

Did your local Best Buy just close?
We have the top brands and low prices.

Our stores will match the price of any local competitor's printed ad for an identical product. Not applicable to Walmart.com®. For ad match and coupons, some restrictions apply. See store for details.



[Click here to learn more >](#)



Bluefields Bay Villas & Patrick Marti: Business & Peace Corp working together to make a difference

HOME | OPINION | SPORTS | CULTURE | BOOKS | BLOGS | COMMUNITIES | PHOTO GALLERIES |

ENTERTAIN US | FAMILY | GLOBAL | LIFE | SPORTS VIEW | POLITICS | RELIGION | FOOD & TRAVEL | HEALTH & SCIENCE | BUSINESS

COMMUNITIES HOME ▶ FOOD & TRAVEL ▶ TRAVEL THE WORLD ▶ ABOUT US | WRITE FOR US | CONTACT US | FEEDS | TERMS

Bluefields Bay Villas & Patrick Marti: Business & Peace Corp working together to make a difference

[Comment](#) | [Tweet](#) | [Share](#) | [Pin it](#) | [EMAIL](#) | [More](#) | [Like](#)



Patrick Marti, Peace Corp Volunteer Photo by: Jacquie Kubin

Sunday, June 10, 2012 - [Travel the World](#) by Jacquie Kubin

Jacquie Kubin



[Ask me a question.](#)

[Follow @donne_tempo](#)

BLUEFIELDS BAY, Jamaica – Traveling from Montego Bay to Bluefields Bay, a trip of about 45 minutes, the van heads up and over the mountains while the city slips away. Suddenly everything is lush. Everywhere are trees bearing breadfruit, papaya, and mango growing alongside the spiny crowns bearing pineapples.

The land gives fruit and sustenance to the people, and that is the way it should be. If the tree is not owned by someone, its fruits are there for the taking and the roads are lined with mostly woman selling freshly harvested fruits that taste otherworldly to anything one can purchase in the grocery store.

PHOTO GALLERY:

A mango just picked at the peak of ripe, peeled and consumed roadside

WHO WE ARE

This is the Communities at [WashingtonTimes.com](#). Individual contributors are responsible for their content, which is not edited by The Washington Times. The opinions of Communities writers do not necessarily reflect nor are they endorsed by the Washington Times. [Contact Us](#) with questions or comments.

LIKE US [f](#) FOLLOW [@WTCOMMUNITIES](#)



Get The Most Up-To-Date News From The Washington Times Communities.

* required

MOST READ

- [Will Ron Paul delegates make Romney flip flop again?](#)
- [Shocking boxing results: Bradley beats Pacquiao in controversial decision](#)
- [Pacquiao vs. Bradley bout: could an upset make boxing history tonight?](#)
- [Will Ron Paul's battle transform the party? Ron Paul has already won](#)
- [No television for babies: Why TV is bad for young children](#)
- [Mitt Romney and service in God's army: The LDS missionary program](#)
- [Keeping Ron Paul's liberty movement alive](#)
- [Schedule: Pacquiao vs. Bradley TV preview and fight coverage aplenty for fans Friday and Saturday](#)



48 Photos
Bluefields Bay Villas & Patrick Marti: Business & Peace Corp working together to make a difference

is very different than the one, still hard, in the grocers aisle.

Food is an important part of the ritual of life here in Jamaica. The people rely on the bounty of the earth and sea for the foods they eat and the foods they sell, eking out what would be, to some, a meager living.

But for the Jamaican's it is a living. It is a life. It is.

And it is in danger.

For this island nation the farmer's life is one that is alternately hard, but satisfying, as, like farmers everywhere, they love the land they live on. They respect the gifts that it gives. For George, one of the organic farmers of the Bluefields Organic Farmers Group, his crops cycle begins with the Pimento tree and from the tree comes All Spice, given its name for its aroma of cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon and pepper.

The Pimento tree is indigenous to Jamaica and has been used by the Jamaican people, recorded since before 1509. In 2006, the export of pimento products from Jamaica was estimated at \$5 million annually.



Pimento leaves are steamed for oil which is exported, the berries are dried and ground into All Spice seasoning, and the wood of the tree is what gives Jerk Chicken its particular flavor.

All spice, ground from the berries is one export from the pimento tree, however the real money in the tree is in the oil that is extracted via steam and still from the leaves. It is hard work, must be hot work in a place that is already hot in mid-May, but George's pride in his "factory" is

apparent.

Where a teacher may make \$6,000 a year, for a farmer to be able to acquire the tools he needs to process Pimento leaf oil is an accomplishment to be proud of.

One must always remember, this is an island. Most everything they have, that does not come from the land, or sea, is imported. Which

means expensive.

Spending time with George, he showed us how, working with BOFG, he has become an "organic" gardener in that he now takes the leaves after the steaming and composts them.

In the rougher form, when the leaves are compacted, they are used around the base of the banana trees, and George is growing some beautiful banana trees with fruit that is sweet and delicious with a texture that is firm and pleasant.

George explains that some of the compost is allowed to further decay into soil. That soil then used, sometimes mixed with manures to nurture his crops of okra, green sweet peppers, broccoli and cucumbers. His farm is tucked at the based of the hill, not far from the origination of the Sawmill spring that provides fresh, free flowing mineral spring water to the people of his community, and his crops.

2012 NBA Finals forecast: Heat vs. Thunder

FEATURED NEIGHBORHOODS



Autism Unexpected

Thoughts on the unexpected emotions, difficulties and joys involved in raising a special-needs child.

Autism at the school carnival

It is supposed to be a festive and fun occasion, but for me, these large, chaotic school events always break my heart.

Sensory friendly theater for special needs kids at the Kennedy Center

For people with sensory sensitivities, a day at the theater can be impossible. Places like the Kennedy Center are making it possible for special needs individuals to take part.

Spotlight on: Garret Westlake and Disability as a Catalyst for Innovation

Have we been operating from a deficit model of disability for too long? Garret Westlake thinks so and has created STEM Force Technology to prove it.

Special hockey for autistic youth is therapy on skates

Special hockey for players with developmental disabilities is more than just a sport. It teaches sportsmanship, teamwork, friendship, motor skills, and so much more.

An Indian Journal - Seeking Balance in India

An Indian Journal is your window to the world's largest democracy with a diverse culture, growing economy and deep contradictions that remain unparalleled.

Sports Around

Contributions to the Communities Sports desk from readers.

Higher Things

Because everything is ultimately spiritual.

Culinary Quest

Great discoveries in the world of restaurants and chefs fulfill the quest for delicious food and cooking.

Share your story for a chance to **WIN!**

REMAX \$10,000 GRAND PRIZE

WEEKLY PRIZES
\$750 Apple gift cards

For all the things that move you.™

CLICK HERE >>

Each office independently owned and operated.

Did your local Best Buy just close?
We have the top brands and low prices.

LOW PRICE GUARANTEE

SAMSUNG

TOSHIBA

Our stores will match the price of any local competitor's printed ad for an identical product. Not applicable to Walmart.com™. For ad match and coupons, some restrictions apply. See store for details.

Click here to learn more >

PHOTO GALLERIES



Images from the 2011-2012 performances at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

Arts

Images from the 2011-2012 performances at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

9 Photos



Waldorf Astoria Park City
8 Photos

George is one of 28 farmers that have been working with Patrick Marti, a Peace Corps volunteer that came to Jamaica after receiving his PhD from Cambridge where he was instrumental in developing a new coating for hip replacements.

“An odd career path choice,” Marti says. “Earning my doctorate and then choosing to come here, but its about choosing a life path versus a career path.”

Marti’s time in Jamaica is drawing to a close after 26 months; to say he has made a difference is an understatement. He worked with the farmers, like George, to introduce sustainable, environmental and organic techniques that the land can better support.

He has worked with [Bluefield Villas](#) and their wide sweeping community efforts, and the Bluefield Bay Fisherman’s Friendly Society, a group of 57 fisherman, creating one of the country’s nine marine sanctuaries where it is illegal for the fisherman to take fish.

The Caribbean is dangerously overfished as commercial demand had fisherman using seine nets with holes so small they caught the small fry fish, which they did not throw back. The nets also damaged the coral in lowlying waters.

Then came the use of technology, scuba gear, to go deeper to fish fish that used to be able to grow. And the demand of people, unaware, looking for fish to sit plated, with head and tail, pulls fish out of the sea before reproductive maturity.

A fish that can sit on a dinner plate is a fish too small to remove from the ocean. It has not gone through its reproductive cycle. It has not spawned new fish, to sustain the fisherman tomorrow.

The 3,000 hectare reserve, the largest marine sanctuary in Jamaica, is part of a growing effort whose goal is to help offset unemployment and bring the most over-fished country in the Caribbean back to health.

“We now have grants from the government that allow us to patrol the bay, to ensure that fisherman are not fishing a population that desperately needs to regrow,” Marti says. “And compliance is nearly 100% as the fisherman are now seeing that they can catch larger fish outside the sanctuary when they, the fish, are allowed to reach maturity inside the sanctuary.”

Bluefields Bay has worked with Marti and the group, donating gas to the fisherman and sitting on the board, along with parents, Braxton and Debbie Moncure, who decided Bluefields was where they wanted to live when visiting in 1977.

Marti has also worked with the woman of the community, helping them to realize a new source of business income in the making and jarring of June Plums, a local plum that had a minimal income life that is now expanded.

A group of about 28 woman, and men, get together to create the “locally made” jams sold to the hotels. It is not a big operation, but fruit boiled on an old gas stove. And it is not just June Plums, which are sweet and tangy, with more stone than flesh, that they turn to jam, they also pick the Sorrell flowers.

Once only used for a Christmas drink made by boiling the flower and adding dried ginger, sugar, and, of course, allspice, it is now a source of income for the people.

The Sorrell Sepal flowers are related to hibiscus and the drink is similar to the hibiscus drink that is enjoyed by the Egyptian culture, but now instead of a once yearly refreshment, Sorrell flowers are now boiled into a bright red jam that tastes of the island.



[Images from The Ferrari Club of America, Southwest Region show](#)

Images from The Ferrari Club of America, Southwest Region show

47 Photos



[Mayan predictions: Photos from Central America/Belize](#)

Mayan predictions: Photos from Central

America/Belize

16 Photos



[Citizens of Sanford, Florida standing for Trayvon Martin](#)

Citizens of Sanford, Florida standing for

Trayvon Martin (Photos by Jerry Rabinowitz)

30 Photos



[Dismantling the Space Shuttle Endeavour](#)

An exclusive look inside the Space Shuttle

Endeavour's dismantling and decommissioning process.

12 Photos

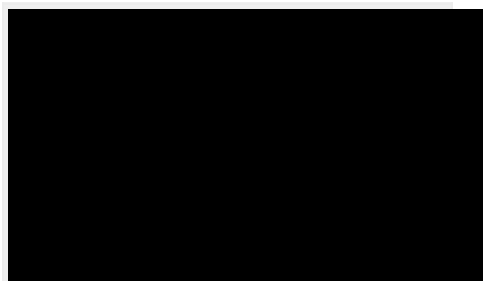


[Disney's Princess Half Marathon Slideshow](#)

Disney's Princess Half Marathon Weekend

from Feb. 24-26 was a fairy tale tour around Walt Disney World in Florida. Follow along with photos from the half-marathon, kids' races and 5K. (Photos: Courtesy of runDisney)

36 Photos



Houston Moncure of Bluefields Bay Villas supports the efforts of these groups by purchasing produce from the farms, the jams from the womans co-op, fish – particularly the evasive and destructive lion fish – to serve to his guests, and his generosity to the school in which Patrick Marti has also worked teaching environmental education and literacy.

“What we do is easy to do,” say Moncure. “We choose to support the people of the town, the people whose family members work with us, the people that keep Bluefields a travel destination.”

Serving the lion fish to guests is a resourceful way to help combat a problem created when a pair of the fish were “accidentally” introduced to the waters off of Florida. Those fish have spawned a wave of destruction that can wipe out a healthy coral reef of all the smaller fish in a matter of hours.

“Bluefield’s pays not only for the fish, providing an income for the local fisherman,” Marti says, “They also pay for fish to be cleaned of its venomous spines allowing them to charge a higher price for the filet. “

Having been served the fish, herbed and poached, served with a curry citrus sauce by Chef Rose Spence of Bluefields Bay Villas, I can personally attest to the deliciousness of the mild, yet very flavorful fish.

The big Bluefields Bay villas “B” can be seen on the washrooms that replace the “pit-toilets” at the Mernsville Academy where children from 8-12 learn. It is also visible at the Bluefields Early Childhood Institution where the Bluefields’ Villas support Miss. Joy’s classroom of twenty three to five year olds.

The classroom does not yet have electricity, and they still have pit toilets for the staff and children, which may seem primitive by our standards, but the children are being given a learning foundation, and a pit toilet is not so strange here.

The children are being fed fruits and vegetables so that they grow and develop both physically and mentally.

They have toys we may not consider in the U.S.A. Small motorbike tires that are for jumping, and rolling. An old swingset. A seesaw that would never pass American standards but that works just fine for children that see no more or less than an opportunity to play.

Bluefields Bay Villas is an Early Childhood Institution benefactor, supplied the toilets to Mernsville and donated a classroom filled with new Dell Computers creating the *Bluefields Bay Villas Computer Lab* in the new Belmont *Academy* High School for Excellence.

Even here for a week, the Jamaican’s ability to live with grace and joy is apparent, mostly in the faces of the very young, which like all young around the world, think mostly of the play, not the work, the day brings.

Marti is leaving Jamaica but he hopes his lessons stay behind, that they continue to grow and flourish. There are eight Peace Corps volunteers coming into Westmoreland, Jamaica to replace this one man. That may be too broad a statement, but to continue the work this one man has done will take each and everyone of those volunteers.

Together, and with the constant help and support of Bluefields Bay Villas and the Moncure family, Patrick has influenced the lives of the people of Bluefields in ways too many and too positive to just count on paper.

From Bluefields Bay, Marti goes to Zambia to continue to spread the message of environmentalism, sustainability. And we hope he will tell us of his work there as well.

“Recycling is not the message I give, though it is important, but it is also difficult when things need to

be shipped out to be recycled," Matri says. "I try to teach reduction of use and reuse of what they have. Don't throw it out, find another way to use what you have. When you have little, it is important to treat everything as a resource."

This article is the copyrighted property of the writer and Communities @ WashingtonTimes.com. Written permission must be obtained before reprint in online or print media. REPRINTING TWTC CONTENT WITHOUT PERMISSION AND/OR PAYMENT IS THEFT AND PUNISHABLE BY LAW.

More from Travel the World



Travel to Florida's Gulf Coast

Cruising in France's Burgundy Region



Bluefields Bay Villas & Patrick Marti: Business & Peace Corp working

together to make a difference

Communities on StumbleUpon



National Tourism Month: A rabbi connects travel and religion...
washingtontimes.com



May Day Protests: Civil Disobedience or Lawlessness? |...
washingtontimes.com



Where the West could truly lose | Washington Times Communities
washingtontimes.com



An economics lesson from Ron Paul: Inflation is theft |...
washingtontimes.com

powered by StumbleUpon



Showing 0 comments

Sort by popular now

M [Subscribe by email](#) S [RSS](#)

Add New Comment

[Login](#)



Please wait...

Reactions



Trackback URL

blog comments powered by DISQUS

