

Golden Rock League of Merit introduced on Kingdom Day

ST. EUSTATIUS—Kingdom Day 2015 marked the inauguration Tuesday of St. Eustatius' own order of decorations to honouring its worthy citizens: The Golden Rock League of Merit. In a fully packed Vincent Astor Lopes Legislative Hall, ten St. Eustatians were decorated with the medal symbolising them being part of a special group of outstanding members of the community.

The local decorations programme is a 2011 initiative of then Commissioner Clyde van Putten, who requested that Sharon Blair and Walter Hellebrand put together a system of decorations. Their proposal and the medals, which were designed by Hellebrand, were unanimously adopted by the Island Council in October 2011.

The system works along the same lines as the Dutch national royal decorations but without ranks. Instead, there are various categories to recognise specific individual talents and contributions: being an Exceptional Inspiration; Outstanding Contribution to Society; Excellence in Dedication; Extraordinary Achievement; Valour; and High Esteem.

The first honourees of the Medal of Extraordinary Achievement to acknowledge outstanding achievement in a particular field were Elva Arnaud for her exceptional efforts in the area of sports in creating opportunities for the young and adult alike.

Eric Demming was awarded for his continuous energy to keep Statia's string band music alive and Marcella Gibbs-Marsdin for her devotion to continuing Statia traditions, such as the July 1 Flamboyant decorations and July Day singing. The youngest recipient Asha Robins was awarded as a role model for the youth for her commitment to excelling in sports.

The first recipients of the Medal of Outstanding Contribution to Society for helping the further development of Statia were Alvin Courtar for advancing the growth of business on the island; Cyril Tearr for being an inspirational example of a successful self-made business man; and Louise van Putten for serving her island in various civil servant's roles in a dignified manner over 40 years.

The first Medals of Excellence in Dedication, for putting years of one's life at the service of Statia's people, went to Henry Hassell for his extensive career at Public Works and to Meville Hazel for demonstrating the potential of agriculture on the island in an encouraging way.

Receiving the Medal of High Esteem was Eric Henriquez, "who was a Commissioner for over 11 years, as well as an Island Council member for many years.

Henriquez' son explained this medal meant more to his

father than any medal before since it recognised his dedication to the wellbeing and welfare of Statia's people.

Because the medals did not reach the island in time provisions had been made by the Decorations Committee to arrange for token replacements, with the real medals being presented when they arrive.

Government Information Services (GIS) together with the Committee members will be informing the public through the media about how to nominate candidates for next year's ceremony.



Award ceremony for the Golden Rock League of Merit, with seated from left: awardees Eric Demming, Asha Robins, Louise van Putten and Henry Hassell. Standing from left: Island Councilwoman Adelka Spanner, Commissioners Astrid McKenzie-Tatem and Reginald Zaandam, awardees Carlyle Tearr, Elva Arnaud and Alvin Courtar, Island Governor Gerald Berkel, Island Councilman Koos Sneek, awardees Meville Hazel, Eric Henriquez and Marcella Gibbs and Island Councilman Clyde van Putten.



K1 BRITANNIA

k1britanniafoundation.org

Foundation

Be a Child's Angel this Christmas!

Next Friday to Sunday (December 18th - 20th), the K1 Britannia Foundation will once again fill the Christmas tree in Clem Labega Square with little angels!

Each one is made with love by and represents a foster child, a client of the Sister Basilia Center, a resident of the White & Yellow Cross, or an underprivileged child who needs some extra love this Christmas!

Pass by on any of these days to choose your special angel that you would like to be the secret Santa for this Christmas by buying them a present, and in return you get to keep the little angel as a gift from that person to you. Just choose an angel, and a K1 representative will tell you the age of the person who made it and help with suggestions of what you could get for them.

Be an angel for someone who needs love this Christmas....because after all, that's what Christmas is about!

Times:
Friday - Sunday: 9:30am to 6:30pm





Regina Marisv.

Dutch school ship visits Statia and GVP School

ST. EUSTATIUS—Sailing ship *Regina Maris* will be visiting St. Eustatius December 16-20. The ship is actually a school with approximately 35 students from secondary schools in the Netherlands.

Teachers aboard give lessons enabling the students to continue their school programme while making a half-year journey from Holland, via the Cape Verde Islands, across the Atlantic Ocean, sailing around in the Caribbean area, and back to Holland again.

Students of VMBO-T4, HAVO 4 and 5 of Gwendoline van Putten (GVP) School will host these guests during their four day visit. Shortly after arrival today, Wednesday, there will be words of welcome by Island Governor Gerald Berkel and GVP Principal Rosalie Edelstein-Lopes, followed by a meet-and-greet at the school.

On Thursday, the aforementioned GVP students will be guests on board the *Regina Maris* during a sailing trip to Saba.

On Friday, the Dutch guests will be attending the school's Christmas service at Seventh Day Adventist Church, followed by a visit to Lynch Plantation, a tour along the historical points of interest in Oranjestad, and a visit to the Historical Museum.

Saturday will have a sportive character with climbing of the Quill and a visit to its crater. On Saturday afternoon, *Regina Maris* will be open to all Statia residents. In the early evening there will be a barbecue for all the hosts and guests.

The "school at sea" will be departing on Sunday morning for the next Caribbean destination.






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