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Vol. 2, #1136 ---January 22, 2018
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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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...**

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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

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.

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33 news stories this week

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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 2/24/2018 3/3/2018 Week 8 Atrium Resort Beautiful one bedroom that sleeps 4 with pull-out sofa in living room (a really comfy pull-out, too!) Corner unit on 7th floor with wrap-around veranda that faces Simpson Bay. You'll watch the glorious St. Maarten sunsets from this balcony! Beach chairs and towels provided. Many restaurant within walking distance. \$1,750.00 Jeannie 610-888-6106 jdisante@gmail.com

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 2/11/2019 2/23/2019 Week 7 Diamond Flamingo Beach Resort Ocean front extra large 1st floor end studio with great view, King size bed and queen pull out couch, 2 TV's, Full kitchen, dining table and patio that overlooks beach. There is a partition that separates sleeping area for privacy. Resort has midweek maid service, 2 beaches, large infinity pool and is an easy walk to Hollywood Casino, several restaurants, Peli Deli mini-mart, & gift shops. Free Parking on premises. \$8,000.00 M.J. 978-369-9305 maryjtn@gmail.com

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

See them all at 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 / SXM" 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=sxmweeklynews>

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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Major Stories about Ray Sidhom (Alegria Resort), "Pearl of China," and others is in our Main News section, Section Four, below.

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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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 . 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. Dutch Side Officials Tour Airport Seeking Clarity, Answers

Dutch side government officials last week toured SXM Airport to get a closer look at the devastation caused by hurricane Irma and at the demolition that has been underway for the last couple of weeks in preparation for terminal rebuilding.

Although the inspection was expected to generate more questions than answers, it certainly gave the officials an eye-full, enabling them to get a better grasp of the task ahead at restoring SXM Airport to its prior preeminence.

We expect to have more on this as government officials formally react to this visit.

2. WestJet Planning SXM Service Resumption

At one point, WestJet, the Canadian carrier, had said it had no plans to resume service to St. Maarten until possibly late this year. That has changed, and it would not surprise us at all to see it change again — in an even more positive way.

As of now, the airline plans to resume service weekly on Sundays starting April 29.

The airline market to SXM is fluid. Moreover, WestJet is not the only carrier taking passengers from Toronto to SXM, but as of April 29 it will be the only nonstop carrier.

As always, we're watching.

3. Hey Minneapolis: Try Jet Blue to SXM

Lots of people from Minnesota like to go to SXM. Now, they have help: JetBlue Airways. JetBlue starts service from Minneapolis in the near future, initially flying to Boston from which there are connections to SXM.

Although currently those connections are through JFK, that will change when JetBlue announces service to JFK from MSP -- that should happen later this year. Either way, it gives Minnesotans a new option for getting to SXM.

More is [here](#).

4. Jet Blue Now Has Daily Flights to SXM

Earlier than previously expected, jetBlue Airways has now increased its service from JFK to SXM from twice-weekly to daily. Although demand is not as high as usual for winter seats to SXM thanks to Irma, a significant number of timeshare units and hotel rooms are coming online now and more come online very soon. In addition, hundreds of villas are available. So JetBlue, seeing the opportunity to fill more airplanes, and with a growing national network to feed its nonstops from JFK, pulled the trigger — a great thing for the airline and for the island.

We'll keep you posted about additional changes to airlift to SXM as they happen, both here and on our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM" Facebook site](#).

5. Jet Blue Celebrates 10 Years in SXM

Although it was probably a coincidence, JetBlue increased service from JFK to SXM to daily just as it was celebrating the 10th anniversary of launching its first St. Maarten service from JFK to SXM — which we had predicted several months earlier. Here's the anniversary [story](#).

6. MSC Cruises Set To Return to SXM

Following on the heels of Royal Caribbean and others, MSC cruises has now announced its intent to return regular service to SXM. Here's that [story](#).

7. Current SXM Weather Info

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. There are now also active weather widgets on the

site's home page.

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.*

8. **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.

9. Ocean Club Timeshare Owners form Online Group

The Ocean Club timeshare resort in Cupecoy was severely damaged by hurricane Irma. The resort's website has said ever since that the resort is closed until further notice. With pictures of huge damage widely seen by timeshare owners, they have been asking owner Eric Loor for definitive information on whether Ocean Club will be rebuilt, but Mr. Loor has not responded. The owner of multiple Caribbean resorts, Loor's properties were affected by hurricanes this season and no doubt he has been dealing with insurance adjusters and a myriad of other issues.

Nonetheless, timeshare owners want to know what's going on and after more than four months, they've heard practically nothing. They've now formed a timeshare owners group on Facebook. If you own timesharing at Ocean Club, it might be quite useful for you to join [this group](#).

10. A Flamingo Resort Story

A long-time reader writes:

"I'm in a Diamond resort in Arizona and attended an update to hear about Flamingo. According to these guys here, as we know, Flamingo will be closed for two years. *They also stated they are recalculating maintenance fees to include repairs or a probable assessment. They stated Diamond notified Flamingo owners last year giving them the option of converting the fixed week to points for a discounted price of 3.98 cents per point. Must buy 1000 points for each deeded contract.*

"I never received such a notice. Don't know if anybody else did. They claim a large number of fixed week owners converted, leaving a smaller pool to absorb the maintenance fees and repairs."

We posted this story on our ["Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM" Facebook site](#). Will be interested to know whether any other Flamingo timeshare owners know any more about this; please post your reaction in the dialog on Facebook.

11. "Major Brand Hotel" Coming to Happy Bay, Gov't Says

The French Side government has announced that a "major brand hotel" is coming to Happy Bay, easily one of the most gorgeous (and untouched) beaches on the island. Beyond that terse announcement, we know very little.

The only "name brand" hotel on the French Side is the Riu Palace in Anse Marcel, which before that was Radisson and Radisson Blu, and before that L'Habitation. Riu is not exactly a familiar name to many US tourists, who dominate SXM tourism. We don't know whether the "brand name" will be a North American brand or a European one; exactly where near the beach it will be located; how many rooms; whether current Happy Bay beach vendors can stay; whether Happy Bay will still be used clothing optional; etc.

As always, we'll watch this and keep you posted.

12. Belmond La Samanna / Cap Juluca

La Samanna, SXM's pre-eminent ultra-luxury resort, won't return that way, sources are telling *SXM Weekly News*. Founded in 1973, La Samanna for years has been SXM's most luxurious hideaway for the "rich and famous."

Heavily damaged by hurricane Irma, La Samanna will still be a luxury resort when reconstruction concludes and it reopens, hopefully some time next year. But Belmond La Samanna's sister ultra-luxury resort in Anguilla, Cap Juluca, is said to be in-the-ready to re-launch as the *top* ultra-luxury resort in the region.

We'll post more on this when it becomes available.

13. SXM Timeshare Condo & Villa Rentals

With several timeshare resorts coming back online — Sea Palace, Sapphire Beach Resort, and Atrium Resort, with others to follow -- timeshare owners are now posting units available for rent on our [timeshare rental site](#) on everythingSXM.com and on our new companion Villas for Rent page, also on everythingxsm.com. Check them out.

SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

14. "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 some 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](#).

SECTION 4: Island News, Info, & Features

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

Join, Renew, or Reinstate Today

New JMB memberships: One year \$59; Two, \$79; Our Best Offer: Five years just \$129

http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

Renewal JMB memberships: One year, \$39; Our Best Offer: Six Years just \$139

www.everythingsxm.com/secret Go to the **Membership Renewal Center**

JMB Membership Reinstatements:

One year, \$39; Our Best Offer: Six Years just \$139

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

**In Addition To Those 300 Discounts
& Other Benefits,
Your JMB Membership**

helps keep
SXM Weekly News
Publishing for You,
Every Week!
Please Join Today!

15. After "Scare," Island Looks at Tsunami Preparations

Almost two weeks ago, a 7.6 earthquake in the ocean north of Honduras caused no damage and no tsunami, but it did send shivers through the region. It may not be the last earthquake here, and nations in the region may not be so lucky next time.

So, a small Work Group within the Emergency Support Functions area of the Dutch Side Emergency Operations Center has been formed to assess and develop a *national tsunami preparedness plan* involving areas such as warning systems, designated safe areas, public awareness campaign, and post-tsunami events.

One of the key areas discussed is the identification of an alarm center(s) that would then activate the EOC. This is critical, as evident in the real-life event of Tuesday, January 9 in the middle of the night when an earthquake in the Western Caribbean Sea resulted in a tsunami warning being issued for parts of the Caribbean (the quake off Honduras).

The workgroup will look at warning systems to ensure that the country has a comprehensive and effective system such as siren alarms, smart phone electronic messaging, etc. The group will also assess what's needed in the aftermath of a tsunami.

In the past 500 years there have been ten confirmed earthquake-generated tsunamis in the Caribbean Basin with four causing fatalities. An estimated 350 people in the Caribbean were killed by these events. During the relatively short 500-year period of written Caribbean history, tsunamis have inflicted a small amount of losses compared to other hazards such as windstorms, earthquakes and volcanic activity. The impact of a large tsunami can be as devastating as earthquakes or an erupting volcano.

The Eastern Caribbean islands lie in a setting where major structural changes are occurring in the Earth's crust. All known sources capable of causing tsunamis (that is, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides) occur within striking distance of the Eastern Caribbean, and there are also distant sources across the Atlantic.

Since the islands lie in an area of relatively high earthquake activity for the Caribbean, the most likely tsunamis to affect the Eastern Caribbean are those which can be triggered by shallow earthquakes (<50km depth), in the region, greater than magnitude 6.5, according to the Seismic Unit of the University of the West Indies.

16. Huge Redevelopment Plans on French Side

Over the next several weeks, we'll publish as much detail as possible here and in our ["Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM" Facebook site](#) regarding long planned French Side redevelopment of downtown Marigot -- which will likely be modified now due to unexpectedly heavy flooding caused by Irma -- and the rebuilding of Grand Case and Orient Beach, both of which were also heavily damaged by Irma.

Here's a French language [article](#) on this.

17. "La Belle Creole" Redevelopment: What Happened?

In its day, La Belle Creole was one of the island's top resorts. Located on a peninsula between Sandy ground and the French low lands, it was an oasis of tranquility that was nonetheless close to Marigot, Grand Case, and the Dutch side airport.

But hurricane Luis abruptly ended all that in 1995. And Creole, like Mullet Bay Beach Resort only a few miles away, became derelict buildings visited at night by, well, fringe characters. Over the years, there have been reports of planned redevelopment of this prime real estate, the most recent within the last few years. Although French side development projects take a long time to get going — if, indeed, they ever get going — nothing has ever happened there. Rumors persist about the possibility, but nothing concrete has happened. Ditto with Mullet Bay, on the Dutch side.

We've published many other news stories over the years about major hotel developments which, at the end of the day, never happened. In the US, once projects are formally announced, they usually happen. We don't know why things are so different on SXM.

18. How Will Dutch Side Redevelopment Funds be Spent?

A few months ago, the Dutch side government then led by William Marlin basically told the Kingdom of the Netherlands to send Irma relief / redevelopment money, and the island would spend it as it saw fit.

But the Kingdom of the Netherlands knew better, and said it would require the island to say in advance what the money would be spent for and to account for every penny. Marlin didn't like that so there was essentially a standoff. Although the Kingdom was sending substantial aid by ship starting only days after Irma had hit, far more aid was in abeyance because of Marlin's obstinance.

Fortunately, a no-confidence vote was taken in parliament on the island and Marlin was thrown out. An interim government is now in place, as we previously reported. It is moving forward to put in place the kind of logical response that the Kingdom requested. Here's that [story](#).

19. French Side Rebuilding Permits Face "Gates"

The French side is being very deliberate in the issuance of rebuilding permits. The damage it suffered was enormous, with massive flooding that was far beyond anything expected by the wildest guesses of French side officials. They don't want to go through this again, hence the very deliberate approach. Here's [more](#).

20. Yoda Guy Exhibit / Museum Open in Philipsburg

If you're a Star Wars fan, chances are you already know that the newest Star Wars episode is getting rave reviews.

But did you know Star Wars has a St. Maarten connection?

The man who developed the characters Yoda and Chewbacca has his Yoda Guy Museum on Front Street in Phillipsburg, which will be tremendously fascinating to kids of all ages with any interest in the Star Wars franchise. The museum is open and welcoming guests daily. It's also very inexpensive. Here is [its website](#).

21. Clothing Optional on Orient Beach

The entire stretch of Orient beach in front of the Club Orient naturist resort remains clothing optional. However, since this is the only part of the beach where there are services, some cruise ship passengers are being brought here by taxis to enjoy the beach. To prevent gawking and to curb the likelihood of ship passengers annoying naturists, for the time being naturists are being accommodated more toward the southerly end of the beach near Papagayo rather than near the Perch Light bar. That only happens when a fair number of cruise ship passengers are visiting — and it is purely temporary.

22. It All Started With a Trip

Gene writes: "We've had a vacation from hell, starting with our luggage delayed by a day, my tripping over a curb at the airport, getting a flat tire in Phillipsburg, Terri having an extreme attack of the flu, overnight stay at SMMC, my catching a much milder flu. But as 'old folks' who are generally in great health, we've shrugged most of it off. Having a mild grade fever in 70 degree temperatures instead of the 10 degrees in Wisconsin is a no brainer. We still have 7 days to enjoy the sun. We're staying away from restaurants for two reasons: not much appetite and we don't want to spread our problems."

Gene and Terri we hope your final week on SXM gives you some great memories...and we're relieved to know you have SkyMed, just in case. You were lucky nothing was broken when you tripped over that curb....

23. Jump-Up Casino Makes Big Donation to Rotary, Lions

The Rotary Club of Sint Maarten and the Lions Club of Sint Maarten proudly accepted large donations from the Jump Up Casino on Saturday evening at L'Isola Restaurant in Pelican Key totaling \$46,694. The donation was shared equally between the two Clubs.

Students from The Gulliver Schools of Miami, Florida, who were on island to assist with various beach clean up efforts, presented the donations to both clubs. According to Antione Akl of the Jump Up and Hollywood Casinos, "We thought it was very fitting to have students visiting our island in service to the community to present the donations to the Rotary Club of Sint Maarten and the Lions Club of Sint Maarten. The funds raised were collected during the holiday season after a progressive Bingo tournament".

John Caputo, President of the Rotary Club of Sint Maarten, thanked the students and the Jump Up Casino for their support of Rotary. Mr. Caputo continued, "The Rotary Club of Sint Maarten is pleased to accept this large donation. These funds will be used to help us re-equip the Sister Marie Lawrence School after all the supplies, computers, smart boards, etc. were lost after the passing of Hurricane Irma. In addition, a portion of the funds were used to brighten the recent holiday season for youngsters who may not have had a visit from Santa Claus. We are grateful for this significant donation and we look forward continuing our efforts to focus on the children of Sint Maarten".

Lion Alison Busby, President of Sint Maarten Lions Club, thanked the students for their great school work project and also the staff and management of Jump Up Casino and also to the citizens of Sint Maarten that participated at the bingo events of Jump Up casino during the month of December. A big thank you to Mr. Antoine Akl for thinking of and being a corporate sponsor of Lions Club of Sint Maarten. Mr. Busby went onto say, "The LION Club international has 5 areas in which we are active, including Sight, Youth, Hunger, Education, and most recently, Diabetes. This donation will be used for the children's projects of which one is 'Eyes for a Brighter Future' project. This was planned for October 2017, but due to the passing of Hurricane Irma, the project was postponed for a later date this year. This project entails the testing of about 4000 plus elementary school students by the VOSH organization and where eyeglasses are needed the student will receive a pair of glasses free of charge".

24. Planning Travel w/ Grandkids?

If you are a grandparent who enjoys taking your younger grandchildren with you on trips to SXM or elsewhere, while the kids parents get some time to themselves, you should know that SkyMed will cover those young grandchildren when they're with you as long as you have family SkyMed coverage yourself. And if you, your spouse, or the kids need a medical evacuation home, SkyMed will see to it that you and your vacationing grandchildren also are brought home. You'll find the details in your member services agreement, supplied to all SkyMed members when they join. See the other stories in this issue for much more on SkyMed. You can also visit the SkyMed website at

getskymed.com, or call Jeff directly at 508-747-8281. He'll answer all your questions and can sign you up by phone in just a few minutes.

25. SkyMed "Double Bonus" Both Expanded & Extended

Under the SkyMed Double Bonus, we've been giving people who buy new SkyMed memberships through us -- duration one year or longer — and people who upgrade their current SkyMed memberships bought through us to longer memberships — a double bonus: we give them JMB Website Supporters membership extensions equal in length to what they had bought through us from SkyMed. In December, we also started giving \$25 gift certificates to these folks, good toward the purchase of a future JMB Website Supporters membership extension. That was our Double Bonus.

We originally were intending to end this promotion December 31 but instead we have expanded and extended it.

Under the expansion, we now offer a triple bonus — including a new extra year of JMB membership in addition to what we already offered — again, for people who buy new SkyMed memberships through us with a duration of a year or more or who upgrade their current SkyMed memberships bought through us. More on that is in the next story.

Bottom line, there has never been a better time to acquire SkyMed medical evacuation coverage through us. If you purchased a new SkyMed membership through us or upgraded your SkyMed membership through us in December, no worries: just send an email to Membership Services at support@JMBCommunications.com using the Subject "Triple Bonus" and ask them to give you an extra week (you must forward your December confirmation letter from SkyMed with your email).

Please contact Jeff to apply for SkyMed protection: 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only). Or email him at jeff.berger@skymed.com or jeff@jmbcommunications.com. Do it now..... There is no age limit to apply for SkyMed.

26. This Is The Time To Get SkyMed Peace-of-Mind

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 and he'll be happy to answer all your questions.

New Triple Bonus Now in Effect but it could end soon, so do get SkyMed while the bonus lasts. Here's more:

Buying a new annual or multiyear SkyMed medical evacuation membership from us, or upgrading an annual membership to a multiyear Ultimate through us?

An all new SkyMed **triple** bonus is available through www.getskymed.com or by calling Jeff when you buy a new SkyMed annual or longer membership from us -- or upgrade to a multiyear SkyMed membership from an annual membership you bought from us.

The new Triple 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.

With the second part of the 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. (JMB renewals are always consecutive, never concurrent.)

The "Triple" Bonus? Yet another year of JMB membership on top of (in addition to) what you just read about.

See the other SkyMed stories in this issue for much more on SkyMed. Join now... this will not last very long.

27. Restaurant of the Week

For years — after stumbling upon it while in search of a decent cup of coffee on one winter Sunday morning — we've enjoyed breakfast, lunch, and dinner at Vesna Taverna in Simpson Bay, about 125 yards north of the Simpson Bay drawbridge, on the lagoon side.

Originally founded as the bagel house at a smaller location across the street, Vesna's today still makes bagels in the morning which are part of some of their American breakfasts. The breakfasts are hot and delicious and well served by Sally, who also has been here for years. One of our favorites is smoked salmon (lox) and eggs, served on one of those bagels if you like. Super fresh and super delicious. There are salads and sandwiches for lunch as well and some Greek specialties, since Vesna is half Greek.

There is a full menu at night with most of their long-time favorites which you can read about and see pictures of on their website, VesnaTaverna.com. Vesna also does specials and you can read about her Greek night on their website; on Greek night, the regular menu is served plus many Greek favorites.

Leave room for dessert. Vesna does fantastic desserts and is a highly skilled chef. Her husband, Yannick, formerly general manager of a fine dining restaurant in Grand Case, is top chef at Vesna Taverna and his work is outstanding. If you haven't tried Vesna's, come, do it on your next trip — you won't be disappointed and you will become a regular.

Here is a rundown of the status of all restaurants featured in the last year or so in our *Weekly News* restaurant column. Dates below are when each restaurant was last covered.

Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 1/22/18). Reopened. Now open seven days / nights, B/L/D.

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 1/15/18) David is back and the restaurant has reopened. Now open for lunch as well.

Celine Too Motor Yacht, www.sailstmaarten.com (featured 8/7/17). Sunk by Irma. Neil has bought a new sailing yacht as big as Celine Too was and is readying it to enter service soon. Neil is known for amazing cooking on board his boats.

Big Fish Restaurant www.bigfishsxm.com/ (featured 5/1/17). Big Fish has closed. We do not have any word on whether Mike and Teresa will be reopening.

Busby's Chicken Rotisserie (featured 6/5/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.

Isola Ristorante Italiano (featured 5/29/17) Marco Ferrante's Isola Ristorante Italiano next to Hollywood casino in the middle of Simpson Bay Resort was one of the first restaurants to reopen soon after Irma struck, and it has been open ever since. It is now also fully enclosed and fully air conditioned - no street noise. Neat place.

Avantika Thai www.avantikasxm.com (featured 2/6/17) Avantika is open. SXM's best Thai.

Canoa, www.canoasxm.com (featured 4/10/17) Canoa has established a gofundme campaign to help it rebuild. We have no information on timing, but our guess is probably late 2018, or later.

Mario Bistro www.mariobistrot.com/en/ 3/13/17 Mario's Bistro reopened a few weeks after Irma hit and looks forward to your return. Phenomenal dining.

SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 7/17/17) Skipjack's main dining deck overlooking the lagoon was wrecked by Irma and is being rebuilt. They should be open late 2018.

Trattoria Pizza Pasta, Maho Plaza near Casino Royale (featured 9/12/16). The Maho area was hit very badly by Irma and Pizza Pasta has closed and is not expected to reopen, not at that location anyway. Selena has moved to St. Kitts where her mom, Ilde, and dad, Dario, operate their Ciao restaurant.

Daniel's By The Sea, www.dawnbeachsxm.com (featured 8/14/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.

La Patrona, Simpson Bay Resort (featured 1/30/17; added 1/17) La Patrona is open and has been for quite some time.

Domino's Pizza <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dominos-Pizza-St-Maarten/95635717338> (featured 9/16) Open.

Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 5/21/17) Recently reopened; new menu; redesigned; also now serving lunch. New name too: Cafe Spiga. New bar, new bar snacks, same great staff, service, and wonderful food.

The Boathouse, <https://www.facebook.com/CDayDay777> 10/3/16 Just got insurance settlement, not yet reopened.

The Hideaway, <http://www.lavistaresort.com/restaurant.html> (featured 10/31/16) Opening in progress; contact the restaurant for details and reservations. Updated 1/15/18.

Stone Restaurant, www.thestonerestaurant.com (featured 9/2/14) Stone is permanently closed.

Melange International Grill (featured 2/20/17) Reopened.

Le Pressoir, <http://www.lepressoir-sxm.com> (featured 7/6/15) Believed permanently closed and likely for sale. We'll post quickly if we hear anything else.

Temptation, <http://www.temptation-sxm.com/> (featured 7/5/17) Permanently closed. Dino has now relocated to Emilio's at the Emilio Wilson Estate, which will be featured here soon.

Lal's Curry In A Hurry Indian Restaurant, Airport Road, Simpson Bay (featured 7/10/17) Open now for lunch and dinner.

Mr. Busby's Beach Bar <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 6/26/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.

Island Pizza, <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 6/19/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.

Pineapple Pete, www.pineapplepete.com (featured 7/31/17) Reopened.

Papagayo, <http://www.cluborient.com/papagayo.php> (featured 10/17/16) Club Orient was wrecked by Irma; rebuilding is planned. ETA not yet known.

Dany & John's Cupecoy Beach Bar (on Cupecoy beach; follow the car path the turn near Shore Pointe to get there). (featured 4/17/2017) Reopened. Their sign blew away in Irma -- to Virgin Gorda's airport 192 miles away.

FIG, Maho complex at Le Terasse Had closed permanently before Irma hit.

St. Maarten Yacht Club, at the Dutch Side Drawbridge Reopened.

Jimbo's, www.jimboscafe.com (featured 6/12/17) Rebuilding, hopes to reopen soon.

Topper's <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 2/27/17) Reopened quickly.

Taloula Mango <http://www.taloulamango.com/> (featured 4/20/15) Reopened.

Bylbos, Simpson Bay Not yet known.

Sushiitto Japanese Restaurant, Port de Plaisance <https://www.facebook.com/sushiitto.sxm> (featured 2/13/17)

Closed permanently; see next item. Pierre ("Pete") Ferland has opened a new Japanese Restaurant next to

Pineapple Pete...

Wasabi Charlie Japanese Restaurant (formerly Sushiitto) is the new name of Sushiitto, now relocated next door to Pineapple Pete in Simpson bay. Essentially the same menu, same staff, same great service.

Emilio's at Emilio Wilson Estate will be featured soon. It's the new property run by renowned chef Dino Jagtiani, whose Temptation Restaurant was wrecked by Irma.

You will find hundreds more restaurants from both the Dutch Side and French Side listed in the Files area of our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#). Our thanks to our Admin there, Contessa Aiello, who edited the restaurant entries on that site.

28. 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 / St. Martin / SXM 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 with the subject "Weekly News Idea." We welcome every idea.)

2) Spread the word about *Weekly News*. Let others know they can subscribe "free" anytime on our site, sxmweeklynews.com.

3) 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 . 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 everything.sxm.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 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 as you saw above. We may suspend these later for the winter... so order now.
- Check Out Our Extensive Website Design / Content Creation / Website Hosting Services. See websitesthatworkusa.com or our broader jmbcommunications.com, with even more services. Hosting info is at jmbwebhosting.com.

Our Tangible Thank-You for Helping Us:

For a limited period only (ends 1/31/18) -- 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 everything.sxm.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.*

29. US/Canadian ExPats Living on SXM Can Get SkyMed Coverage Too

SkyMed coverage is incredibly important for US and Canadian ex-pats living on St. Maarten, other Caribbean islands, or even Mexico. Your US or Canadian health insurance does not work in any of those places. So, in case of a critical illness or injury, you must get back to your province in Canada or to the US for treatment to be covered by your health insurance.

SkyMed Takes You Home®. Here are details:

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 -- just extended and expanded -- 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. And it has now been expanded and extended: see story #11.

The double bonus offer comes only with SkyMed memberships purchased from us now...

How Does SkyMed Work?

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?

Attention ExPats: 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.

For more information, see www.getskymed.com or contact Jeff any business day (including this week) Eastern time at 508-747-8281 (fastest) or email him at 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.

30. 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. 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 or 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 Triple Bonus in story # 18 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. .

31. Now: Ten-Year Price Guarantee for SkyMed's Most Cost-Effective Medevac Protection

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 which is the only way to get this level of protection if you're not a SkyMed member.

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

Prepay for five years at the sharply reduced rate of \$2495 for [JMB Website Supporters](#) members exclusively. 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 get many features and benefits, too; [here they are](#).

If it's more convenient, you can also pay \$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.

Learn more at www.getskymed.com.

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www.websitesthatworkusa.com

In business since the web began --

a unit of JMB Communications.

32. 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 May, 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

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

33. 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.

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.

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.

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

To unsubscribe, go here: 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; 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

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.

Our main St. Maarten / St. Martin website: www.everythingsxm.com.

Privacy Policy http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/privacy_policy/index.shtml

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