

December News Brief 2010

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Xmas Party Raises Scholarship Funds & Donates Toys

Celebrate the season of giving at this year's Holiday Party on December 15 at the Westin Resort St. John. Please arrive at the National Park dock by 5:15 pm as the ferry will depart promptly at 5:30 pm. The event raises money for our scholarship fund through the silent auction and raffle and collects toys/donations for our annual Christmas delivery to the Boys & Girls Club of St. Thomas. **Admission is one toy valued at \$20 or more.** Wrapped toys can be dropped off at the Hotel Association office through December 20. Please indicate the applicable age and gender for each gift. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, the association will purchase a gift on your behalf. Auction items are still needed for the event. All donations are tax deductible Contact Nicole at the association office to donate today.



The Industry's Best Recognized at 9th Annual Tommy Star Awards Gala

There were a record number of nominees but after all was said and done, 9 exceptional hospitality employees were recognized as Tommy Star Award winners. Presented with the prestigious Lalique Starfish were:

Sean LaPlace (VI Ecotours)—Activities/Attractions Associate of the Year

Karis Bartley (Seaborne Airlines)-Airline Associate of the Year

Anthony Fleming (Media Marketing, Inc.)-Hospitality Support Associate of the Year

Karen Kline (Property & Procurement)-Public Service Associate of the Year

Margaret Patrick (The Ritz Carlton)-Restaurant Associate of the Year

Yvonne Sutton (The Ritz Carlton)-Retail Associate of the Year

Stanley "Love Cab" Trotman (Nominated by Left Lane Productions & Events)-Taxi Operator of the Year

Sheryl Codogan (The Westin Resort)-Hotel Supervisor of the Year

Joycelyn Joshua (Windward Passage Hotel) - Hotel Associate of the Year

Longtime hoteliers Michael & Lorette Resch received the **2010 Lifetime Achievement Awards**. For more than 50 years, the couple have helped build the industry in the USVI, supported small hoteliers throughout the Caribbean, and been recognized for their selfless contributions.

Also recognized were the HTA's Scholarship recipients Jeffrine Niles and Ilejah Crabbe. Both 2010 graduates attend the University of the Virgin Islands, majoring in Business Management.

Star studded thank you's to **our sponsors:** The Department of Tourism, M Booth & Associates, Lambert Media, WSTA, the West Indian Company Limited, Presentation Services, Roses Too, Virgin Islands Daily News, Bellows International, Cape Air, Chairs Plus, Frenchman's Reef Marriott, Nick Pourzat, Seaborne Airlines, Crystal Shop, The Ritz Carlton, TV2-CBS, Westin St. John, Wyndham Sugar Bay, Avis Rent-A-Car, Best Western Emerald Beach, BoltNagi, Caneel Bay, Diamonds International, Island Business Graphics, Island Meetings & Incentives, Windward Passage Hotel, Bolongo Bay Beach Resort, Concessions International, Coral World Ocean Park, Host U, Media Marketing, Inc., Mim's Seaside Bistro, and Theodore Tunick & Company.



Membership Corner

New Member

Spend time at the Cyril E. King Airport and you're bound to eat or drink at one of the locations of **Concessions International**. There are 5 operating locations including the Hibiscus Bar & Café inside the terminal. In addition to the usual fare like hot dogs and hamburgers, diners can expect to find local delicacies on the list such as stew chicken, pelau, Johnny cakes, and chicken soup. It's a great way to expose visitors to local cuisine. Concessions International is also available to cater for parties, receptions, or meetings. Contact Claudia Prince at 777-8818, or email cvprince@cintl.com for catering prices.

Board Retreat

The HTA Board recently held a one-day retreat to review 2010 successes and discuss goals and initiatives for 2011. Key topics discussed were: transportation, UVI program, influencing change in the community, improving the product, increased marketing, improving the industry image, restoration of Charlotte Amalie, increasing leverage with Government Agencies, defining position of the destination, more private sector joint initiatives, infrastructure, crime, education, environment and increasing membership. Action steps were noted and steps taken in early 2011 to implement the above mentioned topics.

November Membership Meeting

A year in review was presented at the General Meeting on November 12. Thank you to the Wyndham Sugar Bay Resort for hosting the meeting.

Tommy Goes to School Newsletter

A new issue of the Tommy Goes to School newsletter is now available on our web site, www.usvihta.com. Share it with your kids or grandkids!

Get More for Less in 2011 with HCP



Hotels that distribute Discover and print advertisers who support the publication receive a FREE profile in www.DiscoverUSVImagazine.com. The website is maintained and promoted at no cost to the USVIHTA and is another marketing tool to help attract travel planners to the USVI. Campaigns totaling approximately \$3.5 million in retail value help promote the website and appear in Google, Tripadvisor.com, McClatchy newspapers, and HCP/Aboard Publishing magazines (which reach over 70 million active travelers each year). HCP is committed to driving travel planners to you! Need more exposure and leads to increase direct bookings in 2011? Get high profile exposure on the website at unprecedented low rates, now thru January 2011.


Please find added value and opportunities for additional online exposure at www.discoverusvimagazine.com/getmore2011.ppt.

Environmental Committee Update

The Hotel and Tourism Association's **Environmental Committee** continues to review recycling options, compostables, training and outreach in addition to other initiatives. The Blue Flag feasibility study has been submitted to the FEE and the 5 beaches have been identified for potential Blue Flag status. Two representatives from the FEE are scheduled to be in the USVI in January 2011 to review the recommended beaches. This is an important initiative and being designated a Blue Flag destination is a great marketing too. Another committee initiative is to ensure that the 2011 Tommy Awards includes a Green Award. Due to lack of nominees, it was removed as a category in this year's event. We know that many businesses have respected employees doing exceptional things for the environment. Make sure they are recognized.

CMI Corner

The **Island Escape Winter** promotion will launch in the next week. The package includes a 6th night free, resort credit and discounts at activities, attractions, restaurants, and retailers. The promotion is commissionable to travel agents at 10% or can be booked directly with the participating hotel. The booking window will last through January 30, 2011 with travel January 3-April 15, 2011. Booking code: WINTER2011.

 Our **Facebook** fan base is steadily increasing, up to 1950 fans presently. One lucky fan recently won a 4-night stay at Frenchman's Reef Marriott. We will continue to offer monthly sweepstakes in order to increase the number of fans and collect a database which can be used in our marketing efforts. Are you a fan?

Update on Airlift, 2010/2011 Cruise Ship Season

The DOT's continued marketing efforts to the legacy carriers, the USVI has experienced a 7.4 percent year-over-year increase in air arrivals from the mainland U.S. with direct and non-stop service now available from Atlanta, New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, DC, Minneapolis, Miami and Puerto Rico. The most recent airline capacity report was distributed in November. Please note it is **SUBJECT TO CHANGE**. Commissioner Nicholson-Doty notes that "while we recognize the challenges resulting from the seasonal reductions, we remain committed to our partnerships with airlines to build brand awareness. Additionally, we've been fortunate to have growth without the revenue guarantees that are prevalent in the region."

With regards to cruise ship arrivals, St. Thomas will experience modest growth in 2010-2011, with an expected 1 percent increase year-over-year. While a recent rumor mentioned that the summer season would be unusually slow, St. Thomas will actually have increased calls next summer—a total of 141 calls between May and September compared to 136 calls during the same period in 2010. According to predictions by WICO, St. Thomas will welcome an estimated 65,000+ more visitors next summer than in 2010.

The St. Croix cruise ship schedule is also showing growth for 2010-2011 season.

SAVE THE DATE

December 15 Holiday Party & Silent Auction, Westin St. John

December 23 Boys & Girls Club Toy Donation, Yacht Haven Grande, 3:00-5:00 pm



Happy Holidays!
Wishing Everyone a Prosperous New Year