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Vol. 2, #1122 --- 10/23/2017
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin



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St. Maarten & St. Martin "SXM" Weekly News

*St. Maarten & St. Martin's Most Relied-Upon Source
of Tourist-Oriented News & Information*

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Weekly News is part of JMB's St. Maarten / St. Martin website: www.everythingsxm.com

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to be sure you receive this newsletter every week.

IMPORTANT: "Jeff1620" is a send-only email address.
For Contact info, see [#Contact Us](#)
at the end of this newsletter.

Important Note:

This is Jeff Berger's / JMB Communications' **St. Maarten & St. Martin / SXM Weekly News**, published every Monday (Tuesdays during most holiday weeks). **You are receiving St. Maarten & St. Martin "SXM" Weekly News because you subscribed to it and/or are a JMB Website Supporters member. Unsubscribe info is at the end of this newsletter. Stay with us for all the latest tourist-oriented news from St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM all year long. Now read by 300,000 people around the world...**

Get Important SXM News as it Happens & Lots of Pictures Too from our Facebook and Twitter Pages:



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Download PDFs of Recent Editions ---- Attention iPad, iPhone, Note, and Android Users

This narrow format is easily readable on all mobile devices. Scroll down for this week's news.

You can also download PDFs of recent editions here:

http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

On that page, the link beginning with the highest number is the most recent edition.

Get Your Own Free Weekly Copy of SXM Weekly News:

<http://www.everythingsxm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?>

Enter your email address at the top and click SUBMIT. When you receive the confirming email, click the confirming link and you're in.

TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE

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Timeshare Rental and Sale of the Week

Each week JMB randomly picks timeshare condominiums for rent and for sale in SXM from the huge selection at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml and features them here.

To rent out or sell timeshares you own in SXM or anywhere else worldwide, for no ad charge or commission, join JMB Website Supporters. Visit http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml for info. Membership now delivers a growing list of about 300 St. Maarten and St. Martin-focused travel benefits -- and your membership subscription helps keep these weekly SXM newsletters coming.

SXM Timeshare Rental of The Week:

Rental listings here have been temporarily suspended; many rentals are on our site, as always.

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 5/4/2017 5/2/2018 Week 11 Simpson Bay Resort & Marina This is a one bedroom unit on an upper floor of the upper B units (Bougainvillea bldg) It had a spectacular sunset view and overlooks the B pool. It was recently upgraded and has two murphy beds in addition to the main bedroom. asking \$8,000 US Donna 865-458-0426 tbirdbill@yahoo.com

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

See them all at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml

St. Maarten / St. Martin Homes, Villas, Businesses, Commercial Properties, and Residential Properties for Sale (NEW): [Click to access our recommended real estate agents](#)

This Week's Stories

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest. This week's Table of Contents follows these links:

"Like" Our "Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin" Facebook Site:



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/6297726366/>

"Like" Our Facebook St. Maarten Timesharing Group

<https://www.facebook.com/StMaartenTimesharing/>

Search the **SXM Weekly News** Archives:

Current Archives (Since 4/2014) in PDF Format:

http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

Archives prior to April 12 2014 (old format):

<http://everythingxsm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?flavor=archive:list=xsmweeklynews>

Check Out Our Linked-In "St. Maarten and St. Martin Travelers" Group (Free; Timeshare Focus):

www.linkedin.com

Get a growing group of about 300 SXM-focused island discounts and other SXM-related benefits through JMB Website Supporters membership:

http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

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St. Maarten / St. Martin Homes, Villas, Businesses, Commercial Properties, and Residential Properties for Sale (NEW): [Click to access our recommended real estate agents](#)

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Section Five: For Members Only (Revised 8/2017)

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- B. Password Recovery Info: Your username is the email address you have registered with JMB Website

Supporters. If you forget your password, click "forgot password" in the orange login box near the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com.

C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads: Links are on the Secret Website (see a, above.)

Section Six: Where To Find Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) (Revised 8/2017)

How To Get a **GROWING LIST of 300+** Money-Saving St. Maarten- and St. Martin-Focused Travel Benefits

Visit <http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret>, the *secret* site for JMB Website Supporters members only, for low fares to SXM from cities across the USA, Canada, and Western Europe, plus a growing list of 300+ additional major travel benefits.

Not a member yet? See http://everythingxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml. Cost: \$59 for one year, or \$99 total for three full years. Other durations available. Join us today...

All JMB Newsletters Read *From JMB*

This newsletter and mail from JMB Website Supporters to members read *From JMB* in the subject area so you won't misinterpret them as spam.

THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest.

SECTION 1: Getting There: Flights, Airlines, Airports, Cruises, & Weather

1. For Now, Storm Formation in the Atlantic Stays Unlikely

Thanks in large measure to a significant amount of Saharan dust that's blowing across the Atlantic basin east of St. Maarten, and to adverse winds in the tropical Atlantic, tropical storm formation in that area is currently unlikely. Forecasters are saying this may continue for a bit.

The Cape Verde hurricane season — during which the most significant storms for St. Maarten often form — is pretty much over. The entire hurricane season ends November 30, though storms have been known to form later and some have hit St. Maarten well into November.

We'll keep you posted here and on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) as this awful hurricane season hopefully winds down.

2. Cruise Ships Returning Soon To SXM

Cruise ships start to return to St. Maarten in the first half of November. The island is talking with a number of operators to increase visits.

Many restaurants on the island already have reopened, though progress appears to be faster on the Dutch side. Cruise ship passengers often visit Philipsburg, where a number of stores are expected to be open to greet them.

We'll post more when ships start arriving...

3. Airlines Already Increasing Flights To SXM

Airlines will base their scheduling of flights to SXM based upon the volume of available beds more so than on demand. However, they are about to find out that demand is high and passengers anxious to visit the island are finding previously underutilized sources of accommodations helpful in making reservations. See more about accommodations in section 2 and especially in section 4 of this edition.

American Airlines already has resumed a flight a week from Miami, fed by widespread connections. And JetBlue restarts some service from JFK early next month, far ahead of its original announcement. Delta and some other airlines from the US already are serving the island, and Air France is providing service via connections.

We're reporting all the latest news about the increasing airlift to SXM on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#).

4. Get Up-To-Date Tropical Outlooks, Watches, & Warnings

Major updates to the Weather section of our everythingSXM.com website were completed over the last few weeks.

In addition to many new real-time tropical weather graphics — including satellite images and new loops — our weather site has now been updated with the National Hurricane Center's latest tropical outlook; tropical weather discussion (for true weather geeks); and the latest forecasts, watches, and warnings for all active storms, plus new track models. .

You can access all this information free, as always: just go to everythingSXM.com and click "Weather" in the masthead.

If you are prospectively in the path of any future approaching storm, we urge you to visit crownweather.com and to sign up for their incredibly inexpensive detailed forecasting service. It's by far the best on the web and it can prove highly useful to you, your family, and your business.

As we've said before, if you are in the path of an approaching storm, never use any website for life or death advice: always rely on directives from local authorities.

5. Four Sources of Current SXM Weather Info (Revised 10/8)

You'll find detailed observations and forecasts by visiting our main SXM website, www.everythingsxm.com, and clicking either of the weather observations at the top of the page.

The four sources of current weather info, beyond the two above, are:

- 1) [Crown Weather Services](#) whose very inexpensive subscription service is, we feel, the best in the business.
- 2) Our "Weather" page at www.everythingsxm.com -- it has current satellite images and radar loops and now all the latest NHC weather forecasts, outlooks, and advisories as well.
- 3) Our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#), which publishes the latest advisories, watches, and warnings when SXM is threatened by any storms.
- 4) On or off the island, listen to Island 92 -- 91.9FM or see www.island92.com. They report island warnings at once and know exactly what's going on. You can listen on the web anytime through live streaming. They were knocked off the air by Irma but are now back.

Get a quick, current satellite look at the Atlantic basin anytime: <http://www.goes.noaa.gov/GIFS/ATWV.JPG> .

N. B.: *Again...Never rely on any website if you're in the path of a storm; always heed warnings from local authorities.*

6. **Guaranteed Lowest Rates** for Hotel Rooms & Car Rentals Around The World

[SkyMed Travel offers you a 110% Lowest Rate Guarantee for both hotel and car rental reservations worldwide.](#) You can't lose with this, so read this article, sign up free and make your travel reservations directly through *SkyMed Travel*.

What it Is - How to Join (free for Our Readers & JMB Members):

We're now giving JMB Website Supporters members and *SXM Weekly News* readers access to a private, "members only" travel wholesale club that offers incredible prices not only on airfares but on travel reservations and packages worldwide.

The SkyMed Travel Club offers exceptional pricing on everything and almost invariably beats everyone else's pricing. We have found their pricing excellent across the board and their 110% low rate guarantee on hotels and car rentals is real news.

Normally, SkyMed Travel charges \$99 to join plus \$99 annual renewals. But for our JMB Website Supporters members and now for **Weekly News** readers, the cost to join is zero as will be the cost for renewals. Join the Club by going to <https://www.skymedtravel.com/register>, sign up, and provide the requested information. Complete the first sign up item (SkyMed Membership Number or Representative ID) by entering the code 391330 — doing that ensures that you pay nothing for your SkyMed Travel Club membership. No code, no free entry to the club's phenomenal pricing. **If you are a SkyMed Member, however, enter your SkyMed Membership Number here to get the absolute greatest possible discounts.**

You won't be disappointed.

[Changing Your Email Address?](#)

Now You Can Unsubscribe Your Old Email and Sign Up Your New One for your SXM Weekly News subscription Quickly and Easily at our Site: www.sxmweeklynews.com

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Resorts, Timeshares, Villas Etc.

7. SXM T/Share Rentals for 2018 Available from Owners

If you're tentatively planning to visit SXM this winter, do check out our listing of timeshare rentals available for 2018. Of course, there's a notice at the top of the page concerning the availability of such weeks at island timeshare resorts.

This week, we will begin to accept ads from our JMB Website Supporters members who own villas on the island and wish to rent their private villas to tourists. We'll be detailing this program in a special message to our JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program members this week, which is when we'll also be updating our ad input form so it can be used for both private villa rentals and timeshare rentals.

As is the case with timeshare ads, JMB will accept advertising only from members of JMB Website Supporters. To join JMB, please click the page curl on all pages of everythingSXM.com — that's where you'll find membership options including information on our US military memberships.

We look forward to the imminent implementation of this program, which will deliver new benefits for our JMB Website Supporters members and new rental options for our readers.

SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

8. "Section Three" -- Member Discounts / Benefits News & Updates

This section of *SXM Weekly News*, which appears weekly, will provide detailed information about current JMB Website Supporters discounts and benefits both for current members and for people thinking about joining JMB.

We now offer about 300 discounts (including those now being rolled out). We think you'll find many surprises here that will be of great interest and value. Please check this section in the coming weeks as we continue to roll out entirely new discounts and benefits.

For more info on what you get with your JMB membership, [go here](#).

SECTION 4: Island News, Info, & Features

LAST
CALL:

It's Not Too Early
To Start Planning
Your Next SXM Trip.

Let Us Give You
About 300 SXM Discounts
& Other Benefits
In Our "Dog Days" Sale,
Must End Nov. 1

Hundreds of St. Maarten / St. Martin Discounts
& Other Benefits at Great Prices:

New JMB memberships: Three years, \$89; Five years, \$109; One year, \$39
http://everythingsexm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

Renewal JMB memberships: Four years, just \$89; three years, \$69; one year, \$34
www.everythingsexm.com/secret Go to the **Membership Renewal Center**

JMB Membership Reinstatements: Four years, just \$89; three years, \$69; one year, \$34
<http://everythingsexm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

9. Irma Damage Estimate Now About USD\$5-Billion Island-Wide

Hurricane Irma damage estimates on St. Maarten/St. Maarten now top \$5 billion, \$3.5 billion of which is on the French side.

There, virtually everything was destroyed along Orient beach; Boulevard de Grand Case saw virtually all of its buildings pummeled, and downtown Marigot was hit with a punishing storm surge and breakers crashing into and through many buildings.

As we previously reported, hundreds of boats were sunk on both sides of the island and many vehicles were ruined by salt water, 185mph+ winds, flying debris, or a combination of all of these. The current damage estimate we are sure is closer to reality than its predecessors. But the final bottom line cost to the island will probably be even higher once lost tourism revenue is calculated in.

We'll keep you posted.

10. Summit Resort, Destroyed by Irma, Closing Permanently

Built in the early 1970s, Summit Resort was one of the few remaining vestiges of St. Maarten's charming, serene past.

Consisting of dozens of mostly two-story chalets painted in tropical colors in a garden setting, Summit harks back to a time when resorts were a place for pure relaxation in the natural splendor of true tropical ambience.

It was never posh, but nobody needed posh. Knowledgeable tourists, knowing the tradewinds off Simpson Bay lagoon provided refreshing breezes virtually every night, left their windows open at Summit — no real need for air conditioning here, though every room had it..

King size beds with green bedspreads bespeckled with gorgeous tropical flowers lit up the rooms, where ceiling fans helped the tradewinds on their way. There were modern conveniences, of course, including cable TV, free Internet access, a pool deck with a genuinely spectacular view of Simpson Bay lagoon, Marigot harbor in the distance, even Creole rock and Anguilla as well as the northern mountains.

Late at night, daring souls occasionally skinnydipped in their pool under the stars.

But it all came to a punishing end when Irma visited on that early September day, exactly 22 years after vicious Hurricane Luis which was puny by comparison to Irma. As we reported soon after the hurricane hit, she destroyed most of Summit's wood frame buildings, blew pieces of the pool deck hundreds of yards away, removed roofs, and in a few hours had done more damage to Summit than all hurricanes from the prior 44 years put together.

The first time we visited St. Maarten we went to the old Mullet Bay Beach Resort (MBBR) which until hurricane Luis hit had bordered the Mullet Bay golf course. That visit was part of a group meeting from New England Life. We enjoyed the island and returned less than a year later — visiting Summit Resort which at the time had chalets painted in white with brown molding.

It was our first real SXM vacation experience and we loved it, as did thousands of other regulars. After visiting with and explaining the fate of Summit to its employees late last week, owner Bruce Jakobovitz sent this message to the resort's timeshare owners:

Dear Summit Resort Hotel and Vacation Club Member,

As you know by now, Hurricane Irma struck the island of St Maarten in the early morning hours of September 6, 2017 as a Category 5 hurricane with sustained winds of 185 miles per hour and with wind gusts of over 200 miles per hour. The impact on our beautiful island was devastating. The impact on the Summit Resort Hotel was catastrophic.

Some of the Summit's buildings were flattened completely by the force of Hurricane Irma's winds. All but one of the Summit's two-story buildings had their second floors either partially, or completely blown off. Our single-story buildings lost roofs and suffered other damage. The pool deck was completely blown away with pieces from it landing by our front entry gate. Our General Manager's living quarters were destroyed as were the living quarters of our Head of Housekeeping. Our restaurant, bar, reception office, laundry facilities and maintenance building were each either destroyed or heavily damaged as well. There is not a single part of the Summit that has been spared from the destructive force of Hurricane Irma.

It pains me deeply to write this but the Summit Resort Hotel is closed for good. The cost of rebuilding far exceeds the amount of insurance for which the Summit qualifies. Had the Summit been destroyed by fire, insurance proceeds might have been enough to cover the cost of rebuilding. Hurricane insurance is prohibitively expensive however, as many of you may know, and our coverage does not provide anywhere near enough to rebuild. Having opened in 1973, as one of the first hotels on St Maarten, and having survived numerous hurricanes over the years including Luis, Marilyn, Lenny, Gonzalo and so many others, we were done in by Irma which was reported to be the most powerful storm ever recorded in our area. The loss is simply too great and we have no plans to rebuild or to reopen at any time in the future.

Like me, many of you have been visiting the Summit for decades and it truly is your "home away from home" in St. Maarten. I know that many of you think of our staff like your own family and they think of you the same way. Unfortunately, some of our staff lost their homes in the hurricane and all of our staff will soon be unemployed as there is no way to keep them on the payroll when the hotel has no revenue. For this reason, I greatly appreciate the donations that so many of you have made to our fundraising campaign to support the Summit staff. Article 2 of the Summit Resort Hotel and Vacation Club Terms and Conditions states:

"Should the Unit not be available due to acts of God or other reasons beyond the reasonable control of the Lessor, the Member may receive his pro-rata share of the insurance or condemnation proceeds so generated or the Lessor may elect to repair or rebuild the Unit and extended the Member's benefits for the length of time use was not available."

Unfortunately, repairing or rebuilding is not a possibility given the enormous gap between, on the one hand, the estimated rebuilding costs and, on the other, our limited insurance coverage and our limited revenues from timeshare and hotel operations. Therefore, in accordance with our Terms and Conditions, each of you will be receiving a pro-rata share of the limited insurance proceeds generated. We are waiting for our insurance company to complete its assessment and to finalize the amount it will pay out in total. Once this is done we will be able to calculate the pro-rata share of the proceeds that each Member is entitled to and communicate this to you. This is likely to be a low number though given the sublimit imposed by our insurance carrier for damages caused by hurricanes.

We will need each Member's correct physical address, telephone number and email address in order to get this information to you. If this letter has been forwarded to you by someone else, please make sure to contact us, at info@thesummitresort.com, and give us your up to date information.

On a personal note, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your many years of visiting the Summit, for the friendships you built and maintained with our staff, for the support you offered for all the upgrades and improvements we did to the property over the years and for the warm and friendly atmosphere that each of you helped create at the Summit.

I am proud of all our accomplishments, and of all the awards we won over the years as well. Especially that, in what turns out to be our last year in business, we won TripAdvisor's highest honor, the Travelers' Choice Award. The Summit was never about the physical buildings and rooms but, rather, the Summit's beauty was in its people and each of you were one of those wonderful Summit people.

I hope you each have good memories of the Summit, as well as lots of pictures too, and will cherish those in the years to come.

Best regards,

Bruce Jakubovitz

11. Is Ocean Club "Closed Permanently"?

Ocean Club St. Maarten's Facebook Site reads "closed permanently" -- or it did through Saturday night, to the astonishment of a number of Ocean Club timeshare owners who visited its Facebook site after unsuccessful attempts to contact the resort.

We wrote to the resort to ask whether the resort was in fact closing permanently. Their Facebook site on Wednesday was revised to read, "The Ocean Club is closed until further notice, due to the devastation caused by hurricane Irma. To our Members, you will be updated via email as we have done previously. If you are a member and have not received an update email from us, please let us know via info@oceanclubstmaarten.com." In response to that email, we simply received a brief form letter: "Please be informed that the due to damage caused by Hurricane Irma, the resort is closed until further notice."

There has been serious damage to the resort based solely upon observation of aerial photographs, one of which we posted on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#). But the resort by press time had not answered our very specific question about closing.

Hopefully they are not "closing permanently" and simply are too busy coping with this catastrophe to bother with press questions.

12. Timeshare Resorts' Escape Hatch: Force Majeure Clause

Although we've been aware of the existence of these clauses for some time, we don't think timeshare owners have even read them, let alone understand them.

Force majeure clauses in timesharing contracts and elsewhere — according to a Google search — mean this:

A "force majeure" clause (French for "superior force") is a contract provision that relieves the parties from performing their contractual obligations when certain circumstances beyond their control arise, making performance inadvisable, commercially impracticable, illegal, or impossible.

St. Maarten timeshare resorts are honorable businesses that live up to their commitments to timeshare owners. But Irma was the strongest hurricane on record in the Atlantic basin, and the second strongest known tropical cyclone in the planet's recorded history. As you're well aware, Irma it ravaged the island and damaged or destroyed some 90% of its buildings.

If you have not yet heard from your timeshare resort about its future — or if you have not read that resort information in the Files area of our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) — you should be aware of this clause and you should check your timeshare contract to see whether it's there.

If your resort closes, this clause explains how it can happen.

13. More Than 100 Royal Islander Employees Get \$500 Each in Food Vouchers

To bring you up to date we [made] the first distribution of \$51,500 on Tuesday October 17th 2017 when Ed Misiph, a long time owner at the Resort whom is known to many owners, and myself are traveling at our own personal expense to the Resort to personally distribute the delivery of your contributions.

All employees and folks who are part of the Royal Islander experience (103 folks) will receive Food vouchers worth US\$500.

We are also taking 200 lbs of clothing to be shared. Once we are there we can consult with the folks on the ground as to how best distribute the balance of relief and the best use of funds. One idea I am considering is shipping a container of clothing and other goods in the new year from my winter home in Florida. More information will be forthcoming . Please note more funds are needed so if you know people who may not have contributed please share my posting.

You can donate at www.royal-islander.org. Thank you

Richard March

14. Where To Stay in SXM - Right Now

As we've reported, of vast majority of fans of St. Maarten don't want to go anywhere else, but many feel that accommodations may be unavailable because so many timeshare resorts are currently out of commission.

As we also reported last week, hundreds of villas will be coming online during December. Many were hardly damaged in all and are already occupied by people who are otherwise homeless and by workers helping in the rebuilding effort, while others are getting the repairs they need.

Some are listed on AirBNB and others on VRBO, but many local listings will be in the hands of Anju Snow at Island Real Estate Team, our real estate partner on the island headed by Arun Jagtiani.

This Wednesday, October 25, our much heralded Villa rental page on everythingSXM.com goes live. It currently (as of today, Monday) shows villas we recommend and contacts for reservations. JMB Website Supporters members who own villas are now entitled to submit villas for rent to us to be added to this page — so you should expect a significant number of additions coming soon. The page is [here](#).

We are also making our JMB Website Supporters members aware of how to place ads on the new page. Directions will also be posted on our members-only secret website homepage, www.everythingsxm.com/secret.

All of the above will give you substantial opportunities to select a new place to stay on the island while your timeshare is being rebuilt.

If you're interested in making a villa reservation (doing it with close friends can be fun and more economical than you'd imagine), contact our Villa rental/sale partners at [Island Real Estate Team](#). The agent who handles villa rentals is Anju Snow, who you can reach at anjusb@live.com or 1 721 520 7284. Please let her know now that you're interested in a rental for later in the winter and you were referred by Jeff Berger's *SXM Weekly News*.

15. Send Groceries to SXM's Neediest Families - W/O Shipping

Jeannie Gee of ShopnDrop in SXM has set up a program enabling people to get food vouchers to SXM's neediest families. Look here for details: www.shopndropgroceryirmaassist.com.

16. Spiga Restaurant Wins Coveted Travelers Choice Award from Trip Advisor

Spiga restaurant in Grand Case, long our favorite restaurant in "the culinary capital of the Caribbean," just won a travelers choice award from TripAdvisor. It's a distinguished recognition since only the top 1% of all restaurants receive this coveted award. Spiga is currently on its annual closing and is making repairs to some damages caused by Irma. We'll let you know when we hear it's reopening.

17. Lee's Roadside Grill Reopens; Court Date Delayed Until Nov 17

Lee's Roadside Grill suffered significant damage when St. Maarten was struck by hurricane Irma. Thanks to aggressively executed repairs, Lee's has already reopened.

As many readers know, Lee has been waging a long battle with his landlord. The landlord wants to throw Lee's out of the building and Lee's wants to stay right where it is.

A court date had been set for mid September, but that was abandoned because of the hurricane. Another court date

has now been set which may decide things: November 17.

As soon as we hear any results, we'll post them here and also on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#). Lee also posts news [here](#).

18. Canoa's Sherman Marten's Rum & Peas is Open

Although our headline for this story is a bit funky, the message is crystal clear.

As we recently reported, the Canoa restaurant on the pier at Greathouse Marina was destroyed by hurricane Irma, as were many other restaurants.

Fortunately, Sherman Marten's culinary expertise is still on display at his newer restaurant in Simpson Bay, Rum and Peas. That's the restaurant that consists of a number of large shipping containers.

The Greathouse Marina owners are scheduled to return to the Marina this week, after which we may hear more about the future of the Marina and the businesses on it, which included Pier Grocer and a rotisserie chicken take-out place.

19. Vesna Taverna Sets Night Hours

Vesna Taverna, long one of our favorite restaurants on the island, reopened for breakfast and lunch a couple of weeks ago and for dinner last Friday night.

Dinners are currently served only on Friday and Saturday night. When that changes, as we're sure it will, we'll let you know. If you haven't yet visited Vesna's, check their website: vesnataverna.com. The restaurant is terrific and has been a long time recipient of our Award of Excellence from everythingSXM.com.

20. What's Happening in Grand Case - And Why

If you walk through Grand Case, chances are you won't see a great deal of progress in restaurant rebuilding. Either before or soon after the storm, a number of restaurateurs left the island and some have yet to return. In addition, not all restaurateurs own the property in which their restaurants are located. Rebuilding is up to the property owner; nothing can begin without their input.

The next few weeks should see an uptick in rebuilding. We have eyes in Grand Case and will keep you posted on what's happening there.

21. Marine Trades Assn Launches New Website for Yachts

If you're a yacht owner, crew member, or captain, you can benefit from reviewing the new website of the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association which delivers substantial information. Here's [the site](#).

The homepage picture is one of the best images we've seen of Venus, the late Steve Jobs' yacht as it was entering the lagoon at some point well before the storm.

22. Electricity "Close to Normal" On Both Sides of SXM

Neither water nor electricity is fully back to normal yet on the island, but we're told electricity right now is nearly

normal.

The desalination plant that produces water for the Dutch side was beat up by Irma. The last news we had on it was that it was not yet fully back in service. Bottom line, there is lots of progress but it still will be a while before the island is fully back to what it was.

If you plan to return soon, do not expect SXM to be like it was. It's quite different -- slower, quieter, enormous mountains of debris concentrated at some points, many places closed, boats still submerged, cars looking like King Kong threw them at walls, hundreds of businesses beaten into unrecognizability.

This will take a while.

23. Richard Branson Eyes Marshall Plan for Rebuilding Caribbean...

After World War II, there was a massive plan for rebuilding Europe called the Marshall plan, named after Secretary of State George Marshall.

Branson, who heads both Virgin America Airlines and Virgin Atlantic, and as well as numerous other ventures, has proposed and is attempting to implement a Marshall plan for the rebuilding of Caribbean islands that were all but destroyed by hurricane Irma last month in the Caribbean.

Here's [that story](#).

24. French Side Looks at Tinker-Toy Like Beach Building Solutions

A few years ago, a comparatively mild-mannered hurricane named Gonzalo whacked a number of old restaurants on Orient beach between Pedro's and KonTiki upside the head.

The restaurants were long in the tooth, didn't have real running water, and were becoming what the Reserve Naturelle regarded as eyesores.

Although the Reserve's new buildings looked sterile when they were first inhabited by beach businesses, those businesses soon personalized the buildings and by last winter, the new buildings had taken on unique personalities that were well-suited to the beach.

Then Irma came, demolishing all the new buildings plus hundreds of others. All she left were the new units' bright, shiny roofs -- sitting atop rubble.

The French Side has apparently had enough of this. It's now saying it wants the next iteration of replacement beach buildings to be capable of disassembly should another major storm approach. Our sense is that they would like structures similar to big tradeshow booths, that can be taken down, put in crates, and removed in hours to someplace safe. That's vaguely reminiscent of tinker toys -- also relatively easy to disassemble.

We'll keep you posted.

25. Two SXM-Related Travel Disasters

Donald Thompson and Mary Beth Fairbrother read *SXM Weekly News* and were preparing for a trip to St. Maarten, so they got SkyMed for the trip. [Only weeks later in SXM, Don fell and broke his hip](#). After an ambulance trip to the hospital, they both decided they needed and wanted to get Don home for treatment. SkyMed made all the arrangements. An ambulance took them to SXM Airport where a SkyMed-provided medical evacuation jet picked them up and brought them home to Rhode Island.

There, SkyMed handled customs and immigration and another ambulance was waiting to take Don to the hospital. SkyMed made sure his medical history was there, a bed was waiting for him, and a team was ready to care for him...

Other *SXM Weekly News* readers and JMB members -- Bette and Bob, an MD on vacation aboard a cruise ship at the island of Corfu, off Greece -- last April suffered an accident there and broke his leg. They immediately called SkyMed for help. Since he needed emergency surgery, he was flown by SkyMed in a medevac jet to Athens, where he quickly underwent the surgery.

As soon he was sufficiently stable for the long flight home to Florida, SkyMed paid for him to fly first class all the way with a very attentive, highly qualified medical escort from the US. An ambulance then took him home and he was wheeled into his bedroom at 2 a.m. by the same medical escort.

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Please visit www.getskymed.com now for more information. To talk with Jeff and get your questions answered, either email jeff.berger@skymed.com or phone Jeff directly at 508-747-8281, our line for SkyMed questions only.

26. New Bonus From SkyMed Gives You Free Extra Years of JMB

Buy a new SkyMed one, three, or five year membership -- or upgrade to a three or five year membership at getskymed.com or by phone at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only). Forward your approval letter from SkyMed to us at support@jmbcommunications.com with the subject SkyMed along with your full street address and daytime phone number... and we'll issue you a JMB Website Supporters membership extension for the same number of years.

This program is available for a strictly limited period only. If you've been thinking about getting or upgrading SkyMed protection, now is when you'll want to do it.

Questions? Call Jeff at 508-747-8281; he'll be happy to answer them.

27. Now: Just \$59/month* for SkyMed's Best Medevac Protection

How about SkyMed for \$59 a month for your family?

SkyMed medical evacuation programs protect your pocketbook and your health when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. That's because SkyMed Takes You Home® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill while traveling. They protect your pocketbook by making it unnecessary for you to pay for a medical evacuation in cash in advance --- the only way to get this level of protection without being a SkyMed member.

Those out-of-pocket costs are huge: upwards of \$45,000 in many cases, and often far more.

*Now, you can get a five year SkyMed Ultimate membership and pay for it monthly at just \$59 per month for your family, which makes it easily affordable to practically anyone (even retirees and AUC students).

Of course, if you prefer, you can prepay for five years at the sharply reduced rate of \$2495 for JMB Website Supporters members. When you apply, you can get a 10 year price guarantee as well simply by noting on the application that you want an automatic renewal. That's the equivalent of paying \$499 per year for 10 years— an extraordinary price guarantee in times that are tumultuous politically worldwide.

You can also pay the \$59 a month for a month or two then convert to the prepaid Ultimate membership to grab those prepayment savings. For info, call Jeff Berger at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only). He can answer all your questions and even help you get signed up. *Please also see the next story.*

Learn more at www.getskymed.com.

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LAST === CALL
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28. About 300 SXM Discounts Are Yours in Our "Dog Days" Sale, ***Must End Nov. 1***

Our Dog Days membership sale Ends on October 15. It's your best opportunity to obtain 300 discounts on virtually everything you do during your island vacation.

When we return to the island later this year, will be meeting with many of our discount partners and will keep you posted on when they will reopen, if they aren't back already by that time. We also expect to be adding many new partners for the winter season.

Stay tuned — and definitely plan on being in SXM this winter. As we set elsewhere in this issue, we expect many timeshares to the open ahead of schedule on a staggered basis.

29. Get Our SXM Euro Ovals

Printed with green ink on durable bright white stock, varnished for long life, our copyrighted SXM euro ovals have been adorning cars on SXM and around the world for more than 15 years.

You can now get two for \$10 or five for \$15 mailed first class to your home in the US or Canada. You can pay for them by PayPal or by check. If you pay by PayPal, make sure US dollar funds are sent to Jeff@JMBcommunications.com and in the comments section be sure to tell us what you're buying — two for \$10 or five for \$15, SXM euro ovals, and include your current, correct mailing address.

If you pay by check, we accept US dollar checks only drawn on US banks — sorry, no Canadian checks. You can mail them to SXM euro ovals, care of JMB Communications, PO Box 1812, Plymouth, MA 02362-1812. Make the check payable to JMB Communications.

We have a decent supply but we suggest you order quickly. Allow 30 days for shipping.

We periodically publish pictures of these on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#).

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30. Still Time: Enter Our SXM Summertime Vacation Giveaway

Our Summertime SXM vacation giveaway is underway and you can now enter. *SXM Weekly News* readers (NOT pass-along readers) can enter up to 10 times per subscribed email address. The drawing has been deferred until January, 2018.

Here is our current prize list. Since this giveaway promotes non high-season visits to SXM, most of these vacations are yours from mid April to mid December, 2018. All vacations are subject to availability.

- an 8-day, 7-night vacation at La Vista Resort, May through December 2018.
- a 5 night stay (based upon availability April 10-Dec 18, 2018) in an ocean front room at the Westin St Maarten Dawn Beach Resort, Spa, and Casino.
- a 4-day, 3-night stay at the beautiful Oyster Bay Beach Resort.
- Dinner for Two at Davide Foini's legendary IZI Ristorante Italiano in Simpson Bay (One winner)
- Dinner for Two at Marco Ferrante's Isola Ristorante Italiano next to Hollywood Casino at Simpson Bay Resort. (One winner)
- Dinner for Two at Spiga, the highly acclaimed Italian Restaurant in Grand Case. (One winner.)

Enter here: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/getting_here/entry-form-for-our-seven-vacation-giveaway.shtml

Dates for all vacations subject to change thanks to Irma....

31. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

Look here for our PDF archives: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml. Most issues for the past few years are now online.

32. Trump Recalling Up to 1,000 USAF Pilots Could Affect Airlines

We don't know whether the recall would be mandatory or voluntary. The effect on air travel would most likely be less if it's voluntary, but either way it could cause a worsening pilot shortage among airlines. We'll watch this for you.

[See the story here.](#)

We spoke to a former USAF pilot who now flies corporate jets. His comment: "It doesn't surprise me. There is a pilot shortage across the board, civilian and military. The civilian side is sucking pilots from the military, but the military can only provide a fraction of what the civilian side requires. I believe the civilian side is going to be in a crisis over the coming years with a shortage. It's a long story, but in a nutshell, Congress (which as you know is great at screwing stuff up) changed pilot requirements after the Colgan Air Crash in 2009 which has made it VERY difficult

and very \$\$\$ for a young person to get into aviation.....and now we are starting to see the results."

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Ask Jeff for details -- see preceding article, or call him at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only, reg. hours Eastern time.)
More info? See getskymed.com.

St. Maarten / St. Martin Homes, Villas, Businesses, Commercial Properties,
and Residential Properties for Sale (NEW):

[Click to access our recommended real estate agent, Arun Jagtiani, featured on HGTV.](#)

Rent Out or Sell Your Timeshare (both SXM and Worldwide) -- Frequently Updated

JMB members can run up to 10 free ads on our website per 12-month period to rent out or sell St. Maarten / St. Martin timeshare weeks they own -- or any timeshares, anywhere worldwide. If you're not a member, learn more about membership here: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml .

Want to rent or buy a week?

2017 St. Maarten / St. Martin Timeshare Weeks For Rent or Sale are posted at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml Listings are now updated every few weekdays. Ads are free (no commission) but are accepted from JMB Website Supporters members only.

SECTION 5: For Members Only

- A. Where to Get Member Info: www.everythingsxm.com/secret
- B. Password Recovery Info: Your username is the email address you have registered with JMB Website Supporters. If you forget your password, click "forgot / change password" in the orange login box near the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com. To change your password, click that same link.
- C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads or Update the Price in an Ad: See www.everythingsxm.com/secret .Your username and password are required.

SECTION 6: Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) Updated 7/2017

See www.everythingsxm.com.

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NON-members who wish to contact us should write to ***jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com*** with the subject *Free Newsletter Recipient,* but due to the huge volume of mail received, we may not respond individually.

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