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Flags to Fly at Half-Staff June 20 in Honor of Edgie Christian, Founding Member of Ten Sleepless Knights and Cultural Icon

Governor Bryan has ordered Virgin Islands flags to fly at half-staff on June 20 in memory of Edgie Christian, the late co-founder of The Ten Sleepless Knights and a beloved cultural ambassador whose music, legacy, and community impact spanned generations.

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Eldred “Edgie” Christian, Jr.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has ordered that all Virgin Islands flags be flown at half-staff across the territory on Friday, June 20, in tribute to Austin Eldred “Edgie” Christian, Jr., a pioneering cultural ambassador, musician, and co-founder of the legendary Quelbe ensemble, The Ten

Sleepless Knights.

The proclamation directs all flags at Government House and on public buildings throughout the Virgin Islands to be lowered from sunrise to sunset in remembrance of a man whose influence helped shape the territory's musical and cultural identity.

“Edgie Christian was more than a musician—he was the living embodiment of our cultural rhythm and pride,” said Governor Bryan. “From classrooms to parades, from serenades to festivals, he shared his love of culture with young and old alike. His passing is a tremendous loss to the people of the Virgin Islands.”

Born on March 21, 1942, in St. Thomas, Christian—affectionately known as “Edgie”—was a lifelong champion of Virgin Islands culture, particularly through the medium of Quelbe, the official music of the territory. In 1970, he helped form The Ten Sleepless Knights and coined the name that would come to represent generations of cultural preservation and musical storytelling. As a lead vocalist and banjo player, Edgie's sound and spirit became synonymous with the Quelbe tradition.

Before forming The Ten Sleepless Knights, Christian founded another ensemble, Edgie & the Majestic, in the 1960s. Throughout his life, he brought music into the heart of the community—playing at public festivals, school programs, senior centers, and holiday celebrations. His appearances during Virgin Islands History Month and Christmas-time school visits were especially meaningful, offering students a firsthand experience of the melodies and narratives that define Crucian identity.

Christian's influence also extended into local traditions. His role in transforming the traditional Scottish ballad “Auld Lang Syne” into the culturally resonant “Old Year's Quelbe” helped anchor the song as a hallmark of Crucian New Year's celebrations, now cherished across generations.

Beyond music, Christian's devotion to the Virgin Islands community was unwavering. He was a familiar and joyful presence at baseball games, tennis matches, and Sunday horse races—known for arriving early and staying until the last event was finished. His love for sport and music alike made him a deeply recognizable and respected figure across St. Croix and beyond.

Austin Eldred “Edgie” Christian, Jr. passed away on May 24, 2025. In mourning his loss, the Virgin Islands community also celebrates a legacy that transcends melody—one built on cultural transmission, community connection, and a lifelong commitment to elevating the soul of the Virgin Islands through song.

Governor Bryan has encouraged all residents to pause in reflection on June 20 as the flags are lowered in honor of “an extraordinary culture bearer whose voice and vision will echo through our history.