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Vol. 2, #1131 --- 12/18/2017  
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin

\*\*\*\*\*Happy Holidays\*\*\*\*\*



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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](http://www.everythingsxm.com)

Add [jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com) to your address book 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 more than 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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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](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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**34** news stories this week

Scroll down for our complete Table of Contents

## 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](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](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 1/5/2019 1/19/2019 Weeks 1 and 2 Villas at Simpson Bay Resort and Marina Luxurious Junior Suite featuring 2 full beds, small refrigerator, toaster, microwave, coffee maker, flat screen TV, DVD player, wireless internet, room safe, and a large tiled bathroom with separate dressing area. Enjoy the view from your private balcony overlooking beautiful Simpson Bay. Resort amenities are numerous; convenience store, spa, water sports, multiple pools, beach, casino, Red Piano, several restaurants and is within walking distance to so much more.  
[dlmazzei@comcast.net](mailto:dlmazzei@comcast.net) \$1000./week Diane, 856 696 2060

### **SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:**

SALE 2/24/2018 3/24/2018 Weeks 8, 9, 10, 11 Simpson Bay Resort & Marina Villa (Master and Junior Suites) together accommodate 6 people. Master suite consists of a full kitchen, King size bed/master bedroom, 2 Murphy beds/living room with flat screen TV, dining/living room, spacious bathroom with separate double vanity area. Beautiful, large deck (off of bedroom and living room) overlooks Simpson Bay. Junior suite: (lock out) 2 full beds, a small kitchen, dorm size refrigerator, microwave, toaster, coffee maker. The bathroom is spacious with a separate double vanity area. Deck overlooks Simpson Bay & Pool. \*\*All boat excursions are located onsite and available directly from the resort. \$12,000.00 per week Rosanne 6096130728 [mess113@yahoo.com](mailto:mess113@yahoo.com)

### **Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:**

See them all at [http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare\\_rent\\_sale/index.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml)

Villa Rentals Now Offered On Our Site Too:

**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](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=sxmweeklynews>

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

[www.linkedin.com](http://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](http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml)

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====Restaurant of the Week Returns Soon====

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

- A. Where to Get Member Info: [www.everythingsxm.com/secret](http://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 password" in the orange login box near the masthead at [www.everythingsxm.com](http://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://everythingsxm.com/sxm/about\\_sxm/paypal.shtml](http://everythingsxm.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\***  
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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. Airport Answers Passengers' Top Questions**

SXM Airport is ironing out its Internet communications issues and was able to give us brief answers this week to some of our questions. Here goes:

- q. Is there a target date for re-opening the terminal?
  - a. PJIAE Management is targeting the 4th quarter of 2018.
- q. When will installation of the new runway lights be completed, enabling nighttime operations?
  - a. Night time operations have commenced since Saturday, December 2, 2017.
- q. Is there even the roughest information on the status of preclearance for passengers headed back to the USA?

a. (Our comment) We're being connected to officials in charge of the Preclearance project, and we hope to have an update in time for our next issue of **SXM Weekly News**.

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## 2. First Royal Caribbean Ship Visits SXM

Royal Caribbean's "Grandeur of the Seas" returned to SXM this past weekend, far earlier than they had predicted after Irma had struck the island.

Here's the story from [Caribbean Journal](#).

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

Major updates to the Weather section of our everythingSXM.com website were completed during the just-ended hurricane season.

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 [everythingsexm.com](http://everythingsexm.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](http://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. It gave live updates on Island 92 radio as Irma approached, warning of potentially catastrophic winds from the storm.

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

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## 4. Four Sources of Current SXM Weather Info (Revised 10/17)

You'll find detailed observations and forecasts by visiting our main SXM website, [www.everythingsxm.com](http://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](http://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](http://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.*

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## 5. Now On Sale: SkyMed Peace-of-Mind Medevac Protection

SkyMed Takes You Home® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill or injured when traveling. Exclusively for Americans and Canadians, basic SkyMed coverage protects you throughout the USA, Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, Bermuda, and all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba. Global coverage (via Global Emergency Transport Services, or GETS) is standard on all "Ultimate" memberships and an inexpensive option on basic memberships.

Without SkyMed, you will have to pay upwards of \$35,000 to \$50,000 or possibly much more **in cash, in advance**, to set up an emergency medical evacuation home if you know who to call and what to ask in a huge emergency. But with SkyMed, you make one toll-free call to SkyMed 24/7/365 and SkyMed makes all the arrangements related to the medical evacuation and pays for all its services. No deductibles, no claim forms, no reimbursements necessary.

It's like fire insurance -- get it before you need it. Call Jeff at his office (Eastern Time, regular office hours) 508-747-8281 or email him at [jeff@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff@jmbcommunications.com) and he'll be happy to answer all your questions.

Double Bonus in effect only until 12/31/17:  
*Big, All-New SkyMed Double Bonus Available Thru 12/31*

Buying a new annual or multiyear SkyMed medical evacuation membership, or upgrading an annual membership to a multiyear Ultimate? This news will make you happy that you waited:

An all new SkyMed double bonus is available through [www.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com) or by calling Jeff when you buy a new SkyMed membership from us -- or upgrade to a multiyear SkyMed membership from an annual membership you bought from us.

The Double SkyMed bonus is simple. Once you've bought or upgraded your SkyMed membership through us, you forward to us by email your SkyMed acceptance email. (Use the subject "SkyMed Bonus".) Once we verify it, we extend your JMB Website Supporters membership by the same number of years as you purchased coverage from SkyMed.

Now, with the double SkyMed bonus, we will also give you a certificate good for a \$25 discount on a future JMB Website Supporters membership renewal. The certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue. That's in addition to the years extension: That's quite a double bonus.

The double bonus offer comes only with SkyMed memberships purchased from us through 12/31/17. See story 24 in this issue for much more on SkyMed.

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## 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.

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## 7. Solved: Missing Luggage from SXM

Read this, regardless of the resort you were evacuated from after Irma:

"Simpson Bay Resort (SBR) was contacted by the US State Department to let SBR know there were a bunch of bags held in 'a secure area' at the airport. We had been previously advised that all of the bags left at the airport had been donated already, and that none were left, but apparently they just lost track of them for a little while. Anyway, Trinity Houston went to the Airport to retrieve luggage for SBR members, but it turned out there were hundreds of bags there that had been left behind by people from all over the island.

"On her own time, without pay, she took it upon herself to sort through the bags that are held in an area without air conditioning (and with a bunch of standing water, mosquitoes, etc.) and tracked down every single person she could find to arrange for their bags to be sent back to them (if they wanted the bag back; some people donated them). She did this for everyone, whether they were Simpson Bay Resort members or not...."

Got questions? Contact Trinity via Facebook.

Much more about reclaiming your luggage left in SXM is on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) in the Files area.

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## 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](http://www.sxmweeklynews.com)***

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

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## 8. Belair Beach Progress Report from Evans, New Director

As we've previously reported, Belair Beach Hotel, the major timeshare resort in Little Bay, recently named Edna "Patricia" Evans as its new director, replacing Susan Heller who has retired after decades of service.

We'll have more on Susan in our next issue.

Evans late last week did a "Facebook Live" online report about what was happening at Belair, giving several key staff members a chance to greet timeshare owners from their offices at the resort. See her update on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) -- just do a quick search on our FB page for "Energy," Edna's nickname, and you'll have no worries finding the video.



## 9. Diamond Flamingo Fires Staff a Week Before Christmas

Google "Diamond Resorts" for lots of information on who Diamond Resorts is and what they do, not all of which is apple pie and vanilla ice cream sweet and tasty....

We've heard now that Diamond's Flamingo Resort in SXM is letting its employees go, and that it's saying it may be closed through 2019. Specifically:

"Flamingo just met with their staff and they are dismissing everyone in 6 weeks. If they continue to work between now and then, they will be paid plus get a meal allowance, but they also may stay home and still earn the six-weeks of pay.

"At least they gave notice and are willing to pay them beyond Christmas. It is going to be very hard for the 100 employees to get a job. Hopefully in that time more job opportunities will open up."

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## 10. SXM Villa Rentals

Lots more has been added and hundreds of villas are now becoming available. Fly with friends or extended family for outstanding rates. See [our Villa page](#) for info.

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## 11. SXM Timeshare Rentals

With several timeshare resorts coming back online soon — first Sapphire Beach Resort and Atrium Resort early in 2018, with others soon to follow -- timeshare owners are now posting units available for rent on our timeshare rental site on everythingSXM.com. Check it out.

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### **SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits**

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## 12. "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 months as we restart rolling out a number of entirely new discounts and benefits.*

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

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### **SECTION 4: Island News, Info, & Features**

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***Don't Miss It! Almost Over!***

**Get About 300 SXM Discounts  
& Many Other Benefits Through Our Exclusive  
JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program**

**\*\*\*\* HOLIDAY SALE ALMOST OVER\*\*\*\***

**Join, Renew, or Reinstate Now:**

**New JMB memberships: One year \$29; Two, \$49; Our Best Offer: Five years just \$99**

[http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about\\_sxm/paypal.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml)

**Renewal JMB memberships: Two years, \$39; Our Best Offer: Five Years just \$89**

[www.everythingsxm.com/secret](http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret) Go to the **Membership Renewal Center**

**JMB Membership Reinstatements:**

**Two years, \$39; Our Best Offer: Five Years just \$89**

<http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

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Your JMB Membership  
helps keep

***SXM Weekly News***  
Publishing for You,

Every Week!  
Please Join Today!

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## 13. Some Resorts Painstakingly Eliminating Mold

It isn't talked about very much, but the fact is that St. Maarten was affected by two hurricanes last September: Irma and Maria.

Irma, as you know, was a devastating category five storm that delivered 185 mile-per-hour sustained winds, 240 mile-per-hour recorded gusts, scattered tornadoes, a major storm surge, and punishing waves around the island. Shortly after Irma, Maria came; her main effect was copious rain. Normally the rain would not have been any big deal, but roughly 90% of SXM's structures either lost their roofs or had roof damage, and other damages. So Maria's rains came in and did their thing, and it was a big deal indeed.

That's why, as we mentioned last week, the compromised roof of SXM Airport was such a disaster. Rain entered and caused serious damage, but mold that developed later was a huge problem. That's why as we reported last week, demolition is beginning of the insides of the building. Reopening is tentatively scheduled for 2018 Q4, as noted in story #1 above.

Mold has also been a significant, well-recognized issue with some hotels since the storms struck. There are established procedures for dealing with mold to ensure absolutely thorough cleaning, disinfecting, etc. It is not an overnight fix and it requires very special handling. In resorts where mold is even suspected, those procedures are being strictly followed and closely monitored by the governments on both sides of the island.

It looks to us that mold will not be a problem when many resorts are ready for reopening, which is already happening.

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## 14. Familiar Faces Moving Around: We're Watching

Although many restaurants have already reopened and many hotels are completing renovations as quickly as possible in order to reopen soon, where can hospitality workers go if their jobs aren't yet ready for them? For a while, displaced employees simply either stayed home to take care of damage there or went to work at the direction of their resort or other business to help with the massive challenge of cleanup.

Now, they're back on the market and looking for work if their employer is not yet clicking.

For example, "Energy" Evans, former GM at Summit Resort, is now director at the Belair beach timeshare resort. But many others are in the process of relocating. As soon as we hear about well-known hospitality people who have landed in new jobs, we'll let you know.

Know of any? Please email [support@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:support@jmbcommunications.com) and let us know, subject "Faces".

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## 15. Spiga Reopening, Serving Dinner & Lunch; New Menu

Spiga Restaurant in Grand Case reopens this Thursday, December 21. Here's a quick rundown:

Lunch 12-2pm. This is new; Spiga has never before served lunch. Great salads, fresh homemade pastas, and more.

Dinner 6-10 pm. Closed Sundays. New menu -- a bit lighter and also a bit lighter on your pocketbook. Open Christmas Eve and Christmas Day dinner only, and New Year's Eve and New Year's Day dinner only.

Spiga is now Cafe Spiga: a new concept with a new bar area to enjoy their delicious cocktails and bar snacks.

Comment: Spiga is always changing and always doing the seemingly impossible: becoming even better than they were before. Try them soon.... you won't be disappointed. See "Contact Us" on [www.spiga-sxm.com](http://www.spiga-sxm.com) to make your reservations. Their site has not yet been updated to reflect Cafe Spiga, lunch, or their new menus. You can also phone them at 721-520-3363 or use the phone number on their site.

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## 16. Grand Marche's Long-Planned Renovations Almost Done

The supermarket Le Grand Marché near Philipsburg has been looking long in the tooth for years, but the fact is that

its owners — the same local folks who own the Carrefour supermarket in Cole Bay — had been planning heavy renovations for some time.

Many of its long-planned renovations were completed in the last couple of weeks, and the place has gone from being drab to being slick, cool, contemporary, and fun to visit. There's plenty of stock, too. Definitely check it out.

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## 17. Shoebox Program a Likely "Go" - Easter Bunny Shoeboxes

The details aren't all nailed down yet, but thanks to an angel who interceded it appears that our ShoeBox program to benefit kids in SXM may well happen after all.

The original plan was to have many readers of our *SXM Weekly News* and many members of our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) donate shoe boxes filled with goodies for shipment to SXM and distribution to needy children there. We're working out all the details, but our angel owns an aviation company and has told us she is determined to make this happen.

We'll keep you posted about details of what goes in the shoeboxes, where to ship them, when, and how they will be sent from the mainland to SXM and how distribution will occur there. Stay tuned for details.

Obviously it's too short a time to make this happen for Christmas. So, it's going to be an Easter Bunny event — and we already have an island volunteer to be the Easter Bunny.

Stay tuned to *SXM Weekly News*, to our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#), and to some other SXM outlets where we'll be broadcasting information on how you can participate in this great project for needy kids on SXM.

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## 18. GEBE Says Water Restoration Done, Electricity 90%

GEBE, the Dutch side electricity and water company that has taken its share of abuse over the last several years because of frequent outages, actually did quite a job getting the island's electrical infrastructure back online rather quickly following hurricane Irma. Thanks to the fact that many key electrical cables went from utility poles to underground conduits after hurricane Luis, recovery this time was far faster than it had been when Luis hit -- 22 years to the day before hurricane Irma.

The French Side appears to be recovering more slowly this time, but most of their population is in Marigot, Grand Case, and the Orient beach area, all of which were devastated by Irma. There are also legalities involved which we've discussed here before.

We'll keep you posted.

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## 19. Nothing New At the Dump: It's DFDD

True to form, the Dutch side dump — that mountain behind Front and Back Streets that's visible to arriving cruise ships — has been intermittently on fire the last few days. It's a DFDD situation -- dump fire different day.

Last winter when this happened, the island was saying it needed consultants to help us figure out how to put an end to frequent fires. Of course, there has been a change in government since then. We hope that the new coalition is more successful at solving this problem than its predecessor.

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## 20. Rainforest Adventures Gives Stunning Views of SXM

The Emilio Wilson estate, which is easily visible on the large hill closest to Le Grand Marché and even more visible from outside the stadium just north of Le Grand Marché, now houses a chairlift and other facilities named Rainforest

Adventures. The chairlift and the rest of the project consumes a limited amount of the Emilio Wilson estate but many St. Maarten residents and a number of others have been unhappy about its existence regardless of that.

They've cited the area's history as a place where slaves were employed and where their graves are still located, some calling it sacred ground. It is widely regarded by the people of St. Maarten as a conservation area which is not to be touched — just left pristine for future generations.

Proponents of Rainforest Adventures argue that the project helps people appreciate the Estate's natural beauty -- and quietly merchandises that beauty for the benefit of the island and its people.

So far, reports we've seen bear out the contention that this will be an enormous draw for cruise ship passengers particularly. Pictures coming from recent visitors posting on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) are quite attractive, and those posting them describe the views as stunning.

Check out our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) and use the search window for Rainforest Adventures to see more.

One thing that's drawing many people each evening is Emilio's Restaurant, run by renowned chef Dino Jagtiani in a partnership with Norm and Su Wathey. Just opened a few weeks ago, it is receiving great accolades.

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## 21. Andy Fiebig's Message for Want-to-Be SXM Tourists

Tourist Andy Fiebig, recently visiting the island for the first time post-Irma, sends this message to our readers:

"For everyone who doesn't want to come here because their timeshare is closed: Find a new place to stay, there are plenty of options. For those who are complaining about how much a flight costs from their home airport: drive a couple hours and save some money. For those who think they will be bored and have nothing to do: Get down here and find out that you will be wrong. For everyone who doesn't want to come because their favorite places are closed: If you don't come back, they can't come back. If you really want to come and be here, drop the excuses, and make the arrangements. We did all of the above, and are glad to be here."

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## 22. Our Thanks To You...in a Tangible Way

Many hundreds of you in November and December have written to us online and in letters to thank us for our extensive coverage of Irma here, on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) (where we had more than 50,000 interactions with you following the storm), and for our help in answering thousands of phone calls from JMB members in the six weeks immediately after Irma struck.

From Jeff: *I've been a journalist / marketing writer since finishing college, working in radio, TV, newspapers, and magazines. **But your "thanks" messages mean far more to me than the cardboard box of awards we keep somewhere in the cellar.** It's great to know how you rely on us to keep you connected, and that you like what we're doing for you. We truly love doing it as much as you enjoy reading it.*

### **How You Can Help Us Make SXM Weekly News Even More Useful to Its Readers.**

As seasoned journalists, we take great pride in *Weekly News*. We keep our eyes and ears open all week long and on every Friday, decide what's going into *Weekly News*. We write on Friday and Saturday morning, then send *Weekly News* on its way.

Here's how can you help us make **SXM Weekly News** even better -- three key ways:

1) When on the island, keep your eyes and ears open and let us know what you see that's of significant interest to our tourist audience. We might already have it ... then again we might not. (In some cases, what you give us will already have been covered in *Weekly News* -- but when you have a story idea, email it to [jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com) with the subject "Weekly News Idea." We welcome every idea.)

b) Spread the word about *Weekly News*. Let others know they can subscribe "free" anytime on our site, [sxmweeklynews.com](http://sxmweeklynews.com).

c) The crucial word is **free**. Quite frankly, we need your help -- now more than

ever, thanks to Irma -- to be able to continue to research, write, and distribute **Weekly News** every week. It takes a lot of time to research and write **Weekly News**, and "bandwidth costs" for emailing 300,000+ copies weekly (and sometimes more often) does not come cheap.

**There are several ways you can help; we'd be grateful no matter which you do:**

- Contribute. Any contribution amount is very much appreciated. If you want to use PayPal, send it to [jeff@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff@jmbcommunications.com) . Or send a check (payable to JMB Communications) to us at JMB, P. O. Box 1812, Plymouth, MA 02362-1812.
- Join, renew, or reinstate your membership in JMB Website Supporters. This is the best option since it gives you over 300 benefits and island discounts that are good as long as your membership is active. (See the story at the end of this email please.) Many businesses have already reopened on SXM, and more open every week. Boat owners whose tour boats sank have bought new boats and are readying them right now. SXM is welcoming more tourists every single day. To re-join just click the page curl on [everythingxsm.com](http://everythingxsm.com) -- all the info is there. You can also call the office and leave the info there; our numbers are 508-830-3456 (main) or 508-747-8281.
- Join SkyMed. It's the best medevac protection you can buy, in our view; you've likely read about in *Weekly News* and you know you should have it; it covers traveling Americans and Canadians in the USA, Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, Bermuda, and in every nation of the Caribbean including Cuba. If you want global protection, that's available too. (It won't cover you in places like North Korea, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia....) See [getskymed.com](http://getskymed.com) for much more, or call Jeff directly at 508-747-8281. He can answer all your questions and get you going.
- Even get some of our exclusive copyrighted SXM Euro Oval stickers. They're two for \$10 or five for \$15. You can order them via PayPal (include your shipping address) or by check (US checks only drawn on US banks). Our address is below. The PayPal pay-to email address is [jeff@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff@jmbcommunications.com) as you saw above.
- Check Out Our Extensive Website Design / Content Creation / Website Hosting Services. See [websitesthatworkusa.com](http://websitesthatworkusa.com) or our broader [jmbcommunications.com](http://jmbcommunications.com), with even more services. Hosting info is at [jmbwebhosting.com](http://jmbwebhosting.com).

### **Our Tangible Thank-You for Helping Us:**

For the rest of December only -- while our Holiday Membership Sale (still with Black Friday / Cyber Monday prices) continues -- we'll give you a full extra year on top of whatever JMB membership you buy (new, renewal, or reinstatement). Buy via check, through our online site (click the page curl on [everythingxsm.com](http://everythingxsm.com) for links), or by phone at either of the numbers above.

To get the extra year, when ordering you must simply put "Extra Year Too" in the "Notes/Comments" area on PayPal [our online links take you to PayPal]; put it in the "Memo" area of your check; or say it in your message when you call our office to order. *This "Thank You" includes military memberships / military renewals as well but does not apply to any transactions you've already initiated.* (If you have one in progress, do another and you'll get the extra year with your new transaction.)

Thank you. We appreciate your membership...we thank you for being a JMB Website Supporters member...but most of all we simply appreciate *you for your membership and your ongoing support.*

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### 23. Last-Minute Jewelry Gifts from SXM

Zhaveri is going all out this year with great bargains and fast, accurate service. Check them at [www.zhaveri.com](http://www.zhaveri.com).

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### 24. SkyMed On Sale: All-New Double Bonus Ends 12/31/17

Thinking of buying a new annual or multiyear SkyMed medical evacuation membership, or upgrading an annual membership to a multiyear Ultimate? This news will make you happy that you waited:

An all new SkyMed double bonus is available through [www.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com) or by calling Jeff when you buy a new SkyMed membership from us -- or upgrade to a multiyear SkyMed membership from an annual membership you bought from us. Great pricing is available now, too.

First, what is SkyMed? Scottsdale Arizona based SkyMed International takes its members home when they become critically ill or injured while traveling. Basic "Takes You Home" memberships cover you in the USA, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba. Global memberships (provided by SkyMed affiliate GETS) cover you in the rest of the world with a few exceptions — like Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, North Korea and possibly a few others. As you understand, that list may change as world events unfold.

The Double SkyMed bonus is simple. Once you've bought or upgraded your SkyMed membership through us, you forward to us by email your SkyMed acceptance email. Once we verify it, we extend your JMB Website Supporters membership by the same number of years as you purchased coverage from SkyMed. Now, with the double SkyMed bonus, we will *also* give you a certificate good for a \$25 discount on a future JMB Website Supporters membership renewal. The certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue. That's in addition to the years extension: That's quite a double bonus.

The double bonus offer comes only with SkyMed memberships purchased from us from now through 12/31/17.

SkyMed medical evacuations take you home to doctors and hospitals you know and trust — where your health insurance works. You call SkyMed, and SkyMed makes all the arrangements. There are no deductibles, no claim forms, and no reimbursements since SkyMed pays for all the arrangements it makes.

Without SkyMed, if you or a covered loved one needs a medical evacuation, you must make the arrangements yourself in the middle of an emergency and you must pay for everything upfront in cash — ambulances, aircraft, flight crew, jet fuel, medical personnel, etc. With SkyMed, by contrast, SkyMed makes all the arrangements and you pay \$0 for the evacuation. SkyMed *Takes You Home*® — what else matters?

For more information, see [www.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com) or contact Jeff any business day Eastern time at 508-747-8281 (fastest) or email him at [jeff.berger@skymed.com](mailto:jeff.berger@skymed.com). Include your return telephone number and time zone. He'll be happy to answer your questions and can even take an application by phone.

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## 25. For US / Canadian ExPats Living on SXM:

As a US/Canadian ex-pat living on SXM at least six months per year, you understand the need to get home where your US or Canadian health insurance works if you become critically ill or injured while living on SXM. That's exactly what SkyMed ex-pat coverage does; it covers the ambulance from the local hospital to the airport, the medical evacuation flight home, and the ambulance at the arrival airport that takes you to the hospital, to which SkyMed has transferred your record; waiting there is a bed for you; and a team that has your medical records and is prepared to start working with you.

*Don't take chances about being able to get home in a hurry in case of a serious personal medical emergency.* SkyMed takes you home. What else matters? Read about the double SkyMed bonus in effect from now until the end of December in article 24, then see [www.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com) or call Jeff at 508-747-8281 during normal East Coast business hours.

Do it now — the double SKYMED bonus will end December 31, 2017.

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## 26. Traveling Anywhere Soon? SkyMed Takes You Home®

More Info: No matter where you go, take SkyMed medical evacuation protection with you: SkyMed Takes You Home(R) to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill or injured when traveling. Without SkyMed, that medevac trip home could easily cost you upwards of \$45,000 payable in cash, in advance.

Why risk that?

Get SkyMed protection now, before you need it. See [www.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com). Got questions? Phone SkyMed Ambassador Jeff Berger at 508-747-8281 weekdays during regular office hours, Eastern time. Email Jeff at [jeff.berger@skymed.com](mailto:jeff.berger@skymed.com) or [jeff@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff@jmbcommunications.com).

You'll find an overview of all key SkyMed Features & Benefits here:  
<http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxmweeklynews/SkyMedServices.pdf>

And you'll find Frequently Asked Questions here:  
<http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxmweeklynews/2015SkyMedFAQ.pdf>

SkyMed Bonus: See info on the all-new SkyMed Bonus in story # 24 in this issue.

SkyMed Takes You Home® when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. What else matters? Global coverage is available. Call Jeff for details & answers to questions. .

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## 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](http://www.getskymed.com).

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## 28. Buy SkyMed for Your Traveling Parents, But You Get The Bonuses...

Got aging parents who travel? There's no age limit to apply for SkyMed medical evacuation protection. For your peace of mind as well as theirs, this holiday season get them SkyMed protection. When you do, if you like we'll give you the double SkyMed bonuses described in story 24. Good for them. Good for you.

Got questions? Call Jeff at 508-747-8281. We'll tell you how we can help make it happen.



## 29. Get Our SXM Euro Ovals: Order Now

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 (ten for \$30) mailed first class to your home in the US or Canada. You can pay for them by PayPal. If you pay by PayPal, make sure US dollar funds are sent to [Jeff@JMBcommunications.com](mailto:Jeff@JMBcommunications.com) and in the comments section be sure to tell us what you're buying — two for \$10 or five for \$15, 10 for \$30, 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. Check orders are NOT likely to be received before the holiday. PayPal orders made this week will be shipped this week but arrival by December 23 (Saturday) can not be guaranteed.

We have a decent supply but we suggest you order quickly. No shipping charge.

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

More stories follow.

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***a unit of JMB Communications.***

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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 now until at least March, 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, though for obvious reasons those dates are subject to change. 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](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/getting_here/entry-form-for-our-seven-vacation-giveaway.shtml)

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

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## 31. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

Look here for our PDF archives: [http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free\\_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml). Most issues for the past few years are now online.

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## 32. About Our Next Issue

It starts mailing before Christmas Day and should be in your email inbox by December 26 at the latest. Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah to all our readers!

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## 33. Twin-Tower Hotel Gets Gov't. OK for Cupecoy Area

A new hotel is coming to SXM and unlike many previous hotel announcements, this one looks like it will actually happen. The announcement came from VROMI, a Dutch Side government department.

The developer of the "Belmont" towers is the same as for nearby Jordan Village. As usual, the announcement was light on details such as how tall it will be (an artist's rendering looks like about 21 stories); how many people will be staying there once it is occupied at capacity; what infrastructure improvements on nearby two-lane roads will be carried out to mitigate traffic congestion (none, most likely); whether the erstwhile "Pearl of China" project is still expected to be built in the same general area, which would further aggravate traffic; or whether in-building or underground parking is planned, since the drawing we saw shows very little visible parking.

The project will be located between Starz Casino and the American University of the Caribbean, near the edge of the Mullet Bay Golf Course, the island's only course. There are other projects headed for this general area as well.

There are questions about this project.

Low-flying planes going from Anguilla to SXM Airport do fly very low over this exact area on approach to the airport, so SXM Airport may have concerns (we don't know whether they were concerned over the Cliff, which is nearby but lower). In the US, some abutters in cities object to towers casting shadows; that kind of objection in SXM would probably draw eye-rolls. We'll keep you posted.

Here's more information from the [Daily Herald](#).

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## 34. Enter: When Will Our FB Site Have 20,000 Members?

When will our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) have 20,000 members?

We want you to guess, and the person closest to the date / time will get a prize from us (prize TBA). Here's how:

1. First, you \*MUST\* be a member of the site (free). Go to it, answer the vetting questions, add that you read SXM Weekly News, and you'll be added w/in 24 hours.

2. See what our current membership is (closing in on 19,000). We've added about 2000 in the last month and a half or so. If you want to add people, they must be SXM tourists or US/Canadian ExPats living on SXM, locals who own tourist-focused businesses, AUC students, or yachties who work out of SXM. Our focus: *by* tourists, *for* tourists.
  3. Decide on one good guess. It must be date and time, am or pm.
  4. Get a PICTURE POSTCARD of your area and mail it (regular postal mail) with your exact 20,000 guess to JMB Communications 20,000 Contest, P. O. Box 1812, Plymouth, MA 02362-1812. Include your email address, your full name, your Facebook name as it appears on our FB site, your physical mailing address, and your exact date / time guess.
  5. You may send one card per FB member only; if you send more, they'll all be thrown out. We'll store them in chrono order and pick the winner once we hit 20,000. In case of duplicate entries, the one with the prettiest picture wins. Your entry must be closest to the date without being past the date/time when we hit 20,000.
  5. Got questions? Don't ask, just punt. We think the above directions should be enough....
- As usual, JMB employees, their families, and JMB contractors are not eligible. You must be at least 21 years old to enter.

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[Get The Current Low Price](#)  
[on SkyMed's Best 5-Year Ultimate Membership](#)  
[and keep the current low price on your first 5-yr. renewal.](#)  
[That's a 10-year price guarantee.](#)  
[More benefits... \*\*same price.\*\*](#)

Ask Jeff for details -- call him at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only, reg. hours Eastern time.) More info? See [getskymed.com](http://getskymed.com).

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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 agent, Arun Jagtiani, featured on HGTV.](#)

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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](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](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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.everythingsxm.com).

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About Email Address Changes / How To Unsubscribe (Updated 4/17/17)

To unsubscribe, go here: [www.sxmweeklynews.com](http://www.sxmweeklynews.com). You CAN NOT unsubscribe either by replying to this email or, if you are an AOL user, by clicking the \*spam\* button on AOL.

To change your email address, visit [www.sxmweeklynews.com](http://www.sxmweeklynews.com); unsubscribe your old email address and subscribe your new one. *JMB Website Supporters members should notify Membership Services of the new email address for continued Secret Site access.*

## Get Your Own Free Copy Of St. Maarten and St. Martin Weekly News:

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

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Our email headers also contain subscribe / unsubscribe / address change links.

## Contact Us (Revised 8/21/17)

All member discounts and benefits are explained in detail on the members-only \*secret\* website, <http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret>. If you're a JMB Website Supporters member and have a question not answered there, contact **[support@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:support@jmbcommunications.com)**

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

Our main St. Maarten / St. Martin website: [www.everythingsxm.com](http://www.everythingsxm.com).

Privacy Policy [http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/privacy\\_policy/index.shtml](http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/privacy_policy/index.shtml)

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