

## June News Brief 2009

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### **New Member–VI Game fishing Club**

Since 1963, the VI Game Fishing Club (VIGFC) has been promoting the sport of salt water game fishing in the Virgin Islands. Considered one of the best in the country, the VIGFC boasts over 100 varied members. Probably best known on island for hosting some of the top fishing tournaments such as the July Billfish Open and the ABMT Boys Scout Open, the club would like to familiarize more locals with the club and its goals. One goal is to offer more clinics and events for kids. The Youth Committee is currently working activities to teach sportsmanship, rigging, boat handling, reef conservation, safe boating techniques, etc. The club recently completed an extensive renovation and has made the space in Red Hook available for rent. The location can seat 125 and offers a view of Pillsbury Sound, kitchen, buffet area, sound system and dance floor. For additional information about the club contact Ruth Baldwin at 775-9144.

### **Destination Symposium**



The 16th Annual Destination Symposium is fast approaching and we're hoping you've marked your calendars. The event, scheduled for June 15-19, will welcome our tour operator partners and travel media for marketing presentations, networking events and business meetings. The conference begins on St. Thomas at the Frenchman's Reef Marriott and culminates with a taste of Crucian hospitality. Registration fees are broken down into categories including hotels, allied members and industry partners. One day registration, including breakfast and lunch, is available on Tuesday, June 16 for a fee of \$95. Ad space in the conference booklet is still available.. The USVI Symposium is one of the best in the Caribbean so this is an ideal way to meet with industry professionals and get your message in the hands of buyers and consumers. To register or take advantage of any of the marketing opportunities contact Canika John at the Association office at 774-6835 or email [canika@virgin-islands-hotels.com](mailto:canika@virgin-islands-hotels.com).

### **VI Culinary Team Update**

Last month, the Culinary Team welcomed its newest apprentice, St. Croix Career and Technical Education Center Student Afiyah Augustus. The budding chef skillfully prepared the winning entrée to earn her spot on the team. The team also held its first fundraiser in May at the Frenchman's Reef Marriott. Over 50 guests enjoyed a variety of delicious appetizers including plantain gnocchi in a banana cream sauce, crispy pork belly with a tamarind gastrique and tostones, and chicken galantine. Two additional fundraisers are scheduled this month as the team revs up for the **Taste of the Caribbean Competition**, June 12-14 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The first one will be held on Wednesday, June 3 at Costa Java in Crown Bay; the second on Tuesday June 9 at Divi Carina Bay. Your support of these fundraisers provides valuable feedback on the creativity of their dishes, taste and presentation. Funds raised also allows the team to purchase equipment and defray the cost of travel and accommodations.

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340 774-6835 email: [admin@virgin-islands-hotels.com](mailto:admin@virgin-islands-hotels.com)**

## CMI CORNER

**\*Membership Card**— Members are adding outstanding discounts for cardholders every week. Check out this offer from **St. Thomas/St. John This Week**. Cardholders who are new advertisers receive 30% off the full, half, or third page rate. The offer is not combinable with other specials and is based on an annual contract.

\*Havensight Mall retailers have launched **“No Ship Thursdays”**. In the past, stores may or may not open when there's no ship in port. For the summer, all stores will open on Thursday from 10:00 am—3:00 pm. Friday, Saturday and Sunday hours will vary from store to store.

\*As of the printing of this newsletter, 3550 **Sizzlin' Sampler** packages have been sold—627 on St. Croix; 2883 on St. Thomas; and 40 on St. John. The package can be booked through October 15, 2009.

\*Advertising opportunities are now available at the **Association kiosk** on the Havensight Dock. Annual rates are \$400 for a small display to \$900 for a large one. If you want to reach millions of cruise ship passengers here's your perfect opportunity. The deadline for signup is June 12.

## REDUCE, RECYCLE, REUSE

The Environmental Sub-Committee is excited to launch the **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle** campaign and have identified goals and initiatives to help members understand the importance of the concept and commit to participation. The goals are as follows:

**Reduce:** With the help of the VI Recycling Association, develop a market for compostable food containers and provide information on vendors with most affordable supplies.

**Reuse:** Distribute information on suppliers of reusable shopping bags and encourage members to purchase them for business use or to serve as premium (giveaway) items.

**Recycle:** To recycle 100% of waste aluminum cans, with a commitment to place recycle bins around the business and drop off cans at collection facilities on St. Thomas and St. John. The facility currently pays \$.20 per pound for cans.

The Committee will continue to gather pricing information and provide campaign updates. Additionally, they will begin to investigate “Green Globe and Blue Flag certification and the American Hotel & Lodging Green Guidelines Program.



### Staff Profile—Shamir A.L. Joseph

Shamir is an 18-year old sophomore attending the University of the Virgin Islands, majoring in accounting. As the new President of the Always Believe in Yourself (ABY) Organization, a member of the National Association of Black Accountants, and an active member of the Adventist Youth Society, he believes that the discovery of success is given to those that relentlessly seek it. Since joining the Hotel and Tourism Association team in February of 2008, Shamir says his eyes have been opened to the importance of the tourism industry. With the steadily growing knowledge that he is attaining from his four female coworkers every day, Shamir plans to make a positive difference in our islands. He believes that with God all things are possible. We are happy to have this future leader as a part of our team.

## SAVE THE DATE

June 3	Culinary Team Fundraiser—Costa Java, Crown Bay—7:00 pm
June 9	Culinary Team Fundraiser—Divi Carina Bay—7:00 pm
June 12-14	Taste of the Caribbean Culinary Competition, San Juan, PR
June 15-19	16th Annual Destination Symposium
June 24	Membership Reception—Iggie's at Bolongo Bay—5:30 pm
September	Travel Agent Month
Sept. 29-Oct. 2	Small Hotels Retreat—St. Thomas, Frenchman's Reef Marriott, <a href="http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com">www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com</a>
November 21	Tommy Star Awards & Gala—Estate St. Peter's Great House



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### DATES SET FOR PAYMENT AND APPEAL OF 2006 REAL PROPERTY TAXES

Governor John P. deJongh, Jr. has signed an Executive Order which sets the dates for payment, delinquency and appeal of 2006 real property taxes. The Order notes that the Tax Assessor having determined that all 2006 real property tax bills to both residential and commercial property owners having now been sent out, new dates for the payment of these bills, when they become delinquent and the deadline for appeal are now required. Those dates shall be the following:

All 2006 Real Property Tax Bills shall be due and payable on July 1, 2009;

All 2006 Real Property Tax Bills shall become delinquent if not paid on or before on July 31, 2009;

The last day for filing of an appeal of 2006 Real Property Tax Bills shall be August 14, 2009.

For additional information, the public should contact the Office of the Tax Assessor on each island. On St. Croix, 773-6449; on St. Thomas, 776-8505 and on St. John, 776-6767.



### CAT CAFÉ PROGRAM NEEDS YOU

The statistics are staggering and sad. In 2008, over 800 feral cats were euthanized by the Humane Society because they were not adoptable. The life of a stray is pitiful to say the least. They are ill, malnourished, constantly breeding, and looking for food which could make them a nuisance. But after years of research, program director and creator, Dellia Holodenschi came up with a workable solution. Enter the Cat Café Program where businesses adopt a location, assume the financial responsibility of constructing a "café" (examples pictured above), are asked to contribute toward the cost of neutering, and provide food and water daily. Here's how it works. The Cat Café traps the feral cat, and with the help of the Humane Society, has them neutered, and returns them to their colony. While under anesthesia, ears are tipped to identify them as having been evaluated, vaccinated and sterilized. Holodenschi would like to recognize three hotels—**Frenchman's Reef Marriott, The Ritz Carlton, and Wyndham Sugar Bay**—for seeing the benefit of the program and their dedication to providing a humane existence for our furry friends. She has tailored a presentation for hotel managers and restaurants, pointing out that the business has an optional way of dealing with the strays. Guest discomfort at seeing hungry cats is removed by the addition of a feeding station set up away from the restaurant and maintained by a staff member. Cafés exist in other locations on island and she spends many hours a day providing food and water to these sites. She welcomes help from anyone who is interested in volunteering. If you are interested in setting up a café or volunteering contact Holodenschi at 513-1854. **Let's give our strays a fighting chance and a happier life.**