branch level.

The reorganization and consolidation of the Union's branches and the provision of increased training opportunities are aspects aimed at enhancing capacity and accountability so as to create the base of the future leadership.

To focus the activities planned for the observance of the Diamond Jubilee a planning committee, headed by the President, Mary Isaac, was established for the purpose. The committee is broad based and comprises representation from the women, youth, fundraising and sports committees. The Committee is expected to work and focus activities for International Women's Day, International Youth Day and give attention to the observance of May Day 2011, and highlight CSA Week.

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CSA

**THE UNION THAT
SERVES YOU.**

Draft Program of Activities for CSA 60th Anniversary (May 15, 2011)

DATE	EVENT
8 th March	Women's Symposium Theme: "Your Health is Your Wealth – Health and Wellness"
20 th April	Youth Symposium Theme: "Making Wise Financial Decisions For Future Living"
29 th April, 2011	News Spin: Radio interview with members of the St.Lucia Trade Union Federation
1 st May	May Day Celebrations in collaboration with the St.Lucia Trade Union Federation <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (7:30 am)2. March around the Derek Walcott Square3. Rally at the Derek Walcott Square (Music by a popular hi-fi and calypsonians)4. Talk Show Interview: To-The-Point with Timothy
15 th May	Cocktail Reception general membership) – CSA Auditorium
16 th May	Play by Hayden Forde (actors – members of the CSA) – CSA Auditorium
29 th May	Boat ride (Fund-raising event)

"JOIN THE MAY DAY MARCH – 1ST MAY, 2011 – DEREK WALCOTT SQUARE"

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP MEDICAL PLAN

The Secretariat is in receipt of reimbursement cheques from CLICO and SAGICOR. Grateful if you could inform members within your department, who are members of the group insurance, to call the Secretariat to inquire if a cheque was received on their behalf.

Innovative Housing Project Underway

BY Wilfred Pierre
1st Vice President



BACKGROUND

The CSA after having taken cognizance of the plight of members for housing, and in keeping with the interest of the National Executive Committee to expand and identify new areas of benefits for members, the Union this year has embarked on an initiative to seek to satisfy the need of its members for the provision of affordable housing.

After a series of consultations, the concept of a Housing Scheme as a benefit/service to members was approved, in principle, as part of work plan activities for 2011.

RATIONALE

The rationale for the Union pursuing this initiative is that, given the importance of having a home, and at existing housing market conditions and current salary levels of our members, it is extremely difficult for our members to be able to purchase and own a home. The present characteristic market conditions which exists that are making it difficult for most of our members to own their home are, inter alia: -

- High level of land speculation of our limited land space, to foreign markets/existing alien landholding licensing mechanism (driving cost of land to \$13-\$18 per sq. ft.)
- Lack of adequate financial support from Government, and financial institutions as it relates to the provision of affordable housing.
- Lack of adequate regulation and legislation for housing to address the plight of low income earners.
- The high costs of materials and labour are also among the major constraints that restrict housing development.
- Other almost inevitable consequences of this failure of supply even to approach demand are high cost house-lot and house prices, and high rents. Indeed, the selling prices of houses are, on average, about 5-6 times annual household incomes, and monthly rents are from one-half to two thirds average monthly earnings.
- A house costing \$220,000 represents the

most basic of standards; yet such a building would still be out of the reach of the average LOW income earner.

- Mortgage financing for the low income earner is difficult to access partly because of the complex collateral conditions which the existing mortgage institutions require. Furthermore, the relatively high bank interest rates militate against would-be homeowners, by making monthly mortgage payments extremely high.

FRAMEWORK FOR A CSA HOUSING SCHEME

The present structure of the CSA does not lend itself to adequately deal with the provision of housing for CSA members and as such the institutional framework approach that we will pursue to fulfill the housing needs of our members (operationalizing the housing scheme) will be the establishment of a Housing Cooperative.

The Housing Cooperative/Society will operate to provide the following services to enable members to access affordable housing for themselves and their families: -

Assist members by working with financial institution (Credit Union, Banks, Mortgage companies) to access funding for land purchase and house construction;

Lobby Government (Prime Minister office) for whatever assistance possible:

Serve as the interface between members and institutions (NDC, DCA, NIS, Ministry of Housing, other Government Departments) that provide services that are pre-requisites for the construction of houses such as;

Present Status /update of our housing scheme.

- We have identified land both in the North and South and are presently in the process of making a submission to Government for use.
- We have had discussions with two local and one foreign company wishing to engage in the construction of houses using different types of construction materials.
- We have developed the relative draft byelaws for formation of a housing cooperative and have provided a copy of the byelaws to the Registrar of cooperatives.
- It is our intention to establish the Housing Cooperative this year to coincide with our 60th anniversary.
- We have held consultations with a number of financial institutions with a view of providing capital towards our housing scheme to provide affordable housing for our membership.

THE CSA WORKS FOR YOU! KEEP IN CONTACT WITH OUR SECRETARIAT FOR THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING THIS IMPORTANT INITIATIVE.

New Insurance Provider

The St. Lucia Civil Service Association (CSA) has made the strategic decision to change its Insurance provider from CLICO to SARGICOR Ltd.

This decision was taken in light of the difficulties presently being experienced by CLICO as a result of the world's financial crisis: 2008/2009.

Since this decision, members have been coming, in large numbers, to complete the necessary forms to make the transition. The CSA encourages all Civil Servants, who at present are not covered by medical insurance, to make use of this opportunity and join this group medical, since the cost of health care is on the rise and persons without health medical insurance will find it difficult to meet the cost of health care on their own.

Please find below a table which indicates the new premiums: -

INSURERS UNDER 65 - \$500,000.00 POLICY		
SINGLE	SINGLE AND ONE DEPENDANT	FAMILY
\$108.00	\$200.71	\$272.81
INSURERS OVER 65 - \$500,000.00 POLICY		
SINGLE	SINGLE AND ONE DEPENDANT	FAMILY
\$151.94	\$288.69	\$395.05

REMEMBER: Being an insured person under our programme dramatically reduces the cost of your medical care

NB.: The deductible under the new arrangements is \$200.00 per annum; then claims are paid on a 80% - 20% basis. This means that you, the insured, will be refunded 80% of the regular and customary charges.

Please call telephone number 452-3903 and ask for Mrs. Philomene Darius for more information.

YOU MAY ALSO ACCESS ALL FORMS RELATING TO YOUR HEALTH PLAN AT

<https://www.sagicor.com/groupweb/pdfdocs.asp> or <https://www.sagicor.com/groupweb/.com>



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2011 WOMEN'S WORKSHOP

"HEALTH & WELLNESS"

The Women's Arm of the St. Lucia Civil Service Association organized a Women's workshop to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Women's day.

The workshop was held under the theme "Health and Wellness" and was held at the CSA's Auditorium on Tuesday, March 8, 2011. Over forty (40) women activists attended the activity which was coordinated by Miss Anselma Calderon, Deputy Director, Training Division, Ministry of the Public Service.

The women were able to attract some very qualified, experienced, and knowledgeable facilitators in the persons of Dr. Stephen King, Dr. Segun Tobias and Mrs. Patricia Biscette-Modeste.

This workshop was very interactive and generated much debate and discussion.

We have extracted the following comments from the evaluation forms of some of the participants: -

- "I really enjoyed every aspect and every speaker"
- "The seminar/workshop was very informative and factual"
- "The wealth of information shared in such short sessions There was 100% participation"
- "It was very informative, interesting and interactive"
- "Lots of information gained; very informative and interesting; well organized and relevant"

You would no doubt agree, judging by these comments, that this workshop was indeed a tremendous success.

On behalf of the CSA's Women's Arm, we would like to express our deep appreciation to the coordinator, the facilitators, the employees of the Secretariat and all the participants for their invaluable contribution toward this activity.

Pics of women's symposium



Industrial Relations Matters

The St. Lucia Civil Service Association (CSA) has negotiated, and is in the process of negotiating, Collective Bargaining Agreements on behalf of its membership. The following information, below, gives in summary information regarding completed contract negotiation, those which are ongoing and those which are pending: -

ORGANISATION	PERIOD OF AGREEMENT	STATUS
National Skills Development Centre	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Proposals submitted for April 25, 2010. Reminder June 2, 2010
St.Lucia National Archives Authority	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Negotiations on-going – awaiting Government salary settlement.
St.Lucia Tourist Board	April 2008 – March 31, 2011	Awaiting feedback from employees re: proposals
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Proposals submitted – April 26, 2010
St.Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation	September 1, 2007 – August 31, 2011	Awaiting feedback from employees re: proposals
National Conservation Authority	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Agreement signed on December 10, 2010
St.Lucia Social Development Fund	December 1, 2007 – November 30, 2010	Agreement signed September 3, 2010
Castries City Council	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Agreement signed on August 23, 2010
Government of St.Lucia	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Proposals submitted on January 4, 2010.
Lewis Industries	August 1, 2006 – July 31, 2012	Provisions being monitored
St.Lucia Civil Service Cooperative Credit Union	January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2011	Proposals submitted June 17, 2010. Negotiations progressing smoothly.
CBN St.Lucia	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Negotiations on-going
WASCO	January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008	Proposals submitted on February 26, 2010.
St.Lucia Bureau of Standards	July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2011	Provisions being monitored
St.Lucia Marketing Board	January 1, 2005 – December 31, 2006	Monitoring closely situation at this organization
St.Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority	June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2012	Negotiations concluded
Soufriere Regional Development Foundation	September 1, 2009 – August 31, 2012	Provisions being monitored
National Development Corporation	December 1, 2009 – November 30, 2012	Provisions being monitored
Advance Building Maintenance Services	October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2013	Agreement signed on October 28, 2010
Sports St.Lucia Inc.	April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013	Proposals submitted on August 31, 2010
Computer Centre Ltd.		Negotiations on-going
Bel Jou Hotel	February 1, 2010 – January 31, 2013	CSA in discussion with management re: negotiations
LUCELEC	December 1, 2010 – November 31, 2013	Negotiations on-going
Radio St.Lucia Company Limited	April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2012	Negotiations concluded. Awaiting signing of Agreement

Agreements are negotiated on behalf of members. Please ensure that you get a copy of, and read, the Collective Agreement which pertains to you. This is important in order to be aware of your rights at the workplace.

“MAY DAY IS YOUR DAY – JOIN THE MARCH AT THE DEREK WALCOTT SQUARE!”

CSA TUTORIAL PROGRAM

Programme purpose: Assist members/staff children in preparation for CXC

Course: **Principles of Business**

TARGET GROUP: Secondary level, Form 4 and Form 5

TIME: Saturdays (tentative)
Starting: April 2011

TUTOR: Wilfred Pierre, Bsc. Msc. (Management) MBA

Fourteen (14) years of teaching, Business Management at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, (Continuing Education)

PRICE: **FREE for members children ONLY**

PLACE: CSA Auditorium

SPACE IS LIMITED, APPLY NOW

LOOK OUT FOR THE NEXT PUBLICATION – JUNE 2011