

Trust focused on clean-up mission

The Future Centre Trust (FCT) is not relenting in its effort to clean up the island in spite of major difficulties in its path.

Speaking recently during the trust's annual **Green Gala and Silent Auction** at Port St Charles, St Peter, chairman Vivian Gittens said the members continued to make progress with their outreach programmes.

"There are [many] challenges in the environment that need to be addressed. We feel that even the issue of climate change, there's some misunderstanding of what is climate change and what it means for small island developing states, and we would like an opportunity to do some training in that area. We also feel that waste management and controlling littering and making Barbadians more aware of their environment is important," she said.

Gittens said the FCT planned to stress to Barbadians the importance of keeping the island clean.

"The environment is very important to us and our country, particularly regarding alternative energy and to reducing the fossil fuel," the chairman added.

Getting on board

Gittens said she was pleased to see businesses getting on board in the clean-up efforts.

"We find that the business places are taking leadership and they often call us. Like for instance we have the national clean-up programme in November, but all during the year different business places would call and say they want to have a clean-up and when they do say that, they mean the heads of the businesses and other staff members would come out, guided by us, and do a clean-up of a particular area," Gittens added. (DB)



First Baptist Chorale. Inset, John Yarde. (GP)



Yarde tops gospel picks

This year is shaping up to be a magnificent one for gospel artist John Yarde.

Yarde, who was married earlier this year, has been nominated for nine awards in the **Flame Gospel Awards** scheduled for May 5 at the Hilton Barbados.

The nominations, most of which are from his album **First John**, are: **Male Vocalist Of The Year**, which he won last year, **Radio Announcer Of The Year**, for his work on **Life 97.5**, **Songwriter Of The Year**, **Recording Of The Year**, **Best Scripture-Based Song Of The Year**, **Original Song Of The Year** and **Praise And Worship Song Of The Year**.

In the category **Reggae Song Of The Year**, Yarde has been nominated twice.

Also leading this year's nominations is the **First Baptist Chorale**, which has ten from their debut CD **Infused**.

In the **Praise And Worship Song Of The Year**

category, the group has been nominated for four awards.

Its other nominations are for **Choir/Chorale Of The Year**, **Recording Of The Year**, **Original Song Of The Year**, **Music Video Of The Year**, **Reggae Song Of The Year** and **Best Scripture-Based Song Of The Year**.

Also securing nominations are 11 first-timers, including former **Spice & Company** back-up vocalist Jan Keizer (formerly Jan Gibson) in the **Female Vocalist Of The Year** category and a former **Richard Stoute Teen Talent** contestant, Lillian Lorde, who earned her first nomination in the **Reggae Song Of The Year** category for her composition, **One With You**.

The nominees were chosen from the period November 15, 2016, to November 15, 2017.

The **Flame Gospel Awards** is a celebration of locally produced gospel music which has evolved into an international brand. (DB)

FAS bringing reggae for 'pure love'



Director of FAS Promotions, Al Gilkes, speaking at the press conference. (Picture by Christoff Griffith.)

FAS Promotions does it for the love of it.

Though the economy may be tight and putting on major events may be an uphill battle, one of the directors of FAS Promotions, Al Gilkes, said his company continued to put on the annual **Reggae Festival** because they love what they do.

"We do these things out of pure love. We are doing it straight from the heart and not for the need to fill our pockets with money. So far over the past 14 years we have been blessed in this regard. We think of the bottom line after everything else. We think of bringing the best artistes possible, of having the best stages possible, providing the best VIP experiences. We concentrate on all those things even before we determine whether or not we are going to lose or gain," he said.

Gilkes was speaking at a press conference last Friday night to officially announce new title sponsors for some of the major events in upcoming festival.

Digicel, which has been sponsoring the event since 2006, will retain title sponsorship of the premier event **Reggae On The Hill**. **Reggae**

On The Beach will now be sponsored by Magnum Tonic Wine, while **Vintage Reggae Show And Dance** will welcome Mount Gay 1703 as its title sponsor.

Gilkes said with the new sponsors on board, their budget had improved and he was thankful for the support from companies other than Digicel.

"Sponsorship budget has improved and we believe that it has improved to the levels that would make us more comfortable and where we would not have to sweat to see whether we would have enough ticket sales to cover the rest of our budget. We are thankful that this concept is being supported by other sponsors other than Digicel.

However, the veteran promoter said while FAS might be benefiting from increased sponsorship, things were still touch and go because of the state of the economy at present, admitting that FAS lost money while producing last year's highly popular festival.

This year's **Barbados Reggae Festival** runs from April 22 to 29. (DB)

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