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ST. GEORGE VILLAGE BOTANICAL GARDEN  
127 Estate St. George  
Frederiksted, VI 00840



## Upcoming Events

- CHRISTMAS GALA AT THE GARDEN**  
Friday, December 10 • 6:30pm
- CHRISTMAS SPOKEN HERE**  
Sunday, December 12 • 11am-5pm
- ISLAND GARDEN TOURS**  
Saturday, January 22 • 9am  
Saturday, January 29 • 9am  
Saturday, February 5 (St. Thomas)
- ANNUAL MEETING**  
Saturday, February 19
- GARDENS BY MOONLIGHT**  
Wednesday, February 23

## The Conch Call Newsletter

A publication of the St. George Village Botanical Garden, SGVBG is a non-profit membership organization.

We welcome articles, photos, letters, and content suggestions, and reserve the right to edit.

Submit to: SGVBG, 127 Estate St. George, Frederiksted, VI 00840, email to [garden2@viaccess.net](mailto:garden2@viaccess.net) or fax 340-692-6154

Visit us at [www.sgvbg.org](http://www.sgvbg.org) or call 340-692-2874

## Board of Governors

- Robert Bartle, *President*
- Peggy Bodine
- Gary Bourdon, *Vice President*
- Amy Claire Dempsey
- David Hamada
- Margaret Hayes
- James Kobak, *Treasurer*
- Tom Pinchbeck
- Wendy Ramos
- Sandi Savage
- Joanne White



Executive Director: Brinsley Burbidge

**Garden Hours**  
OPEN DAILY 9AM-5PM

## New Members

- PATRON (\$500)**  
Denali Asset Management LLLP
- FAMILY/DUAL (\$45)**  
Patt & Steven Dicks  
Michelle & Yener Korkut  
Arnold & Jill Lange  
Roland & Rene Lee  
Brad & Catherine Lenhart  
Billy & Barbara Miller  
Bob & Ellen Waldman

- INDIVIDUAL (\$30)**  
David Hayes  
J. Todd Howell  
Margarita Hutchison  
Heike Nilgen  
Sarah Prudence



## Renewing Members

- SPONSOR (\$250)**  
Oscar E. & Olivia H. Henry
- BENEFACTOR (\$100)**  
Charlie & Barbara Gachot  
Al & Ann Lang  
Richard LaRhette & Diane Moran  
Ed & Connie Lemco  
Michael Makedonsky
- FAMILY/DUAL (\$45)**  
John & Inge Barker  
Antonio & Imelda Dizon  
Charles & Gretchen Freehling  
Philip & Ellen Kuhlman

- Barbara & Randolph Maples
- Hugh F. Morgan
- Lee & Peggi Morris
- Rick & Terry Rothenberger
- Fred & Sally Schantz
- Orville & Carolyn Sheldon
- Dave & Carol Waschull

- INDIVIDUAL (\$30)**  
Muriel Carter  
Chris Davies  
William Darryl Gross  
Linda Morland  
Winifred Reedy



- SOCIETY (\$15)**  
Valerie Combie

**Join** Chapter membership runs on an annual basis, with several levels of membership available. Write us at [garden2@viaccess.net](mailto:garden2@viaccess.net) or call 340-692-2874.

# St. George Village BOTANICAL GARDEN

CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & PRESERVATION

## The Conch Call

4th Quarter 2004

## President's Message

Greetings to all! This great-looking full-color edition of the Conch Call is made possible by the generosity of Cat Lenhart and Denali Asset Management. We asked Cat, a Garden member with a background in journalism, to help us make the Conch Call more exciting. She and Denali are now handling the design, production and printing of the Conch Call at no extra cost to SGVBG. In fact, the color version is costing us less than the black-and-white version. A big THANK YOU! To Cat and Denali.

More good news! The Garden has taken a great step forward toward gaining financial stability by adding a professional grant writer, Julia Sheen, to our team. Working with Brinsley, Julia has developed a long-term strategy to build the capacity for SGVBG to become a more successful institution. We have already submitted two assessment grants and have begun applications for major future programs, including funding for staff positions to carry them out. These grants include a new Native Species Program for the Garden and the funding to stabilize the buildings on our site. These applications are guided by our newly adopted Strategic Plan. There is a description of the Strategic Plan on this page of your Conch Call. A copy of the plan is available in the Garden's Library.



Good gardening!  
Bob Bartle

## Gala aims to bring new friends, funds to Garden

Three dynamic SGVBG members—Rasa Glengary, Connie Lemco and Vickie Wessel—are co-chairing this year's Christmas Gala at the Garden on Friday, December 10. They've set their sights high, aiming to bring in record-setting numbers to help boost the Garden's finances.



From left, co-chairs Rasa Glengary, Vickie Wessel and Connie Lemco.

Two new supporters, International Asset Management and Alliance Management Partners, join Peter and Monette Booth and Hovensa (regulars at the Garden's Christmas festivities) as our major sponsors. The weekend's events conclude with Christmas Spoken Here on December 12.

A dozen trees, decorated by talented volunteers, will be auctioned off by radio personality Roger W. Morgan, who is offering his considerable skills to the Garden for the third year.

Faithful volunteers Jinny Hall, Gladys Orr and Darline Ward Clark have again been pounding the Christiansted sidewalks in search of exciting items for the Silent Auction.

Patrick Baron will provide the musical entertainment, and Sugar Reef Catering will create the sit-down dinner menu.



From left, volunteers Gladys Orr, Jinny Hall and Darline Ward Clark.

Former board president Christie Bartle is handling the details for Sunday's Christmas Spoken Here—always a memorable family event with Santa, choirs singing seasonal tunes, our White Reindeer flea market, Christmas Cupboard bake sale, local vendors, and a Nursery sale.

The committee is hoping for a great turnout for these special Garden events.

## Strategic Plan charts course for the future

An institution without a plan is like a ship sailing without a destination or an airplane flying without a flight-plan. They both probably give the impression of direction but where they end up and whether they run out of fuel along the way is a matter of chance. Neither is going to have happy passengers. So SGVBG, like every other organization, needs a plan that sets out, in understandable language, what we are

(continued inside)

## Our Patrick resigns in favor of Florida

The St. George Village Botanical Garden has sadly accepted the resignation of Patrick Sumra, who has been our faithful and dedicated gatekeeper and unofficial ambassador to all who have come to the Garden over the last 10 years.

He has greeted thousands of visitors, handing out leaflets, directing them to parking areas and what to look for. He knows all the members of the Board of Governors, all the volunteers, and many of the

Patrick Sumra

regular visitors to major events, having established, over time, a rapport that underscores his natural friendliness and reflects his own love of the Garden. He has also been responsible for security at the entrance, for relief in the Gift Shop and for handling admission fees.

Patrick migrated from St. Lucia in 1970 and worked in the hospitality business, serving as a waiter and bartender at the former Grapetree Beach and Queen's Quarter Hotels, and was a valued employee at the Cormorant Beach Club for 15 years as

well as the Hibiscus Hotel. His wife, Vanita, is a former office manager.

They are the parents of four children, two girls and twin boys. The oldest, a daughter, lives in Philadelphia, where she is employed by the federal government in determining grant approvals to states. Their other daughter, the youngest, teaches history in Tampa. One son is still in college and lives in Philadelphia, and the other lives in New York and is a production systems director.

Patrick and Vanita are planning to live the Orlando area, where they will be near their younger daughter. As soon they pass papers on their St. Croix home, they will begin searching for their new home.

"It's time for a change," Patrick said. "I will miss most the people I have met here. I am a people person and love my job very much, but I just wish it were more challenging." Naming numerous friends he has made here and the interactions he has had with them, he said, "I will miss the Garden. I have learned a lot about it and will miss it all."

We will miss Patrick and sincerely hope that he and Vanita will find all that will enrich their lives.

## Future continued...

going to do. This plan is most frequently called a strategic plan as it contains strategies for success.

Grant-giving organizations demand that we have an approved strategic plan (would you give money to an organization that has no agreement on what it was going to do with your money and who would benefit from it?) and so your Garden now has a board-approved Strategic Plan.

So what is it and what does it contain? It sets out where SGVBG is going in the coming years: It describes the context (including economic realities) in which we operate; it identifies the community needs that we are best qualified to serve; it sets goals to be achieved; it defines who we are working for; and it identifies, very broadly, the resources we will need to get there. In short, it is a road map for our future and answers the question: "What does SVGBG do?"

Like any plan it will become less and less useful as conditions alter; therefore it is critical that the plan is reviewed regularly and modified in the light of changes to the world in which we operate.

## Wish List

When thinking of Christmas presents, please remember that your Garden operates on a shoestring and can rarely afford many of the key things we need. We have some very substantial needs, as several vital pieces of Garden equipment are either defunct or are costing more to maintain than they are worth. Please give us a call if you can help with any of these:



- The most important is a new ride-on mower. We have three mowers, all of which are old and require constant, often expensive maintenance to keep them going. There are times when all three are not working.
- Welding costs us a lot of money; many in-house repairs could be done if we had a good arc welder.
- Computers age and finally die: Three of the Garden's computers have died this year and we have only replaced one. We need at least one new computer.
- We need your help, even if these big-ticket items are beyond your reach. The dollars we earn from events, rentals and from sales are insufficient to keep the Garden functioning, and so we must rely on your generosity to give us whatever you can afford. Please remember SGVBG in your Holiday giving.

We would like to thank the St. Croix Orchid Society for the kind donation of the late Mauricette Brin's collection of books for the SGVBG Library.

## What's New in the Garden

### Bodine Visitor Center nears completion



The Gift Shop, at the entrance to the new Visitor Center, is nearing completion.

Next time you're at the Garden, do please stop by and see the exciting new progress on the Bodine Visitor Center. In the last three months the pergola has been built, the bathrooms have been fitted out and the walls of the shop have been completed. Due to the continuing generosity of Dick and Peggy Bodine we are looking forward to a completion date for the building early next summer. In the next edition of the Conch Call we will have more pictures showing further developments on this important addition to the Garden's facilities.



The pergola at the new Bodine Visitor Center's will eventually be covered in vines.

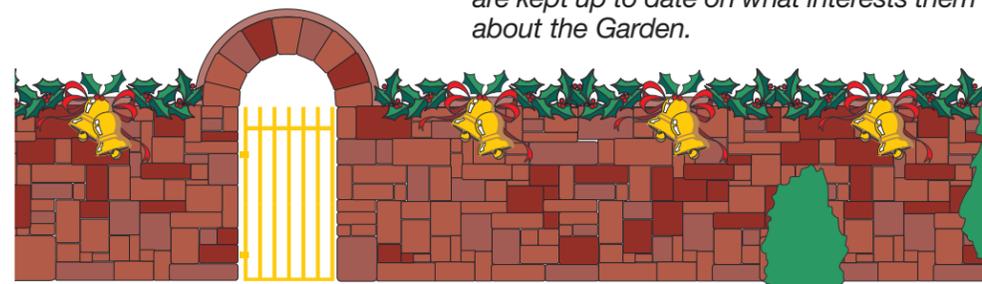


## We need your Feedback!

Did you receive a questionnaire in the mail recently about the Conch Call?

If not, please give the office a call and we will send you a copy.

We want to be sure that all our members are kept up to date on what interests them about the Garden.



## Seasonal Blooms

### 'Lipstick plant'

One of the most popular plants, especially with kids, on our Garden tours is the Lipstick Plant (*Bixa orellana*) that grows beside Mint Gut between the two bridges. The seeds are covered with a waxy material that stains anything it touches (including people and their clothing) a deep red color, hence its common name. This seed's dye is used very widely among South American Indians to color the body, face and hair and the "lipstick" is widely reputed to deter insects. It has many other local uses, including starting fires by rubbing two pieces of the soft wood together.

A native to tropical continental America, it is widely cultivated as a cosmetic and food colorant and known by many different names: achote or achiote in Puerto Rico, bija in the Dominican Republic and Cuba, roucou in Trinidad (and also historically in the Virgin Islands), atta in Belize, onoto in Venezuela and urucú in many other South American counties.

The red dye (commercially called annatto) is also used to give color to butter, margarine, cheese, soups, drinks and many other foods, and is widely used in cosmetics and paints.

It is easy to grow from seed (in fact it is often naturalized) and is a small, attractive shrub with conspicuous pink flowers. If you have little kids, do think twice about planting it. They can get into enough trouble without you providing a plant that they can use to color themselves, their clothes, the walls of your house (and probably your cat and dog) a long-lasting bright red color.

The Garden's Lipstick Plant is popular with visitors, especially children.