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TRADEWINDS

The Community Newspaper Since 1972 • St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands

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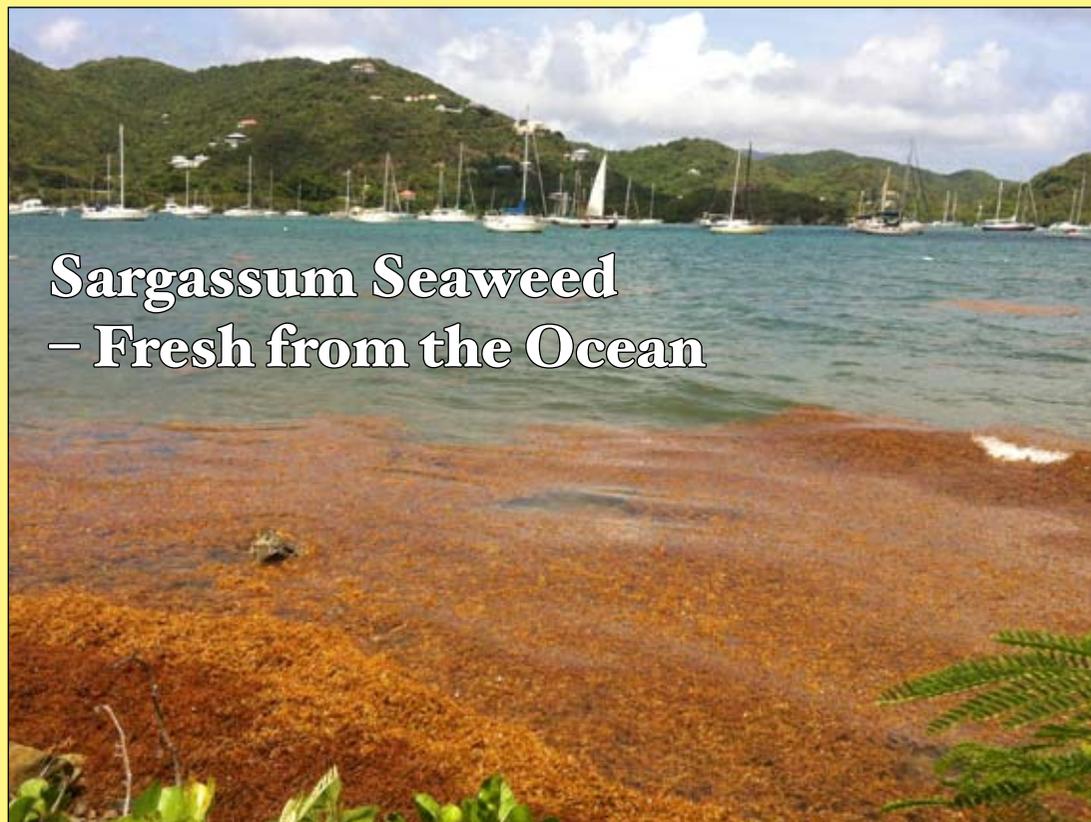
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Sargassum Seaweed – Fresh from the Ocean

St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Tom Oat

A mat of Sargassum seaweed covered the entire south shore of Coral Bay harbor and beyond on Friday, September 19. The seaweed continues to wash up on the eastern shore of St. John and provides a dining spot for herons and a hiding spot for other marine creatures like the Sargassum Frogfish.

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St. Johnian Atty. Monique Liburd Named Top 50 Leader in U.S. Tech

By JUDI SHIMEL
St. John Tradewinds

A 29-year-old native St. Johnian has been named one of the nation's most accomplished female attorneys in the U.S. technology field.

Monique Liburd, a trademarks attorney at Google, and 49 other professionals were named 50 Women Leaders in Tech Law by the online Recorder, an online publication serving the practice of law.

Liburd and others were credited for leadership and keeping up with the legal aspects of rapidly changing technology trends. Some were also cited for the role they played in deal making and promoting other women into influential legal posts.

Women attorneys represent-



Monique Liburd

ing Facebook, eBay, Apple, Cisco Systems, SanDisk, BlackBerry, Intuit and Apple were also named on the top 50 list. Other attorneys being honored represent boutique law firms. There are also two academics and one government official.

The group will be honored at an event at the JW Marriott Hotel

in San Francisco Sept. 23.

Liburd attended the Julius E. Sprauve School in Cruz Bay and the Giffit Hill School in Beverhoudtsberg. She is a graduate of the California State University at Northridge and Berkley Law School.

In 2013 she was honored by the National Bar Association as a litigation leader.

Nancy Liburd is the daughter of Levi Liburd and Nancy Fish Liburd.

Mother Nancy Liburd said part of her daughter's interest in technology began early on, when she used to visit the *St. John Tradewinds* newspaper office on her way home from school and one of the writers would take time to show her the workings of an Apple Mac II computer.

Children Should Never Be Left Alone in Vehicles for Any Reason

St. John Tradewinds

Assistant Police Commissioner Thomas Hannah issued a cautionary warning to parents telling them not to leave children in their cars while they go and run an errand even if they expect to be gone for just a few minutes. On September 11 two children apparently passed out from heat exhaustion after being left in a hot car at about 2 p.m. in the Sunny Isles Shopping center.

Hannah said concerned citizens saw two girls, who are about seven and eight-years old, sleeping in the locked vehicle and called 911. Officers in the area responded and with the help of citizens shook the vehicle and aroused the children who were able to unlock the vehicle. Although the engine was running, the air conditioning did not seem to be working properly, Hannah said.

The parent arrived back at the

vehicle within minutes, police said. The case is being investigated.

This type of behavior can have deadly consequences, Hannah said, citing several instances in the mainland and the Caribbean where children have died from heat exposure after being left in hot cars.

Children are more susceptible to heat stress than adults. In a car the temperature can rise very quickly, the victims first suffer heat exhaustion and then heat stroke.

CZM Decision Meeting October 1

The St. John Coastal Zone Management committee will conduct its decision meeting on the controversial Coral Bay marina at noon on Wednesday, October 1 at the Legislature Building in Cruz Bay.

“No Fleas Please” Flea Market Event To Be Presented in Two Parts

The Animal Care Center of St. John's annual “No Fleas Please” flea market fundraising event will be presented in two parts this year. The clothing only sale will be at The Marketplace on Saturday, October 11, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. All general merchandise will be sold at the flea market sale on the following Saturday, October 18, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Winston Wells Ball Field in Cruz Bay.

Donations of sale items are currently being accepted at the ACC shelter in Cruz Bay, next to the public library. Individuals may purchase tables for \$30 to sell personal items. For more information, call the shelter at 340-774-1625.

“Just Play” Day Set for October 13

Using Sport for Social Change will bring back, for the sixth year in a row, a free fun-filled day of sports for youth ages 5 to 17 years on Monday, October 13, at Winston Wells Ballfield.

Each person will be given a free t-shirt and water bottle for the event. A full lunch will also be provided by Mathayom Privates Chefs to each attendee at the event. Brenda Reckor-Wallace will once again be the event moderator. DJ Adonis will be spinning the music for the event, and William Schouten (aka T-Rex/Juggernaut) will be the guest of honor.

Volunteers are needed and encouraged to sign up as well. Pre-registration is required. To sign up, please visit <http://www.using-sportforsocialchange.com>. Volunteers will be asked to do general tasks such as keep score and keep the kids moving in the right direction.

Sponsors are greatly needed to make this event a meaningful and memorable experience for all. Any business or individual who would like to help sponsor this event, visit http://www.usingsportforsocialchange.com/2013_just_play_sponsorship_levels.

More information about this event can be found at: <http://www.usingsportforsocialchange.com>.

Free Mammogram Vouchers Available

American Cancer Society is offering free mammogram screening vouchers available for pick up at the St. John Community Foundation office at the Marketplace, Office Suite II #203, on Thursdays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in September.

Vouchers are available for both men and women over 40 who do not have mammogram coverage via insurance. Men and women under 40 are also eligible for vouchers with a doctors referral. Vouchers MUST be used during the month of October and appointments are to be scheduled with St. Thomas Radiology. For more information, call SJCF office at (340) 693-9410.

USVI/BVI Friendship Day Oct. 17-18

Governor John P. de Jongh Jr. and First Lady Cecile deJongh are announcing plans to host the 2014 USVI/BVI Friendship Day on October 17 and 18. This year, the U.S. Virgin Islands will host the main event in downtown Charlotte Amalie.

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CZM Will Decide on Coral Bay Marina at October 1 Meeting

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

The St. John CZM committee will conduct its decision meeting on the controversial Coral Bay marina at noon on October 1 at the Legislature Building in Cruz Bay.

The developers of the proposed St. John Marina agreed to a deadline extension of the 30-day time limit for the St. John CZM committee to rule on the application heard at the heavily-attended, August 20 public hearing because Edmund Roberts, one of the two CZM members who will vote on the application, is not expected return to the island until the end of September.

The applicants agreed to extend the CZM's deadline for a decision meeting, Summer's End spokesperson Rick Barksdale told St. John Tradewinds on Thursday, Septem-

ber 18. Barksdale referred questions to CZM officials.

The jam-packed audience at the August 20 St. John CZM meeting which was predominantly opposed to the Coral Bay marina proposal did not raise any objections to Mr. Robert's historic electronic participation, but there were catcalls at CZM member Brion Morrisette.

A longtime CZM member and island attorney, Morrisette participated in the committee's first action of the evening, approving a Westin Resort solar project, before recusing himself from the subsequent marina hearing to on the Coral Bay Marina citing a conflict of interest, leaving Roberts and committee chairman Andrew Penn as the only voting members on what should be a five-member panel. (There have been two vacancies on the panel for years.)

Morrisette explained to the audience then and again in

a subsequent letter to St. John Tradewinds that, if he had not participated in the August hearing, there would not have been a required quorum and the Coral Bay Marina permit application would have been officially deemed approved according to the law if the committee had not heard the application within the required period of time after it was deemed accepted by the CZM or an extension had been requested or agreed to by the applicant.

Although Roberts made the historic first Skype participation in a St. John CZM application hearing on August 20 when he called in from California on the internet telephone/video service to participate in two committee actions, the St. Johnian is expected to return to the island by the end of September, according to CZM Permits Director Anthony Richards.

Marina Developer Says DPNR Reviewing Expired Agreement To Control Coral Bay Harbor Moorings

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

The V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) has not completed a promised "partnership" with the developers behind the proposed St. John Marina to control the estimated 110-plus moorings in Coral Bay, and some members of the public and government officials are questioning whether such a management contract is legally required to be put out to public bid.

In a March 19, 2014, 90-day Letter of Intent, (LOI) former DPNR Commissioner Alicia Barnes outlined a "Public-Private Partnership" to Chaliese Summers, Managing Member of the marina developer, The Summer's End Group, LLC.

Barnes resigned her DPNR position June 1 without the management agreement — or what is legally called a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) — with the marina developer having been completed, DPNR officials acknowledged.

Acting DPNR Commissioner Jean-Pierre Oriol had no comment when asked September 18 if DPNR was reviewing the status of the MOA between DPNR and the marina developer, according to a DPNR spokesperson. Oriol, the Director of DPNR's Division of Coastal Zone Management,

has been serving as acting DPNR Commissioner since Barnes left that position.

DPNR Commitment to Marina Developer Ended in June

The 90-day period outlined in the LOI would have expired in mid-June, well before the August 20 DPNR Coastal Zone Management (CZM) committee public hearing on the proposed marina plan — which hinges on the relocation and management of the moorings by the private marina developers.

The control of the moorings by a marina developers was specifically opposed by a large majority of the almost 50 testifiers at the heavily-attended August public hearing, many of whom were the owners and/or occupants of boats using the harbor.

"The LOI was submitted as part of our permit application," Summer's End partner Rick Barksdale wrote *St. John Tradewinds* on September 12. "What is currently in process as a part of the process of moving towards having professional management of Coral Harbor is a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The MOA is currently being reviewed by DPNR and legal counsel."

St. John Tradewinds Asks for Status of Mooring Plan

Senior DPNR officials had no comment on the status of any

mooring management agreement in connection with the Coral Bay Marina CZM application when contacted on September 18. A DPNR spokesperson deferred to the pending decision by the St. John CZM. The marina developers subsequently agreed to an extension of the CZM decision deadline which was September 20, 30 days after the hearing, and the decision meeting is now set for October 1. (See related story above.)

The takeover and relocation of the mooring field is an integral part of the controversial marina plan, which proposes to remove the existing moorings and install three mooring fields with a total of 75 fee-based moorings in other areas of the bay to allow the marina developers to extend docks more than 500 feet into the center of the harbor from the southeast shore and to add 12 moorings of their own in a mooring field in the outer harbor.

The developers' management plan also includes requiring boat owners to "lock" or secure the wastewater systems on their vessels to eliminate discharges into the bay and to pay to use a pump-out station proposed as part of the mooring and marina development.

The proposed cooperation between DPNR and Summer's End for the management of the harbor moorings was emphasized in the

first published reporting on the St. John Marina plan in the July 21 issue of *St. John Tradewinds*.

While community opposition to the marina proposal has been virulent, especially among boaters, the status of the proposed "partnership" between DPNR and Summer's End for the moorings has received little attention.

"I can't say as to whether (there) should have been a bidding process," one government official told *St. John Tradewinds*.

Rafe Boulon Questions Control by Outside Entity

St. Johnian Rafe Boulon, a retired marine biologist with DPNR and the V.I. National Park, raised the mooring issue in a column in the *V.I. Daily News* on September 10:

"It all appears aimed at turning over the development and management of the Coral Bay to an outside entity with no demonstrated ability to do so or real sensitivity or understanding of the people and environment that make Coral Bay the special place it is," wrote Boulon, a respected marine biologist.

"To me, that is unconscionable and atrocious," Boulon continued. "I strongly urge the CZM Committee, DPNR and the Army Corps of Engineers to seriously consider the full ramifications of permitting such a thing to happen to Coral Bay."

St. John Tradewinds Asks for Status of Mooring Plan

St. John Tradewinds first asked DPNR Acting Commissioner Oriol to comment on the status of the mooring management plan on September 11 in light of the expiration of the 90-day deadline imposed in former Commissioner Barne's in her previously-unpublished Letter of Intent which reads in part:

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Judge Rules “Villa Company” Parking Signs Do Not Have Unstated 30-Minute Time Limit

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

CRUZ BAY — A St. John Realtor and vacation rental property owner and manager successfully fought a parking ticket issued her vehicle while parked in the Cruz Bay waterfront space marked “LOADING AND UNLOADING FOR LICENSED VILLA COMPANY” — in a case which may have established new Virgin Islands Territorial Court case law.

Denise Obbagy, co-owner of Caribbean Palm Properties, LLC., a villa rental and management company, with her husband John, was found not guilty of parking in

one of the two spaces between the signs.

With Solomonic certainty, the appropriately serious Judge ruled that it took longer than one half hour for a representative of a licensed villa company to load or unload a vehicle when meeting arriving guests at the Loredon L. Boynes Sr. Dock.

Obbagy (“The ‘Y’ is silent.”) represented herself and brought a few color prints of the signs and the waterfront parking area to enter into evidence and use in her self-defense. The photographs clearly showed that the signs do not say “No Parking” nor do they

contain any reference to a parking time limit.

The judge, in closing out a long morning of jurisprudence, accepted testimony that Obbagy’s vehicle had been in the parking spot for approximately one-half hour and ruled that one-half hour was not a sufficient amount of time to load or unload a vehicle and that Obbagy was not guilty of the cited offense — whatever it was.

General Public Nonplussed

When the two “VILLA” signs marked DPW (V.I. Department of Public Works) were erected in the jumble of beachfront parking signage on the V.I. Port Authority (VIPA)-controlled waterfront adjacent to the Boynes ferry dock, members of the general public were nonplussed.

It had not been easy for the Port Authority to wrest five parking spaces from the then all-powerful-and-now-defunct St. John Taxi Association for public, short-term parking after the waterfront shuffling which surrounded the construction of the Boynes dock.

Villa representatives and island residents typically load and unload in the several short-term, public spaces at the Boynes dock; and many arriving visitors walk to one of the nearby rental car companies to pick up a vehicle and return to load their luggage and entourage at the ferry dock before driving to their vacation rental.



St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Tom Oat

A VIPD officer tickets a vehicle in one of the contested “Villa Company” parking spots on the Cruz Bay waterfront.

The apparent loss of two of the five public spaces when designated for “LICENSED VILLA COMPANY” by nonsensical signs has been confusing for residents and law enforcement

Actually, Realtor and vacation rental property owner and manager Obbagy had several tickets for parking in the same spaces for the two vehicles owned by the couple, but the court clerk said only one had been “filed” by the officer or officers who had put the tickets on her vehicles. Obbagy was told by the clerk that the other tickets in her sheaf were void because the officer who wrote them had failed to turn them in to the court by the court date.

(Editor’s Note: A St. John

Tradewinds reporter also had a parking ticket for parking in one of the “villa” spaces which was not filed by the officer by the February 12 court date on the ticket and automatically was voided by the court.)

Despite the Judge’s ruling, the exclusive-but-nebulous signage on the convenient, much-coveted and much-misused spaces apparently will continue to be a thorny subject — unlike the nearby sign reserving a perpetual space for the now-defunct Maho Bay Shuttle at the gate to the Battery.

Actually, everyone on St. John already knew it takes longer than a half hour for a “Licensed Villa Company” to get loaded in Cruz Bay.

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2014 USVI/BVI Friendship Day Festivities Set

St. John Tradewinds

Governor John P. de Jongh Jr. and First Lady Cecile deJongh are announcing plans to host the 2014 USVI/BVI Friendship Day on October 17 and 18. This year, the U.S. Virgin Islands will host the main event in downtown Charlotte Amalie.

“This is an event that I look forward to each year as it continues the strong bond that solidifies us as Virgin Islanders.” De Jongh said, adding, “There may be a little bit of business talk and some policy considerations, but it is really about enjoying the bond of two nations and the strength of two com-

munities with events that highlight our culture and history. This event is always the perfect opportunity to showcase our hospitality.”

This year’s theme is “Ole Tyme Tings”— Celebrating the Ties that Bind Us.” Barbara Petersen, Administrator for St. Thomas & Water Island and the 2014 USVI/BVI Friendship Day Committee Chairman, said that “This event is the perfect opportunity for our community to showcase the USVI to our kin in the BVI. We are inviting farmers and local arts and craft vendors to be a part of in this year’s event. This year we are also looking for vendors of old time

desserts like specials, jawbone candy, coconut cakes, tarts and the like, so contact my office for details. Let us make this USVI – BVI Friendship Day the best one yet!”

Festivities will begin on Friday October 17 at 7 p.m. with fast pitch softball games pitting the best from the USVI against the best from the BVI at the Emile Griffith ballpark. On Saturday, October 18 at 9 a.m. the public is invited to attend a breakfast and a special cultural presentation in the heart of the historic district of Downtown Charlotte Amalie.

For more information, call Dawn Simon at 340-693-4342.

Tax Assessor Offers Relief from Property Tax “Sticker Shock”

By **JUDI SHIMEL**
St. John Tradewinds

ISLAND WIDE — The man in charge of the territory’s property tax bills says he’s willing to meet with St. Johnians and others suffering from sticker shock after seeing their most recent bills.

But a group of St. John property owners who have battled the government before says they’re not in a talking mood – the head of the St. John Unity Day Group says they’re going back to U.S. District Court.

“There’s no point in taking this to the Lieutenant Governor, the Tax Assessor, the Governor or the Legislature,” said Myrtle Barry. “We’ve done all that before. This is going to require another court case.”

Explaining 2013-14 Tax Bills

Tax Assessor Ira Mills says he thinks the uproar over the 2013 and 2014 property tax bills can be explained.

“What we are trying to do here is make sure everyone understood, but it seems somehow people are not paying attention,” Mills, a former Director of the Office of Management and Budget, said in an interview with St. John Tradewinds.

The bills now in taxpayers hands reflect changes that occurred when the 27th Legislature passed Bill No. 27-0165, and it was signed by Gov. John P. de Jongh as Act 6991, according to Mills.

When the 2012 tax bills were issued they were computed with formulas used in 1998 as ordered by the court, Mills said. In accordance with Act 6991, 2013 tax bills are created under a new formula which requires that “(a)ll real property in the Virgin Islands must be assessed at 100 percent of its fair market value,” he explained.

That value is calculated using the assessment method outlined in the act and a “mil rate” is set for different classifications of property, according to Mills. A court-ordered reassessment of some 50,000 Virgin Islands properties was carried out in 2005 and 2006 by the Office of Tax Assessor in the Lieutenant Governor’s Office.

The results of those property revaluations appear for the first time in the 2013 and 2014 tax bills, according to Mills. The valuations which were used in 2012 had been set at the 1998 rate. The new bills are set at the 2005-6 valuations, and at current fair market levels, the tax assessor said.

The fair market level, he added, is based on overall improvements in the area where the property is found.

Sticker Shock and “Dumb Errors”

And that, says, Barry, is where sticker shock sets in.

“It’s the same dumb errors again, it’s frustrating and it’s a shame to know it still hasn’t been corrected,” Barry said. “I see it as a harassment, especially to persons on the island of St. John.”

“We have seen property values go up anywhere from 240 to 3,600 percent,” Barry added. “It sounds weird, but it’s true.”

The Unity Day Group is currently asking property owners who want to contest their bills to support a legal fund that will assist in mounting a new court case, according to Barry. But that challenge will proceed, regardless of how many people join, Barry said.

In 2008, represented by Attorney James Derr, the Unity group challenged the reassessment conducted under contract by BearingPoint before Chief District Judge Curtis Gomez. But in 2011 Gomez declared the challenge moot, saying the issues raised by Unity were addressed when a 2000 case, Berne Corp. vs Government of the Virgin Islands, was resolved.

Mills says he and his staff have tried, over the past few weeks, to get word out to the public that change would appear in new property tax bills. Articles have appeared in local publications, officials visited a radio talk show to field questions. Speakers have visited veteran’s groups.

Built-in Credits Give Tax Breaks

But, he says, information is still slowing getting out there. One important bit of information Mills says he wants to share is about tax breaks built into Act 6991. They include:

- A \$400 credit known as a homestead credit;
- A \$650 credit for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces;
- A \$500 credit for property owners age 60 and over, effective Jan. 1 of the taxable year. This credit applies to senior-headed households with annual incomes of \$30,000 or less for singles and \$50,000 or less for couples;
- A \$500 credit for disabled property owners, whose disability has been documented by the Social Security Administration;
- And a “circuit breaker” credit for homesteaders or those owning unimproved property. Qualifying taxpayers can earn a 40 percent break on their property tax bills, not to exceed \$5,000.

Certain categories of tax breaks can be combined, resulting in greater savings, Mills added. For instance, a veteran age 60 or over would qualify for both tax credits.

“These are some of the interesting things,” he said.

Fair to Taxpayers — and Government

The tax assessor added that in the case of residential properties, the mil rate used to compute tax bills has dropped from .0125 percent on the 2012 bills to .003770 on properties assessed at 100 percent market value.

Different rates are applied to different categories, including residential, commercial, unimproved and time share properties.

The Office of the Tax Assessor is inviting property owners to visit their office now to get a better understanding of what to expect for the upcoming 2015 property tax bills. Those who visit can also apply for whatever exemptions they may qualify for.

“We’re going to be fair to the government and we’re going to be fair to the taxpayers,” Mills said.

BIR Announces Publication of Names of Delinquent Taxpayers

Director of the Virgin Islands Bureau of Internal Revenue, Claudette Watson-Anderson, CPA, announces that, pursuant to section of 8(a) of Act No. 7261, as amended by Act No. 7559, the Bureau has been authorized to publish in a generally circulated newspaper, the names of all businesses and entities and the owners thereof, that are delinquent on the payment of gross receipts and hotel occupancy taxes three (3) months after the tax is due. The list will include taxpayers who have been delinquent prior to January 1, 2014. This press release serves as an official notice to delinquent taxpayers advising them that publication will occur thirty (30) days after this notice.

Gross receipts and hotel room delinquent taxpayers are strongly urged to immediately make full payment with the Bureau or set up an installment agreement to satisfy the outstanding obligation to avoid publication of their names after the thirty (30) day period.

For more information, call Tamarah Parson-Small at (340) 714-9312 or 714-9310.

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Ziggy enjoys roaming Cruz Bay Beach on Friday morning, September 19.

St. John Tradewinds News
Photo by Tom Oat

Donations Are Being Sought To Ship Cruz Bay's Renowned 220-Pound Beach Pig Ziggy to Mainland Tour

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

CRUZ BAY — It's time for Ziggy, the world-renowned, 220-pound Cruz Bay beach bar pig to go back to the states and go on tour.

After years of entertaining visitors and locals around The Beach Bar and between the beach and his home near Gallows Point, Ziggy (and owners Kristin Hartness and Jay Yontz) is looking for money for a ticket to greener, or less sandy, pastures up north.

Of course, the only way a 220-pound pig can travel from the USVI to the states is by private charter, so his owners are trying to raise the necessary funds.

"Hi Everyone! Ziggy and his family are moving to the states, buying a motorhome, and gonna launch 'Ziggy the Traveling Piggy' and travel to a town near you," Hartness and Yontz wrote in an appeal on the internet site gofundme.com. "Please

help us afford the expensive private jet charter that is required to get Ziggy back to America."

The good news is \$1,633 of the necessary \$13,000 was raised from donations from 43 people in four days.

When Hartness imported Ziggy from Florida two years back, she said she was told he was a "mini-teacup" pig and would grow to no more than 25 pounds. As Ziggy grew to more than 200 pounds on the hoof, the promised pet became a full-blown, so to speak, farm animal.

Which is a relatively big problem if you live in Cruz Bay.

Adept at cracking open small coconuts with his snout full of mis-aligned teeth, Ziggy has his own website in addition to accepting donations for his relocation at gofundme.com.

Ziggy will be hanging out at The Beach Bar on Cruz Bay Beach crunching coconuts until his private jet arrives.

With New "Mini St. John Market," Nael Amhad Will Expand His Island Grocery Competition

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

CORAL BAY — Nael Amhad made his decision to open what he calls "a mini St. John Market" in Coral Bay before the St. John Coastal Zone Management (CZM) committee hearing in August on plans for the controversial Coral Bay mega-yacht marina.

"I'm taking over Lilly's," the normally discreet grocery maven told *St. John Tradewinds* in early August, shortly after that former grocery tenant vacated the retail space on the second level in the Coccoloba commercial complex overlooking Coral Bay harbor — and the potential future home of the controversial Coral Harbor mega-yacht marina.

"The marina is coming," Amhad said self-assuredly of the major factor in his decision to add a fourth store on St. John to his St. John Market, Dolphin Market and Dolphin Market Wholesale.

Amhad had renovations underway and new coolers being moved into the space by mid September — before a CZM vote on the plans for the marina in Coral Harbor directly across the street from the store — as he continued his effort to dominate the St John grocery market in competition with the island's Starfish Market in The Marketplace commercial complex in Enighed.

The Coccoloba commercial complex is under contract to the developers planning the potential marina and Ahmad is counting on its construction to support his investment in a modern grocery store for the community. Ahmad plans for the store to be open by November.

From Pine Peace to Island Grocery Dominance

Amhad started in business on St. John as a partner in the Pine Peace Market before opening Dolphin Market on the historic site of the island's first "supermarket" in the Boulon Center, the Albert Willis-owned, pink building which towers over the Cruz Bay rotary intersection of a half-dozen federally-numbered island roads.

"People like a clean store," Amhad said, succinctly revealing one of the keys to his grocery retailing success on St. John with Dolphin Market and Dolphin Wholesale in Cruz Bay and his St. John Market on South Shore Road adjacent to the Westin Resort which has proven popular with guests at the timeshare resort and residents of the island's south shore neighborhoods.

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St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Tom Oat

Senator at Large candidate Almando Liburd has prominently displayed his only St. John election poster in front of his house on Supreme Corner on Centerline Road in Pastory — so he can keep an eye on it.

Front Yard Roadside Campaign Poster and “Billboard” Highlight Mild At-Large Race

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

Rocky VI or VII?
No, it’s not another installment of the popular movie franchise

It’s Almando “Rocky” Liburd back in the political ring trying to regain the Senator at Large seat he gave up after six terms to run for V.I. Lieutenant Governor in 2004. This time “Rocky” is in a toe-to-toe with St. Johnian peer Ronnie Jones to claim the title which Sen. Craig W. “The Great White Hope” Barshinger is vacating for personal reasons after four non-consecutive terms.

Liburd and Jones met in a televised “debate” in mid-September as part of pre-election V.I. public television coverage which debate was to be re-aired.

“He (Jones) really walked all over Rocky,” said one long-time Coral Bay resident who has followed V.I. politics for decades of the debate, which was scheduled to be rebroadcast by V.I. Public television. “Rocky was talking about his experience saying ‘I’ve been in government for many years,’ and Jones talked about things he would do as Senator at Large.”

“I haven’t watched it,” admitted Jones, who said he might watch the reruns.

Liburd was elected to the Virgin Islands legisla-

ture in 1991 as senator at large and was president of the Virgin Islands legislature from 1995-96 and 2001-02.

Liburd’s confident Independent campaign on his home island for his old seat has consisted of one color poster of himself on Supreme Corner on Centerline Road in Estate Pastory in front of his St. John residence which offers panoramic island views from St. Thomas to St. Croix. The former Senator at Large has kept a relatively low profile through the relatively low-key 2014 political campaign season.

A few sinuous miles east on Centerline, relative political newcomer Ronnie Jones has a medium-sized billboard with his name in large blue letters next to his family’s roadside stand at the entrance to the family’s historic Estate Catherineberg adjacent to what has become the mid-island business district on the main east-west highway. That, and family members wearing “Ronnie Jones” embroidered hats and printed t-shirts, is the extent of his low-key second campaign for Senator at Large.

Jones’ best advertising has continued to be his family’s offering of the island’s unparalleled selection of homemade native drinks and baked goods to knowledgeable local passersby — and the sporadic safari of cruise ship visitors lucky enough to stop for refreshments at the start of their island tour.

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Animal Shelter Is Filled With Off-Season Back-up of Rescued Pets

By TOM OAT

St. John Tradewinds

ENIGHEd — It's off season and summertime so airlines serving the USVI aren't accepting animals for travel to the U.S. until it cools down after September and there aren't that many visitors to adopt pets or to help as volunteers walking the dogs in the shelter waiting to be adopted or shipped to new owners in the states, so the St. John Animal Care Center has

its hands full.

"Four fluffy little puppies were just brought to the shelter in a box and are currently at the vet," Ryan posted to ACC supporters on Sept. 12. "We are now up to 20 dogs and the situation here is getting dire. This time of year is very slow for us we just don't have the foot traffic like the winter."

"Hopefully soon we can get some dogs stateside," Ryan added.

"Please spread the word," Ryan wrote. "We only have 11 kennels; we have dogs in every corner of the shelter at the moment."

"We are doing all we can to find homes, they just don't come quick enough to keep up with the intake these days," he added. "We have a few dogs that would do great in multiple dog homes as fosters 'til we can free up some space if anyone is willing to help."

Ryan also used the opportunity to inform the public that the ACC can help pay for spaying and neutering pets.

"It's not difficult to spay and neuter and if its a financial issue the shelter will help so please reach out to us."

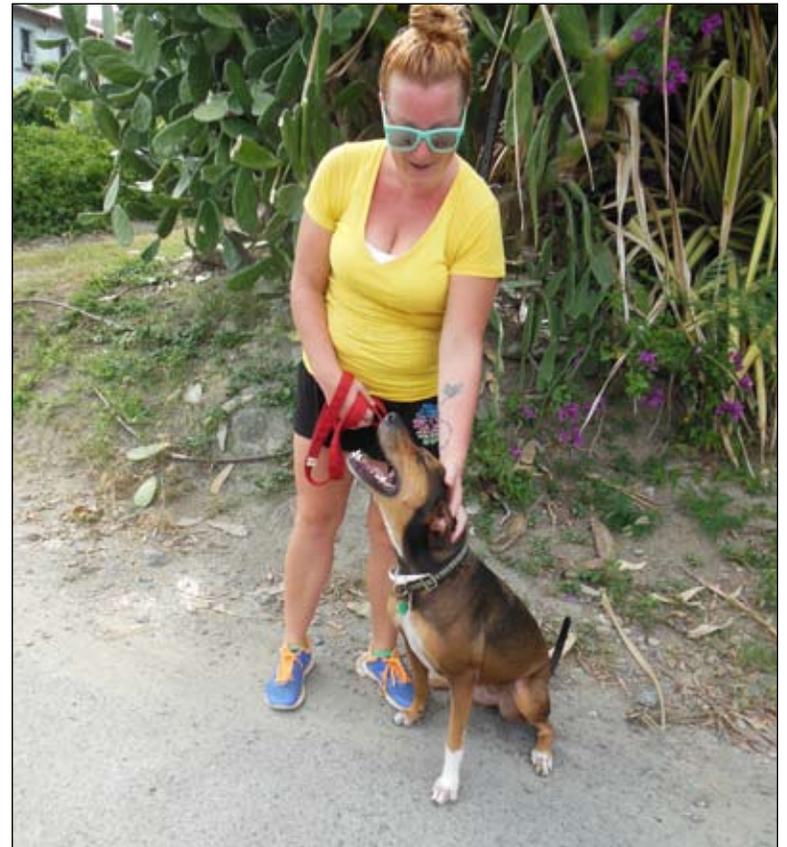
Rescue and Adoption Efforts Continue

Despite the overload at the shelter, the ACC staff and volunteers are not stopping their rescue efforts, Ryan acknowledged in an internet posting on September 17.

"Well another dog has come into the shelter we are now up to 23 dogs this is the most dogs we have had in over a year," Ryan wrote. "The one we took this morning was living on the streets with a gentlemen and we convinced him to hand over the dog because he was having trouble providing food."

"The love was there but the dog needed more," the ACC shelter manager explained.

Meanwhile, the ACC staff has



St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Tom Oat

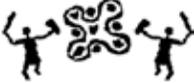
An ACC volunteer stops for a picture while walking one of the 20-plus dogs currently at the shelter

beefed up its efforts to promote adoptions.

"We did a little video to show everyone what we are dealing with, and to show how wonderful a lot of these dogs are," Ryan wrote. "Out of the four little pups in the video, two will be flying to NY on Saturday, and we do have some interest in a few others state-

side just waiting on the weather to cool down to fly them out."

"We also have Bully in the office upstairs and Honey Bee a little Chihuahua mix living with the cats," Ryan added. "Spread the love everyone; it is very quiet on island now, and we don't have a lot of people coming in to look at dogs. Thanks for the support."



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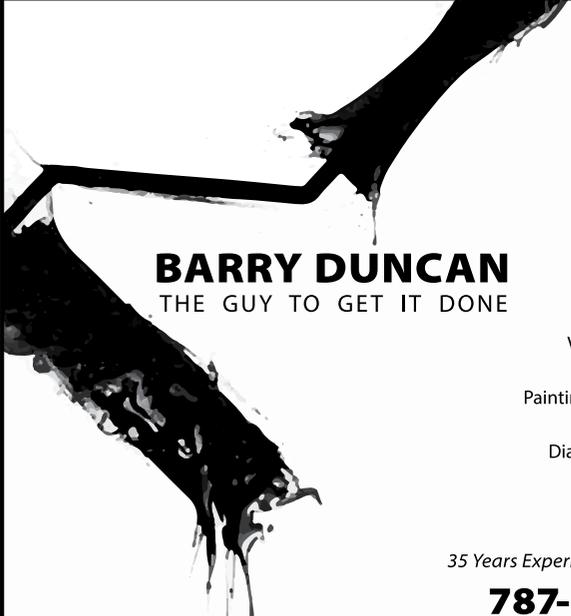
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St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Tom Oat

Bully, a three-legged brindle mix, doesn't have a problem with the overcrowding at the St. John Animal Care Center — that means as the biggest dog around he gets to sleep on the office rug. Where he patiently waits to greet visitors.

Could Proposal for Marina in Enighed Pond Port Mangroves Mitigate Controversial Coral Bay Marina Proposal?

By TOM OAT

St. John Tradewinds

ENIGHED — If Steve Black fulfills his latest dreams, you will be able to hear the music from the new St. John Festival grounds at the Theovald Eric Moorehead Dock and Terminal at Enighed Pond quite clearly while sitting on your boat at the adjacent mangrove-lined Enighed Pond marinas.

While all island eyes have been focused on the controversial mega-yacht marina plan proposed for Coral Bay by off-island developers, long-time resident Black, who professes to have opened the first St. John supermarket in the late 20th century, decided he would build a marina for the west end of the island — right where he could keep an eye on it from his simple pink and purple, wood-frame home high on Caneel Hill overlooking Cruz Bay and Enighed.

Plans Presented to VIPA Executive Director Dowe

On Friday, September 12, Black and an associate, a prominent St. John real estate developer, presented drawings of the plan

for the development of a marina in the mangroves in the inner portion of the St. John port to Virgin Islands Port Authority Executive Director Carlton Dowe and VIPA staff.

The now-lush mangroves were planted as a mitigation area to replace vegetation lost in the dredging of the former salt pond when it was opened to the sea in the development of the port.

Black, one of the island's original "continental" business entrepreneurs, has most recently been promoting his plan to create a concert and festival venue on the vacant VIPA between the marine terminal's bulkhead and the public long-term parking lot near the Cruz Bay public tennis courts.

The Port Authority leadership was excited by the marina proposal, the Black associate told *St. John Tradewinds* before the meeting. "They want the whole engineering staff to hear the proposal."

After the presentation by Black to the VIPA staff, the nascent plan apparently got bigger.

Two Marinas in One Pond

Actually, Black now wants to build

two marinas, one in what is now the inner mangrove mitigation area and the second consisting of a floating dock parallel to the mangrove shoreline along Fish Fry Road on the northeast side of the port adjacent to the proposed new St. John Fish Market and docking facility. "They (VIPA) want me to expand the plan," Black told *St. John Tradewinds* after the meeting.

VIPA officials encouraged Black to expand the design of the proposed Fish Fry Road portion of the marina plan by extending the breakwater at the entrance to the Enighed Port further into Turner Bay, the fledgling marina developer said. The enhanced plan will include a restaurant on the vacant government property at the entrance to the port currently used for private boat trailer storage, he said.

Black declined to make preliminary plans available to *St. John Tradewinds* and said new renderings would be drafted to incorporate suggestions from the VIPA staff and executives to expand the project.

After presenting his plan to VIPA staff on St. Thomas, Black and his associate met

with V.I. Port Authority Director Robert O'Connor Jr. on St. John where the preliminary proposal also received a warm reception, according to Black.

The fledgling project proposes to relocate the mangroves, which have successfully taken root in the mitigation area in the interior of the pond, to another mitigation area or to replant mangrove seedlings in a new mitigation area.

Renowned Marine Biologist Demurs

Amy Claire Dempsey, the renowned St. Croix marine biologist who directed the creation of the mangrove mitigation area at Enighed for VIPA and is a paid consultant to the proposed Coral Bay marina, was succinct when asked for comment on the proposal to put a marina in her Enighed mangroves.

"It's not a feasible plan; it's in a designed mitigation area," the respected marine scientist emailed *St. John Tradewinds*.

"I think they better check with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE)," Dempsey added. (ACE gave the federal approval for the permit to construction the port.) "(ACE) will shut them down."

Legal Notice

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A Settlement has been reached with Apple Inc. ("Apple") in antitrust lawsuits filed by State Attorneys General and Class Counsel about the prices of electronic books ("E-books"). A Court has found there was a conspiracy among Apple and five top U.S. publishers to fix and raise retail prices of E-books. Apple has agreed to settle the lawsuits, but denies it did anything wrong.

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You can exclude yourself from the Apple Settlement and keep the right to sue Apple for the claims at issue in this case. The exclusion must be in writing and postmarked by **October 31, 2014**. If you exclude yourself, you will not receive a payment. If you stay in the Apple Settlement, you may object to it in writing, postmarked by **October 31, 2014**. A Detailed Notice that explains how to exclude yourself or object and an Exclusion Form are available online at the website listed below, or by mail. The Court will hold a hearing on **November 21, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.** to consider whether to approve the Apple Settlement. You or your own lawyer may ask to appear and speak at the hearing. The hearing may be moved to a different date or time without additional notice, so please check the website below for more information.

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Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center Will Maintain 24-Hour Medical Services

By JUDI SHIMEL

St. John Tradewinds

ST. THOMAS — St. Johnians will still be able to get care at Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center 24 hours a day, despite budget concerns at Schneider Regional Medical Center (SRMC), Chief Executive Officer Bernard Wheatley said assuredly during an interview September 15 before an SRMC board meeting.

The proposed budget allocation for Schneider Regional Medical Center (SRMC) and the three entities it operates — Roy L. Schneider Hospital, Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center and the Charlotte Kimmelman Cancer Institute — is simply not enough and if more revenue is not forthcoming things may have to change, SRMC Chief Executive Officer Bernard Wheatley told members of the Senate Finance Committee during budget hearings on August 26.

But the St. John facility will continue to be open around the clock, Wheatley told *Tradewinds*.

“We do have nurses on at night; we did not take them away,” Wheatley said. “It’s still a 24 hour operation. The cutbacks and decreases in allocations, that does not stop that.”

“Given its financial status, MKS cannot continue to provide services at its current levels without additional financial support and resources,” Wheatley said. “If funding is not provided, MKS must take measures to curtail services in order to reduce its operating expenses.”

Governor John P. de Jongh Jr. asked the 30th Legislature to approve \$22.4 million for SRMC.

No Hope for MKSCHC as Hospital Satellite

Hopes have apparently been dashed for convert-

ing the Myrah Keating Smith Clinic into a satellite of the Roy L. Schneider Hospital, after an assessment by top officials of the Schneider Regional Medical Center presented during a recent board meeting.

SRMC CEO Wheatley and Chief Financial Officer Fred Vitelo told members of the Health and Hospitals Corp territorial board earlier this year they would seek a special designation for Keating Clinic.

But now Wheatley and Vitelo say those prospects are dim.

“It had to have, at one time, been designated as a hospital,” Wheatley said. “Schneider Regional Medical Center is still looking at ways to maximize revenue at Myrah Keating Smith Clinic.”

The next possibility being explored is whether the St. John health care center could qualify as a hospital-based clinic, Wheatley said. If that were to happen, the clinic could qualify for a different level of Medicare reimbursement it’s not receiving now, he explained.

Improving revenues through a stricter tracking of health care charges from federal, private insurance provider and self-paying patients is a major strategy for SRMC officials faced with ever dwindling government budgets.

Vitelo said a new disbursement system, managed more directly by SRMC, helps make it possible. Instead of the previous situation where the hospital, the St. John clinic and the cancer center receive allotments individually from the Office of Management and Budget, the medical center now has greater discretion to meeting its operational needs.

That discretion was helpful with the shortfalls in budget allocations that occurred among government agencies in the last quarter of FY 2014, which ends September 30, Vitelo added.



(L to R)
Patricia Reed,
Sharon Coldren
and Sean
Peterson in
front of CBCC
office.

St. John Tradewinds
News Photo
Courtesy of CBCC

CBCC Hires New Environmental Programs Associate

St. John Tradewinds

The Coral Bay Community Council (CBCC) announces that Sean Richardson has been hired as their new Environmental Programs Associate. Sean will be responsible for managing the NOAA Marine Debris Removal grant-funded project and will also work on the USDA Solid Waste Management Planning grant and other CBCC projects. He will be responsible for coordinating numerous volunteer and outreach activities.

Sean was born and raised on St. Thomas. He graduated from the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) with a Bachelor of Science in Biology in 2005. In 2012, he received a master’s degree from UVI’s Marine and Environmental Science program. His primary interest is botany and terrestrial plant ecology. Dr. Gary Ray of UVI, was his professor in Ecology as an undergraduate, and one of his thesis advisors as a graduate student. Sean’s other personal interests include reading, journaling, researching, traveling, and gardening.

He joins Patricia Reed, Environmental Projects Manager, CBCC’s other full time employee, and Sharon Coldren, CBCC’s volunteer Executive Director, the CBCC Board of Directors and the many community volunteers in undertaking environmental improvement and protection projects for Coral Bay.

For further information, call the CBCC office at 340-776-2099.

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On *the* Market

A feature dedicated to special homes on the market listed with *Tradewinds* real estate advertisers*

Enjoy North Shore Views and Elegant Living at Villa Lantano

By JAIME ELLIOTT
St. John Tradewinds

Once you enjoy truly stunning water views of the famed North Shore of St. John from every single room at Villa Lantano, you'll never want to leave.

A five bedroom, five and a half bathroom villa in Upper Peter Bay, Villa Lantano is for sale for \$5.9 million, explained Islandia Real Estate/Seaglass Properties' Merry Nash.

"Enjoy magnificent North Shore views over Peter Bay to Jost Van Dyke from this spacious home in Upper Peter Bay," said Nash.

From the travertine marble floors to the elegant pool and spa deck with jaw-dropping views, Villa Lantano is an exceptional property.

The home features two large bedroom suites in the main house and an additional two spacious bedroom suites in a separate pod as well as an efficiency apartment, perfect for a caretaker.

Villa Lantano includes deeded access to the powder white beach of Peter Bay just down the road. The alabaster shorelines of Cinnamon Bay and Trunk Bay are also just a short drive from this North Shore home.

The 0.6-acre parcel of land features lush professional landscaping. Work on your tan as you lounge pool-side on spacious deck, which also includes a relaxing hot tub. Or step under the shaded gazebo and curl up with a good book as you enjoy the cooling breezes and sweeping water views.

"Enjoy stunning ocean views from the infinity pool and the shaded gazebo area," said Islandia Real Estate's Nash.

Dining al fresco under the stars just off the pool area at Villa Lantano will make you want to stay home and have friends over every night of the week. Or throw a more formal party at the indoor dining room, which boast wrap around windows that bring those stunning

views right inside.

"The large patio, lounging area, and outdoor dining area at Villa Lantano make this home great for entertaining," said Nash.

The professional grade kitchen will make whipping up those meals a breeze. Villa Lantano's custom kitchen boasts granite counter tops, hard wood cabinets, stainless steel appliances and a large island.

The main building at Villa Lantano includes both the master suite and a guest suite. Both bedroom feature en suite bathrooms, tasteful island decor and private decks.

Another two large bedroom suites, also with en suite bathrooms and well-crafted hardwood furniture, are found in a separate pod building. Villa Lantano also boasts a separate efficiency apartment.

For more details about Villa Lantano, call Nash at Islandia Real Estate at (340) 776-6666 or email merry@islandiarealestate.com.



St. John Tradewinds News Photos

Stunning North Shore views are visible from the pool deck.



Relax in the luxurious pool or in the shade under the veranda while soaking up the views.



Elegant finishes complement the formal dining area.



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To The Rescue

by Bob Malacarne, N-R, EMT

Protect Yourself Against Mosquitos

St. John Tradewinds

Greetings from the members of St John Rescue. So far we have eluded all threats of hurricanes. Let's hope and pray that we make it through the rest of the hurricane season unscathed.

We do have another issue that needs our immediate attention. The mosquito borne Chikungunya disease has now been determined to be an epidemic. Spraying for mosquito control may not be an option. What can we do to lessen our chances of getting this debilitating disease?

First of all wear bug repellent whenever you are out. Keep your screens in good repair and make sure you enter and exit your home quickly to lessen the chance of mosquitos entering your home. Bug zappers also work well. Eliminating any sources of standing

water and not allowing your lawn to grow long will also help keep mosquitos away from your home.

Homemade Mosquito Trap

I found a site that explained how to make a simple mosquito trap. The directions are:

Rinse a two liter soda bottle with warm water. Cut off the top third of the bottle. In a saucepan boil four cups of water and two cups of brown sugar. Once the sugar is dissolved, set it aside to cool. Add the mixture along with a bit of yeast to the bottom of the cut soda bottle. Put the upper part of the bottle upside down into the lower part of the bottle. Tape the pieces together.

St. John Rescue responded to the following calls for assistance:

- August 30 – vehicle off the road- no injuries
- September 12 – DOA transport

from Wharfside village

- September 14 – DOA transport from Pastory
- September 17 – Patient transport from MKSCHC to Cruz Bay

Trainings

- September 11 – Rappelling equipment check and maintenance
- September 18 – Rappelling training practical
- September 20 – Community CPR and Community First Aid

Events

- August 31 – Triathlon at Maho

Meetings

- September 4 – Board of Directors meeting and general membership business meeting

The members of St. John Rescue are proud to serve the people of St. John.

We are "on call for life."



St. John Tradewinds News Photo Courtesy of Bob Malacarne

St. John Rescue members set up their rappelling equipment for training at the Myrah Keating Clinic hill.



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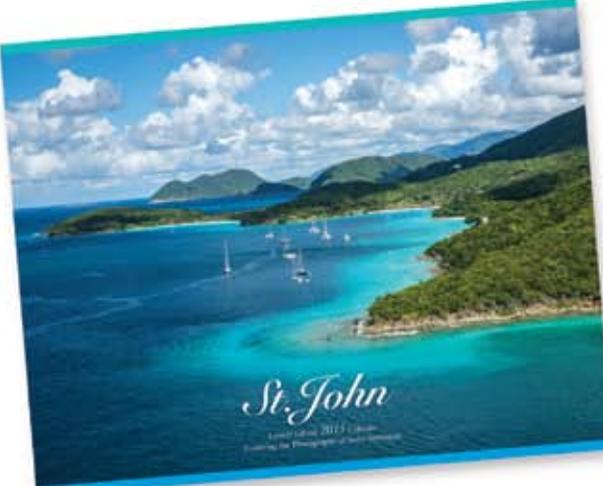












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Senator-at-Large Reports

By Senator Craig Barshinger

Marina and Taxes

St. John Tradewinds

St. John and particularly Coral Bay Residents have mobilized in opposition to the Marina proposed by the Summers End Group. If the project were to get a CZM permit, and if it were then to get a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers, the Legislature would have to decide to approve or deny a submerged land permit. For this reason, I am not taking an official position on the proposal while information continues to emerge. At this point, however, the objections have been so clearly stated, in so many ways, that it seems difficult for the proponents to overcome the objections. My perception is that the proponents are armed with marketing hype, whereas the opponents are armed with the law, science, economics and common sense.

This matter recalls the SirensUSA struggle. The difference here is that Marina opponents are not just numerous, but additionally are well-organized and well-informed. I see the opponents of the SEG remaining vigilant and in fact intensifying their efforts in opposition. They appear to have learned from the disappointments of the SirensUSA rezonings. If this trend continues, opponents are likely to prevail.

Let's turn now to another crisis that appears to be affecting St. John and to some extent St. Croix: Property Taxes. The 2013 property taxes were printed in late August and should be in your hands by now.

It appears to me that we have a major crisis on our hands. Too many people have bills which are unfair, or that they simply cannot afford to pay. There are two questions that I ask as your senator at large:

First, check your bill for the assessed value of your land and for your improvements. Could you really sell your property for that amount? If you could not, then your bill is flawed. You will not have to pay that bill, and I will tell you what to do to have it adjusted.

Second, if your assessed property value is correct, but you simply cannot afford it, please contact my office by phone 693-8061, or email catherine@visenate.org, or stop in during normal working hours. This problem may require legislation to fix.

Let's look at these two issues separately. First, if your assessed value is false, you can contact the Tax Assessor and ask that the property be re-valued. You have a right to be taxed on your fair market value, and no more. If you don't get satisfaction from the Tax Assessor, you can appeal your bill by December. There is also the "nuclear option". If you feel that St. John has been abused as a whole, you could band together and sue the VI Government. The Unity Day Group did this during the last property tax fiasco. Because of the pressure it brought to bear on the Governor and Lt. Governor, I was able to persuade the Governor to abandon the 2006 bills and reissue them at the 1998 valuation levels. The 1998 values were used 2006 through 2012, bringing much needed relief to St. John property owners. I anticipate similar collective Court action if the 2013 valuations turn out to be mostly false.

The company that created the ridiculously inflated 2006 values was Bearing Point. They were paid over \$8 million on a \$6.4 million contract to "re-value" the properties in the Territory. They failed miserably. Amazingly, the Governor & Lt. Governor rehired the very same Bearing Point organization under the guise of DeLoitte & Touche. I am still waiting to hear more reports from you, but it appears that once again the Bearing Point contractor has failed to determine fair market values for St. John properties. We will not know the extent of the problem until we hear from you.

Continued on Page 18

Tent Sponsorships Available for "Just Play"

St. John Tradewinds

Using Sport For Social Change is offering you a unique opportunity this year to increase and enhance your brand awareness by becoming part of a truly unique community event.

The sixth annual "Just Play" event will be in Cruz Bay on Monday, October 13, bringing approximately 300 participants and volunteers to this fun, free day of sports for Virgin Islands youth.

This tax deductible donation, given directly to the St. John Community Foundation will not only help raise awareness for your

brand, but will also help support this fun, free community event, according to the press release.

"Tent Sponsorships" spaces are now available at \$500 and \$1000 each.

Partnership Package Includes: Each tent sponsorship will receive a custom designed banner showing your support for this event with the name and logo of the business and will be prominently displayed on one of two tents during the 6th Annual "Just Play" event.

- \$500.00 sponsorships will receive an 18" x 36" banner
- \$1000.00 sponsorships will

- receive an 36" x 48" banner
- Brand exposure to over 300 event attendees during this one day event.
- Name/logo recognition on USFSC website as a VIP Tent Sponsor
- Name/logo recognition on USFSC Facebook page as a VIP Tent Sponsor
- Two "Just Play" t-shirts
- Two "Just Play" water bottles
- After the event, your banner is yours to keep

For more information, call Dean Doeling at 971-235-1869 or email islandsun40@yahoo.com.

Registration

Continues at St. John School the Arts

ART CLASSES

- Coastal Explorers
- Ocean Artshop (Oct/Nov)
- Tribal Arts (Jan/Feb)
- Recycled Arts (Mar/Apr)
- Traditional Art Technique

DRAMA CLASSES

- How to be a Movie Star
- Theater

MOVEMENT CLASSES

- Ballet
- Dance Movement
- Dance Elite
- Hip Hop
- Little Movers
- Master the Movement
- Radiant Child
- Theater Dance and Tap
- Tumbling

MUSIC CLASSES

- A Cappella Ensemble
- Adult Voice Class
- Combined Choir
- Drumming
- St. John Women's Ensemble
- Young Fingers
- Individual Lessons in:
Flute, Guitar, Piano, Saxophone,

VI Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation Sponsored Classes (6)

Sign up for \$10 Insurance Fee

Combined Choir

Fri 3:30-4:30 7-10 yrs

Drumming I

Mon 3:30-4:15 5-8 yrs

Theater Dance & Tap

Tue 4:15-5:15 4-7 grade

How to be a Movie Star

Thu 3:30-4:30 9 yrs & up

Master the Movement

Thu 4:15-5:00 9 yrs & up

Tumbling I

Fri 4:15-5:00 6-8 yrs

\$10 Returning Student Registration Fee
\$25 New Student Registration Fee

SJSA Scholarships available through the Sis Frank Scholarship Fund



VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.stjohnschoolofthearts.org

340-779-4322

Letters to *St. John Tradewinds*

No Longer Transporting Deceased for Government

This letter is on behalf of the Board of Directors of St. John Rescue, Inc. to advise the public that as of Thursday, September 18, 2014 our organization will cease to respond to and transport deceased individuals on the island of St. John.

For the past 8 years, St. John Rescue (an all-volunteer, nonprofit agency) has been responding and transporting deceased members of our community at the request of VITEMA, VIPD, VIEMS and additional agencies. We have never officially been designated with this task or provided with a contract or memorandum of understanding (MOU) for this work; despite our numerous attempts get one in place.

It was never our intention to be the sole organization tasked with this work. We have never received any financial compensation for this for consuming and emotionally draining work. In fact, we have been incurring expenses to provide this service.

We began providing this service because the paid agencies responsible for transporting the deceased appear to be unable to do so as a result of logistical issues, lack of clear protocols, and lack of proper transport vehicles. The result being long and arduous waiting periods for the deceased individuals and their families.

The management of deceased individuals appears to be unregulated and unsupervised. There is a lack of interagency communication as well as unclear proto-

cols and procedures. Due to the general disorganization and potential legal repercussions surrounding this matter, St. John Rescue has been advised by counsel and our Medical Director to no longer transport the deceased on St. John. In addition to the financial and legal ramifications of this issue, an often four- to six-hour standby response time for a deceased individuals pick up and transport hinders us from being available to respond for medical support, extrication, maritime, or technical search and rescues.

While we have made numerous requests over the years for an MOU and/or contract regarding response and transport for the deceased, we have not been presented with one. Unfortunately, this matter has reached a breaking point for our organization. Should an MOU and/or contract be presented to us, we may continue to provide this service to the community assuming all legal repercussions and protocols are addressed.

The St. John community deserves to have their passed loved ones attended to courteously and in a timely manner. We hope, for the sake of our community, that these policies are developed soon.

If you are aware of a deceased individual that needs transport please call 911.

**Sincerely,
St. John Rescue
Board of Directors**

Still No Gas in Coral Bay

Yet another good idea from an enterprising local has bitten the dust due to red tape and the government not issuing a permit for a much needed gas supply here in Coral Bay. All of us here in Coral Bay waited for months in anticipation of the mini mobile gas supply station that was placed out here to open simply waiting for the final permitting to be issued by the government agencies.

Now, as the picture (right) shows, the facility has been disassembled and is being loaded on a flat bed trailer for removal. How can this be happening? Everyone here on this side of the island wants/needs a gas station and finally a local entrepreneur invests in the equipment and applies



for the permits only to be turned down.

Please do an in-depth research into what exactly happened with this venture. All of us that live in Coral Bay and on this side of the

island want to know who's responsible for cutting off our supply of gasoline.

**Jack Brown
Coral Bay, St. John**

DID YOU KNOW...

THAT YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR FAVORITE NON-PROFIT GROUP AND YOUR ISLAND NEWSPAPER AT THE SAME TIME?

Animal Care Center of St. John
Coral Bay Community Council
Friends of the Virgin Islands National Park
Giffit Hill School
Island Green Building Association
Kids First!
Kids in the Sea (KATS)
Sisterhood Agenda
St. John Audubon Society
St. John Christian Academy
St. John Community Foundation
St. John Film Society
St. John Historical Society
St. John Montessori School
St. John Recycling Association
St. John Relay for Life
St. John Revolving Fund
St. John School of the Arts
St. John Youth Coalition
STT/STJ Chamber of Commerce - STJ Chapter
Team River Runner
Using Sport for Social Change
(and many more)

Call to add your registered non-profit to this list

**IT'S A SIMPLE SOLUTION:
Underwrite a yearly advertising budget
for your favorite community group.**

St. John Tradewinds supports all registered non-profit organizations with a non-profit advertising rate.
For more information, call 776-6496.

SUBMIT YOUR OPINIONS TO: editor@tradewinds.vi

Community Calendar

St. John Tradewinds welcomes notices of community-oriented, not-for-profit events for inclusion in this weekly listing. Call 776-6496, e-mail editor@tradewinds.vi or fax 693-8885.

Wednesday, October 1

— The St. John CZM committee will conduct its decision meeting on the controversial Coral Bay marina at noon on Wednesday, October 1 at the Legislature Building in Cruz Bay.

Monday, October 13

— Using Sport for Social Change will bring back, for the sixth year in a row, a free fun-filled day of sports for youth ages 5 to 17 years on Monday, October 13, at Winston Wells Ballfield. Volunteers are needed and encouraged to sign up as well. Pre-registration is required. To sign up, please visit <http://www.usingsportforsocialchange.com>. Volunteers will be asked to do general tasks such as keep score and keep the kids moving in the right direction. Sponsors are greatly needed to make this event a meaningful and memorable experience for all. Any business or individual who would like to help sponsor this event, visit http://www.usingsportforsocialchange.com/2013_just_play_sponsorship_levels. More information about this event can be found at: <http://www.usingsportforsocialchange.com>.

October 17-18

— Governor John P. de Jongh Jr. and First Lady Cecile de Jongh are announcing plans to host the 2014 USVI/BVI Friendship Day on October 17 and 18. This year, the U.S. Virgin Islands will host the main event in downtown Charlotte Amalie.

Saturday, October 18

— On Saturday, October 18, the Animal Care Center of St. John will present the “No Fleas Please” Flea Market Sale at Winston-Wells Ball Field from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This annual event is a major Animal Care Center Fundraiser — with emphasis on the fun.

Saturday, November 22

— The Rotary Club of St. John will host 2014 Flavors – A Taste of St. John on November 22 at St. John’s award-winning Westin Resort in the newly renovated ball room and will include adjacent rooms from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

The fundraiser will include about 24 participating restaurants, live music by Cool Sessions, and a number of wine distributors and silent auction.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

All meetings are now open. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 6 p.m. Nazareth Lutheran Church, Cruz Bay; Thursday 7 a.m. Nazareth Lutheran Church, Cruz Bay; Sunday 9:45 a.m., Hawksnest Bay Beach; Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 6 p.m. at Moravian Church, Coral Bay

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS

Narcotics Anonymous has open meetings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. every Saturday at St. Ursula’s Church.

AL-ANON MEETINGS

For Al-Anon meeting location and times, please call (340) 642-3263

Letters to *St. John Tradewinds*

We Must Manage Our Community Better

We all know that this is a special place, we know it because Tim Dunkin came from here, and a lot of other professional athletes, and a lot of other very successful people. For a community this size to send as many kids to the summer and winter Olympics and to World Chess tournaments, and to Miss America Pageants, National Poetry and other competitions of all kinds and to become successful professionals in a lot of fields is truly amazing. This is really something to think about. This is a very special place. We all say “GOOD MORNING” to each other, and make it through the intersections and potholes to get to work or go to the store.

We have made it illegal for Politicians to commit crimes and Government Employees who do will get caught and will go to jail. Rodney’s wife is still trying to get out and the guys in Hill’s gang are sitting in jail thinking about their future. We cannot afford to continue to allow our Government to steal from us. We need a Government that will train its employees and fix this place. Unsold Government Lottery tickets win the prize and take the money: only in the VI. Now the OLG’s employees are caught stealing land at Public Tax Auctions.

I know we have to go through this, but we really have to let the leaders of this community know that we want them to fix this place and not just get fat off it. I think that we can fix it. Most of the Government Employees, and the WAPA Employees and WMA wouldn’t mind doing a good job if they were trained correctly and we encouraged them to do a good job.

We need to have our community managed better

than it is being managed. We need to encourage Tim and the rest of the Pro’s to come down here to teach our kids more often. We need to get more of the pros in all fields to come back and help a little in all areas of our community; Waste Management, real estate record keeping, environmental protection all need to function a lot better than they are and they need a lot of help to do it.

We have improved a lot but we really need to think about our economy and the future. If we don’t start picking up the trash of the sides of the road and all over our island we will never be able to teach our kids that don’t go away not to litter and how to grow up and have successful lives.

We cannot maintain our economy on Federal Funds and Cruise Ships. We need to encourage longer stays and enjoy more activities in “America’s Paradise.” We need to find jobs for the Crusians and we need to reduce our electric bills by 60%.

We need to protect our marine and terrestrial environments not only for the Tourist Dollars that they bring but also because this is our home. We need to begin to do some serious discussion about how we want our islands to grow; our community will grow whether we plan it or not.

We need to tell our Senators to begin to work on these issues and not to wait until after the elections because we are still trying to decide who to vote for. We are beginning to say “good morning and have a great day” to each other and to take care of each other and we need their help.

Greg Miller

Obituary

Michael Philip McDermott

St. John Tradewinds

Michael Philip McDermott, born in New Fairfield, lost his battle with leukemia on Sept. 12, 2014. He was surrounded by his loving family, including his partner and soul mate, Madeline Lapuyade, of California.

He was a graduate of New Fairfield High School, class of 2002, and went on to study Culinary Arts at New England Institute. He was able to share his love and passion of food with the people of, St. John, in the Virgin Islands and San Francisco.

Michael is survived by his parents, Wesley and Catherine McDermott of New Fairfield, his partner and soul mate Madeline Lapuyade of California, his sister Jessica Daigneault of St. John, USVI and brothers Christopher and Daniel of Connecticut. He is also survived by two nieces and two nephews.

A Memorial Mass was held on Wednesday, September 17, 2014, at St. Edwards the Confessor, in New Fairfield.



Michael McDermott

Arrangements were made by Green Funeral Home in Danbury, Connecticut.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Michaels memory can be made to, Be the Match, 3001 Broadway St. N.E., Suite 100, Minneapolis, Mn. 55413 or on line at bethematch.org.

Parents of “Mistaken Identity” Murder Victim Ask Officials About Related Assault Prosecution

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

Ro Malfetti, whose son James Malfetti III, 41, was found dead in his south shore apartment on St. John with his throat stabbed and slit in January 2014, wants to see the private security camera videotape of a vicious assault on a young stateside man in a downtown Cruz Bay late night altercation in 2013.

Mrs. Malfetti now believes the prosecution of the gang assault may have led to the subsequent fatal assault on her son in a case of mistaken identity and she wants to make sure V.I. Police Department officials investigating her son’s murder have taken a long look at the participants in the videotaped assault as well.

After the Malfetti’s private investigator discounted the early rumor that their son, an internet entrepreneur, may have been killed because he had moved into the intended target’s former apartment, the New Jersey couple hit a dead end with V.I. law enforcement on the investigation into the otherwise apparently random murder of their accomplished adult son during what police classified as a burglary of his apartment.

Reaching Out To Public

Now the New Jersey couple are reaching out to the public after reconsidering other information their private investigation of their son’s murder had corroborated which appears to support the theory that their son was killed in a case of mistaken identity when he moved into a secluded apartment formerly rented by the victim in the Cruz Bay attack tape.

The Malfettis want to know if the V.I. Police Department and the Attorney General’s office had sought a copy of the video of the Cruz Bay assault on the former tenant of Malfetti’s apartment and if authorities had planned to use the video in the prosecution of the assault case.

And they want to know who is pictured on that tape who may have mistakenly killed their son or knows who did.

Victim in New Apartment

Two days before Malfetti was

found dead with his throat cut in the mob assault victim’s former apartment, the victim of that late night mob assault, a seasonal resort employee, had been subpoenaed to give a deposition in connection with the prosecution of one of the young men captured on the videotaped of the attack, a source told *St. John Tradewinds* September 15.

The street assault victim, a young stateside man known as Matty, “pressed charges, but it was only (against) one person, and we know there were about 10 people involved (in the assault,” the source told *St. John Tradewinds*. “(Matty) was served a subpoena to give a deposition against the individual he had pressed (assault) charges against within one or two days before Malfetti’s murder.”

In fact, Malfetti may have been killed more than a day before his body was found, as VIPD officers responded Saturday morning to a report of a burglary attempt in the main house on the property on the Friday night. The police, however, had not checked the apartment when they responded to the burglary report on Saturday morning and were called to the residence again after Malfetti’s body was found on Sunday morning by the property manager.

Street Attack Victim Changed Apartments

The victim of the mob attack had reconstructive surgery out of the territory in late 2013 to repair damage to his face from what was described as a “stomping” by one Cruz Bay businessman who had told *St. John Tradewinds* he had been shown the tape of the “brutal” assault by the owner of the business with the security camera.

The young man “never changed his address when he came back to the island after having surgery. It remained Boatman Road,” the source told *St. John Tradewinds*. “And... he let no one know where he was living for fear of retribution.”

“(Matty) dropped the charges stemming from his beating the week after Jimmy’s murder,” the source told *Tradewinds*.

Videotape Captured Beating
St. John Tradewinds reported August 11 the existence of the

videotape from a downtown Cruz Bay business which purportedly showed the crowd of men beating

and kicking the young stateside man.

Continued on Page 19



COLONIAL COMFORT
US VIRGIN ISLANDERS AND PUERTO RICANS CELEBRATING THEIR FRIENDSHIP
CURATED BY: LISA LADNER

A PHOTOGRAPHIC ART EXHIBIT ABOUT LIFE IN THE COMFORT ZONE

ADÁL AE.I.OU

Denise **BENNERSON**
David **BERG**
Diane M. **BUTLER**
Nicole **CANEGATA**
Janet **COOK-RUTNIK**
Lionel **CRUET**
Mónica **FÉLIX**
Tina **HENLE**
Liza **MORALES**
Erik **MILES**
Ray **MILES**
Marta Mabel **PÉREZ**
Herminio **RODRÍGUEZ**
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FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 19, 2014
5:00pm (followed by SUNSET JAZZ)

FREE ADMISSION
CASH BAR + LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

Artwork on display in 2nd Floor Gallery
SEPTEMBER 19 – NOVEMBER 20, 2014

Exhibition will be open THU – SAT
10:00am – 5:00pm (+ Cruise Ship Days)

PANEL DISCUSSION
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 20 - 10:00am

ARTISTS' ROUNDTABLE
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 20 - 3:00pm

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14 - (time TBD)

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Church Directory

Baha'i Community of St. John

For Devotions and Study Circles, call 714-1641
7:30 p.m. Fridays; Study Circles 9 a.m. Sundays
776-6316, 776-6254

Bethany Moravian Church

Sunday School 9 a.m., Divine Worship 10 a.m.

Calvary Baptist Church

13 ABC Coral Bay, 776-6304
Sunday School 10 a.m., Sunday evening 6 p.m., Thursday 7 p.m.

Christian Ministry

Cinnamon Bay Beach
Inter-Denominational, Sunday 8:30 a.m.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Sun. 9 a.m., on St. Thomas . 776-2379
Sun., 5 p.m., STJ, Lumberyard

Cruz Bay Baptist Church

Sunday 11 a.m., 6 p.m. 776-6315

Emmaus Moravian Church

Coral Bay, Divine Worship 8:30 a.m., 776-6713

Freshwater Church

Freshwater Church St. John USVI
Sunday Worship 10 am at Hawksnest Beach
Follow us on Facebook, 340.514.6578

Jehovah's Witness

7:30 p.m. Tuesdays; 7 p.m.
Saturdays (Español), 10 a.m. Sundays, 340-715-053

Missionary Baptist Church

9:30 a.m. Sunday Services, 10:45 Worship,
Tuesday 7 p.m. Bible Study 693-8884

Nazareth Lutheran Church

Sunday 9 a.m., Sunday School 8 a.m. 776-6731

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church

Saturdays: 6 p.m.; Sundays: 7:30 & 9:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. in Coral Bay
at the John's Folly Learning Institute & 6 pm. in Spanish;
Mondays: 12:15 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays: 7 a.m.
& Fridays: 7 p.m. Call 776-6339 for more information.

Prayer House of Faith

Sunday Morning Service at 8 a.m; Bible Study at 7:30 p.m. on Mondays
Prayer services at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays; 340-690-3820

St. John Methodist Church

Sunday 10 a.m, 693-8830

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturdays, 779-4477

St. John Pentecostal Church

Sunday 11:05 a.m., 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays Prayer 7:30 p.m.,
Thursdays Bible Study 7:30 p.m. 779-1230

St. Ursula's Episcopal Church

Sunday Church Service, 9 a.m.
Bible Class on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. 777-6306

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

9:45 a.m. Sunday, 776-6332

Senator at Large Reports: Marina and Taxes

Continued from Page 13

I have alerted my colleagues of the impending crisis. They were not aware of it, because the St. Thomas tax bills have not upset St. Thomians. On St. Croix there is some concern about the bills, but Crucians are much more irate about Senator Hansen failing to pay \$183,000 in taxes while they are expected to pay their increased property tax bills. So it is primarily a St. John issue at this point. If your market value is wrong, I'd would like to hear about it. The actions your should take are 1) contact the tax assessor for a quick correction to your market value, 2) file an appeal with BLUA, or 3) join a lawsuit.

On the other hand, if you agree with your market value and feel that the amount is fair, pay your bill right away to obtain the 5% discount for early payment.

Let's look at the second problem. If your market value is correct yet you can no longer afford your tax bill, the options for relief are different. Property taxes are presently governed by Act 6991, which was passed in 2007. The bill is complex, and set us up for the problems we have today because it did not look comprehensively at the property tax issue and how it could drive people from their homes. Basically the bill says that everyone will pay tax based on their market value, multiplied by the "millage rate". On top of that simple formula are a series of exemptions, such as homestead or veterans, that serve to reduce your tax bill. You should make sure you have applied for and received all exemptions for which you are eligible. Next, there is a "circuit breaker" clause that applied to anyone whose bill increases more than 125% from the previous bill. From what I have seen, the tax assessor has not been automatically granting this. If your bill went up more than 125%, you should ask the tax assessor to apply the circuit breaker provision.

However, all of these fixes may be mere band-aids for the serious wound of being unable to afford your property taxes. They don't fix the serious problem faced by people whose home values have risen much faster than inflation.

I propose legislation to require that property is assessed (re-valued) only at the time of purchase. In almost all cases, that means that the last sale price will be used to multiply by the millage rate. This means that you will be immune from increases from factors outside your control, such as someone building a mansion or hotel next to you. This legislation would be an enormous benefit in stabilizing our community. No longer would people be taxed out of their homes by property taxes that rise much faster than inflation.

Please share your input on this subject. I'm willing to push this legislation if you like it. I have other relief alternatives as well, but I believe that limiting the assessment to the time of purchase is a good approach. I have solicited ideas from my colleagues, but they have turned it back to me and to St. John. If you have suggestions, please let me know.

I must mention here that both the Governor and Lt. Governor think the streets of St. John are paved with gold. I have heard from their lips statements such as, "St. Johnians have money, they can afford it." This is gross insensitivity to the vast majority of St. Johnians who struggle with high expenses and flat wages.

The next subject to report on is the Traditional

Vendor's Plaza and the Coral Bay Public Area. The administration has refused to act on these projects. Although the cabinet members are in support of the projects, the Governor has submitted incorrect financial statements regarding the balance of the St. John Capital Improvement Fund. On January 13, 2014, the Legislature's Post Auditor pointed out the discrepancy and formally requested an accurate accounting. To date, the Legislature has not received this. My concern would be that the administration has raided the \$5 Million in the St. John Capital Improvement Fund and has fabricated a story about \$9.3 million in phantom "encumbrances" in order to cover the missing money.

My legislative powers on this matter are limited. The power has transferred to you, the citizen, with the passage of the Acts which specify that St. John will get a Coral Bay Public Area and a Traditional Vendor's Plaza. The Coral Bay Public Area includes 170 acres in Coral Bay that will be used for walking and biking trails, a Recycling "Convenience Center", Living History restoration of the Carolina ruins, and other public purposes. Because you were granted these things by the Legislature and the Executive Branch is refusing to execute them, you have a cause of action. Please call me if either or both of these St. John projects are important to you. I intend to see them through to completion and will do so, with your help.

As you examine the choices for Governor in the upcoming election, I urge you to choose one who is honest and is committed to transparency. Inaccurate financial data and sloppy handling of public money is a huge impediment to bringing our people the good things they deserve. The St. John Community Foundation will be hosting candidate forums in October. Please attend, and ask any questions you have for the candidates.

On a positive note, the Tropical Storm Otto repairs on Centerline Road are complete. I have inspected the work and things are in order, except that some of the culverts still have concrete poured into them. These culverts were engineered to collect the water on the north side of the road, direct it under the road and into natural drainage guts on the south side. Perhaps some persons did not want this storm water on their property and so blocked the culverts. The problem is that when one or more culverts are blocked, the water on the north side of the road amasses. When the volume gets too great, it pours over the road like a vast waterfall. That is exactly what happened in Otto. In order that this doesn't happen again, I contacted DPW Commissioner Smalls. He understands the problem and states that he will be fixing the problem.

I have stated that after I retire from the Legislature in January I will be studying Finance and working on house projects. It turns out that I will also be changing diapers! My girlfriend and I are going to be blessed with a baby in late March. The baby is code-named "Baby Bear" at this point. (We've seen the ultrasound and heard the heartbeat, but we don't know the gender yet.) I am very enthusiastic about this new adventure, which I understand entails a lot of work but is very rewarding. The arrival of a new life in the world is a miracle.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Senator at Large.

Parents of “Mistaken Identity” Murder Victim Ask Officials About Related Assault Prosecution

Continued from Page 19

Tradewinds had raised the possibility Malfetti was killed in a case of mistaken identity by a person or persons trying to stop “Matty” from testifying about the attack on him under subpoena in the initial coverage of the Malfetti murder in January.

Ro Malfetti, who said she has had no contact with the VIPD since she and her husband Jim employed a private investigator to examine the VIPD investigation into the murder of their son, a successful internet entrepreneur who lived and worked from St. John to enjoy his love of watersports, wants to know if authorities have examined

the video for possible suspects in their son’s murder.

After nine months of waiting for the V.I. Police Department to communicate with them, Ro and Jim Malfetti want to know if VIPD investigators have questioned the men in that video or in any way investigated the connection between that mob assault and the subsequent murder of their son.

The Malfettis want to know if one or more of the men in the group who attacked the seasonal resort employee in 2013 may have been involved in the 2014 murder of their son — a murder investigation which the VIPD has muddled from its start.

Quiet Sunset Over Maho Bay



St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Tom Oat

The mooring field was empty at sunset in mid-September at Maho Bay in the V.I. National Park.

New Native Son BVI Ferry Tickets



St. John Tradewinds News Photo by Judi Shimel

Jacqueline Wynter from *Native Son Ferry* shows off new tickets that will be used with an automated system. The \$21,000 system is designed to keep better track of ticket sales and for quality control. Passengers holding tickets currently in use are asked to use them by October 1.

Crime Stoppers U.S. Virgin Islands

St. John Tradewinds

Crime Stoppers thanks you for making a difference in the US Virgin Islands. Continue to make the USVI one of the safest places in the world to live, work, and raise a family. To make sure that no crime goes unsolved, everyone needs to speak up. If you know something, say something. Doing so will help law enforcement solve more crimes.

St. John

On Monday, August 25 at about 7:35 a.m., a citizen reported at the Leander Jurgen Command that someone stole the four wheels of her daughter’s vehicle, a red Ford Focus, while it was parked in the Enighed Pond parking lot.

On July 15 at about 5:50 p.m. officers received a call that

a burglary had occurred at 2-2 Susannaberg. The complainant stated that he secured his residence at approximately 10 a. m. and returned at about 5:40 p.m. to find that a screen on the western side of the home’s roof had been cut. The perpetrator stole a black iPod and exited through the western sliding glass doors.

St. Thomas

On September 4 at 4 a.m. in the area of Oswald Harris Court, 26-year-old Keithroy Caines was killed by a shot to the head. The police are seeking information on this senseless homicide. If you saw or heard anything, say something, no matter how insignificant as it might seem. It might be just what the police needs to solve the crime.

On Thursday, August 28,

at 7:30 a.m. three masked men robbed a victim at gunpoint of over \$100 in the area of Wimmelskafts Gade (Back Street). If you know something, say something. Help put these criminals behind bars where they belong.

Continue to help make our islands a safer place to live and visit by telling us what you know about these, or any other crimes. Go to www.CrimeStoppersUSVI.org or call 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

You can also text “USVI” plus your message to CRIMES (274637). Your tips are completely anonymous. If your tip leads to an arrest or the recovery of stolen property, illegal drugs, or weapons, you will receive a cash reward to be paid according to your instructions.

9-21

CRYPTOQUIP

S G O X D N A C Y I D H N L O B N X C O N C Y O U D
 A B E X V V E R Z N B Q I Y Y O T H N D U A R R O K B , E ' T
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Today’s Cryptoquip clue: N equals O

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Developer Says DPNR Reviewing Agreement

Continued from Page 3

“On behalf of the USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), we are pleased to submit the following Letter of Intent for the establishment of a Public-Private Partnership for the Mooring Management of Coral Bay Harbor,” then-Commissioner Barnes wrote on March 19, 2014.

“DPNR recognizes that Coral Bay Harbor is one of the most heavily used anchorages on the island of St. John and in the territory,” Barnes continued. “This harbor, which contains significant environmental resources, is impacted by the mooring and anchoring of vessels.”

“In an effort to address these and other environmental issues facing the Coral Bay Harbor, DPNR agrees to partner with The Summer’s End Group, LLC (SEG), the developers of the St. John Marina, to address issues related to marine pollution (including derelict vessels), proper installation and maintenance of moorings, and enforcement

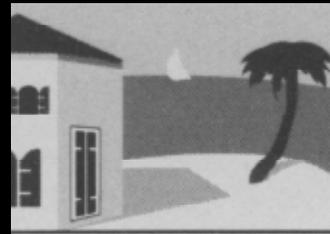
of marine regulations” the letter from DPNR Commissioner Barnes continued.

“As part of this partnership, mooring locations will be properly sited, vessel amenities (such as pump out, or trash removal) will be provided, as well as other items to be agreed upon,” Barnes continued.

“By way of this letter, DPNR pledges to secure a formal agreement with SEG within 90 days receipt of this notice. You may engage my appropriate staff directly in the development of the agreement. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me...” Barnes wrote Summer’s End in March.

St. John Tradewinds reported in its July 22 issue that the Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) for the marina filed with DPNR’s Coastal Zone Management committee in the marina developers’ permit application stated “the marina will be taking over the management of the bay in cooperation with the Department

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Officers, My Red Pig Print Pajamas Were Not Anti-Law-Enforcement Political Statement

By TOM OAT
St. John Tradewinds

I admit I must have looked quite incongruous standing on the roof of my one-room cottage on Wednesday morning, September 10, dressed in my pajama pants and a Trinidad Charlie t-shirt as the distinctive whoop-whoop of the rotors of a large helicopter echoed through the broad valley above Virgin Grand Estates and the Westin Resort on the south shore of St. John.

I had already wandered through the quiet residential neighborhood filming the aircraft as it slowly floated up and down the valley, eventually concentrating on an area deep in the center of the ghutt near "the pig farm."

The large black helicopter at times was at eye level to the Bethany Moravian Church nearby while descending over the ghutt at the center of the broad valley between Pastory and Giff Hill and sweeping up and down, its doors wide open on both sides and dark-clothed figures visible inside look-

ing out. Back in my cottage getting ready to go to work when the noise again intensified, I had climbed the rickety stairs to my roof deck to film the ominous aerial war machine while it hovered over my neighbor's beautifully landscaped ridge-top home.

Bad idea. I admit I felt somewhat at risk when the helicopter swooped in for a broadside look at the strange man standing on the roof filming their military-style police action.

I had a flashback to the aerial assault scene from the Vietnam War movie *Apocalypse Now*.

I subsequently considered that they might have been checking out the unusual vegetation in my new back yard - where I have bound the tufts of tall wild grass into towering dark-green leafy stalks which are naturally-aligned in almost perfect rows in one small patch.

Or maybe it was the red pig motif on my white pajama pants?

As the helicopter moved to a different area, I quickly headed off

to work, going first to my mechanic's shop in the upper ghutt where the police action had been over his head most of the morning.

No, he reported, no apparent law enforcement vehicles had been down the ghutt road since the helicopter was overhead that morning.

On the way out of the ghutt on the back road heading to town, as I passed by the Bethany Moravian Church the police action found me as I came upon a score of a variety of law enforcement officers piling out of three assorted vehicles. The familiar black polo shirts and khakis and bulging belts of weapons and tools of the trade of federal law enforcement officers was very identifiable.

And, I didn't stop at my house when I passed by heading to town over the back roads to Pine Peace; just in case the feds unloading around the corner were planning to drop by for a chat with the strange-looking man in the red pig pajamas and a look at the strange-looking plants growing in his back yard.

And, although I have several videos of the helicopter circling my neighborhood and my house, I admit that when it swooped in for its closest view of me on my roof deck I was so intimidated that I pressed the wrong button on the camera and didn't get the really close-up shot.

Trust me, it was weird looking directly into the hovering helicopter full of armed law enforcement while wearing red "pig" pajama bottoms. I could envision the "perp-walk" if I had been taken into custody.

It subsequently was reported Saturday, September 13, in the *VI Daily News* that the law enforcement operation in my neighborhood was part of "Operation Weed Eater," what has become an annual "week-long effort against marijuana growing operations on St. Thomas and St. John. The operation was described as "a week-long effort to reduce the territory's marijuana supply."

The *VI Daily News* headline read: DEA Finds "\$6M worth of

marijuana plants on St. Thomas, St. John during helicopter sweep," but the calculation of that \$6 million total was not explained.

The law enforcement effort uprooted 4,003 plants of various sizes, which are valued on the street at \$1,500 per pound, Eric Barnard, DEA resident agent in charge and commander of the regional High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area task force reportedly told the *Daily News*. (Which would mean the individual plants contained an average of one pound of marijuana.)

The DEA used two helicopters provided by the U.S. Coast Guard in Puerto Rico to survey the two islands, the *VI Daily News* reported.

"The helicopter is all we use to detect marijuana," Barnard told the St. Thomas newspaper. "Once it is visible then we go in and eradicate it."

No arrests were made during the operation. The plants were stuffed into bags and transported to an incinerator on island, the St. Thomas newspaper reported.

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