

Mysterious Walking Trees and Light Poles

It is really mysterious how so many trees, street light poles, and sidewalk fences end up in the pathways of truck and cars on our little island. It is because they need more space to walk and run during play time. It is because they catch us off guard when we are not looking their way. I really thought all these years that trees, light poles and fences are permanently fixed in the ground. However, since I've returned home in 1996 it seems as though trees and light poles like to go walking or jogging. Sometimes I see them on the other side of the road from where they usually stand all broken and damaged, crying for help. Their beautiful skins, though tough with nature's guard or strong rust-proof paint, are all peel away or broken because of some human who is angry with them. It is so painful to see.

I know many of you have already figured out where I am going with this article. The very day after the government opened the Tonique Williams-Darling highway for traffic, I was shocked when I personally watched a car driving at an unusual speed hit a pole and spun over and over ending up in the ditch. I was further shocked when the driver came out of the mashed car unscathed and with a smile on his face. However, it was obvious to most of us around that he was high, very high, on something. Since that date I counted at least fifty light poles that were involved in traffic accidents. It is pathetic. Why don't we respect these light poles. They deserve it.

When the well-made, beautiful dual carriage, leading to the airport was opened to traffic I watched as within days the first light pole was hit. Since then the beautiful, miles-long, center way has been colored with many broken and bruised light poles. It is as though Bahamians are having a love affair with light poles and sidewalk fences near our roundabouts? Have you noticed that there is not even one side walk fence on roundabouts that have not been hit and seriously damaged? The responsible government agency soon comes around and repairs or replaces the damaged ones as if they were getting ready for the next hit.

It is my view that our driving ethics and skills are seriously wanting. I also maintain that the responsible government agencies that manage traffic control and make effective traffic laws and also seriously lacking. I cannot understand how so many poles and fences can be hit and the public never hears or reads about any changes. In this country the abuse of trees, light poles and road fences are at an all-time high. It has become an epidemic that has surpassed other abuses like rape, incest and domestic violence. Wow! Is that really true? Just look around and see for yourself how our beautifully decorated roads are filled with abused-looking, seriously wounded, and many times dead-on-the-side of the road light poles and trees and spine-broken, leg amputated fences. It brings tears to your eyes.

I have lived in a few countries. I've noticed that if there is a just one very serious accident on a street the officials would examine if there is a need to adjust the road or make tougher laws. I have a few suggestions for the government to consider. First: Enforce the current traffic laws and where improvement is needed, do it. Second: Put camera surveillance on every main highway where these wounded light poles are often found. Third: Implement very high, ridiculous fines for speeding. Fourth: Take away driver's license permanently from someone who causes an accident because of driving at dangerously high speeds. Fifth: Give a life sentence or very long prison term for those who kill because of dangerous driving. Six: In addition to the serious fines and prison terms there should be retribution. The dangerous driver is to be required to pay for the light pole and damages caused to individuals involved.

Note readers that this matter is very serious. I also think it is embarrassing to us when visitors see so many light poles and trees crying for help. Please, please, drive carefully. Let's keep our island beautiful. Let's commit to preventing light pole and tree abuse on our island. It can start with you. If you see a light pole crossing the street or a tree skipping in the road, slow down and let it pass. You will be happy you did.

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