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# St. Croix Real Estate reviews



Featuring Real Estate Market Updates and Local News of St. Croix, USVI

**FEBRUARY 2019**

## 'The Mountaintop', CCT's homage to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a celebrated icon in the Civil Rights era and is today in the 21st Century. January 15 was the anniversary of his 90th birthday and many local groups paid tribute to his memory during the national holiday honoring him.

January 18 through the Sunday matinee on January 20, the Caribbean Community Theater presented "The Mountaintop" by award-winning playwright Katori Hall.

Sayeeda Carter directed the two-actor cast of Lionel Downer as Dr. King and Diana



Photo by Elisa McKay

Dr. King listens as Camae tries to get a reprieve for his impending death.

Prince as the maid at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. Both actors gave stunning performances in a fictional twist of the evening prior to Dr. King's assassination.

Director Carter worked as a speech and drama coach for teenagers in junior high and high schools on the mainland and here on St. Croix. She recently worked with CCT in their Calico Cats children production in December.

"I like the intimacy of a small cast. It's my first time working with only two characters," Carter said.

Downer found delight in the role of Dr. King and he was honored to do it, he said.

## Message from Amy...

January brought fun and progress to the New Year. There was music everywhere as nine featured bands played for hundreds of music lovers at the first Cane Bay Music Festival in a grassy field on the North Shore to benefit three nonprofit organizations. The organizers have plans to hold the free concert annually in the field across from the Cane Bay beach. The Caribbean Centers for Boys and Girls, the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center and My Brother's Workshop will benefit from the day's festivities. Participants of My Brother's Workshop have continued to work on wheelchair ramps, guttering and many other projects to help the community.



Amy Land-de Wilde

The University of the Virgin Islands Board of Trustees approved the guidelines for the administration of free tuition. During a special session held on January 23, the new policies and procedures were addressed. Virgin Islanders who have lived in the territory at least four years and have graduated from high school with a 2.5 grade point average or higher can look forward to receiving a four-year scholarship to attend the university. Eligible applicants must maintain the GPA requirements while pursuing their associate's or bachelor's degree. The free tuition measure is not expected to affect the payment of fees or room and board. It is hopeful that free tuition will help improve student retention and graduation rates, supporters of the bill said.

The Island Center for the Performing Arts reopened during the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend. Dr. Eugene Petersen worked tirelessly with help from volunteers to get a musical program underway. The University of the Virgin Islands Inspirational Singers set the stage in perfect harmony. Carla Scott and Peter Clements sang several solos. Scott joined Petersen and two young singers, Milan and Ochin, in songs throughout the evening. The Caribbean Dance School performed a modern dance choreographed by Curliss Solomon and pianist Khadijo Kwabena and his accompanying musicians kept the tempo going to the enjoyment of the audience. The community can look forward to future performances at the celebrated amphitheater, Petersen said.

Come and experience the creativity and talent of our island community. Our Coldwell Banker St. Croix Realty offices in Christiansted and Frederiksted are open to welcome you.

See you soon!

*Amy*

Amy Land-de Wilde  
Regional President/Managing Broker

Scroll down for more ●●●●

This newsletter written by Elisa McKay [sistahart@earthlink.net](mailto:sistahart@earthlink.net)



## 'The Mountaintop' *continued*

The play takes place the night before King's death and it's like getting one last look at the human side of the man behind his iconic presence... something one seldom saw, Downer said.

The feminist persona in the maid, Camae comes as a surprise in that (1968) era, Prince said. Prince is very passionate about her role and she holds her own in conversation with King, while displaying an air of sassiness, which captivates him.

Playwright Hall developed the Dr. King character into someone

very human as she peeled back layers to expose King's fear of mortality, Downer said.

The surprise twist in the last minutes of the performance reveals Camae as the Angel of Death who has come to prepare King for his impending assassination.

# Jazz Cruise Brings Festivities to Frederiksted

Frederiksted got a huge boost January 23 when jazz fans and musicians cruised into the West End port.

The Celebrity Infinity docked at the Ann E. Abramson Pier and folks spilled out onto the waterfront early that morning.

The weeklong cruise entertained passengers with jazz while they traversed the Caribbean Sea. It's a jazz festival on the sea, said one musician, who was taking a break on the Frederiksted beach with passengers and other musicians.

It was the 19th anniversary of the Jazz Cruise and many of the passengers were back for their ninth time. When the cruise ship docks in port, the musicians get a day off to explore the island with the passengers.

Local vendors were out in number. Some provided umbrellas and chairs for rent, while others sold drinks and food. Many vendors sold the usual jewelry, clothing and souvenir items. Retail stores and restaurants stayed open until the last passengers boarded the ship that night.

JoAnn Jones owner of One of a Kind Kulchah Shop

on Market Street was happy to have the many customers who made purchases. "They made my day," she said. It can get very quiet after the holidays, and the jazz cruise brought the spark back to Frederiksted, Jones said.

Local musicians performed throughout the afternoon and invited jazz musicians from the cruise to get a taste of our local musical culture.

The Guardians of Culture Moko Jumbies and the We Deh Yah Cultural Dancers were features of the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism's revival of Harbor Night.

Harbor Night kicked off from 4 to 11 p.m. with performances by Eddie Russell, Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights, Senise Jeffers, Chris Klein and the Boulevards and many more local musicians.



Photo by Joan Keenan

# 'In Search of Identity'

## A CENTENNIAL LEGACY PROJECT

The Society of Virgin Islands Historians and the Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Center partnered in the "Home-Grown St. Croix Heritage" presentation on January 19 at the Great Hall of the University of the Virgin Islands St. Croix Campus.

Gerville Larsen, a sixth generation Crucian and a registered architect, and Mary Dema, of the Christiansted Alliance, delivered "In Search of Identity – A Centennial Legacy Project" as an Update on the Virgin Islands Center for Architecture, Crafts and Built Heritage at the Old Barracks in Christiansted.

A town plan selected by a jury in 2013 is a concept, which includes the revitalization of the Old Barracks as an urban campus and the hub of education within architecture and traditional building crafts.

*"The plan is to bring back vitality to the ... buildings in town and revitalize Christiansted."*

Local and Danish architects worked on the plans under the supervision of architect Gerville Larsen of St. Croix and professor Mogens A. Morgen, of Aarhus, Denmark.

Larsen said the plan allows historic ruins to remain discernable with a multi-functional courtyard, which would generate income and sustainability.

The school would offer a two-year associates degree for students coming from places like Puerto Rico, South Carolina and Florida. They could continue on to other



Old Barracks on Hospital Street, St. Croix.

Photo by Elisa McKay

universities to complete the architectural degree, Larsen said.

"There will be an apprenticeship program and scholarships for our local youth with funding for them to learn trades," Larsen said in reply to a question from the audience.

Demá works with local property owners in an

incentive to restore and renovate properties in Christiansted town. This is an opportunity for our youth to help rebuild the town, she said.

The plan is to bring back vitality to the locked up and abandoned buildings in town and revitalize Christiansted, Larsen added.

An estimated budget of \$20 million includes the old Jarvis School complex on St. Thomas with plans for the development of a U.S. Virgin Islands Museum and Cultural Center.

The prerequisite is a joint venture. Historic Houses, the Danish Government and the Government of the USVI have provided initial funding.

## Student Volunteers Help SEA Plant Native Trees

The St. Croix Environmental Association planted trees at the Southgate Coastal Reserve over the last few months of 2018 as part of a project to aid in the recovery of the natural environment after the hurricanes of 2017, said acting Executive Director Jennifer Valiulis.

Volunteers – preschool through teenagers from the Caribbean Centers for Boys and Girls of the Virgin Islands, started the New Year on Jan. 3 by completing SEA's tree-planting goal.

Valiulis said the group learned all about the interesting trees we were planting. "We planted a variety of species including orange manjack, Jamaica caper, calabash, pitch apple, lignum vitae, soapberry, turpentine and several others."

Goat manure and mulch were

applied to each tree and the volunteers really liked doing that, Valiulis said. "They were excited to see a couple of worms and all the gongolos in the soil."

SEA gave the volunteers first-hand information about the value of tree planting. Trees provide shade along the trail and valuable habitat for wildlife, they keep soil in place so it doesn't wash down into the ocean during flooding rains, and trees reduce the carbon in the atmosphere that creates climate change.

"The students were so willing to get their hands in the soil. They wanted to make sure they planted the trees correctly and showed excitement as they worked at their planting," Valiulis said.

"Planting trees is one of the easiest and most rewarding actions

we can do to help the environment," Valiulis added.

"Our goal was to plant 100 native trees at the Southgate Coastal Reserve and we are just shy of reaching that goal."

The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands provided support for the project with funding from Cruzan's Island Spirit Fund.



Marley Cassius plants her tree.

Photo courtesy of SEA

## Feature Property of the Month

### 23 Solitude

**Miramar** is a one of a kind luxurious five-bedroom, five and a half bath mansion in a private estate perched on a bluff overlooking the Caribbean Sea. The former Appleton Estate, featured in Elite Traveler's 2017 Top Ten Villas in the Caribbean, is a villa-mansion located in a most extraordinary sea-front setting and is custom designed to integrate comfort and elegance. Miramar is found in the beautiful



Estate Solitude on the northeast shore of St. Croix. Guests enter through a private gate to a columned portico and fountain, and first to the mansion's 2400 square foot great room with unobstructed and breathtaking views of the Caribbean Sea and nearby Buck Island. The great room's high-coffered ceilings are supported by grand columns that run down to Italian marble floors. The great room also features a formal dining area, an 18-foot granite-topped wet bar with an ice maker and beverage coolers and an impressive gourmet kitchen with black granite countertops and custom cabinetry. Miramar's heated infinity pool, gallery and sun terrace are found outside the French doors on either side of the wet bar with straight on Buck Island views. Additional features include 78 solar panels with net metering, handsome library with custom floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, a plush lower-level efficiency with a full kitchen and bathroom, a fully-equipped gym, a detached, 2-car garage with large storage room below and an additional 1-car garage, 60 KW automatic, diesel generator, and high efficiency AC throughout. For buyers looking for a luxurious, resort lifestyle in the Caribbean with a bounty of amenities and comfort in a secluded and sublime location landscaped with rich tropical flora, superb Miramar is unquestionably THE villa choice on St. Croix...five stars, plus!

MLS 19-173 **\$8,900,000**

## MORE ISLAND VALUES



### 54A Company Street

This 0.07-acre home-site, zoned B-1, is ideally located in a high-traffic area in the heart of Christiansted town near-by businesses, popular restaurants and shops, and the Christiansted harbor. The current

owner has a license for the property to be a parking lot, although the possibilities are endless!

MLS 19-148 **\$109,000**

### 70 Catherine's Hope

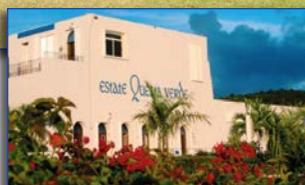
This almost 0.40-acre lot in Catherine's Hope on the East End, has a great building site with an easy incline allowing for Caribbean Sea views. This property is located just minutes from fine dining at Duggan's Reef, Point Udall, the Divi Casino, and beautiful, sandy beaches!

MLS 19-171 **\$55,000**

**NEW LISTING!**



**COMING SOON IN QUESTA VERDE!**



### END UNIT at Questa Verde!

This 2-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath condo has 2 beautiful outdoor living areas with plenty of space for entertaining and enjoying the breeze. Gaze down onto the lights of Christiansted in the evening and the blues of the Caribbean Sea in the day.

**\$259,000**

## ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

**CLOSED SALES COMPARISON :1/31/17-1/31/18 VERSUS 1/31/18-1/31/19**

	2017-2018 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE	2018-2019 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE
Home Sales	150	316	\$280,000	213 ↑	294	\$275,000
Condo Sales	102	217	\$149,000	115 ↑	218	\$167,000 ↑
Land under \$39,999	49	371	\$25,000	61 ↑	336	\$25,000
Land over \$40,000	40	470	\$82,500	61 ↑	397	\$80,000
Commercial	12	639	\$386,000	12	375	\$772,500 ↑

*The Good News...*

**42%  
MORE  
HOMES  
SOLD**

**Through this January, compared to the same period last year.**

Information from the St. Croix Multiple Listing Service

\* The average sales price and the average days on market could be skewed greatly by only one sale or because of the small number of annual sales.