



INLAND REVENUE'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ReveNews

Contact us at ird_relations@candw.lc

Volume 8,
Issue 1
January to March,
2003



Filing Frenzy 2003

Taxpayers at the Inland Revenue Department's counters seeking the assistance of Tax Officers in the filing of their returns, trying to meet and beat the deadline - March 31, 2003!



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Editorial:

by: Ms. Sophia Henry,
Auditor

“It is more blessed to give than to receive!” Have you ever viewed this remark in terms of returning to your country a fair proportion of your earnings? How often do you endeavor to bite the hands that feed you? It is time to expunge the misconceptions about the role of the Inland Revenue Department.

The taxation system should be appreciated for what it is designed to achieve i.e a collective output from our individual input. Consequently, we can only accomplish as a nation as much as we invest.

Think for a moment how our revenues are utilized:

- Roads are constructed and maintained
- Education is made available to our children
- Health care is provided
- Recreational facilities are made accessible
- Law and order and a sense of security is made possible

In light of the above, you will concur that the Department is working on behalf of the Government and people of St. Lucia in administering the relevant tax laws to accumulate sufficient revenue for the development of our nation. Too often are we seen as the “bad guys” in fulfilling a task handed to us by the very people we serve.

We have come a long way in ensuring that we serve you with the uttermost efficiency, professionalism and courtesy:

- Efficiency – as we continually automate our processes
- Professionalism – as the quality of our team players is enhanced via training.
- Courtesy – as we have realized that it is a pleasure serving you as we serve our country.

Let’s not view our selves as mere *tax-payers* but rather as contributors toward the success our nation.



Editorial Committee



Peggy Ann Soudatt
Ag. Assistant Comptroller -
Administration
Chief Editor



Lisa Goodman
Taxpayer Relations Supervisor
Associate Editor, Writer



Arlene Williams
Taxpayer Relations Officer
Writer, Layout & Design

Liaison Officers:

Carolyn Morgan- Emmanuel
Data Processing



Priscilla Dwarkasingh,
Audit



Benita Monerville,
Property Tax



Heather Nicholas,
Collections



Dilia Jn Baptiste,
Administration

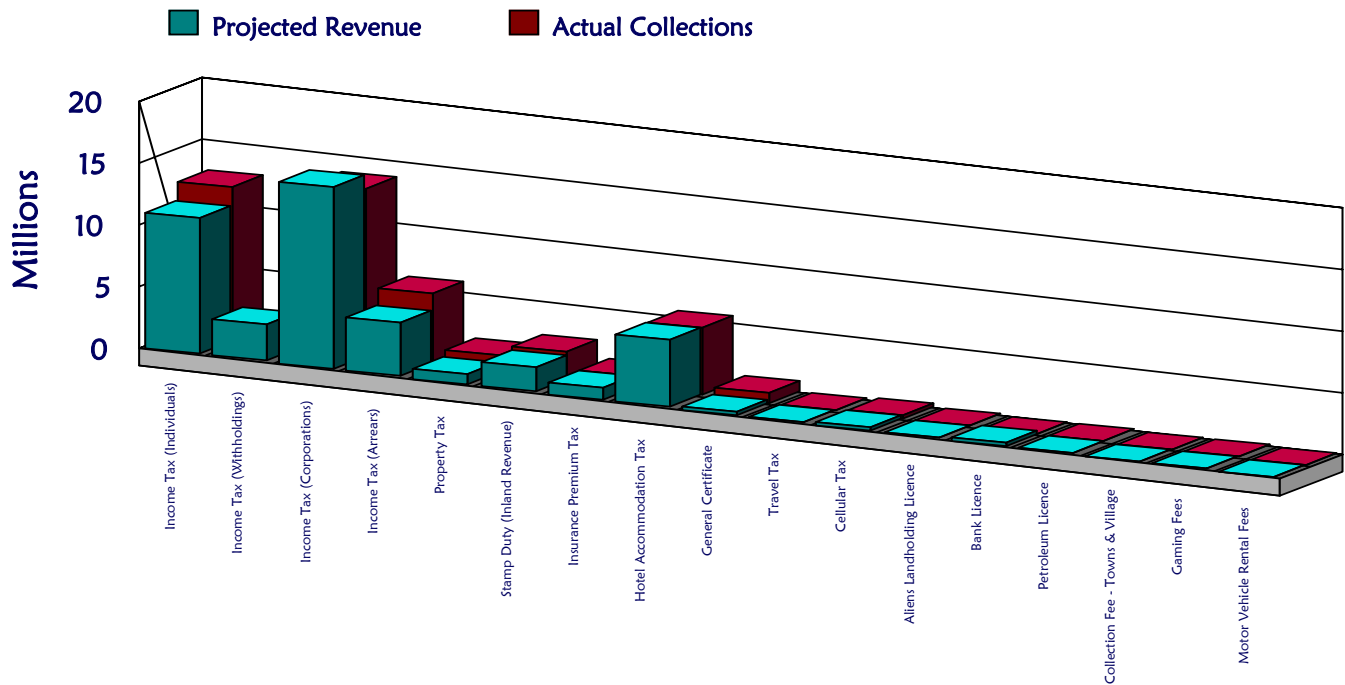


John Lawrence,
Vieux-Fort Tax Service
Centre



REVENUE COLLECTIONS:

January to March, 2003



Actual Revenue Collection for the Quarter showed a slight increase over what was projected.

Projected Revenue - \$43,833,301
 Actual Collections - \$44,738,445

instalment period for the 2002/2003 financial year. Although the Department did not meet its projected figure in the area of Corporation Tax. Our overall collections for taxes on income and profits were met.

The quarter January to March, 2003 was the last Taxes on Domestic Sales also contributed to the

I.R.D. AD AUDITIONS



It was recently discovered that the officers of the Inland Revenue Department are more than just tax persons, they are also talented actors and actresses. This talent was unleashed when the Taxpayer Relations Unit in collaboration with Mr. E. St. Catherine of Ripple Marketing, conducted auditions for a Filing Time advertisement.



Cheryl M. and Bee Jay giving an exciting performance.

The ad was a scene in the form of a dialogue which took place between a man and his wife. This skit was

Dilia and Andre acting like a real married couple. They had wonderful chemistry.

There's No Place in Business for These 4-Letter Words

by: *Harvey Mackay, courtesy Just Business Online*

There are certain four-letter words that have no business in business. Many, in fact, are bad for business -- so bad that using them may determine whether you stay in business. No, we're not really talking about profanity here; that's a given. These are everyday words that really smart people eliminated from their vocabularies long ago. Let me share some of the most offensive. I've even used them in sentences so that you can avoid these common mistakes.

CAN'T, as in "We can't do that" or "You can't expect us to meet that deadline." Your customers come to you because they think you can do what they ask. If you truly cannot produce what they're asking for, be honest but then help them find someone who can, even if it's your competition. They'll remember that you went the extra mile to make them happy.

BUSY: "I'm too busy to do that now" or "I'll call you when I'm not so busy." The last thing your customers want to know is that they rank at the bottom of the food chain. It is acceptable to say that you will need a few days to do the job right, or that you'll knock off a few bucks in exchange for their patience. It is never okay to imply that they aren't as important as all your other customers.

BORE: "This project is such a bore" or "Don't bore me with the details." Unemployment is boring. Try to find something to love about every job or project you do. Otherwise, find a job you love. Life is too short to be bored or boring.

SAME: "We've done it the same way for years" or "Same old, same old." If you've been doing something the same way for years, it's a good sign you're doing it the wrong way. Maybe it's time to find a new and better way to do it. People change. Technologies change. Your customers aren't asking you to dye your hair purple and wear your kid's jeans. But their businesses change and they're looking to you to follow (or lead). You should question why you're still doing things the same way.

SAFE: "Let's play it safe." Safe is important in baseball, but in business you must be prepared to take some risks. The scary part about taking risks is that they don't always work, but I'll take a good calculated risk any day of the week over the boring, same, safe way. Sometimes it's risky not to take a risk. To triple your success ratio, sometimes you have to triple your failure ratio.

RUDE: No sentence example needed here. There is never, ever, ever an excuse to be rude to a coworker, customer, or a stranger on the street. You're staking your name on your behavior, and you don't want your name to become a four-letter word.

MEAN: Your lawyer should be mean. Your tennis serve might be mean. You can't afford to be mean. You are dealing with customers whose business and referrals will determine where your kids go to college and what kind of retirement you can look forward to. If that doesn't make you nice, I don't know what will.

ISN'T: "That isn't my job." Maybe your job description doesn't include every last chore that's required to finish a project, but someone has to do those things. You need to take your turn. Along the way, you just might find yourself becoming invaluable for your diverse job skills or your particular expertise. Never pass up the chance to do something new, just because you think you're too good. The further you climb up the ladder, the further down you can fall. It's important to have secure footing on each rung.

FEAR: "I fear that we may be moving too fast" or "My biggest fear is that we can't do this" only demonstrate one fact: you haven't done your homework. Common sense, thorough research, and sound advice should allay your fears to a reasonable level. Knowing what is acceptable risk should help too. If your biggest fear is that rain will ruin an outdoor promotion, plan something inside. If you fear your suppliers will keep you from meeting a production deadline, find a more reliable supplier. Take charge.

LAST: "Nice guys finish last." I consider myself a nice guy, and I hate to finish last. But I've had to lose a few times in order to win the next round. I've learned something from every last-place finish.

MORAL: *Sticks and stones can break your bones, but these four-letter words*

I.R.D. Sports Stars



“Best of 11” This was the name and surely the rhythm of the game as the crowd roared in thunderous shouts from match to match.



With every game came increased tension as the competition grew more and more intense.

Benita and Denise were most certainly involved, both being on the

defense.

It was definitely an amazing and remarkable site as they defied the laws of gravity, challenged their opponents and led the balls home.

Inland Revenue was indeed well represented as the team left with the Best Commercial League Trophy.

TRIVIA !!!

Why do we call a computer problem a glitch?

My favorite reference book on such matters, “Small Bytes: An Irreverent Computer Dictionary,” succinctly describes a glitch as “a hitch in the glitch between input and output.” I couldn’t have put it better myself.

Every other word I’ve heard in conjunction with this unfortunate occurrence has four letters. But they can’t match this one’s ability to sound just like what it is: a mishap that may well ruin your day but won’t spoil your life.

The word glitch is relatively new, a product of the space age and the era of advanced electronics. It comes from the German “glitschen,” and via the Yiddish, “glitschen.” Both mean, “to slip.” We have ingeniously miniaturized electronic circuits, but it looks like the old banana peel has shrunk in proportion to them. No matter how carefully we design electronic products, such as computers, we never get out all the weirdness. They still trip us up.

ID Card Training



Ms. A. Williams of the Taxpayer Relations Unit conducted an informal training session with Mr. Kenya James, an officer of the Electoral Department on Gen-Frame. This training session took on January 30, 2003 in the Library of the Inland Revenue Department.

Gen-frame is a dedicated card-configuration software package designed to interface with Freeze Frame Complete Desktop Photo ID Card System. Gen-Frame allows the user to create an unlimited variety of card designs; incorporating logos, titles, data fields, photographs, signatures, fingerprints and any other required information.

The Inland Revenue Department has been using this ID card package for the past four (4) years and has had much business from many Government Ministries and other private sector organisations.

Filing Fro

Lesley & Arlene assisting at the Help Desk in the Post Office.



Merle assisting a taxpayer at the Office.



Frederick, Chinida and Gary assisting at the Help Desk at the JQ's Mall Help Desk in Rodney Bay.



Elisha providing some assistance to taxpayer.



Lisa, Felicia and Comptroller, James Charles assisting in the lobby.



Some taxpayers getting their returns together.



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continued from front page

hands were on deck—Sophia assisting a taxpayer with a return.



Kervin & Priscilla assisting at the Help Desk at Gablewoods, Sunny Acres.



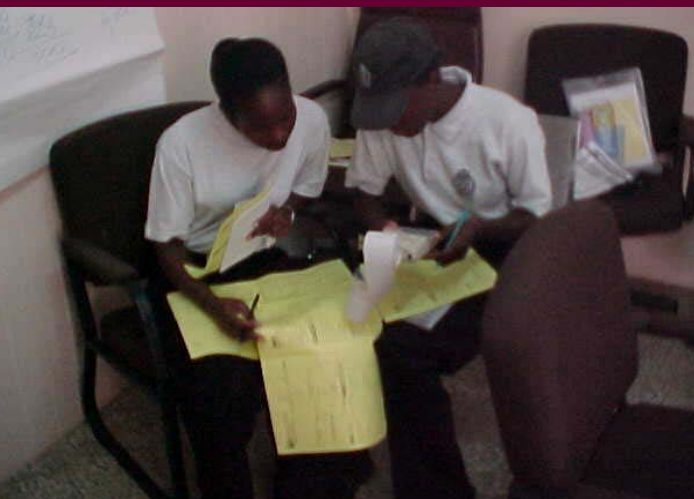
he & Marva at the Taxpayer Assistance counter.



Employees of the National Conservation Authority at a Training Session on Filing a Return.



f of the National Conservation Authority filing their returns.



Lisa making a presentation to the National Conservation Authority.



Filing Period 2003

The month January to March were very busy and exciting for the staff of the Taxpayer Relations Unit. The Unit had its work cut out and there was no time to waste. From producing flyers, sending out notices and reminders and even appearing on various talk shows and television programs to teaching. But all of this could not be done without the help and assistance of every staff member of the Department.

Once again, in an effort to make our service more readily available, the Department provided taxpayers with Help Desk at strategic locations in the island. Two officers of the Department were stationed daily in the lobby on the ground floor of the Heraldine Rock Building, at the General Post Office, and at Gablewoods and JQ Charles Malls. Extra staff was also sent down to our Vieux-Fort and Soufriere Offices.

Our services were offered once more to various companies through the Chamber of Commerce by providing assistance to their staff members in filing their return forms. The Unit along with the Taxpayer Assistance staff and some Auditors visited and assisted the staff of GBTS, Lab Services, Johnson's, Courts, Tropical Quality Fruit Company, Sandals La Toc & Halcyon, Bank of St. Lucia, M & C, Brydens, SLBGA, Gros Islet Fire Service and National Conservation Authority. Presentations were also made to participants of workshops which was hosted by the Parliamentary Commissioners' office.

Once again as we strived to provide an efficient, professional and courteous service to our taxpayers, we thank each and every one for making the **2003 filing period** a success.

Remember the Inland Revenue Department - serving you in serving our country!

Health Watch courtesy Web MD

SARS

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

A new disease called SARS Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) is a respiratory illness that has recently been reported in Asia, North America, and Europe. This fact sheet describes the disease and important guidelines for preventing the spread of SARS.

Symptoms of SARS In general, SARS begins with a fever greater than 100.4°F [38.0°C]. Other symptoms may include headache, an overall feeling of discomfort, and body aches. Some people also experience mild respiratory symptoms. After 2 to 7 days, SARS patients may develop a dry cough and have trouble breathing.

How SARS spreads The primary way that SARS appears to spread is by close person-to-person contact. Most cases of SARS have involved people who cared for or lived with someone with SARS, or had direct contact with infectious material (for example, respiratory secretions) from a

person who has SARS. Potential ways in which SARS can be spread include touching the skin of other people or objects that are contaminated with infectious droplets and then touching your eye(s), nose, or mouth. This can happen when someone who is sick with SARS coughs or sneezes droplets onto themselves, other people, or nearby surfaces. It also is possible that SARS can be spread more broadly through the air or by other ways that are currently not known.

Who is at risk for SARS Cases of SARS continue to be reported mainly among people who have had direct close contact with an infected person, such as those sharing a household with a SARS patient and healthcare workers who did not use infection control procedures while taking care of a SARS patient. In the United States, there is no indication of community spread at this time. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) continues to monitor this situation very closely.

What you should do to protect yourself Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) has issued interim guidelines for patients with suspected SARS in the healthcare setting and in households. These guidelines may change as we learn more about SARS. If you get sick with the symptoms described above and have been in close contact with someone who might have SARS, see your healthcare provider and follow the guidelines below.

GUIDELINES

If you think you (or someone in your family) might have SARS, you should:

- Consult a health care provider as soon as possible;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you have a surgical mask, wear it during close contact with other people. A mask can reduce the number of droplets coughed into the air.

Staff Profile:- Mr. M. Wayne Martial

It was indeed a great pleasure to conduct the interview for this quarter's Staff Profile.

Mr. Michael Wayne Martial affectionately called "Buzz" is very well known around the Department and beyond for his friendly, out-spoken personality and his no non-sense but jovial disposition.

Mr. Martial started his journey with the Inland Revenue Department in 1976, just 1 year after leaving Secondary School. He worked in the Assessments Unit. In 1980, he left the government service to pursue new horizons with Hess Oil (St. Lucia) Limited, where he was employed within the Accounts Department. In 1982, Hess began experiencing financial difficulties and as a result, Mr. Martial was laid off. In November of 1982, Mr. Martial returned to the Inland Revenue Department, after a 6 month job-search.

Upon returning to the Department, Mr. Martial was assigned, yet again to the Assessment Unit was divided into Traders and Employees, he had the privilege to work in both sections. It was about this time that Mr. Martial decided to enroll part-time into the Certified General Accountant (CGA) Programme. While pursuing the CGA, he discovered a love for computers and so he decided there and then to quit the CGA programme, of which he had already got to Level 3, in pursuit of a career in Computer Technology.

Wayne fondly reminisced about his first experience with a computer. There was a computer just sitting there, unattended in the then Comptroller's office. Wayne's curiosity got the better of him and he asked the Comptroller whether he could have a look. This marked the beginning of Wayne's career in the world of Computer Technology.



Mr. Martial has been afforded many training opportunities locally, regionally and internationally. Namely:-

- Basic & Advanced Law & Practice
- Novell Netware Administration
- Advanced Computer Applications in Finance
- System Administrator Course
- Introduction to Cisco Router

Configuration

- Introduction to ARC GIS
- Visual Basic
- Microsoft Windows NT (Certification Incomplete)

To date, Mr. Martial has given the Department 21 years of dedicated service. He currently holds the position of Network Administrator within the Department's Systems Unit. His job entails ensuring that the Network is working efficiently and effectively.

His hobbies include playing dominoes, messing around with computers and music. He also plays the double-tenor with the Department's All Star Pan side.

Mr. Martial has two children which are his pride and joy. He's divorced, but he says he does not mind making that trip down the aisle again.

Wayne Martial's advice to persons coming to work with the Inland Revenue Department is, **"if you do not like the job you're doing, you will never like working at Inland Revenue"**. In other words, **if one is not interested in the taxation system and does not have any appreciation for taxes, they should not pursue a career with the Inland Revenue Department.**

La Cuisine de Inland Revenue

Vegetable Soup with Sweet Basil

- 2 small leeks, white part only
- 1 large potato, peeled
- 1 small onion
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 medium zucchini
- 12 green beans
- 2 medium carrots, peeled
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1/2 gallon chicken stock (or 1/2 gallon water, 4 bouillon



cubes, a pinch of thyme, and 1/2 bay leaf)
 6 ripe tomatoes, peeled and seeded
 4 medium garlic cloves
 30 fresh basil leaves, washed and dried
 Salt
 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 Cut the leeks, potato, onion, celery, zucchini, green beans, and carrots into 1/4-inch dice. In a 6-quart stockpot, combine 3 tablespoons of the olive oil with the water. Add the vegetables and saute over medium-low heat until all the water evaporates.
 Do not brown the vegetables. Add the stock and bring to a boil.
 Cook at a gentle boil for 30 minutes. Meanwhile,

GUESS WHO'S HANDS



Can you guess who's hands?

Unscramble the names below and link them to the correct pair of



kleoysietcnsdvs
 leminelckthivr
 amoloidangs
 snoaionaorsserd
 ahenomelpimsau

News from the Sections

AUDIT

The year started off with some minor staff changes. Mr. Kenrick Haynes position as Audit Supervisor was switched with Ms. Delores "Jill" St. Catherine, the Senior Reviewer.
 Midway through the quarter Mr. James Charles, Assistant Comptroller—Audit was promoted to Comptroller, leaving room for mobility within the Department. The Audit team takes the opportunity to wish him all the best in his new and challenging post.

At the end of the quarter most Auditors assisted taxpayers with the filing of their Income Tax Returns at the various Help Desks located around the island. They really seemed to enjoy the break away from their Audit Cases.

Congratulations to our most recent ACCA finalist, Ms. Merlicia Malikan.

We send special birthday greetings to Amedee & Prissy who celebrated their birthdays during this quarter.



Getting to know the Positions at Inland Revenue

OFFICE ASSISTANT

The Office Assistant works closely with staff on all matters pertaining to the job.

DUTIES:

1. Collect the Department's keys on mornings from the Central Police Station to open the Office for business.
2. Attend to all outgoing correspondence and documents promptly.
3. Deliver the Daily Cash Summary Report to the Treasury Department.
4. Collect the Daily Cash Summary Report and the cash receipt from the Treasury.
5. Collect forms, receipt books, stationery and other related documents and records from other Government departments and private business places.
6. Collect mail from the General Post Office.
7. Provide clerical support to staff.
8. Photocopy documents and other related records.
9. Ensure the Office is locked at the close of business and deliver the keys to the Central Police Station.
10. Perform other related duties as assigned from time to time by the ACIR - Administration and the Administration Supervisor.

TRAINING

THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

As stated at the end of 2002, Training recommenced in 2003, as staff participated in Workshops organized by external agencies and of course our internal "Trainers".

The onset of the ECEMP 111 Project saw the Conference Room fully booked as Managers and staff of the Data Processing, Administration, Audit, Tax Service Centre and Collections Sections put their hands to the wheel in developing the **READ PROCEDURES & STREAMLINING** for the upgrading of SIGTAS and became proficient in the use of "**CRYSTAL REPORTS**".

Of course, we could not let the opportunity to learn more about "**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS & REPORTING**" pass us by and Officers from the Audit, Objections, Votes Units actively participated in this Workshop which was hosted by the Ministry of Finance.

Property Tax continued too, in our vision with one officer participating in the long awaited **INTRODUCTION TO GIS USING ARC/GIS** Workshop which was hosted by CARILEC.

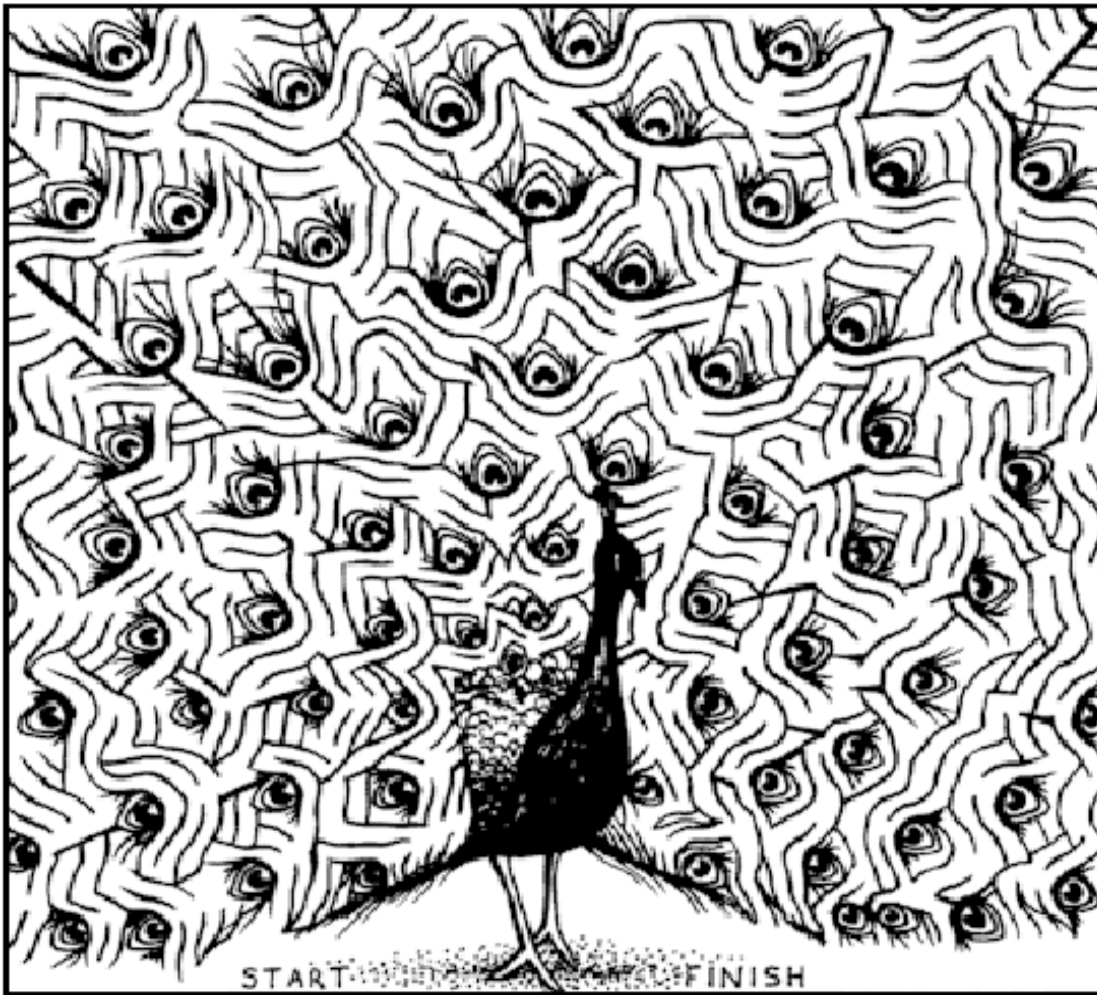
Not only was the Conference Room utilized by outside Facilitators but also our internal expertise as Ms. Soudatt, Nicholas and Mr. Dickson facilitated a **BASIC COLLECTIONS PROCEDURES Workshop**. Concentrating on an **Overview of Collection Procedures, Interviewing Skills, Analysis of Financial Statements and Ability To Pay**. From all reports we have in our midst personnel with the ability to make presentations with impact!! Hats Off to you.

The Library continued to be a focus of the Administration Section not only in uplifting the environment but equipping the staff with the requisite skills. The Department continued to sponsor the participation of staff in the **LIBRARY STUDIES** programme offered by the Sir Arthur Lewis Community. To date only tangible benefits have been reaped by the Department.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The initiative of hosting **FRIDAY AFTERNOON DISCUSSION FORUM ON TAX TOPICS** was reactivated. Presentations were made on the **OATH OF SECRECY, ALLOWANCES & DEDUCTIONS, REPAIRS & RENOVATIONS**. The enthusiasm, excitement and concrete recommendations which ensued was evident that these were indeed challenging issues experienced by staff.

TAXIN' YOUR BRAIN . . . !!!



We've decided to move away from the normal word search in this quarter's newsletter.

This Maze is guaranteed to tax your brain.

Can you solve this one?

CHUCKLES



Other Publications

- * Know Your Taxes
- * Tax Facts—Small Business Enterprises
- * Income Tax Return Guide for Individuals
- * Tax Facts—Personal Allowances & Deductions
- * Tax Facts—RHOS Plan
- * A to Z of Taxation
- * Tax Facts—Corporations
- * Property Tax - Our Vision

Check out our website: www.irdstlucia.gov.lc