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The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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— See Annual Calendar of Events 2023 on page 19

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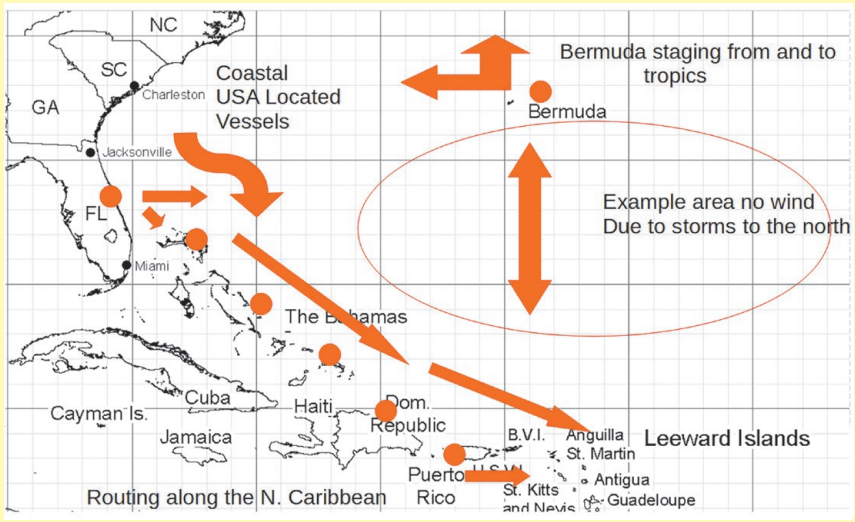
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The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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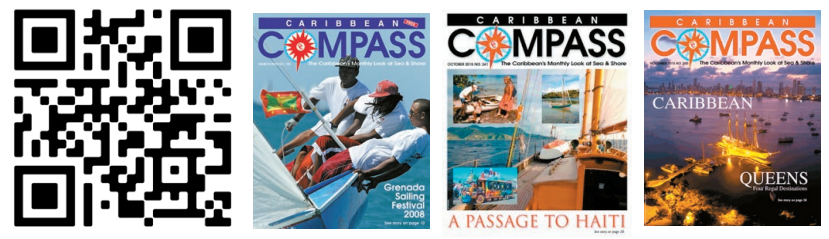


ON THE COVER:
On the cover: A serene anchorage at Jost Van Dyke, BVI, can explode when there's an event on. Photo by Robert Harding. The Caribbean welcomes 2023 with cruisers' doings, hot regattas and fun festivals. See Annual Calendar on page 19.

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Compass is like a five-star restaurant with overly solicitous waitstaff. We have hardly consumed one delicious 'meal' before you serve us another. Don't stop, though! We love it!
— Susan Chaplin, BVI

CARIBBEAN COMPASS

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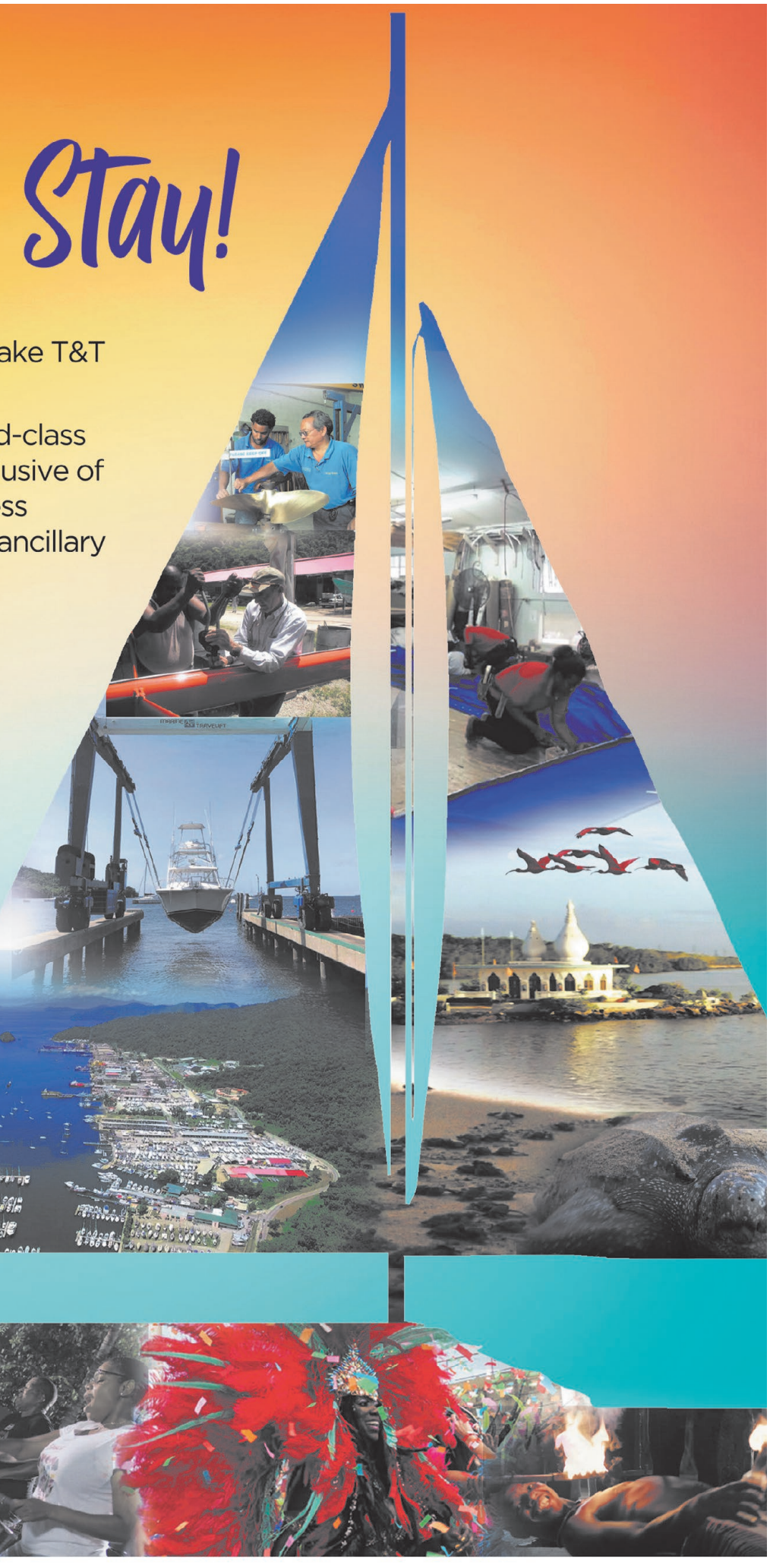
See each new issue of the magazine at www.caribbeancompass.com

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Info & Updates

New Mooring Field in Tobago

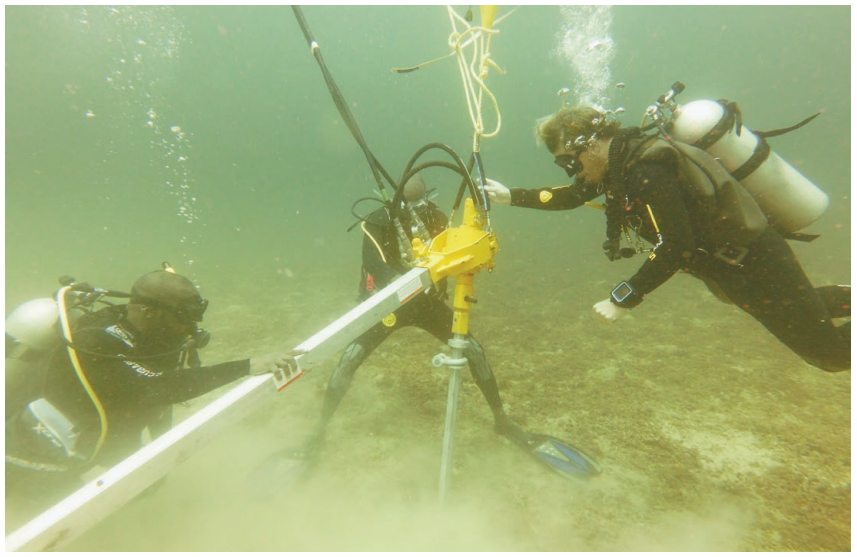
The Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville (ERIC), Tobago, is launching "The Buoys of Man-o-War Bay" in the North-East Tobago UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve. Working in conjunction with the Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries of the Tobago House of Assembly, and with funding from Shell Trinidad and Tobago Ltd, ERIC has installed 15 moorings in the beautiful Pirate's Bay area of Man-o-War Bay.

Unlike many other Caribbean islands, Tobago has not traditionally catered to sailing yachts and these buoys are the first of their kind on the island. They establish a designated area for yachts to tie onto secure, well-maintained moorings fastened with helix screw anchors. ERIC hopes that this combination of a sailing tourism product with environmental protection and social benefits to the community will become a template and role model for other such projects in the wider Caribbean region.



The mooring buoys are located on the northeast corner of Man-o-War Bay, which is protected from the prevailing wind and sea conditions.

ERIC, a non-profit NGO, operates the moorings with the goal of reducing anchor damage to fragile marine ecosystems and simultaneously providing income for the local populace. The mooring installation is part of a larger community-based conservation and beautification project run by ERIC, aimed at increasing tourism and tourism revenue in the region, strengthening the Blue Economy and building climate change resilience. ERIC has been running marine, environmental, and community-based conservation projects in northeast Tobago since 2014. It was instrumental in the designation of the Biosphere Reserve and is overseeing and authoring its management plan.



The installation of the helix screw anchors by divers from ERIC, the Department of Fisheries and an ERIC-affiliated community-based field technician.

All fees raised from the buoys will feed directly into ERIC's conservation activities, providing income for programmes including reef health monitoring, capacity building, sustainable livelihoods, and the protection of endangered marine species. ERIC also provides support to the elderly, assists with youth development programs, and keeps the cultural heritage of the Tobago community alive through a partnership with a local stakeholder in the project, the Charlotteville Police Youth Club. Finally, income from mooring fees will be used for the regular assessment and maintenance of the mooring lines by ERIC's staff and community-based field technicians.

For more information on the moorings' design and construction, their specific locations, where and how to book stays, as well as additional services provided by the CPYC, visit www.tobago-moorings.com.

—Continued on next page

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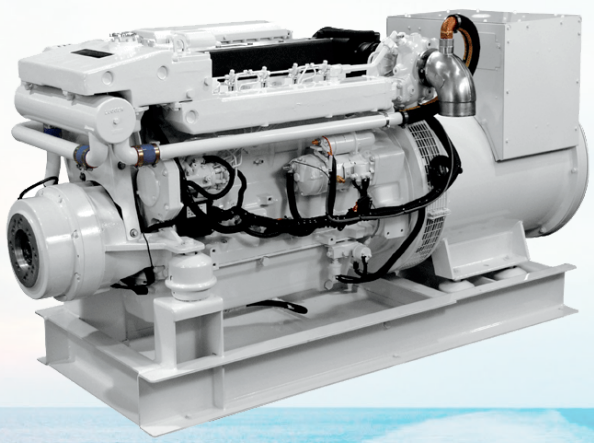
Antigua
Marine Power Services
268-460-1850

British Virgin Islands
CRC Engines & Fabricating
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Marine Maintenance Services Ltd.
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—*Continued from previous page*

Ferry Between Antigua & Guadeloupe Returns

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA), alongside the Antigua Cruise Port, has welcomed the return of the regional ferry service *L'Express des Iles* from Guadeloupe. After a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the Guadeloupe-based ferry arrived in Antigua on December 10th, 2022, carrying 415 passengers on its chartered day service. CEO of the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority Colin James, ABTA Marketing Consultant for the Caribbean & Latin America Charmaine Spencer, along with other ABTA executives, were on hand to greet and welcome the passengers with a vibrant cultural display of stilt walkers, dancers, and steel pan. The ferry and its visitors came right in time for the holiday season, to shop and enjoy the local holiday festivities that Antigua has to offer.

L' Express des Iles has been in operation for over 30 years, providing a fast, reliable, and affordable ferry service for travelers between the islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Les Saintes and Marie Galante, as well as offering services to Dominica and St. Lucia.

The ferry's management company, Jeans for Freedom, is delighted to resume its charter services to Antigua, and has already announced trips for April and May 2023. Plans are also being made to facilitate persons wanting to visit for Antigua's Carnival in August 2023.

"We look forward to growing this business with Jeans for Freedom because it's great to connect Antigua & Barbuda with our regional brothers and sisters. Antigua & Barbuda has always been a regional hub by air, and now we hope to also have it be a regional hub by sea," said James.



COURTESY THE ANTIGUA & BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY

Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority's team, alongside the Antigua Cruise Port team, with captain and first officer of L'Express des Iles, which provides service to and from Guadeloupe.

Sailing to the States?

The Seven Seas Cruising Association (www.ssca.org) reminds foreign vessels intending to enter the United States that the US ROAM application was updated in July 2022. If the foreign vessel has the ROAM application, a new feature now assists with the port check-ins that are required by US Customs. A vessel first checks in at arrival, and obtains a cruising permit. The vessel captain then enters the Cruising Permit number into the US ROAM application. After successful permit information is entered in ROAM, vessels can use the application to do online check-in at their next port of entry or stops.

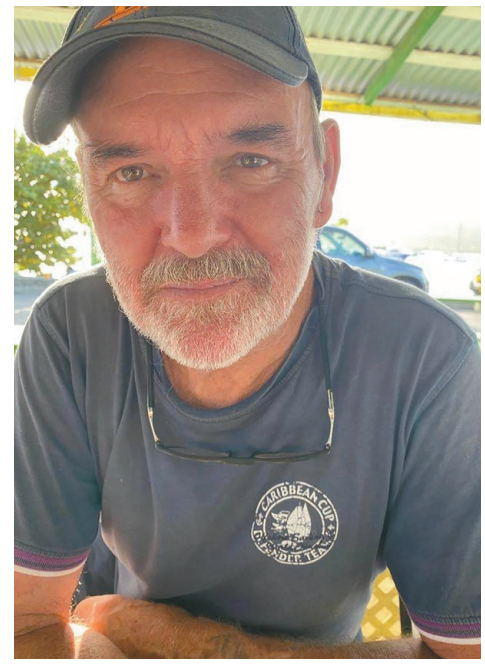
If a cruising permit has not been entered into ROAM, a boat must physically check in at each stop made at US ports. Basically a vessel uses the ROAM app for online check-in; or, if ROAM is not available, the skipper must check in physically at each port of entry, as has been done previously.

There is no change in the requirement for foreign vessels to check in, just in the way it's possible.

See details at Noonsite.com.

Eight Bells

Jerry Stewart passed away at home on Carriacou on November 19th, 2022. He was 68 years old.



Jerry owned a fleet of tugboats and barges, built the Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout and, for larger vessels, operated the Slipway marine railway. He employed many workers, most of them local.

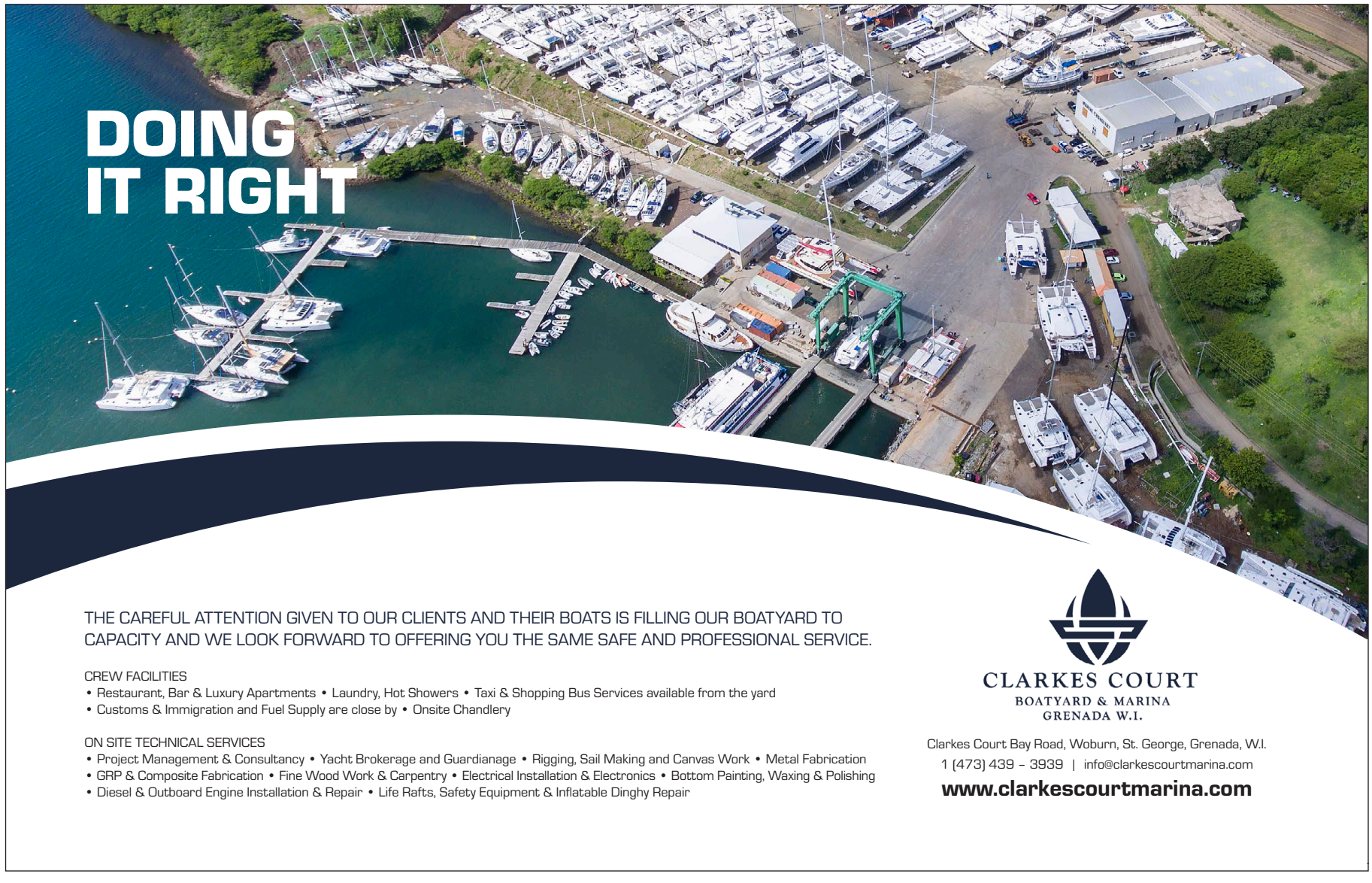
He was also an avid and successful sailboat racer, mostly aboard his Hughes 38, *Bloody Mary*, and his Luders 27, *Free Spirit*, both frequent contenders at Grenada Sailing Week and the Bequia Easter Regatta. He was often instrumental in organizing races such as the yacht series of the annual Carriacou Regatta, and occasionally contributed regatta reports to *Caribbean Compass*.

Plus, he was an all-around good guy. After tropical storms he was likely to show up at damaged houses with his tool belt. During a drought his vessels brought water to the island. He also was a supporter of the Carriacou Children's Education Fund.

He is survived by his wife Daniela, his three sons, Douglas, Hugo and Max, and many friends.

Jerry will be much missed.

—*Continued on next page*



—Continued from previous page

Successful Second Caribbean Charter Show

The second annual Caribbean Charter Yacht Show was held at Yacht Haven Grande Marina in St Thomas, US Virgin Islands. The four-day event, running from December 8th through 11th, dedicated to serving the needs of charter and yacht brokers, welcomed brokers and clients from around the globe.

The 2022 Caribbean Charter Yacht Show saw almost 100 brokers and managers flock to the four-time winner of the title Superyacht Marina of Year, with attendance of yachts up by 30 percent from last year. Some of 2022's attending yachts included the 51.2-metre *Helios 2*, Benetti's motoryacht *Next Chapter* and the 24.4-metre sailing yacht *Seaclusion*.

The Caribbean Charter Yacht Show organizers arranged a diverse range of events for guests to enjoy including nightly entertainment, a variety of cuisines and a crew party on the final evening. The planning process for next year's event is already underway with the show dates due to be released soon.

Visit www.caribbeancharterys.com for more information.

Third Martinique Boat Show Coming!

May 11th through 14th — save the dates!

After the success of the first two editions, the Martinique Boat Show is back from May 11th to 14th in Fort-de-France at the Etang Z'Abricots Port.

With 5,000 square metres of exhibition space on land and 300 metres of pontoons afloat, it is the ideal space for boatowners to see products and meet future service providers from all over the Caribbean.

The Martinique Boat Show is a showcase and a meeting place for all companies related to the sea: brokers, ship chandlers, naval repairers, sailmakers, mechanical maintenance, marinas, excursionists, diving centers and more. The organizers provide participating companies with dedicated transport, accommodation and logistics service to prepare for their arrival in Martinique. For business inquiries, information and registration contact martinique.boat.show@gmail.com. Registration opens on January 2nd, 2023.

With more than 80 exhibitors and 5,000 visitors expected, this is a boat show in full growth, on the way to becoming a must for the islands. Will you be there?

For more information visit www.martinique-boat-show.fr and see ad on page 11.



MARTINIQUE BOAT SHOW

The third edition of the Martinique Boat Show is coming in May. Will you be there?

Selected Caribbean Cruisers' VHF Nets

Cruising guides, social media, happy hour chitchat — these can all be good sources of information for sailors in the Caribbean. But often one of the best ways to get up-to-the-minute news on what's happening in individual anchorages is to tune in to the daily cruisers' VHF nets.

Here are some popular ones suggested by cruisers, organized from north to south. All times given are local.

- Bahamas, Nassau: 0715 hours, Ch14
- Dominican Republic, Luperón: 0800 hours every Sunday and Wednesday, announced on Ch68 then switch to Ch72. On Sundays, 0900 hours, Ch72
- St. Martin/Maarten: 0730 hours, Ch10 Monday through Saturday. (Shrimpy has been running this net for 17+ years!)
- Antigua, Jolly Harbour: 0900 hours, on Ch74 Monday through Saturday
- Antigua, English and Falmouth Harbours: 0900 hours, Ch06 daily
- Antigua, Carlisle Bay: 0900 hours, Ch72
- Dominica, Portsmouth: 0730 hours, Ch72 daily (depending on the number of yachts present)
- Martinique, Ste. Anne/Le Marin as far as Fort-de-France: 0830 hours, Ch08 Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- St, Lucia, Rodney Bay: 0800 hours, Ch69 Monday through Saturday
- Bequia: 0800 hours, Ch68 daily
- Grenada: 0730 hours, Ch66 (International duplex mode) Monday through Saturday

Note: If the 66 repeater is unavailable then listen on the alternate Ch72 for this net. Please use your radio's high 25-watt power setting for this net.

- Trinidad, Chaguaramas: 0800 hours, Ch68 daily
- Bonaire: 0800 hours, Ch77 Mondays only (more volunteers would mean additional net days)
- Panama, Bocas Del Toro Emergency Net: 0745 hours, Ch68 Monday through Saturday
- Panama, Shelter Bay marina: 0730 hours, Ch77 daily
- Panama, Vista Mar marina: 0830 hours, Ch74 daily
- Rio Dulce: 0730 hours, Ch69 Monday through Saturday
- Honduras, Roatan, Fantasy Island Net: 0800 hours, Ch71 Monday through Saturday

Thanks to cruisers for this information. As this issue of Compass *went to press, it was correct to the best of our knowledge. Don't see your favorite VHF net here? Drop a line to editor@caribbeancompass.com*





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Selected On-Line Weather Sources

"Red sky at night…"? When was the last time you really looked at the sky during happy hour? For that matter, when was the last time you even tapped the barometer? Yet weather prediction occupies a large part of a Caribbean sailor's attention.

According to Wikipedia, it was not until the invention of the electric telegraph in 1835 that the modern age of weather forecasting began. Before this time, it was not widely practicable to transport information about the current state of the weather any faster than a steam train (and the train also was a very new technology at that time). By the late 1840s, the telegraph allowed reports of weather conditions from a wide area to be received almost instantaneously, allowing forecasts to be made from knowledge of weather conditions farther upwind. In the United States, the first public radio forecasts were made in 1925 on WEEI, the Edison Electric Illuminating station in Boston. Television forecasts followed in Cincinnati in the 1940s on the DuMont Television Network. The Weather Channel, a 24-hour cable network, began broadcasting 40 years ago.

The technology used to disseminate weather forecasts is still evolving. Remember weather fax and GRIB files? Today, many cruisers depend on professional weather routers.

And although SSB radio or SatPhone weather are still indispensable when offshore and out of WiFi range (see schedule of SSB weather reports on page 9), because WiFi is now so widely available in the Caribbean, increasing numbers of sailors get their weather information from on-line sources.

Here we present a selection that various Caribbean cruisers have recommended (tested PC and Android tablet compatible).

Caribbean National, Regional and Island Weather Websites

• ABCs Weather
www.meteo.cw/rad_loop.php
• Curaçao Met Department
www.meteo.cw
• Barbados Weather Satellite
http://barbadosweather.org/GOES16/Jiren_Satellite_Products.php#
• NEW FEATURE! Now available on FaceBook
https://m.facebook.com/BarbadosMeteorologicalService
• Composite Radar Atlantic and Caribbean
www.barbadosweather.org/BMS_Radar_Composite_Resp.php
• Martinique Weather Radar (French):
www.meteofrance.gp/previsions-meteo-antilles-guyane/animation/radar/antilles
• Trinidad & Tobago Weather Radar
www.metoffice.gov.tt/satellite
• US National Weather Service (for USVI and Puerto Rico)
www.weather.gov/sju/marine
• US National Weather Service for USVI
https://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lat=17.728114454000035&lon=-64.81908749999997#.YIW4R1UpC9c

General Weather Websites

• NOAA-NationalWeatherService-Caribbean
www.weather.gov/marine/offnt3cmz
• Mike's Weather Page
www.spaghettimodels.com
• Worldwide Cyclone and hurricane tracker by Hayley
www.cyclocane.com
• WINDFinder
www.windfinder.com
• Weather Tools
www.onboardonline.com/weathertools
• PassageWeather (provides seven-day wind, wave and weather forecasts)
www.passageweather.com
• General weather discussion on Wunderground Cat 6
www.wunderground.com/cat6
• Windyty
(shows wind speed and direction for 14 days in about three-hour increments)
www.windyty.com
• Ventusky (same look as Windytv, but different)
www.ventusky.com

Weather Conversions

• www.weather.org/conversion-chart

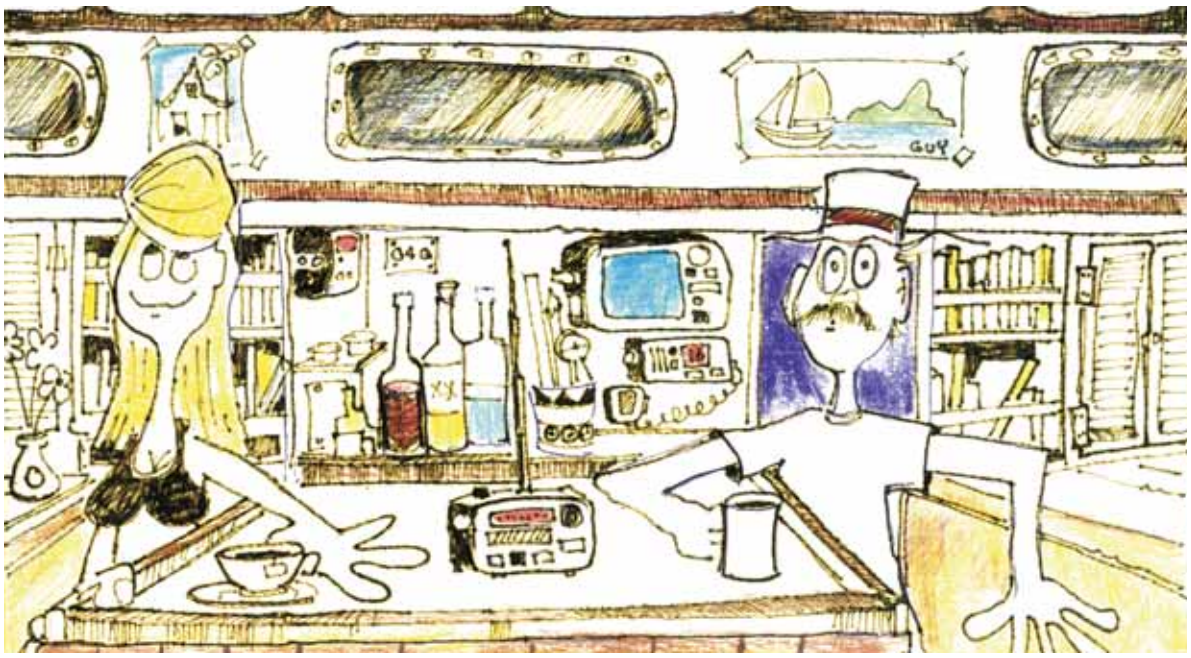
Commercial Marine Weather Service Websites

• Buoyweather (free two-day forecasts in addition to paid-for custom forecasts)
www.buoyweather.com
• Chris Parker's Marine Weather Center (listen free on daily SSB nets or subscribe for daily e-mails for your area)
http://mwxc.com
• Atlantic severe storm prediction (paid subscription):
https://stormpulse.com

Hurricane Information Websites

• Caribbean Hurricane Network (latest local updates from correspondents on the islands)
www.stormcarib.com
• US National Hurricane Center
www.nhc.noaa.gov
NHC Marine Weather Discussion
www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIATWDAT.shtml
• NHC Offshore Reports
www.nhc.noaa.gov/marine/offshores.php
• AccuWeather
http://sirocco.accuweather.com
• Atlantic Hurricane Tracking Chart (print out for offline reference)
www.nhc.noaa.gov/pdf/tracking_chart_atlantic.pdf
• NOAA Climate Discussion
www.climate.gov/news-features
• NHC Marine Graphicast
www.nhc.noaa.gov/marine/graphicast.php?basin=at#contentw.nws.noaa
• Weather Underground
www.wunderground.com/hurricane

Happy weather windows!



Selected Caribbean Shortwave Weather Reports Winter 2023

UTC	AST*	STATION & REPORT DESCRIPTION	FREQ	TYPE	MODE
0330, 0515 & 0930 (UTC) NOAA Daily High Seas Offshore Forecast NMN Chesapeake					Voice USB**
1000	0600	Daily Caribbean Weather	6215 (uncontrolled 1000-1200)	USB	
1030	0630	Trinidad Emergency Net	3855	LSB/Ham	
1030	0630	Carib. Emergency & Weather Net	3815	LSB/Ham	
1100	0700	Eastern Carib. Weather (Chris)	4045 & 8137	USB (Note 1)	
1130	0730	Bahamas Weather (Chris)	4045 & 8137	USB (Note 1)	
1200	0800	Coconut Telegraph	4060	USB (except Sunday)	
1215	0815	KPK Cruising Safety (sponsor SSCA)	8104	USB	
1220	0720	Bahamas Weather (C6AGG C Wardle)	7096/3696	LSB/Ham	
1230	0830	US East Coast, Atlantic NW of Bermuda (Chris)	8137/12350	USB (Note 1)	
1245	0845	Waterway Cruising Club	7268	LSB/Ham	
1300	0900	Transatlantic Cruisers Net (SSCA)	12400	Ham (Note 3)	
1300	0900	Central American Breakfast Club	7083	LSB/Ham	
1330	0930	Cruizheimers Net	8152 (or 8146/8164)	USB	
1330	0930	Western Carib. Weather (Chris)	8137 & 12350	USB (Note 1)	
1330	(0830 local)	Panama Connection Net	8107 & 8167	USB	
1400	1000	Northwest Caribbean Net	6209	USB	
1530	1130	NOAA Daily High Seas Offshore Forecast NMN Chesapeake			Voice USB**
2130	1730	Transatlantic Cruisers Net (SSCA)	12350	USB (Note 3)	
2130	1730	NOAA Daily High Seas Offshore Forecast NMN Chesapeake			Voice USB**
2200	1800	Doo Dah Net	8152	USB	
2200	1800	Carib. and Atlantic Weather (Chris)	8137 & 12350		Voice USB (Notes 1 & 2)
2230	1830	Carib. Emergency & Weather	3815		Voice LSB/Ham

* Atlantic Standard Time (AST) does not shift to DST in the summer in Caribbean waters.
** NOAA frequencies (in kHz): NMN, Chesapeake, 4426, 6501, 8764. NMG, New Orleans, 4316, 8502, 12788

Note 1: Unless severe weather threatens, this net is not conducted on Sundays. When there are active Tropical systems in the Atlantic, Marine Weather Center (Chris) runs a net at 2300 UTC/1900 AST on 8137 USB.

Note 2: Please hail Marine Weather Center 15 minutes before the net so that Chris knows where to aim his antenna to reach you. This net is geared primarily to offshore Atlantic and Pacific passagemakers. For schedule updates see www.mwxc.com

Note 3: The Transatlantic Cruisers' Net operates only during yacht migration periods.

TIPS

• During severe tropical storm or hurricane activity, information can be found continuously on the Hurricane Watch Net on 14325 USB/Ham and 3950 LSB/Ham.

• The Maritime Mobile Service Net is operational every day from 1200 AST (1600 GMT) until 2100 AST (0100 GMT) on 14300 USB in the 20-meter Ham band. The network also operates on the alternate frequency of 14313 USB should the primary frequency be inoperable.

NOTE: In an emergency they will answer and assist ANY vessel in need, not just Amateur Radio operators! In a DISTRESS situation, anyone may operate on any frequency.

This SSB network regularly repeats high seas and tropical weather warnings and bulletins from the National Weather Service and the National Hurricane Center.

• In cooperation with SSB station KPK, the Coconut Net Controller will check in on that net at 8:15. KPK operates daily as part of the SSCA and the Caribbean Safety and Security net on 8104

KPK handles traffic from all the Caribbean and listens for emergency calls on their 1215 UTC net.

• Chris Parker, Radio callsign WYC listens for emergency traffic at the beginning and end of each of his weather nets. Anyone, licensed or not, may legally operate on Ham or any other frequencies in the event of life-threatening or DISTRESS situations.

• A more complete schedule of US East Coast cruising nets is available at www.docksideradio.com/east_coast.htm

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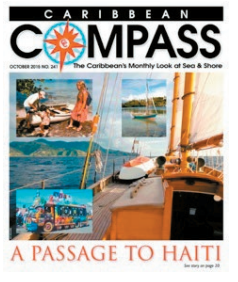
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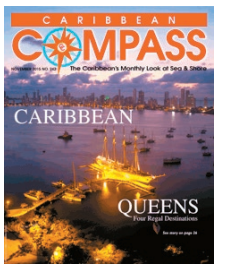
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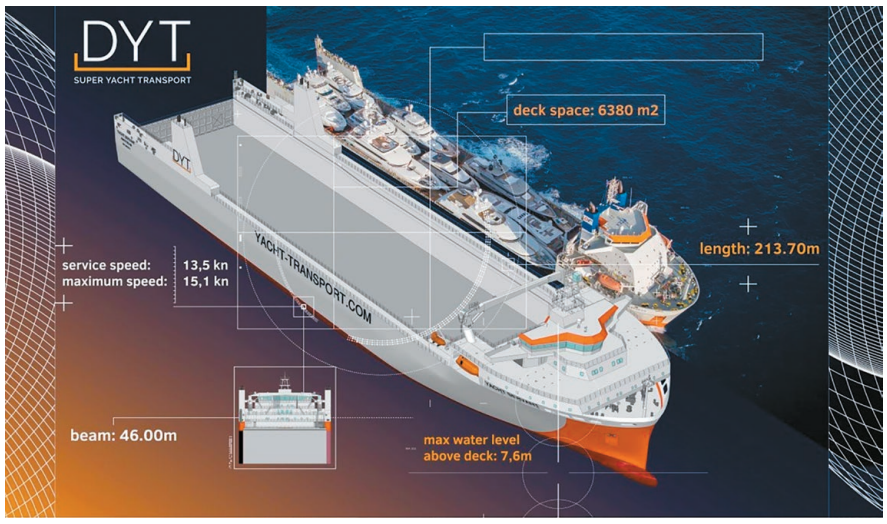
BUSINESS BRIEFS

Yacht Transport to and from Martinique

The largest semi-submersible yacht transport vessel came into Le Marin, Martinique, on November 17th, 2022, to discharge 15 yachts for their winter season in the Caribbean. The LOA of the superyachts unloaded ranged between 30 and 45 metres.

Delivered in late 2021, the *Yacht Servant*, 214 metres long and with a beam of 46 metres, slipped into the narrow entrance of Le Marin in front of the Club Med at 12:00 sharp with a pilot on board. The discharge operation took place on the 18th; once the ship is down in the water the yachts simply float out under their own power, a rapid process. The transport came in from Palma de Mallorca and then went on to Port Everglades to discharge the remaining ten yachts on board.

Douglas Yacht Services is the Caribbean representative for Sevenstar and DYT



A comparative image of this brand-new cargo with its sister ship, the SS4 (LOA 169m and width 32m), which has been operating in Le Marin, Martinique, for a number of years. Its extra width allows four yachts across instead of three.

yacht transport companies since 2015. They have driven the number of transport stops in Le Marin from four to consistently above ten per year. With its protected waters and DYS's excellent management of the operation, Le Marin has become the favourite Caribbean port for all concerned with yacht transportation.

For more information see Douglas Yacht Services' ad on page 12.

Grenada is 'Yachting Destination of the Year'

The title Yachting Destination of the Year has been given to Grenada in the 2023 *Caribbean Journal* Awards, with Camper & Nicholsons' Port Louis Marina receiving particular mention in the judges' assessment. *Caribbean Journal* is a leader in covering Caribbean travel and trade news.

"Grenada has quietly become an in-demand yachting hotspot in recent years, both for the tri-island state (including nearby Carriacou and Petite Martinique) and for its place as an easy-to-reach hub for exploring the wonders of the islands of the Grenadines," said the judges.

Port Louis Marina is available for yachts from ten up to 90 metres, with flexible berthing for visiting guests throughout the year and premium marine services and facilities. The marina, with 227 berths, including extra-wide berths for larger catamarans, welcomed World Cruising Club's more than 400 crew from 91 ARC+ boats to start the season, with the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) transatlantic race, and the Viking Explorers and Globe 40 rallies to follow. In addition, the Grenada Billfish Tournament and Grenada Sailing Week, two of the regional and busiest marine events for Grenada, are hosted at Port Louis Marina. Due to arrive in March from South Africa, the Oyster World Rally also chose Port Louis Marina as their preferred marina destination.

The marina is complimented by exceptional services and facilities including safe and secure berthing, a multilingual staff and 24-hour security, and a yacht charter company. A Customs office is on site. A swimming pool is available for berth holders, along with the entertainment from two bars and restaurants. Power, WiFi, washrooms and a laundry are available. A Marina Village is specially created for the events season at the marina, which includes a weekend market of fresh produce, specialty spice stalls and delicious local food. Nearby are supermarkets, local provisioners, a chandlery and more. For ease of travel, the airport is only five miles away, with regular flights to other islands, the US and Europe.

Popular excursions include rum and chocolate tasting tours, waterfall and jungle walks, horse riding along Grand Anse Beach, and diving at the famous Underwater Sculpture Park.

Zara Tremlett, CMM, Marina Manager at Port Louis Marina says, "It is really such an



Grenada was named Caribbean Journal's *Yachting Destination of the Year, with special mention of Port Louis Marina.*

honour to receive the special mention from the judges at this year's awards. Grenada is one of the most fantastic cruising locations, and our marina is working hard to help facilitate and service yachts throughout the year. We are delighted to continue to see loyal customers returning to our marina and charter captains and crew are becoming well versed in using the local provisioners and yacht management companies, all complimented by a very welcoming and authentic Grenadian charm and atmosphere."

For more information on Port Louis Marina visit https://cnmarinas.com/marinas/port-louis-marina/

Expansion at Spice Island Marine Services

Spice Island Marine Services, a full-service insurance-approved boatyard in Grenada, is excited to share several notable improvements this season. A recently completed yard expansion offers increased storage capacity, as well as new docks with 14 Med-moor style marina slips with 50/60hz power available. The yard is increasing its sustainability efforts and has installed new solar panels to offset electrical usage.

Customers will also enjoy an expanded Budget Marine chandlery and newly opened restaurant, One Love, featuring the best pizza and gelato on the island.

If you are looking for hurricane storage in 2023, be sure to secure your spot in advance by contacting their friendly customer service team at simsco@spiceislandmarine.com or (473) 444-4257. Visit www.spiceislandmarine.com to learn more about their services and rates. For more information see ad on page 8.

—Continued on next page

SPICE ISLAND MARINE SERVICES



Spice Island Marine Services in Grenada now offers increased storage capacity in the boatyard and an expanded Budget Marine chandlery.

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—Continued from previous page

Parts and Power Adds to Perkins Distribution

Perkins distributor Parts and Power Limited has expanded its responsibilities after it was awarded additional territory in the Caribbean, with Trinidad & Tobago, Guadeloupe and the ABC Islands (Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao) now in its customer service area.

The addition of the territories to Parts and Power is part of Perkins' distributor strategy to further strengthen its service network by providing engine expertise and services for Perkins powered machine owners and operators.

"Our distributor in the Caribbean since 1973, the Parts and Power team, and the wider network, which comprises more than 25 dealers, are recognized for their commitment to service and for developing positive relationships with their customers," said Jaz Gill, Vice President of global sales, marketing, service and parts at Perkins. "Their approach has helped to grow their business and the Perkins reputation and were among the key reasons we decided to increase their service area by awarding them these additional territories."

Parts and Power's General Manager Gavin Dooley stated, "We are excited to be adding these additional territories to our Perkins responsibilities. We aim to provide best-in-class services and support to our customers, both new and current. We will use our experience and resources to make sure we are taking on the needs of our customers head-on and helping to create an even better service network."

Headquartered in Tortola, BVI, Parts and Power offers sales, engineering, support, parts, and service across the Caribbean.

Visit www.partsandpower.com for more information.

Bequia Threadworks' New Ethical Fashions

Bequia Threadworks, an ethical Caribbean brand, has launched its fourth fashion collection. "Into The Wild" infuses the relaxed atmosphere of Bequia life with the lush tropics of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. This collection is the most sustainable line yet, featuring organic, deadstock and artisanal fabrics.

Bequia Threadworks was founded in 2018 as a nonprofit organization and social enterprise based in Bequia. Its mission is to promote economic freedom and women's empowerment on the island through employment and training. The collections are designed and manufactured in Bequia, using state-of-the-art equipment and sustainable fabrics, and are sold directly from the organization's Port Elizabeth boutique and the soon-to-launch online store. This is made possible with an all-woman team of in-house designers, pattern makers, seamstresses and boutique staff, working alongside local models and photographers to make it a truly Vincentian enterprise.

The "Into The Wild" collection focuses on local and regional collaborations as well as sustainable fabrics. Vincentian designer Odini Sutherland recently joined the Threadworks family and helped birth this latest effort. Inspired by the vibrancy and bold attitude of Caribbean culture, she brought a new energy to Bequia Threadworks with more structured styles, and stunning new prints and fabrics. In the Bequia Threadworks boutique, "Into The Wild" is complemented with accessories and jewelry from local designers and artisan brands, making it the shopping experience in St. Vincent & the Grenadines!

Visit the Bequia Threadworks Boutique on Back Street, Port Elizabeth, to shop "Into The Wild." Open daily from 9:00AM to 5:00PM.

For more information visit www.bequiathreadworks.com, www.facebook.com/bequiathreadworks and www.instagram.com/bequiathreadworks, and see ad in the Market Place section, pages 36 and 37.

Gill is ASW's Technical Apparel Sponsor

Antigua Sailing Week (ASW) has announced the return of Gill as the exclusive technical clothing sponsor of the 2023 event, which will take place April 29th through May 5th.

Gill North America, created in 1975, has been the go-to brand for professional and leisure sailors worldwide. Their latest range was put through its paces by the US Sailing Olympic team. The Gill NA product range spans everything needed for sailing and any type of watersports from wetsuits and offshore clothing through to watches, sunglasses, gloves and bags. The select Antigua Sailing Week Gill collection will be a combination of marine casual and technical styles including UV TEC and Marine Sport, featuring ASW branded UV technical shirts and hats. These protective, breathable and quick-dry fabrics are the perfect way to outfit your crew before and after racing in the Caribbean's sunny, warm and wet conditions.

The new Antigua Sailing Week Gill collection can be reviewed at www.sailingweek.com, and is available for purchase at Budget Marine chandleries in Jolly Harbour and English Harbour. Participating crews can also order customized kit from the selection of Gill UV TecOrder online for pick up on arrival.

To find out more about custom orders visit www.sailingweek.com or email info@sailingweek.com.


THREADWORKS

Visit the Bequia Threadworks Boutique to shop "Into The Wild."

Safetics Heads to a New Destination

Following the success of its special edition for the Vendée Globe and the launch of its first edition in English, *Safetics* has announced its new collaboration with the Route du Rhum - Destination Guadeloupe.

Waterproof and compact, the *Safetics* guide compiles 60 pages of unique checklists validated by sea safety experts, as well as essential memos and regulatory information for coastal and offshore navigation. The English edition is offered at £19.90.

Check out all the editions of Safetics the Sailor's Checklist *at www.safetics.com.*





REGATTA NEWS

6-Day Solo Transat in Route du Rhum

Bringing together the biggest names in ocean racing, the Route du Rhum is a 3,543-mile single-handed transatlantic race from Saint-Malo in Brittany to Pointe-à-Pitre in Guadeloupe that is run every four years.

The 2022 fleet included IMOCA 60s, Ocean Fifty trimarans, Class 40s and 100-foot Ultime trimarans. A battle among three giant Ultimes saw a win and a new course record for Charles Caudrelier on the foiling *Maxi Edmond de Rothschild,* with a time of 6 days, 19 hours, 47 minutes and 25 seconds. The previous record of 7 days, 14 hours, 21 minutes and 47 seconds was set by Francis Joyon in 2018.

It wasn't an easy race. The start was postponed for three days, until November 9th, to let stormy conditions pass, yet a front on November 12th brought winds up to 40 knots and resulted in three dismastings within a three hour period, and the capsize of the then-leading Ocean Fifty (no injuries were reported).



ALEXIS COURCOUX / ROUTE DU RHUM

Maxi Edmond de Rothschild, *shortly before winning the 2022 Route du Rhum.*

Last year's Class 40 winner, Yoann Richomme (*Parpec-Arkea*), described the conditions to Helen Fretter of *Yachting World* magazine: "It was fast but very, very violent after the front. The boat was jumping off the waves. It felt like everything was going to explode at any moment! It was freakishly scary… especially after seeing Aurélien Ducroz and Amélie Grassi dismasting behind my stern. I really thought we were all going to suffer the same fate. I know what it is to lose your mast in these types of conditions. It's incredibly hard to undo all the lines and cables in rough seas and at night too. It is a stark reminder to keep a lid on it."

Yachting World reported, "… the Ultime skippers consistently managed 30-plus knot speeds and periods of headwinds and large swells, without capsize or serious damage. The reality of these giant 100-foot trimarans racing around the world solo has got a step closer."

Roland Jourdain, racing the 18-metre Outremer 5X catamaran *We Explore*, crossed the finish line first in the Rhum Multi Class, in 16 days, 5 hours and 51 minutes after sailing 4,163 nautical miles at an average speed of 10.68 knots. This is the third time that he has crossed first, following victories in 2006 and 2010. However, upon inspection after arrival, *We Explore* was given a time penalty of 90 minutes for a broken lead seal and fell to second place behind Loïc Escoffier (*Lodigroup*) who crossed 43 minutes later.

We Explore is made of flax fibre. This is reportedly the first time that a multihull of this size has incorporated so many biomaterials.

For more information and full results visit www.routedurhum.com/en.

90 in Discover Caribbean Dinghy Regatta

The weekend of November 12th saw the 32nd edition of Puerto Rico's Discover the Caribbean Dinghy Regatta. The 2022 event, held at the Club Naútico de Ponce, hosted 90 sailors, 28 of them female, from different Puerto Rican sailing clubs to compete in 420, ILCA4, ILCA6, O'Day Mariner, Optimist, Playero, Rhodes 19 and Sunfish classes. Sailors from the Sailing Academy of the Club Naútico de San Juan, Marlin Sailing School, Boquerón Sailing School/Fundación 2010 Mayaguez, and the Club Naútico de Ponce participated in this traditional event.

The regatta was part of the qualifying series for the Central American and Caribbean Games in the Sunfish class.

With a total of five races in "super light" wind conditions the athletes gave their maximum effort.

The class winners are as follows. Optimist Blue Fleet and First Place Overall, Valeria S. Pérez-Hermida; Optimist Red Fleet, Isabel Rivera Fernandez; Sandpipers, Jonathan Sánchez / Ednalis Muñoz; Club 420, José Guillermo Díaz; ILCA 4 (Laser 4.7), Diego Rodríguez Emerson; ILCA 6 (Laser Radial), Paolo Perino; Sunfish, Marco Teixidor; Rhodes 19, Orza! - Graham Albert Castillo, Mariano Richiusa and Julio de Cárdenas; O'Day Mariner, Compai - José Fullana, Fraito Lugo and Alejandro Lugo

For full results visit https://theclubspot.com/regatta/3Or5dWpfIv/results.
Visit www.sailingpur.com for more information.

Curaçao's Balentien Wins St. Maarten Optis

Twenty-six young sailors from six different countries competed in the 17th annual Sol St. Maarten Optimist Championship, held in Simpson Bay on the weekend of November 19th, 2022.

With sailors from the Antigua Yacht Club, St. Kitts & Nevis Sailing Association, Club de Voile de Friar's Bay (St. Martin), Youth Sailing Curaçao, St. Barth Yacht Club, and the Sint Maarten Yacht Club, the competition was fierce.

Eleven competitors raced in the orange fleet and 15 young sailors raced in the blue fleet, which is for the advanced sailors.

EDWARD PENAGOS



So many young competitors are excited for this event every year!

—Continued on next page

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In the blue fleet, a tight fight for first place took place between James Balentien from Curaçao and Carrack Jones from Antigua. Where Carrack was in first place after Race Day 1, with a difference of 3 points, Balentien sailed better on Day 2, even though he scored a tenth place in race 11. Jones scored a 12th place in race 9, which made it all very close. Balentien managed to take the win with only a one-point difference and took home the overall trophy and a beautiful dry bag sponsored by Budget Marine. Richendly Ferrero from Curaçao took third place.

In the orange fleet, Skyla Connor, representing the St. Kitts & Nevis Sailing Association, took first place with 14 points out of 11 races. In this fleet the competition was about second, third and fourth place. Lourenco Rolo Couto from the St. Barth Yacht Club came in second with 23 points, Nathan Sheppard from Sint Maarten came in third with 24 points, and Tao Carmona from St. Barth Yacht Club came in fourth with 25 points.

Trophies for Newcomer and Sportsmanship were also awarded. The race organization named Greyson Burrell from the St. Kitts & Nevis Sailing Association as promising newcomer. It was his first race off island, and he showed great motivation and didn't give up in tough conditions. Stanley Haes from Club de Voile de Friars Bay earned the Sportsmanship Award, for the second time in a row. Haes showed great sportsmanship as he made his penalty turns when he made a mistake, even when there were no other participants around.

"This is how we would like to see the sport," said Race Officer Rien Korteknie, "true and honest racing on a high level."

"So many young competitors are excited for this event every year. We couldn't have done it without all the help from the volunteers in Race Committee, onshore and offshore and the sponsors that contribute yearly to this event. From donating prizes, to breakfast, snacks and dinner, our sponsors made it all possible," says Linda Koning, intern at the SMYC. "We want to thank our title sponsor SOL for their loyal and continuous support. As well as our other regional sponsors: Budget Marine, Remax, The Scuba Shop, Domino's, Grant Thornton and Zeebest,"

For more information and full results visit www.smyc.com.

New BVI Dinghy Champs

Four classes took to the water on November 26th for the 21st edition of the BVI Dinghy Championships.

The Laser fleet had some tight racing with three of the five entries posting race wins. Overall, Christian Thompson reclaimed the title he last held in 2019 by winning three of the five races and finishing fourth in the others. Second overall went to Sam Talbot with a win in race two, two seconds, a third and a fourth. Third place was decided on countback as Nathan Haycraft and Andrew "Tubes" Thompson both ended the regatta on 14 points. Tubes emerged on top due to a win in the final race.

The Laser Radial class was won by Marentia de Villiers.

It was a family affair in three of the four RS Fevas, but it was Imogen New and Harry Bowerman who took the title after winning four of the five races. In second place, and the only duo to take a win from Imogen and Harry, were Eddie and Ashley Brockbank.

Youth sailor Jake Richardson with his dad Matt as crew put on a great performance to take third in their first-ever RS Feva competition. Also new to racing were Rhiannon and Catrin Jones, who finished fourth.

The Club was delighted to welcome wing foilers to the regatta for the first time. Colin Rathbun was crowned the first BVI Wing Foiling national champion after finishing second and first in their two races. In second overall was Rusty Henderson on his foiling windsurfer posting a third and a second. Mike Hirst won the first race but did not complete the second so finished third overall.

For more information visit royalbviyc.org.

Light Air for Foiling Champs

The practice of foiling has become popular in recent years. It consists of adding a hydrofoil under a kitesurf or windsurf board to limit water resistance, which elevates the rider above the water. The discipline will be included in the 2024 Olympic Games.

December 9th marked the first day of the 2022 Caribbean Foiling Championships in Orient Bay, St. Martin. With a low wind and high swell system in the Atlantic, organizers Maxim Van den Pol and Sacha van der Wouden said: "We tried to make the most of the morning and go full force on the races for this first day.''

The 45 registered contestants had been called a couple of days prior to the race to explain about the wind conditions. Half of the participants decided to postpone until next year to have maximum chances of racing. The French sailing federation officially accredits the race and participants gain points in the world circuit if three races are validated. Tiger Tyson from Antigua, who is training to represent his country to the Olympics, postponed but pointed out that the Caribbean Foiling Championships is usually one of his favorite races of the year.

—Continued on next page

CFC



Fun was had despite abnormally light airs.



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The high-pressure system in the Atlantic caused abnormally low winds for the time of year and prevented the races from taking place as planned. Participants could only do one race on Friday morning. On Saturday afternoon, the wind picked up slightly before dropping again.

On Sunday morning, eight to ten knots were established and the races were launched: the kitefoil pro category did five races, being able to gain speed even in light wind, and the wingfoil category did two races. "We are glad participants could race; we took every opportunity we could," the organizers said. The desire to compete never left and numerous races were very close, with contestants winning by only half a point or one point difference.

Class winners were as follows. Kitefoil Pro category, Julien Quentel (St. Martin); Windfoil category, Sacha Fortuné (Guadeloupe); Wingfoil Pro category: Mahé Thebault (Guadeloupe); and Wingfoil leisure category, Storm Nicolai (Bonaire).

Prizes were also given to Aurélie Garreau as best female, Serge Amiot for best sportsmanship, and teenaged Lone De Jong for most worthy youngster.

For more information and full results visit www.caribbeanfoiling.com.



CFC

ON THE HORIZON

Grenada Sailing (Full!) Week

The organizing authority of Grenada Sailing Week has announced the return of Grenada's premier sailing event under the title The 2023 Pure Grenada Sailing Week, with title sponsorship from the Grenada Tourism Authority. After a break due to the pandemic and a successful abbreviated regatta in 2022, the organizers again offer a full, weeklong schedule of racing, parties and events.

Responding to the popularity of last year's Around Carriacou race, the 2023 Pure Grenada Sailing Week will begin on January 29th with the final registration, skippers' briefing and welcome event at Carriacou Marine, Carriacou. The first race day, January 30th, will see participants sail around Carriacou, with start and finish in Tyrell Bay. Day Two will be a race from Carriacou to Grenada, finishing in the vicinity of Le Phare Bleu Marina, before a Lay Day on Day Three. Days Four and Five will feature a series of shorter races off Grand Anse beach. The final prizegiving will be held at the Victory Bar, Port Louis Marina.

This fun-filled, family friendly regatta with nightly events and prizegivings is open to a range of CSA-rated boat classes. Early entries include Richard Szyjan's local Hobie 33, *Category 5*, as well as boats from Trinidad, Martinique, Great Britain, France and the US.

Visit grenadasailingweek.com for more information.

Expanded Caribbean Multihull Challenge

Every year, technological advances enable multihulls to become faster, safer and more comfortable in all kinds of winds. The Sint Maarten Yacht Club, organizers of the Caribbean Multihull Challenge (CMC), is celebrating the remarkable growth of multihull sailing worldwide by introducing new features to this growing event. All cats and tris are welcome!

Two new features are on tap for 2023.

The Around Saba Dash is a 52-mile power reach for CSA 1 boats starting in Simpson Bay, heading around Saba, and then back to Simpson Bay. This race, sponsored by the Sint Maarten Tourist Bureau, will join the now two-year-old Caribbean 60 Mile Multihull Sprint sponsored by FKG Rigging.

Other classes will be offered courses sailing mostly in Sint Maarten's southside waters. One day of the three will see the famous Around Island race for all entrants.

The Cruising Multihull Rally is the answer for those who want to participate in CMC fun but who do not want to race. Day One will be a cruise from Simpson Bay on the Dutch side to Anse Marcel on the French side for an afternoon on the beach or shopping, then a barbecue at the Blue Sail Restaurant at waterside in the evening. On Saturday, the rally fleet will head downwind around the western end of Anguilla and then up to Sandy Ground in Road Bay for beach games followed by dinner at the Lit Lounge and late-night carousing at the Elvis Beach Bar. On Day Three, rally boats will head back to Simpson Bay to arrive in time for yet again another party as well as prizegiving.

Visit https://caribbeanmultihullchallenge.com for more information.

Bocas del Toro Regatta, Panama

Panama's fourth annual Bocas del Toro Regatta will take place on February 11th. This one-day event will feature monohull and multihull divisions and will combine serious racing with energetic partying. Actually, the awards banquet might surpass the racing itself, since it is traditionally a "fungatta."

There is always a great prize list donated by local businesses and the entrance fee is easy on the wallet. Even more importantly, the regatta takes place in what many consider The Undiscovered Caribbean – Bocas del Toro, Panama.

For details contact www.bocasmarina.com.

New RORC Nelson's Cup Series

The RORC Caribbean 600, which starts and ends in Antigua, is a bucket-list offshore event for thousands of sailors. For 2023 and beyond, more racers' desire to participate in a variety of races has led to the creation of the RORC Nelson's Cup Series. The 11-day program features all the hallmarks of racing with the Royal Ocean Racing Club, including professional race management and memorable social events.

From February 13th through 24th, the RORC, supported by the Antigua Yacht Club, will organize the inaugural RORC Nelson's Cup Series, followed by the 14th edition of the RORC Caribbean 600. Six races are scheduled, with a full social program ashore. Racing under IRC, MOCRA and one-design rules, competitors can take part in all or part of the series. The series will have a variety of courses tailored to give all entrants an equal chance of winning after IRC time correction. For boats competing in the RORC Caribbean 600 Race, there is no additional entry fee for the RORC Nelson's Cup Series. Teams wishing to compete in just the inshore racing will have a nominal entry fee.

About 80 boats are expected for the 600-mile offshore race and some of the most successful teams in recent years have already entered the RORC Nelson's Cup Series. A significant number of Antiguan sailors are expected to take up the challenge of racing against some of the world's most accomplished teams.

The Notice of Race for the RORC Nelson's Cup Series has been published and on-line entry is open. More details are available at http://caribbean600.rorc.org.

—*Continued on next page*



EDWARD PENAGOS

All cats and tris are welcome!

—Continued from previous page

Caribbean Maxi Challenge

The Caribbean Maxi Challenge 2023, launched by International Maxi Association (IMA) in 2022, comprises three main events this year: The RORC Caribbean 600 in Antigua, setting sail on February 20th; the St Maarten Heineken Regatta from March 2nd through 5th, and Les Voiles de Saint-Barth Richard Mille from April 16th through 22nd.

The IMA Caribbean Maxi Challenge is open to all Maxi yachts, not just members of IMA. If the number of races in the Challenge is superior to the minimum as required, then the worst score will be removed. Only the two best races will be taken into account for the final results.

Big Variety for St. Maarten Heineken

The 43rd St. Maarten Heineken Regatta takes place from March 2nd through 5th, with four days of multi-class racing out of Simpson Bay.



TIM WRIGHT / PHOTOACTION.COM

Right: The RP37 Taz *had the highest rating in the Heineken's CSA5 class last year, so they had to cross the line with a big enough lead to secure a win against competitors like the Melges 32* Kick 'em Jenny 2.

A major attraction of the event is its variety. There's everything from professionally crewed Maxis to thrill-seeking catamarans, and close racing within the sportsboat classes, with skippers and crews ranging from Olympic sailors to newcomers. Even liveaboard cruisers enjoy the "Serious Fun" by competing in the Island Time class.

With over 35 countries participating, entries already received for 2023 will see some exciting battles.

Antigua-based American Pamala Baldwin, who offers places on her J/122, *Liquid*, for young talent to gain international racing experience, says the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta is perfect for some of the most competitive racing in the Caribbean. She says, "St. Maarten Heineken Regatta offers everything in one package. There's non-stop action on and off the water – pure adrenaline!"

Having swept the honors board last year by fulfilling her mission of winning the CSA 7 class in 2022, achieving "Best Overall Performance" and being awarded the trophy for representing women in sailing, there's high expectations for Pamala's *Liquid* in the hotly-contested class this year. The competition already includes Ross Applebey's Oyster 48, *Scarlet Oyster*, and *Whistler*, a J/121 from Barbados.

When the on-the-water action is over, the fun continues on shore with teams from all classes gathering for daily prizegiving and apres-sail libations in the race village at Port de Plaisance. Teams docked at Yacht Club Port de Plaisance get front row seats to all of the action: nightly entertainment, hot food, cool bars and great company. Special rates on docking at Yacht Club Port de Plaisance are offered for registered boats on a first-come, first-served basis, so be sure to register now for the 43rd St. Maarten Heineken Regatta on Yachtscoring.com.

Whether you can BYOB (bring your own boat) or are looking to charter your bucket-list boat, or want to crew or volunteer at the event, all options can be found at www.heinekenregatta.com.

Antigua Sailing Week 2023

Antigua Sailing Week is back in 2023 for a week of competition afloat and fun ashore. The Notice of Race is out and entries coming in from all over the world are expected to exceed 100 yachts.

ASW kicks off with the stand-alone 52-mile Peters & May Round Antigua Race on April 29th. ASW racing starts the next day with the English Harbour Rum Race Day. Daily racing continues until May 5th, not forgetting Wednesday's Lay Day, for its unforgettable entertainment. CSA racing, CSA double-handed, CSA multihull, classic, sportsboat and cruising classes are all invited and for the first time the event will coincide with the three-day Antigua Wingfoil Championships.

Starting on May 1st, the wingfoilers will compete using a separate start line and custom-tailored courses. The Antigua Wingfoil Championships will feature three consecutive days of racing, including two days on a fast-paced course in Falmouth Harbour and a long-distance down-winder along the island's south coast to coincide with the Lay Day activities on May 3rd.

Entries are quickly shaping up. Peter Corr and his US team on the King 40 *Blitz* will be returning to defend their 2022 overall victory, achieved with an undefeated run of first places in CSA Division 4. Several other race-proven entries are already leading the way for the good number of expected charter entries. Chartered boats traditionally account for a significant proportion of the entry line-up, providing an easy solution for yacht crews who sail together in their home waters to fly in from the corners of the globe to participate.

The multihulls are also gearing up for some hot competition. Entries received from Anthony McVeigh's home-based Dragonfly 28 *Bobby Dazzler* and, all the way from Australia, Guy Chester's Crowther Tri 46 *Oceans Tribute*, are paving the way for a good spectrum of boats and crews in this class.

"We can't wait for April to come around and to be able to welcome the yachts into Falmouth Harbour for the start of another fantastic Antigua Sailing Week," comments Race Manager Jaime Torres. "It will be bigger and better than our back-from-Covid event last year with more classes and tighter racing."

Antigua Sailing Week first took place in 1968 and more than 50 years later is firmly established as one of the greats of the world sailing calendar. The high standard of racing is matched only by the spectacular party scene. Music, food fresh from the barbecue and Antigua's own plentiful supplies of rum are the highlights of the après-racing, including the prizegivings after each day of racing, and all the beach fun and entertainment of the Lay Day.

For more information visit www.sailingweek.com.

Reports Coming Up!

We'll have the results of Barbados Sailing Week 2023, and full first-hand reports on the Grenada arrival of the ARC+ and the St. Lucia arrival of the ARC transatlantic rallies, in next month's *Compass*!



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Passages South to the Caribbean
A New Look at the Thornless Path

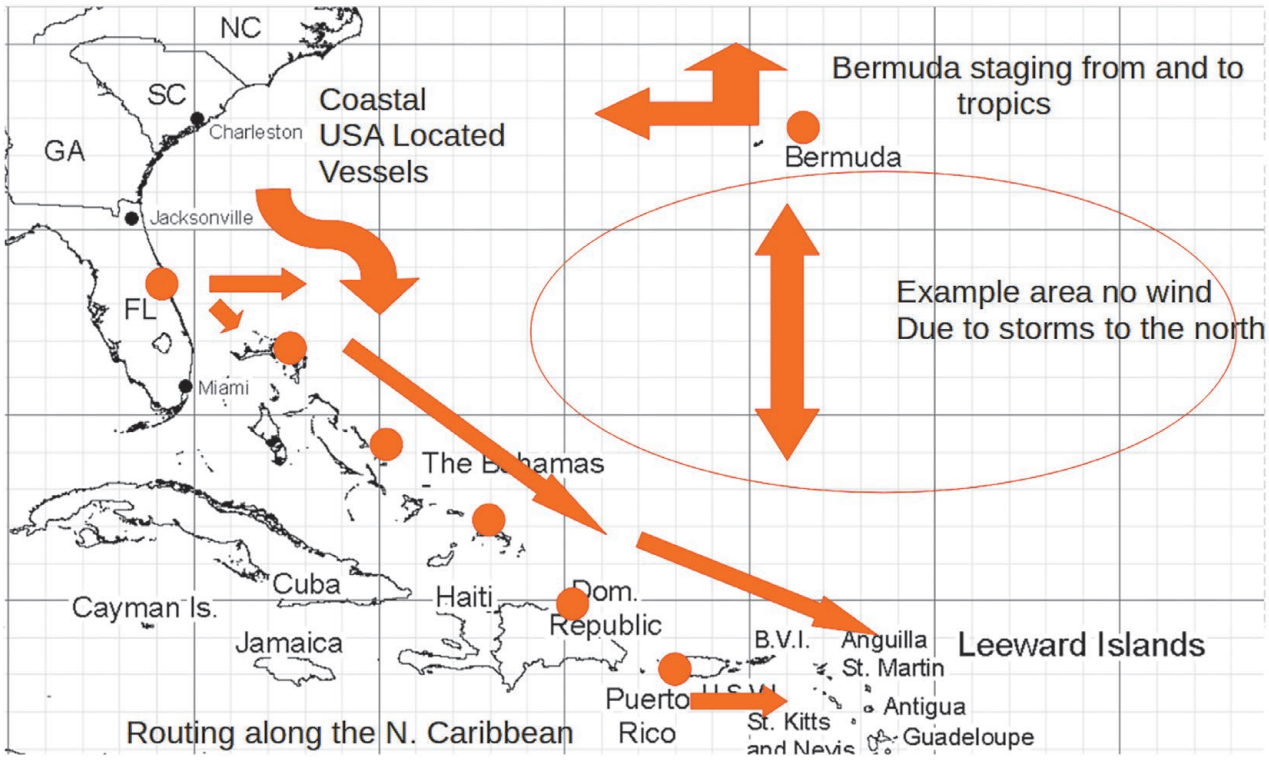
by Joan Conover

The offshore passage from the US East Coast to the Caribbean in the fall has always presented weather challenges, but they seem to be getting worse. This year's passage saw strong fronts exiting off Cape Hatteras and then large storms forming in the North Atlantic. Boats on passage directly to Antigua first experienced weather delays, then Hurricane Nicole visited the Bahamas, Florida and parts of the East Coast during the second week of November, and then there were big seas offshore. A crewmember on one large catamaran summed it up in one word: "rough!"

we get for her?" could be the dreaded words a spouse asks the captain on arrival in the first Caribbean port!

One example of staging for weather on this passage includes a Bermuda stop. Many cruisers who left from Newport, Rhode Island, and other northern ports in late 2022 made a stop at St. George's, Bermuda, and waited for favorable weather conditions before continuing, letting fronts pass while in safe harbor. (See "Sailing to the Caribbean: It's Not Always Easy, Especially This Past Fall" by David H. Lyman in last month's *Compass*.) This routing tactic should be considered earlier in the season (late October departure) and before the strong winter gales start. It not only breaks up a thousand-plus-mile sail, but also supports leaving during an optimum weather window.

A second suggestion for routing to the Caribbean is to use the 'Thornless Path" approach.



Above: Several routes from the US East Coast to the Caribbean were suggested by 2022's fall passages.

Below: Los Haiteses in the Dominican Republic provides good storm shelter on the Thornless Path.

Where is the Thornless Path?

Years ago a very experienced and respected sailor, Bruce Van Sant, wrote a book called *The Gentleman's Guide to Passages South*. In it he described what he called the "Thornless Path," a concept of routing from the eastern US to the Eastern Caribbean via short hops along the Bahamas and the northern Caribbean islands of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico. (Note that the yacht's return to the US in the spring can be the reverse process.) The last publication of this book (2017) is available on Amazon, but realize that stopping in Haiti is not currently recommended due to political unrest.

It is to Mr. Van Sant's to credit that we can suggest ways to bypass the difficult offshore weather patterns we are seeing in recent years.

During the 2022 storm season, first with Hurricane Fiona in mid-September, and then Hurricane Ian in late September, some northern Caribbean destinations on this path experienced storm damage. Fiona impacted the Dominican Republic's Samaná as a Category 1 hurricane, before taking a northwest track over the Turks & Caicos. Southern Puerto Rico, from the west coast to Salinas, suffered storm-surge and flood damage. Yet after the hurricane season ends, the route remains a good option.

—Continued on next page

Storm potential is increasing

Why are we seeing difficult weather patterns now? An unusual global weather phenomenon could be to blame. A major cause of severe weather issues is La Niña, part of the global relationship between water and atmospheric circulation systems. La Niña's hallmark is a large cold water ocean upwelling off the west coast of South America. La Niña is known to cause flooding in the west side of the Pacific, droughts in other areas such as the western USA and parts of Central America, as well as creating a more curved jet stream in the Northern Hemisphere. This increases the potential for storms and other weather abnormalities. This feature, which affects our weather, is currently going into its third year. There hasn't been a three-year La Niña since 1900. NOAA tells us that a continuing La Niña can increase wind speeds, with significant impacts.

Sailors will continue to face increasing weather challenges. Even when La Niña shifts to neutral as it cycles to El Niño, experts expect issues to remain due to climate change. Not the least of the issues is the changing policy coverage by insurance companies, reflecting offshore damage in storms.

For routes to the Caribbean, vessels should expect an offshore passage to be more difficult. Any boat en route directly from the US East Coast to the Eastern Caribbean should be prepared for several instances of gale conditions with high wind and seas. This is not a passage for inexperienced captains or vessels that are designed and set up only for coastal sailing.

Cruisers should consider varying their passage route options based on the longer-range weather patterns. We may not know the exact science, but we all see the enhanced strong fronts and storms in the Atlantic. It does not seem like a vacation in paradise when captains are faced with major vessel repair costs on arrival, and/or the possible trauma an offshore storm can cause the crew. "How much can

PUERTO BAHIA SAMANA



—Continued from previous page

Cruisers who took the Thornless Path in 2022 reported passages without gales. A partially favorable wind and wave situation was due to a windless high-pressure area just south of the Bahamas caused by storms to the north. Due to light or reversed trade winds, boats could sail or motor-sail eastward along the northern Caribbean islands without beating into the easterly trades. This routing is definitely weather dependent. If there are trades blowing, shorter hops are recommended.

As changes in weather patterns increase, so do the need for updated guides, current port information and up-to-date marine navigation charts (sometimes for areas ignored for years). Government surveys have updated chart details in the Bahamas, Puerto Rico, the US and British Virgin Islands for either USA government charts or charts developed by British Admiralty Charts. But no government marine surveys have been done for the Dominican Republic since at least the 1990s. Many current commercial charts are dependent on old (1960-90) raster data with overlays. To help entry into harbors, local marinas are starting to digitize their entries and post these details on line on their websites (for example http://oceanworldmarina.com/MARINA-MAP.gif).

However, professionally collected underwater survey data, or at least survey data collected under specific guidelines — a costly project — is needed if the Dominican Republic hopes to increase boating traffic. Currently boats can use Navionics electric navigation charts on chart plotters. The data can utilize Navionics customer provided routes and sonar scans. Some open source chart plotters, such as OPENCPN, offer a map tile feature using Google Earth to create charts (useful if the water is clear).

In purchasing electronic charts for the northern Caribbean and Cuba in 2019 we discovered that the depth data was missing in critical regions. Also, harbor data was offset by metres for some areas of the DR coastline, and was non-existing for Cuba except for old raster datum. Bottom line: for some parts of the northern Caribbean such as the Dominican Republic, captains should realize that paper or electronic charts could be outdated and created without government-validated survey information.

Both Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic were featured in *Caribbean Compass* articles in 2021 (see "Sailing Eastward Along Puerto Rico's South Coast" on page 20 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/july21compass_online.pdf and "North Coast Ports of the Dominican Republic" on page 14 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/june21compass_online.pdf) with guidance on where to stop and how to sail eastward along both Puerto Rico's south coast and the northern coast of the DR. When added to *Passages South* routes, these articles suggest an easier way to reach the Eastern Caribbean, and even offer alternative places to anchor and enjoy for a week, month or season.

SSCA cruising hosts on the Path

The Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) is the world's largest association of cruising sailors. It has volunteer "cruising station hosts" in key locations worldwide. The SSCA recently added local cruising hosts along the northern Caribbean's Thornless Path as a complement to its host locations in the Eastern and southern Caribbean.

Going west to east, SSCA has new hosts in the Bahamas (Georgetown), the Dominican Republic (Luperón, Marina Puerto Bahia and Ocean World) and Puerto Rico. Western Puerto Rico has a new host, Dario Vissepo at Marina Pescaderia; his boat is in a slip there. Salinas, Puerto Rico, has an existing host, as does Vieques.

These hosts can provide information during a passage or on arrival. For example, the Dominican Republic hosts, led by Regional Host Denise Simpson, kept cruisers informed about weather systems during the past summer and fall. We followed Denise's suggestion to stay in Luperón for Hurricane Fiona, and she reported hourly from her boat about the conditions there. She also provided details for several other locations, especially the mangrove areas used as hurricane holes by locals, as well as both pre- and post-storm details covering the northern coastline of the island.

Now the DR hosts are starting to provide port guides for the northern coast. This additional written local knowledge comprises Facebook posts and written port guides being published internally as SSCA Cruisers' Bulletin documents. SSCA is developing this local host input into a more formal guide. There is even a new app for despacho automation for those cruisers in the DR with a 'navigational' permit.

See more information on the SSCA and its cruising station hosts at www.ssca.org.

All in all, it looks like a good time to take a new look at a Bermuda stop or a Thornless Path hop when looking at passage routes from the US to the Caribbean.

Joan Conover is the president of the Seven Seas Cruising Association.



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DESTINATIONS: GOTTA GO TO GUATE!

by JoAnne and Bill Harris

Where do we begin? We arrived in Guatemala aboard our trimaran, *Ultra*, for the first time almost ten years ago. We organized several cruiser activities in Mario's Marina during our hurricane season there. We then left *Ultra* in the marina for three months, while we crewed aboard a sailboat in Turkey and Greece.

We flew back, sailed *Ultra* down to Panama and spent several years there exploring all over Panama and Colombia. We crewed aboard other boats, including sailing to the Galápagos. We returned to Guatemala briefly and then sailed onward to Belize and the Bay Islands of Honduras.



There is so much to explore along the Rio Dulce.

We must confess that the first two times we visited the Rio Dulce we did not like it as much as we do now. It is now much cleaner and a lot more developed. Upon our return we discovered new restaurants, mini-malls, hardware stores, chandleries, pharmacies, shops, supermarkets, and so much more.

Guatemala is located just south of Mexico and Belize. It is a wonderful melting pot of cultures including Garifuna, many Mayan groups, Spanish, and expats from around the globe. We have found while living here in Guatemala that the people are very resourceful, helpful and friendly.

Hurricane season

When we cruised through the Rio Dulce for our fourth season recently, we were in awe: the stunning beauty of majestic jungles, gorgeous canyons and abundant wildlife surrounded us. Yet, with a growing variety of businesses catering to the marine industry, it is a great place to get boat work done. There are several canvas and sail-repair shops, woodworking and fiberglass shops, marine chandleries, haulout facilities, and more. All this makes Rio Dulce a wonderful place to spend the hurricane season.

For the last two hurricane seasons we have stayed in the brilliant Nanajuana Rio Dulce Hotel & Marina. With more than 12 acres of lush manicured gardens, a boatyard, chandlery, restaurant, swimming pool and bar/café in addition to the hotel and marina, it makes for resort-style living in paradise. The property is full of wildlife including owls, parrots, toucans, various songbirds, iguanas, squirrels, howler monkeys, coatimundis, butterflies and opossums. We wish to give a big shout to our fun friend, Edgar, the seasoned dockmaster, who speaks four languages. He is always polite, completely competent and safety conscious.

Making a wonderfully eclectic mix, Nanajuana Marina hosts boat owners from at least 30 different countries at any given time. This multi-cultural feel adds another element of charm, and many holidays are celebrated and shared.

There are several other marinas up and down the river to select from, offering a variety of amenities and services. The marinas on the Rio Dulce offer great places to get boat work done, take inland trips, interact with local communities, and just have fun, all while being in an area safe from hurricanes.

Building cruiser camaraderie

It is important to us that wherever we travel, we always build a place of great cruiser camaraderie where everyone can make great memories.

Upon our arrival in Nanajuana Marina in 2021, we resumed instructing yoga and extreme fitness classes, as well as hosting Wednesday Movie Night and an All-Day Massage Day when cruisers could reserve hour-long massages. A few days later, we started the popular Friday Night Cruisers' Barbecue and Potluck.

In 2022, we resumed the same activities, continued the tradition of an epic Halloween Party, and planned a fun Thanksgiving Dinner potluck for 65 cruisers to enjoy. Four turkeys were cooked!

On November 20th, 2022, we participated in representing Nanajuana Marina in the First Annual MTB Rio Dulce 42K bike marathon. This was our first time in an organized distance bike event. At 6:00AM we were up and ready to ride to the meeting point, along with friends Paul and Sabina of S/V *Chat Eau*. Leo and Cisa of S/V *Poroto* met us there. We intrepid sailors biked up and down mountains, through muddy pastures and along slippery gravel roads, sometimes in full-on downpours. At the finish all the participants met at the Castillo de San Felipe, a Spanish colonial fort built in 1644, to receive medals, cold drinks and lunch. Then it was another 7K ride back to the marina, a total of 50K in one day for six sets of sea legs!

—Continued on page 23



Sailors participating in a bike marathon stretched their sea legs and received medals.



Upon arrival in Nanajuana Marina in 2021, JoAnne (back row, center) resumed instructing yoga.



A meal with friends from around the globe. Many different holidays are celebrated and shared.

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Giving back, spreading joy

There is so much need everywhere, so wherever we travel, we always try to help as many people as we can.

Here in Rio Dulce, we have continued to spread joy with the help of many amazing cruiser volunteers that have donated funds, goods or their precious time to our Ultra Community Projects.

Recently a crew that had been following our work for some time asked to film our projects as part of a UNESCO World Heritage film project. Along with us, they visited the homes of Guatemalan families and local school in need of a new playground and bathrooms.

We then hosted a children's Art Day where the children performed a wonderful song and dance routine before beginning their creative drawing fun. In addition to art and school supplies, Ultra Community Projects donated a speaker with two microphones (that doubles as a karaoke machine) to the school.

While writing this article, we are preparing for the first cruisers' event that the Cayena Restaurant has ever done, and also their first-ever Margarita Monday event. We are also planning a huge fundraiser complete with silent auction, raffle and door prizes collected from local businesses — all to raise funds for our Ultra Community Projects that help local families in need and help clean up the environment.

Explore More

There is so much to explore along the Rio Dulce as well as inland. There are amazing day trips that whisk you away to hot waterfalls and hot springs, and hikes that take you through the jungle to the Seven Altars waterfalls and other natural wonders.

There are longer trips inland that take you to the mountains, volcanoes, city life, ancient ruins, and lots more to explore. Last season, we stayed at a hotel in quaint Isla Flores and our wonderful guide, José, took us in a collectivo van to Tikal for the day. There we explored Tikal National Park, full of magnificent Mayan ruins. The next day we went with a guide to a cave sacred to the Mayan people.



We have found that people here are very resourceful, helpful and friendly.

It is extremely convenient to leave your boat in one of the marinas and explore via the bus, taxi or rental car. In Guatemala City, you'll find a bustling city full of everything under the sun including fine dining, posh hotels, countless malls and an international airport. There are also the beautiful areas of Antigua, Lake Panajachel and Lake Atitlan, with great bird watching and volcanoes to hike. If you wish for more adventure, there is also Semuc Champey Nature Preserve, which consists of several clear freshwater pools to enjoy as well camping, hotels, tubing, hiking, and cave exploring. Seacacar is another site not to be missed for hiking, tubing, caves and canoeing. If you are looking for adventure, you gotta go to Guate!

We hope you get the opportunity to sail to the Rio Dulce and spend some time there.

JoAnne and Bill Harris are the Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) Cruising Hosts and the Ocean Cruising Club Port Officers for Honduras, including the Bay Islands. Their cruising station is located at the Roatan Yacht Club Marina, French Harbour, Roatan, Honduras. The Harris's Ultra Community Projects help to give back to the local communities and they also help organize SSCA Clean Wake Projects.

See their You Tube channel, yacht ultra adventures Bill and JoAnne.



Ultra Community Projects often help local homeowners with repairs and improvements.

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PART TWO: INSTALLATION OVERVIEW

by Keith Dickey and Rebecca Frontz

How do two 30-something-year-olds convert a 43-year-old sailboat to electrical propulsion and then beat nearly 5,000 nautical miles eastward in the Caribbean?

There is nothing easy about repowering a boat, let alone an old one, but add an electric motor and it feels increasingly overwhelming. The layout of a traditional sailboat is not intended for an electric motor, of course, and the systems are not compatible. It is not simply a plug-and-play situation or a swap like-for-like affair — but it is achievable. While every person and boat would encounter different challenges, we hope that sharing our experience in detail might help someone plan for their own electric conversion.

Out with the old

As described in our initial article, "5,000 Nautical Miles Against the Trades with an Electric Motor" in last month's publication, our 1979 sloop-rigged Pearson 424 came with its original reverse-mounted 60hp Westerbeke and V-drive. Once we determined it was time to repower, regardless of what would be installed in its place, we needed to get the ol' leaky diesel out of the boat. With the crane at the shipyard being expensive and charging by the half hour, we prepped *Vagari* while she was still docked in her marina slip to save time and, therefore, money. We disconnected all electrical components to the diesel engine and loosened all bolts holding it in place. A three-quarter-inch double-braided line was wrapped around the engine with a shackle placed at the top.

We then called for a tow to the shipyard across the channel in Kemah, Texas. In an effort to keep expenses as low as possible, the goal was to spend 30 minutes or less at the shipyard's work dock using the crane. We requested that the tow stay on standby to move us from the work dock as soon as possible once the old engine was



We needed to get the ol' leaky diesel out of the boat.

out. We also asked a friend of a friend, who was a contractor, to stand watch, as the shipyard required this. A nice bottle of rum was accepted as payment for his time.

We advertised the 40-something-year-old diesel for free online if you could be present with a truck at the shipyard at the time it was lifted off the boat. This meant the engine went straight from the boat to the truck without touching the ground, keeping the time the crane was in use to a minimum. Luckily, we had a taker.

With *Vagari* at the work dock and the crane lowered, we attached the crane's chain to the engine via the shackle on the rope. The engine was carefully lifted through our aft companionway with absolutely no spare clearance on any side. With it tilted just right, it slipped through without having to remove any of the beautiful teak trim of the companionway. The Pearson boatbuilders in Rhode Island in the 1970s either



Above: The former diesel space being cleaned for new batteries.

Below: A custom coupler was machined and support struts installed.



planned this perfectly or it was sheer luck. Either way, we felt fortunate. Our bimini was already folded back to allow for easy movement once it squeezed through the narrowest part. With the Westerbeke removed, the tow pulled us from the dock right at the 30-minute mark and moved us back across the channel to our marina slip engineless. Once back in the slip, we removed the old V-drive. This proved to be a much easier feat, as it was much smaller and did not require a crane.

Preparing for the change

With the diesel long gone, it was time to plan the installation of the 20kW Electric Yacht motor. The motor consists of two 10kW motors stacked together working in unison to rotate two pulleys that then spin a one-inch shaft. The one-inch electric motor shaft would then directly connect via a coupling system to the existing one-and-a-half-inch propeller shaft.

The first step was dry fitting the electric motor into the old V-drive compartment under the aft cabin sole. We decided it would be a tight fit, but doable without any large modifications. We first built struts for support and to serve as attachment points for the motor mounts. They were built out of three-inch by quarter-inch mild steel flat bar coated in an epoxy and then painted. We were comfortable using mild steel, as this is an area of the boat that, by necessity, is dry, given that it houses an electric motor.

While building the struts, we had a custom coupler machined. At the time, the electric motor shaft terminated below the aft motor, only providing two inches of vertical clearance. This meant a typical Buck Algonquin coupler with a four-inch flange could not be used. Importantly, our motor is designed to shut down if it experiences markedly increased torque (e.g. from a fouled prop), and we did not take this into consideration when designing our initial coupling system. We would painfully learn that our custom-built coupler, which lasted four years, would fail us and this whole process of connecting the electric motor shaft to the boat shaft would need to be redesigned. As it happened, this occurred at what was likely the most inopportune location of all our cruising. Perhaps, we shall delve into that in more detail at a later date. Suffice it to say, our recommendation is to discuss the aspect of shaft coupling with the motor manufacturer to ensure your coupler can withstand the force needed to allow for the electrical motor over-torque protection to activate.

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In with the new!

Once the struts were built and the coupler machined, we placed the electric motor into the old V-drive compartment. Before securing it, we tightened the coupler to align the two shafts and we then adjusted the motor mounts and bolted them down. This order of operations allowed us to precisely align the shafts while in the water without any special equipment.



Each 10kW motor came with its own "computer," which is essentially a 48DCV to variable AC voltage inverter. We were able to mount them in the same old V-drive compartment. Once we studied the wiring diagram, we measured out the necessary length of 4/0 wire and acquired all the needed lugs. There was one problem. We did not have the tools needed to cut or crimp said thick wire. Thankfully, our local West Marine did and they graciously let us hang out in the store for an hour cutting and crimping. Voila!

Battery challenges

Our next big challenge was determining how best to power the motors — AGM versus LifePO4 batteries. The sheer weight of and physical space needed for AGM batteries to reach the amp-hour storage we wanted was extreme. Roughly, 400 usable amp-hours would have weighed approximately 2,000 pounds. Meanwhile, LiFePO4 batteries had their own challenges, the biggest being the cost. At the time that we needed the batteries, four years ago, each 48V 100Ah battery retailed for approximately US$5,000. Despite the hefty price tag, we decided LiFePO4 batteries were our best option and we were determined to decrease the cost by cutting out the middleman. We located a LiFePO4 battery manufacturer in China and researched the process for importing the batteries ourselves. We shared our motor specifications with the battery manufacturer to ensure the batteries and associated battery management systems (BMS) were appropriate for our motor needs. Acting as the importer of record and filing all your own paperwork is not for the faint of heart. However, we deemed the effort worth it as the total cost of our four 48v 100Ah batteries, shipping, and all other associated fees to import was approximately the cost of one and a half batteries in the States at the time.

Like many things, not everything has gone to plan pertaining to the batteries. We initially ordered three batteries from the manufacturer in China. Shortly after, we decided we wanted a fourth identical battery and had one shipped over. Unfortunately, our fourth battery never quite acted like the others. It seemed like it had fewer amp-hours, as the BMS would engage prematurely in comparison to our other three identical batteries. Over time, this issue worsened and we finally got to the bottom of it while out cruising. After some testing, we discovered one individual cell within the battery had gone bad. Interestingly, the difference between our first received shipment and the manufacturing of the second was the start of the Covid pandemic. We wonder if the pandemic affected the quality of the product as the manufacturer was shut down off and on or if it was simply bad luck. Either way, a learning point for us is, while we saved on cost, we forfeited having a usable warranty. In theory, the manufacturer offered a two-year warranty, but logistically working directly with an overseas manufacturing company during a pandemic to discuss next steps or a warranty proved to be impossible. We've made the best out of the situation and are actively converting the bad 48V 100Ah battery into a 12V 300Ah battery by rewiring the good cells and using a new 12V BMS. As a bonus, we have a couple spare cells and a spare BMS for our three other 48V batteries.

Trimming the boat

With the motor installed, the batteries obtained and secured in the old engine compartment, and the system wired, we were left with one big hurdle that we did not anticipate. The boat was now significantly bow-heavy.

When converting our system, we should have considered the weight difference when swapping from a half-ton diesel to an 80-pound electric motor. Furthermore, we considered the weight difference when choosing LiFePO4 versus AGM batteries in terms of moving the batteries around to install them and finding the physical room. However, we forgot to take into account how the overall weight change from one system to another would affect the boat. As mentioned in last month's article, we got a little creative. We cut out our forward water tank and turned it into storage. Additionally, the anchor chain on a Pearson 424 typically lives in a forward deck locker. We chose to extend the chain pipe through the deck locker into the locker at the foot of the V-berth and farther down into the forward section of the old water tank. This moved weight lower into the boat and slightly more aft. We also store heavy items in our cockpit lockers and installed our diesel generator in the aft cockpit locker. With all of these changes combined, we remedied our problem.

Left: Once the struts were built and the coupler machined, we placed the electric motor into the old V-drive compartment.

Below: We located a LiFePO4 manufacturer in China and imported the batteries ourselves.



Next: Charging

Even with all of this effort, we still had work to do. The system was in need of a way or multiple ways to charge our new battery bank. The charging setup has proved to be the most time consuming and expensive. There was plenty to learn and, after some trial and error, we are happy with our current system. Next time, we'll share the nuances and our learning regarding this. If you have any questions or are interested in a more detailed discussion, email us at sail.vagari@gmail.com.

CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Historic Steps for Small Island States

Stakeholders from Caribbean small island developing states (SIDS) have welcomed the decision to establish a loss and damage response fund from November's United Nations Climate Conference (COP27) in Egypt.

"We have literally exhausted all of our efforts... to bring home the climate action commitments our vulnerable people desperately need," said the Hon. Minister Molwyn Joseph of Antigua & Barbuda, chair of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS).

AOSIS has represented the interests of some 39 SIDS and low-lying coastal developing states for more than two decades in climate negotiations and sustainable development processes.

Labeled a breakthrough decision, the agreement to establish a loss and damage fund forms a part of a package of decisions from the international negotiations. It follows years of deliberations on the call for financial support to help developing countries respond to climate-related impacts, including livelihoods loss, and the addition of loss and damage to the COP agenda for the first time.

However, even as stakeholders celebrate, they are mindful of the work ahead to operationalize the fund.

Executive Director (ED) of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, Dr. Colin Young, said while the hard fought-for loss and damage decision was certainly welcomed, it is now time to ensure the fund becomes operational and benefits SIDS and other developing countries.

"The details will need to be worked out; the criteria established and the sources identified. The design of the fund must be fit for purpose and not repeat the mistakes of other funds that are very difficult to access and take years," said the ED, who was in Egypt from November 6th to 18th for the UN Climate Talks.

Meanwhile, the co-chairs of the Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (COSIS) submitted a request for an advisory opinion to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) on the obligation of States under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Antigua & Barbuda's Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, and his Tuvalu counterpart, Kausea Natano, filed the request as part of the efforts to protect and preserve the marine environment in relation to climate change impacts, including ocean warming, sea level rise, and ocean acidification.

"This is a historic step for small island states, to invoke international law in the effort to ensure that the major polluters take their obligations seriously, to prevent harm to vulnerable states or to compensate them for damage. Our peoples are already feeling the catastrophic consequences of climate change. We cannot continue business as usual," said Prime Minister Browne.

Prime Minister Natano remarked, "If humankind does not act with urgency, some of the island nations will disappear under the sea within a generation.

"Protection of the marine environment is a matter of survival. Greenhouse gas emissions should not be treated less seriously than other forms of pollution. If anything, they require even greater urgency and a commitment to respect existing principles of international law," he added.



PAUL TYLER

The breakthrough decision follows years spent deliberating financial support to help developing countries respond to climate-related impacts including livelihood loss.

The proceeding before ITLOS is the first interstate case addressing the international legal obligations of states with regard to climate change.

The request to ITLOS is complementary to and in support of the initiative of Vanuatu, to have the UN General Assembly request an advisory opinion on climate change from the International Court of Justice.

Informed sources told the Caribbean Media Corporation that it is anticipated that ITLOS will schedule the filing of written pleadings and a hearing in 2023, in which all State parties to UNCLOS as well as international organizations will be able to participate.

COSIS is assisted by a committee of legal experts consisting of 14 distinguished jurists from around the world. The current members are Antigua & Barbuda, Tuvalu, Palau, Niue, Vanuatu and St. Lucia.

For further information, contact indidlk@yahoo.com.

Garbage Removal Service at Chatham Bay

The Union Island Environmental Alliance (UIEA) has announced a partnership with Tenuta Chatham Bay Resort, with agreement with St Vincent & the Grenadines' Central Water & Sewage Authority, to deliver regular garbage removal from Chatham Bay, Union Island. Chatham Bay, despite its popularity with visiting yachts, formerly had no formalized garbage collection service. Thus, the waste built up over time in unsightly piles, blew through the forest, and attracted vermin.

A daily morning and late afternoon collection visit will be undertaken to the yachts anchored in the bay. In addition, vessels can hail the Tenuta Chatham Bay collection team on VHF Channel 69, or send a text WhatsApp on (784) 530-8805 to request collection. The message should contain the name of the vessel and a brief description (e.g. 50-foot white sailing sloop, blue awning), the approximate location in the bay (e.g. close to the beach at the north end) and the number of bags of garbage to collect.

A nominal fee of EC$15 or US$5 per bag will allow for the removal process to be financially sustainable. A receipt will be given as proof of payment. The garbage will be disposed of properly within the island's municipal refuse collection scheme. During the quieter summer months (June 1st to November 15th) collection will operate on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Yachts are asked to NOT bring bags of garbage ashore in Chatham Bay under any circumstances.

The UIEA in collaboration with Fauna & Flora International and the Forestry Department of the Government of SVG are presently executing the Union Island Climate Change Adaptation Project. Funded through the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, this project seeks to reduce the volumes of plastic and other pollution within Chatham Bay. The Chatham Bay watershed is listed as one of the Caribbean's key biodiversity areas by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, which cites it as being "wholly irreplaceable" due to the exceptional quality of the ecosystems within the bay and the high level of endangered endemic species that live there, including the rare Union Island Gecko.



KIM BALDWIN

Helping keep Chatham Bay beautiful, there is now a regular garbage-collection service from yachts.

For more information contact Katrina Coy at President. UIEA@gmail.com or by Tel/Whatsapp (784) 526-7457.

—Continued on next page

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Granulator for Non-Recyclable Plastic in Carriacou

Richard Laflamme reports: Carriacou's No-To-Single-Use association aims to make Carriacou free of waste plastic by 2025. The achievement of this goal will be partly fulfilled by granulating quantities of unrecyclable waste plastic to use in concrete blocks. The granulated plastic will be confined inside concrete for more than 100 years.

The group believes so much in waste-to-concrete sustainability that we contracted a loan of US$30,000 to purchase a heavy-duty plastic granulator. To pay back the loan, we need to collect 80,000 kilos of waste plastic within two years.

With the heavy-duty plastic granulator in place, we are working with the waste management authorities and the Ministry of the Environment to set up selective waste collection island-wide. Three EcoHouses made of waste-to-concrete blocks will be built this year. Kentisha Boatswain, Project and Communication Manager, will start awareness programs in all primary and secondary schools next September.

Launch of Sint Maarten Pelican Project

Enviromental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) has started a project to research the status and conservation of the Caribbean Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*) on Sint Maarten and promote conservation of the pelican through awareness raising and outreach activities. With the data collected, the long-term goal of this project is to improve management of natural resources for the preservation of biodiversity on Sint Maarten, particularly Sint Maarten's Brown Pelican population and associated habitats.

The Brown Pelican is a good indicator of general ecosystem health, and is a national symbol and appropriate mascot for nature and culture preservation. The largest pelican nesting colony is located at Fort Amsterdam, internationally recognized as an Important Bird Area and a site of historic significance.

Numbers are concerning. Brown Pelican numbers have declined in the last decade, and sightings of sick and dying birds are on the rise. The last assessment of nesting success of the colony at Fort Amsterdam by EPIC was ten years ago. During that time, the number of pelican nests showed a downward trend, with an 85 percent decline in breeding activity between 2000 and 2010. Typically, the female lays two to four eggs, while both the parents incubate the nest. Chicks can fly and fend for themselves after three months, but they need to be fed for eight to ten months.

The deteriorating numbers are suspected to be related to development and to potential botulism outbreaks. In addition, disturbance of the nesting colony is an ongoing threat and outreach efforts are needed to inform the public of best practices to reduce or eliminate disturbance, pollution, and development of sites, especially during the breeding season.

Research alone cannot conserve the pelican; everybody's help is needed. A Brown Pelican conservation manual will be drafted and provided to key decision-makers and educational signs will encourage best practices at the pelican nesting site. Businesses and tour operators with near shore activities will be contacted to encourage most appropriate actions to reduce disturbance and flushing of birds from nests. The project team is offering free presentations about pelicans to schools, community groups, and businesses. EPIC is also calling on all residents and tourists on Sint Maarten to report sightings of injured or dead pelicans, as part of important data collection.

Updates about this project and upcoming events can be found on EPIC's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/epicislands. For more information contact projects@epicislands.org.

Sea Turtle Presentations in Bonaire

If you're visiting Bonaire and would like to learn more about sea turtles, join Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire's bi-monthly presentation at Yellow Submarine on Kaya Playa Lechi 24. Every second and fourth Wednesday of the month, volunteers and staff talk about sea turtles and the work done to protect them. Entrance is free, but please bring cash if you'd like to purchase STCB merchandise.

Between January and April, STCB conducts transect-count (snorkel) surveys along the west coast of Bonaire and around Klein Bonaire. During these surveys, they count sea turtles, keystone species and fish schools. Each survey day, they conduct four surveys of one kilometre each. STCB is looking for volunteers who are on Bonaire during this time, are strong swimmers and enjoy snorkeling. If you would like to join in (preferably at least one day a week), contact www.bonaireturtles.org

St. Maarten Regatta Beach Clean-Up

The organizers of the St. Maarten Regatta are in full preparation for the Annual St. Maarten Regatta Beach Clean-Up. The Beach Clean-up will take place on February 11th, from 8.30AM till 12.30PM at Kim Sha Beach in Simpson Bay.

The aim of the Beach Clean-Up is to collect as much garbage as possible. The group that collects the most will win a prize.

The day will start with a presentation from the Nature Foundation, followed by the clean-up. At the end of the day there will be a quiz about this presentation that will allow the participants to win more prizes.

To close off the morning, there will be a variety of fun sport activities on the beach provided by Lab Sports Academy

For more information contact linda@smyc.com.



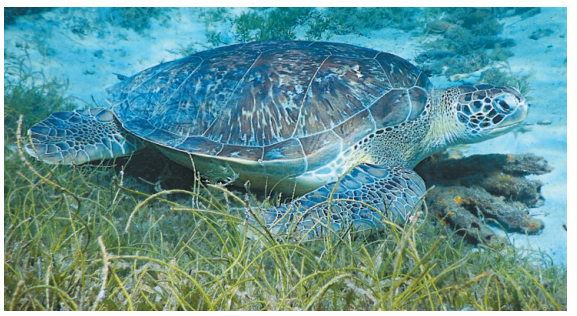
FILIPPO MILANI

An adult breeding Brown Pelican. Outreach efforts aim to inform the public of best practices to reduce or eliminate disturbance, pollution and development of breeding sites.

Caribbean Sea Turtle Hotlines

Have you ever found a sea turtle in distress? In busy anchorages they can get hit by the propellers of speeding boats. At sea they might become entangled in abandoned fishing gear. On sargassum-covered coastlines, hatchlings can get stranded.

What do you do? Who do you call to find out?



SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION BONAIRE

Sea turtle hotlines

With help from the WIDECAST Caribbean sea turtle network, marine biologist Emma Doyle has put together a new list of turtle hotlines in the Caribbean.

Antigua	(268) 736-8878
Aruba	(297) 592-9393
Barbados	(246) 230-0142
Bermuda	(441) 293-2727
Bonaire	(599) 780-0433
Curaçao	(599) 9664-7970
Grenada	(473) 534-4324
Mustique	(784) 532-3995
Nevis	(869) 669-4771
St. Croix	(340) 690-0474
St. Eustatius	(599) 318-2884
St. Kitts	(869) 764-6664
Trinidad & Tobago	(868) 481-4838

Sea turtle vets

We also have some trained sea turtle vets in the region:

Bermuda	Dr. Gaelle Roth
British Virgin Islands	Dr. Sarah Weston
Grenada	Dr. Kenrith Carter
St Barts and St Martin (France)	Dr. Claire Saladin

Emergency messages

You can also message WIDECAST's social media with any emergency cases:

www.facebook.com/widercaribbeanseaturtleconservationnetwork

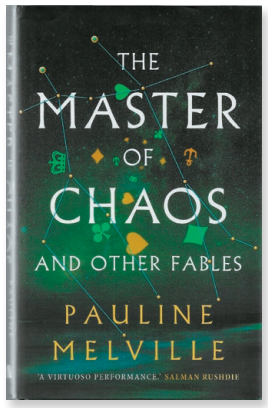
www.instagram.com/widecastseaturtles

For more information visit www.widecast.org

BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

A Book of Unique Fables

***The Master of Chaos and Other Fables**, by Pauline Melville, 2021, Sandstone Press Ltd., Scotland. ISBN: 978-1-913207-54-0. ISBNe: 978-1-913207-55-7.*



The writing of Guyanese author Pauline Melville flies off the pages and lands the readers of these short stories in surprising countries — from Argentina to Russia, from Suriname to Scotland, from London to an Amerindian community in Guyana, from an asylum to a waiting room in an unnamed city, and from the cliffs of Cornwall to the Syrian desert.

Melville's exceptional fables, ranging from the surreal to the paranormal, reveal either out-of-the-box thinking or extensive research, or both.

The 14 stories have intriguing names: "The Master of Chaos," "Fable of a Laureate," "Reason has its Limits," "Fable of a God Forgotten," "The Dostoyevsky House," "Fable of a Missing Word," "The Dream of Ocalan: A Fable," "Anna Karenina and Emma Bovary Discuss Their Suicides," "The Dark Photon," "A Fable of Tales Untold," "Let Me Out," "Morne Jaloux," "A Bright Yellow Bag," and "Singing in the Dark Times."

The first tale, "The Master of Chaos," touches us down in Guyana. The story's 15-year-old narrator, Guilford, returns to the nation's capital, Georgetown, with his parents. He tells us of bringing with them his gambling addicted grandfather's body, back from England to be buried in his homeland.

In "Fable of a Laureate," Noel Dunham, winner of a Nobel Prize for Literature, has a problem. He has writer's block. He looks through the telescope from the study of his house on the Cornish cliffs, and that's the day he decides to kill himself. But he struggles even to write an original suicide note.

When his housekeeper, Mrs. Edwards, comes to say goodbye, she says, "I'm just going to fly off. I'm away now." He thinks, "That would do. Simple. Direct. Touching on the Poetic. Minimally humorous. The problem was solved." But when he comes to pen Mrs. Edwards' words in his farewell note he finds he does not have an interesting and dramatic name like other Nobel Laureates: "Gabriel Garcia Márquez. Yasunari Kawabata. Svetlana Alexievich. Kazuo Ishiguro. Olga Tokarczuk." And "the pen hovered over the paper but seemed unable to make contact with it."

"Fable of a God Forgotten" is a story with nameless characters. A patient at a mental hospital launches a savage attack on a victim who for a few seconds experiences a strange epiphany. "One thing was certain. This god had nothing to do with love. More like Tlaloc the Aztec god with his lightning axe, or Zeus himself. Nor was there a sense of a god who wanted to be worshipped. No adoration required. Not even approval… What he expected was… a recognition of his existence…" Even the psychologists and psychiatrists going over the patients' files remain without names.

"Let Me Out" has an eerie feel. In this paranormal story, a nameless student who wants to purchase an Inter-rail ticket to Europe takes a job cleaning statues at a foundry. The first day on the job he arrives early and the only one in the foundry is a small, enigmatic, bright man with a sharp face dressed in old-fashioned black clothes.

"Ye just wash him down fust," the man instructs, "with a clean cloth… Like you might do a corpse, before ye lay it out." And on and on he goes with his instructions. When the boss comes in and finds that the student has already started work and knows what to do, he says, "Oh, you've met Ernie, have you? He's a bit of a joke here. He drops in now and then. Tells people what's what."

Ernie continues giving cleaning instructions, lectures "about the differences between marble and bronze statues," and other pieces of information.

The student takes him for either a janitor or watchman, but his function, both in the foundry and beyond, proves to a great deal more unusual.

In the surreal "Anna Karenina and Emma Bovary Discuss Their Suicides," Karenina and Bovary relive the happenings leading up to their tragic ends in a waiting room in an unnamed city that could well be purgatory, and discuss how the authors Tolstoy and Flaubert wrote about their deaths.

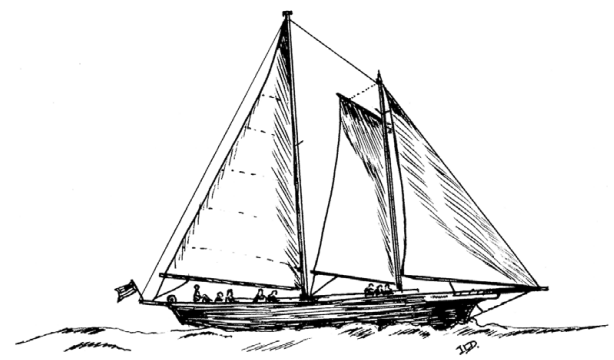
In *The Master of Chaos and other Fables* Melville has offered a treasure trove of unique gems for readers to cherish. "A virtuoso performance," says Salman Rushdie on the book's jacket cover.

Island Poets

ALWAYS A BIGGER BOAT

You come on deck
and run your eyes over
the sails furled, the flags flying,
the anchor rode responding rightly
to the wanton gusts of wind,
and you sit back remembering
how you tacked up the bay,
your mate handling the sheets,
performing splendidly,
and finding in the anchorage an open slot
headed into the wind and
let the anchor go,
the foresail backing her down,
watched by eyes delighted, approving …

You sit beside the wheel, pen in hand,
and take a long pull on your drink,
feeling like a million dollars,
then follow the eyes delighted, approving
or not, perhaps even envious,
to a ninety-foot Maxi sloop, black sails furled
after one race or another
in which it was victorious
(or at least vindicated),
its uniformed crew poised,
motoring to its reserved dock space,
its momentary place in the pride of yachts,
all those favored by Fortune
and not of yachts alone.
— *Richard Dey*



ISABEL DYER

PICK UP!

Ahoy, Compass Readers! When in Grenada, pick up your free monthly copy of the Caribbean Compass at any of these locations. (advertisers in this issue appear in **bold**):

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Island Water World
Port Louis Marina
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Clarkes Court Boatyard & Marina
North Yacht Shop
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Grenada Marine
Le Phare Bleu Marina
Nimrod's Bar
Secret Harbour Marina
Spice Island Marine
Turbulence Sails

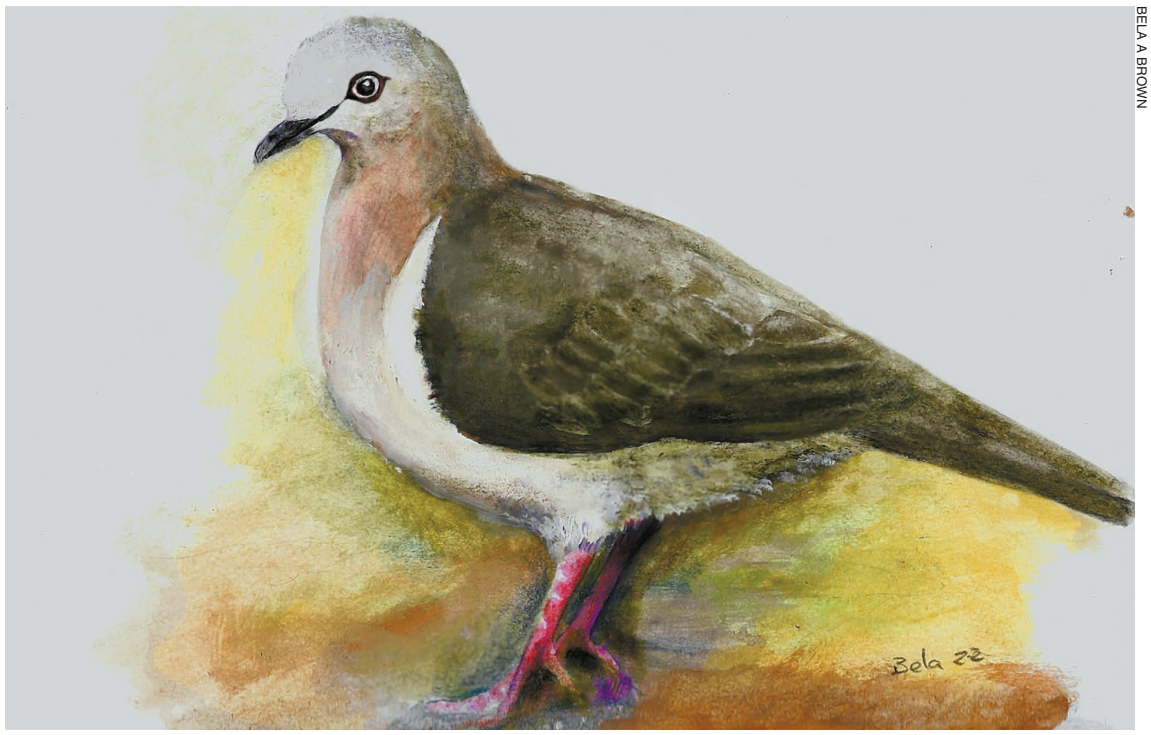




The Endangered Grenada Dove

Grenada, the southernmost of the Windward Islands, has a wide variety of habitat, ranging from lush, misty valleys and rainforest canopies in the interior, to mangrove forests, swamps and thorny scrubland near the coast. It is in the coastal woodlands that we find one of the rarest birds in the world — the highly elusive Grenada Dove *(Leptotila wellsi)*.

Originally known as the Pea Dove and Well's Dove, the Grenada Dove was first described in 1884 as a member of the genus Engyptila. Later, it was placed in the genus Leptotila, a group consisting of 11 species of ground foraging doves, found only in the Americas. Initially considered a conspecific (member of the same species) with the Grey-Fronted Dove *(Leptotila rufaxilla)* found in Trinidad and South America, it wasn't until 1988 that, using sonographic analyses, the Grenada Dove was officially established as a separate species.



Leptotila wellsi *is a delicate, medium-sized bird found only in Grenada.*

The Grenada Dove is a delicate, medium-sized bird found only in Grenada and easily distinguished from other doves on the island by its stout body, reddish-brown or olive mantle, white-greyish crown and forehead, light pinkish-cinnamon breast and neck, whitish belly and flanks and red covers around the eyes. The Grenada Dove is the national bird of Grenada and can be seen depicted in the national coat of arms alongside the armadillo.

Historically, this unique bird was recorded throughout the island's coastal forests, including offshore islands, but unfortunately for the dove, coastal lands are considered prime areas for agriculture and tourism development. Agriculture had a profound negative impact on its habitat, with the land being repeatedly cleared to make way for plantations and grazing, and more recently for urbanization and tourism developments.

Thought to be nearly extinct in the 1960s, the Grenada Dove is now listed as a critically endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, with its population estimated to be less than 160 individuals.

While until 1996, conservation efforts had been largely unsuccessful, the government of Grenada established Mt. Hartman Estate, previously a government-administered cattle farm and sugar plantation in the south of the island, as a National Park and protected area, along with the Perseverance Protected Area on the west coast, for the protection of the dove. Despite these protected areas covering only a small portion of the dove's territory, its numbers increased from an estimated 100 individuals in 1998 to 182 individuals in 2004.

Tragically, the passage of Hurricane Ivan that same year resulted in a dramatic population decline, particularly along the west coast, where the population of singing males dropped from 36 to 12. Today, what is left of the species is found mostly in the Mount Hartman and Clarkes Court Bay area. Nevertheless, the government has recently re-designated the Mount Hartman National Park boundaries to include only areas where the birds have been observed, thus allowing for parts of the Mount Hartman estate to be sold to developers. The construction of a resort and golf course is currently underway and is estimated to displace about six percent of the dove's population. Although the developers gave assurances that they would help preserve the adjacent dove sanctuary, the construction of roads and buildings in such close proximity to the reserve is predicted to further impact the dove's habitat.

As well as being among the rarest creatures on the planet, Grenada Doves are shy creatures, rarely observed. They tend to hide in the newly formed vegetation cover that emerges from heavily grazed and intensively farmed land. They favour woodland with a dense canopy of up to eight metres high, consisting of small trees, such as Acacia and white Indigo Berry *(Randia mitis)*, as well as emerging trees, such West Indian birch *(Bursera simaruba)* and Mother of Cocoa *(Glivicidia)*. Like all members of the genus Leptotila, Grenada Doves feed mostly on the ground, either alone or in pairs. The species consumes a varied diet of fallen fruit, including papaya, as well as seeds, grubs, insects and caterpillars. They almost always feed among the trees, occasionally near the edge of clearings, but never outside the forest boundaries, or above the forest canopy.

If you've spent time anchored in the Mount Hartman and Clarkes Court Bay area, there is a good probability that you have heard a male's sorrowful cooing drifting across the quiet bay during the breeding season. The call is a single, descending-note *hooo*, given every five to eight seconds.

Grenada Doves breed between December and July. While there is no data available on the species' breeding behaviour, individuals have been observed fighting on the forest floor, indicating that males are territorial.

Only one active Grenada Dove nest has been studied. It was a fragile structure of sticks lined with rootlets, found on a palm, about four metres from the ground, and contained two small, white eggs. Incubating birds are easily flushed and will abandon the nest when disturbed by flying to the ground and walking away. Grenada Doves appear to spend much of their time walking on the ground, making them easy prey for introduced predators, such as rats and mongoose. In fact, flight has only been observed in short bursts, from the ground to a tree, from perch to perch and from perch to ground.

So, next time you visit Mount Hartman and Clarkes Court Bay, listen carefully for the very soft, low-pitched *hoo* — a sound reminiscent of the wind blowing across the top of an open bottle. You can also take a stroll along the dusty trails to try catch sight of these lovely doves, but remember that they are endangered. As exciting as it is to glimpse one of the rarest birds in the world, be sure to remain at a distance so as to not disturb these unique creatures!

Read in
Next Month's
Compass:

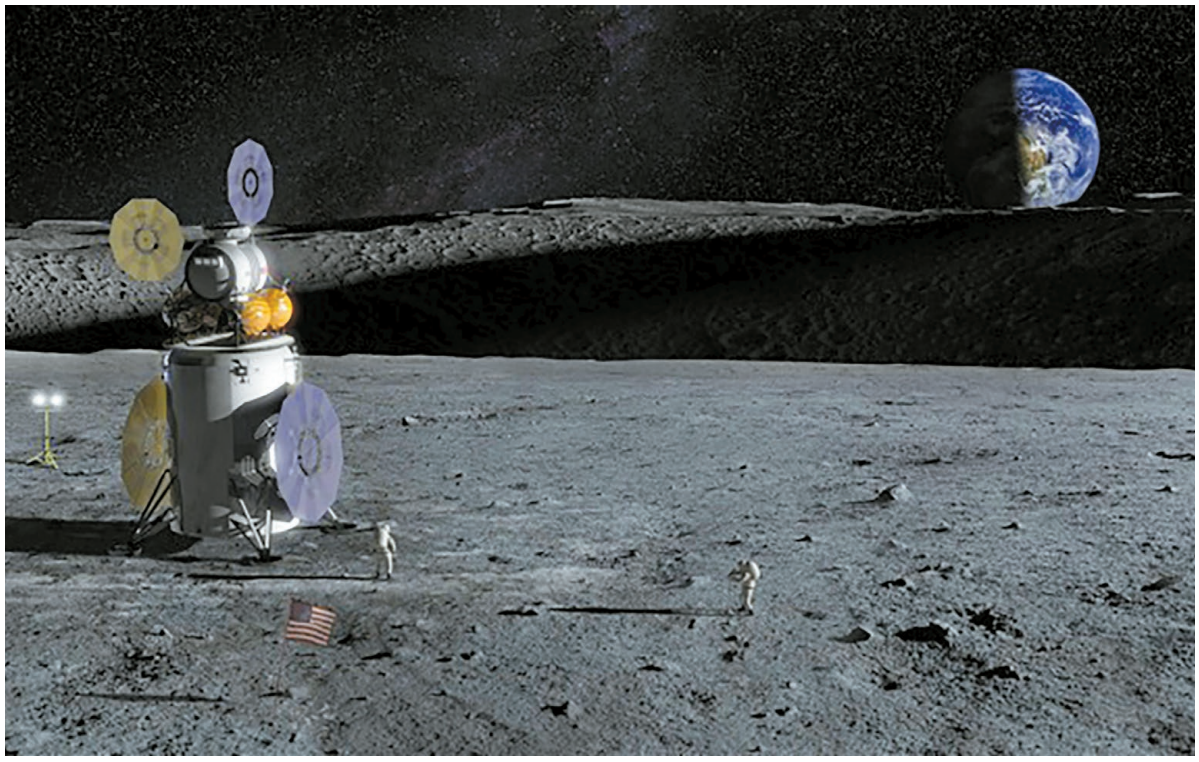
Sea Turtles and Cruisers
ARC and ARC+ Rally Reports
Battery Charging with Electric Motor
… and much, much more.

Don't miss it!



THE SKY FROM MID-JANUARY TO MID-FEBRUARY

by Jim Ulik



Many countries are positioning themselves for a Moonbase near the lunar south pole.

The race to put man on the Moon, build a base and acquire its natural resources is moving forward. The unmanned *Artemis 1* mission is complete. The manned *Artemis 2* is projected to launch in May 2024. *Artemis 3* will put astronauts on the Moon's south pole in 2025. If the schedule holds it will put NASA on the Moon's south pole ahead of China. China's plan is to have a lunar scientific research station completed by 2028 located at the Moon's south pole. The pressure is on to get to the south pole first. Why land at the poles? The lunar poles combined have over 600 billion kilograms of water ice. The water can be used for drinking or turned into rocket fuel. Germany and India are also planning missions to the Moon and the Soviets might also have a presence there.

Will asteroids be redirected to impact the Moon to collect their mineral wealth? It might be easier to collect minerals on the Moon rather than excavate separate asteroids. Better watch out for the impact debris ejected back to space. What is not left in the Moon's orbit might be headed towards Earth.

Governments are heading to the Moon first and using it as a way station for future Mars exploration. NASA's plan was to send a mission to Mars in 2033 but that most likely won't occur earlier than 2037. In reality it might not happen until the 2040s. Wouldn't it be nice if Space X would rocket to Mars by their planned date of 2024?

Wednesday, January 18th

The Moon is illuminated about 17 percent this morning. Before sunrise, Antares can be found positioned south of the sliver Moon in the east southeastern sky.

Thursday, January 19th

The Đ-Ursae Minorid meteor shower will be active from January 15th to January 25th, producing its peak rate of meteors this morning. This variable shower can produce up to 50 meteors per hour. Look for shooting stars radiating out of the northern sky around 0500hours.

Friday, January 20th

Another early morning event is the close approach between the Moon and Mercury. The waning crescent Moon will rise about 15 minutes after Mercury. The pair is best viewed after 0530 until sunrise.

Saturday, January 21st

The New Moon will be located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun. This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere.

Sunday, January 22nd

The Moon is one day past its new phase and barely visible above the western horizon after sunset. A few degrees above the horizon you will find a meeting between Venus and Saturn. They will almost appear to touch unless viewed through binoculars. This pair can be seen in the west for about one and one-half hours after sunset. The brighter object high in the western sky is Jupiter.

Monday, January 23rd

Throughout the day the Moon has slipped by Venus and Saturn. Its eastward movement places the Moon above Venus and Saturn. Venus now resides above Saturn as it begins to shift east of Mercury.

Wednesday, January 25th

The Moon and Jupiter will make a close approach tonight. Looking through binoculars you may see three of Jupiter's moons Ganymede, Callisto and Europa.

Saturday, January 28th

The Moon will pass first quarter phase, appearing prominent in the evening sky and setting after midnight around 0040 on January 29th.

Sunday, January 29th

Pleiades, or Seven Sisters, will appear a little dimmer this evening. The bright Moon will gradually move in, dimming the cluster of stars as all approach the western horizon.

—Continued on next page



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Don't worry we're here for you! At Gonsalves Liquors you'll find all that you need. We have the widest selection of wines, spirits and liqueurs in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. We're just a phone call away!

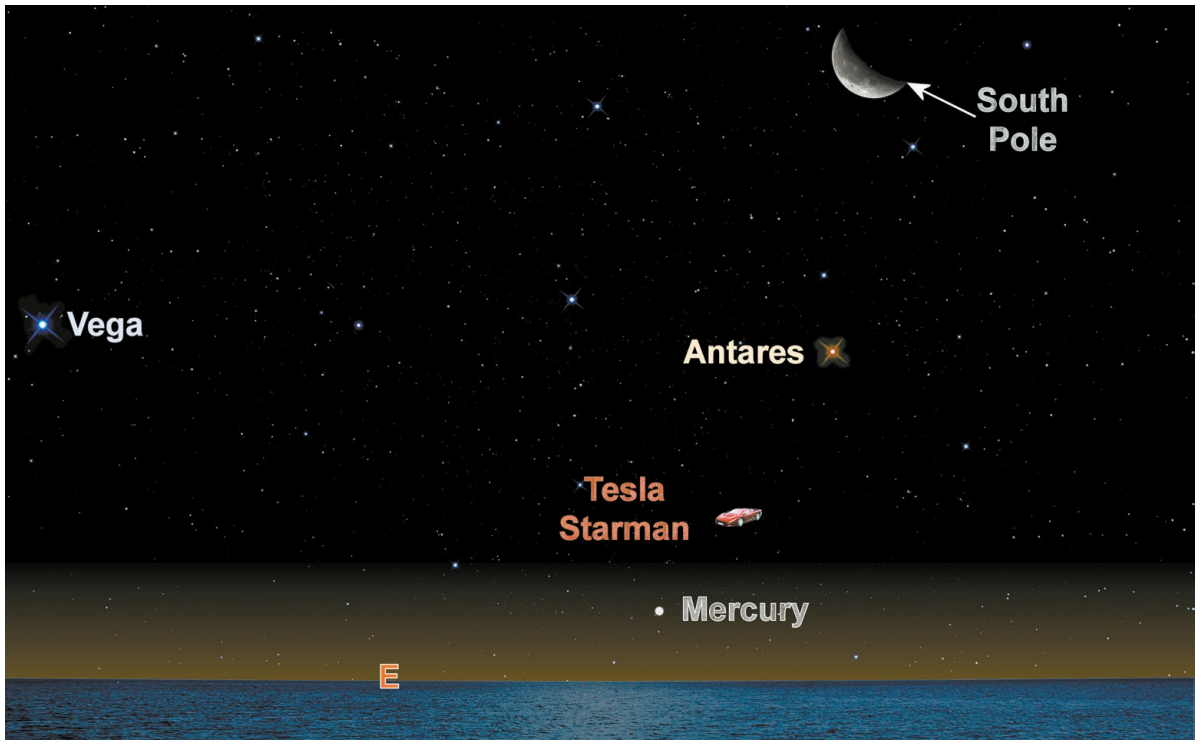
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—Continued from previous page



Above: The Moon, Mercury and the current location of the Tesla Roadster and Starman on January 16th.

Below: Comet 2022 E3 reaches its brightest on February 1st.



Monday, January 30th

Mercury will reach its greatest western elongation or greatest separation from the Sun today. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the morning sky.

Tonight, the Moon will gradually close in on Mars. It will become more apparent on January 31st after midnight and over the next two hours. The Moon will eventually occult or block the view of Mars as they reach the horizon. Mars will disappear behind the un-illuminated side of the Moon and slowly reappear from behind the illuminated side of the Moon.

Wednesday, February 1st

Comet C/2022 E3 (ZTF) is forecast to reach its brightest and its closest approach to Earth. Around 2100 the comet will be located about half the distance between the Moon and true north. Comet C/2022 E3 (ZTF) is a long-period comet because it takes more than 200 years to complete its orbit of the Sun.

Friday, February 3rd

From west to east Saturn, Venus, Jupiter and Mars line up along the ecliptic or path of the Sun. Further east finds the Moon alongside Pollux in the constellation Gemini.

Saturday, February 4th

The Moon will pass overhead in the constellation Cancer near the Beehive Cluster. The Moon is at apogee, the furthest point along its orbit to the Earth. It will appear slightly smaller than usual.

Sunday, February 5th

Tonight the Full Moon will illuminate the night sky. It will be visible for much of the night, rising at around dusk and setting at around dawn. In two days, the Moon will be at its farthest distance from the Sun.

Wednesday, February 8th

The radiant of the alpha Centaurids meteor shower is located low in the southern sky. This is a variable shower that can produce up to 20 meteors per hour. The farther south you are located in the Caribbean the more shooting stars can be seen. The best time for viewing is at 0400. The shower is active January 28th through February 21st.

Saturday, February 11th

There is a close approach between Spica and the Moon tonight. Spica can be found a few degrees south of the Moon.

Monday, February 13th

The Moon will pass the Last Quarter phase. Look for the Moon to rise in the middle of the night and appearing prominent in the pre-dawn sky.

Tuesday, February 14th

The Moon will be caught in the claws of Scorpius tonight. Off the illuminated side of the Moon is the red supergiant double star Antares, “the heart of the scorpion.”

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Time Out Boat Yard Saint Martin

Next to the French Bridge

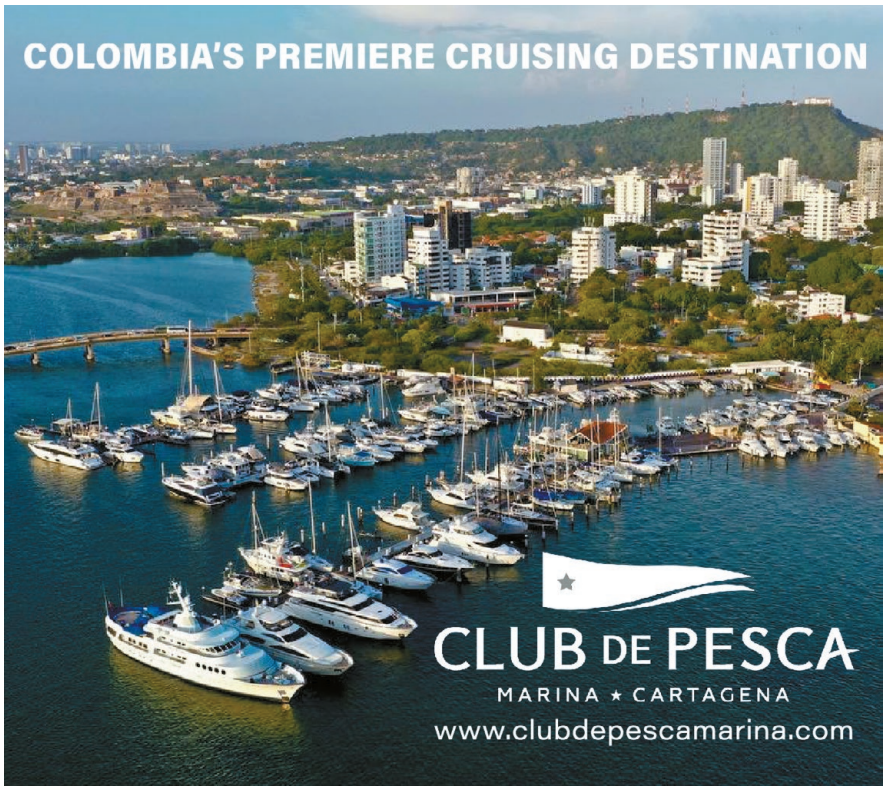


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THE SLOW AND STEADY SEA SNAILS

by Darelle Snyman

The unique sea snails are most often recognized by their hard outer shells, which come in an endless variety of shapes, sizes and colors.

If you are like me, you will know the temptation to pick up every beautiful shell you encounter as you stroll along the seashore. But how often do we think about the slimy, soft-bodied little creature that once called that shell, which we admire so much, home?

Sea snails belong to the most diverse and abundant class of mollusks, the Gastropoda, which includes more than 65,000 living snail and slug species — a staggering number of species only beaten by insects. These snails are important members of the marine ecosystem, where they are a food source for many other forms of marine life. The herbivores among them help keep algae levels down. Their discarded shells become valuable shelters for a variety of animals, notably hermit crabs.

The slow-moving, well-hidden sea snails are not the easiest of animals to locate in the vast underwater world. The following species represent a ridiculously small fraction of the species you are likely to encounter in your underwater forays.



The mature Queen Conch's shell has a broad, flared outer lip that is glossy pink or orange on the interior.

The Queen Conch

When it comes to these slimy Caribbean residents, none are as iconic as the Queen Conch (*Aliger gigas*). This aptly named sea snail has been part of Caribbean culture for millennia and archaeological evidence dating back approximately 2,000 to 3,000 years indicates the utilization of their clearly versatile shells as building material and to make cooking pots, cups, fish hooks, knives, chisels and more.

Today its shell remains a prominent sight throughout the Caribbean, as a decoration or a souvenir or discarded in heaps after the precious meat has been removed.

The meat is the base for many famous dishes and its continued demand has resulted in a dramatic decline in conch numbers throughout its range, a problem compounded by the shrinking of seagrass beds, its preferred habitat.

These snails also produce another sought after item: they can make pearls in their shells. The Queen Conch is one of the few conch species able to produce commercial quality pearls, which makes them very rare and sought after items. These hidden gems vary across several shades of dark pink, salmon, gold, orange and brown.

The striking shell of this prized snail is characterized by knob-like spines at the apex and a broad, flared outer lip that is glossy pink or orange on the interior. If you ever handled a Queen Conch shell that has been out of the water for a while you might have noticed the surface of the shell flaking off. This is the periostracum, a brown, papery layer that covers the shell protecting it from corrosion. It also collects silt, bacteria, and algae, which helps to camouflage the living animal.

The Queen Conch is a long-lived, slow growing species that takes between three and five years to reach maturity. At this stage its shell has reached its maximum length of up to one foot (30.5 centimetres) and bears the characteristic flared lip that is absent in the juveniles. For the remainder of its life the conch will continue to add to the thickness of its shell, and the thicker the flare, the older it is. The thickened shell provides the adult conch valuable protection against a variety of natural predators that find its meat just as delicious as humans do. The thickened shell, however, is no match for nurse sharks. Nurse sharks have the unique ability to create enough pressure to suck the living conch right out of its shell, quite an amazing feat.

Like most shelled snails, the Queen Conch also has an operculum attached at to the end of its foot. This covers the shell opening when it retreats into its calcium carbonate home. In the case of the Queen Conch its operculum is claw-like in shape and helps to propel the conch forward in a somewhat ungainly way. It is definitely a treat to watch the Queen Conch in motion. To achieve forward motion they plant their operculum on the substrate and then push off like a pole-vaulter, causing the shell to rise and then be thrown forward in a jerky motion. It might not be graceful but does the job as it allows them to graze over 400 feet of seagrass. The operculum also functions as a lever to righten the conch should it find itself in the undignified position of being upside down.

(For more information about the Queen Conch, see "Save the Queen? The Iconic Caribbean Conch" by Ralph Trout on page 30 in the May/June 2022 issue of Compass *at www.caribbeancompass.com, Back Issues Archive.)*

The True Tulip

A spindle-shaped sea snail that shares the sand flats and seagrass beds with the Queen Conch, especially where turtle grass (*Thalassia testudinum*) is present, is the True Tulip (*Fasciolaria tulipa*). This beautiful snail is, however, not the most welcome of neighbors, as it is a voracious predator of bivalves and various other snails, including the Queen Conch.

It in turn is preyed upon by a variety of its own kind as well as crabs, stingrays, sea stars, and bony fishes. Like many of its other family members it retreats into the safety of its shell when threatened, using its hard operculum to completely seal the shell opening. This feisty snail is also known to thrash its muscular foot around to escape from a predator's grasp.

Their beautiful shells, which vary greatly in color, can reach sizes of up to 25 centimetres (ten inches).

The True Tulip's most distinctive feature, apart from shape, is the thin dark stripes that spiral along the whorls of the shell. Their mantle, if you are lucky enough to see it, is pink with white speckles.

These snails reproduce sexually via copulation and have impressive stamina, having been observed to stay attached for as long as two hours and to mate as many as three times a week. Egg clusters are attached to hard surfaces. Unlike most gastropods, the young of Tulip snails do not undergo a planktonic stage but instead emerge as miniature versions of the adult.

—Continued on next page



The spindle-shaped True Tulip snail inhabits sand flats and seagrass beds.

—Continued from previous page



A Greek god of the sea, Triton, is often portrayed blowing a large seashell horn that resembles this species.

The Atlantic Triton's Trumpet

The tastes of the Atlantic Triton's Trumpet (*Charonia variegata*), another predatory snail, extend more towards invertebrates even slower than itself, namely the echinoderms, especially sea urchins and cushion sea stars. This slow-motion hunter finds its prey by smell and when it encounters a cushion sea star it will flip it over, using its serrated radula (a minutely toothed, chitinous ribbon used for feeding) to saw through its victim's protective armor as it subdues the fallen prey with paralyzing saliva. After eating, it merely spits out the unpalatable parts such as spines and pieces of shell.

The most distinctive feature of the Atlantic Triton's shell is the elongated, sharply pointed spire that contributed to these creatures being named after the Greek god Triton, the son of Poseidon, the god of the sea. Images often portray the god Triton blowing a large seashell horn that resembles this species. The mottled shell, which varies from shades of creamy white to yellow with brown markings, is a true beauty and prized by shell collectors. On the underside, the lip of the shell is lined with distinctive bands that alternate in cream and brown.

These Tritons flourish in a wide variety of marine habitats, but are most often found hidden under overhangs and in crevices.

The West Indian Top Shell

Most marine snails, however, prefer an algae-based diet. Another common herbivorous sea snail, and one that is also a popular food item in the Caribbean, is the West Indian Top Shell *(Cittarium pica)*. Its marbled, black-and-white shell has also earned it the name Magpie Shell, and among Caribbean locals they are known as wilks.



Discarded West Indian Top Shells are favorite homes for Hermit Crabs.

They are the only living species in their genus and their popularity as a seafood delicacy is in league with contenders such as the Queen Conch and the Spiny Lobster *(Panulirus argus)*. Over-harvesting has seen their numbers dwindle and in places such as Bermuda they have become locally extinct.

It is not always easy to spot these critters underwater as these hardy snails prefer rocky inshore areas with wave action. They blend in well with their rocky environment, where they feed, primarily at night, on a wide variety of algae and sometimes detritus. They are not delicate in their feeding habits and the scraping action of their serrated radula to remove algae off the substrate can actually lead to erosion over time.

These snails have no problem sharing their shell home with other organisms and the small Black-Rib Limpet (Lottia leucopleura) can often be found attached to the underside of their shells.

Once the Top Shells are empty, these heavy shells are sought-after homes for island land crabs, especially the large Hermit Crab *(Coenobita clypeatus)*. In the photo you can see one of these large hermit crabs protruding from its somewhat battered West Indian Top Shell home.

I hope you enjoyed this small peek into the lives of these few Caribbean residents that, at first glance, might not appear very exciting until you start delving deeper into their life histories.

LOOK OUT FOR...

THE CANDLE STICK PLANT

by Lynn Kaak

Every month in the Caribbean there's something special to look out for.

Senna alata is one of those plants that just gets around. Native to the tropical Americas, it has made its home everywhere it could drop its seeds in some receptive soil and not freeze to death. It is SO widespread now, there are some public websites explaining how best to eradicate it. However, with lots of competition in the Caribbean, and other plants used to its pushiness, it is less of a problem here and can be enjoyed as an ornamental.

The names Candle Stick Plant, Candle Bush, Candelabra, Empress Candle and variations on that theme all stem from the same feature of the plant, the eye-catching fluorescence (flowering body) of the plant. The bright yellow flowers bloom from phallic shaped protuberances at the top of the plant. These growths can be as long as 25 centimetres (11 inches).

The flowers themselves are small, but the colourful bracts are the standouts. Because the bracts last far longer than the flowers that are nestled within them, the Candle Stick Plant remains pleasant to look at for a long period of time. This is one of the reasons that they are sought after for their ornamental value.

The flowers are popular with bees, making bees the most common pollinator of these bright bloomers.



Look for Candle Sticks as garden escapees by the side of the road.

The plant, or shrub, will grow to a height of three to four metres (ten to 13 feet) if given the chance, but half that height seems more common in this region. The branches are green, supporting very large leaves that are 30 to 60 centimetres (one to two feet) in length. The leaves are actually made up of smaller leaflets, paired up along the leaf stem.

The pinnacle that holds the flowers eventually becomes the seedpod, with about 50 seeds produced by each one. The seeds have little membranous wings on them, helping them to disperse widely.

While they are appreciated for their ornamental value (when they aren't being invasive), Candle Stick Plants are also cultivated for their medicinal value. One of their common names is the Ringworm Plant, as the plant has very strong antifungal properties and is used for treating ringworm and other fungal infections.

Another advantage to having them as an ornamental plant in the Caribbean is that since livestock don't tend to have them on the menu, the neighbour's goats are less likely to eat some of your garden.

The Candle Stick Plant is often found in places that get seasonal flooding, as they don't mind getting wet feet. They thrive in roadside ditches, on the edge of cultivated land, in disturbed land, and pretty much anywhere they can become in-fill where it might be a little too damp for some of the other plants that also rejuvenate disturbed soil.

Look for them in gardens, as escapees by the side of the road, in slightly swampy places, and at the edge of wild areas.

Potluck Party Packs

by Mary Heckrotte

Thank goodness I'm a cruiser since, I confess, I love potlucks. Not that potlucks never happen to Dirt Dwellers, but they surely don't happen as often as they do when two or more liveaboard boats share a dock or an anchorage. Whether it's just happy hour or a full-fledged potluck dinner, I love preparing only one dish and ending up enjoying a full array of palate-pleasing variety. I love all the creative ways folks can combine everyday food items to produce something entirely different from the same old same-old I always fix. I love the laughter and sharing stories and exchanging ideas. And now, thanks to my friend Stacy, when anyone says "potluck," my potluck pack is packed, and my pot carrier just waiting for its pot.

Stacy McCampbell introduced me to a potluck pack when we first met in the Aves Islands, just off the coast of Venezuela. We sailed in to anchor next to a little island where thousands of booby birds nested in mangroves and spectacular reefs surrounded our boats. Our friends Kathy and Jack Grafius, on *S/V Dream*, were with us and they knew Stacy and her husband, Dave McCampbell, from *S/V Soggy Paws*, the only other boat in the anchorage. Anchors secured, the guys went off hunting and gathering and returned before noon with a great haul of conchs. Kathy invited everyone over to *Dream* for fresh fried conch. "Bring a dish to share," she said, five little words that precede many an evening of joy.

Carl and I arrived first. I had baked onion-parmesan focaccia on my baking stone. After covering the bread with foil, I put the stone on a wooden trivet, and then wrapped the whole affair in a big green bath towel. Carl climbed aboard *Dream* first and I passed up our potluck contribution and then handed him a plastic grocery bag containing jumbled utensils and plastic plates for the two of us. We were just settling the focaccia, still inelegantly wrapped in its towel, on *Dream's* cockpit table when Stacy and Dave came alongside. While Dave tied off their dinghy, Stacy daintily stepped aboard *Dream*. On her shoulder hung a gray canvas bag and in her left hand she clutched a gray canvas carrier by its little dowel handles.

Kathy made introductions as Stacy sat her carrier on the table. I watched in fascination as she rolled down the carrier's canvas flaps to reveal a beautiful bowl of cheerfully layered red and green vegetable salad with a container of her homemade poppy seed dressing. Then Stacy opened her gray shoulder bag and extracted glass dinner plates, silverware, a chilled bottle of wine and real glass wineglasses for herself and Dave. Whoa, now! Is this a class act or what?!

Barely finished saying hello, I asked Stacy, "Where did you find that carrier and bag?"

"Oh, I made them," Stacy said. "Some of the cruisers in Trinidad were making the carriers and I just traced the pattern. I'll give you a copy if you want one. The bag I just made up myself from some canvas scraps left over from our sail cover."

And that was the beginning of one those special and wonderful friendships that happen to cruisers. Sadly, we parted company with *Dream*, which was heading back east. We were delighted, though, that our *Camryka* and *Soggy Paws* were both heading westward and we soon became buddy boats. For the next year and a half, we sailed, snorkeled reefs, commiserated over repairs, played in the mud at a Colombian volcano, paddled up jungle rivers, shopped, and shared meals and happy hours in ports in Colombia, Panama, Honduras, and all the way to the Rio Dulce in Guatemala.

True to her word, Stacy gave me the potluck pot carrier pattern. But even nicer than that, she made me two carriers for my birthday. She used printed denim on the outside and a lighter-weight printed 100-percent cotton to line the inside. Since then I've made a couple of dozen pot carriers to give as gifts and to sell at flea markets.

Any stout washable cotton cloth can be used for pot carriers including denim, terrycloth, broad cloth, or quilted cotton. Removable handles can be made from half-inch wooden dowels. (The handles look nicer and are kinder to your hands if you sand and varnish or paint them.) For carrying very hot pots, a wooden or other trivet can slip in an opening between the two layers of the carrier. The carrier folds for easy storage and, handles removed, can be tossed in a washing machine.

Stacy's idea of having a potluck pack is also handy. Having gear pre-packed saves time when getting ready for a spur-of-the-minute get-together and also saves having to make a run back to the boat for some forgotten item. In *Camryka's* potluck pack, we not only have plates, eating utensils, and wineglasses for the two of us, we also have salt and pepper shakers, a corkscrew, knife, and serving spoons. Two cloth placemats wrap around our wineglasses to protect them from bumps, and matching cloth napkins are layered between the plates. In a side pocket, I tuck a flashlight in case we are out after dark, and a small container of bug repellent, for which many a cruiser has been grateful. A small, insulated cooler, just large enough to keep a bottle of wine or a couple of beers cool, also fits snugly inside.

Though Stacy sewed her own bag, a small backpack also makes a perfect potluck pack. To pad the inside, cut two half-inch-thick pieces of foam rubber to fit, and cover them, pillowcase-style, with washable fabric. Put wrapped dishes, glasses, and utensils inside one two-gallon plastic Zip-loc bag and everything else in another. Insert these between the foam layers. A plastic grocery bag tucked in serves for the dirty dishes when the feasting is complete. Back aboard, as soon as the dishes are washed and dried, they go right back in their Zip-loc, a clean grocery bag folded alongside, and we're ready to potluck party again!

Although *Soggy Paws* and *Camryka* ultimately steered different courses, I don't ever go to a potluck without thinking about my friend Stacy who showed me how to have a little potluck class.

This article first appeared in the June 2004 issue of Compass.

LOULOUNE



CALENDAR

JANUARY 2023

1	Public holiday or 'recovery day' in many places (New Year's Day)
1	Annual Festival Parade in Montserrat. Facebook.com/MontserratArtsCouncil
6	FULL MOON
6	Public holiday in some places (Three Kings Day/Epiphany)
6	Viking Explorers rally departs from Canary Islands bound for Grenada. www.vikingexplorersrally.com
7	Start of World ARC, St. Lucia – Colombia leg. www.worldcruising.com
8	RORC Transatlantic Race departs Canary Islands bound for Grenada. http://rorctransatlantic.rorc.org
14	Grant Thornton Multiclass Regatta, St. Maarten. www.smyc.com
14	Latitude 18 Halyard Challenge Race, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org
14 – 15	Martin Luther King Regatta, St. Thomas. https://stthomasyachtclub.org/sailing/regattas/mlk-regatta
14 – 22	Barbados Sailing Week. www.roundbarbados.com and see ad on page 9
16	Public holiday in Puerto Rico & USVI (Martin Luther King Day)
20 – 22	Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta, Cabarete, Dominican Republic. www.caribwind.com
21	Public holiday in Barbados (Errol Barrow Day) and in the Dominican Republic (Our Lady of Altagracia)
21 – 23	Pineapple Cup Race, Miami to Montego Bay. www.pineapplecup.com
22 – 28	Martinique Cata Raid. https://martiniquecataraid.com
25	Public holiday in Aruba (GF Croes Day), in Cuba (Birthday of José Martí) and in Cayman Islands (National Heroes' Day)
25 – Feb 8	Mustique Blues Festival. https://basilsbar.com/mustique-blues-festival
26	Public holiday in Dominican Republic (Duarte Day)
28 – Feb 4	Manhattan Caribbean Week, BVI. https://myc.org/cruising/caribbean-week
29 – Feb 3	Grenada Sailing Week. www.grenadasailingweek.com
TBA	St. Barts Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org/festival
TBA	Halyard Challenge Race, Tortola. regattas@royalbviyc.org

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)

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

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 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.

JANUARY 2023

DATE	TIME	
1	2002	
2	2048	
3	2137	
4	2228	
5	2319	
6	0000	FULL MOON
7	0011	
8	0100	
9	0148	
10	0233	
11	0316	
12	0358	
13	0439	
14	0520	
15	0603	
16	0649	
17	0740	
18	0837	
19	0939	
20	1046	
21	1153	
22	1257	
23	1356	
24	1450	
25	1540	
26	1627	
27	1713	
28	1759	
29	1846	
30	1934	
31	2024	

February 2023

1	2115	
2	2206	
3	2257	
4	2345	
5	0000	FULL MOON
6	0031	
7	0115	
8	0157	
9	0238	
10	0319	
11	0401	
12	0445	
13	0532	
14	0625	
15	0723	
16	0825	
17	0930	
18	1034	
19	1136	
20	1233	
21	1325	
22	1415	
23	1503	
24	1551	
25	1639	
26	1728	
27	1818	
28	1910	

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The Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association through grant from the Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Program has put in place a formal marine garbage collection and disposal system in the marine park to protect the marine environment from the amount of garbage entering the sea.

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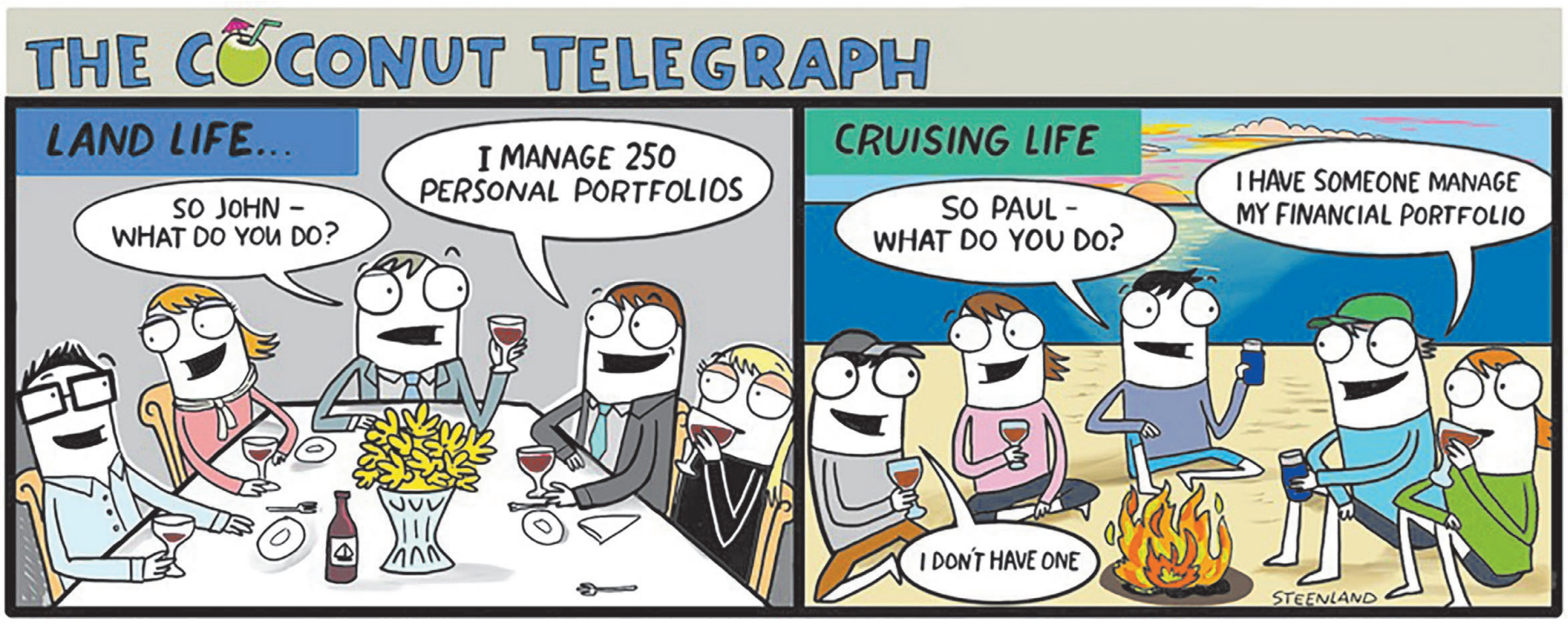


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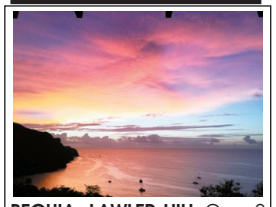


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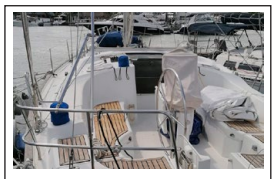


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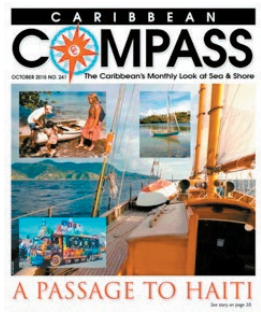
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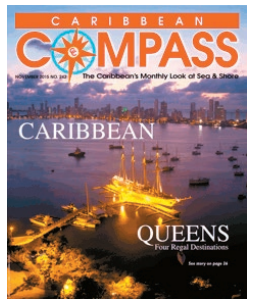
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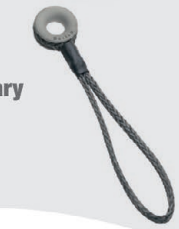
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