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Amy Land-de Wilde

Happy Easter!

Spring is finally here and the entire island is in full swing with celebrations and festivals.

March 31 marked 89 years since the Danish government sold the Danish West Indies, renamed the U.S. Virgin Islands, to the U.S. government for \$25 million in gold. The day is now known as Transfer Day. A

Transfer Day celebration was held under two ancient saman trees on the Lawaetz Family Museum grounds.



The United Way of St. Croix held the 6th annual Chili Cook Off on April second at the Divi Carina Bay Resort. There were 19 booths serving up homemade concoctions ranging from nuclear-hot and very meaty to mild vegetarian creations.

The St. Croix Foundation held its annual fund raiser on April 11 with the Taste of St. Croix. Tickets went on sale Monday, April 3, and were sold out immediately.

March was a great month in real estate. We were very busy all month listing and showing properties. April is showing more signs of the same, which is good news for both home buyers and home sellers.

If you are interested in buying or selling a property on St. Croix, please call us. We will be happy to talk to you.

Regards,

Amy Land-de Wilde
Coldwell Banker Land-de Wilde Realty
Broker/Owner

WORK BEGINS ON FREDERIKSTED PIER DREDGING PROJECT

Earlier in March divers from National Resource Consultants completed the relocation of live coral around the dredging site and are in the process of removing the piles left from the old pier.

The old pier extended 900 feet from the shore while the existing pier, built to the north, is 1,526 feet long. There are approximately 240 pilings which will have to be removed or cut to a minimum of one foot below the sea floor. If the divers are forced to cut them, they will remove the sand around the base of the pilings and then cut them with a hydrolic saw.

A material barge which will hold the dredged sand will arrive at the pier in early April. The sand that is dredged up will be barged to the Gordon Finch Molasses Pier for storage.



NEW CRUISE SHIP AGREEMENT

The recently formed, nine-member, Cruise Ship Task Force met with residents of St. Croix to get comments and suggestions on the content of a new agreement they hope will draw cruise ships back to St. Croix.

The new task force is charged with negotiating a new agreement between the U.S. Virgin Islands and members of the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA). The first agreement was signed five years ago by FCCA President Michelle Paige, on behalf of the member cruise lines.

The task force hopes that the revitalization of the waterfront and the Vincent Mason Pool and the improved appearance of the town will make Frederiksted a more desirable post location.

The task force has been asked to consider an agreement with specific cruise lines for a definite number of calls per year so that merchants and shop owners will be more likely to open stores in Frederiksted.

ST. CROIX 2005 TOURISM STATISTICS

In a press release issued earlier in April, Gov. Charles Turnbull said St. Croix tourism showed a big improvement in 2005. He said a report issued by the Economic Research Bureau indicated that both air and cruise passenger arrivals were up on St. Croix in 2005.

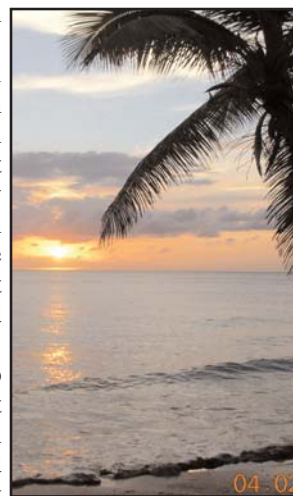
Air arrivals were up 14.8 percent over 2004, with cruise passenger arrivals up 118.2 percent.

St. Croix received 151,773 visitors arriving by air in 2005 compared to 132,237 in 2004.

V.I. Hotel and Tourism Association President Beverly Nicholson said "The Delta flight has helped overall," referring to the direct flight between Atlanta and St. Croix that began arriving twice a week last March.

She said that Divi Carina Bay Hotel reported improvements over the 2004 reporting year which ends in September.

The number of cruise ship passengers arriving on St. Croix more than doubled in 2005 over that of 2004. The island saw 54,502 cruise ship passengers arrive in 2005 compared to 24,983 in 2004.



COMMERCIAL PROPERTY TAX BILLS ARRIVING SOON

Although no official due date has been set, the 2004 commercial property tax bills will be mailed this month.

Tax Assessor Roy Martin said the tax bills will be sent out at the 1998 level and do not reflect any recent changes in value.

The commercial property values will change after the local government gets approval from U.S. District Court for its new commercial property

appraisal system. The new values are expected to be reflected in the 2005 commercial property tax bills which will go out next year.

Tax bills are payable to the Finance Department, not the Tax Assessor's Office.

SEABORNE TO ADD THREE NEW AIRCRAFTS AND LOWER FAIRS

In a press release issued by Seaborne Airlines, the airline announced an agreement which will introduce three more aircrafts into its fleet.

According to Seaborne president and CEO, Marvin Ruthenberg, "Three additional de Havilland DHC-6-300 Twin Otter seaplanes as currently flown by Seaborne will be incrementally added to our fleet over the next eight months, with the first airplane arriving in early-to-mid-July. These new Twin Otters will be used to further expand flights between St. Croix and St. Thomas, and San Juan. Seaborne will also use these aircraft to inaugurate service to Virgin Gorda, B.V.I., the company's first new destination to be added in three years."

Ruthenberg also said, "This deal is

very exciting as it will allow us to aggressively pursue the needed local market capacity growth we have wanted to implement for some time."

Ruthenberg added that the additional planes and increased passenger capacity will result in reduced costs, which he said, "we hope to pass on to our customers in the form of lower fares. While this may seem somewhat incredible in an era of ever-escalating costs, including high fuel prices, we believe it is achievable. This additional capacity certainly will be a major step toward that objective."



TIPS FOR THE HOME SELLER

It is spring home buying time again, and the professionals at Coldwell Banker Land-de Wilde Realty offer the following advice to help make a home as appealing as it can be.

Maximize Curb Appeal: Ensure that the outside of the home looks appealing

by mowing the lawn, trimming the trees and cutting back overgrowth. Also, be sure to store bicycles, gardening equipment, and children's and pet's toys, and remove the car from the driveway to provide parking.

Make Your Home Anonymous: Stow family photos and collectibles. You want potential buyers to imagine their families in the house, creating their own memories.

Spic and Span: Potential buyers will want to inspect all parts of the home. Remove all clutter, and make sure all lights are working throughout the house. Clear out your closets to make them appear as spacious as possible.

Make Necessary Repairs: The last thing you want potential buyers to see are water stains on the ceilings or chipped tile. Make sure all leaks are repaired, paint over any stains, and caulk the tiles, where needed. You do not need to spend a lot of money on the repairs, but it is important to do the necessary touch ups.



FEATURED HOME OF THE MONTH

Waterfront home surrounded by beaches situated in quiet Grapetree Bay. 3-bedroom retreat on 1 acre of flat land. Easy ranch-style floor-plan with a greatroom ideal for entertaining. Sea side gallery is beautiful in the day and especially for star gazing in the evening. Tiled pool and pool house with bar & outside shower. MLS# 05-1355 \$1,200,000.

ST. CROIX REAL ESTATE AT A GLANCE

Jan-Mar 2005 vs. Jan-Mar 2006	Sold J-M '05	Avg. days on market	Avg. price	Sold J-M '06	Avg. days on market	Avg. price
Home sales	33	331	\$309,310	44	311	\$395,963
Condo sales	34	218	\$155,176	42	171	\$192,752
Land under \$39,999	32	867	\$23,500	55	871	\$26,047
Land over \$40,000	24	387	\$103,596	51	393	\$141,588
Commercial properties	4	284	\$1,091,250	3	272	\$523,333

* Information from the St. Croix Multiple Listing Service