



# Horizons Newsletter



## WESTJET STARTS SCHEDULED ST. MAARTEN FLIGHTS

Commissioner of Aviation Mr. Frans Richardson and President of the Princess Juliana International Airport operating company (PJIAE) drs. Eugene Holiday welcomed the first seasonal non-stop WestJet flight to St. Maarten on Sunday November 1 2009, praising the airline as the island's newest partner for the Canadian market, St. Maarten's second largest source market.

WestJet flight 2652 touched down at the PJIA just before 4:00pm, with 116 passengers on board. The airline will fly between Toronto and St. Maarten three times per week, non-stop, until April 29, 2010. Flight time on both legs is about 4.5 hours.

Commissioner Richardson noted that booking for the airline is looking very good and efforts are continuing to increase the numbers which would possibly lead to WestJet increasing the amount of flights to the island.

The Commissioner went on to laud the economic spinoff the new service will have for St. Maarten in all tourism related sectors. He said preliminary figures indicated that the WestJet service could account for US\$5.5 million for the island coffers from November 2009 to April 2010.

Mr. Richardson told the WestJet executives in attendance that the airline can count on commitment from his office

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*Officials cutting the ribbon to the Westjet flight*

## PJIAE CONFIDENT IN THE FUTURE AND AHEAD IN AVIATION

**With the end of the worldwide economic recession in sight, PJIAE, the Operating Company of St. Maarten's international gateway Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA), is focusing on increasing its traveler friendliness.**

Several projects –some ongoing currently and some in start-up phase- are to enhance the experience of visitors as they arrive and depart the island. Our mission statement says that PJIAE is a regional leader in providing airport services

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## SELF SERVICE CHECK-IN KIOSKS COMING

St. Maarten's Princess Juliana International Airport is setting yet another aviation standard in the North Eastern Caribbean when it introduces automated check-in kiosks in the check-in hall of its terminal building. Already welcomed as cost and time savings mechanisms by several of the airport's airline partners, the kiosks will be installed and operational as a representation of PJIAE's newest focus on improving passenger experience.

Supplied by SITA, the specialist in air transport communication and IT solutions, these AirportConnect Kiosks offer multiple services to the traveler while maintaining flexibility for airports and airlines. "The aviation industry has welcomed

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**PJIAE CONFIDENT .....**

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and as such we strive for excellence," said PJIAE President drs. Eugene Holiday in his update on the projects, which include the completed fisherman's jetty on the banks of the Simpson Bay Lagoon, the nearly finished Airport Boulevard network upgrades, the soon-to-be-introduced automated check-in kiosks and the future runway end safety area (RESA). "Traveler confidence is poised to return soon and St. Maarten will fare well from that development.," drs. Holiday said.

He continued: "The aviation industry has welcomed airport self-service check-in kiosks, as they improve passenger processing and customer service."

The self service check-in kiosks that will be installed and operational at PJIAE in the near future, PJIAE's newest focus on improving passenger experience. Also in the pipeline to kick off soon is the construction of two more gates in the B concourse at the lower southwestern end of the terminal building.

Two more doors will be constructed in that area. The intention is to have the new gates –which will also be outfitted with the CUTE system and be operated with the airport's access and security control system- in operation during the high season.

**WELL ON TRACK**

Drs. Holiday reported that all projects ongoing at the airport are progressing well. "We are well on track with our goals for 2009," he said, looking back at the completed rebuilding of the airport's south fence and sea wall that were torn down last year during the passing of Hurricane Omar, and at the new fishermen's jetty that was constructed in the Simpson Bay lagoon.

To raise the level of customer service, PJIAE is considering providing ongoing training sessions for employees of PJIAE and its tenants, while security personnel recently followed mandatory security guideline courses, as stipulated in international aviation regulations. Also in accordance with international regulations are the equipment upgrades in planning for the Air Traffic Services (ATS) division.

**CONFIDENCE**

Drs. Holiday placed all projects in light of PJIAE's unwavering confidence in the future. He hinted that after months of doom and gloom news about major losses

in travel, the industry is starting to focus its attention on the end of the recession. Reports speak of encouraging signs that consumer confidence may be better than originally anticipated, which could mean positive news for tourism. According to the U.S. Conference Board, consumer confidence increased considerably in April and May. That confidence is reflected in travelers' intentions for vacations and business trips in the next 12 months. In November 2008, only 10% of travelers foresaw increasing their travel in the next 12 months compared to the previous 12 months; in April 2009, that figure rose to 21%.

This represents exciting news for the tourism based economies of the Caribbean. Drs. Holiday referred to earlier statements he made, in which he forecast that St. Maarten was in for a dauntingly challenging year, and said that with the end of the recession now in sight, all hands are needed on deck to navigate onward. "While the recession was at its highest, our airport operating company never relented in actively promoting our island and our airport services and in doing so we have even been able to attract yet another major aviation conference".

PJIAE in 2009 also displayed its willingness to go to unprecedented lengths to support its partners, the concessionaires that operate businesses in the terminal building. Earlier this year the airport company launched "So Much More" as the theme for its retail section; the accompanying shopping guide – which is now in its second edition - and website dedicated to PJIA retail, greatly aided in promoting the versatility of the airport building.



*The new fisherman's jetty in the Simpson Bay Lagoon.*

Horizons Newsletter is a publication of PJIAE N.V. The views expressed by our interviewees do not necessarily reflect the views of PJIAE N.V. Send comments and requests for information to the attention of the Marketing & Customer Service department.  
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## INSEL'S EDWARD HEERENVEEN IS SATISFIED

Edward Heerenveen, General Manager International Affairs of commuter airline Insel Air has every reason to be satisfied. His dream of establishing a strong Caribbean airline that would ensure that his native Curacao would not be isolated has become an attractive reality; Insel Air clocked a NAf 2 million profit in 2008 and is expanding rapidly, adding routes, linking with important strategic partners to extend its reach and purchasing its fourth MD82 aircraft soon. "We dreamed of setting this up; but now the time for dreaming is over. It's time to implement what we planned," Mr. Heerenveen said dryly.

Disarmingly straightforward, the Insel Air executive knows exactly where the success stems from. "It's our business formula," he said. He recalled the initial skepticism which greeted the plans for setting up a new Curacao based airline that would serve the small islands. "They thought we were crazy in thinking that such a carrier would have any right to exist," he said. But the advantage of the dream appeared to be in proper planning, and in the people that were involved and with whom the plan would be implemented.

"First you have to have a sound business-plan that proves that what you want to do is really feasible. Many businesses don't succeed because they don't research properly whether what they want to offer is really a necessity. We researched if there was a demand, and moreover whether and how many people would want to fly with us and to our destinations," he said. "We had just lost DCA -formerly ALM- and there was only one airline flying insular, so we also looked at what we could offer that was better than what there was. And we found that it was service; on time performance, well trained personnel."

The human factor, said Mr. Heerenveen, proved to be another important element. "You need people who believe in what you



Mr. Edward Heerenveen

want to do. Investors who will not hound you right away for a return on their money, but rather want what you want: something that works, that is sustainable," he said.

Insel Air also got the best people that previously worked at DCA to join the team. "They knew what caused the demise of DCA: government involvement. We are one hundred percent private, so that was something they could work with," said Mr. Heerenveen, stressing that Insel Air thrives on giving its people as much leeway as possible. "We gave our people the opportunity to finally set up an airline the way they thought it should be done. We did the political elbow greasing to get the business license, we got the investment together and we bought the aircraft. And then we got out of their way and gave them the chance to do what they were good at. The Chief Pilots were allowed to set up things, the Cabin Managers, the Administrative people were told to set things up the way they thought best. What you get then is a company where everything is proper and where satisfied people work. Not only because they get paid well, but also because they know they work in a system that they created."

And it works. The company is profitable. The 152 seats on the Insel Air's MD80 aircraft are usually all occupied as the airline flies its intricate and unsurpassed system of routes. From Curacao flights to Maracaibo and Valencia in Venezuela are being considered, with possibly a Caracas-St. Maarten link. "We are now a Caribbean airline. That was the dream," said Mr. Heerenveen. The airline now cooperates with among other USAir and ArkeFly, and has a code-share arrangement with Winair.

Yes, the Insel Air General Manager has enough reason to be satisfied and he knows it. "We learned that when an island is without airlift, you pay a lot of money to travel. We achieved what we were after. Prices have gone down on insular flights," he said.

InselAir will soon offer passengers more access to North and South America with the ease of one ticket, checked through luggage, and flight dependability. The airline recently entered into an interline alliance with Avianca of Colombia and its subsidiary Sam Airlines, creating a new hub in South America. Similar arrangements already exist with Windward Islands Airways International (Winair) and US Airways.

This partnership of airlines, scheduled to commence mid November, means passengers will be able to book a ticket from any InselAir destination to a destination of its partners, thus expanding the reach of the Curaçao carrier.

## AIR CARAIBES TO START PARIS FLIGHTS IN DECEMBER

Air Caraibes is elevating its services to St. Maarten from regional to international as of this coming December. The Guadeloupe-based French airline will operate a direct flight from Orly Airport in Paris to St. Maarten twice weekly as of December 12, 2009. "We decided not to leave all our eggs in one basket," said Zoe Wegnerowicz, Air Caraibes' Representative in the North Eastern Caribbean. "We are diversifying our product offering to St. Maarten."

Air Caraibes has been servicing St. Maarten since 1973, offering flights to the French Caribbean territories. Ms. Wegnerowicz explained that the company is privately owned by the French Dubreuil Group. It is a merger of the smaller airlines – Air Guadeloupe, Air St Barthélémy, Air St Martin and Air Martinique – that used to fly between the French islands. "We reassembled these airlines and brought them together under one name, Air Caraibes to offer regional air service," she said.

Air Caraibes flies 4 airbus A330 type aircraft, one ATR 72-500 and one Brazil-made Embraer. They employ 800 people throughout the French islands and French Guiana and transported over one million passengers in 2008. The company boasts an annual revenue of 230 million Euros and clocked six million Euros profit in 2008. "We are a healthy company," Ms. Wegnerowicz smiled.

A force to be reckoned with on short and mid-haul routes –with flights between Guadeloupe, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba and Belem in Brazil-, Air Caraibes now has its sights set on further developing its long haul service; the company flies to Paris from Guadeloupe and Martinique using an Airbus A330-200 since 2003. For the St. Maarten-Paris flight the Airbus 330-300, a giant that seats more than 320 passengers will be used. This aircraft brings Airbus' wide-body efficiency to airline operations on longer-haul routes and is the largest member of the twin-engine A330 series. Air Caraibes will use it between St. Maarten and Paris on Saturdays and Tuesdays, taking off from St. Maarten just before 4.30pm. "We're making a stop in Haiti, where we will be for an hour to re-fuel, after which we fly eight hours to Orly-Sud in Paris," said Ms. Wegnerowicz.

She listed some advantages of this flight, among which the connections at the airport at Orly and the time passengers



*Air Caraibes' Airbus 330-300*

will arrive there. "Orly-Sud is perfect for passengers that have South France as their final destination; it is not as busy as Charles de Gaulle airport and offers good connections to the south, whether by plane or train," she said, calling the new flight a perfect solution for the Antilles. "A lot of people from the Antilles, French and Dutch live or have family in the South of France."

She stressed that Air Caraibes is not competing with Air France and Corsair on the transatlantic flights to the French Republic, but should be seen as rather complementary. "We do not offer the same product. We fly to a different airport, and with different equipment. We fill a void," she said. Air Caraibes is already actively promoting the new service. A special brochure produced on the flight, details the Airbus 330-300 as an aircraft that offers Comfort a la Carte. Air Caraibes offers two of the three flight class options on this flight: Classe Madras, comparable to First Class and Classe Soleil (Coach).

The company is also developing a frequent flyer kind of programme, which will offer benefits to loyal customers. Ms. Wegnerowicz wasn't ready to divulge much about that yet, but assured that it will be a good program to join. "We are an Antillean company, with headquarters in Guadeloupe and we look after our people," she said.

### WESTJET STARTS....

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and the St. Maarten Tourism Bureau in making the business relationship between the airline and the destination a resounding success. He also made special mention of Head of the Tourist Bureau Ms. Regina Labega as the driving force behind making the service to St. Maarten a reality.

Drs. Holiday said the inaugural flight comes at a critical moment when the economy of the United States and Canada reported growth for the first time since the second quarter of 2008. He said Consumer confidence is returning and people are expected to start to travel again. "It comes at a time when our focus is on the end of the recession and the opportunities ahead. This flight therefore comes at a possible turning point in the global economy. Thus, as I looked at WestJet Flight 2652 taxiing towards the terminal, I realized that this new service coincides with expectations of changing economic outlook for the better. But above all, because you previously served PJIA as a charter carrier, I realized that this new service expresses a strengthening of WestJet's confidence and commitment in destination St. Maarten," drs. Holiday said.

Through this service out of Canada, the PJIAE President added, "we expect to continue to realize our goals as a regional leader offering an extensive network of Connections between North America, South America, Europe and the Caribbean. We are therefore pleased and proud to have WestJet join our airport family; we are because we believe that the decision of WestJet to include St. Maarten in your itinerary is expected to play an important role in the realization of our mission," he said.

Present at the welcoming event were former Commissioner of Tourism Mr. Roy Marlin, Commissioner of Finance Mr. Xavier Blackman, State Secretary Mr. Patrick Illidge and members of PJIAE's supervisory board of directors. Also present were three executives from WestJet, Ms. Janice Webster, Vice President of Talent Management & Retention in People Department, Mr. Robert Palmer, Manager of Public Relations and Ms. Angela Braun, CARE Coordinator.

## PJIAE ATS STAYS AHEAD OF THE GAME

Equipment Upgrades are an ongoing process at PJIAE's Air Traffic Control Department. "As with all electronic equipment and systems, the equipment in use are in need of periodical upgrades and since it is required by International standards to provide quality service to the users, PJIA ATS is no different and ensures that it abides by the international Quality Assurance Program laid down in the regulations.

Mr. Jan Brown, Director of PJIAE's Air Traffic Services Division stressed recently, that next to Safety and security priorities the quality of service is seen as one of the basic priorities in Air Traffic Services at PJIA.

Completed in November 2003 and in operation since March 2004, PJIAE's air traffic facility is outfitted with state of the art equipment and is seen as one of the leading modern facilities in the region (including Puerto Rico) The equipment in use has been provided through a turn Key project by Raytheon Canada LTD systems. RCL is one of the leading suppliers of sophisticated electronics equipment in the world

Mr. Brown reported that among the upgrades that should be online soon, is the installation of ground to ground dedicated voice and data links between the PJIA ATC Facility and the French airports of St. Barths and Grand Case, St. Martin.

These two airports fall within the area of responsibility of PJIA ATS. Positive and flight advisory services are provided to these airports and the communication is being done via commercial lines at present.

Also in line for an upgrade will be the RCAG (remote communication Air Ground) for the Air Traffic services in San Juan, Puerto Rico, formerly located in Beacon Hill.

The purpose of this upgrade is to enhance the communication possibilities between Puerto Rico and aircraft on trans-Atlantic flights (NE sector) that experience poor or no communication.



*Air Traffic Controllers will soon have new equipment.*

Mr. Brown said upgrading PJIAE ATS service is crucial, not only from the standpoint of following international aviation regulations, but also from the perspective of customer service. "Companies (airlines) pay for the ATS service that we provide, so it has to be optimal," he said.

He said that meanwhile PJIAE is well on target with implementing measures that will increase performance based navigations (PBM). "International regulations stipulate that the service you provide has to be of high quality level. You are supposed to –for instance- help pilots and airlines to fly more direct routes, land quicker and burn less fuel," he explained. It has to do with economics and environmental enhancement by the operators.

Mr. Brown explained that a number of possibilities exist, such as satellite based navigation, charts, radar service etc and that conventional ground base navigational aids will be phased out eventually.

Mr. Brown: "That will help lessen the carbon footprint. The less time aircraft spend in the air, the less pollution they cause." He was proud to say that PJIAE is well ahead in planning as far as performance based navigation is concerned, "because we foresaw that the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) would introduce it as a requirement in the very near future."

### SELF SERVICE CHECK-IN KIOSK....

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airport self-service check-in kiosks, as they improve passenger processing and customer service," said PJIAE President Drs. Holiday. "They help to reduce facility congestion and enable better use of check-in positions and gates. By providing self-service check-in for low-needs passengers, such as a frequent traveler with carry-on luggage, we are presenting our airline partners with the ability to focus on customers who need greater assistance."

AirportConnect integrates with other SITA services that are in use at PJIA, including the Common Use Terminal Equipment (CUTE), SITA's shared-use network that enables airlines operat-

ing at the airport to cross-utilize the check-in counters. Drs. Holiday said introducing the Airport Connect kiosks represents a development that gives passengers more freedom and responsibility and at the same time is an enormous cost savings feature, all the while propelling the airport into an exciting new-age era. He said the self check-in kiosks herald progress. "This development represents our aim at remaining in the foreground of the aviation industry in this region," the PJIAE President said.

## PJIAE PROJECTS KEEP AIM ON TRAVELER COMFORT AND ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

With the completion of one major infrastructural project in sight, PJIAE is soon to turn its attention to another project aimed at easing the flow of passengers; albeit that the project nearing completion is roadside, while the other in start-blocks is airside. The project on the roadside called on motorists driving through the airport area to take note of another detour, as the upgrade of the road network is reaching completion. As of Wednesday October 7, 2009, and until further notice, the new roundabout has been open for traffic coming from both the Maho and Simpson Bay directions.

"We started the second half of the roundabout; so that - although it is not fully covered with asphalt - part of it is in use while work continues on the eastern half," said PJIAE Technical Director Mr. Mirto Breell. He expected the final layer of asphalt to be laid by the third week of October, after which the road works should finalize by week 45, the second week in November. "After that we will turn our full attention to the parking lot and work on completing that by February 2010. We are on target. Very much so," he said.

Meanwhile, while work is being finished on the road, traffic heading towards Maho will be led through the roundabout and will continue along the Simpson Bay lagoon, around the visitor's parking lot. Traffic coming from the Maho direction will go around the parking lot, and over the roundabout to head towards Simpson Bay. Motorists leaving the frontier road at the Airport Terminal Building, will turn either left or right around the roundabout, to head in either the directions of Maho or Simpson Bay.

The airport infrastructure upgrade works started in May, with the objective of improving safety and enhancing traffic flow in the area. Drs. Eugene Holiday, President of the Princess Juliana International Airport operating company (PJIAE) repeated earlier calls for caution as the works progress. "These temporary detours are an important facet in the island's overall development. This project will result in the reduction of traffic congestion, thus reducing the loss of valuable productive time and reducing the chances of people missing flights. At the completion of this project safety of the traveling public, as well as meters and greeters will also have been improved. So we again ask for patience of the general public, but most of all for caution of motorists," Drs. Holiday said.

The new road represents a US\$2 million investment. This proj-



*The new road is almost finished*

ect forms an integral part of the adjusted Airport Masterplan and is aimed at securing and enhancing adequate traffic flow to/from the airport and airport parking; relinquishing the pedestrian crossing over the main road and increasing car parking.

The project on airside that is now in starting blocks concerns the addition of two gates at the southwestern end of the airport building. The number of B-Gates will be increased to 5, with the installation of two single sliding doors. The objective is to enhance capacity of the B-lounge during peak hours, explained Mr. Breell.

He said it had been brought to PJIAE's attention, that sometimes, when multiple aircraft are being boarded from the B-lounge, things can get cramped in that area. "With the additional doors, even when all their flights come in at the same time, the airlines that use this area will have something to fall back on, so they can board more than one aircraft at once," Mr. Breell said.

The B-Lounge is used predominantly by the lighter commuter airlines that do not dock at the jetbridges. Passengers walk to or are bussed to their waiting planes from these gates that are located on the ground floor of the terminal building. Work will start as soon as the project proposal by the contractor has been reviewed and approved.

Drs. Holiday placed the additional gates in light of PJIAE's aim at staying in the foreground of aviation in the region. "Customer comfort is important to us. The airlines pointed out a bottleneck and we complied because we agreed that these additional doors will help to ease passenger flow," he said.

With the additional doors, the terminal building will have 13 gates. The facility was commissioned in 2006. Spanning 30,500 square meters, it has four floors, 46 check-in counters, eight transfer desks, 10 immigration booths and five emigration booths. With a capacity to handle 2.5 million passengers annually, it took travel in the north eastern Caribbean to new heights, transferring PJIAE from an airport to more than a place where one catches a flight; the new building is fully air-conditioned, has a shopping mall, a bank, a food court and many other amenities passengers consider comfort.



*The B-gates*

## ARRINDELL AVIATION 20 YEARS

A pillar in St. Maarten's aviation industry, Frank Arrindell has seen it all in his 47 years at Princess Juliana International Airport. Three consecutive bankruptcies of airlines he was involved in prompted him to start Arrindell Aviation Services 20 years ago and now, at the dawn of the company's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this coming November 11th, looking back at what he calls "a road paved with challenges," he admits he has had fun. "I had fun. We enjoyed what we did," he said during a recent interview.

He is aware of his reputation of being "difficult to deal with," and can even joke about it, but stresses that as far as he is concerned, that "difficulty" is one of his strongest traits, which has helped propel his company into the second largest employer at the airport, after the Airport Operating Company (PJIAE). "We have touched lives here, and there is nothing more significant than that. People call me tough, but nice guys don't win any battles," he said sternly.

Mr. Arrindell started his career in July 1964 at Pan American World Airways, after which he served as Resident manager at LIAT, before he moved on to Eastern Airlines as Regional Manager. When the company went belly-up in 1989, that signaled a new beginning for Mr. Arrindell; he started his own company.

He reminisces: "We've had ups and downs. Desert Storm; September 11; there were hurricanes left right and center. At times I actually felt like giving up, like throwing in the towel. Also because contrary to what people think, this is not a hugely profitable business. Yes, we've done well for ourselves, but this company is more like a machine to provide livelihood for people," he said.

With close to 100 employees, "Arrindell Aviation" is the largest private employer, handling the bigger airlines like Air France/KLM and American Airlines. "We make a good living, but that is primarily because I have been very fortunate enough to have been associated with some very good people; people that enable me to work remotely from Atlanta," said Mr. Arrindell, mentioning John Tomlinson and current Manager Roy Mingo.

Characteristically critical of some elements in the aviation/tourism environment today, the aviation veteran



*Mr. Arrindell, Mr. Roy Mingo and AAS staff flanking British billionaire entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson, Owner of Virgin Atlantic*

is full of compliments for PJIAE. "Our success is in part due to the support from PJIAE," he says. Honestly revealing that he still has to fully come to grips with the new terminal building, he called on all users to take the leap into the new era it represents.

"I will admit that I still have not let go of the old building. I have worked there since 1962; that's 47 years! So I am still grappling with trying to put what it was like in the past. We used to have so much fun. You were out the back door quickly, it was much easier to function in, with less people and less cost," he said, his voice laced with nostalgia.

He said that compared to back then, the logistics that have to be considered now make costs high and business therefore less profitable. "I would have liked to stay in the old days, but frankly you have to move on. I am getting used to the new building. PJIAE has handled it well and we assist because we must move on to the next level. This is a really nice facility. I travel the world and from what I have seen, our airport can hold its own against all other world-class facilities out there. We should be proud of it," he said.

Mr. Arrindell said it is time everybody else who makes their living from working at the airport recognizes that they too have to move up to the higher level as well. "Some of us have not moved to that next level yet. They still have the old mentality and they forget that this is the first point of entry for our visitors. When you arrive and you enter the building and you see their faces, you want to turn around and leave the island right away. And no matter how good a time you have got, when you leave our island after a couple of days, you encounter the most unfriendly faces you have ever seen. It takes away from the classiness of the building," he said. In his opinion a lot of effort and time should be placed in improving customer service and friendliness. "You can spend all kinds of money to build facilities and bring people down here, but if you don't address these shortcomings, it's wasted money."

Eager to move on from that lesser note, he didn't have to think long and deep when asked what was his most memorable experience working at PJIA. A gifted storyteller who has obviously been through his share of interviews, he turned on the suspense to recount the time he was walking through the former terminal building.

"I saw this little old lady sitting in a wheelchair; her head a bit leaned to the side. It looked like she was tired and maybe a bit sick. I knew right away that I knew her, but I wasn't sure. So I walked over to her to ask if she needed assistance and then it hit me," he said, not ready to call names yet. "I asked 'aren't you ...,' but she quickly told me to 'shhhh... hush. I don't want anyone to know I am here.' She was on a BWIA flight that

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## ARRINDELL AVIATION....

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*Mr. Arrindell and Mother Theresa*

got cancelled, so we ended up talking and even corresponding after that."

Obviously still undone by the enormity of that chance encounter from way back, Mr. Arrindell paused again. "I have met all kinds of people through my career. I have met Jacky Onassis and Henry Kissinger and even driven the Prime Minister of Israel over the ramp to his private jet. There is no one who knows more people on this earth than Roy Mingo and I, but meeting Mother Theresa right there in our terminal building really made an impression on me. It blew my mind," he said.

Turning his attention to the impending 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, he said he will be happy to give back on that day. "We want to give recognition to the people who have been there throughout the years," he said. He mentioned specifically former Lt. Governor Ralph Richardson who signed his business license 20 years ago. "We also want to create a buzz around our milestone and use it in this time of recession and business being bad to create some awareness about our island and our com-

pany. The opportunity is there," he said.

On November 6, Arrindell Aviation invited guests from the St. Maarten community and FBO clients to a gala fundraiser and the culmination of the Princess Juliana International Airport FBO's 20th anniversary celebration. The fundraiser also launched Arrindell Aviation founder and president Frank Arrindell's Aspire organization (Arrindell supporting, promoting, inspiring and rewarding youth in education). An auction raised money for the Unity Foundation with items like a Napa Valley wine country experience; Nascar racing package; shopping getaway at Bloomingdale's; a Carnival cruise; and a Fashion Week experience in New York City.

"It was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the company; the anniversary year of one of our biggest clients -KLM-; I just celebrated my 66<sup>th</sup> birthday; I just welcomed my first grandchild into this world and I am celebrating my wedding anniversary. I felt like throwing a party!"



*Mr. Arrindell in the 70's, Country Manager of Eastern Airlines.*

## PJIAE READY FOR NETWORK LATIN AMERICA

The preparations for Network Latin America, scheduled for December 6 to 8 at the Westin Dawn Beach Resort are progressing well. Host PJIAE is in full swing with arrangements which should guarantee that the prestigious conference has a flawless run. "We were able to stage a professional and memorable platform for the Airports Conference of the Americas last year, and we will present Network Latin America 2009 as a conference one cannot afford to pass up," said PJIAE President drs. Eugene Holiday.

Network Latin America is organized annually by Airline Business magazine, the leading strategic title for airline executives, with a global reach of 25,000 senior readers. Held previously in Aruba, it is a conference where delegates will listen to and debate route planning strategy with key industry players. The meeting provides aviation executives with a platform for scheduled one-to-one meetings and also features an exhibition.

Some key facts about the conference: It will be the third Network Latin America event. Airline Business first introduced the Network concept where buyers and sellers come together in pre-arranged one to one meetings, 9 years ago when the first Network USA launched; In addition to Network Latin America, the magazine's 2009 events diary featured Network USA in Fort Worth this March and the Airline Distribution Conference in Vienna in April with the Airline Strategy Awards in London in July and Network USA 2010 in Fort Lauderdale next March; The Flight Global website is the biggest aviation portal in the world [www.flightglobal.com](http://www.flightglobal.com); Airline Business' website offers 10 years of searchable archives, 150 chief executive interviews and links to the Airline Business blogs written by the magazine's editors. [www.flightglobal.com/ab](http://www.flightglobal.com/ab);

Drs. Holiday said PJIAE was prepared. "We are delighted that we have been chosen as the hosts for this prestigious meeting of the aviation in our hemisphere. Yet another unique opportunity to showcase St. Maarten's tourism and aviation products," he said. He said hosting the conference fits well within company goals to promote St. Maarten as a Top Caribbean vacation destination and Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA) as a Caribbean Leader in Aviation.