

LifE STYLES



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RUM CAY DREAM

An etching of the dream home Ron Rickert is building on the island of Rum Cay.

BUILDING YOUR DREAM ISLAND HOME

By **KARAN MINNIS**
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Deserted, pristine, beaches that seem to go on for miles. Turquoise waters so clean you can see clear to the bottom. Small, villages with people so friendly, you can't help but smile as you pass each other. Add to that the lore of pirates and buried treasure and you've got the lure of the Bahamas Islands.

It's for these reasons that many an ex-patriots seek to build second homes on the Family Islands for vacation purposes, and ultimately for retirement. Bahamians in the know, are following suit.

But it is not uncommon for someone to begin the process of building that home only to become overwhelmed by the challenges that are associated with construction on a Family Island and giving up.

Ron Rickert, a founding partner in Affiniti Architects an architectural firm headquartered in Boca Raton, FL, who is building a home on Rum Cay, knows first hand the roadblocks you can stumble upon as you seek to make your dream a reality. He says that with careful planning and education about the building process, you can probably avoid the pitfalls ahead of time, and make the process of building your dream island home go

■ See Home on L2

With careful planning and preparation you can avoid pitfalls

By **KARAN MINNIS**
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The fresh breezes and warm sunshine that arrive in the spring and summer months seem to bring out a little of the gardener in everyone. But if you have little experience with plants or if you just don't have the space to grow them outdoors, a simple indoor herb garden may be just the solution for you. It requires very little maintenance, and their aromas scent up a room.

You also have a steady stock of herbs to use in cooking.

Lily Saunders, 43, who loves to garden has several indoor herb gardens, as well as an outdoor garden says she feels more attached to her herbs than her roses.

"I love having an indoor herb garden," she says. "It helps me cut back on buying them, plus it adds a little life to my food and my kitchen. Another benefit is that it

■ See Indoor on L4

Indoor herb gardens are low maintenance with a high scent return



GREEN

Growing herbs in your home can be less expensive on the pocket than purchasing at the grocery store. As an added bonus, they give off a great scent.

Internet photo



ETIQUETTE 101

STACIA WILLIAMS

Professionalism in the work place

You hear customers say it all the time — "boy these people really aren't professional".

"I wish my people would be more professional, is what you hear from managers and supervisors, but in spite of all the whining it seems that very little is being done to upgrade the level of professionalism in the work place.

Last week I had a personal experience that disturbed me so much it prompted this article.

I went into a local bank in the Oakes Field area to conduct business, and as I waited in line for the next available teller, I began to mentally take note of the branch's layout, décor and its employees — one in particular caught my attention. He was sitting behind the desk in the manager's office chewing gum. When I had concluded my transaction I asked if I could have a quick word with this gum-chewing employee. The reply was "as soon as the manager gets off the phone I'll see if he would see you".

Imagine my shock. The gum-chewing employee was actually the new branch manager, wow!

Here are five characteristics displayed by this new manager that detracted from his professionalism in the workplace:

- **His obvious lack of soft skills:** When I entered the manager's office I remained standing as the employee who escorted me in made the introductions. The manager remained seated so I walked over to him and extended my hand. Without standing he shook my hand.

Point to Remember: Whenever a client enters your office ALWAYS stand to greet him/her. Always be the first to extend your hand and greet the customer with a smile. This simple act speaks to your level of confidence, and exposure to social graces and sends a message that says "I'm in control".

- **He didn't look the part:** When meeting someone for the first time, psychologists have determined that within 30 seconds of the encounter, the other person has made at least 11 assumptions about you.

Included in these assumptions are your socio-economic status, career competence and success, intelligence and educational level. They also assess your overall

■ See Etiquette on L4

Lifestyles

POETRY CORNER

What color do you see?

By Kadria R. Sears

Variations of all kinds,
multifaceted and sundance.
We never seem to stop
and examine its contents.
Red, yellow, black, white
what colors clearly are in sight?
Is it one of hatred or fright?
Maybe one of disbelief,
bewilderment or excitement?
Can you really discern
the cares, the pressures or the concerns?
Whether we see in gradations,
pantones or a plethora of pastels,
there is one thing that can't be ignored
And that is beyond all
shades of what we see
A wonderful painting exist
despite the colors
of this world's hostility.

Remember the happy times

By Elizabeth Munnings

Remember the happy times
When the children played on the playground.
When they ran and played "catchers".
They played "ring plays".

Remember the time
when they walked from school.
Other children teased them because of their uniform.
It was harmless in those days.

Today the times are deadly.
Children are so angry.
They attack with knives, bottles, rocks, and guns.
They are easily provoked.

Some homes are war zones.
Dad and mother fight from sun up to sun down.
Some children view this every day.
Their lives are "hell"; they cannot play.

Let's save the children!

■ Yes, folks! The Nassau Guardian's Poetry Corner is back! Local poets will be featured every Tuesday in the Lifestyles Section of the newspaper. All poems submitted will be subject to screening, and will not automatically be selected for publication. Interested persons can e-mail their poems to The Nassau Guardian at shavaughn@nassguard.com.

THERE IS A REASON WHY YOUR TANGELOS ARE
sour

GARDEN KORNER

OSCAR PHILIPS

Q. I purchased a tangelo tree from one of the local nurseries last year. I enjoyed the fruits from the plant. After a hurricane, I picked some fruits and they were lumpy, sour and do not look like the same fruit. Can you tell me what has happened to this plant?

— T.L., Seabreeze Estates

A. It would appear that your tangelo tree has sprouted from its root stock. This branch being of juvenile wood was aggressive and fast growing, crowding out the tangelo portion of the tree. When this branch matured, it started producing the lumpy and sour fruit. In your tree, the tangelo bud wood was grafted onto a rough lemon root stock. Find the point of origin of the rough lemon branch and cut it from the tree. Be careful to remove any other sprouts from below the graft union of the rough lemon root stock and the tangelo scion. The bark should have a different color or texture on the root stock than it does on the remainder of the tree. In time, the less vigorous tangelo graft should fill in and produce a new tree. Remember to seal all wounds on the tree with pruning paint or sealant.

Q. I have been told that I unwittingly killed several of my house plants by over-watering. Can you tell me when it is the right time to water indoor plants?

— K.C., Eastern Road

A. A good way to tell it is time to water your indoor plants is by inserting your finger two to three inches deep into the plant potting mixture. If the soil feels moist at that depth, there is no need to water. If in doubt, do not water. Plants can tolerate low moisture much better than moist conditions. Over watering is the number one reason why many house plants die.

Q. Each year I have noticed that I have a lot of disease problems in my vegetable garden. What am I doing wrong? Is there anything I can do other than use insecticide sprays?

— F.I., Winton Heights

A. You can use several methods to reduce diseases in your garden. Such methods include spacing your plants far enough apart to allow for good air circulation, buying disease and nematode resistant varieties, using mulch, and watering in the morning so the

foliage of the plant dries quickly. You may want to buy healthy transplants instead of growing from seeds.

Q. I received a birthday present gift a small frangipani plant growing in a pot. Will it bloom or should I give it to my daughter for her to put in her garden?

— A.C., Stapledon Gardens

A. Your frangipani plant will flower and do quite well in a pot on a balcony. The deciduous slow-growing, salt-tolerant, small tree will flower when quite small. It will even flower the first year from small rooted cuttings, in a pot or in a garden.

PLANTING GUIDE FOR APRIL

VEGETABLES: Beans (lima, pole, snap), cabbage, cantaloupe, collard, corn, cucumber, eggplant, okra, peppers (hot and sweet), sweet potatoes, radish, summer squash, tomato, watermelon.

FLOWERS: Aster, balsam, bachelor's button, begonia, candytuft, celosia, cosmos, cornflower, dahlia, daisy, gaillardia, marigold, periwinkle, portulaca, Queen Anne's Lace, verbena, zinnia.

GRASSES: Centipede, St. Augustine, Zoysia

■ For help with your garden problems, write to Garden Korner, P.O. Box N-3011, Nassau, Bahamas.



BEAUTIFUL BLOOMS:

Cannas will add beauty to your garden

HOME

■ From L1

more smoothly.

Rickert stumbled upon Rum Cay, five years ago while sailing with a friend on the way to the Exumas, and he was hooked. He knew he had to build his retirement home there.

"It just felt natural."

Adding that The Bahama Islands are one of the most unique places in the world, Rickert says that the people are even more wonderful, and one of the reasons he would encourage people to move here.

"It is a great place to live. But before you do, you have to take a few important steps, and the first is to find a piece of land you truly love.

"Holding on to the vision of it will drive your dream and encourage you to persevere even when there are obstacles. You can choose to build in a developed area, or be a pioneer and choose one of the more remote islands. But remember that although the initial cost of land is likely to be lower on an outer island, it can be harder and more expensive to develop because you will be paying to transport people and materials to a distant location without infrastructure."

Before you purchase the land Ron says to check to see if there is a legitimate contractor who works on the island, otherwise, you may encounter work permit issues.

"You have to think of questions like: Are water, sewer and power available to the site? If they are not, developing the property will be more complicated. However it is quite possible to design a home 'off the grid.' Wind power, which is reliably constant in most of the islands, can substitute for traditionally generated electricity. The initial investment is likely to pay for itself in just a couple of years, because wind power is free. The system can also be grid-friendly so that when traditional power does come to your island, you'll be able to hook up without additional expense.

"Then you can have a desalination process, which can create fresh water from saltwater. It is easily possible to design a small sewer system for your home. Plus these 'green' systems need to be serviced only twice a year, and will not contaminate the land or water."

Once you purchase property, it is time to hire an architect, and Rickert says it's usually best to choose a firm on the island of your choice, or an affiliation with one of the local Bahamian architects, because there will be fewer complications involved during the design and building process.

"The architect will design a home that is specific to the site, maximizing views, land features, natural light, and cross breezes. A timeless island style that incorporates clean, modern lines which can blend beautifully with the landscape and seascape."

Rickert advises that the design phase is likely to take three to four months before the plans go out for bids, which can take another month. When the bids come in, he advises adding 20 to 30 percent to the bottom line, because in The Bahamas, overages can add rapidly. He says you should anticipate unexpected duty fees, shipping costs and delays, even if you think you have covered them in your initial plan. Adding that many people also decide during the building process to upgrade fixtures and finishes, Rickert says that while this will also add to the initial cost of the home. Once you accept a bid, the local Bahamian architect will apply for the permit, and you should expect at least another month for it to be issued.

Rickert says construction is likely to take anywhere from 10 to 18 months, depending on the remoteness of the island you have chosen.

"In some locations, shipping can be intermittent, and if you miss having materials delivered on one boat, you may have to wait some time for another. It is a good idea to expect delays so they won't discourage you. Remember, you are building on an island, not in a metropolis. Throughout the process it's important to keep your original dream in mind, which is a private island hideaway. But once you achieved that dream, take enough time to truly enjoy it, like I am" he said.

As it turns out, Rickert's father who passed away in 1995, used to visit Rum Cay on his sailing trips. Rickert did not know any of this, until one fateful day while unloading some of his building supplies that he met a boat captain, who asked him if he was junior. He told me that I looked like your dad. "This was some 12 years after I even knew this was my father's favorite island."

A set up for heartache

TIME TO THINK



D. Paul REILLY

I guess that when a whole lot of people initially read the title of this particular article, they'll immediately start to speculate about what it is that I'm going to be dealing with today. In other words, what exactly is it that is going to "set up" an individual for future heartache?

What I'm dealing with here today is the extremely delicate subject of infidelity in relationships, which alas is all too common throughout the world, and in particular The Bahamas.

The practice of "sweethearting", as it is locally referred to, is having an affair with someone other than one's spouse while still married. Alas, it is most common.

What I'm relaying to you my friend, is that infidelity, or sweethearting is indeed a definite "set up" for great heart ache in the future — and don't you ever forget it!

When anyone deceives another, by having an affair outside his or her marriage, it is most definitely bound to have repercussions — on both the person who is cheating, and on his or her spouse. It will also bring ultimate disaster into the life of anyone who knowingly is involved romantically with someone else's spouse.

If you are having an affair with someone whom you know to be married to someone else, believe you me when I tell you, that absolutely nothing good can come out of it. In fact, I guarantee that your future will be full of heartache if you insist on continuing in this illicit, sordid, ungodly affair.

Everything in the universe operates in accordance with the law of cause and effect. What you put out daily in all of your affairs during your present existence on planet earth, is exactly what you will inevitably get back, for as it is written: as you sow ... so shall you reap.

When you sow deception, you must, according to universal law, reap a harvest full of great heartache. And please my friend, don't ever try to kid yourself by stating that you're living your life in accordance with God's laws by stating that you're a Christian, whilst you're also involved in an illicit affair.

Don't ever forget that no one can ever fool God. And in God's world, in God's universe, there are no closed doors behind which we incorrectly think that we can hide our sordid lifestyle from Him. Yes indeed, God obviously sees all, including our illicit activities and sordid affairs. In short, if you honestly feel that God wouldn't like it — well then, don't do it!

Email: dpr@humanri.com and listen to "Time to Think" the radio program on Star 106.5 FM at 8:55a.m. & 6:15 p.m. Monday through Friday.