



ELECTIONS AND BOUNDARIES DEPARTMENT

*Accuracy * Efficiency * Compliance * Credibility*

EBD Conducts Training Workshop for Staff

The Elections and Boundaries Department held a series of workshop on May 18 & 19, and May 26 & 27, as a part of the its ongoing personnel development program. In-house training is a priority for the department as staff development is integral to its strategies and action plans.

All staff members countrywide converged at the Central Office in Belize City and were treated to a variety of sessions designed to empower and educate. Facilitators from the public and private sectors presented on various job related topics, including the Role of the Public Service Union and the Commission, Conditions of Service, Performance Appraisal, Human Resource Management, Constitutional and Administrative Law, the Machinery of Government, Ethics, Effective Presentation Skills, and the Representation of the People Act.

At the end of the workshop, participants via a questionnaire instrument, commented that the topics were adequately covered and relevant to their jobs.

The department continues to support and develop its human resource in an effort to provide more efficient and effective service delivery.

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Editorial



Congratulations to all the graduates and parents of graduates! It is indeed a time of celebration. Only you know the sacrifices, the struggles, the wanting to give up...but you have made it. You should be proud!

In all your celebrating, don't forget to give thanks to God who makes all things possible.

Continue to strive for the best!

Sharole R. Saldivar

*My job is to take care of the possible
and trust God with the impossible.*

Ruth Bell Graham

I take this opportunity to express sincere gratitude to the following persons who facilitated our training workshop:

*Mr. Dylan Reneau
Mr. Justin Palacio
Ms. Valerie Samuels
Ms. Sylvana Woods
Ms. Ann Marie Williams
Mr. Carl Smith
Ms. Margaret Mckenzie
Mr. Conrad Lewis
Mrs. Merlene Martinez
Mrs. Arreini Palacio Morgan
Mrs. Myrtle Palacio
Mr. Francisco Zuniga*

Mission

The Elections and Boundaries Department is committed to the

EBD Holds 6th Annual Voter Appreciation Day on May 12, 2004

In conjunction with its Voter Education Campaign, which was launched in November 1999, the Elections and Boundaries Department hosted its 6th Annual Voter Appreciation Day, on Wednesday, May 12, 2004 under the theme *Voter Education - Bridging the Gap in the Democratic Process*.

All twelve District Offices countrywide entertained students, scholars, stakeholders and the general public with information on election administration and the voting process.

Displays were mounted at the Central Office in Belize City and at the Orange Walk Registration Office, by the Elections and Boundaries Department in collaboration with the Belize Archives Department. The exhibition included information on the registration process, historical information on voting in Belize, and women who have participated in Belize's politics.

The Elections and Boundaries Department continues to live its mission of commitment to the enhancement of democracy through the promotion of voter education and the maintenance of a legitimate, impartial, valid electoral process.

Excerpt of speech on the Elections and Boundaries Department's Voter Education and Community Outreach Initiatives, delivered by Mrs. Sharole Saldivar, Ag. Assistant Chief Elections Officer, on 5 February 2004 at the launching of the booklet: *A Framework For Voter Education*, written by Mrs. Myrtle Palacio, Chief Elections Officer.

"As an election authority, mandated by law to perform electoral administrative tasks, the staff of the Elections and Boundaries Department has, since 1999, committed to gathering and disseminating information on the electoral and registration processes... to heighten awareness...to educate...to provide the tools and support necessary to attain an accurate, transparent electoral system...to forge partnerships...share, link, network, reach out to like organizations and stakeholders...with the objective of strengthening public confidence in the department and in the electoral system, and increase voter participation.

This has been accomplished through the department's continued efforts in voter education and community outreach initiatives, and is testimony of its mission of commitment to the enhancement of democracy through voter education and the maintenance of a legitimate, impartial, valid electoral process, and its goal to encourage public participation, forge partnerships and provide efficient and effective service delivery.

As a result of these initiatives, there is an increase in confidence in the department at the national and international levels. Voter registration and turnout has increased and is constantly increasing."

Voters' Appreciation Day
Reprinted from Multi-Media Newspaper, Orange Walk Town
May 16th, 2004

Earlier today, Wednesday 12 May the Elections and Boundaries Department set up their display to educate the public on voting and its procedures. This annual tradition kicked off at 9:00 a.m., when Louisiana School students began to arrive. Mrs. Eneida Vargas and Ms. Pearl Lizama were among the officers explaining the Department's purpose and goals. In accordance with their theme: "Voter Education; bridging the gap in the Democratic Process," the department was educating the young students on the voting process, registration requirements and the importance of the vote.

Part of the day's program was achieved by distributing pamphlets and booklets. For the younger children, they also had balloons depicting the theme. The department was also conducting an essay contest among high school students to be judged today. According to a spokesperson for the department, all the local schools were invited in order to receive their share of voting education.

The highlights of the display included a poster of the first Belizean Cabinet. This was provided by the Archives department and is something that few Belizeans have seen. Also included are posters of the history of our political arena, including clippings of newspaper where adult suffrage, political movements and impressionable leaders were profiled.

Part of the history displayed was information on the first national elections, held on April 28, 1954. Also displayed were clippings about our adult suffrage. Adult Suffrage meant that "working class persons, the rank and file, were able to vote for the first time." Some leaders elected under Adult Suffrage included among others, George Price, Phillip Goldson and Orange Walk's George Flowers.

Something that struck many people's interest was the display of women in politics. Women have long been underestimated and have kept merely as moral supporters or campaigners. Some prolific women in Belizean history are Gwendolyn Lizarraga (former Minister of Education), Faith Babb (Minister of Women's Affairs), and Mirna Manzanarez (political candidate) to name a few.

This morning's events proved that the Department recognizes the importance of education. Indeed, educating the public about voting and elections prepares the public, especially our upcoming generation, to make conscious decisions. The education of the public on subjects like these allows them to make better decisions regarding our future leaders. This morning's events further proves that we live in a beautiful jewel where democracy presides, and where the people have a high level of freedom.

The Seven Principles of Public Life



Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reason for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Belize Wins Gold in Guatemala City!!

Contributed by Jerrylyn Bruce

Assistant Registering Officer and member of BTL Female Softball Team

The BTL Female Softball Team, behind the management of Mr. Raymond Lashley, won the 2003 National Tournament. This tournament is held at the end of the regular softball season each year. First and second place for each division was given greater significance, as the winner would have the privilege to represent Belize at the Central American National Female Softball Championship.



This year was the second opportunity that our team had the privilege of representing our country.

On April 29th 2004, a bus departed the Novelos Bus Terminal at approximately 6:30 a.m. en route to Guatemala City. The bus carried the President of the Belize Softball Association, an ISF Umpire, our manager, two coaches, a chaperon, 18 players and 8 friends of our team.

The journey was expected to last for at least twelve hours but due to numerous stops along the way, it took 15 hours to reach Guatemala City. We experience different weather along the way—sunny and hot, then rainy then cold.

We finally arrived in Guatemala City at 9:30 p.m. and it took us another half hour to find the complex where we were going to stay - 'The Village'. This is a sport complex where foreign athletes stayed while in Guatemala for tournaments. Other athletes staying on the grounds were El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua's softball teams, and Cuba's football team. The tournament was set to begin on April 30th and finish on May 2nd, 2004.

We woke up early on the first day and had breakfast in the cafeteria on the grounds. After taking a couple of pictures we boarded our bus en route to the stadium for our first game of the day and the tournament, which was against El Salvador. We were confident going into the game but somewhere along we lost all hope when the errors began. El Salvador defeated us 7-6.

Our manager held one of his usual meetings to help build our confidence after a loss. His points were strong as we came out 'banging' after that. We viewed ourselves as the 'dream team'. We were hitting, running and playing massive defense. We were on a roll.

(Continued on page 7)

We had defeated Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala. El Salvador had lost their first game against Guatemala so they were tied with us.

That night the players of El Salvador came into our room to talk with us. We were familiar with most of them from the first Central American National Female Softball Championship that was held in Belize three years ago. They tried to negotiate with us that we should defeat Guatemala and then they will defeat us making them the gold medallists and us the second runner up. "What a joke!" I exclaimed to them. We didn't plan on settling for nothing less than first place.

We played at least two games each day. On May 2nd we were set to play three games against Nicaragua, and finally, El Salvador. We won our first two games and were in the middle of the third. In the fifth inning our confidence began slipping away as we were down by two runs and the umpires were being bias. I tried to comfort my teammates and reassured them that we were going to win regardless of the calls that the umpires were making.

It began raining in the 6th inning. We had tied the game 7-7. We had one inning remaining to play. Our plan was to play strong defense and not allow El Salvador to score any more runs. We executed that and then it was time for part two of our plan - to score. The rain did not stop the game. It was our turn to bat.

A pitch hit our first batter and this gave our lead off runner on base. Our second batter was walked and the third got a hit. We had bases loaded with no out. Our fourth batter went to the plate and after fouling off numerous balls she hit a line drive to the third base defender but none of our runners moved. We didn't give El Salvador the opportunity to make a double play.

Our fifth batter went to the plate and the first ball pitched to her was a wild pitch that got away from EL Salvador's catcher and caused our lead runner, Mrs. Delcie Lizama, to score the winning run.

The entire delegation ran out on the field. Tears of joy could be seen running down our faces as our dream to be gold medallists of the competition came through. We ran around the field with our National Flag and screamed and shouted, "Belize is number one". Words could not describe our feelings that day but our emotions and tears did. The players of El Salvador finally agreed with me by saying, "Belice es numero uno." And we surely are as we are the gold medallists of the third Central American National Female Softball Championship.

After the interviews we ordered pizza and champagne to celebrate our victory while we

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Staff Profile

Francisco Zuniga



I am Francisco 'Girrette' Zuniga, born on 17 September 1958 in the beautiful island on the sun, Seine Bight Village, Stann Creek District, the first male twin child of Cecilia Ramirez nee Guzman and Francis Zuniga. I attended primary school at both Seine Bight and Georgetown villages, and it was at the latter I eventually grew up and completed my elementary studies. Reasons beyond my control, can say now: 'not regrettable' did not permit me to enter the doors of a secondary school. However, ambition drove my determination, that soon as I got my first employment, I would pursue some correspondence course at an institution or evening classes where I would be able to speak the language of a high school graduate or even greater. With God, nothing is impossible. This idea came into fruition when I got my first employment, that I begun taking studies for the First Class Teachers Examination and was successful on the first attempt in 1978. Later, I attempted the Second Class Exam, and was successful in five out of nine subjects.

During this time, I also registered for a correspondence course in Accounting at a prestigious institution in the United Kingdom. Unfortunately I was not able to continue this course. Later, I registered at the St. John's College Extension Department and obtained Certificates in Basic Accounting, Accounting Principles, and Principles of Business. Aiming for an accounting profession, I was recommended to the then University of Belize (UB) and was accepted to pursue advanced accounting courses, which was successfully done. This opportunity afforded me to pursue other programs eventually towards a Bachelors in Science Degree in Business Administration, which I am currently pursuing. The struggle definitely served me right, as one airline logo says: "Work Hard, Fly Right."

I joined the department on 2 January 1991 as an Assistant Registering Officer for the Belize Rural Divisions. In 1992, I was promoted to the post of Statistical Officer and was assigned to the Central Electoral Office. In 1993, I was promoted to act as Registering Officer for the Belize Rural Divisions and later confirmed to the post.

In 1997, I was transferred to the Toledo office. I had the opportunity to visit several on the inland and coastal villages and experience the diverse culture of the beautiful jewel. In 2001, I was transferred back to Belize City at the Vernon Street office and in December 2002, I was transferred to the Racecourse Street office.

In 2001, I had the honor of being nominated to observe the General Elections in St. Vincent and the Grenadines as part of a CARICOM Observer Mission. This was a wonderful experience to be among a high level delegation and to be an Ambassador for my country.

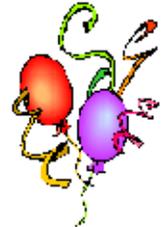
I am proud to be a member of the Elections and Boundaries' family under the stewardship of Mrs. Myrtle Palacio. I presently serve as Secretary General of the Belize Public Service Union. I am the proud father of four children, Arnold, Melissa, Ashton and Marleny, and married to my beautiful wife Agnes since 1981. FGZ

Staff Corner



Happy Birthday

Areli Fern



Happy Father's Day

To all fathers



You can win more friends with your ears than with your mouth.

Anonymous

What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. They are but trifles, to be sure, but scattered along life's pathway, the good they do is inconceivable.

Joseph Addison

Worry is like a rocking chair: It gives you something to do but doesn't take you anywhere.

Anonymous

(Continued from page 7)

watched the final game between El Salvador and Guatemala. This game determined the second and third place winners.

The closing ceremony began after that game. There were eleven individual trophies presented that day and we brought home seven of them:

MVP and Highest batting average - Lydia Cacho

Most Steals - Kimberly Vaccaro

Most Strike Out - Kenreen Gillett

Pitcher w/most wins - Keneesha Sutherland

Most hits - Norecia Rowland

Most triples - Martha Rhys

After receiving our medals, we burst our champagnes and took more pictures. We were given an hour to shop and then we went back to 'The Village' to pack our belongings. We departed from Guatemala City at 10:00 p.m. on May 2nd 2004, and we arrived in Belize at 11:00 a.m. a welcoming committee greeted us on the Western Highway in front of Leslie's import and we were escorted through the streets of Belize where onlookers cheered us on.

For the entire week our pictures graced the newspapers and we are now known as 'Queens of Belize'. We were hosted by various committees at luncheons and cocktails. The attention and gifts we received so far gave us a feeling of appreciation and pride as for as long as twenty-five years Belize haven't won gold at any international softball tournaments. Hopefully the BTL Female Softball Team has set the stage for Belize to excel and win gold in all other tournaments we play.

I extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisors for affording me the opportunity to visit Guatemala City and be a part of history. I also urge everyone to believe in themselves and not to give up when it 'begins to rain'. Jerrylyn Bruce

Editor's note

The Staff of Elections and Boundaries Department congratulates Ms. Jerrylyn Bruce and the other members of the BTL Female Softball Team, Winner of the Central American National Female Softball Championship. You've made Belize proud!



Recipe Corner

Apple-Raisin Salad



2 medium apples, cored and cut into chunks; 1 cup seedless red or green grapes, cut in halves; 1/2 cup raisins; 1/2 cup tiny marshmallows; 1 – 8 ounce carton Strawberry Banana Fruit on the Bottom Yogurt

1. In a medium bowl, combine apple chunks and grape halves.
2. Use a wooden spoon to stir in the raisins and marshmallows. Add the yogurt and stir until fruit is coated.

Makes 6 servings

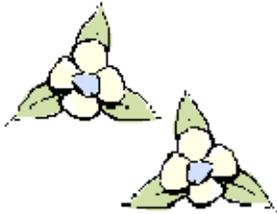
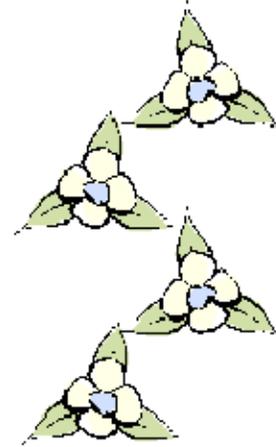
My Dear Friend...

*It means a lot to me
To have a friend like you,
To know that I can count on you,
And to know that you care for me.*

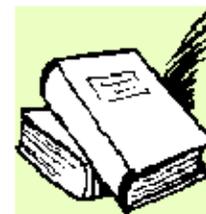
*It makes a world of difference
To have you in my life,
And to share my troubles with you,
Just like you share yours with me.*

*It means a lot to me
To have someone I can trust ~
Who constantly believes in me
And likes me just as I am.*

*It means more to me
Than you could ever know ~
To have a wonderful person like you,
As a special and dear friend.
You're a good friend in every way, and every single day.*



Publications



Brochures

About Us Voter Registration - All You Want To Know
The Election Process The Referendum Act
Boundary Redistricting

Reports

End of Year Report 1999 Annual Report 2000
Annual Report 2001 Annual Report 2002
Accomplishments in Financial Management 1999 - 2003
Voter Education and Community Outreach Initiatives 1999 - 2004

Annual Report 2003

New

Manuals

Policies and Procedures on the EBC Database System Administrative Manual
Election Day Guidelines for Polling Agents Guide To Election Officials
A Guide For New Entrants A Quick Reference For Registering Officers

Writing for the Office: A Guide for Staff

New

Books

Selecting Our Leaders – Past and Present
A Framework For Voter Education

Calendar 2004

**Elections and Boundaries Department
P.O. Box 913
Mahogany Street Extension
Belize City
Belize
Central America**

**Telephone: 501-222-4042/4992 Fax: 501-222-4991
Email: electbound@btl.net
Website: www.belize-elections.org**

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