

The Conch Call



SECOND QUARTER 2012

ST. GEORGE VILLAGE BOTANICAL GARDEN~CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & PRESERVATION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

An essential part of a summer-time experience on St. Croix is, of course, the Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival at the St. George Village Botanical Garden. This lively festival is a celebration of everything that is special about the U.S. Virgin Islands: the fertile land, the tropical weather, a rich agricultural heritage, and a hard-working and creative human population with an amazing history of utilizing the abundance of fruits that surround us!

I invite everyone to enjoy the culmination of all these treasures, here at the Garden on Sunday, July 1 from 12 noon to 6 pm as we celebrate these qualities that create an unforgettable summer experience for the eyes, the nose, and the taste buds.

Each year this event continues to grow and develop, and each year there are new things to learn and experience. Our dedicated committee, made up of members from the V.I. Department of Agriculture, the V.I. Department of Tourism, the University of the Virgin Islands Agricultural Experiment Station (UVI-AES), and the University of the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service (UVI-CES), works very hard for months preparing this event. The driving force is the desire to share with the community the agricultural and horticultural potential for our beautiful islands, and to celebrate

Continued on Page 2

MANGO MELEE - SUNDAY, JULY 1

Mango – the scents, sights, and experiences of summer on St. Croix are at Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival held each year at the St. George Village Botanical Garden. A joint effort of the VI Departments of Agriculture and Tourism, UVI's Cooperative Extension Service and Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Botanical Garden, this festival has become one of the most anticipated events in the Virgin Islands each summer.



This year, the 16th annual Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival will be held Sunday, July 1, from 12 noon to 6pm. This activity-packed day offers fun and food for residents and visitors of every age.

The displays in the Great Hall feature the staggering variety of mangoes and other tropical fruit being grown here on St. Croix, and the opportunity to talk to experts about how to grow these fruits. Over 90 vendors will be offering a huge assortment of crafts and food.

On the Main Lawn a variety of children's activities will keep the younger attendees busy with fun and educational projects. For those who want to learn more about growing, caring for, and using the many tropical fruits, there will be educational workshops in the Visitors' Center.

Perhaps the single most memorable event of the day is the mango eating contest. Contenders line up in separate adult and children's competitions to see who can finish their pile of mangoes first!



Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival is a fantastic opportunity to learn about and sample the abundance of tropical fruits and the many ways they can be enjoyed. Please call the Garden office at (340) 692-2874 for more information.

Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival, Sunday, July 1, 2012.
12 noon to 6 pm. Admission \$5/adults \$2/children

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Continued From Page 1

the skill and artistry of our residents in producing a staggering variety of tropical fruits and an equally astonishing variety of ways to use them!

The St. George Village Botanical Garden is indebted to the dedication of the members of the committee as this event is an incomparable opportunity to support and celebrate the Garden's mission of conservation, education, and preservation of the ethno-botanical heritage of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

From the time of the "discovery" of these islands by early European explorers, the islands were claimed, traded, fought over, bought and sold because of the plants that were growing here and those that could be grown here. The basic needs of the people who populated the region - the early Amerindians, the European colonists, and the enslaved Africans-drove them to learn about and utilize what was available from nature for medicine, for food, for shelter, for clothing, and material for everyday household items.

In these modern times, we often take for granted that the food and items we need are easily available, and are perhaps, too removed from what it

takes to make them conveniently available on our supermarket shelves.

Attending Mango Mele and Tropical Fruit Festival is an educational and enjoyable way to celebrate, promote and re-connect with the incredible agricultural heritage of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Come and speak to our experts - the researchers from the University and Department of Agriculture, the farmers who are producing over 100 varieties of mango and other fruits, and the many residents who are using these fruits to make delicious dishes and an array of useful products.

So please, save the date, Sunday, July 1 from 12 noon to 6 pm.



Bring the whole family and help celebrate and experience the culture and bounty that is the result of centuries of tropical weather, productive land, resilient people and creative minds.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

The closing of HOVENSA precipitated the departure of **Ellen Patton**, our Museum Store Manager. She and her husband, Chris are now in Texas. Ellen did a wonderful job, and was a delight to have on staff. We will miss her and wish her the best!

After an extensive search for a replacement we were fortunate to interview **Denise Scott-Pokorney**. Denise has owned property in St. Croix for 3 years and was preparing to move here full time from New York State when she applied for the position. She was so determined to be considered for the opening that she attended *Tip Your Hat* just for the opportunity to meet David and Holly. She is an avid animal-lover with 2 dogs, 2 cats and 3 horses. You can regularly find her at the race track cheering on one of her horses.

Please make sure you stop in to meet Denise in the store.

Bernard Frederick, our weekend gate attendant will be retiring this summer. Bernard worked during the week at Hovenssa and decided that the time was right for him to say goodbye to the Garden as well. He was with the Garden 5 1/2 years.

Patt Lewis, our Thursday morning gate attendant has left to spend more time on other endeavors, including The Women's Coalition's Closet to Closet.

We will miss our friends and wish them well in their next adventures.



WISH LIST

Help your Botanical Garden continue to offer residents and visitors a beautiful and educational experience! Here are some of the many ways you can help. Please consider donating the following items:

- ALL your gently-used household items for the "White Reindeer" rummage sale in December 2012
- 12 Golf Umbrellas for our Visitors to use on rainy days (\$25 each) **WISH FULFILLED**
- Great Hall & Office Generator **INSTALLED AND OPERATIONAL** thanks to a generous donor
- Repair of gutters on Great Hall (\$25,000)
- Repair of Great Hall Doors and cane-bolts (\$12,000)
- Metal handrails for stairs in factory ruins (\$2,500)
- Replacement of exterior light fixtures in Great Hall (\$7,800)
- Leaf Rakes – both metal and plastic tines (\$20-25 each)
- New desktop computer for Administrative office (\$1,200)
- Digital projector (\$700)
- Repair of chain-link fence along east and south borders of the Garden (\$4,500)
- New Split unit air conditioner for Administrative office (\$3,000)
- 3 Energy Star rated refrigerators for Great Hall Kitchen, Manager's House, and Visitors' Center (\$750 each)
- 18" Chainsaw (\$900)
- 6 Round tables for Visitors' Center events (\$700)

YOUR time and talents as a volunteer at special events, as a tour guide, in the Museum Store on busy days, in the volunteer plant nursery, in the office, or maintaining the grounds! (PRICELESS!)

Please remember your donations to the St. George Village Botanical Garden are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please consult your tax advisor.

Gifts at the Museum Store

Visiting Family this summer? Shop for gifts at the Museum Store. We have a large selection of books - children's, history, local flora & fauna and lots of cookbooks. There is a great selection of local art, jewelry, t-shirts and so much more. Open Mon.-Sat. 10am-4pm.

Members always receive a 10% discount!

NURSERY NOOK

The Nursery will be open during Mango Mele from noon until 6pm. The nursery Volunteers are always ready to greet you and assist in your planting needs. We will answer your gardening questions or when needed direct you to other sources for plant help.

This year we have a wide variety of exotic tropicals and will also have a specially reduced rate on palms and crotons for your landscape.



We want to remind everyone that the Nursery is open Tuesdays and Fridays from 9-11am and in addition we are now open every 2nd Saturday of the month from 9am-12:30pm for those folks who cannot get to the Nursery during the week. This also coincides with the Garden's Second Saturday educational program for children.

Happy Gardening and enjoy Mango Mele, truly a delightful experience.

Don't Forget to Remember the Garden

If your family doesn't know
what to get for your

BIRTHDAY

How do you expect them to
know how to handle your

ESTATE?



St. George Village
Botanical Garden

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
KINGSHILL, VI
PERMIT NO.40

127 Estate St. George, Frederiksted, VI 00840

Hours

Open Every day except Christmas; 9 am—5 pm

1/2 Price Admission for St. Croix Residents every
Sunday; STX Children (Under 12) Free on Sunday

HERBARIUM HOURS:

By appointment. Call 340.692.2874

LIBRARY HOURS:

By appointment. Call 340-692-2874

NURSERY HOURS:

Tuesday & Friday; 9 am-11am
2nd Saturdays 9am-noon

MUSEUM HOURS:

Monday through Friday; 9 am – 5 pm, and on weekend
days when a cruise ship is in port.

MUSEUM STORE HOURS:

Monday through Saturday; 10 am – 4 pm,
And during special events.

Tel (340) 692-2874 Fax (340) 692-6154

infoatthegarden@gmail.com

www.sgvbg.org

Upcoming Garden Events

July

1	Mango Melee	Noon-6pm
7	StoryHour	10am
14	Second Saturday	9am-noon
18	StoryHour	10am
28	Grow & Learn	10am-noon

August

4	StoryHour	10am
11	Second Saturday	9am-noon
15	StoryHour	10am
25	Grow & Learn	10am-noon

September

1	StoryHour	10am
8	2nd Saturday	9am-noon
12	StoryHour	10am
22	Grow & Learn	10am-noon

EDUCATION: SASKIA CORKE, EDUCATION COORDINATOR**STORYHOUR**

Summer is almost here: the school year is winding down; summer activities are set to start; beach barbecues and more time to spend outdoors. Why not spend some of that time at the St. George Village

Botanical Garden. This summer promises to be full of fun, exciting, educational, and family oriented activities everyone can enjoy. Spend the morning of the first Saturday or third Wednesday of every month at StoryHour under the kapok tree on the front lawn. With the orchids in bloom, and the cool morning breezes, StoryHour is a great way to instill a love of the outdoors and books in our youngest garden enthusiasts. StoryHour takes place at 10 in the morning, and features a botanically themed story from a guest reader or storyteller. Afterwards, feel free to explore the garden and take in the sights, smells, and sounds of summer.

If you are looking for a more all-day festivity, tropical fruits will take center stage on July 1st as the Garden hosts the 16th annual Mango Meleé and Tropical Fruit Festival. Mango Meleé highlights the bounty of fruits these warm climes offer during the summer months. This year's mango festival will feature local vendors selling various mango themed foods and provisions, as well as craft vendors, and farmers. There will also be fun crafts and games for the kids along with a mango-eating contest.

Mangos were first grown on the Indian subcontinent, over 5000 years ago. From Asia, humans carried the seeds throughout their travels, introducing the plant to the Middle East, Africa, and then the Americas. As one of the most popular fruits in the world, mangos are enjoyed in a myriad of countries by many different cultures in various ways. The fruit is a culinary delight: consumed in chutneys,

salsas, salads, smoothies, or as a sweet addition to a chicken, pork or fish dish. Besides being nutritious and comestible, many parts of the mango tree can be utilized in remedies or crafts. In India, parts of the mango tree are used to create a natural yellow dye for *saris*, fibers, and fabrics. The bark of the mango tree would be used to extract a rich, durable yellow color; the leaves and stems would be beaten to make a juice, when mixed with turmeric and lime, would create a rosy-ochre color. Not to be forgotten, the delicious fruit has been utilized in Asia as a dye solution; the rind of the mango an acid solution that is used in traditional dye techniques as well as the fruit's flesh that creates a soft, yellow color.

grow & learn
educational workshops for adults

Not to be forgotten, Grow and Learn workshops for adults every fourth Saturday of the month, features exciting topics that have ranged from Hurricane Preparedness, Soap Making, and Alcohol Infusions. Stay tuned for updates on these summer's topics.

If you are interested in a private workshop in the Garden for adults, students, or children, the Education program still offers private workshop on various topics. Whether you want to learn more about soil, observe pollinators in action, or make your own soap, a private workshop or seminar is a great way to spend the day. Call or email if you would like more information.

Do you have an idea for future workshops or programs? Or would you like to be a guest reader at a Story Hour? Email Saskia at sgvbg.edu@gmail.com.



Is yours the **Biggest**, the **Tastiest**, do you have the **Most**?
 Are you **Good with your Hands**, are you **Lucky**, or really **Hungry**?
 You can be a **Winner** at Mango Melee!

Mango Dis Mango Dat - Food competition.

Entries will be judged on best use of mangoes; taste; creativity; and presentation. There are four categories: *Sips* (alcoholic & non-alcoholic drinks); *Salsas* (and sauces); *Sweets* (and desserts) and *Stuff* (miscellaneous items that don't fit other categories). Your fee of \$5 per entry gives you an opportunity to win bragging rights for a year in addition to the following: 1st place in each category will receive \$50 and a Mango Melee apron 2nd place in each category will receive \$25 and a Mango Melee apron. Call 692-2874 or visit the Garden for a registration form.

Mega Mango Contest - is yours the biggest???

Bring your entry to the Great Hall during Mango Melee. There will be an electronic scale to weigh in. Winner receives a Mango Melee t-shirt!

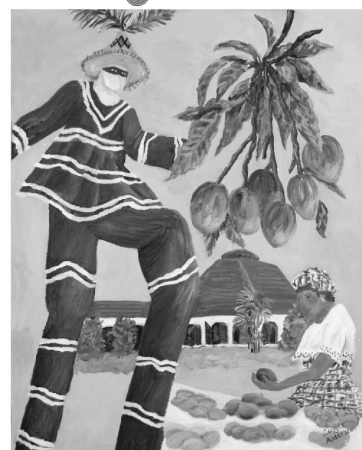
Tropical Fruit Identification - by TOUCH.

Close your eyes and examine tropical fruits hidden in a bag. The individual who gets the most correct answers receives a Mango Melee t-shirt!

Mango Melee t-shirt Contest- do you have the most?

Do you have a collection of Mango Melee shirts in your closet? Show them off. Who ever has the most (from different years) will win this year's shirt featuring **Ginger Anderson's** painting.

Mango Melee



*St. George Village Botanical Garden
St. Croix, USVI*

them off. Who ever has the most (from different years) will win this year's shirt featuring **Ginger Anderson's** painting.

Raffle -

One lucky person will take home Ginger's original art which will be raffled at the event!

Mango Eating Contests

This year we will implement a new system to prevent chaos at the sign up table! Registration will be all afternoon and names will be drawn just prior to the adult and children's contests to determine contestants. Winner in the Children's contest receives \$50; Adult winner receives \$100.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR ART IN THE GARDEN AND TIP YOUR HAT SPONSORS:

HOVENSA

A Better Copy * A Friend * A Friend *
JKC Communications * Gary M. Lalor * Sandcastle on the Beach
 *

Caribbean Country 93.5 *Hertz * Innovative * Marshall & Sterling
Owen Johnson Electric * Robert Merwin * Sandi Savage * Nina York