

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Governor Mapp Pays Tribute To Alwyn Baptiste, Sr.

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Alwyn Baptiste Sr. and Jr.

ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp joined Virgin Islanders throughout the community in paying tribute to the late Alwyn "Al" Baptiste and on Saturday offered formal condolences to his family, friends and fans. Mr. Baptiste died of Sarcoma cancer at the age of 62 on Thursday. His death saw an outpouring condolences from musicians, well-wishers, and government officials, all noting Mr. Baptiste's enduring contribution to the territory's culture.

"Al Baptiste was a giant in the local music entertainment industry and was well-known to many as a founding member and manager of St. Croix's legendary Xpress Band. He was

an extraordinarily talented keyboardist, arranger and composer," Governor Mapp said.

"Al Baptiste contributed much to the musical and artistic landscape of our territory. He was a fine man and deeply committed to his community and its culture," he added.

Xpress Band has been an integral part of carnival celebrations for many years and it has taken the Road March title at St. Croix Festivals on more than one occasion. A great deal of the band's music was produced at Al's Backyard Studio in La Grande Princesse on St. Croix. Mr. Baptiste both recorded and influenced many artists and was considered a valuable resource to local musicians.

As he offered prayers and appreciation of a grateful community to the bereaved family, the governor said the loss of Mr. Baptiste would be felt acutely throughout the territory.

"My thoughts and good wishes are with the loved ones of Al Baptiste at this time. On behalf of the entire Mapp-Potter administration, I offer our deepest sympathies," Mr. Mapp said. "While he is no longer with us, the joyful spirit present in his music remains."