

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Veterans Day Celebrated With Marching Bands, Speeches, Excitement And Pride

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Military veterans around the United States and United States Virgin Islands were honored on November 11--the day designated to remember those who have already sacrificed their lives on the front lines, and others' continued efforts in protecting the lands of the United States, its interests and its people.

Christiansted came alive with government officials, soldiers, National Guardsmen and women, as well as marching bands that made their way from the Charles Howard Complex to Fort Christiansvaern in downtown Christiansted.

VI Consortium spoke to Kareem Alexander, Private First Class (PFC), who said it was his first time marching and that the experience was "very good."

The march was followed by a ceremony, where officials, stationed at the bandstand, spoke about the importance of Veterans Days, and remembered the sacrifices made by



Visitors gather at Fort Christiansvaern for

Veterans Day celebrations.

Jahdel Jules, director of the Adventist VI Pulse Drum Corp. Band, with 7-plus members strong at Tuesday's ceremony, said his group is a unified effort between small Adventist bands around the islands, and it was their first time performing at the Veterans Day ceremony. He further pointed out that small Adventist bands have performed in the past.

Jules said the band practices twice a week--on Saturday nights and Sundays--for up to three hours. He said the group was already looking forward to next year, and that the experience for the team has been "fun."

At the bandstand, Governor de Jongh, Delegate to Congress, Donna M. Christensen and other officials paid homage to local veterans.

"This is my last Veterans Day as your Delegate to Congress and it has been an honor to serve our Veterans, their families and the people of the Virgin Islands," Christensen said.

In a special welcome home ribbon ceremony, Guardsmen from St. Croix and St. Thomas returning from Afghanistan were honored. On St. Croix, honorees included Chief Warrant 4 Fabian Claxton, Staff Sgt. Peter A. Bando, Sgt. Adrian N. Ramsden, Staff Sgt. Henrietta Sampson and Staff Sgt. Raymond Williams.

On St. Thomas, Cpt. Brenda Sydney, Staff Sgt. Dazarene Lescott. and Staff Sgt. Lazarus Toussaint were honored.

The event started early, about 8 a.m., and went into the afternoon. By all accounts, it was a success.