

# Good Belizeans



**Letters from the Premier**  
Exhibit Booklet

Good Belizeans, Letters of the Premier  
Exhibit Booklet

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# Minister's Foreword

In 2020, the Government of Belize declared January 15th, the birthday of George Price, as a national holiday to honour the Father of the Nation. This decision reflects our commitment to his vision of an independent Belize.

As we reflect on Mr. Price's immense contributions, it is vital that we ensure his legacy is remembered and passed on, especially to our young people. Our government is working closely with the Price family and the George Price Centre for Peace and Development to preserve and promote his values.

It is inspiring to see the continued efforts of Good Belizeans, both named and unnamed, who supported Mr. Price and continue to contribute to the country's progress.

Let us work together to build a progressive, prosperous Belize. May this booklet of his letters inspire us all to act with purpose and determination in fulfilling the vision Mr. Price set for us.

**Hon. Francis W. Fonseca**

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Education, Culture, Science & Technology

# Introduction

This collection of letters offers a window into the mind and actions of George Cadle Price, the Father of the Nation and a Belizean National Hero. Born on 15 January 1919, Price dedicated his life to leading the country from colonial rule to self-government and independence.

Price's life was marked by a deep commitment to service, social justice and the welfare of the Belizean people. His formative years, spent in spiritual pursuit to be a priest, later converged with his role as the country's most gifted political leader. His dedication to the advancement of Belize set him apart as a leader who prioritized the nation's collective progress over his personal gain. His contributions to Belize's political, social and economic landscape are countless with his influence reaching far beyond the letters compiled in this collection.

Many of the letters in this collection are from George Price's term as Premier of Belize, which was the title given to him as the highest elected leader during the period of self-government from 1964–1981. These correspondences housed at the Belize Archives and Records Service explore a wide range of issues, from national unity and independence to environmental concerns and development. These letters, many of which are addressed to key political figures and institutions, demonstrate his hands-on approach to governance and his commitment to building a more united Belize.

The title of this booklet, "Good Belizeans," reflects a phrase George Price used on several occasions, including in a 1965 letter to the Hattieville Village Council, where he wrote, "You are good Belizeans, and when more of us unite to build a nation, we shall get independence in a quicker time." These words, along with the inscription on his epitaph - "A good Belizean, one who went through life on a pilgrimage, and left the world a better place than he found it" — capture the thoughtfulness and vision that defined Price's leadership.

These letters are important for us to analyse and appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of our political and social development. Thanks to the collaboration of historians Giovanni Pinelo (ISCR-NICH) and Delmer Tzib (UB) we are treated to key reflection summaries of the selected letters. We are grateful to the leadership and professional team at the various divisions of the National Institute of Culture and History, the Belize Archives and Records Service, the Belize National Library Service and Information System, and the George Price Centre for Peace and Development for making these records available in print and online form. This interest stems from the vision of the Access501 initiative which is led by the Hon. Francis Fonseca as Minister of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology, seeking to ensure that students, teachers and the wider public have access to open-access resources for teaching and learning.

As we observe George Price Day 2025, we are also featuring the creation of a street exhibit, a botanical garden at the Price Family House, and the digitization of Price's memorabilia. The National Institute of Culture and History and its partners remain committed to fostering unity and development through research, education, and cultural and artistic engagement.

Rolando Cocom, ISCR-NICH Director  
Delmer Tzib, UB History Department  
Giovanni Pinelo, Public History Officer, ISCR-NICH



## **The Call for National Unity**

During the 1940s, movements for decolonization and workers' rights gained momentum in Belize, then the colony of British Honduras. A small group of mostly Jesuit-educated leaders became instrumental in advancing the nationalist movement, challenging the inequities of colonialism. Their agitation against colonialism and improving workers' rights was readily received by fellow compatriots yearning for more political authority to direct their development.

By 1949, Belize faced significant social and economic challenges, including a decline in the mahogany and chicle industries. The economic strain deepened when the colonial governor used his reserve power to devalue the British Honduras dollar, exacerbating public discontent.

In response to these crises, a group of concerned activists formed the People's Committee (PC) to address the worsening conditions, confront colonial policies, and advocate for self-governance. The committee's strategy emphasized national unity for resisting devaluation and advancing the fight for self-determination. By August 1950, George Price, the PC's secretary, was actively involved in organizing and mobilizing these efforts.

The accompanying letter from the Price Family Archive showcases the organizational methods employed by the People's Committee to convene meetings and secure commitment from its leadership and members.

# This Meeting is Strictly Private and Important

Belize - August 21, 1950.

At the request of several members, a meeting of the People's Committee is called for tonight (MONDAY, AUGUST 21) at 8 p.m. at 1114 Pickstock Street.

This meeting is strictly private and IMPORTANT. It is limited to the names listed below:

*George Price*

George Price, Secretary

The People's Committee.

- Rep 1 Edward Austin *L.S. O.K.*
- Rep 2 + Mervy Hulse *part. O.K.*
- Rep 3 Juan Murillo *OK JM*
- Rep 4 + Daniel Goff
- Rep 5 + Richard Felix
- 6 Philip Goldson *O.K. P.L.*
- 7 Leigh Richardson *O.K. L.R.*
- 8 John Smith *O.K. J. Smith*
- Rep 9 + Henry Roabteau *H.R.*
- Rep 10 + Leopold Grinidge *OK by Alfred Berant?*
- 11 Nicholas Pollard *OK N.P.*
- Rep 12 + Henry Middleton *OK H.M.*
- 13 George Price *O.K. G.P.*
- Rep 14 + Joe Rivero *OK J.R.*
- 15 Maurice Burgos
- 16 Calin Monsanto *OK*

“ ”

**This confidential letter invited a group of Belizean leaders to a private meeting at the Price Family Home, just weeks before the People’s Committee evolved into the People’s United Party.**

**The residence at Lot 1114, No. 3 Pickstock Street, Belize City, played a pivotal role in shaping the path toward Belizean independence.**







## Environmental Concerns and Development

Premier Price intricately linked Belize's national identity with environmental concerns, development, and appreciation of Belize's vast resources. Price exemplified leadership grounded in action, from picking up trash himself to directing ministers and other public officials in carrying out their duties. His letters reflect this commitment, presenting practical solutions to national challenges while fostering collaboration among public officers, community leaders, and citizens.

The letters in this section highlight Price's vision for Belize's sustainable development. In a letter from 1965 and another from 1973 he encouraged tree planting to enhance the community spaces and foster unity. Another letter from September 1969 addressed the aftermath of a natural disaster, requesting seawall repairs at then Monkey River Town.



## Planting of Trees in Hattieville

31st May, 1965.

Mr. Basil Smith,  
Public Officer,  
Hattieville, Belize District.

Dear Mr. Smith,

Now that the rainy season is approaching, it would be well to plant some shade trees alongside Hattieville in order to take away that desolate and bare look.

I would suggest the following trees: pine, seagrapes, flamboyant, etc.

All you have to do is to arrange with the Agricultural Department at Central Farm and they will supply the trees.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
P R E M I E R.

“ ”

Hattieville was set up after Hurricane Hattie's destruction of Belize City on 31 October 1961.



## Good Belizeans

16th September, 1965.

Mr. Percival Jones, Chairman,  
Hattievillle Council,  
Hattievillle, Belize District.

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you for your letter of 11th  
September and for the kind thoughts you expressed  
therein.

You are good Belizeans and when more  
of us unite to build a nation, we shall get  
independence in a quicker time.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
P R E M I E R.

“ ”

The title for this booklet “Good Belizeans” is from this letter of 16 September 1965 to the Chairman of the Hattievillle Council. In it, Price thanks him and Hattievillle for their support in the struggle for independence.



## Hurricane Francelia Recovery Efforts

Q-(v)

20th September, 1969

Hon. A.E. Cattouse,  
Minister of Public Utilities,  
Belize City.

Dear Minister,

Mr. John Watler reports that after the hurricane things have got worse in Monkey River Town and suggests that work be done on the Black Creek seawall at the back of the Town.

I would be grateful if you would go into this and do what is possible to get a little work done on this from some vote under your control.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

Monkey River Town was among the hardest hit by Hurricane Francelia, which struck southern Belize on 3 September 1969. Premier Price enlisted the support of Hon. Albert E. Cattouse, Minister of Public Utilities, to coordinate recovery efforts.

## Beautification for Belize City



*Please Quote*

O-(vi)

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER,  
Belmopan,  
Cayo District, Belize,  
Central America.

5th January, 1973

Hon. L.S. Sylvestre,  
Minister of Housing,  
BELMOPAN.

Dear Minister,

Would you please endeavour to have trees planted  
in Belize City by the Housing Department.

The possible places are: Central American Boulevard,  
north side and south side; Constitution Park, Lopez Mateos Park, etc.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

As Belize City extended into new zones, Premier Price recommended the planting of trees for the creation and preservation of green spaces across the municipality.



## Infrastructure and Road Safety

Premier Price was a pragmatic leader, dedicated to addressing the challenges of everyday Belizeans. Infrastructural development, particularly for transportation, was critical for safety and communication. Additionally, Price actively sought tangible international cooperation and investments to Belize, as seen in his correspondence regarding the BELCAN Bridge.

Premier Price listened to residents and acted on pressing issues. In his letter of April 1969, he expressed concerns about an accident at Hector Creek, seeking immediate solutions to prevent further incidents. In another letter from January 1974, he addresses the speeding limits, emphasizing his commitment to public safety as part of national development.

In the following letters, Premier Price focuses on improving infrastructure and access to rural communities, as well as traffic safety.



## International Cooperation

O-(v)

20th March, 1969

Hon. Minister of Public Utilities,  
Belize City.

Dear Minister,

You spoke to me on the 'phone about the possible wording of a plaque for the new bridge. I offer the following suggestion. The word "BELCAN" means "BELIZE-CANADA".

BELCAN BRIDGE  
BUILT BY THE  
CANADIAN AND BELIZEAN PEOPLES  
AND INAUGURATED BY  
THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
THE HON. ALBERT CATTOUSE  
APRIL , 1969.

If an emblem is required for the plaque, perhaps it could be the maple leaf entwined with the mahogany leaf.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

A good example of international cooperation prior to Belize's independence is the BELCAN Bridge in Belize City. This project was carried out in collaboration with the government of Canada.

## Traffic Safety at former Hector Creek Bridge

O-(v)

8th April, 1969

Hon. Minister of Public Utilities,  
Belize City.

Dear Mr. Minister,

At Hector Creek there are two bridges. I learned that a motor car accident occurred because the bridges are near enough together to make it appear at night that there is only one bridge. As a result the car tried to get through the middle where there was no bridge and it ran into the rails.

I would suggest that P.W.D. erect suitable warning lights to show the width of the bridges.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

Premier Price's focus on traffic control at the Hector Creek Bridge in the Belize District reflects his concern to improve public safety.



## The Nago Bank Road

O-(v)

9th May, 1969

Hon. Minister of Public Utilities,  
Belize City.

Dear Minister,

Mr. Alfred Flowers came to this office to remind us about a request from the people of Nago Bank for a public road of approximately 2½ miles from Maskall to Nago Bank.

Would be grateful if you would do what is possible to have a bulldozer or a grader clear this path to Nago Bank. I learn that 40 families would benefit from this road.

I would suggest you send the Hon. Fred Hunter there to do what is possible to help.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

**Premier Price often issued reminders to the respective ministers regarding citizens' concerns, as is the case in the letter above with reference to Nago Bank in the Belize District.**



**“You are good Belizeans, and when more of us unite to build a nation, we shall get independence in a quicker time.”**

**– Premier George Price.**

**These words, along with the inscription on his epitaph — “A good Belizean, one who went through life on a pilgrimage, and left the world a better place than he found it” — capture the thoughtfulness and vision that defined Price’s leadership.**



## Concerns about Speeding

C  
O  
P  
Y

6/5

22nd January, 1974.

Hon. F.H. Hunter,  
Minister of Power and Communications,  
BELMOPAN.

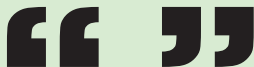
Dear Minister,

On Friday, 18th January, 1974, at about 5 p.m.  
vehicle No.2995 of B.T.A. was seen at about mile 33,  
Western Highway, driving at a speed beyond 40 m.p.h.  
breaking the speed limit.

Please make sure that all vehicles observe  
the speed limits.

Sincerely,

(SGD.)  
(GEORGE PRICE),  
Premier.



Though Premier Price's letter above reference a vehicle exceeding the 40-mph speed limit of the 1970s may seem trivial, it is still a call for cautious driving today.





## Education and Health

From self-government to independence, Premier Price worked to create opportunities for Belizeans to access public services. He believed education was crucial for civic engagement and nation-building, as attested through the letters of May and September 1973. Furthermore, in a March 1973 letter, Price aimed to facilitate a trip for San Pedro College students to observe the legislative process at work.

Similarly, a letter of January 1975 requesting health services for an individual demonstrates Price's personal attentiveness to the well-being of the vulnerable. Such actions are reminders that we are all called to serve with care and diligence.



## Invitation for Students to Visit the National Assembly

O-(vi)

14th March, 1973

Hon. L.S. Sylvestre,  
Minister of Education,  
BELMOPAN.

Dear Minister,

Would you please arrange for the students of San Pedro College to attend a future sitting of the House. It would be too late for the sitting of 16th March, but sometime thereafter.

I am directing Mr. Bert Brackett to let them have the "Lolette" for account of this Ministry. The "Lolette" should leave on a Thursday for San Pedro, then sail to Belize City about 3:00 a.m. Friday and back to San Pedro at about 3:00 p.m. Friday.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

Premier Price recognized that young people should be well-informed about the country's governance. He facilitated San Pedro College students' visit to observe a session of the House of Representatives in Belmopan

## Belize: New Nation in Central America

6/6 Vol. II

17th May, 1973

Hon. L.S. Sylvestre  
Minister of Education  
BELMOPAN

Dear Minister:

Please let me know what has been done so far to introduce into the school curricula the booklet: "Belize - New Nation in Central America".

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

*Belize: New Nation in Central America* (1973) presented an overview of Belize as “a new nation in Central America in the heart of Caribbean basin”. It became a key text for Belizean history.



## Concerns About Education Costs

7th September, 1973

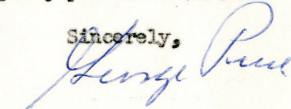
Minister of Education  
Belmopan, Belize

Dear Minister,

Would you please direct the Education Department to look into (and if possible remedy) the high cost of books in the schools.

I learn that at one primary school in Belize City the books for one year per pupil costs \$25.00

Sincerely,



(George Price)  
Premier

“ ”

Premier Price firmly believed that access to quality education was a fundamental right for every Belizean.



## Do What is Possible to Help

January 22, 1975

Hon. Minister of Social Services  
Belmopan

Dear Minister,

Mr. George Leslie, guest of the  
Belize City Infirmary asks two things:

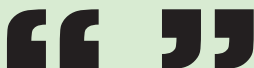
- (1) please help him to change his glasses, which  
need a change after an eye operation for  
cataract: and
- (2) Please arrange for a doctor to attend to him  
as he suffered a back injury when a bicycle  
hit him.

Please do what is possible to help

Mr. Leslie.

Sincerely,

George Price  
Premier.



Health and well-being is a service which Premier Price recognized as a human right and encouraged those in a position to assist willingly.



## The Struggle for Independence

In the 1960s and 1970s, Belize's quest for independence was a multifaceted process that involved both national and international efforts to achieve political support for self-determination and shape a new national identity. Guatemala's claims to Belize's territory were a major obstacle that significantly delayed independence. However, Premier Price, in close collaboration with other nationalist leaders and wide-spread popular support, carried out strategic actions to advance the country's path to self-determination.

The letters included in this section illustrate these efforts, including calls for citizen participation in rallies to support independence. Price also actively publicized the name Belize and its corresponding symbols on the path towards an independent nation. This he did through the school system as well as on the national radio of that era. These letters not only urged action but also emphasized that independence could not be achieved without the active involvement of the people.

On the international stage, Price lobbied support for Belize's independence from international partners. In 1973, Caribbean diplomat Sir Shridath Ramphal expressed the Caribbean countries' relentless support for Belize's independence and territorial integrity at a UN Security Council meeting in Panama City. Price's handwritten note of thanks attests his gratitude for diplomacy.

Collectively, these letters demonstrate how both internal and external forces shaped Belize's transition to full independence in 1981.

“ ”

Premier Price extended an open invitation to join a national pro-independence rally in Belize City on 5 October 1969.



# Rally for Nationhood



*Please Quote:*

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER,  
Belize City,  
British Honduras (or Belize)  
Central America.

30th September, 1969

As a good and generous friend of the governing party which has a mandate to lead Belize to independence and prosperity, I am hereby informing you that there will be a national rally and parade for an independence guarantee to take place in Belize City on Sunday, October 5th, at 4:30 p.m.

You are invited to attend and to encourage others to assemble at the Court House Plaza and take part in the rally and parade.

I enclose copy of the petition that will be addressed to Lord Shepherd in which you will see that we are demanding as our right a guarantee that the United Kingdom organize such defence arrangements as shall insure the new nation of Belize against military aggression.

Let us all meet on Sunday and together continue to build the new nation of Belize in the heart of the Caribbean Basin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Price".

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

# Support for the Name Belize

8th March, 1973

FROM: Premier, Party Leader of the People's United Party

TO: The Chairman, Constitutional Committee of the Belizean House of Representatives

Messages have been coming into the Premier's Office in support of the Bill to make official the ancient name of Belize.

2. Enclosed are the following messages in favour of the Bill:

## Municipal Governments

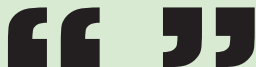
- (a) Belize City Council
- (b) Orange Walk Town Board
- (c) Corozal Town Board
- (d) Stann Creek Town Board
- (e) Punta Gorda Town Board
- (f) Benque Viejo del Carmen Town Board

The only remaining PUP Town Board which we have not heard from is the Monkey River Town Board, but I learn a message will be coming from them before the Second and Third Reading of the Bill.

## Village Councils

- (a) Black Man Eddy
- (b) Unitedville
- (c) Georgeville
- (d) Santa Familia
- (e) San Antonio, Toledo District ✓
- (f) Isavella Bank ✓
- (g) August Pine Ridge ✓
- (h) Yo Creek

/Others...



The push to rename “British Honduras” to “Belize” won wide-spread support across the country. The National Assembly resolution to officially change the country’s name came into effect on 1 June 1973.

Others

- (a) Emory King, Belize City
- (b) R. Montero and E.A. Awe, Central Farm
- (c) Members and Supporters of the PUP in San Ignacio and Santa Elena
- (d) Union Cultural Corozalina, Corozal Town
- (e) Fenton J. Bradley, Belmopan
- (f) Canuto Orozco and Family, Corozal Town
- (g) Mr. & Mrs. Archibald Shiel & Family, Corozal Town
- (h) Mr. William Williamson, Belize City
- (i) President, United Women Group, Stann Creek Town

3. The only dissenting note comes from the San Ignacio Town Board which seems to have missed the entire issue because their motion refers to the Webster's report which is entirely irrelevant to the issue before the House.

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier



## Belize Most Grateful

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Guyanese Delegation  
Hotel Panama  
Panama City

For Minister Ramphal

BELIZE MOST GRATEFUL  
FOR YOUR ABLE AND BRILLIANT  
DEFENCE OF INDEPENDENCE  
OF BELIZE.

Your STATEMENT  
READ TO HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVE RECEIVES  
WIDE SUPPORT

PREMIER OF  
BELIZE

“ ”

Premier Price's note of gratitude to Shradith Ramphal for supporting Belize's bid for independence at UN Security Council Meeting in March 1973 in Panama.



## Publicizing Belize



*Please Quote*

7/1(81)

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER.

Belmopan,  
Cayo District, Belize,  
Central America.

4th May, 1973

From: Premier

To: Secretary to the Cabinet

Please see copy of letter attached to the Principal of the Belmopan Comprehensive School.

2. On being consulted please make sure that the Belizean flag is in its proper place and also that the Belizean Anthem is played and that the speeches refer to our country as "Belize" and not "British Honduras". Radio Belize can provide the anthem; also arrange for Radio Belize to record the ceremony and give due publicity.

(GEORGE PRICE)

Premier

“ ”

**Premier Price consistently asserted the name Belize and key national symbols in preparation for independence.**



## Personal Notes and Interests

Premier Price's letters provide a glimpse into his character, revealing his deep connection to the everyday experiences of Belizeans. Whether expressing gratitude to an ordinary citizen or sharing his thoughts on how to improve horse races, Price's correspondence reflects a range of interests beyond his political role.

His interactions with the public were not solely driven by his political agenda, but also by a sincere interest in the lives of those around him. Through these letters, we gain a fuller understanding of Price not just as a statesman but as an individual who valued the people of Belize. His communication was personal, sincere, and indicative of the bonds he sought to forge with fellow Belizeans across the nation.



## A Request for *Sibelius Finlandia*

Please Quote:



OFFICE OF THE PREMIER,  
Belize City,  
British Honduras (or Belize)  
Central America.

October 29, 1965

Secretary of Cabinet,

Please advise all Representatives  
of the government party to meet in Premier's office  
on Thursday, November 11, 1965, at 2 p.m.

*George Price*  
George Price, Premier.

Please ask CBO:  
where *Sibelius Finlandia*  
can be bought + price?  
Hon. G. Peck would like  
to buy the record.

# “ ”

The philharmonic rendition of the finale of “Sibelius Finlandia” is well known in Belize as the background music for the national prayer recorded by Premier Price. This musical piece was played throughout the mourning period following his death, which occurred on 19 September 2011.





## Observations on Horse Racing

O-(7)

17th February, 1969

Confidential

Hon. Minister of Public Utilities,  
Belize City.

Dear Mr. Minister,

Please accept my observations on the races yesterday, which no doubt you have made. They are:

(1) Lateness in starting races. It seems to me Mr. Morter, the official starter, is single handed and he may need assistance to get the following race started while the actual race is still in preparation, so that there is a continual flow of races.

(2) It seems to me the committee must be enlarged. It does not seem right that one person should be handicapper and judge at the same time. I have great esteem for Mr. Conrad Jones and Mr. Eddie Cassasola and I think they are doing a good job under difficult circumstances. They must be given assistance.

(3) This is one you have already decided - to make a paddock to keep the crowd out of the stables.

(4) In order to encourage and accomodate district owners of horses, they should be given a time before the races to practise their horses using the starting gate. For instance, I encouraged Mr. Herman Davis to bring his horse in. He brought Lady D but he did not have a chance to practise his horse with the starting gate until the morning of the races.

/We...

- 2 -

We can discuss these things later.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier



“ ”

The Price family had a long-standing tradition in the equestrian business, particularly horse-breeding and racing. Premier Price showcases his deep knowledge and appreciation for horse racing as a sport discipline.

Sincerely

23 June 1976

Mrs. Peggy Monsanto  
c/o National Assembly  
Belmopan

Dear Mrs. Monsanto,

The sweet bread and cakes were delicious.

It was kind of you to remember. Very many  
thanks.

Kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

(GEORGE PRICE)  
Premier

“ ”

Premier Price expressed his heartfelt gratitude for homemade foods and treats such as sweet bread and cakes which people often offered him.





**On Independence Day 21 September 1981, Prime Minister George Price returned home and planted a mahogany tree in the backyard.**



**Today, from the trunk of that fallen mahogany tree, we call on all Good Belizeans to plant, harvest, and honor the revolution of Belize, no matter the challenges.**

**SCAN TO LEARN MORE  
OR VISIT  
[nichbelize.org/gpday2025](https://nichbelize.org/gpday2025)**



[nichbelize.org/gpday2025](http://nichbelize.org/gpday2025)



**SCAN HERE**  
For more information

