

BOTANICAL GARDEN

The Conch Call

3rd Quarter 2006

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

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



Upcoming Events

GARDENS BY MOONLIGHT

Saturday, October 7

NURSERY SALE W/THE ORCHID SOCIETY

Sunday, October 8

GROW AND LEARN

Wednesday, October 11

CHRISTMAS GALA AT THE GARDEN

Early-bird reservation deadline
Tuesday, October 17

GROW AND LEARN

Wednesday, November 8

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 or fax 340-692-6154

Visit us at www.sgvbg.org or call 340-692-2874

Board of Governors

Gary Bourdon, *President*
James Kobak, *Vice President*
Ethel Ritch, *Treasurer*
Sandi Savage, *Secretary*

Robert Bartle	Max McIntosh
Peggy Bodine	Joanne White
Monette Booth	Nina York
Amy Claire Dempsey	

Horticultural Director: David Hamada

Administrative Director: Lesley Hoffman

Garden Hours
OPEN DAILY 9AM-5PM

New Members

* denotes renewal member

GOLD PALM

Max McIntosh

SILVER PALM

Dan & Amelia Musser*

BRONZE PALM

Barbara Benner*
Amy Dempsey*
John & Frances Fifield*
Phil and Rasa Glengary*
Pam Nielsen
Dan & Nancy Putnam*

COUPLE

Ginger & Tom Anderson
Rosemary Barker & Michael Haworth
Bobbie Cooper & Robert Hawse
Peter Duthie & Britt Lindwall-Duthie
Truman & Janet Hagbloom*
Tanya Nichols & John Orr
Rick Starr & Zandy Hillis-Starr
Doug & Bunny Bewick*
Gary Bourdon & Ava-Gail Jagroop Bourdon*

Paul & Marilyn Chakroff*
Jennifer Jordan & Tom Eldridge*
Johanna Etkin Finley*
Owen & Carol Johnson*
Yener & Michelle Korkut*
Nancy & Junior Martin*
James & Judith McWilliams*
Eric Joyce & Judi Perazzo*
Douglas & Linda Roach*
Anne & Pete Scigliano*
Dick & Debbie Smullen*
Andreas & Debra Tutein*
Roger & Diane White*

INDIVIDUAL

Jane Akin*
Judy Baumgarten*
Betty Cambra
Lynn Fahy*
Jeannette Jurman*
Jeff Keularts*
Freda Logan*
Kimberly McCollum
Frances Molloy*
Teddi Morrison*
Bonita Oswald Repp*
Martha Shoemaker*
Bea Turner*
Greg Worrell*

*We would like to extend our grateful thanks to:
Denali Asset Management for their continued support in helping
produce our quarterly Conch Call in full color.*

President's Message

Dear Members:

At the last Annual Meeting the topic of education came up. When I mentioned some of our programs, a reply came from the audience: "What about education for adults?" I would like to speak a little on the existing programs and some new ideas for education we will put in place this year that are geared more for adults.

We currently have two adult-education programs: Gardens By Moonlight and Grow and Learn. Gardens By Moonlight was revived a couple of years ago and is a truly enjoyable evening. It is an interesting mix of elegance and education. Botanical gardens are not unlike the sea: their mysteries unfold at night and David Hamada does a great job of showing us this world. Joanne White has put together the Grow and Learn program, which takes place in the Pavilion in the Bodine Visitors' Center. Once a month speakers are scheduled to talk on fun and informative topics.

We are planning a couple of new things: Peggy Bodine and Nina York are working on arranging a tour to Denmark to visit the Danish Botanical Gardens, as well as other historical sites, in May or June 2007.

The Board has also approved the creation of a small museum that will chronicle the history of Estate St. George and the interaction of people and plants over the last 2,000 years. The museum will tell the story of evolution from a large Amerindian settlement up to the present day Botanical Garden.

I would like to welcome Attorney Maxwell McIntosh to the Board. We are excited to have Max on the Board where his wisdom will, I'm sure, be put to good use. As always, I would like to thank the Board, Lesley, David, staff and volunteers for all their hard work.

Sincerely, Gary M. Bourdon

The Magic of Christmas' coming to the Garden

This year's Christmas Gala at the Garden, with the theme "The Magic of Christmas" and chaired again by Connie Lemco, will begin at 6:30pm on Friday, December 8. It will be followed by Christmas Spoken Here, chaired again by Christie Bartle, on Sunday, December 10.

Ten live Christmas trees, decorated by our talented volunteers, will be auctioned off at the Gala by radio personality Roger W. Morgan. Connie Lemco, with the help of Gallows Bay Frame's Jim Bierowski and the group of artists known as the Pallatteers, will make sure we have the sought-after Artistree again. More than 50 Virgin Islands artists contribute original miniature paintings to grace the tree. This is a great way to add to your collection of original island art while helping support your Garden.

After last year's rave reviews, we have asked David Trask of Good Spirits Catering to cater dinner again; and keyboardist Patrick Baron and singer Judi Fricks will be back to entertain.

The early-bird price for the Gala is \$125 per person; after October 17 it goes up to \$150 per person.

At Sunday's Christmas Spoken Here, the trees will remain on display in the



The Artistree drew a winning bid of \$2,500 at the 2005 Gala.

Great Hall before being delivered to the successful bidders on Monday. We will also have choirs singing carols on the hour every hour throughout the day. Santa will of course be on hand to take note of the little ones' wishes and we will have dozens of food and craft vendors.

We welcome donations of items (except clothing) for our ever-popular White Reindeer sale; call the office to arrange for a good time to deliver them.

We look to our wonderful volunteers for help both in the planning stages and during the events. Give us a call if you'd like to help!

Board works on completing two major grants



Horticultural Director David Hamada meets with CAP assessor George Gann.

St. George Village Botanical Garden continues efforts to complete two grants funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The first of these grants, the Museum Assessment Program (MAP), focuses on governance. This assessment

(Continued on page 3)

Spotlight

Errol Chichester, Chairman of Mango Melee

Many of us can remember the first time we went blueberry picking or enjoyed our first piece of strawberry shortcake. Here in the islands, each year more people join thousands of Virgin Islanders in celebrating the most popular tropical fruit of them all—the small but juicy, colorful and ever-so-versatile mango.

This year marked the 10th annual Mango Melee and Tropical Fruit Festival, a major event at the St. George Village Botanical Garden that is co-sponsored by the V.I. Department of Agriculture, Department of Tourism, UVI Cooperative Extension Service, UVI Agricultural Experiment Station, Innovative, BiolImpact, Inc., Hovensa, Plaza Extra and Cruzan Rum.

Errol Chichester, head agriculturist and horticulturist at the V.I. Department of Agriculture, has chaired the event for 10 years and has already begun planning for next year. Chichester has wanted to step down from the top position for a number of years; when he does, we are hoping that Stafford Crossman, Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture, will take his place.

“Mango Melee started because we saw the need to encourage residents to utilize the abundance of local fruit,” Chichester said. “We wanted to encourage and promote the propagation, cultivation, and use of mangoes and other tropical fruits.”

Festival-goers had only to drive to the Garden on Sunday, July 2, to realize how very popular it has become. Cars filled with family members of all ages were lined up all the way to Queen Mary Highway.

The festival has grown considerably over the years, as has interest in the workshops and demonstrations. Some events were moved this year to the beautiful new Bodine Visitors’ Center, making it an attraction in itself.

“We are now providing technical guidance for farmers as well as long- and short-term residents and responding to their various agricultural concerns, including, but not limited to fertilizing, pruning, and composting. We also hold numerous workshops in conjunction with UVI’s Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and Agricultural Experiment Station (AES), all for free, and we recently asked growers to concentrate on developing “value added” products with their tropical fruits.”

About a dozen vendors showcase their specialty packaged wares in the Great Hall, adjacent to the display of tropical fruits collected by Chichester from around the island, while dozens of other food vendors, farmers and craft vendors line the driveway.

Interest in the Mango Dis, Mango Dat food Competition has also grown considerably over the past couple of years, with more than 30 entries this year.

“We are hoping that the 10th Mango Melee Cookbook will come out within the next couple of months,” Chichester said. He explained that once mangoes are ripe, they can be frozen, making them accessible year-round, not even losing their color.

Chichester said he is now working on how to make Mango Melee even more successful. One possibility is making it a two-day event, as some festivalgoers have requested. “It has grown steadily over the last four years. The fact that it is a family affair held in such a beautiful location and that we try to have something for everyone are reasons for the event’s popularity.”

Chichester once again thanked all of the Mango Melee committee, the tropical fruit growers and all the participating farmers on who he depends each year. Special thanks are extended to Irene Lawaetz, Dennis Nash, Aberra Bulbulla, and Alex Etienne for their invaluable assistance in providing the fruit in this year’s display. This year there were 93 varieties of mangoes and over 50 other tropical fruits on display in the Great Hall.

“They all help to make this one giant success,” he said. “Every year it gets better and better. The new Bodine Visitors’ Center provided a nice attraction between the old and the new. It makes a wonderful addition.”

– Anne Scigliano



Danica David and counselor Sherisse Lake.

Kids’ camp a big success

Danica David’s Creative Adventure Summer Art Program was held for the third year this summer, from June 19 to July 28. David, has been helped at her summer camp for the past five years by counselor Sherisse Lake. The 20 young participants spent the six weeks learning how to draw, paint, make cartoons, sewing, jewelry making and creating cultural masks and birdhouses. V.I. Rum Industries again

donated empty half-barrels, which the kids painted with bright floral designs. Ferdi Abraham has taught the children gardening techniques in past years; this year they learned how to start a vegetable garden. Next year’s camp will be a four-week program in July and August.

SAVE THE DATE!

The Annual Christmas Gala
“The Magic of Christmas”
 At The St. George Village Botanical Garden

Friday, December 8, 2006
6:30pm sharp

For information & reservations call 692-2874

Music by Patrick Baron & Judi Fricks

Sumptuous passed hors d’oeuvres
 Elegant served dinner catered by
 GSBB Catering, Chef David Trask

Live auction of decorated trees
 Auctioneer Roger W. Morgan
 Silent auction

Limited seating – Reserve early!
 Tickets \$125 Per Person prior to October 17th
 \$150 after October 17th



Fort Frederik curator Bruce Tilden presented a talk on St. Croix’s archaeological history during July’s Grow and Learn program in the Pavilion.

Grow and Learn series offers variety of topics

Since June this year, the Garden has been presenting a series of talks in the new Grow and Learn program. June saw about 25 members and friends learning how to make edible garnishes out of fruits and vegetables. Wallace Phaire, Jr., chef at the Juan Luis Hospital, gave expert advice and guidance during this hands-on workshop.

In July, Bruce Tilden, curator at Fork Frederik Museum, gave an interesting talk on St. Croix’s history to about two dozen people. He brought with him some fascinating archaeological artifacts that helped illustrate his presentation.

In August, Margarita Hutchison showed participants how to make the most of everyday waste by using composting techniques; and in September Ed Miller discussed the many uses of the Agave plant, including making tequila.

The workshops are held on the second Wednesday of each month in the Pavilion at the Bodine Visitors’ Center. Suggestions for future workshops are encouraged: Call Joanne White at 773-1519.

What’s New

Board sets new rates: Membership Fees

At its June 2006 meeting, the Board of Governors revised and updated the levels of membership of St. George Village Botanical Garden. When you get your next renewal letter, you will see the following changes:

- Individual \$50 per year
 - One membership card for free Garden admission
 - 10% discount at the Museum Store
 - Quarterly newsletter, the Conch Call
 - Discounts at special events
 - Use of SGVBG library by appointment
 - Reciprocal privileges at other botanical gardens

Senior (60+) Individual \$35

Couple \$75
 • Same as individual plus 1 extra membership card

Senior Couple \$55

Bronze Palm member (two cards) . . . \$150
 • Same as couple plus 4 free one-time guest passes

Silver Palm member (two cards) . . . \$250
 • Same as couple plus 8 free one-time guest passes

Gold Palm member (two cards) . . . \$500
 • Same as couple plus 12 free one-time guest passes

Platinum Palm member (two cards) . \$1,000
 • Same as couple plus 20 free one time guest passes

Free admission for members’ children and grandchildren under 16; member must accompany children.

Admission Fees

The Board of Governors has announced new general admission fees to the Garden, starting Sunday, October 1, 2006. This is the first increase in fees in many years; the new rates include a special discount for people over the age of 60. These per-person rates do not apply to special events:

- Adult visitors \$8
- Seniors (60+) \$6
- Children under 12 \$1

Taxi van passengers
 Fewer than 10 \$8
 More than 10 \$5

Safari bus tours \$4

There is a special rate for Virgin Island residents on Sundays: \$4 for adults and accompanying children under the age of 12 are admitted free.

GRANTS (continued)

examines the way our Garden is governed and provides for professional guidance in improving the way we operate according to museum standards. We have completed a self-study and are in the process of selecting an objective surveyor to conduct a site visit.

The second grant, the Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) allows for professionals with expertise in historic architecture and plant collections to conduct assessments of our historic structures and living plant collections and develop recommendations for preservation, maintenance and development. George Gann of the Institute for Regional Conservation in Miami paid SGVBG a visit July 12-13 to conduct his site visit and survey the plant collections. His final report will be prepared in co-operation with architect William Taylor, who is responsible for the architectural assessment. The final reports generated by the MAP and CAP assessments will be useful tools in demonstrating to funding sources our commitment to developing according to professional museum standards.