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St. Croix Real Estate reviews



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

MARCH 2019

Message from Amy...



Amy Land-de Wilde

We love February on our beautiful island in the sun! The shortest month of the year is packed with activities from the first day to the last.

The St. Croix District Spelling Bee champ for 2019 is Michael Atwell, a 7th grader from the Good Hope Country Day School. He continued through 15 rounds of spelling the most obscure words and outlasted his 14 competitors. His winning word "torotoro" means, "a kingfisher of New Guinea having an orange beak." The top five spellers will join Atwell in the territory-wide competition on March 19.

The Richmond Senior Center was filled with the air of love on Valentine's Day. It was a "Love Fest" that began by having the guests walk a red carpet at the entrance of the building all the way to the cafeteria, where lunch was served. Upon entering the facility and throughout the afternoon, singer Otis Johannes serenaded them. Gov. Albert Bryan, Jr. greeted the women at the door and presented each of them with a rose. Bryan thanked the seniors for their contribution to the community throughout the years. "And now it's up to us to make sure you're comfortable," he said. Several local dignitaries joined Bryan in honoring the seniors.

We love a parade and our fur-babies! The 13th Annual Krewe de Barkus Dog Parade put on by Krewe de Croix filled the Christiansted boardwalk with canines galore. Crowds of children and adults came out for the annual fundraiser to benefit the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center. Tamara Psurny and her dog, Kasper, won the adult first-place and Best of Show as "Sam I Am" from the book, "Green Eggs and Ham." Thing 1 and Thing 2 outfits came in second and Lorax came in third place, both Dr. Seuss themes. Children's winners Kyla Morrell and her dog Croix came in first, Zoe and her dog Frazer won second, and Alelia

and her dog Ayla took third place. Parade Marshal Jelly Bean the Clown and Cupcake entertained the youngsters with balloons and face painting.

We are eagerly awaiting the 19th annual Taste of St. Croix food and wine event with its

kickoff Thursday, April 4, at bond @ balter in Christiansted. The epicurean magic continues throughout the weekend: Sunset BBQ at the Frederiksted Pier and Cork & Fork at a private home, both on Friday, April 5. Wine in the Warehouse at Bohlke International Airways Hanger Saturday, April 6 and Gourmet Vintner Dinner at the Galleon, Sunday, April 7. All of these are a fabulous choice of venues. This event celebrates the special spirit and flavor of St. Croix by bringing together local chefs, restaurants, farmers, caterers and distributors by showcasing the cuisine and culture of St.

Croix, the Caribbean and the rest of the world. Taste of St. Croix, Inc. in conjunction with the USVI

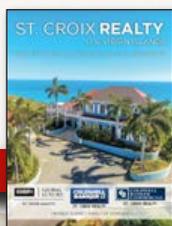
Department of Tourism and Caravelle Hotel & Casino will present its culinary street delight on Thursday, April 11, 6-9 p.m. These popular events sell out quickly. For tickets: visit stxfoodandwine.com or call 340-773-9898.

Our lush island is the perfect setting for events and fun activities! It's a great time to visit us. We welcome you to our Coldwell Banker Realty offices in Christiansted and Frederiksted. Come see us soon!

Amy

Amy Land-de Wilde
Regional President/Managing Broker

This newsletter written by Elisa McKay
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Ag Fair Going Strong in its 48th Year

The Agriculture and Food Fair opened its 48th year to an excited throng of visitors. The fairgrounds were filled with families and children, teens and older adults, all in a festive mood, as they welcomed the sight of vendors selling their wares and many activities for their participation.

The once-a-year weekend activity is always a welcome pleasure for everyone in the community. It focuses on the local culture, and it invites participants and visitors from other Caribbean islands and the mainland to weave themselves into the fabric of St. Croix. This is a time when Virgin Islanders come together as one. It's



Dr. Michelle Mehalick and Ayjauni Joseph.

Photo by Linda Morland

in the air. You can feel it and see it in the smiling faces and the proud reflection of the culture.

Produce and livestock farmers and vendors selling books, clothing, jewelry, plants and local food and drinks were in demand during the three-day festival. The big tent beckoned to music lovers on a regular schedule each day

throughout the weekend. The legendary Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights were a definite hit each time they appeared. Singer Blakness entertained with reggae, jazz and gospel lyrics backed by her local quartet.

The big stage was a venue that featured the We Deh Yah Cultural Dancers, who performed quadrille for the crowds. The Guardians of Culture Moko Jumbies danced and pranced and posed for pictures with the youngsters and the older folks all weekend. A colorful sight was the amusement park set up for the enjoyment of the children, with many rides some young ones had not been on before.

Governor Albert Bryan gave thanks to the government, the Gentlemen of Jones and private companies who worked together to get the grounds ready for the festival.

Tony and Nancy Ayer publish Estate Mount Washington book



Nancy and Tony Ayer.

Tony and Nancy Ayer have published the book, "Estate Mount Washington – The Discovery and Resurrection of a Lost Plantation" about the estate on Frederiksted's north side. The compelling history of their home is packed with beautiful photographs and eye-opening information that reads like a best-selling novel.

Tony grew up on St. Croix and his wife, Nancy knew nothing about the island until their move to Mount Washington. As investors in a developing resort, they discovered they were the last two remaining financiers interested in the "white elephant" tucked away in the rain forest.

There were many structures to consider: the three-story stone sugar factory warehouse, the rum distillery, and the attached dungeons. There was the adjacent one-story burning shed for bagasse (the dry fibrous residue that remains after sugarcane stalks are crushed to extract their juice) and the boiling room and the sugarcane mill nearby. Stables and plantation cottages emerged from the jungle brush ...and finally, the two-story great house appeared from possibly a

century of tropical rainforest takeover.

The book goes on to tell the reader of the Ayers' decision to create a home with the comforts of the present day without compromising the original historic structure. Nancy furnished their home with West Indian mahogany furniture from the antique store she ran and created from the former stables.

Nancy created the labyrinth and thinks of it as her crowning project at Mount Washington. "It brings a lot of peace to those who come to see it and walk it," she said.

The Ayers did large amounts of research about the people who lived and worked on the estate, using Danish colonial records with information concerning their place of birth, jobs, religions and other vital information.

The issue of slavery was important to the Ayers in bringing their discovery to light. Most of their restorations of Mount Washington were completed in 1990. Their sensitivity was noted and later juxtaposed to the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. with their opening in 2016.

"To visit Estate Mount Washington is to visit the history of our islands," Nancy said. It is open to the public to see in all its historic beauty – free of charge.

To visit Estate Mount Washington is to visit the history of our islands.

Krewe de
Croix's annual
**Mardi
Croix
Parade**
drew Hundreds
to the North
Shore

The North Shore was filled with hundreds of folks stepping to the annual Mardi Croix Parade en route from La Vallee to Cane Bay Beach. The Dr. Seuss theme served up a flamboyant display of creativity.

Mardi Croix captures the New Orleans flavor right here on St. Croix. It was a giant party and the mixture of parade folks and onlookers blended into a huge revelry. Participants spilled out onto the streets from the parade and there were some families who relaxed on the beach by the water's edge.

Vendors were available with local food and drinks and the restaurants catered to those who ran in for a quickie cocktail or a cold brew.

Parade enthusiasts who have been to the New Orleans Mardi Gras recommend this one as a close runner-up embellished with the flair of the local culture. "Not only is it the funniest parade, but it always has the greatest music to entertain us," someone on the sideline said.

Local musician Kurt Schindler sang and played for the spectators and Mama's Black Sheep entertained the crowds. Express Band and Smokey's Farmland Band



Photo by Kathy Tiddark

North Shore Freak Show, Randy Tiddark, Puppy Blu and Michael Gelardi.

gave the North Shore a musical blast. DJ Cole was mixing them up for the people.

First prize went to the "North Shore Freak Show" with an outlandishly creative float made by artist Barbara Gelardi and her husband Michael. Absolute Autos came in second and DJ Ninja took third place.

"Cowboy Steve" and "Lady Kathryn" were this year's king and queen. Gary Anthony was the grand marshal. Angry Nate's, Absolute Autos, HH Tire & Battery, Sylvie's and Sprat Net Bar supported the parade.

Toni Lance is for the Birds...

As a young girl, Toni Lance was hooked. "I was spending weekends riding my bike to wetlands to study and watch birds." Her parents and older sisters all had an interest in art and nature. As the youngest of four girls, it was natural for Lance to follow what they were doing.

Lance pursued photography in college, wildlife management and biomedical illustration, and by the time she visited St. Croix in 1980, she fell in love with the island.

Lance made her move from California to St. Croix and began her life on the island as a visual artist painting scenes of local life.

As she became more successful as an artist, she decided to do what was foremost in her heart – painting and photographing birds.

"I encountered two boys with an injured bird, and I told them a wild

story and got them to release it to me. I took it home, rehabilitated it and set it free. This was my first connection to my life's purpose of caring for birds," Lance shared.

"I started going to the states to take classes about bird rehabilitation and learning everything I could find on the Internet. I was getting information by talking to people and I was eventually licensed by the Department of Fish and Wildlife on the island," Lance said. She created a non-profit corporation. People began to learn and hear more about her as she developed her bird sanctuary on the south shore of Christiansted, gave tours and went to schools to talk to children about caring for birds.

"I was a caregiver to my aging companion while I developed a unique lifestyle of caring for him and

alternately caring for the birds. When he passed, I devoted all of my time to the birds – nurturing them back to health, painting and photographing them, and releasing them to fly free."

The documentary "Under Her Wing" came about when filmmaker Elizabeth Hertsfeld-Kamprath was visiting her parents on St. Croix, working on her master's degree in environmental documentary filmmaking at American University. Lance and Kamprath met and worked for many months in putting the documentary together.

"Under Her Wing" was screened at the Caribbean Cinema and has been entered in the Washington D.C. Environmental Film Festival, the American Documentary Film Festival and several others. Lance will speak at the D.C. screening on March 23.

Feature Property of the Month

Costa de' Este is a spectacular four-bedroom, four and a half bath beachfront villa situated on the east coast of St. Croix with straight on Buck Island views. The sandy beachfront is just steps from the sunny veranda and swimming pool. The villa combines the splendors of historic St. Croix by incorporating a Danish inspired Sugar Mill into the architectural design with high-end contemporary comforts and top-quality finishes including Mahogany wood accents throughout, Travertine, marble and coral stone flooring and gorgeous kitchen granite countertops that compliment its mahogany cabinetry. An expansive gallery stretches the entire width of the villa and frames the sun drenched terrace and swimming pool with poolside bar overlooking the blues of the Caribbean Sea!

MLS 19-285 **\$3,950,000**



Costa de' Este



BUILD ON THE BEACH!

102 et al Two Brothers. This premier location is a rarity on the West End with vibrant sunsets, swimmable waters and a sandy beach. The three waterfront lots, almost half an acre combined, are contiguous and are zoned W-1 allowing for many opportunities - build a charming island villa or a beachside bar and grille. Included is a 0.29 acre lot directly across the street with R3 zoning.

MLS 19-234 **\$370,000**



7,7A Shoys. Over 400 feet of sandy beach front! This almost 4-acre waterfront residential building lot is located in the coveted and gated community of the Buccaneer Bay Estates on a gorgeous sandy beach

with crystal clear and swimmable waters, near resort amenities at The Buccaneer Hotel – Enjoy a round of golf, fine dining with Caribbean sea views or getting pam-pered at the spa!

MLS 19-335 **\$2,150,000**

NEW LISTING!



21 Seven Hills

This 2-bedroom, 2-bath home with an efficiency apartment offers the beauty of island living with a graceful and artistic feel. Enjoy the views from multiple outdoor patios and take in the breezes. The kitchen features West Indies mahogany and teak wood that is complimented by beautiful travertine countertops. The open living area opens to a sunny veranda all facing the beautiful view of downtown Christiansted and the Caribbean Sea. The lower-level efficiency is extremely spacious with a HUGE wrap-around gallery.

MLS 19-441 **\$489,000**

ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

CLOSED SALES COMPARISON :2/28/17-2/28/18 VERSUS 2/28/18-2/28/19

	2017-2018 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE	2018-2019 SOLD	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN SOLD PRICE
Home Sales	148	315	\$250,950	215 ↑	294	\$290,000 ↑
Condo Sales	98	219	\$146,500	121 ↑	218	\$167,000 ↑
Land under \$39,999	52	332	\$25,000	61 ↑	336	\$27,000 ↑
Land over \$40,000	39	483	\$82,500	62 ↑	397	\$78,250
Commercial	13	650	\$422,000	14 ↑	375	\$612,500 ↑

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.

The Good News...

HOMES SOLD FOR 16% MORE

Through this February, compared to the same period last year.