



In trust we trust

OUR ABILITY to make decision comes directly from the trust placed on us to make our own decisions. Check out Jaye-Q's Brew.

P29

Is the Crocodile Hunter really mad?

NET TALK takes a look at Steve Irwin, who recently held his month-old baby while feeding a croc. Has the Aussie finally gone too far?

P32

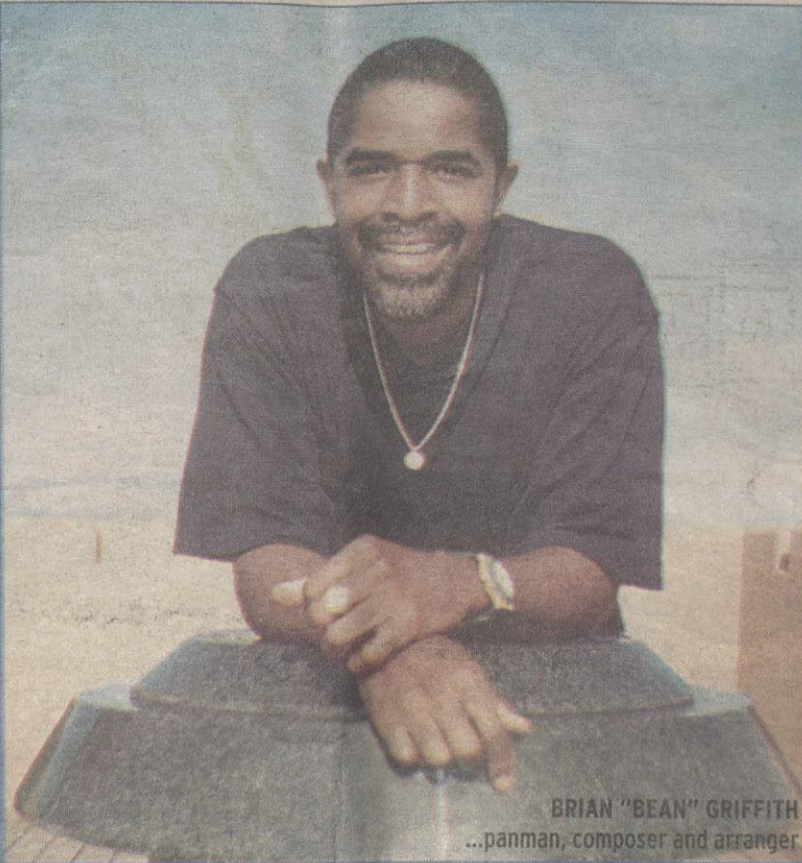
Training alone

WHILE training with friends is usually an encouraging experience, to train alone regularly, you have to be strong mentally and spiritually.

P28

The nature of steel

'Bean' makes music in Belmont



BRIAN "BEAN" GRIFFITH
...panman, composer and arranger

SHIRVAN WILLIAMS

BRIAN "BEAN" GRIFFITH began his career as a panman in a time when the profession was considered to be only for bad-johns.

Griffith, from Belmont, was 13 when he had his first turn in the spotlight.

"As a little fella I would run away every evening after school and go to the panyard, even though I had a very strict father. There was a guy named Harris who would teach me all the tunes they were playing. In those days, a van used to come around to tape pan music.

"A Friday night I saw the van and I asked my father if I could go and listen to pan (because he did not want me to play). He said yes.

"When I got there I just grabbed a pan and began playing it."

Griffith said the captain of the band asked him if he knew the tunes and he said yes.

It was then that natural talent was recognised in the young man.

The captain went to his father and told him his son had played and had done so very well.

"After he told my father about my ability, my father questioned me. At first I was going to lie, but I decided not to and he allowed me to play - but I had to be home by nine every night," he said.

His career blossomed over the following years.

In 1972, he migrated to the United States where he formed the band Mood's Pan Groove.

He lived in the USA for 10 years before coming home and becoming one of the original members of Phase II Pan Groove.

While with that band, he started a new career in arranging. He began with Players Symphony in Belmont, and in 1986 left Phase II to become a professional arranger.

Griffith has also worked closely with several schools for the Junior Steelband Festival.

This move paid off, and in 1989 Griffith joined Showboat International, a Trinidad-based steelband, which led to his playing all over the world.

"We went to Japan, Hong Kong, Europe and Sweden. We took pan all over the world," he said.

Soon after that he started to compose as well.

Griffith has composed the music for songs like "Trini Know How To Party," "Advantage," and "Can't Touch This."

This year he composed "Behave Yourself," a song performed by Uniece Peters with lyrics by Alvin Daniell.

In 1999, Griffith won the Pan Song of the Year Award from the Copyright Organisation of T&T.

Griffith has returned to his hometown of Belmont to help Belmont Fifth Dimension this year.

He hopes to help the band win the Pan Trinbago Sydney Gallop Competition (previously known as the Small Steelband Competition, part of Panorama).

He views this as a way to help youth get off the street and become more interested in music.

"Being a person that born and grow up here in Belmont, I wanted to do something good to give back to my community. I hope I can take some of the youths off the violent trend that we have been seeing recently, so that when people look at the area they will see something positive," he said.



Croc Hunter's stunt with baby draws fire

SYDNEY - "CROCODILE HUNTER" Steve Irwin has survived tussles with giant pythons, poisonous snakes and, of course, crocodiles. Now he faces a new threat: claims he endangered his infant son.

Irwin drew fire from child welfare groups and was named the subject of a government investigation for a publicity stunt on Friday in which he fed a crocodile with one hand while cradling his month-old son, Robert, in the other.

The incident at Irwin's popular reptile park in Beerwah, north of Brisbane, was captured on Australian television, and viewers later jammed phone lines to express their outrage.

"I think he's a bloody idiot. He's addicted to the attention," crocodile farm owner Keith Cook said.

At a news conference on Saturday, Irwin said he probably would have done things differently with his son, but he defended his actions.

"It's all about perceived danger. I was in complete control," said Irwin, flanked by his father, his wife and his five-year-old daughter, Bindi.

"People say, 'Well, what if you had fallen?' But for that to take place a meteorite would have had to come out of the sky and hit Australia at 6.6 on the Richter scale like in Iran," he said.

Irwin has gained worldwide fame for his *Crocodile Hunter* show on the cable channel Animal Planet, in which he chats excitedly about exotic and dangerous creatures - sometimes from extremely close proximity to the beasts. Animal Planet's Web site features several "Close Call Clips" that show Irwin getting bitten or merrily escaping the jaws of hungry reptiles.

Friday's footage on Australian TV showed Irwin feed a dead chicken to a 13-foot crocodile named Murray while he held Bob in the other hand. Murray snapped up the meat.

"Good boy, Bob," Irwin said. He then balanced the boy on the ground after the crocodile had retreated to the water.

Irwin's wife Terri had handed the baby over to Irwin in the enclosure and giggled at the spectacle.

"It was a wonderful sensory experience for him (the baby). He dug it," she said.

The stunt drew comparisons to singer Michael Jackson handling of his infant son in Berlin in November 2002. A national broadsheet, *The Australian*, called it "a bizarre act at his Sunshine Coast zoo that mirrored Michael Jackson's dangling of his newborn over a balcony." (AP) SEE PAGE 32

PHASE II PAN GROOVE

