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FEBRUARY 2023 NO. 323

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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— See stories on page 13 and 15

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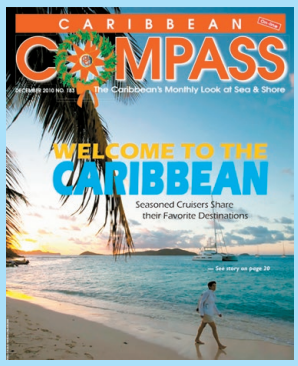
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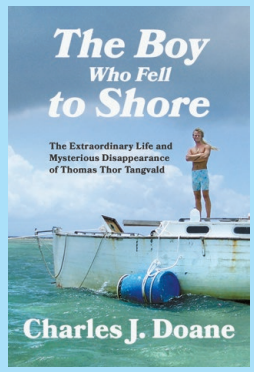
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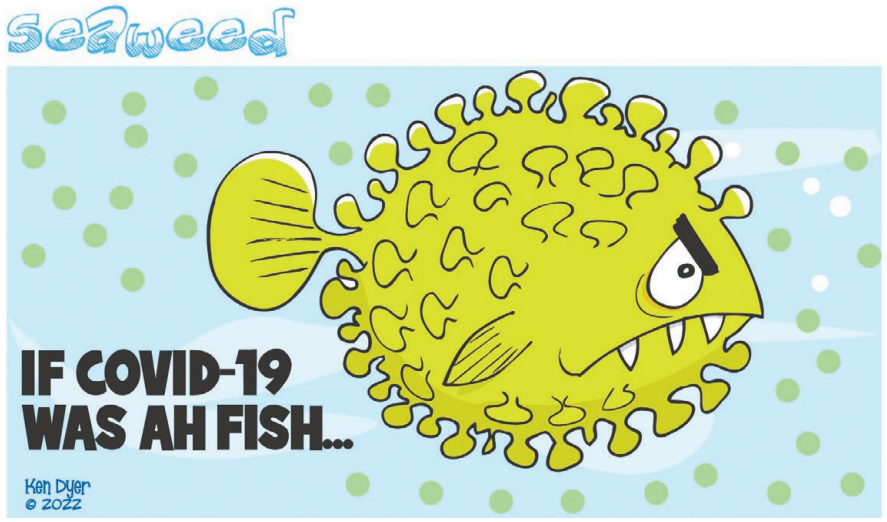


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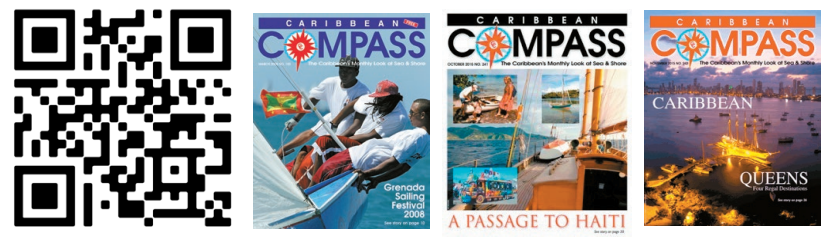


ON THE COVER:
ARC action: Pelican, *a Prout Quasar 50, is welcomed to St. Lucia by a warm tropical sunset. Photo by Tim Wright/www.photoaction.com. Read exclusive coverage of the 2022 Atlantic Rally for Cruisers to St. Lucia and the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers plus Cape Verde (ARC+) to Grenada by Sally Erdle starting on page 13.*

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The *Caribbean Compass* is recognized as a strong voice in the Caribbean. Going to all the effort for the facts is why the magazine is respected.
— Kelly Hall, Thailand

CARIBBEAN COMPASS

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS WELCOMES NEW EDITOR IN CHIEF

Handing Elaine the Helm

It's an honor for me to hand the editorial helm of *Caribbean Compass* over to the capable hands of Elaine Lembo with the February 2023 issue. Elaine knows her way around boats, the Caribbean and a sailing magazine editor's desk better than most, and I couldn't think of a better person to succeed me. I consider *Compass* readers to be lucky to have her take the wheel. After 26 years as *Compass's* editor, I'm excited to be able to go off watch and see Elaine steer *Compass's* content into the future. My longtime editorial watch mate Tad Richards remains on as executive editor.

Working with all of *Compass's* staff and contributors over the years has been a joy, and I trust not only that Elaine will appreciate working with them as much as I did, but that they will enjoy working with her, too.

Sally Erdle

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea and Shore Sails On!

I'm thrilled to step aboard as the new editor in chief of the *Caribbean Compass*, joining publisher Dan Merton, a dedicated staff and a growing list of talented contributors.

I've admired the *Compass* and its founders, Sally Erdle and Tom Hopman, from the day so many years ago that my partner, Rick Martell, and I sailed into the port of Bequia aboard the charter sailboat *Windward Haze*.

The love affair has never stopped. Throughout years working as charter crew in the Caribbean, then decades on staff at *Cruising World* magazine, and after, as an independent journalist, editor, and contributing writer for a host of publications and organizations, the *Compass* has remained a steady and important part of my life.

We know how important the *Compass* is to you, so get in touch! Send us your stories, in print, in video, and in photos. Join us on Facebook and Instagram @ caribbeancompassmag.

We want to hear from you!

elaine@caribbeancompass.com



Right: No stranger to the Compass *or the Caribbean, Elaine Lembo, the new editor of the* Caribbean Compass, *strolled the shores of the Tobago Cays while on assignment for* Cruising World *magazine in 2010.*



Info & Updates

2023 Y2K Program Launches with Axxess Marine

Antigua Sailing Week is delighted to announce the return of Axxess Marine as sponsors of the Youth to Keelboat (Y2K) program throughout the event which runs April 29 – May 5, 2023. It stands for Youth to Keelboat, and is a program designed to get young dinghy sailors aboard race boats at Antigua Sailing Week. This is the second year that Axxess Marine has supported the program in Antigua & Barbuda, and their investment reflects their commitment to development of youth.

Axxess Marine is a leading provider of maritime connectivity and communication solutions, operating from locations across the Caribbean, Europe and USA. The company provides and supports VSAT services including Ku/Ka, the latest high speed-low latency LEO solutions from Starlink and OneWeb, 4G/5G Cellular and Satellite TV, all supported by a unique on-demand client portal.

Founder of Axxess Marine Dennis Henri says, "Supporting local yachting events has always been a key focal point for our team, especially those events closely associated with Antigua & Barbuda, the home of our main office branch. We are proud to be the 2023 sponsors of the Y2K Race Day as well as providers of the Official Antigua Sailing Week Press Boat. I have seen that sailing has brought changes in many children. I hope that more children from the community will get involved in this sport that brings lifetime benefits."

The 2023 class of the Axxess Marine Y2K sailors, between the ages of 14 to 25, will undergo training over the three months prior to the event. New for 2023, the applicants will be split into Freshers, those who will experience racing in ASW for the first time, and Seniors who have had previous Y2K experience or who are regularly part of race crews year-round.

Daniel Brown, who was 15 years old and a newcomer when he secured a 2022 spot on the VOLVO 70 *Ocean Breeze*, has this to say to others considering the opportunity, "Go for it! Don't be fearful. This is one of the best experiences you would ever have in your life. I am forever grateful to have had this chance. And the best thing I learned that has carried over to my daily life, is the importance of preparation – making lists and checking them twice."

Antigua Sailing Week President Alison Sly-Adams says, "This is the fourth year that we are running the Y2K programme. In 2023 the selection process and training will be much more rigorous. For the sailors who are selected, they can expect to have a life changing week as they get out of their comfort zones and learn the ins and outs of being part of a competitive team."

Boats that would like to support the programme by taking a youth on board can email info@sailingweek.com to opt in or log into yachtscoring.com, answer the special questions section, and select YES to the option to take a youth on board.

Axxess Marine Y2K Race Day will take place on Monday, May 1, 2023.

For more information on Axxess Marine visit www.axxess-marine.com. For more information on Antigua Sailing Week visit www.sailingweek.com

Mas Domnik "The Real Mas" Kicks Off in Dominica

Carnival celebrations are back in Dominica, with the official opening of Mas Domnik 2023 on Saturday, January 14th.

After a two-year absence, carnival in Dominica returned with a mix of traditional and contemporary flavors. Highlights included Lapo Kabwit bands, Sensay, Black Devils, Stilt Walkers, and the Calypso King and Carnival Queen.

The 2023 Carnival Calendar boasts two months of activities for every age group, right through Carnival Monday on February 20th culminating on Tuesday, February 21st. Events will include jump-ups, fetes, parades, pageants, and calypso. Among the highlights are the Miss Dominica Carnival Queen Pageant, scheduled for February 16th; SunRise on February 17th; and the grand Calypso Finals on February 18th. Calypso patrons can also look out for weekly calypso tents on Wednesdays and Fridays with the Stardom Tent being held at Petit Miami and Mas Camp at Jerk Hut, both located at Castle Comfort.

Tarnia Latoya Eugene, contestant number #4 of the Dominica Pageant, was officially sashed by her sponsor Republic Bank Ltd. Other notable sponsors who have come on board thus far are the National Bank of Dominica, sponsor for contestant #5 Sandrin Elizee, and Convenience Plus/De Construction Solutions Ltd, sponsor for contestant #1 Meeya Francis. Belfast Umbrella of Companies has also confirmed its sponsorship for the Carnival season with BB rum being the official rum for Carnival 2023.

Mas Domnik, dubbed The Real Mas, is considered to be one of the most eventful seasons in Dominica, portraying authentic masquerade in the Caribbean. Airline and ferry tickets are still available and people are encouraged to book early.

Mas Domnik 2023 is presented by the Government of Dominica through the Ministry of Tourism and Discover Dominica Authority (DDA). Discover Dominica Authority encourages everyone to use the hashtags #TheRealMas, #MasAnLawi, #DiscoverDominica, #DominicaFestivalCommittee , #DominicaCarnival, and #MasDomnik in social media posts.

For more information on Dominica, visit Dominica's official website at www.discoverdominica.com, explore the destination's YouTube Page and follow Dominica on Instagram and Facebook.



Visitors aboard Sørlandet

Port de Marigot Hosting 3-Mast Tall Ship

Caribbean Sail Training announced today that the Port De Marigot will host once again one of their member vessels, the full rigged tall ship *Sørlandet*, on the Galisbay pier on Sunday, February 5th, 2023 for an open ship day with free access to the general public from 1200 hours until 1700 hours. An invitation-only private reception for Port Authorities, press, government and invited guests as well as CST members will be held at 1800 hours.

The Norwegian full-rigged vessel is a member of Caribbean Sail Training, and sails primarily with youngsters of the A+ World Academy.

The ship will be docked at the Galisbay Pier in Marigot (commercial harbor). Visitors will have to park cars outside the harbor, and transport to and from the vessel will be provided.

For information about the Sail Training Vessels, sponsored voyages and more go to www.CaribbeanSailTraining.com

Or to www.CaribbeanSailTraining.org

—Continued on page 8

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

With Shurhold, Gelcoat Restoration Is Simple



Exposed to UV rays and windborne dirt and salt, even a late-model boat can appear old and worn-out when its gelcoat turns dull and chalky. Washing and waxing aren't enough; it needs polishing—a task that's not as overwhelming as it seems. Shurhold offers a Clean-N-Simple Tip to quickly restore gelcoat to its original deep lustrous color and velvety slick finish.

The Shurhold Pro Rotary Polisher, and related high-quality products the company offers, make for an easy and organized project.

An exceptionally powerful professional tool, it has 1,400 watts of power and will complete the task in less time and with less elbow grease than if using a consumer-grade unit. For owners hesitant about the power of this machine, Shurhold offers a complete range of polishers.

The Shurhold Pro Rotary Polisher features three different ergonomic grip styles to accommodate different angles and work preferences. A 177mm Quick Change Backing Plate provides fast tool changes while a 6m power cord allows for uninterrupted work. EZ Clean mesh air intake vents and carbon brush ports make maintenance simple.

Once the boat is polished, it's important to add a protective layer such as Shurhold Pro Polish Wax & Sealant. The unique polymer-based formula doesn't contain fillers that will damage the restored surface. It provides a hard, durable finish with exceptional water-beading properties and UV resistance.

Dedicated to educating boat owners, Shurhold provides key tips for boat value preservation at www.shurhold.com. Inventor of the One Handle Does It All system, Shurhold manufactures specialty care items and accessories to clean, polish and detail.

Contact Shurhold, 3119 SW 42nd Ave., Palm City, FL 34990 USA. +1-772-287-1313; Fax: +1-772-286-9620. www.shurhold.com.

Elco App Turns Any Mobile Device into a Dashboard





Data monitoring for Elco motors can now be done wirelessly from nearly any mobile device with the introduction of the Dash Bluetooth Dashboard Display. An available option on all 2023 Elco outboards, plus new EP-6, EP-12 and EP-20 inboards, it displays a wealth of real-time vital data, has automatic performance notifications and enables instant reporting.

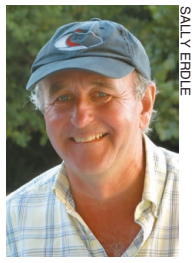
With all data funneled through a free companion app, the Elco Dash turns any Android or iOS mobile device into a modern, information-packed dashboard. Its colorful interface with bold graphics is intuitive to use, quickly guiding owners through pairing with the Elco motor and calculating battery capacity.

Once configured, the Elco Dash app displays speed in MPH, KPH or knots, as well as RPM and remaining battery charge both graphically and numerically. It also monitors critical system data such as remaining runtime, nautical miles remaining, voltage, current and wattage.

Users can even share photos or video of their fun Elco experiences on the water to social media, or join the Port Elco Facebook group, right from the app. The Elco Dash Bluetooth Dashboard Display is available from Elco with motor purchase; the free companion app can be downloaded at www.bit.ly/ElcoDashAndroid and www.bit.ly/ElcoDashApple.

Contact Elco Motor Yachts, 9 Front St. Lake George, NY 12845 USA. +1-877-411-3526. info@elcomotoryachts.com; www.elcomotoryachts.com.

Change of Directors for World Cruising Club



SALLY ERDLE

Andrew Bishop

The ARC transatlantic yacht rallies organized by World Cruising Club annually bring hundreds of boats to the Caribbean from homeports all over the world.

Having been involved with running the ARC since 1990, World Cruising Club Managing Director Andrew Bishop retired at the end of December 2022. In an emotional speech at the ARC2022 prizegiving in St. Lucia, Andrew thanked everyone who has supported the ARC and World Cruising Club during his long career with the company, and spoke about the strong bond between the ARC and St. Lucia, forged over 33 years of the island offering a Caribbean home to the finish of the ARC.

We wish Andrew a happy retirement as we welcome Paul Tetlow as World Cruising Club's new Managing Director.

For information on all World Cruising Club events visit www.worldcruising.com



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REGATTA NEWS

Caribbean Multihull Challenge V: Record Entries for the Region's Happiest Regatta

When the fifth annual CMC begins on February 3rd, a record number of entries will be on the books. As the New Year rolls in there is already a 30 plus percent increase over 2022. "From a high of 18 boats in 2022, we hope to come closer to the high 20s for this coming event," says Stephen Burzon, volunteer director of marketing.

Several Balance catamarans will join the first ever Caribbean Multihull Challenge Rally, a three-day cruising event beginning and ending in Simpson Bay, Sint Maarten, with fun-filled overnights on the French side of SXM at Anse Marcel and at Sandy Ground in Road Bay, Anguilla.

The cruising rally will run concurrently with the traditional three-day CMC hot racing schedule focused on the Dutch side of the island.

"The Sint Maarten Yacht Club's CMC is a place for all kinds of multihulls to come to race, play, and party. We have luxury cruising boats on racing courses along with very fast multihulls racing in their classes on other courses. Everything from the French designed 24-foot Diam class open trimarans to a stunning Leopard 50 and a charismatic Schionning 53 will be out there pressing for new records. Our new CSA 1 class trifecta combining a 60-mile sprint around St. Barth, a 52-mile dash around Saba, and a 27-mile circumnavigation of the island will bring the combined winner of all three an Oris Aquis Diving Watch provided by longtime sponsor Oris," says Petro Jonker, CMC steering committee chair.

The Caribbean Multihull Challenge is more than a regatta and a cruising rally. It is a true festival of all things multihull and a chance for the multihull community to come together in one place to recreate, learn, congregate, and enjoy the dual nation island of St. Maarten and St. Martin. Oris Swiss Watches, gold sponsor of the Caribbean Multihull Challenge Race and Rally since 2019, places the retail value of the Aquis Depth Gauge watch at $3,900.

While the bigger boats sail the longer mileage Trifecta, all other classes of boats will enjoy a variety of shorter, but equally challenging inshore courses. And if that is not enough action for one weekend, cruising class yachts entered in the CMC rally program will see great sailing and great fun heading to the French side and to Anguilla for joyful overnight stops at the same time as the racing.

The Caribbean Multihull Challenge Race and Rally was founded by the Sint Maarten Yacht Club in 2019 to further the interests of multihull sailors everywhere, but especially in the northeast Caribbean. Described as the "happiest regatta in the Caribbean," the CMC invites all to sail, compete, and enjoy.

For more information about the CMC, visit www.CaribbeanMultihullChallenge.com. To enter the race or the rally, visit www.YachtScoring.com.

World ARC 2023-24 Sets Sail from St. Lucia

The World ARC 2023-24 fleet set off from St. Lucia on January 7th, with 19 of 23 yachts starting from Rodney Bay.

Over 50 rally supporters assembled to see the fleet off, accompanied by local media and the race committee onboard the marine police vessel *Protector*. As sails were hoisted ahead of the pre-start sequence, the "liquid sunshine" arrived with a squall adding to the steady 15-20 knots of breeze forecast.

Although World ARC is a rally, not a race, friendly competition was already evident as *Salt* (SWE) and *Lover of the Light* (USA) were over the course start line as the horn was blown, and it was *Mistral of Portsmouth* (GBR) officially leading the way across the start line. The rest of the fleet followed in close succession, leaving Rodney Bay and making their way along the coast down to Castries. On reaching a turning mark, the fleet gybed away from the Caribbean island, raising their downwind sails to make the most of the tradewinds.

2023 sees a new face at the helm of World Cruising Club with Paul Tetlow formally taking over as managing director. He was out on the water in Rodney Bay to bid the World ARC 2023-24 fleet farewell. "This is an exciting time for this group of sailors as they set off on their next sailing adventure," says Tetlow, adding, "from our experiences of leading previous World ARCs, we know these participants are assured of some great sailing, some warm welcomes to new countries and some fun and interesting exploration ashore.

"These are also exciting times for World Cruising Club as we start the new year with World ARC 2022-23 just leaving Cape Town, South Africa, making its way to St. Lucia in April, and the ARC January fleet currently in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, preparing for their Atlantic crossing to arrive in St. Lucia at the end of January and early February. As one fleet is leaving, others are making their way here to Rodney Bay!"

The start marked the end of a program for the World ARC crews in St. Lucia, made possible by the support of several local organizations, including the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority, Events Company Saint Lucia, IGY Rodney Bay Marina and the Saint Lucia Yacht Club for all their generous assistance.

Next stop for the fleet will be Santa Marta Marina on the Caribbean coast of Colombia. The stopover is one of the most popular on the World ARC route, with plenty of good food, exceptional beaches and warm hospitality. They can expect good tradewind conditions along the way with occasional and isolated squalls typical of ocean sailing. The boats were expected to make landfall from Wednesday, January 11th. Those yet to depart from Rodney Bay, *FAR, Hoka Hey, Leviathan* and *Sara of Stockholm* hope to be underway shortly and catch up the fleet.

For more information on Marina Santa Marta see ad on page 5. For more information on World Cruising Club events visit www.worldcruising.com.

—Continued on next page

Viking Explorers Rally Departs Canary Islands

Without an official time and date of departure, the skippers in the Viking Explorers 2023 fleet of 17 monohulls and six multihulls decided to leave las Palmas Marina in the Canary Islands on January 6th, sailing south some 850 miles towards Mindelo Marina at Sao Vicente in Cape Verde Islands.

The fleet's smallest monohull is a 10.95-meter Sigma 362, and the biggest is a 17.50m Amel 54. The smallest multihull is an 11.50m Lagoon 380, and the biggest is a 15.27m Outremer 51. The international fleet from 16 countries was expected to arrive in Mindelo Marina in six days.

Three boats departed the following day after last-minute repairs, and S/Y *Trim* had to do a quick stop in Tenerife and La Gomera.

Viking Explorers has suggested that participants stop in Mindelo before the big jump across the Atlantic to check boats and fix any issues, then cast off for their 2,100 miles across the Atlantic, towards Port Louis Marina in Grenada. S/Y *Maiken*, an Amel 54 with captain Peter Tinér from Sweden, took the direct route to Grenada.

The Viking Explorers 2023 is supported by the Grenada Tourism Authority, Camper & Nicholson Port Louis Marina, and Clarke's Court Rum among many other sponsors.

Port Louis Marina in Grenada, which will host the Viking Explorers for the third time, is a marina chosen by many after an Atlantic crossing for its friendly people and extensive services they might need. It has been named Yachting Destination of the Year by *Caribbean Journal* magazine.

Once in Grenada, participants will enjoy the island and several activities before the official welcome ceremony and fun prize giving at True Blue Bay Resort and Marina on February 6th.

ARTHUR DANIEL RORC



The ARC January fleet preparing to leave for St. Lucia.

—Continued from previous page

Women Run the Show at the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta

According to the Maritime Institute of Technology, women comprise only 2 percent of the 1.2 million sailors worldwide. Yet the racing scene in the Caribbean appears to buck that trend both on the racing circuit and in the organizational teams running events.

Regatta director Michele Korteweg has been involved with the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta for the last decade, starting in 2009 as an intern. Now, besides overseeing the event, she is also the rpesident of the Caribbean Sailing Association, which represents and connects all Caribbean racing events, many of which are also managed by women.



SOULEYMAN

Regatta Director Michele Korteweg (left), accompanied by fellow event organizers, Saskia Revelman and Sasha van der Wouden, enjoying another regatta well done.

Commenting on the unusually high number of women involved in the racing scene in the Caribbean, she says: "I don't think it's by chance, because women are very good at organizing by nature! A lot of events in the Caribbean are organized by women, but definitely, the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta is dominated by women. Our race committee chair, our marketing committee chair, our press writer and our social media team, are all represented by women and I can go on and on. The event gets lots of support from female sailors as well. It is important to us to showcase how many women are involved because it's super special to see all this female talent working together!"

One all-female team which has competed in every St. Maarten Heineken Regatta for the last 25 years is Team Something Hot, sailing a Sun Odyssey 44. "We are very much looking forward to sailing the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta again," says team organizer Marlot Smaal. "The Heineken Ladies Sailing team brings us a trusted network of women within Heineken. It is about empowerment of women to achieve more together and to go the extra mile. We love the combination of competing as a team in very exciting races, having lots of serious fun and drinking a Heineken® beer during the bridge acts and the parties. All of this comes together in one of the most beautiful places in the world — could it get any better?"

It is the unique nature of the island itself which really enhances the event, continues Korteweg. "The people here are so friendly and so happy to welcome everyone. You can do your shopping here, have your beach time here, and of course we have the tradewinds that make for perfect sailing conditions. And you can have a good time wherever you go! We have the smaller bars, the nightclubs, spas, we got it all. You can also take a boat to cruise to neighboring islands like Anguilla, Saba, St. Barths. The island is a great hub to get your boat repaired, but also to venture out and see some of the beauty of the Caribbean."

Newcomers for this year's regatta include another all-female entry, Sun Fast 3200RC *Purple Mist*. Skippers Kate Cope and Claire Dresser raced doublehanded across the Atlantic in the RORC Transatlantic 600, and after arriving in Grenada, the pair will sail across to Antigua for the Nelson Cup Series, the Caribbean 600 and then onto St. Maarten for the Heineken Regatta, where Claire's daughter Emily and crew member Suzie Anthony will join them.

This is the first time this all-female crew will compete in the Caribbean circuit and the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. "We are new to it and we've heard that it's 'the regatta' to do," says Claire of *Purple Mist*. "And after the Caribbean 600, for Kate and I, it's just going to be so nice to have other people including my daughter on board! We're going back to fully crewed, so we can hopefully let go of the reins when we let Suzie and Emily in on the boat." *Purple Mist* skipper and owner Kate agrees: "For me, I'm looking forward to the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta and doing it as an all-girls crew."

As the first all-female doublehanded competitors in the RORC Transatlantic Race, Kate Cope says she and Claire are getting lots of support from fellow doublehanded sailors. "I think we're inspiring many of them to do this transatlantic race, so we might find next year in the Caribbean a bunch of doublehanded boats over here doing the whole series."

Don't have a boat? Don't fret! There are many opportunities to get in on the action with race charters available through OnDeck, LV Yachting, Global Yacht Racing and Ocean Racers. Individual berths and team charters are still available for the Volvo fleet; contact info@oceanracers.net or lucy@lvyachting.com, respectively, to learn more. The St. Maarten Heineken Regatta is also welcoming to family, friends and non-sailors alike, with daily regatta village entertainment open to all starting at 5 PM every evening at Yacht Club Port de Plaisance. Join the Serious Fun March 2-5, 2023!

Latitude 18 Halyard Challenge Kicks Off BVI Racing Season

The 2023 racing season got off to a flying start with the Latitude 18 Halyard Challenge. A sparkling BVI sailing day treated the three trimarans to ideal race conditions on Saturday, January 14th.

The race committee was definitely ready for a re-start as all three boats did some major ziggaling to avoid being over the line early. *Whoop Whoop* was forced to spin away from the line and come back around, so *The Flying Pig* pulled off the best start.

It was anyone's race as they made their way upwind between Norman and Peter Islands but as conditions got a little rougher by Carrot Rock, *Ting Too* was able to stretch ahead, with a few extra feet of boat length helping it through the choppy conditions. After that, there was no looking back as *Ting Too* came around the east end of Peter Island, popped the spinnaker and charged back down the channel to the finish.

Crossing the finish line at 11:48:26 was enough for the overall win for Chris Haycraft's *Ting Too*. Team Whoop's *Whoop Whoop* came in second, and Gilbo Simpson's *The Flying Pig* third. There were no changes to the order after applying the CSA Ratings calculation.

The decision was made not to start a second race, as the wind was steadily decreasing through the afternoon, but there is no doubt that fun was had by all.

Thanks to Latitude 18 for sponsoring the event and providing prizes. Thanks to race officer Don Makowiecki and everyone who came out to race.



RBVIYC / TRAND

L-R: Ting Too, Whoop Whoop *and* The Flying Pig

The Royal BVI Yacht Club is planning a series of events to mark its 50th anniversary, highlighted by the 50th edition of the BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival, which will take place from March 27th to April 2nd. Scheduled events include:

4 February - Manhattan Yacht Club Challenge
14-17 February - Mid-Term Kids Sailing Camp
11-12 February - Sweethearts of the Caribbean (WEYC)
4-6 March Dark and Stormy (WEYC)
27 March - 2 April - 50th BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival
Easter Sailing Camp
22 April - Governor's Cup
13 May - BVI Dinghy Championships
10 June - Lowell Wheatley Anegada Pursuit Race

New Multihull Record

On Friday, January 13th, 2023, at 19:46:26 UTC, Giovanni Soldini's Multi70, *Maserati*, took multihull line honours in the 2023 RORC Transatlantic Race. *Maserati's* elapsed time sets a new multihull race record for the RORC Transatlantic Race of 5 days 5 hours 46 mins 26 secs, smashing the previous record by just under 17 hours.



ARTHUR DANIEL RORC

Giovanni Soldini and Maserati

To read more about the RORC Transatlantic Race caribbean-sailing.com/bravissima-maserati.

—Continued on next page

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Bequia Easter Regatta hosts races for yachts, dinghies, children's model coconut boats, and the local double-enders, such as past Class 6 winner Eclipse.

Bequia Bouncing Back

After three fallow years, 2023 sees the return of the Bequia Easter Regatta. The Heritage Boats, junior sailors and limited yacht racing will be on show. This is the start of building the regatta back to pre-virus levels and beyond. Plans are in place to build upon the Easter Weekend to include regatta activities not only on Bequia, but down the Grenadine Island chain.

For more information email Neil Bath neilbath@yahoo.co.uk.

Les Voiles de St. Barth Richard Mille Registers Entries

There are close to 20 boats already registered for the 12th edition of Les Voiles de St. Barth Richard Mille, which takes place April 16-22, 2023.

The list includes the Volvo 70 *Pyewacket 70* in the Maxi class, owned by Roy Disney, who is also the skipper.

In the Spinnaker class, Les Voiles regulars will return, such as Jean François Terrien's J109 *Sang Neuf*, Pamala Baldwin's J122 *Liquid*, and Bernie Evan Wong's *Taz*, as well as Peter Corr's *Bliz*, Peter Lewis' *Whistler*, Sir Richard Matthews' *Holding Pattern*, and Jim Madden's *Stark Raving Mad*. Among the newcomers are the Swan 50 *Balthasar* and John Desmond's Mills 41 *Final Final*.

The multihull class will once again be very competitive with the Gunboat *Mach Schnell*, the 53-foot catamaran *Fujin*, the trimaran *Oceans Tribute* and the HH66 multihull *Nemo*.

There is still time to register at www.lesvoilesdestbarthrichardmille.com/voilesregister

***I Love Poland* Wins the IMA Transatlantic Trophy**

The Polish National Foundation's Volvo 70 *I Love Poland* (POL), with an all-Polish team skippered by Grzegorz Baranowski, crossed the finish line outside Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, Grenada, on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, to win the IMA Transatlantic Trophy in fewer than nine days.

Nine of the *I Love Poland* crew are younger than 35 years of age, with skipper Baranowski the oldest member.

"I am very proud of the team," Baranowski said. "Last year was our first transatlantic race and our aim was to complete the race safely. This year, safety was still the top priority but with more experienced sailors on board, and some new youngsters, with a lot of passion and emotion, we could push harder. A Volvo 70 was made for ocean racing. In 15-20 knots of wind speed it gets really wet on deck, but she starts to fly. The RORC Transatlantic Race is the perfect start to our Caribbean program and next we will sail to Antigua to race in the RORC Caribbean 600 February 20, 2023."

I Love Poland was met dockside by Zara Tremlett and the Port Louis team with two cases of cold beer. The Grenada Tourism Authority representative Alyssa Bierzynski, whose father is Polish, presented *I Love Poland* with a gift basket of Grenadian goods. After safely mooring up on the Superyacht Dock at Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, the *I Love Poland* team went to the Victory Bar & Restaurant, where burgers and fries were very much appreciated.

For full coverage of the RORC Transatlantic Race, including race updates and stories from the teams, follow the Royal Ocean Racing Club on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. For regular updates including satellite tracking go to www.rorctransatlantic.rorc.org.



I Love Poland *Crew: Grzegorz Baranowski, Mateusz Byrski, Arkadiusz Fedusio, Adam Glogowski, Grzegorz Gozdzik, Robert Hajduk, Dominik Janowczyk, Pacyfik Koseski, Konrad Lipski, Borys Michniewicz, Bartosz Nowicki, Filip Pietrzak, Patryk Richter, Jakub Surowiec.*

The Moorings Onboard as Sponsor of 2023 St. Thomas International Regatta

The St. Thomas International Regatta (STIR) March 24-26, 2023, adds global yacht charter company The Moorings to its list of sponsors for an event which has been described as the most competitive mix of round-the-island and round-the-buoys courses set and run by a professional race committee. This year, the committee will be stationed on a Moorings 534 power catamaran, the flagship of the Clearwater, Florida-headquartered company's power charter fleet. Organizers of the 49th annual STIR, which is equally known for its onshore Caribbean quintessential rum-and-fun spirit at its beachfront St. Thomas Yacht Club venue, proudly welcome and salute The Moorings for a decade-plus of support and sponsorship.

Classes include CSA racing, cruising, and bareboat classes; ORC; large multihull; Hobie Waves, and One-Design classes with a minimum length of 20 feet.

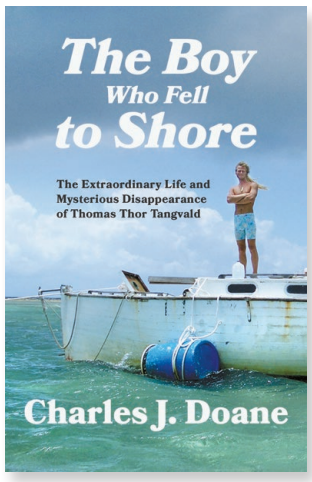
"STIR has long been known as the 'Crown Jewel' of Caribbean yacht racing for its professional race management and the ability of our principal race officers and race committee to set up highly competitive courses. The strong support of The Moorings enables our race officials to have an incredible base to run the regatta and for that, we thank The Moorings for its longstanding sponsorship," says Pat Bailey, co-director of STIR 2023 with Greer Scholes. "STIR 2023 is shaping up to be a spectacular event. If you haven't entered yet, I invite you to do so now. As we say here at STYC, 'We Love It Here' and you will too!"

Find registration forms at yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=15496.



Book Review by Tim Murphy

The Tangvald Saga Revisited



The Boy Who Fell to Shore: The Extraordinary Life and Mysterious Disappearance of Thomas Thor Tangvald, *by Charles J. Doane, 2022, 304 pages, Latah Books. ISBN: 9781957607061*

When I was a kid and circumnavigators were gods, Per ("Peter") Tangvald was a Titan. He was the hero our heroes revered. In 1957 Tangvald won the first-ever singlehanded transatlantic race, then sailed around the world and in 1966 published Sea *Gypsy*, the book that influenced so many aspiring voyagers in that great midcentury expansion of the cruising world. Lin and Larry Pardey dedicated their 1982 book *The Self-Sufficient Sailor* to him.

Tangvald's boats were always of wood, not thermosetting plastic, and he rebuilt and rerigged them often. He sailed with no engine; he eschewed all onboard electricity. No depth sounder on his boat, only a lead line; no digital navigation instruments, only a sextant and compass. Also, no VHF radio, no incandescent lights, no automatic bilge pump. When the Pardeys said, "Go small, go now," Tangvald's message was more ascetic still: accept nothing on your boat that you yourself cannot repair. It was a message that resonated deeply in those countercultural 1960s and 70s—in our hearts if not on our actual boats. In that emerging tribe of cruising sailors, Per Tangvald was an elder whose example set down our early cultural benchmarks.

Charlie Doane, one of our tribe's great chroniclers working today, has taken a deeper look at the man and the legend—and particularly at the heavy costs Per Tangvald's single-minded dream extracted from the flesh-and-blood women and children who loved him. Those costs, it turns out, were devastating.

In The Boy Who Fell to Shore: The Extraordinary Life and Mysterious Disappearance of Thomas Thor Tangvald (https://www.latahbooks.com/blank-1/the-boy-who-fell-to-shore), Doane brings his focus to the next Tangvald generation, particularly to Per's son Thomas, born at sea and seldom of any fixed address in his lifetime, which spanned little more than three decades. In fact, the son's life eerily reprised the father's. Doane's book opens with the heart-racing story of Per's final shipwreck off Bonaire in 1991—a disaster from which Thomas, age fifteen, alone survived but not before witnessing the haunting death of his father and seven-year-old sister. By many accounts young Thomas, with scant formal education, was a prodigy: a boy who designed his own working sextant at age ten and who in less than one year completed two years of prep work that landed him a university scholarship in physics and mathematics. Doane's story follows Thomas through his own sea-gypsying aboard simple wooden boats to his final days before setting off from South America in 2014 on a passage from which he never returned. Between those two presumed shipwrecks runs an exquisitely reported psychodrama. It's impossible to avert our gaze. Or to suspend our judgment.

In *The Sea Is Not Full* (Seapoint Books, 2017), Doane deftly profiled other influential elders of the cruising culture (Don Street Jr., Jimmy Cornell) and quirky outliers (Reid Stowe, Poppa Neutrino). Together with his "Dead Guys" series of obituaries at www.wavetrain.net (James Wharram, Tim Severin, Larry Pardey, Edward Allcard, et al), Doane's body of work, in a voice that consistently mixes iconoclasm and reverence, is emerging as one of our culture's best-told histories.

The Boy Who Fell to Shore is at once a ripping-good sea story, a captivating family profile, and a sober reflection on the values we sailors carry in our hearts.

Editor's note: *Look for an exclusive excerpt and photos from* The Boy Who Fell to Shore *in the March 2023* Compass.

Book Review by J. Wynner

Gore to Core

Black Leopard Red Wolf *by Marlon James, 620 pages. U.S.A. Riverhead books 2019, Great Britain by Hamish Hamilton Penguin - Random House - UK 2019. ISBN: 978-0-241-98185-6*

Although many booklovers, critics and reviewers applaud noted Jamaican author Marlon James' 2019 stunning novel, *Black Leopard Red Wolf*, the first book in his *Dark Star* trilogy, dark being the operative word, there are some readers who may not be able to cope with the book—even repulsed by its contents. Yet others may call the story an African fairy tale—for adults only, for unlike children's fairy tales this one is brimful of gore and sex.

Only a writer like James, with the greatest confidence and talent, can so mesmerize, captivate, fascinate, and grip his fans, and at the same time bamboozle and even turn off others because of all the crudeness, bloodletting, and slaughter of a Once Upon a Time Story, a story set way…way back in time, on the African continent.

Chief among James' plethora of mindboggling characters in his fantasy of African myth and folklore are the ever shift-changing Leopard and Red Wolf—the Tracker, who always has more than one tale to tell as he narrates his shift-changing stories of his search for a little boy lost.

On the first page Tracker says:

Shall I give you a story?

I am just a man who some have called a wolf. The child is dead. I know the old woman brings you different news. Call him murderer, she says. Even though my only sorrow is that I did not kill her. The redheaded one said the child's head was infested with devils. If you believe in devils. I believe in bad blood. You look like a man who has never shed blood. And yet blood sticks between your fingers. A boy you circumcised, a young girl too small for your big . . . look how that thrills you. Look at you.

I will give you a story.

It begins with a Leopard…

At the end of that story Tracker says, "the second story." A few pages later after the telling of that story, he again says, "the third story."

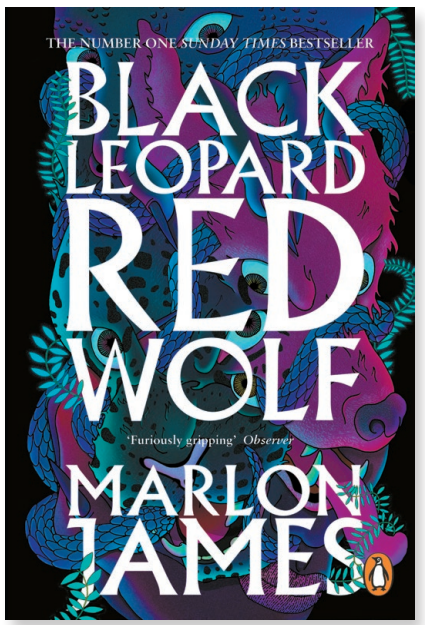
And the tragedy continues for six hundred plus pages—the stories, the bloodletting journey, the violence, the slaughter, the inhumanness of it all. As the search proceeds, Tracker encounters an assortment of creatures, among them Aesi, with skin like tar, red hair, and a flutter of black wings, who searches for the boy too. His experiences are many, varied and mind shattering, including being raped by a pack of hyenas. Along the way he also meets the perfect warrior, Mossi, who becomes his lover.

Though Black Leopard precedes Red Wolf in the book's title, it's Red Wolf, the Tracker, who's very much the leading man, with the cat as the supporting actor in a landscape that's ominous, even otherworldly, as are most of the characters in the novel that's brimful of truth versus lies.

Complexity and a plethora of characters make the story arduous to follow. *Black Leopard* is not an easy read, especially for the uninitiated to James' creativity and style.

One of the easiest and most flowing passages in the book comes near the end, when Tracker says, "It is a griot with a song about me."

The fifth verse:
The one with the wolf eye, he is the one
who says, The night is getting old, why are you not sleeping?
The sun is in the sky, why are you not waking?
Food is ready
When are you going to eat it?
Did the gods curse me and make me a mother?
No he blessed me and made you my wife,
the one called Mossi say,
and the children laugh, and the Wolf Eye scowl
And scowl, and scowl, and scowl into a laugh.
I was there, I see it…
For Mossi speak the Wolf Eye own tongue
Se ge yi ye do bo, he say
Se ge yi ye do bo
Let us love each other
For they two, they grab each other and kiss lip
then kiss tongue,
then kiss neck and nipple
and lower.
And one was the woman, and one was the man,
and both was the woman, and both was the man,
and neither was neither.
And the wolf Eye, he rest his head in Mossi lap.
Mossi, he be rubbing the Wolf Eye's chest.
They just stay there looking at each other,
Eye studying eye.
Face at rest
maybe they sharing a dream.



Black Leopard Red Wolf has certainly furnished the literary fraternity with an endless platform for analysis of character, themes, symbols, motifs, critiques and interpretations, and comparisons with novels of similar ilk.

James is an enigma of a writer. *Black Leopard Red Wolf* is so crude and repugnant, yet his writing scores big. Readers who love his writing can't wait to read him, regardless of what he has to say or how he says it. He is an extraordinary author with dizzying creativity. And, I can imagine his fans thinking, "Maybe with *Black Leopard Red Wolf*, James has provided a noble offering."

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SAILING INTO SUNSHINE

by Sally Erdle

"I wasn't going to cross an ocean. Now I've done it twice. Our 'normal' friends think we're nuts, but our sailing friends know what we're talking about."
— Marie Graven

As the latest Atlantic Rally for Cruisers plus Cape Verde (ARC+) fleet made landfall at Grenada's Port Louis Marina in December, the Caribbean Sea welcomed more than 400 sailors from 27 countries, including 36 children under the age of 16.



TRAVIS RANGER

Marie Graven, at right, aboard the Hallberg-Rassy 54 North Star IV, on arrival in Grenada. "I wasn't going to cross an ocean. Now I've done it twice."

The 91 boats participating in the yacht rally's second leg, from the Cape Verde Islands across the Atlantic, sailed under the flags of 22 nations ranging from Finland to the Cayman Islands. The largest was 21.07 metres (67 feet), the smallest was 9.75 metres (32 feet), the oldest was from 1979, and the six newest were all built just last year.

The ARC+ rally, organized by World Cruising Club (WCC), offers a two-legged passage from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean (850 nautical miles and 2,150 nautical miles respectively), with a stop in the Cape Verdes. It was launched in 2013 in response to the ever-growing popularity of the original Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC), which sails direct and non-stop from the Canaries to Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia.

The ARC+ originally also ended at Rodney Bay, arriving just before the ARC. After the ARC+, too, began to grow, an alternative landfall in addition to that in St. Lucia — Blue Lagoon Marina in St. Vincent — was offered in 2018 to handle the overflow. Although this destination option also proved popular, Blue Lagoon Marina's 25 slips soon proved insufficient for the booming interest in ARC+. In 2021 the decision was made to reunite



SALLY ERDLE

The fleet is in. This was the tenth running of the ARC+ and the second time it's made landfall at Grenada's Port Louis Marina.

SALLY ERDLE



A friendly team of World Cruising Club's "Yellowshirts" was on hand to greet arrivals.

the ARC+ fleets by having a single landfall, at Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina (www.cnmarinas.com/plm) in Grenada.

The number of ARC+ entries is currently limited by the capacity of the marina in Mindelo, Cape Verdes (the increasing popularity of catamarans can reduce overall fleet size, as they take up more dock space).

ARC+2022 departed from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria on November 6th, 2022, and set sail from Mindelo on November 18th. On November 27th, the Mylius 60 *Fra Diavolo* crossed the finish line to set a new ARC+ course record with an elapsed time of 9 days, 5 hours 26 minutes and 49 seconds.

Most of the rest of the fleet arrived in late November and early December, and jubilation ensued when each boat arrived. Rum punch was drunk, hugs exchanged and cheers resounded down the docks.

SALLY ERDLE



Those needing sails, rigging or other gear repaired after the Atlantic crossing could avail themselves of Grenada's wide range of marine service providers.

Marte Pontoppidan, aboard the Norwegian TRT1200 catamaran *Karayato* — a family boat with three kids — told of a mini-emergency during their crossing: running out of sugar. Many other boats in the fleet offered to share their supplies but no drop-off at sea worked out. She said, "When we arrived we were greeted by all the Norwegian and Danish crews — and someone even brought sugar! We have made so many close friends through the ARC+, but it still came as a surprise."

Rosalind Preston on the custom Bill Dixon-designed *Sweet Dreams* concurs, "I've made lovely friends and come away from the ARC+ with a full address book!"

Another sailor explained, "First you naturally start chatting with people who have the same make of boat, or the same flag, or another boat with kids… and then it spreads out from there. Next thing you know, you have a group of like-minded friends for life."

As 2022's ARC+ fleet streamed into Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, marina manager Zara Tremlett remarked on the difference from the year before. "It's fantastic having no [pandemic-related] restrictions," she said. "After sailing across the Atlantic people can roam straightaway — just an absolute pleasure!"

And roam Grenada (recently named *Caribbean Journal's* Yachting Destination of the Year 2023) they did, taking tours to the island's rainforest, waterfalls, chocolate factories, rum distilleries, dive sites and beaches.

Between outings, the crews availed themselves of Grenada's plethora of service providers — haul-out facilities, sailmakers and riggers, diesel and outboard mechanics, and even cleaners to help get things salt-free and ship-shape again after a boisterous ocean crossing. Joelle Szyjan of Turbulence Sails said, "We've never been this busy before. Luckily there are others we can share jobs with when the ARC+ comes in and everyone wants work done all at once. We want the sailors to say that they can get things done in Grenada."

—Continued on next page

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SALLY ERDLE

The rally is a bonding experience. Roz Preston on Sweet Dreams *says, "I've come away from the ARC+ with a full address book!"*

After arrival rejoicings, repairs and island tours, what came next? WCC's outgoing Managing Director Andrew Bishop said, "When many people arrive, they don't have plans. The goal was to get here. Then, plans evolve while talking to others — groups coalesce for Christmas, other passages, etcetera." But plans or no plans, sailing in the Caribbean was on agendas.

Chris and Karen Parker on the Oyster 56 *Mistral of Portsmouth* were among those with a schedule: sail up to St. Lucia in time to join the World ARC circumnavigation that started on January 7th.

Chris and Mary Greenwood on the Malö 42 *Sea Candy* looked forward to more extensive island hopping. They planned to sail up to the Tobago Cays, back to Grenada to leave the boat over the holidays, return to the boat, sail north to Martinique, and then be in Dominica for Carnival during the third week of February. After that, they'd make their way back to Grenada, then Trinidad (where a relative of Chris's is a vicar) and Tobago... with maybe a sail to Curaçao thrown in. Finally, a cruise back up the Eastern Caribbean island chain to join ARC Europe in May.



SALLY ERDLE

Marina manager Zara Tremlett threw a welcome party. She says, "It's an absolute pleasure" for arriving sailors since pandemic restrictions have been dropped.

The Pontoppidan family — Niels, Marte, Tommy, Jakob and Vilda, aboard *Karayato* — are just one example of those whose plans were still evolving. After arriving in Grenada on December 4th, Marte said, "We plan to go to Barbados and spend Christmas there with my father. We have no plans past the holidays." Niels is a drummer and the thought of visiting the home of steel pans intrigues him, so, "Maybe Trinidad..."

Longtime liveaboard ocean sailors Kim and Marie Graven on *North Star* were also keeping their options open. "Three months ago we would have said we were heading for the Pacific maybe, but we've been there." (During the pandemic they got stuck in New Zealand aboard their previous boat.) "So now... we'll sail up the islands, meet our daughter in St. Lucia, and from there, maybe the BVI. Then maybe Latin America... or maybe the Canadian Maritimes..."

Roz on *Sweet Dreams* was planning to sail to St. Lucia at the end of January to meet friends. And after that? "We'll go back across the Atlantic in the spring, maybe with ARC Europe; not sure yet. We're still making it up as we go along. Meanwhile, we'll spend time enjoying sailing in sunshine!"

Thanks to WCC, the Grenada Tourism Authority, Blue Horizons Resort and Sheldon Noel of Royalty Taxi & Tours for making first-hand coverage of the ARC+2022 arrival in Grenada possible and enjoyable.

For more information on ARC+ and other WCC evens visit www.worldcruising.com

Of Egrets and Iguanas



When an egret landed on Karayato *miles from shore, the kids named it Ed.*

Ed the Iguana is an informal mascot of the ARC and ARC+ rallies. A stuffed toy, Ed has made more than 25 transatlantic crossings with these events, being passed on from one family boat to another year after year.

When, a couple of days out of Grenada, a cattle egret *(Bubulcus ibis) landed aboard Karayato,* the Pontoppidan youngsters quickly dubbed it Ed, too.

After resting on deck for a day and a night, Ed the Egret walked into *Karayato's* cabin and appeared to study the chart on the chart table. Not long after, he flew off in the direction of Venezuela.

Compass's bird specialist, Bela Brown, tells us, "The cattle egret is an African species that colonized the New World by flying across the Atlantic. They are known for exploring...."

No offense to Ed the Iguana, but we can't think of any ARC+ mascot more apt.

Sea Candy: A Mid-Ocean Fish Recipe



TRAVIS RANGER

For Chris and Mary (third and fourth from left) on Sea Candy, *it was like coming home. In 2020, after sailing in the ARC, they got locked down by the pandemic in Grenada and spent three months at Grenada Yacht Club.*

When Chris and Mary on *Sea Candy* caught a few big fish on their Atlantic crossing they and their three crew enjoyed "some raw, some cooked and some cured in grog, salt and chili."

The cured recipe will work with any firm, white-fleshed fish, or even tuna. Here's how they did it.

Put skinned and boned fish fillets (or lumps) in a plastic container.
Cover with salt and rub it in.
Add chili sauce ("a few good splodges").
Cover with rum.
Cover tightly and refrigerate for six hours or so. Wash off excess salt.
Keep leftovers (if any) refrigerated.
Enjoy!

"LET'S HAVE A JOURNEY"

by Sally Erdle



CHRISTOPHER KESSELL

Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia, on December 14th, 2022, with most of the ARC 2022 fleet tucked in.

"Where are the Christmas winds?' That's what we've been wondering this year. ARC2022 set out from Gran Canaria with what seemed like perfect tradewinds and a great forecast. Halfway across the winds just turned off, sucked away by a huge low pressure 700 nautical miles to the north. Since then it has been a frustratingly slow finish."

—Jeremy Wyatt, World Cruising Club Communications Director

Celebrating tortoises and hares

Horns sounded, flags waved and fellow sailors cheered as each boat in the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) 2022 fleet slid into St. Lucia's Rodney Bay Marina last December. Although the 2,700-nautical-mile Atlantic crossing from Las Palmas in the Canary Islands organized by World Cruising Club (WCC) usually takes the average cruiser between 18 and 20 days, the 37th running of the event saw arrival times stretched out over almost four weeks.

One hundred and thirty-eight boats from over 60 different boat manufacturers and flying the flags of 35 different countries entered ARC 2022. The largest was the Oyster 885 *Karibu*, a 127-metre superyacht. One of 14 boats under 40 feet long was the smallest, the Vancouver 28 *Oberoi* at 8.35 metres. Twenty-nine percent of the fleet was 15.3 to 18.3 metres (50 to 60 feet).

Start day was November 20th, 2022. Eleven days later the Marsaudon ORC 50 *Malolo* crossed the finish line after regularly racking up 220-mile days. Last in, after 38 days at sea, was the Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 509 *North Wind*.

After strong winds south of Gran Canaria challenged boats and crews during their first nights at sea, steady trades settled in. However, at the end of the second week an unseasonal weather pattern in the North Atlantic disrupted the tradewinds and many boats motored for a few days to keep up their progress. In the third week, the tradewinds returned, peppered with a few squalls.

Early or late, each boat's arrival at Rodney Bay was an event. Claire Massey wrote in the log of the Grand Soleil 50 *Betelgeuse*:

We had a fun-filled and reflective last evening with many a toast to our skipper, Betelgeuse *and each other. A strong wind and a beautiful full moon eased us closer to St. Lucia. We awoke to a view of the windward side of St. Lucia. Rough and rugged but very lush and beautiful…*

The committee boat was waiting for us at the entrance to the harbour and we were tooted and cheered over the finish line at approximately 0900… We were all quietly overtaken by emotion and disbelief that our adventure was drawing to a close. Nineteen days at sea and over 3,000 nautical miles: we'd made it! We quickly spotted Emma, Clare, Rosie, Hannah and Holly waiting for us on the pontoon. They cheered us in along with lots of the boats that had already finished, and the welcoming ARC crew. We came ashore to hugs and kisses, tears, lots of photos, a few ARC formalities and a very delicious glass of rum punch in the marina. Such a wonderful reception.

Crews with roots

Among the 800 arriving sailors were two crews with Caribbean island roots: skipper Christian Richings and his crew on the Oyster 62 *Skyelark 2*, and brothers Howard and Michael Linton, plus Howard's son Andrew, on the Oyster 56 *Lilli Mae*.



SALLY ERDLE

Captain Christian Richings of the Oyster 62 Skyelark 2 *grew up in the Eastern Caribbean and sailed with a St. Lucia based crew.*

Christian grew up in Antigua and St. Lucia, and says that as a young child, when he saw the sailboats in English Harbour, he said, "I want to do that!" His parents then moved to St. Lucia where they own Spinnakers restaurant on Reduit Beach — conveniently right next to the St. Lucia Yacht Club — and he added, "Growing up on the beach, I was always interested in boats."

This was his 12th ARC with charter crew, and the first time with so many crew with St. Lucian connections — some citizens, and some current or former residents. (Only one had never been to the island before.)

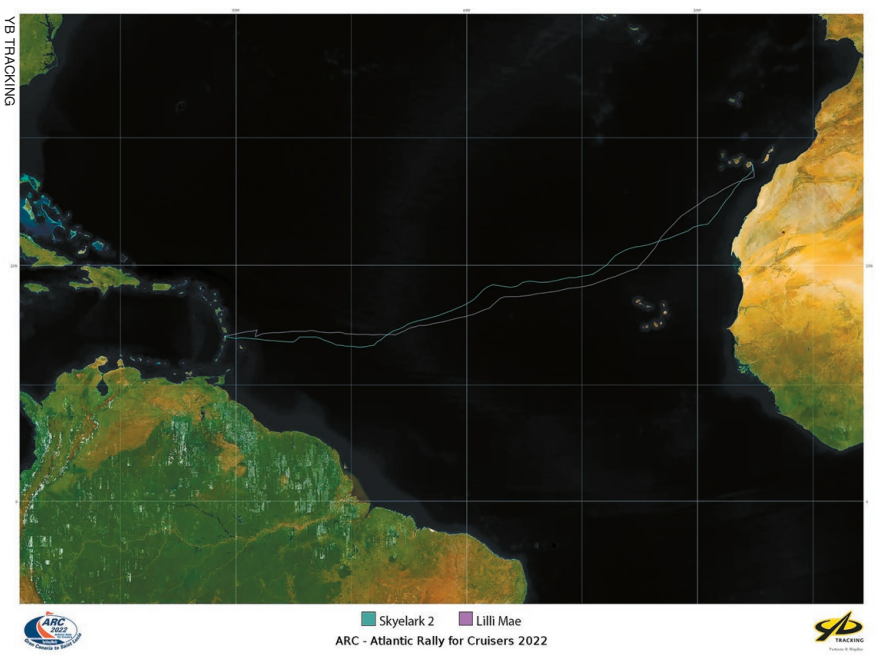
At age 23 Christian was the youngest captain in the 2004 running of the ARC, and he now has over 100,000 sea miles in his wake and 20 years experience. He plans to sail *Skyelark 2* back to Europe in the spring, do ARC2023 in the fall and then enter the World ARC in January 2024, again with charter crew. When asked why there aren't more Caribbean charter captains enjoying this career, Christian said while that the cost of certificates is a problem, "People just don't realize the opportunity."

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TIM WRIGHT / PHOTOACTION.COM

St. Lucia at last! After more than 2,700 nautical miles and 30 days at sea, the Prout Quasar 50 Pelican *is welcomed to St. Lucia by a warm tropical sunset.*



YB TRACKING

Coming home. Skyelark 2 *and* Lilli Mae *crossed tracks en route to their roots, with* Skyelark *dipping south near the end to find wind.*

—Continued from previous page



SALLY ERDLE

The Lilli Mae *crew on arrival. From St. Lucia, the Linton brothers Howard (at right) and Michael (center) will sail the Oyster 56 to their parents' birthplace, Jamaica.*

British skipper Howard Linton on the Oyster 56 *Lilli Mae* says that he and his brother Michael, who was among the crew, are, unlike Christian, neither life-long sailors nor charter skippers. But they have a mission.

Howard and Michael's parents had emigrated from Jamaica to the UK, and the brothers hit on the idea not just to visit the island, where a sister lives, for a family reunion, but to sail there: "Let's do something meaningful. Let's have a journey."

Independently, both Howard and Michael started sailing in 2013, and had small boats for a couple of years. Wanting something larger, the brothers were selecting a Bavaria 46 together at the Southampton Boat Show in 2017 when WCC's Jeremy Wyatt happened to stroll by and they conversed. The brothers committed to entering ARC2019 with the Bavaria, the first *Lilli Mae,* named after their Jamaican grandmother Lilian and great-aunt Mavis, who were twins. "Sailing in the ARC was a way of supporting our overall journey," Howard explained.

They sailed that *Lilli Mae* in ARC2019. Family members from near and far planned to meet them in Jamaica, and the Montego Bay Yacht Club was set to welcome them — when the Covid-19 pandemic hit just as they reached the Virgin Islands. With the Jamaican border slammed shut, they had the boat shipped out of St. Thomas to the US to be sold, and flew home.

ARC2022, with a larger *Lilli Mae*, was a second chance. The Oyster 56 was bought in Barcelona in October of 2021 and, not being new, needed much done, including replacing standing rigging, refurbishing the mast, and even having a spinnaker made in the colors of the Jamaican flag in anticipation of sailing into Montego Bay. Howard said that "it was a scramble" to get ready for the 2022 start, but his son was determined to crew before embarking on career commitments.



SALLY ERDLE

"Welcome to the Caribbean!" Cruising guide author Chris Doyle briefed ARC participants on eyeball navigation, local anchorages and more.

The brothers' plan now, with Howard's wife Joan joining the crew, is to island-hop north and be in Jamaica by next month. Other family members, such as Michael's daughter Clare, and Andrew and his partner Emily, will join when work commitments allow. Then *Lilli Mae* will head to the US East Coast for the summer and sail back to the Caribbean in the fall to visit more islands.

Forever welcome

The many St. Lucian supporters who gave an exceptional welcome to ARC participants were thanked at the prizegiving ceremony on December 17th. IGY Rodney Bay Marina General Manager Sean Devaux and Loraine Sidonie for Events Company Saint Lucia both spoke, and Lorine Charles St-Jules, CEO of the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority, promised that ARC crews will forever be welcome in St. Lucia and encouraged them to return.

Sean Devaux noted that having the ARC arrive each year benefits not only Rodney Bay Marina and the established service providers businesses there — such as Island Water World chandlery, the bars, restaurants, gift shops and mini-market, the laundry, electronics shop and sailmaker — but also the visiting craft sellers and the vendors at the farmers' market. Surveys indicate that food, taxis and accommodation are ARC participants' biggest expenses, spreading revenue into the wider community.

ARC was one of three World Cruising Club-organized yacht rallies to cross the Atlantic from east to west in the winter of 2022/23. The ARC+ fleet, sailing from the Canaries via the Cape Verdes, comprised 91 yachts. The ARC fleet sailing directly to St. Lucia had 138, and a further 32 yachts joined the second edition of ARC January, which set sail from Gran Canaria bound for St. Lucia on January 15th. This brought a total of 261 yachts and many hundreds of sailors under the ARC banner to the Caribbean, a presence felt around the region.



BENCARSON BLAIZE

Whether finishing early or late, 138 boats successfully completed the ARC2022 journey.

Before the ARC2022 sailors dispersed to other islands, veteran cruising guide author Chris Doyle and his publishing partner Lexi Fisher briefed them on Caribbean topics ranging from eyeball navigation in coral and seagrass, to unfamiliar tropical vegetables, to the perils of overproof rum.

And then, new journeys began.

Thanks to World Cruising Club, the St. Lucia Tourism Authority and Harbor Club hotel for making first-hand coverage of the arrival of ARC 2022 possible and fun.

For full results of ARC 2022 visit www.worldcruising.com/arc/arc_2022_eventresults.aspx

For more information on World Cruising Club events visit www.worldcruising.com.

HIKING GROS PITON: IT'S ALL ABOUT BRAGGING RIGHTS

Story and photos by Chris Doyle



Lexi on trail.

There is no more famous Caribbean landmark than the twin Pitons in Soufrière, St. Lucia. When my friend Anne told me she was taking a trip down to Gros Piton with her daughter Annabel and Anabel's partner Jake, to climb to the summit, my business partner Lexi and I signed on. It was a hike I had never done. About 40 years ago I climbed Petit Piton from close to the base of the mountain, so why not give it a go? Well, 40 years older and a decade past the biblical three score and ten should have been a consideration, but no one forces you to go all the way. In my memory, the hike up Petit Piton had been intense. It was extremely steep and we just followed the guide, pulling ourselves up with the help of the trees. Sometimes you would look back almost straight down to the sea below. It was dramatic and only not scary because of the vegetation. I do remember being disappointed by the view at the top because it was grassy with trees all around, so while you could see plenty it was more of a distant view than a dramatic straight down one.

The taxi took us to Fond Gens Libre, "the valley of the free people." Our guides were very good at telling us its history: how escaped slaves had lived here under the mountain, scratching a living from the land and sea (there is a trail down to the beach). If a search party came for them they would disappear up the mountain on roughly the same trail we were to follow.

On my return, I explored the village and was surprised to find the big old Union Vale sugar mill with its water wheel and estate buildings lying in picturesque ruins at one edge of the village. A village of escaped slaves living so close to a plantation? I have not been able to find the history of this plantation, but there is presumably an explanation. Maybe long ago, though they were clearly close in proximity, there was a geographical barrier between them that has since been removed. Or perhaps this plantation started after slavery ended, though that seems unlikely. Maybe one day I will find out.

Our guides met us and took us to the visitor center, where a topographic plaster model showed you the stages of the climb, and for EC$20 you could rent a walking stick if you failed to bring one. As it was, some of those who got to the top found them more hindrance than help, as after the halfway mark you need to be using ropes and handrails to haul yourself up the rocks.



The T-shirts tell the story.

The trail is well laid with lots of support ropes and wooden handrails. Gros Piton is about 2,200 feet high, but your taxi brings you up the first 600 feet or so to Fond Gens Libre, so that only leaves you a couple of thousand. Your first clue that this is more of an endurance test than a nature walk comes a short way up the trail where a bar, set in some lovely gardens, has a boutique selling T-shirts with three sayings; *I conquered Gros Piton, I made it halfway up Gros Piton, and Gros Piton kicked my butt.*

The going is not smooth. For the most part you are climbing up rocks, which are stable but demand attention and are not as easy to navigate as walking on a path. Quite a way after the bar we came to the quarter way point with a view over the village of Choiseul and the surrounding farmland. Time for a sit down for a break.

By this time, we were beginning to get a feeling for the guides. They were perfectly pleasant and would answer questions, but to most in our group it seemed their self-defined role was to get you up as far as you were going, be around to make sure you were okay, and otherwise to be disengaged. Most had mobile phones and stayed pretty much glued to them. They seem uninterested in the climb and surroundings.



Anne at the first quarter.

The halfway mark offered a great view of Petit Piton and benches to relax. Anne decided that was far enough. The three younger members of our group shot on up, and after a rest, I decided to give it a go. The vegetation, which had been mainly dry forest, turned to rainforest and the trail became steep, but the handrails and ropes were good and well maintained. I enjoyed the change in scenery and being on my own for a bit, but the thought of doing what we had already done at this steeper angle was a little daunting, so I sat down to think about it. At this point I was attacked by many large mosquitos, and I decided the rewards may not be worth the effort and made my way back down to the halfway point again.

The slow hike back down was the best part for me: enjoying the beautiful surroundings and trail on the edge of a steep mountain, looking through trees to the distant sea. Talking by phone to our party who made it to the top, I was informed that the view at the top was not all that great, and the Pitons view we saw was the best of the hike.

St. Lucia has many trails, and the guides I have had the pleasure to be with on the Tet Paul Trail (significantly shorter with better views), and on the rainforest skyway and walk, were fully engaged, loved the area and wanted to make sure you appreciated it as much as they did. This was sadly lacking on the Gros Piton Trail. It is not that those guides are unfriendly, but they have no training as to what makes a good guide, which is a shame, because they could enjoy their work much more and gain much bigger tips.

The trail is very well maintained and if you are in it for the challenge of the hike and bragging rights, it is perfect the way it is. Before you brag too much, know that there are those who have done the double Piton challenge; climb both Pitons in one day.

5,000 NAUTICAL MILES AGAINST THE TRADES WITH AN ELECTRIC MOTOR

PART 3: THE CHARGING/ DISCHARGING SYSTEM

by Keith Dickey and Rebecca Frontz

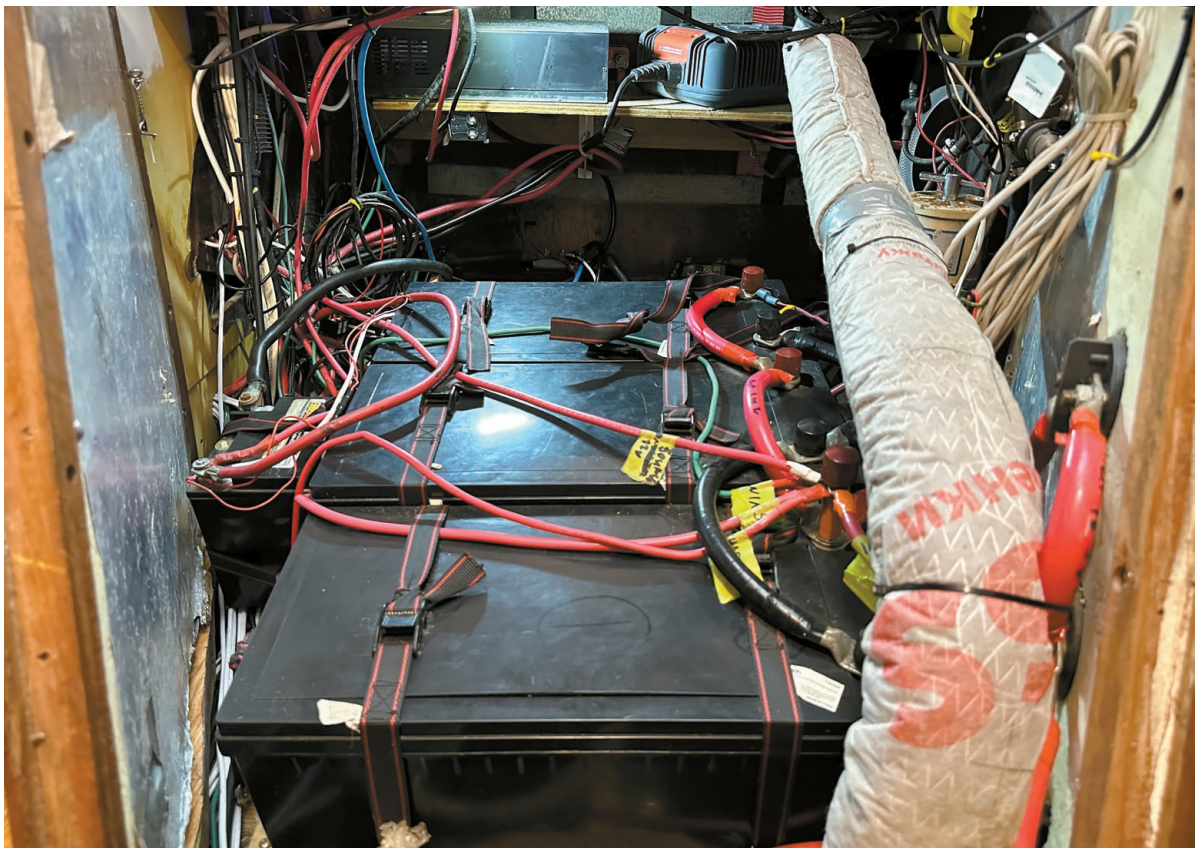
In last month's article, we shared how we physically installed an electric motor in our 1979 Pearson 424, *S/V Vagari*. This time, we'll walk you through something a little more intricate – our charging and discharging system. We didn't get it perfect at the start and we are still in the middle of updating the system to better fit our needs. We hope that by sharing what we've learned, our headaches will be ones you can avoid when updating or converting your own system.

Our electric motor requires 48VDC to run and our entire system has been built around this piece of information. We designed our system with the philosophy that it is easier to step down voltage as needed rather than to step up voltage. Therefore, when possible, our charging components come into the boat at 48V for our 300ah 48V LiFePO4 battery bank, which directly powers the electric motors. We convert it to 12V as needed for the house system, and invert it to 110VAC for appliances. The relationship between our DC 48V and 12V systems has been re-worked a few times and we'll go into some detail later in this article to explain the nuances we've learned. First, let's discuss in detail the four ways in which we can charge our 48V LiFePO4 battery bank: solar panels, wind generator, hydrogeneration, and a battery charger via a diesel generator.



LiFePO4 cells waiting to be repurposed into 12V.

Solar: With a total of approximately 1900 watts, solar proves to be our most effective and efficient way to charge our batteries. We have four groups of solar panels on *Vagari*. Two groups of four 110W 12V flexible panels are mounted above our bimini wired in series for 48V, then wired together in parallel, sharing a single Victron® MPPT controller. Mounted on our archway, we have two 100W 12V rigid panels run in series for 24V. Ideally, as mentioned above, we would have four of these panels to run in series for 48V. However, we were gifted these as a favor for helping a friend and wanted to utilize them. We found an MPPT controller made by Genasun® that could boost the voltage to 48V with up to 95 percent efficiency, so mounting two in series at 24V was a reasonable compromise. After spending some time out cruising, we strongly felt that you could not have too much solar power with an electric motor. While spending a hurricane season in the Rio Dulce of Guatemala, we built brackets over our davits and installed the fourth group of solar panels, which are two 400W 24V rigid panels wired in series for 48V controlled with a Victron® MPPT. These additional solar panels have half cell technology, which improves performance against shading.



Batteries, chargers and inverter housed in old diesel motor compartment.

Regarding shading, there is a library worth of information on the internet about how best to wire solar panels; parallel versus series. There seems to be consensus that panels wired in parallel are not quite as susceptible to shading. We do not have the ability to run all of our panels in parallel as we need to bring the voltage into the batteries at 48V or higher. As such, our mix of 'in series' versus 'in parallel' is driven by necessity of voltage more than performance in shading. We achieve approximately 1600 watts at 'peak sun', losing about 15 percent due to shading, mostly from the archway and wind generator. A benefit, however, to wiring the panels in series to create higher voltage is that it allows for the use of smaller gauge wire, which reduces cost and weight. This reduction can be substantial if the wire lengths are long.

Wind: Our wind generator has proven to be a pleasant surprise for us. In keeping with our philosophy of charging at 48V or higher, we limited our hardware choices. In the end, we chose a 400W 48V Silent Air made by Primus® with a built-in regulator. Having previous experience with wind generators while downwind through the Pacific, Keith was skeptical of its value, especially as it would partially shade *Vagari's* solar panels. However, it has proved beneficial while sailing in the Caribbean with the consistent tradewinds and as an alternative to solar on cloudy days and night sails. The energy production during sailing is improved due to its mounting location. Being mounted aft and center-line, there is increased air flow when sailing on anything forward of a beam as it catches the wind that is funneling off the mainsail.

Hydrogeneration: An exceptionally fun way to recharge our batteries is using the electric motor itself. While sailing with the motor turned on, but not engaged in forward or reverse, water flows over the prop causing it to spin. The electric motor creates electricity from the spinning prop to charge the batteries.

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Via the electric motor controller, we can adjust the resistance at the prop. With increased resistance, we achieve increased charging output. However, high output charging requires a faster speed through the water to overcome the resistance (drag) to spin the prop. Alternatively, the resistance can be decreased, which allows for lower charging output at slower boat speeds. The trade-off with hydrogeneration is its affect on boat speed. At lower boat speeds of around four knots, we notice the hydrogeneration can decrease our boat speed up to half a knot. If we are cruising along at six knots or more, the effect on our speed seems negligible as the boat easily overcomes the drag of the prop through the water. Of course, this all is variable as we can change the resistance settings, which affects our energy generation and boat speed. It is rather nuanced and we are still learning how to harness this energy most effectively given its relationship with boat speed, but it proves to be a very powerful charging tool, providing upwards of 1000W with a mid-resistance setting when sailing at or near hull speed.



Solar panels and wind generator on a sunny day (with crewmember Bosun supervising).

Generator: With wind, solar, and hydrogeneration being our primary charging sources, our generator is not often used, but does serve as a back-up and provides peace of mind. We chose a two-cylinder 5.5kW NextGen® diesel with a full sound enclosure. It is primarily used when we need to motor in otherwise poor charging conditions, i.e. minimal sun. While we would have loved a larger generator, at the time we converted to an electric motor, sourcing an appropriate battery charger was a constraint. With the input voltage on *Vagari* being 110V and output voltage at 48V, we did not have many options. The only off-the-shelf commercially available battery chargers were those for electric bicycles. We were able to find a 20A charger that drew around 1100W that would work with our system, but knew it would be quite undersized. We used it for a short period before seeking the assistance of a manufacturer overseas for a custom-built charger. They were able to build a 60A charger that pulls 4200W at peak draw. As our generator is 5.5kW, that leaves approximately 1000W unused. To optimize the use of our generator, we run the 12V house system directly off the generator while simultaneously charging the 48V batteries. Now a few years later, a quick internet search yields a 9000W 110V battery charger with 150A 48V output. Though quite expensive, this battery charger paired with a 9.5kW generator would be ideal for our system if we were to design it today now that we have insight into the electric motor energy consumption-to-speed curve.

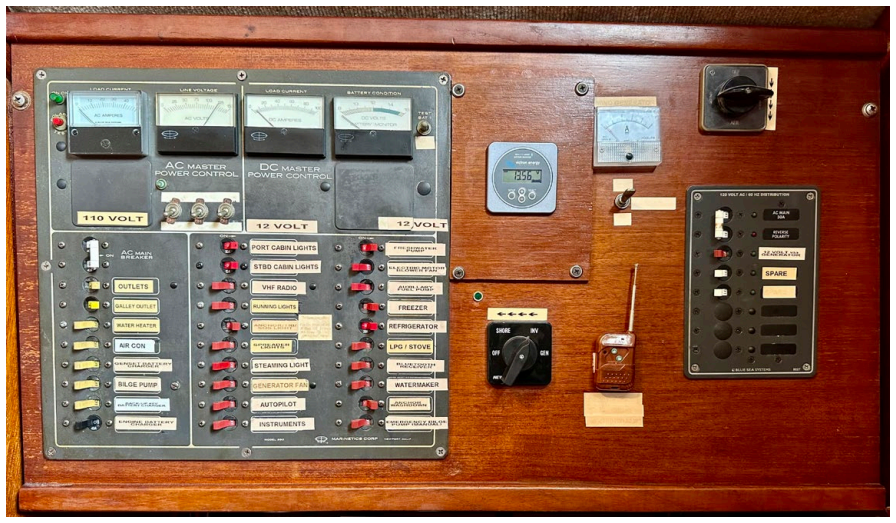
Discharging: The obvious use of our battery bank is powering our electric motor. The energy consumption in relation to boat speed is complex and how we optimize the energy use is quite nuanced. With that said, we will discuss this in detail in the next article. Aside from using our batteries to power our electric motor, we also discharge the batteries via an inverter for 110V appliances. More complicated is how we use our 48V batteries in conjunction with our 12V house system, which has gone through a bit of an evolution and is worth a discussion.

Initially, we chose to use a standard converter to step down the 48V to 12V. However, our electric winch uses upwards of 90A, so we needed a rather large converter. Unfortunately, the only one we could find fitting these specifications produced exactly 12V, which caused intermittent low voltage issues with our house system. Following a friend's suggestion, we now use an MPPT controller to keep a 12V 40ah sealed lead acid battery topped up by drawing from our 48V lithium battery bank. The lead acid battery provides electricity at a sufficient voltage to run our house system without the low voltage issues, as well as allowing a 90A draw for our electric winch. The drawback to this system is that the single 12V battery needs to be constantly charging from the 48V system as the 12V amp hour capacity is not sufficient to run our house system for any length of time. While this generally is of no concern, there are times that we would prefer to have a separate house battery bank, such as during the night prior to a passage when we ideally would leave the anchorage with a full motor battery bank, or while on the move and needing to conserve our battery bank for motoring.

In a previous article ("5000 Nautical Miles Against the Trades with an Electric Motor, Part 2: Installation Overview," by Keith Dickey and Rebeca Frontz, *Compass* January 2023) we mentioned we had a 48V 100ah lithium battery with a bad cell. We've reconfigured the healthy cells of the battery to create a 12V 300ah battery. We are awaiting the delivery of an appropriate battery management system (BMS) and plan to use this as our new house bank. We will continue to charge the battery with a MPPT controller via the 48V bank. We are hopeful this will solve most of our needs and wants. The voltage will be high enough to avoid voltage drop issues, the BMS will allow for a large enough draw to run the electric winch, and given the battery will be 300ah, it should allow for multiple days between needing to be charged giving us the ability to conserve the 48v battery bank for the motor when needed. We will keep you posted about the success of this approach.

Lastly, a large consideration when designing the charging and discharging system is the need for all of the associated computers/controllers to integrate with one another. We found out how important this was when our wind generator had to work in conjunction with the solar panels, batteries, and the electric motor computers. If our batteries were nearly fully charged and the wind generator was producing electricity, as well as the solar panels, it would trip the BMS of the lithium batteries. This had a downstream effect of shutting down our electric motor computers. The motors then needed to be manually reset. This was especially fun to sort out when entering a narrow channel to an anchorage and planning to motor! After some experimenting, we later learned this phenomenon would not occur if the solar panels were not also actively producing electricity. Rather, the wind generator would shut itself off as expected as the batteries approached fully charged. We believe the additional charge from the solar panels entering the batteries confused the wind generator. We found that sightly turning down the voltage setting in the internal regulator of the wind generator fixed our issue. Now when the batteries reach that lower voltage, which is just prior to being fully charged, the wind generator shuts itself off, while the solar continues to top off the batteries.

While this was likely specific to our system, it is only one example of several challenges we have had to muddle through in order to get all the components of our system integrating seamlessly. The learning curve is real and sometimes steep, but from our experience, nearly always surmountable with patience and an intelligent troubleshooting approach.



Vagari's *electrical panel.*

In our next article we will talk in detail about the electric motor discharging, along with the energy consumption-to-speed curve and its significance. In the meantime, if you have any questions please email us at sail.vagari@gmail.com.

SEWING SAILS & MORE BY THE SEASHORE

Story and photos by JoAnne and Bill Harris

As a new year rolls around, the two of us always find ourselves delighted to reflect on the epic memories we have made during our full time living aboard our homemade trimaran sailboat, *ULTRA*. It has been almost 15 years full of brilliant adventures and seems to have passed by in a flash. The wonderful people we have met, the mind-blowing cultures we have encountered and the stunning places we have seen along the way are what we always hold truly dear in our hearts.

It has been almost 30 years of leading, volunteering, coordinating, and fundraising for numerous humanitarian and environmental projects around the globe. Through these amazing projects, we have received so much joy in working with outstanding volunteers to help others and to give back to the communities that we visit. Included in these memories are the magical moments we spent making sails for locals.

Sewing 101: Lessons

In 2001, Bill surprised JoAnne with an industrial Sailrite sewing machine for Christmas. However, there was just one problem. She had never sewn before.

The next step was to sign up for a one month sewing class at a proper sewing shop. She arrived with industrial machine in hand, sat it on the table in the front row, and plugged it in. As she arranged herself, she noticed that all of the other students were armed with dainty little pastel-colored Singer machines. Well, it was time to fire up the monstrous beast and begin the sewing project. The beast began to vibrate and violently shake the table until the sound consumed the entire room. Furthermore, the linen fabric of choice was being completely chewed up by the machine. The instructor politely informed her that she knew nothing of Sailrites and would need to study up on them.

Soon the two of us became so busy traveling for work that it was impossible to attend class. Our fast-paced life took over, and the Sailrite did not leave its box until we moved aboard *ULTRA* several years later. That was when Bill traded his captain's hat for a sewing instructor's cap and started teaching JoAnne himself.



A sail takes shape.

Oh my, a spouse or partner teaching the other how to do something; sometimes it can be good and sometimes not so much. However, Bill was a star and truly rocked it by earning a big *E* for effort, and the rest is history. We have had a blast sewing new covers, repairing sails and so much more for ourselves and others for all of these years.

Sails of change

We reminisce about our times in Panama, with a number of years spent solely in the dazzling San Blas Islands, now officially renamed Guna Yala. Years earlier, we had helped to repair the 30-year-old cayuco (wooden dugout) of a gentleman named Victor who became a good friend, and who was proud to become the chief of over 360 of the 365 islands. As many of his fellow Gunas do, he had spent his whole life paddling some serious mileage and battling the wicked weather elements in his cayuco. While we were in the wonderful Shelter Bay Marina in Colon, Panama, for another hurricane season, we received countless fantastic donations for our *ULTRA* Community Projects from other cruisers, which we distributed throughout the Guna Yala nation. These generous donations included used boat sails and other fabric.



Cutting the pattern.

A season later, we reunited with lots of Guna friends once again, but this time we brought used boat sails, and became engrossed in learning how to make sails for their cayucos. We had no idea what we were doing as it was our first time making sails for any boat of any kind.

So as we always do, we researched it, sought out advice and then figured it out from there. We were blessed to meet up with a local elder who guided us through it. He had a template for a larger cayuco sail and explained how to modify it to make a sail to fit a smaller cayuco. On the beach, we all worked as a team to cut the sail perfectly. Combined with small line, we began to construct the magnificent sail. That night, we sewed it.



Stenciling the GUNA ULTRA.

The Home Depot hunt

The next day we went to another island to hunt for the perfect mast, mast step and boom. The island had a beach we nicknamed "Home Depot," since a wide variety of materials such as wood, plastic and much more had washed ashore there. We dug around for hours to find the perfect pieces. Then, armed with a machete, we walked into the densely wooded island to find the perfect tree to make a mast. Finally, after hours of walking around, we found it. Our dinghy was filled to the brim with wood, plastic, and crew. On the way back, we made a stop at *ULTRA* to get cold drinks to take back to their hut and celebrate a successful day. Victor then told us that we were super lucky we did not encounter any crocodiles or gigantic boas while we were there. WHAT? Needless to say, we were extremely cautious after that when we visited any of those remote islands, and made sure to make lots of noise.

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A well earned mess break.

Happy birthday, Chief!

After years of rowing for miles and miles, we gave the chief a gift that would forever change his life. On his 60th birthday, we had a big party for him with his family and gave him the sail for his cayuco. He then asked if it was possible for us to write *GUNA ULTRA* on the sail. We took it one step further and gave him a stencil so he could paint it.

It was now time to launch the cayuco and the new rig. The amazing part was that Victor had never sailed before, although he had seen others do it. He was instantly a natural and the smile on his face brought us so much joy. We are truly grateful to all of the super generous cruisers out there who have donated their used sails, fabric and other items to our projects over the years to help make gifts like this possible.

Sail on

Bill started a collection of boat paddles several years ago, and one fisherman friend in particular gave him one for his birthday. We always invited him aboard for coffee and lunch and also bought fresh seafood from him. One day as we arrived at the anchorage, he paddled by to greet us. We invited him aboard, and he told us a harrowing story of how he almost lost his life the night before while hunting outside of the reef. A sudden violent storm had flipped him and his cayuco over. In the frightening chaos, he lost his paddle, mask, fins, and spear. The waves and winds were so strong that he could barely tow his cayuco safely inside the reef. After finally making it to an island close by just before dark, he spent the night cold, wet, and hungry. We were happy to tell him that we had an extra set of mask and fins for him as a gift.

After hot coffee and a big breakfast, we told him we had another surprise: with his help, we would make him a sail for his cayuco. The next day he arrived with the mast, mast step, and boom to help us make the sail for him. He was excited and so were we, since the sail would be much faster than paddling and he would return home in half the time. The two of us were delighted to see him sail home swiftly and safely that afternoon.

The joy of sailing and giving back

Before leaving Panama, we had a blast making over 20 sails for local fishermen. We were delighted to meet all of them and to get to know them and their families much better. For all of them, the sails provided a better and quicker form of transportation as well as giving them the joy of sailing.

After our days of sail making, we ventured into making tote bags, yoga mat bags, ditty bags, purses, wallets, casserole dish holders and other items from used sails and other materials to sell to cruisers and others. All of the sales of these items help us and our wonderful volunteers to continue our ULTRA Community Projects of giving back and spreading joy to families in need. They also help us continue our environmental projects in communities: removing the garbage and large debris that harbor mosquitoes, cockroaches, rats and more, as well as mangrove planting. In addition, the revenue allows us to continue our projects of repairing schools, building homes, improving education, installing first time electricity and running water, rescuing stray or unwanted dogs and cats, providing water filter systems for clean drinking water, food bags and so much more. If you wish to see the videos of our adventures in sailmaking and more, please visit our YouTube channel at: https://youtube.com@yachtultra1



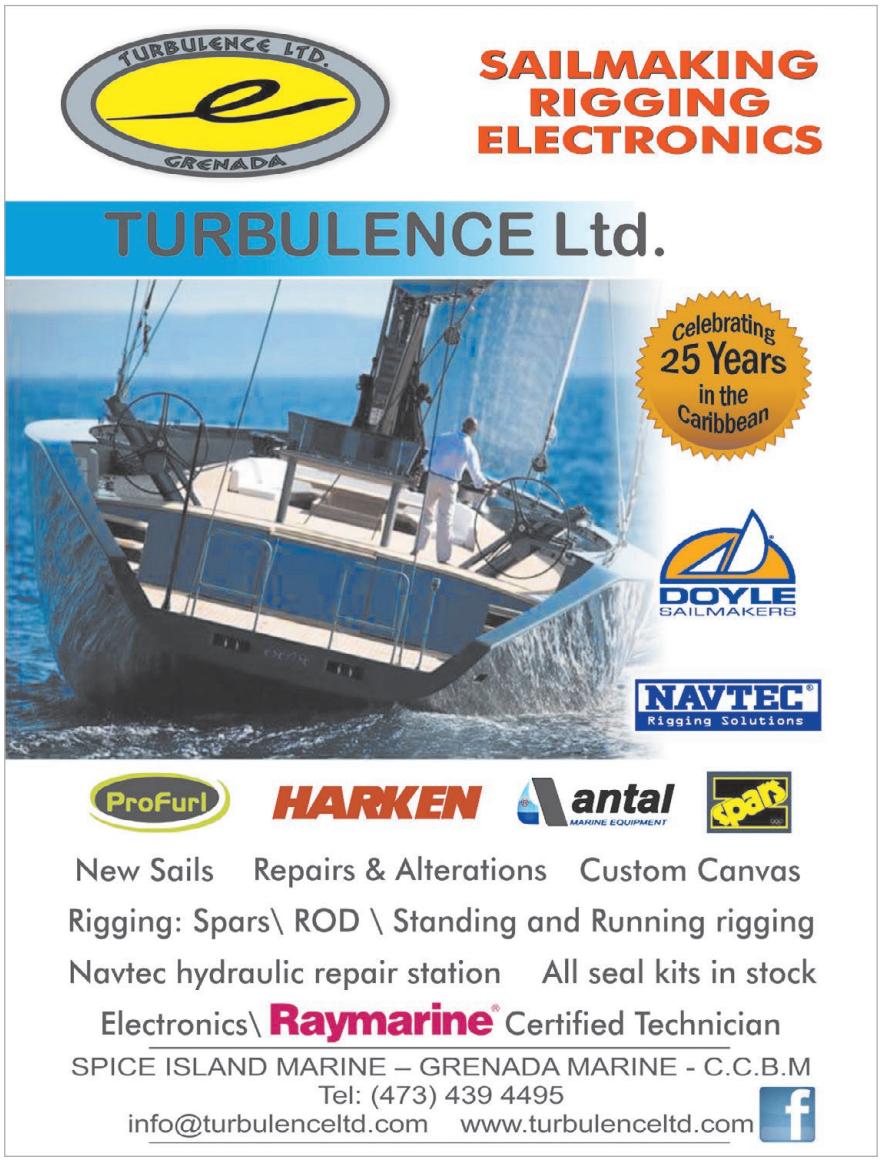
Joanne with yoga mats.

Sailing is our life

After all these years, we are gratified to say that although in the beginning we had a love-hate relationship with our Sailrite sewing machine, now with all these years of experience, machine adjustments and understanding how it works, *WE LOVE IT and cannot imagine our lives without it!* If you are interested in donating used sails, fabric and more to us, or volunteering for any of our ULTRA Community Projects, we would love to hear from you. Oh yes...*We wish all of you fair winds as you sail into 2023!*

The Harrises live aboard ULTRA full time and are the Ocean Cruising Club Port Officers and Seven Seas Cruising Association Cruising Hosts for Honduras including The Bay Islands. You can see more of their sailing adventures at Instagram: #yachtultraadventures



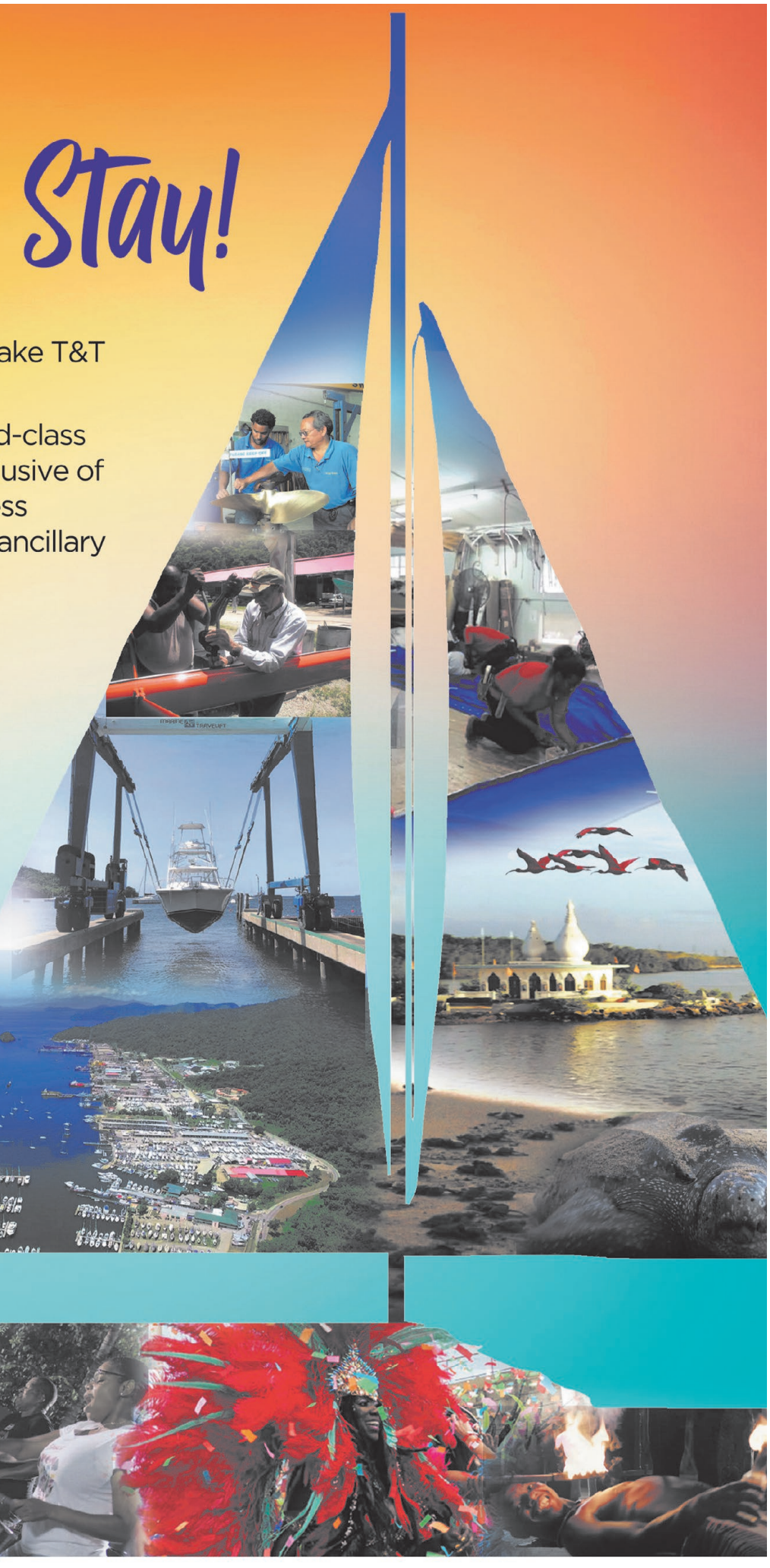


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BILL'S RAT

by Narendra Sethia

One Sunday afternoon in February, I was sitting in my office which overlooked the docks at Rodney Bay Marina. The sun was shining, there was barely a cloud in the sky and the cooling trade winds blew gently from the east.

As I eyed the yachts lying peacefully alongside, I noticed a 26-foot wooden Folkboat approaching one of our slips. She looked tiny amongst the 50 and 60-footers which surrounded her. Her wooden mast was more like a matchstick next to the huge aluminium masts of her neighbours, and the somewhat disheveled state of her upper deck, crammed with fuel containers, cuts of wood, old sail bags and coils of rope, confirmed that she was a "real cruising yacht" and not of the same breed as the large, shiny, plastic charter yachts whose vast and unencumbered decks facilitated sunbathing for their short-term tenants. The Folkboat drew alongside and a lone figure jumped onto the dock and set about securing lines and fenders.

Single-handed sailors have always aroused a certain amount of curiosity, and never more so than when their vessels appear impossibly small to have crossed an ocean, and when their proprietors come across as impecunious "characters" who allow nothing to stand in the way of their adventuring. And so I watched intently, trying to catch a glimpse of this solitary sailor, wondering from which island he had arrived.

I could make out the form of a person busying himself with lines around the yacht's bows, but could distinguish no features other than an enormous beard which seemed to cover the man's entire face and fell in matted locks about his upper torso. Nothing else was discernible for, astonishingly, the fellow was covered from head to foot in bright yellow oilskins – an unusual mode of dress on a warm, clear February day in the Eastern Caribbean.

By now more than curious, I continued to watch as the figure at last turned away from his yacht, looked about him and then proceeded to plod deliberately along the main dock towards my office. He had the gait of a man who had been at sea for a long time, an unsteadiness on his feet that, but for the circumstances of his arrival, might have been attributed to a surfeit of liquid refreshments. The circumspect manner with which he negotiated the dock was as if he expected the ground beneath him to roll to one side all of a sudden.

A few moments later, the door to my office opened and the object of my curiosity stepped inside and peered at me inquiringly. "Er …. Hello!" he said in a soft British accent. "I've just arrived and, er, I was wondering if …"

I interrupted him with a smile. "Yes, I was watching you come alongside. Which island have you come from?" I presumed that he had come down from Martinique, 20 miles to the north, or even, perhaps, from Bequia, 70 miles to the south. "Well, actually," he replied, with a slight twinkle in his eye, "from Gran Canaria."

"You mean you've just sailed across the Atlantic?" I asked.

"Well," he smiled, "Er, yes, actually …"

I asked him how long he had taken. "Forty-seven days," he replied modestly. Even for a 26-foot Folkboat, this seemed like an inordinately long time. In my fat old 31-footer I had managed a 29-day crossing.

"That's a long time," I commented. "What happened? Bad weather?"

"No, not really," he answered, still smiling. "But I took the sails down every night so that I could get a decent sleep".

I had never before heard of such a thing. The notion of a transatlantic sailor dropping his sails every evening, retiring to bed for a good night's sleep and then hoisting the sails each morning before breakfast, seemed to me to be not only improbable but also eccentric.

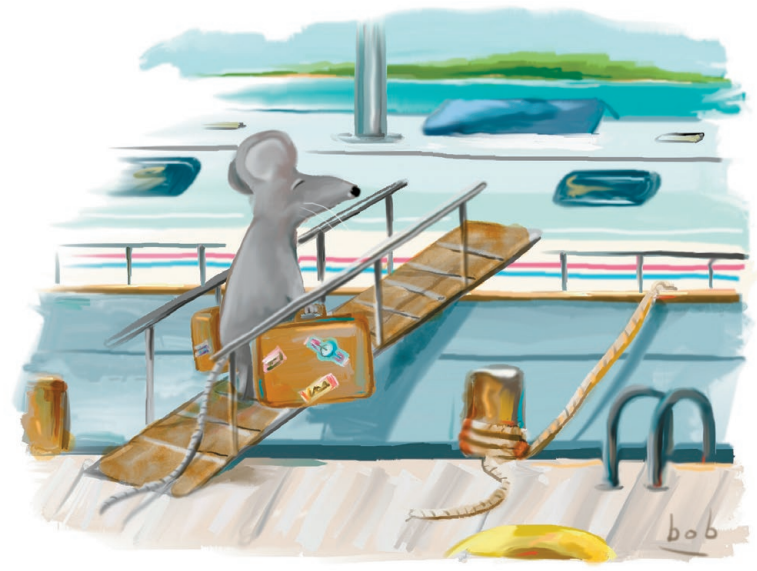
"Yes," he continued, in his calm, unhurried manner, "I suppose it was a bit of a long crossing. But," he added with a chuckle, "I just couldn't be bothered with all that staying awake at night, worrying about having too much sail up, having to reef on my own in the dark and all that. It was just easier to pull 'em down and go to bed. By the way, my name's Bill." And he extended a large, rough hand.

Bill was a short man and reminded me of a small bear. There was an ever-present twinkle in his eye, and he spoke of his nearly seven-week solitary transatlantic voyage, in a vessel not much bigger than a dinghy, with a modesty and matter-of-factness that suggested he had done no more than crossed a pond.

Of course, the cruising yachtsman's euphemism for the Atlantic Ocean has long been "The Pond" and it was not uncommon to hear amongst groups of sailors exchanging embellished tales in small bars, the casual question "Just come over the pond, have you?" This ridiculous understatement, so very British, belied the secret pride harboured by those who had crossed – but to have referred to one's achievement as if it were anything more than trivial would have been considered vulgar, and so, each year, the bars thronged with people who were delighted to expound on marine engineering, horticulture or Chinese cuisine, but who casually dismissed their achievements under sail with a flippant wave of the hand.

Whilst Bill drank gratefully from a bottle of ice-cold beer with which I had presented him, I explained the layout of the marina and told him where to find the showers. He mentioned that he was looking for an inexpensive alongside berth where he could spend a few weeks and have some repairs done on his yacht, so I suggested that he try the A-Frame, a small bar and restaurant on the waterfront in the inner

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lagoon. The place was managed by an Englishman and his St Lucian wife, and it had a long, somewhat dilapidated dock where it was possible to moor stern-to at reasonable cost. Bill duly set off to inquire about this, and I arranged to see him when he had settled in at his new berth.

I saw Bill frequently over the next few days. Divested of his yellow oilskins and now refreshed with fresh-water showers and cold beers, Bill still looked like a small bear. The top of his head was bald and shiny and he had a mop of lank brown hair that fell to his collar. He was plump and stocky and it was difficult to guess his age – he might equally have been 25 or 40. His bright eyes were lively and intelligent, but the entire lower half of his face was obscured by his great, bushy beard. He was an engaging fellow with a dry sense of humour and it was clear that, after his weeks alone at sea, he was now relishing the companionship of others.

I was therefore somewhat surprised when, one day, I found him sitting in the bar looking decidedly glum, and I asked him what the matter was.

"I've got a problem," he groaned, "Oh boy, do I have a serious problem!"

I sat down and asked him to tell me about it.

"I have," he said, slowly emphasising each word, "I have a RAT on board!" He rolled the letter "R" on his tongue and almost spat the word out of his mouth, as if to underscore the repulsive nature of his dilemma. I looked at him sympathetically. A rat on a yacht is a very unpleasant business – very unpleasant indeed.

Quite apart from the hygienic considerations, or the possibility of the yacht's electrical wiring being gnawed through, or the disagreeable experience of having one's toes incised in the dead of night, there is the awful frustration of knowing that the creature is present, of being able to hear it – yet unable to catch it.

It is like hearing the high-pitched siren of a nose-diving mosquito by your ear, in the dark; the sound, and the knowledge of its presence, are more painful than the bite which ensues. I have found that the wearing of earplugs at night-time in the tropics greatly reduces the uneasiness caused by these insects and in fact I believe that I may even have been bitten less frequently as a result.

"Have you actually seen the creature?" I asked Bill.

"Well, I haven't exactly seen it," he admitted, "but I know that it's there. I can hear it – every night. Scurrying about the boat. I hear it in one place and then, when I go and have a look, there's nothing there and then I hear it again somewhere else. Honestly, it's driving me crazy! It must have climbed up my dock lines".

Of course, it is well known in tropical harbours that rats employ this underhanded method of gaining access to ships and, for this reason, larger ships use rat-guards – large, circular metal plates through which the mooring lines are passed and over which the rodents cannot climb. But on small yachts, this practice is unusual and, in any case, rarely necessary as the small diameter of a yacht's mooring line would make it extremely difficult for all but the most athletic of rodents to obtain a foothold.

But I had heard of occasional instances of rats boarding yachts in this manner and one acquaintance of mine (now a well known cruising guide author) had been driven to the brink of insanity when a rat, swept into Rodney Bay lagoon after a torrential downpour, had clung to the anchor chain of his yacht and somehow boarded the vessel. My acquaintance, as I recall, endured two months on board in the company of this uninvited guest before he was finally able to corner it and permanently anaesthetise it with a winch handle.

Even on the smallest of yachts, there are innumerable hiding-places for the visiting rodent – in or behind lockers, beneath the floorboards in the dark, dank bilges, or in the maze of pipework, mechanical installations and electrical fittings. A yachting rat will very soon discover a place to conceal himself, and you can be assured that he will choose the place that is least accessible to the vessel's human owner.

"Have you tried a mouse-trap with some bait?" I suggested.

"Yes," sighed Bill, "but nothing happened. I set it several nights in a row, but the next morning the cheese is always there and the trap is still set. Maybe he doesn't like cheese. But I can still hear the bastard running around. He must be damned clever!"

"Mmmm, maybe you could try a piece of raw meat?" I ventured. "He's sure to go for that – no rat could decently resist a nice, juicy cut of red meat!"

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"Good idea!" said Bill and immediately rushed off to the local supermarket where he bought an enormous cut of horse flesh. On his return to the yacht, he sprinkled the meat liberally with rat poison and put the bait in place on top of his spring-loaded mousetrap.

The following morning, I met Bill for a coffee in the marina bakery. His head was bowed, and he looked more dejected than ever. I asked him what had happened, and he cursed quietly into his beard, and replied that nothing at all had happened. He had awoken early, noticed a repulsive stench emanating from the area of his galley and had found the horse meat – intact, but already quite rotten and infested with hundreds of flies.

It had taken him an hour to rid the yacht of the smell of rotting meat and a plague of flies. He looked tired and said that he was finding it increasingly difficult to sleep at night because he could constantly hear the rat scurrying around, crunching on things and making strange crackling sounds. He was convinced that it was mocking him.

"Alright!" I said, "What we need is a concerted campaign, a combined effort, using all our resources and cunning. Don't worry, Bill, we'll get your rat. First of all, I suggest you get all your gear off the yacht so that it's completely stripped."

He agreed and, next morning, he made arrangements to store all his equipment ashore. When I wandered by, later in the day, I found him squatting by the main companionway hatch, clutching a large hammer in one hand. I asked him what he was doing.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, demonically, "I've taken all my stuff off the yacht and I've flooded the bilges with fresh water – so if he's hiding anywhere beneath the floorboards, he's going to have to come up for air at some stage. And when he does – BONG! I smash him on the head with this hammer!"

He looked at me triumphantly, but I was not entirely convinced and was concerned that the most likely outcome would be severe damage to that part of the yacht which suffered the full force of the descending hammer. Nevertheless, I could see that Bill was a desperate man and I supposed that it would be best to allow him to explore every avenue at his disposal, no matter how improbable the method or unlikely the outcome. When I returned in the evening, around sundown, I could still make out the silhouette of the large, bearded figure, squatting at the entrance to his boat, the hammer still clutched defiantly in one hand.

The following day, Bill came up to me with a mysterious, almost wicked gleam in his eyes. "Did you get him?" I asked, incredulously.

"No!" he said "But now I know how I'm going to! I'm going to smoke him out!!"

For a brief moment, I was appalled by the notion of a fiendish Bill incinerating the interior of his yacht. I knew that his despondency was developing into a loathing from which irrational behaviour would ensue. But then he explained further, and asked me to drive my pick-up truck to the dock. I did so. Bill then produced a ten-yard length of hose that slipped neatly over my vehicle's exhaust and, unravelling it, he led the free end on board his yacht and pointed it towards the main saloon.

"Now!" he shouted, "Stick your foot on the accelerator!"

Within a few moments, Bill was coughing and spluttering from the fumes. He pulled the hose back, shut the main hatch, stuffed an old t-shirt into the crack between the hatch-boards, and leaped onto the dockside where he stood, jubilant and somewhat grimy.

"That'll get him," he said confidently. We'll leave the boat shut up overnight and then tomorrow I'll open her up, get some fresh air inside and chuck the corpse over the side!"

I had to admit that I felt our chances of success were now improving, for what manner of creature, either human or rodent, could possibly survive the toxic fumes that had just been pumped into the yacht? That evening, we ate heartily and washed down our meal with a good deal of wine. For the first time in several days, Bill was his old self, cheerful, witty and announcing to all present that he was on the verge of a great victory.

At some unspeakable hour, Bill rose unsteadily from his chair and staggered happily down the dock towards a friend's yacht where he would pass the night and where, for the first time in more than a week, he would be able to sleep undisturbed by the patter of tiny feet.

The next morning, a crowd of bemused yachtsmen gathered on the dock around Bill's yacht, waiting for the rat-catcher to make his appearance. It was a long wait, for the excesses of the previous evening had consigned Bill to a torpor from which he did not rouse himself until well after midday. When he did eventually show himself, bleary-eyed, he strode confidently towards his boat, a small smile on his pursed lips.

The onlookers watched expectantly as he tore off the hatch boards, slid open the companionway hatch and flung away the old T-shirts that were stuffed into every orifice on the upper deck. He then disappeared into the main saloon, only to emerge a few seconds later, coughing and spluttering. I suggested that he allow some time for the air to clear, and he agreed. Returning to my office, I told him that I would see him later for a celebratory cocktail.

I was delayed and did not arrive at the bar until 10:00 P.M. There were few people inside, and I could make out Bill's familiar shape hunched over a bottle of beer at the counter. I walked up and slapped him on the back and asked him how things were. He turned slowly to look at me, and at first I thought he had been crying, for his eyes had a glazed, slightly moist appearance, red and glistening at the edges. But as soon as he spoke, I realised that he was drunk.

"It's not posshible," he lamented, "jush not posshible!" He kept repeating himself, shaking his head and mumbling strange things into his beard. "I can shtill hear the bastard!" he continued, "the pitter-patter of his feet, the grinding of his teeth as he crunches into another peesh of my boat. I can't take it any more. I'm going to BURN him out!" he shouted and, with that, he grabbed my box of matches and stood up. I placed an arm on his shoulder and said gently:

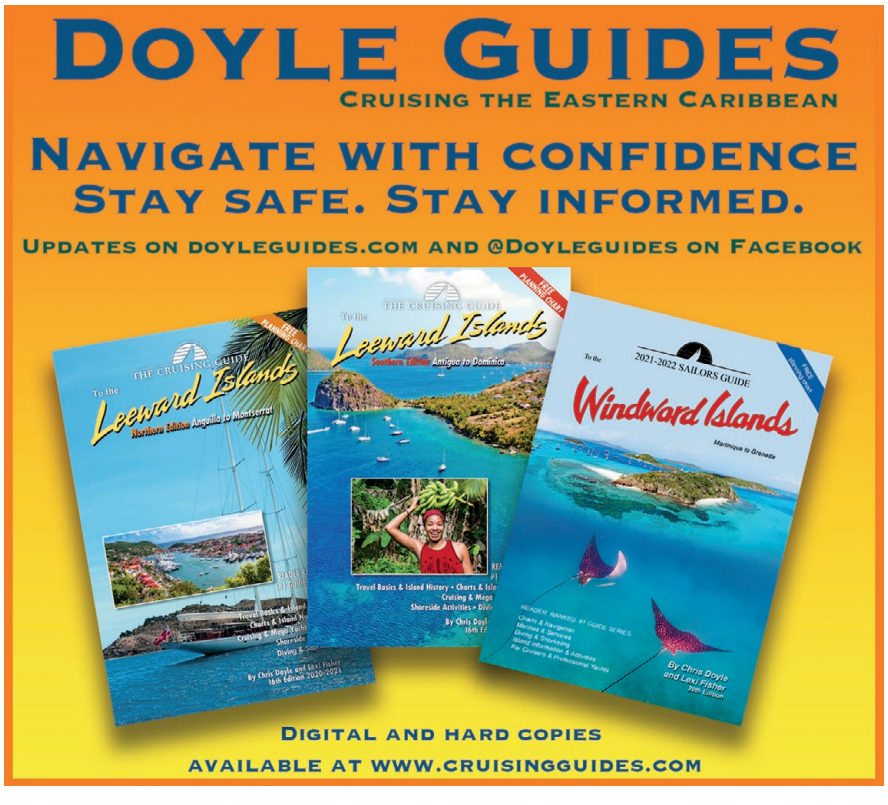
"Look, Bill, there has to be another way. Let's go on board and have a coffee and talk about it."

With two other fellows, we strolled down the dock and clambered aboard Bill's tiny and very empty yacht, and sat down on the hard saloon seats. Bill stumbled over to the small cooker and placed a coffee pot on one of the burners. It was a still evening, with hardly a breath of wind. Around the waterline of the boat, we could clearly hear the loud crackling of the barnacles and crustaceans that abounded in these tropical waters. Suddenly Bill yelled "There! Quiet! Can't you hear it??!!"

We craned our necks and listened intently. And then, all of a sudden, my two friends and I doubled up with laughter until we almost fell off our seats. For the only discernible sounds were the crackling and pitter-patter of the aforementioned barnacles – a common phenomenon in Caribbean lagoons, but one that is possibly unfamiliar to the man who has sailed only in colder waters ..... comparable, some might even say, to the pitter-patter of the tiny feet of some small rodent.

Want to know more about barnacles and other crustacea? Read Darelle Snyman's Marine Life column on the next page.

More stories by Narendra Sethia can be found at Roadjunky.com – Events for Travelers, Guides and Stories.





THE CARIBBEAN SPINY LOBSTER AND OTHER UNIQUE CRUSTACEANS

by Darelle Snyman

When we think of spiny lobsters, many of us will conjure up images of their sweet-tasting, meaty tails draped on a grill, drizzled in garlic and lemon butter. However, there is more to these spiny creatures than just their value as an expensive menu item. Spiny lobsters (family *Palinuridae*), as their common name indicates, can be recognized by their spines and extremely long, thick antennae. It is these antennae and lack of large claws that set them apart from their clawed crustacean counterparts, the true lobsters of the family *Homaridae*. These two families are not as closely related as you might think, even though they share morphological similarities. The *Palinuridae* family is a highly successful group of crustaceans which includes about 49 species that are spread around the world. We are, however, more interested in the one species that creates such a sensation in the Caribbean and adjacent waters, the Caribbean or Florida spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*).



More than just an expensive menu item.

This iconic species is no stranger to divers and snorkelers alike, nor to people who partake in the annual lobstering frenzy. Spiny lobsters can be recognized by the two sharp, black-banded horns above their eyes and a reddish body that is pale below. They can reach a respectable size of two feet (60 cm), and are a familiar sight in crevices and under ledges during the day, where they peek out at you with their long antennae prominently displayed. You will often find more than one lobster sharing the safety of a crevice, but a recent study found that this social habit is easily disrupted if one of the individuals is sick. Healthy lobsters will move away from infected ones, leaving them to fend for themselves. At night they become braver and venture out to forage, targeting a variety of prey such as crabs, shellfish, mussels, worms, sea urchins and sand dollars. They rely on two smaller antennae, called antennules, to locate their prey. These sensory organs are super sensitive to chemicals and movement in the water.

The large antennae are used for fighting and defense. If intimidation does not work, they will apply these antennae in another way to deter the enemy. They can produce a loud screech by rubbing the spiny antennae against a smooth part of their exoskeleton, a sound that would-be predators do not seem to appreciate.

If caught unawares in the open, spiny lobsters do have another escape method up their sleeve, one many of you might have witnessed: speed. They have a wonderful ability to travel backwards at such great speeds that, once in motion, they are hard to catch. Forward motion, however, is a more sedate process achieved by walking on their many legs.

Adult spiny lobsters use their walking skills in a unique way: their tendency to migrate in great numbers. What makes it more fascinating is that they migrate in single file, keeping in contact with each other with their long antennae. Migration is usually triggered by changes in water temperature, such as the arrival of a big storm, causing them to head for deeper offshore waters where the temperatures are more stable. They navigate by using smell, taste, and the Earth's magnetic field. I have only seen this behavior in documentaries—imagine what a spectacular sight it must be to witness it for yourself!

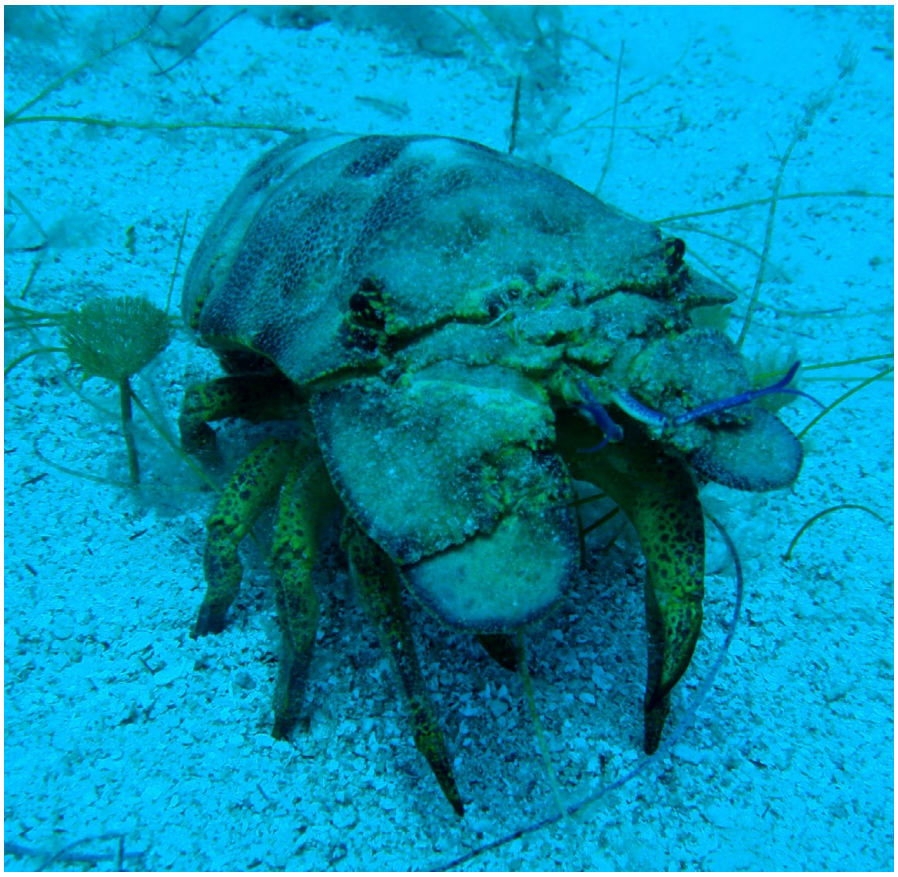
Caribbean spiny lobsters mate from March through June, or, depending on their geographic location, from June through November. The female carries the orange eggs on her underside until they turn brown and hatch, a process that takes about three weeks. During this period she is considered gravid or berried, a fact that enforces the need for closed harvesting seasons during this crucial time in the lobster's life cycle. Spiny lobsters begin their lives as free-swimming, microscopic phyllosoma larvae that settle after about one year among mangrove roots or in *Thalassia testudium* seagrass beds. Here they undergo several molts before migrating to the coral reefs. Conservation of these habitats is thus essential to the maintenance of Caribbean spiny lobster populations and their continued utilization as an economic resource. Size restrictions on this heavily harvested species are also important, as it takes an individual lobster more than two years to reach its full adult, legal harvesting size with a three-inch carapace. Minimum size limits allow them to reach adulthood and spawn at least once before being harvested.

The Caribbean is also home to a true beauty that you can keep an eye out for, the spotted spiny lobster (*Panulirus guttatus*), a reclusive species recognized by the distinctive white spots that dot its dark red to brown body. Another close but unique relative of these two spiny species is the elusive Spanish slipper lobster (*Scyllarides aequinoctialis*). They get their common name from their flattened outer shell which resembles a slipper, but their most outstanding feature is their second pair of antennae that is expanded and flattened into large plates which help them dig in the sand to find prey. The Spanish slipper has a rounded, brown-to-orange body with distinctive purple antennae. These nocturnal critters remain well hidden on the reef during the day and are not as commonly encountered as their spiny cousins. They do not have the same speed and intimidating antennae as the spiny lobsters, and therefore rely on other methods to evade predators. Their flattened bodies and ability to cling to rocks, combined with their mottled coloring, allow them to blend in very well with their environment. Even on sandy substrates, if they lie very flat passing predators have a hard time spotting them.

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The Spanish slipper lobster is not the only slipper lobster that calls the Caribbean home. Its cousin, the sculptured slipper lobster (*Parribacus antarcticus*), is another reef resident that hides itself away during the day. I have not had the privilege of encountering this secretive creature whose main distinguishing features are the presence of tufts of hair and small spines on flat antennal plates, giving it that sculptured look. Its coloring differs from that of the Spanish slipper in being tan to yellow with dark blotches, and it has small black eyes.



The Spanish slipper lobster's flattened outer shell resembles a slipper.

But the crustacean universe extends far beyond lobsters. The variety of shapes and sizes that members of the different crustacean orders exhibit is truly remarkable, and none are more morphologically diverse than the isopods. These unlikely crustaceans might not always resemble each other, but all share the same basic body plan: a head, a thorax with seven segments, and an abdomen with six segments. They are typically dorsoventrally flattened and covered with overlapping plates. The marine environment alone is home to about 4,500 isopod species.

Of greater interest are the isopods that are ectoparasites of fish—parasites that live on the outer surface of a host. In your diving and snorkeling adventures you might have noticed these bug-like creatures attached to a fish, typically the head. These permanent ectoparasites of fish are known as the Cymothoid isopods. Some prefer to attach to the skin, others attach to the gills, and some even replace their hosts' tongues, such as the infamous *Cymothoa* exigua, or tongue-eating louse. Cymothoid isopods of the genera Anilocra and Renocila are common ectoparasites of Caribbean fish and attach to their hosts as juveniles, feeding on blood and possibly mucus and epithelium. During the juvenile stage they will change hosts, but once settled they will remain attached to their host for the rest of their life , unless they are dislodged or eaten. Studies have shown that infestation by Anilocra species such as the anilocra leach can impact breeding success, interfere with swimming dynamics, decrease fish size and reduce the number of red blood cells.



The squirrelfish will never be rid of the permanent ectoparasite.

When it comes to unique crustaceans none can compete with the barnacles, the most unlikely of crustaceans—creatures who once were believed to be related to snails. These familiar little animals spend their life attached to the substrate, usually packed together densely, hidden within their hard protective shells. They are not very picky when it comes to the substrates they colonize. The array of substrates astound, from rocks, dock pilings, shells of clams and oysters, to whales, turtles, and manatees. Other favorite sites, to the horror of many a boat owner, are boat and ship hulls. In fact, barnacle glue is six times stronger than most synthetic glues. This adhesion ability of barnacles has actually inspired MIT engineers to develop a strong, biocompatible glue that can seal injured tissues and stop bleeding--another example of why we need to conserve and continue studying the amazing natural world around us.



The Grooved Gooseneck Barnacle's delicate, chalky white shells, edged in orange, make them stand out.

Mussels and limpets are common neighbors of these sticky crustaceans, a situation that often results in a battle for space among them. As sessile animals they have no need for legs, so their legs have become modified into feeding appendages called cirri. They actively sweep the water column with these feather-like structures, catching passing food particles. When threatened, the cirri are hastily withdrawn into their protective shells, usually made up of six calcium plates. The opening is then closed with two to four plates that act as a door. This also helps to conserve moisture when the tide goes out.

Sexual reproduction can become somewhat problematic it you are immobile and trapped within a shell. To overcome this problem barnacles have evolved extraordinarily long penises. When it comes to having the largest penis to body size ratio in the animal world, the barnacles are the clear winners—a fact that fascinated the barnacle-obsessed Charles Darwin, who dedicated years of his life to studying them.

Not all barnacles attach themselves directly to the substrate; some use a distinctive fleshy stalk or peduncle. One such species is the stunningly beautiful grooved gooseneck barnacle (*Lepas anserifera*), found widely distributed in temperate and tropical seas around the world, a true cosmopolitan species. Their delicate, chalky white shells, edged in orange, make them stand out from their substrate-hugging family. Being a pelagic species, preferring the open sea, they tend to attach themselves in clusters to driftwood and other floating debris, including whales. They are often found washed up on beaches, still attached to their floating perch.

I hope you found this glimpse into the lives of these incredible creatures and their astounding adaptations to survive in the marine world interesting. Crustaceans are truly the rulers of the sea.

THE SKY FROM MID-FEBRUARY TO MID-MARCH

by Jim Ulik

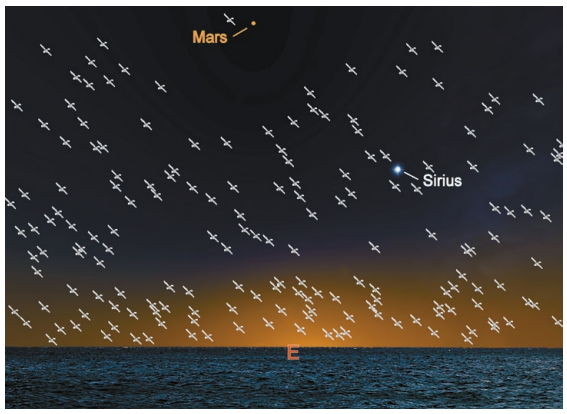


Image 1: A snapshot of the sky on February 16 at 1840h. At any given moment, day and night, numerous satellites are in constant motion overhead frustrating the search for incoming asteroids.

Sirius, the brightest star in the night sky, will shine brightly in the eastern sky as the Sun sets throughout February and March. Its name comes from the Greek word for "searing" or "scorching." The red/orange Mars will continue to appear bright in the sky as twilight turns into darkness. One phenomenon to look for is random flashes of light. Bursts of light overhead could be sunlight reflected off any of the thousand satellites passing through the sky. See Image 1 for the exact location of satellites in the eastern sky at 1840h* on February 16. Looking west during this period Venus will outshine all other night sky objects. The goddess of beauty and light will continue to rise higher over the western horizon over the next few months. Stars twinkle but planets shine a steady light.

Saturday, February 18th

Those with a clear view of the southeastern horizon will find the Moon and Mercury about the same apparent height in the sky. Of course this would require one to be awake at 0530 so I am sure to miss it. Mercury is positioned left or north of the Moon. The pair will be visible for less than an hour when the Sun begins to rise.

Sunday, February 19th

The Moon has reached its closest approach to Earth. The Moon's influence on tidal forces will be at its maximum over the next few days.

Monday, February 20th

Coupled with the close proximity of today's New Moon, the Sun and Moon have a cumulative influence on the tides because they are both on the same side of the Earth. This combined gravitational pull generates extra-high high tides and very low, low tides. When the Moon is closest to Earth and in line with the Sun the tides are called Perigean Spring Tides.

The New Moon is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere. Bright shore lights will be the major source of visual interference.

Wednesday, February 22nd

Three celestial objects will appear close in the western sky this evening. Jupiter and the Moon will appear very close. Venus will be located eastward a short distance below or west of the Moon.

Sunday, February 26th

The Moon makes a close approach to Pleiades or the Seven Sisters overnight. The Moon will outshine the cluster of stars which are located west just off the illuminated side of the Moon. Mars is also high overhead towards the east of the Moon. The other red/orange object between Mars and the Moon is the double star Aldebaran.

Monday, February 27th

The Moon has reached its First Quarter phase. It will rise about Noon and set just after midnight. Throughout the evening hours the Moon will gradually move closer to Mars. It will be less than one degree away from Mars just as they reach the western horizon.

Thursday, March 2nd

For a few minutes in the predawn sky Mercury can be seen near Saturn. The pair will be located just above the eastern horizon around 104 degrees.

Jupiter and Venus will brighten the western sky after sunset. The pair will be less than one degree apart. A quick glance and you may think it is one object but, a closer look will show Jupiter just below Venus. Higher overhead the Moon has entered Gemini making a close approach to the star Pollux.

Tuesday, March 7th

The Moon is now located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and its face will be will be fully illuminated. It is visible for much of the night riding the constellation Leo. The Moon is rising at dusk and setting at dawn. This is the last Full Moon before the Spring Equinox.

Monday, March 13th

The claws of Scorpius have captured the Moon. This situation places the Moon near the heart of the scorpion Antares. This red supergiant star is actually a double star that is sometimes confused with the planet Mars because of its color. The name "Ant-Ares" means "like Mars" where "Ares" is the Greek name for the god of war. Antares shines 60,000 times brighter than the Sun.

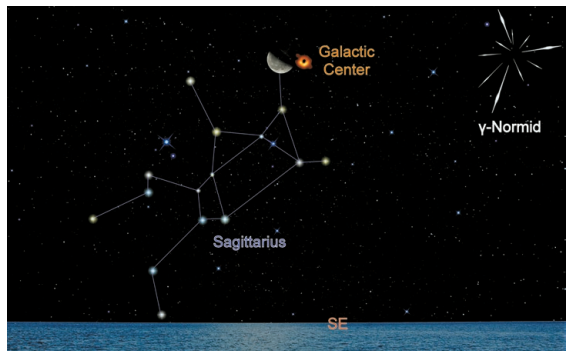


Image 2: The Moon lines up near the Galactic Center at 0315 on March 14.

Tuesday, March 14th

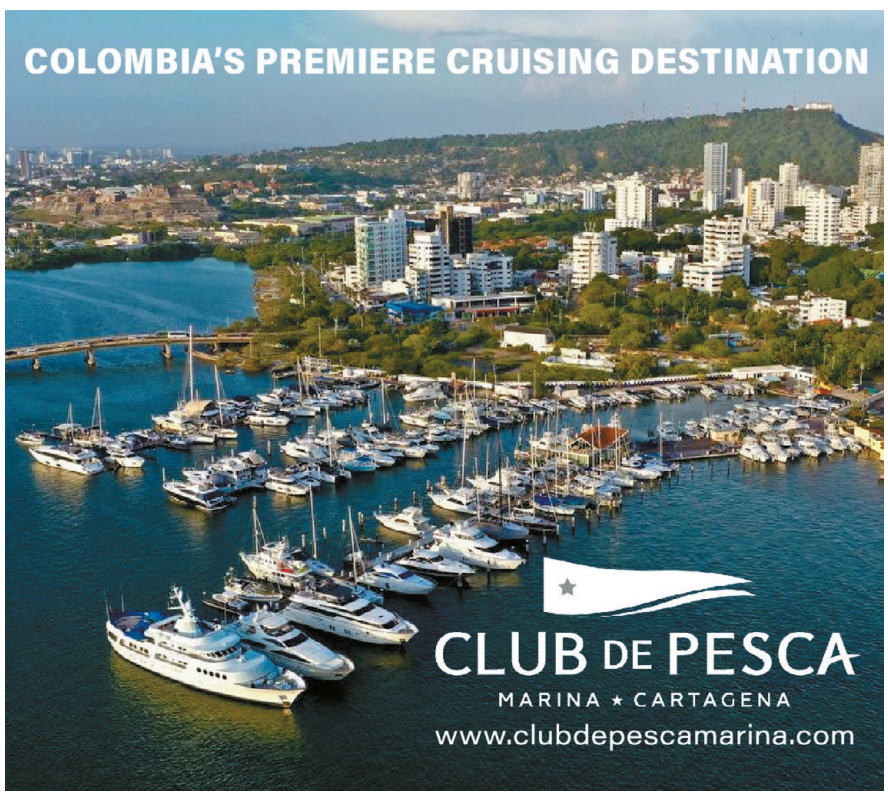
The Moon today will rise around midnight and set about Noon. This marks the Moon's Third Quarter phase. Now located in the constellation Sagittarius, the Moon is nearly in line with our Galactic Center shown in Image 2.

Wednesday, March 15th

February March is a relatively quiet period for celestial events. In any case there may be a random shooting star radiating out of the southeast. They will usually appear after midnight. The meteors originate from the Đ-Normid meteor shower. This shower is active February 25 to March 28 with a peak event occurring tonight.

**All times are given as Atlantic Standard Time (AST) unless otherwise noted. The times are based on a viewing position in Grenada and may vary by only a few minutes in different Caribbean locations.*

Jim Ulik sails on S/V Merengue.





Lajabless on Board!

by Telfor Bedeau

One of the most popular stories in Grenadian folklore is that of Lajabless, a female spirit which is portrayed as a tall woman wearing a broad-rimmed hat and long dress reaching to the ground. Her face is a skeleton's skull and her fingers are like the claws of a chicken hawk. One of her legs is human while the other is that of a cow. When she walks her feet never touch the ground but are a few inches above it. Therefore, it is easy to identify her by putting one's head low to the ground and looking to see if the feet are grounded. If the test proves positive, the Lajabless disappears. If it is a real woman then the observer has to make an apology, as she feels greatly insulted!

Lajabless (from the French, *La Diablesse*) changes herself into a beautiful woman and haunts the country roads at night for the prime purpose of luring men into the forest where they get lost. She then makes herself invisible and laughs at them while they try in vain to find their way out. She is afraid of dogs and tobacco smoke, so if a man lights his pipe or cigarette in the presence of the beautiful lady he is walking with at night, and she is a Lajabless, then she disappears with a loud scream.

It is said that Lajabless originated from the angels who were thrown out of Heaven with Satan after they rebelled against God. These fallen angels were scattered throughout the earth and changed into spirits of different types, one of them being Lajabless. She lives in abandoned places where huge boulders are covered with vines, thorns, bamboo, silk-cotton trees, and gru gru, a species of large palm, the trunk of which is covered with hard, sharp prickles about four inches long.

When vehicles began to move along the roads of Grenada, the Lajabless realized it was something she could not cope with, so she left for the remote areas. One group, learning there were no vehicles on one of the Grenadine islands, decided to emigrate there. Changing their shape to look like normal women, they took passage on a ship. The captain was glad when this group of apparently wealthy women boarded his ship with their huge trunks or "canisters" as they were called in those days. During the voyage, the sea became very rough and the ship rolled heavily. The passengers huddled themselves below deck while the contents of their canisters rattled ominously.

> "Everyone went in search of the women, who could not have gone far by then but were nowhere to be found."

The ship survived and made port safely. The passengers praised the captain for his skill and paid him well, but he was a bit disappointed when they paid him in all coins rather than notes. This made his purse very heavy but he said nothing. The women took their canisters and left, refusing all offers of help. Neither did they tell anyone where they were going to reside. The captain did not care, since he had already gotten his money, which he kept in a separate purse. Later on, when he went to count the total amount of money he made on the voyage, he found that the money he received from the group of strange women was missing. Instead, the purse which had contained it was now filled with bones. He raised an alarm and everyone went in search of the women, who could not have gone far by then but were nowhere to be found. It was then the captain realized he had transported a group of Lajabless.

It is many years since Lajabless has been sighted, and the reason given for her disappearance is that civilization has scared her away. She is afraid of vehicles, aircraft, radios, and the smell of exhaust fumes. She therefore went to hide in the remotest areas of earth waiting for the day when civilization will crumble and the earth becomes natural again.

This story first appeared in the May 1998 issue of Caribbean Compass.

I THINK THAT I SHALL NEVER SEE....

Island Poets

Flamboyant trees are blooming and everywhere I see
Scarlet blossoms, bursting forth from wide umbrella trees
Seems to me this year they're late,
Perhaps it is because I wait
Each season with anticipation
For trees to bloom. My expectations
Increase as busy years fly past
For any year could be my last.

Sailing along Grenada's lee,
I look right so that I will see
Flamboyant red on coast and hill
So beautiful, but then I thrill
When Pouis bloom in brilliant yellow
Bright and brazen, nothing mellow
Or subtle in these forest trees,
But if perhaps this does not please

Aesthetic senses, there's the pink,
Also a Poui. Oh I think
That truly 'I will never see
More beauty than a tropic tree.'
Sweet scented waxen Frangiapani
Plumeria, Shower of Gold, so many
Others to delight my heart,
As one tree fades, another starts,

Gaudy, delicate or bright,
These lovely trees simply delight,
My eyes, my spirit, my whole being,
I find such joy in what I'm seeing,
So Thank You God that I can be
In gardens full of tropic trees.

— *Nan Hatch*



FOREST AND KIM STARR, STARR ENVIRONMENTAL, BUGWOOD.ORG

Whatcha Gonna Do with that Papaya

by Mary Heckrotte

The first papayas I saw were the last things I would want to eat. They sat there in a heap on the market table in Isla Mujeres, Mexico, each one bigger than an oversized and elongated football, all looking totally disgusting with their yellowish/greenish/orange skin blotched with black mold. I figured they must be another of those Third World experiences that had been coming our way since we left the US. I wouldn't have tried them except that every time we ate out, a little papaya slice decorated our plates, as ubiquitous as plantains in the Eastern Caribbean. They looked much better peeled and sliced, all glowing in health, cool and refreshing like a juicy cantaloupe with added color. So I tried them. Once. I really did. But immediately I thought of a friend who said they taste the way dirty toes smell. I agreed.

In Trinidad, where the smaller pear-shaped papayas are a healthy green with a hint of yellow, a lovely Chinese woman taught me to choose the skinny rather than the round ones. She told me to take them home to blend into fruit smoothies or add to mixed fruit salads. I did, and found them fine when their musky taste was masked by the flavors of other fruits. At least they were low cost and nutritious.

In the San Blas Islands of Panama, fresh fruits and vegetables are hard to come by, and nothing is low cost except coconuts. When an enterprising Guna Indian paddled by to take orders, I said "yes" to both pineapple and papaya. Two days later he delivered enough of each to feed the crew of a coast guard ship. We gobbled up pineapple au natural and then made pineapple-papaya preserves. Very nice! Not wanting to waste the rest of the papaya, I made a cobbler, too, substituting papaya for peaches. Really yummy! So, could there be other ways to use papaya?

You bet! This tropical fruit, known also in the Caribbean as a pawpaw, mamao, fruta bomba, lechosa, or tree melon, lends itself to everything from appetizers to desserts, with extracurricular functions as well. I still don't like it all by itself but, by golly, I like it, I really do!



There are two types of papaya, Hawaiian and Mexican, and both are readily available year-round. Mexican papayas are the big guys, often more than 15 inches long and weighing over ten pounds. When ripe, their skin turns from green to golden orange and the brown moldy blotches don't actually hurt anything as long as they are not bruises or cuts. Their flesh is yellow or orange and is a little less intense than the Hawaiian type. The Hawaiian papayas are generally pear-shaped or round and weigh only about one pound each. They also have yellow skin when ripe, but the inside is bright orange or pinkish.

This versatile low-calorie fruit can be eaten green or ripe. It is full of vitamins A and C and is an excellent source of potassium. Green papaya lends itself nicely to shredding for slaws, can be sliced for salads, used to make green papaya preserves, or it can be cooked as a vegetable. Ripe papaya can be eaten alone or added to myriad other foods to make a wide variety of dishes. The center cavity of the fruit contains round seeds, like little black peas, that have a peppery taste. Though I have not tried it myself, I understand that in some of the Caribbean Islands, the young leaves are cooked and eaten like spinach — sounds good, anyway.

The papaya fruit, especially the skin, also contains a digestive enzyme called papain that is used to tenderize meat. The greener the fruit, the more abundant and active the papain. Some resources state emphatically that green papaya should NOT be eaten raw because of the enzymes it contains; other references give recipes for eating it green. I haven't tried it myself, and would recommend more research before eating a raw green papaya. Also important to note is that some people are highly allergic to the pollen of the papaya flowers and may even react to any contact with the plant, fruit, or meat tenderizer containing papain.

According to several sources on the Internet, there are numerous medicinal uses of papaya and its enzymes, including the treatment of ulcers and diphtheria and to reduce swelling and fever after surgery. The enzymes are also used to "clarify beer, treat wool and silk before dyeing, to de-hair hides before tanning...." Papaya "enters into toothpastes, cosmetics and detergents, as well as pharmaceuticals to aid digestion. In tropical folk medicine, the fresh latex is smeared on boils, warts, and freckles and given as a vermifuge..." But all that's another article.

Papayas are most likely native to southern Mexico and Central America. They grow rapidly, from seed to fruit-yielding plants in one year. Some records show that seeds were shipped to Panama and the Dominican Republic in the early 1500s. Cultivation of the plants then spread to Bermuda, the Philippines, India, and Spain within the next hundred years. Today, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad, and Mexico export most of the world's papayas. When you read about the gassing and irradiation that is done to preserve the fruits for export, you'll be delighted to get your papaya fresh and natural right down at your friendly Caribbean market, even if it does have a few old dark spots on the outside.

Studies show that the flavor of ripe papaya is at its peak when its skin is colored about 80 percent yellow, and it should have a sweet smell. A papaya like this will continue to ripen rapidly at room temperature but will be good for another couple of days. If you chill it to no colder than 45 degrees, it will last up to three weeks. A dark green fruit will not ripen properly off the tree even though the skin may turn yellow. Choose a fruit that is without blemish and is firm but gives slightly to pressure of your flat palm. Wrap it in paper and treat it gently on the way home.

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

Just now we're cruising in the northwestern Caribbean and since papayas have made themselves welcome in my galley, one of the big Mexican variety comes home with me most every week. (I confess that I miss the Eastern Caribbean's smaller, more manageable Hawaiian type.) We're still experimenting aboard *Camryka*, but we've definitely found papaya recipes that are keepers.

First, a few simple ideas:

• Scoop out fresh ripe papaya and fill the shell with chicken, seafood, or fruit salad.

• For a quick dessert, peel and slice ripe papaya, pour a little sweetened condensed milk on top and sprinkle with cinnamon.

• Grind papaya seeds and use them as a substitute for pepper.

• Use papaya seeds as a substitute for capers.

• Make a delicious marinade for any tough meat by adding soy sauce, garlic powder, and a bit of sugar to mashed ripe papaya. Cover meat in mixture and refrigerate for half a day or longer.

• Rather than using the good slices of your papaya to tenderize meat, use leaves or peels since they work even better.

• Puree extra-ripe papaya and use it as a topping for ice cream, pudding, pancakes, or mix it with yogurt.

• Don't add raw papaya to gelatin or your gel won't gel, but cooked papaya is fine.

• Depending on where you are, toss your papaya peels outside for the iguanas — they are a favorite iguana treat.

• Substitute green papaya in recipes for winter squash.

• Season green papaya with cinnamon, honey and butter and bake it to serve as a vegetable.

• In savory dishes, chives, cilantro, basil, mint, and rosemary are complimentary herbs for papaya.

And now, some full-fledged recipes:

Curried Papaya Chutney

1 1/2 cups white vinegar
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup sugar
3 tablespoons mustard seeds
6 cups firm, ripe papaya, chopped
2 tablespoons curry powder
2 jalapeño peppers, minced
1 red onion, minced
2 cloves garlic, minced

In a large saucepan, bring vinegar, water, sugar, and mustard seeds to boil. Add papaya, curry powder, jalapeño peppers, onion, and garlic. Bring to boil, then lower heat and simmer, uncovered, for 40 minutes. Stir mixture often to prevent scorching. Pour into hot sterilized jars. Seal and refrigerate one week before serving. Serve with crackers on cream cheese as an appetizer or serve as a condiment with chicken, shrimp, or pork. Makes approximately 4 pints.

Papaya-Mango-Avocado Salad with Papaya Seed Vinaigrette

1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon dry mustard
1 cup rice wine vinegar
1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon dried tarragon
1 small onion, chopped
1 cup olive oil
3 tablespoon papaya seeds
2 cups seeded, peeled ripe papaya, cubed
1 large ripe mango, peeled, seeded, cubed
1 large avocado, peeled, seeded, cubed
1 head Romaine lettuce, torn into to bite-size pieces

In blender or food processor container, blend sugar, mustard, vinegar, salt, tarragon, and onion. With machine running, slowly add olive oil then add papaya seeds. Pour into a jar, cover, and chill at least two hours. Mix cubed papaya, mango, avocado, and lettuce in a salad bowl. Shake chilled dressing then pour over salad ingredients and serve. Serves 4 to 6, with extra dressing for another salad.

Baked Stuffed Papaya

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 jalapeño peppers
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 pound lean ground beef
4 large tomatoes, peeled, chopped
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
4 under-ripe papayas, about 12 ounces each, cut in half, seeded
boiling water
4 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

In a large skillet, heat oil and sauté onion, jalapeño, garlic, and beef until lightly browned. Add tomatoes, salt and pepper. Bring to boil then lower heat and simmer, uncovered, until most of tomato liquid is absorbed. Divide mixture and fill cavities of papaya halves. Place filled papaya shells in a baking pan and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Pour boiling water into baking pan to within one inch of the top of the papayas. Bake at 350°F until papayas are fork tender, about 30 minutes. Serves 4.

Papaya Cobbler

1 1/2 cup sugar
3 eggs, beaten
3/4 cup plain flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups of ripe papaya, thinly sliced
3/4 cup pecans, chopped
1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk

In a medium bowl, add sugar to beaten eggs and mix well. In a small bowl, mix flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir flour mixture into sugar-egg mixture. Add vanilla and stir to mix well. Gently fold in papayas and then nuts. Pour mixture into a greased two-quart baking pan. Bake at 350°F until knife inserted in center will come out clean, about 25 minutes. Serve warm with sweetened condensed milk dribbled on top.

Papaya Pie with Butter Cookie-Pecan Crust

2/3 cup melted butter
2 1/2 cups ground butter cookie or vanilla wafer crumbs
1/2 cup sugar
1 cup pecans, chopped fine
4 pounds ripe papaya, peeled, seeded, cubed
1 1/2 cups brown sugar
1 cup white sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground allspice
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
3 large eggs, beaten
1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk

In medium bowl, mix together the butter, cookie crumbs, one-half cup sugar, and pecans. Press mixture into bottom and up sides of two pie pans. Set aside.

Put papaya cubes into large pan. Add brown sugar and one cup white sugar. Stir to coat. Let sit for 15 minutes then cook over medium heat for about 30 minutes or until papaya is tender and can be mashed into smaller pieces. Add cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves about halfway through cooking and stir often to prevent scorching. Remove from heat and let cool for 15 minutes. In a small bowl, gradually add some of the hot papaya mixture to the beaten eggs, stirring rapidly. Then pour this mixture into the larger pot and stir well. Spoon mixture into prepared piecrusts. Bake at 350°F until center is set, about 45 minutes. When cooled, dribble one-fourth cup sweetened condensed milk over the top of each pie. Serve warm or cold. Makes two pies.






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CALENDAR

JANUARY 2023

28 – 4 Feb Manhattan Caribbean Week, BVI. https://myc.org/cruising/caribbean-week
29 – 3 Feb Grenada Sailing Week. www.grenadasailingweek.com

FEBRUARY 2023

2	World Wetlands Day. www.ramsar.org/activity/world-wetlands-day
3 – 5	Caribbean Multihull Challenge. www.smyc.com/caribbean-multihull-challenge
5	FULL MOON
7	Public holiday in Grenada (Independence Day)
10 - 12	Jolly Harbour Valentine's Regatta, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com
11	Bocas del Toro Regatta, Panama. www.bocasmarina.com
11	Rigging Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
11 – 12	Sweethearts of the Caribbean & Classic Regatta, BVI. www.westendyachtclubbvi.com
13 – 24	RORC Nelson's Cup Series, Antigua. http://caribbean600.rorc.org
17 – 21	Semaine Nautique Internationale de Schoelcher, Martinique. www.cnschoelcher.net
18	Public holiday in Aruba (Flag Day)
18	Sailing the Pacific Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
20	Start of RORC Caribbean 600 race, Antigua. caribbean600.rorc.org
20	Public holiday in Puerto Rico & USVI (Presidents' Day)
20 - 21	Carnival Monday and Tuesday in Trinidad, Martinique, Ponce (Puerto Rico), Barranquilla (Colombia), Aruba, Carriacou, Curaçao, Dominica, Haiti and St. Barth
22	Public holiday in many places (Ash Wednesday) and in St. Lucia (Independence Day)
23	Public holiday in Guyana (Mashramani Carnival)
24 – 26	Conch Festival, Union Island, SVG
24 – 11 March	Oyster World Rally stop in Grenada. www.oysteryachts.com
25	Public holiday in Suriname (Liberation Day)
25	Governor's Cup Race, BVI. www.rbviyc.com
25	Diesel Maintenance Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
25 – 26	Grenada Workboat Regatta. www.puregrenada.com
27	Public holiday in Dominican Republic (Independence Day)

MARCH 2023

2 - 5	St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. www.heinekenregatta.com
4 – 6	Dark & Stormy Regatta, BVI. www.westendyachtclubbvi.com
6 - 12	Superyacht Challenge Antigua. www.superyachtchallengeantigua.com
7	FULL MOON
7	Public holiday in BVI (HL Stoutt's Birthday) and in Belize (National Heroes' Day)
8	International Women's Day
11	Fishing & Liferaft Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
13	Public holiday in some places (Commonwealth Day)
14	Public holiday in in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (National Heroes' Day)
15 – 19	Barbados Independent Film Festival. www.barbadosfilmfest.org
16 – 19	St. Barths Bucket Regatta, St. Barths. www.BucketRegatta.com
17	Public holiday in Montserrat (St. Patrick's Day). St. Patrick's Day Festival, Grenada
18	Public holiday in Aruba (Flag Day)
20	Vernal Equinox
22	Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Emancipation Day)
23	Round the Rocks Race, St. John, USVI. www.stthomasyachtclub.org
24 – 26	St. Thomas International Regatta. www.stthomasyachtclub.org
25	Power Management Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
26 - 27	Antigua Laser Open. www.antiguayachtclub.com
27 – 2 April	BVI Spring Regatta & Sailing Fest, Tortola. www.bvispringregatta.org
30	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Spiritual Baptist 'Shouter' Liberation Day)

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of Compass *went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation.*

If you organize a sailing or boating event not listed here that you'd like to have included in our monthly calendars, please send information two months before the event date(s) to editor@caribbeancompass.com

PICK UP!

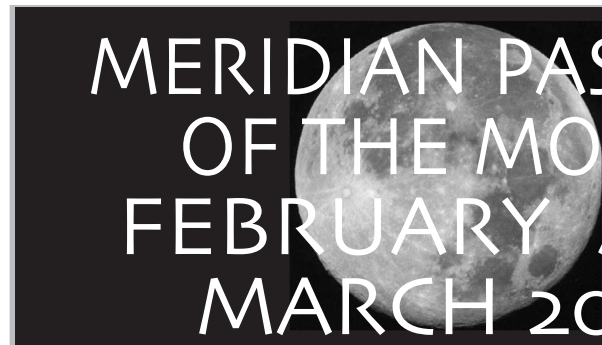
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- Union Island Tourism Office
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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2023

Crossing the channels between Eastern Caribbean islands, an ebb tide carries you off to leeward and a strong flood tide creates lumpy seas, so crossing with a favorable tide is faster and more comfortable. The table below, showing the local time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water generally tries to run toward the moon. The flood tide starts running eastward soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then ebbs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide runs eastward; and from just after its nadir to soon after its rising, the tide runs westward.

The first hour after moonrise, the westerly current is barely negated. The second hour the flood tide is stronger, the third and fourth hour it's strongest, then it eases off in the fifth and sixth hours. The maximum tide is three or four days after the new and full moons.

February 2023					
DATE	TIME	21	1325	12	0330
1	2115	22	1415	13	0420
2	2206	23	1503	14	0515
3	2257	24	1551	15	0614
4	2345	25	1639	16	0716
5	0000 FULL MOON	26	1728	17	0819
6	0031	27	1818	18	0919
7	0115	28	1910	19	1017
8	0157			20	1110
9	0238	**March 2023**		21	1201
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30TH ANNIVERSARY

Dear Ms. Editor Lembo,

I am pleased to greet you very sincerely on behalf of the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba and on my own behalf. As well as, to express my most sincere gratitude for your willingness to support the continuation of the excellent and fruitful relations of friendship and collaboration between *Caribbean Compass* and our Yacht Club. Which is considered as a Sanctuary of love of the sea and friendship between people who love the sea and Bastion in defense and rescue of the nautical history and Cuban maritime and nautical traditions.

For my part, I would feel very honored and happy to have the opportunity that we can meet personally one day. I had that honor with Sally, who responded positively to invitations to events organized by our Yacht Club. We are very sorry that she could not join us in the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of this Cuban nautical institution, on May 21st. We will keep you in mind to invite you to any event of international relevance hosted or organized by our Yacht Club.

I am also very happy that the pages of *Caribbean Compass* continue to be open to the news generated by the activity of our Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba.

Next week I will send you a note about the graduation of a group of young people as sailors. They studied at the headquarters of this Cuban nautical institution in compliance with the Friendship and Collaboration Agreement signed with the "Andrés González Lines" Maritime Fisheries Institute of Cuba, with which we continue contributing to the rescue of the nautical culture of the Cuban nation.

Waiting for us to meet in person in the near future, I take this opportunity to reiterate my most affectionate greetings and express my highest esteem and distinguished consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Commodore Escrich

Facebook: Cnih de Cuba

Dear Commodore,

How delightful! I would love to meet you in person someday. The *Compass* will definitely continue its coverage of your club and stunning sea and shore. I look forward to receiving news of the graduation of the young sailors. Please remember to include high resolution photos!

Until we talk again,

My very best regards

Elaine Lembo

Editor-in-Chief

MISSING HUTCH

Dear Compass,

Man, do I miss summer after summer of sailing Jim "Hutch" Hutchinson's *Fran II* and *Cocoa* dinghies in Tyrrel Bay and its mangrove lagoon. You try not to take unique experiences like that for granted, but then, in 2009 on and off for the next ten years sailing around the point into our favorite Carriacou harbor from the northern throes of Culebra and USVI, I thought I'd live aboard until I died somewhere in the Eastern Caribbean.

Now, I'm a CLOD (Cruiser Living On Dirt). We sold our 40-foot sloop *Boldly Go* in April 2022 and live in my partner Jim's native northern Utah. Reading and seeing the photos within Hutch's "Phil and Di" article in the December *Compass* brought times shared with Phil, Di and Hutch fully to mind. All special people from special times and places in the Caribbean.



Top: It was Hutch who modeled wearing white long-sleeved, button-down shirts for sun protection. We soon both followed suit.

Bottom: 50 ways to get ashore: a Puerto Rican wooden dinghy.



Hutch's style of storytelling, just as he displayed in his day to day life of teaching, nurturing and caring for and about people of diverse ethnicity, age and outlook, is what endears many to him. Of our 13 years aboard, it is time spent chatting or silently nestled in *Ambia's* cockpit as Hutch and my partner played chess, sailing in one of Hutch's cleverly designed dinghies that could be dismantled and nested in his small cockpit for passage-making, watching Hutch in action teaching sailing, knots and seamanship to Carriacou local youth or kayak-paddling *Fran II*, mast stowed, against strong headwind, these are poignant memories I will always cherish. I'm thankful that Hutch lives on in *Compass* issues and the books he produces on OneManSpeaks.com. Write on!!

Ellen Birrell

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

TRINIDAD COMMENT

Dear Kelly and Dan,

We are all very thankful about your taking over the *Compass*. We already missed it.

I have something to say about the article in the December edition on page seven about Trinidad & Tobago and would wish you to publish this letter. I will send it as well to YSATT and the ministry of tourism. To speak for many cruisers, we not only want to read only "how wonderful all is," we want to read real and negative issues as well, to know where to go and where better to stay away. Now our comment about Trinidad/Tobago:

Trinidad was the only island in the Caribbean who made us sailors/tourists "stay in the rain" when Corona was announced. For more than two years, people were not allowed to go back to their boats to take them out of the country, but were forced to pay the expenses for the marinas. Other healthy cruisers, who stayed during the plan-demic on their boats were finally forced to leave, and were deported like criminals within 24 hours. Other countries and islands behaved much better: they have let cruisers stay, or invited them to come back and take shelter during hurricane season, like Grenada.

Trinidadians, we will not forget what you have done to us and what we had to experience from your government which is absolutely not trustworthy! And now you are begging cruisers and other tourists to come back? They would be bloody stupid to do so. You did not help us to get shelter during the hurricane season in 2020 or go back to our homes. And later, in 2021, we could only return to take our boats with a compulsory vaccine. Why do you expect we cruisers should come to visit and bring our money now? If another plan-demic comes up in the near future, you would behave the same way. No thanks, we renounce!

On top of all that comes the continuous misbehaviour of your Customs and Immigration officers against us cruisers, all the nasty collected "overtime" charges without any reason during normal office hours. No thank you! We have had enough of your corrupt government system. Stay on your island, while we are able to travel to governments who have better manners, looking after us and where we are really welcomed!"

Angelika Grüner
S/V Angelos

Dear Angelika,

Thank you for your input. Yes, it was very hard on those cruisers — especially the full-time liveaboards — who had left their boats in Trinidad, expecting to return to them soon, only to be closed out of the country for 16 months (both air and seaports were closed from March 22nd, 2020 to July 17th, 2021, although it probably seemed longer to the affected boatowners) due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. When the borders reopened, the requirement to be vaccinated against Covid before entry was similar to the requirements in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Puerto Rico, and many other countries at that time.

Please be aware that the people of Trinidad & Tobago — especially those earning their daily bread working in the yachting sector — should neither be blamed nor made to suffer further for the actions of the government, which was trying to protect all of its citizens. Many Trinidadian individuals and groups tried very hard indeed to help cruisers during that time. As early as May 2020, the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT) submitted a proposal to the government, detailing how the intake of yachtspeople could safely be managed. Unfortunately, the proposal was turned down, but YSATT continued to fight.

Meanwhile, those cruisers who have returned to Trinidad & Tobago report experiencing the usual warm welcome, good services, unique cuisine and wonderful inland exploring as ever.

Sincerely,

Sally Erdle, Editor Emeritus

Editor Elaine Lembo asked YSATT vice-president Jesse James for his input, which follows.

Hello Elaine,

Thank you for your email and it's a pleasure to meet you. I do look forward to working with you.

This cruiser has some valid points and reasons to be upset with Trinidad authorities, but not all of what she said is true.

Yes, cruisers who had their boats here were not allowed to come back to get their property. But I would like her—and everyone—to know that we at Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago (YSATT) were on the front lines, battling away at the authorities to find ways for those who wanted to come get their boats and leave. We wrote to our Chief Medical Officer, the Minister of Health, The Minister of National Security, the Minister of Trade and our Prime Minister. We did manage to get face to face meetings with several of those ministers.

I also spoke to lots of ambassadors and embassies to try and get assistance for their nationals, but this was not successful.

We did NOT sit on our behinds and just wait for the authorities to decide what to do with our industry, which is the livelihood of thousands of families. We lobbied harsh and hard. I personally went to all of our media—the press, television and radio. We drew up a YSATT-Port Health Safety System (PHSS) Proposal for a safe reopening, and presented it to the CMO. After much consultation, it was finally approved. This was another thing I personally championed. We did what was asked of us by the authorities, but we did not get the results we wanted or the results the cruisers wanted. It was very frustrating for both cruisers and us in this sector.

A lot of other sectors suffered tremendous losses. Lots of business collapsed and will never recover. But if we had not kept our sector at the forefront. we would not have gotten the results we eventually got. We actually got a lot of support from a lot of major businesses, and also from the public, so eventually the government had to crack and reopen our sector.

Trust me when I say I truly understand the plight and frustration of those who got locked out and could not get to their homes. So to bash us, the normal people who depend on the cruisers coming here, and say we did not care or try is very unfair. As frustrating as it was for folks like your letter writer, it was also really hard for us who depended on cruisers to make an honest livelihood. We also paid a hard price for our government's way of managing this world pandemic.

Had we not put up a strong fight, the authorities would not have paid any attention to us. But we really did. We tried all possible angles we knew of. We put them in a position where they had no choice but to finally listen and work with us to safely reopen our sector, because the public was now watching thousands of families' livelihoods go down the drain. And we proved to them that our YSATT-PHSS plan could, and eventually did, work.

I am not sure who was "treated like criminals and deported from Trinidad." there was a lot of facilitation and accommodations for all cruisers who were also stuck here and could not leave by air, due to lack of flights or borders being closed both here and their homeland. People who wanted to leave with their boats were eventually allowed to, but were told they could not return as long as our borders were closed to incoming vessels. Maybe I missed something that this cruiser knows about, but I don't know of anyone who was deported due to an expired visa. Immigration was actually very accommodating to those who were here. It was very difficult to get an appointment, but once you made a request online you just had to wait until they replied and gave you a date, even if it took months. I do acknowledge we have challenges with our Immigration and Customs which we are constantly working on. Actually, we have a big meeting soon with our Minister in Government for Trade, to bring her up to speed with what our issues are so she can try and see how to assist us.

Our borders were closed from March 2020 till July 2021, so no one was allowed to enter. However, when there were threats of hurricanes, cruisers were allowed to come here to seek safe shelter, but they had to leave after the threat had passed as our borders were still officially closed. I was personally involved in working with the Ministry of National Security, Customs, Immigration and our Coast Guard to set this up, all under the watchful eyes of our Coast Guard. We did try to get the government to allow them to stay, but unfortunately it did not work due to our borders being officially closed.

I would need proof of "overtime" charges being charged during normal working hours. I do not know any cruiser who has complained to me or YSATT about this practice. Trust me, if this does happen, we will hear about it from cruisers who are here, and I will deal with it immediately. If it has happened, and someone can show me receipts, I will deal with it immediately. There are overtime charges here for after hours, like anywhere else in the Caribbean.

I know and totally understand that this global pandemic is something none of us ever dreamed of happening in our lifetime. I have read and heard worse stories about cruisers being badly treated by other countries. I am not defending our government's wrongdoing or mismanagement of this pandemic. I totally disagreed with lots of what was done and how things were handled here. The world was thrown off course and I don't think anyone was prepared for a pandemic. But some of what this cruiser is saying is not true.

Again, I truly appreciate you reaching out to me for clarity, and giving me a chance to respond.

There is a lot more that I can speak about, but I do hope this can help. Please also feel free to ask me any questions if needed.

Best regards

Jesse James
Vice President
YSATT

CORRECTION

Hello

I enjoy *Caribbean Compass* so thank you !

I notice on the Cruisers Net info, the info for Jolly Harbour is incorrect as to the time. The net is at 8:30 A.M., not 9:00 A.M., channel 74. It's still done by Lighthouses Yachting.

Just thought I'd flag it up.

Keep this magazine going. It's a great tool.

And thanks!

Anne

Eight Bells

Emilio Martin, sailor and hotelier, passed away in September 2022. His friend, Will Gentieu, sent this tribute.



EMILIO MARTIN

Señor Emilio blessing the fleet and installations of Aqua Vi at Easter time.

Born in Barcelona, Spain, in 1935, Emilio Martin came to Venezuela by ship in steerage in 1955 at age 20 with his parents and sister seeking opportunity and stability away from the turmoil of Franco's Spain. He worked as a waiter in a luncheonette before becoming a land surveyor in booming Caracas. He and an Italian immigrant friend married two sisters whose father was able to help them acquire a parcel of land in Puerto La Cruz, Anzoátegui, then a small crossroads fishing town and ferry terminal for those heading to the island of Margarita. The land lay empty for a decade or so before they could bring all the resources together to begin actual construction, and many more years passed before completion and full operation in the mid to late 90s, just in time for the Chávez presidency which changed the course of Venezuela. I met Señor Emilio, as I always addressed him, when he was looking for someone to move his beloved sailboat, *Idefix II*, from Club Puerto Azul in Naiguatá, on the coast outside Caracas, to its new homeport in Puerto la Cruz.

Thus began a more than twenty year friendship and sailing partnership as I came to know and appreciate the many extraordinary attributes of this unusually humble, caring and compassionate man. Señor Emilio was partnering builder, owner and director of the Hotel Marina Aqua Vi in Puerto la Cruz, as well as an enthusiastic sailor (and sole owner for 43 years) of the iconic Amel Euros 41 *Idefix II*.

He added this moving letter of reminiscence to the departed soul of his friend.

Emilio,

So much affection and esteem I have for you also... now, the memory of you...

I can see you with your eye on the clouds, on the arrow of the main sail pointed at the horizon, toward the visual limits of our terrestrial plain…

So loyal was that boat of yours! How it always knew how to arrive at its destination!

I can well remember that day when we lowered the main mast of the huge sailing yacht White Cloud, hauled out in the Aqua Vi boatyard. It was like an *axis mundi*, a spar so tall (seventy plus feet!) and heavy that we had to wait for a special crane capable of lifting it out.

All the boatyard workmen and even some of the hotel employees were present to help maneuver the giant once it was felled. Everyone there to witness the solemn moment of transformation.

From my lone point of view — high above, where I struggled to unite an enormous hook with the heavy anchor rode I had laced crisscrossing around the mast ending all the way up at the next to last set of spreaders — I could see you, arms crossed, calm, patient, without realizing it... instilling me with confidence.

Perhaps some of the others... I wouldn't know... but certainly you and I felt the gravity and the importance of that final act of reverence, mercy, and above all, understanding. The giant mast remained vertical, straight and true, even after we'd removed the shrouds and everything else. Including before the cable of the crane had been tightened very much.

A group of workmen had to clamber up onto the deck and cut around the base of the (now mostly disassembled) mast with a grinder, where it penetrated the deck into the heart of the old ship. A lot of loud noise and sparks flying, yet still it refused to budge.

The moment at last when by fractions of a millimeter it started to move — bit by bit, losing its equilibrium, then freeing itself from its habitual pose, its faithfully held, decades old, immobile stasis, suddenly broken — I felt a shiver go through me, a shiver that also made its way through all who were present.

Once stretched out on the ground the soul of this majestic *axis mundi*, principle spar of the *White Cloud*, we found something surprising hidden in one end, formerly the top, the masthead. A delicate bird's nest with three tiny eggs, like three little stowaways, lay inside. I remember so well that moment peering into the mast with you, Señor Emilio; when we found a nest at the very top and a coin for Charon, buried in the base of that saintly old giant.

Tonight I am going to toss a coin into the waters of the Bay of Whales (Gulf of Paria) where I am currently. Symbolic of the one you gave me to place under the main mast of the fondly remembered S/V *Idefix II* in its own time. It is only an incomparably insignificant gesture compared with the riches of your spirit that you gifted to me all those years.

Thank you my sailing companion... and friend ~ Will

December 25, 2022

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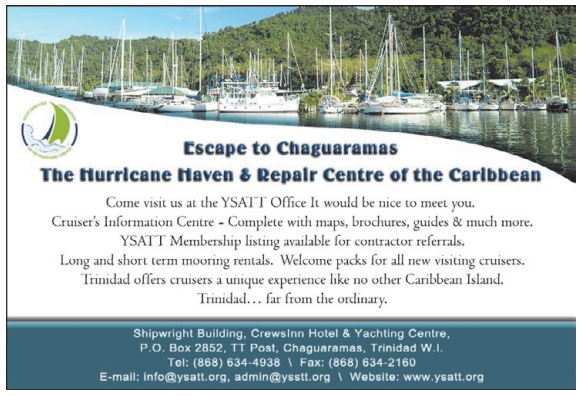
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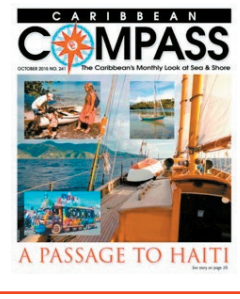


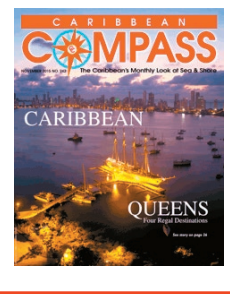
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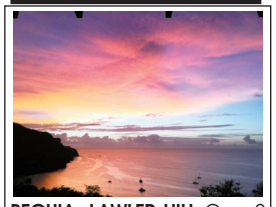






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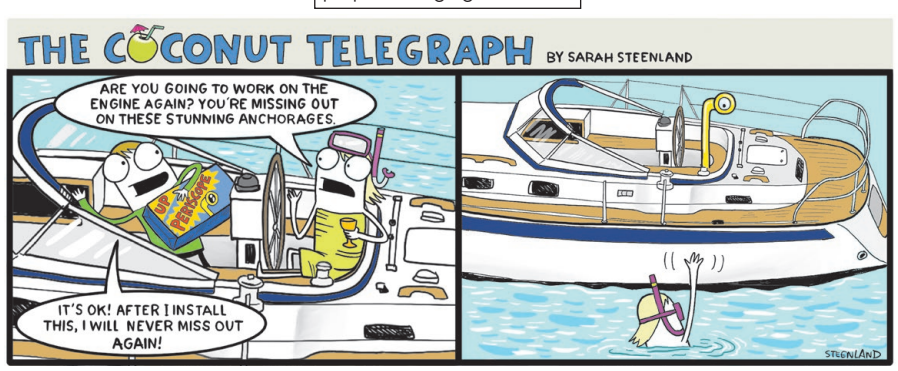


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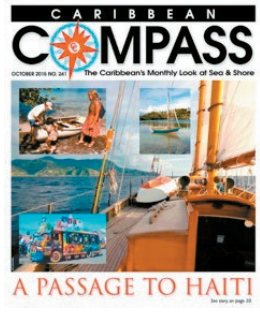
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MP = Market Place pages 36 - 37
C/W = Caribbean-wide

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