

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Virgin Islands Puerto Rico Friendship Continues Today With Parade, Village Activities

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ST. CROIX -- If you don't live on the east of this island, or haven't ventured down Gallows Bay for a while, perhaps you may have missed the U.S. Virgin Islands Puerto Rico Friendship events taking place at the Canegata Ballpark, where Governor Kenneth Mapp spoke on Friday, and bands, quadrille dancers, and other forms of entertainment have been ongoing.

There's always good food, too.

But today's event is the most notable. Called the Grand Friendship Parade, a number of troupes and other groups tramp from the Basin Triangle beginning at 1:00 p.m., all the

way to the Canegata Ballpark, celebrating a half-century-long friendship.

Former VI/PR Friendship Committee President Lilliana Belardo de O'Neal told The Consortium [last year](#) that Puerto Rican descendants started to migrate to the territory in 1917, with the largest flow of immigrants coming in 1927. Following their arrival to the islands, Mrs. Belardo de O'Neal said that the Puerto Ricans started organizing themselves "and became such a powerful group that the Legislature, in its wisdom, decided to pass resolution 1075 (52 years ago) mandating that a day be set aside to honor and recognize Puerto Ricans who contributed to the social and economical growth of the territory."

The parade will be followed by evening events at the village at Canegata, including three groups out of Puerto Rico, an R&B singer named Helly, Heart Attack Band and more.

On Monday, the celebration climaxes with "Friendship Day" on the Christiansted Boardwalk beginning at 12:00 p.m., which will include juggling from DJ Unlimited Sound, a performance from Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights, and a special performance by Rumba Caliente of Puerto Rico.

Correction: Oct. 9, 2016

A previous version of this article incorrectly included Lilliana Belardo de O'Neal as the current president of the VI/PR Committee. Mrs. Belardo de O'Neal was replaced this year by Emerito Torres.