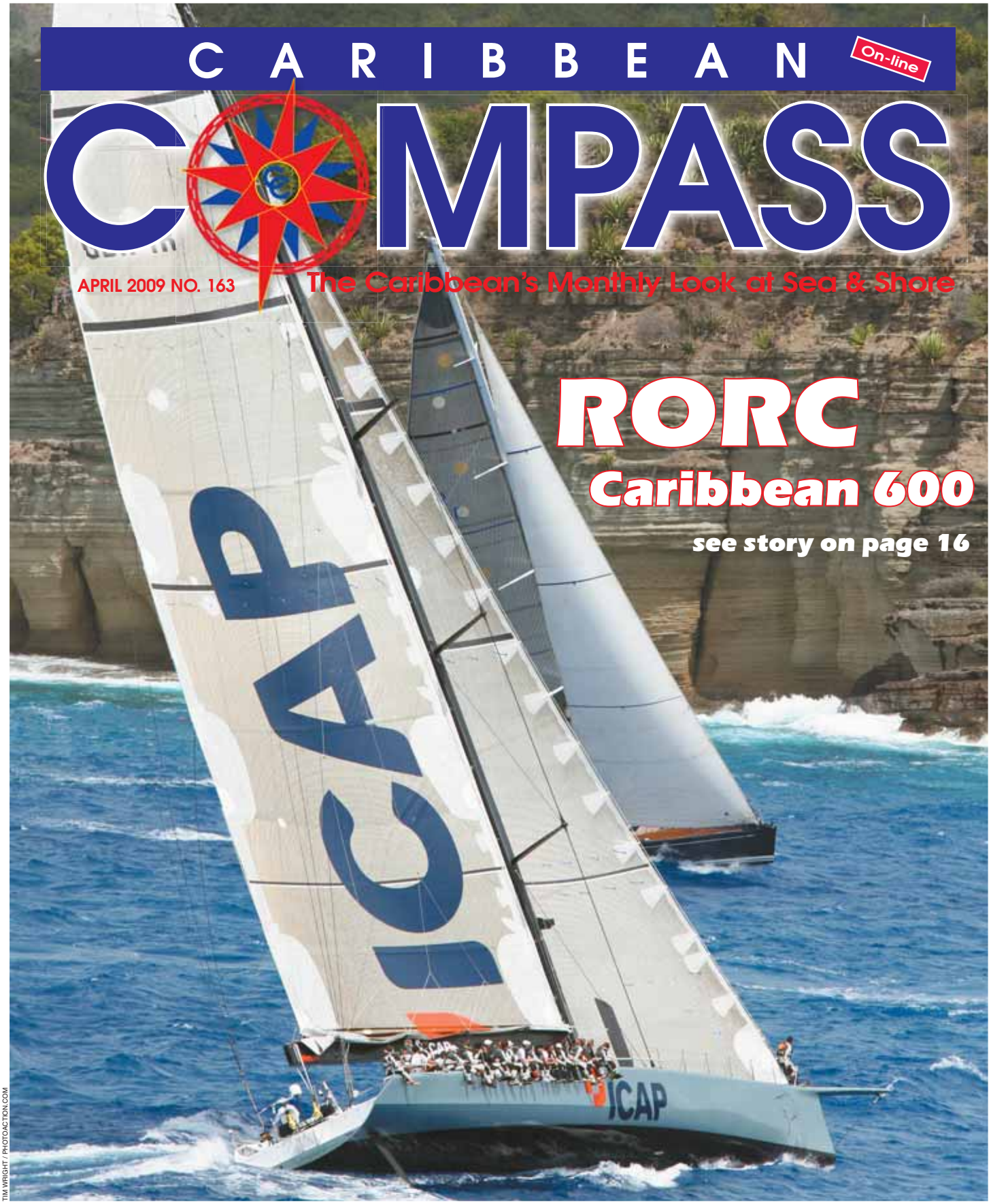
CARIBBEAN COMPASS
On-line
APRIL 2009 NO. 163
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



RORC Caribbean 600

see story on page 16

TIM WRIGHT / PHOTOACTION.COM



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SAFETY

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ICOM FLOATING RADIO
ICO/M34



A radio that can really survive a dunking, drop it in the water and it pops right back up again.
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PLASTIMO FIRE BLANKETS
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Complies with BS EN 1869 standard (Kite Mark).

Size of blanket: 1m x 1m.

Material is continuous filament glass cloth.

Size of container: 30 x 16 x 4 cm.

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FORESPAR FLOATING STROBE LIGHT
FSP/205102



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When equipped with an alkaline battery it will flash at the rate required by the US Coast Guard for 52 hours.

After that it will flash at least every two seconds for about seven days!

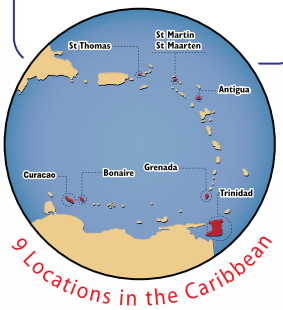
With stainless steel mounting bracket.

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DIV/EF6



2-LED Headlight
Features and Benefits:

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Wilsons' Cruzan Canvas
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St. Lucia
The Sail Loft, St. Lucia
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Trinidad & Tobago
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Chaguaramas

CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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APRIL 2009 • NUMBER 163



WILFRED DEDERER

Local Boats Battle
in Grenada and Tobago .. 11, 12

High Wind Heineken
Force 6 in St. Maarten 19



JACK FOARD

Blissful Bonaire
The ice cream island..... 22

'Stuck' in Grenada
What's bad about happy? 24



ELLEN SANPERE

Crabby People
St. Croix's got 'em!..... 30

A Cruiser Copes
Medical emergency in Mexico..35

DEPARTMENTS

Business Briefs 8	Dolly's Deep Secrets 34
Regatta News..... 20	Cooking with Cruisers 36
Street's Secrets..... 26	Book Reviews..... 38
Cruising Crossword..... 32	Readers' Forum..... 40
Word Search Puzzle..... 32	What's on My Mind..... 42
Island Poets..... 33	Meridian Passage..... 42
Sailors' Horoscope..... 33	Caribbean Market Place..... 44
Cartoons..... 33	Classified Ads 47
Cruising Kids' Corner..... 34	Advertisers' Index..... 47

Caribbean Compass is published monthly by Compass Publishing Ltd., P.O. Box 175 BQ, Bequia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
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See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

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ISSN 1605 - 1998

CALENDAR

APRIL

4 - 28 10th Transcaraibes Rally, Guadeloupe to Cuba. www.transcaraibes.com
9 FULL MOON
9 Holy Thursday. Public holiday in USVI
9 - 13 Bequia Easter Regatta. www.begos.com/easterregatta
9 - 13 Easterval, Union Island, St. Vincent Grenadines. melissaj@vincysurf.com
10 Good Friday. Public holiday in many places
12 Easter Sunday
13 Easter Monday. Public holiday in many places
14 Pan-American Day. Public holiday in Haiti
15 – 19 St. Croix Food and Wine Experience. www.ATasteofStCroix.com
16 - 21 Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. *See ad on page 14*
16 - 3 May St. Maarten Carnival. www.stmaartencarnival.com
18 – 19 Celebrations Trophy Regatta, Guadeloupe. www.triskellcup.com
19 Declaration of Independence Day. Public holiday in Venezuela
20 José de Diego Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
21 – 30 Marlin Madness Tournament, Trinidad & Tobago. www.ttgfa.com/home.html
22 Earth Day
24 Guadeloupe to Antigua Race. www.sailingweek.com
24 - 26 Curaçao International Kite Festival. www.curacaokites.com
25 - 30 14th St. Barth Film Festival. www.st-barths.com/film-festival
26 - May 2 42nd Antigua Sailing Week. www.sailingweek.com
28 National Heroes Day. Public holiday in Barbados
30 Queen's Birthday. Public holiday in Dutch islands

MAY

1 May Day/Labour Day. Public holiday in many places
1 Ascension Day. Public holiday in some French and Dutch islands
1 – 3 Ethnik Festival, Marie-Galante (concerts, films, free camping). latitude21prod@yahoo.fr
1 – 4 West Indies Regatta, St. Barts. *See ad in Market Place section*
1 - 10 St. Lucia Jazz Festival. www.stluciajazz.org
3 West Marine Atlantic Cup sets sail from Tortola, BVI to Bermuda. www.carib1500.com
4 Bank holiday (Labour Day celebrated). Public holiday in many places
5 World Environment Day
5 Youman Nabi. Public holiday in Guyana
7 ARC Europe sets sail from Nanny Cay, BVI, to Portugal. www.worldcruising.com/arceurope
8 Armistice Day. Public holiday in French West Indies
9 FULL MOON
9 Anguilla Sailing Festival. www.anguillaregatta.com
10 – 15 Mount Gay Boatyard Regatta, Barbados. info@sailbarbados.com
16 – 17 Capt. Oliver's Regatta, St. Maarten
18 Public holiday in Cayman Islands (Discovery Day) and Haiti (Flag Day)
20 Independence Day. Public holiday in Cuba
20 - 24 Round Guadeloupe Race. www.triskellcup.com
21 Ascension Day. Public holiday in Haiti and Dutch and French islands
21 - 23 Combat de Coques Regatta, Martinique. Club Nautique du Marin (Martinique). tel (596) 74 92 48, fax (596) 74 62 02, club-nautique-du-marin@wanadoo.fr
22 Emancipation Day. Public holiday in Martinique
22 - 23 35th Annual Foxy's Wooden Boat Regatta, Jost Van Dyke, WEYC
22 – 24 Vela Cup Race, Puerto Rico. www.puertoricovelacup.com
22 – 24 St. Lucia to Martinique Race (to be confirmed). St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), tel (758) 452-8350, secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
23 Labour Day. Public holiday in Jamaica
23 - 30 Curaçao Dive Festival. www.curacaodive.com
23 - 25 BVI Music Festival. www.bvimusicfest.net
24 Public holiday in Haiti (Mother's Day) and Bermuda (Bermuda Day)
25 Memorial Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
26 Public holiday in Turks & Caicos (National Heroes Day)
27 Abolition Day. Public holiday in Guadeloupe
28 – 1 June Canouan Regatta. Canouan Sailing Club (784) 458-8197
30 Public holiday in Anguilla (Anguilla Day) and Trinidad & Tobago (Indian Arrival Day)
30 – 31 Yole (sailing canoe) Races, Martinique. www.yoles-rondes.org
30 – 31 Martinique to St. Lucia Race. YCM
30 – 1 June 5th Zoo Regatta, Gosier, Guadeloupe. www.zoo-regatta.com
31 Pentecost. Public holiday in Bonaire

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 would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

Cover Photo: Tim Wright, start of Caribbean 600 Race

Info & Updates

Guadeloupe Strike Ends

After 44 days, union leaders in Guadeloupe called off an island-wide strike on March 5th after most of their demands were met, including raising some workers' pay and lowering the price of gasoline. Negotiations continued regarding other demands, such as lowering prices on 54 basic products. The strike had paralyzed the island's economy since it began in late January. Martinique's nearly month-long strike, held simultaneously and for similar reasons, has also ended. Businesses on both islands report "everything is back to normal".

Antigua Improves Yachting Security

John Duffy reports: Since the shooting death of mega-yacht skipper Drew Gollan during an apparent mugging attempt in January, measures have been put in place to increase security in the English Harbour and Falmouth areas of Antigua.

Even very minor changes are making a difference. National Parks has been clearing away overhanging trees and bushes from the roadside, which reduces hiding places for criminals. Street lighting has been improved in the darker areas of the harbours and also around Pigeon Beach, a yachties' favourite within walking distance of the harbours.

The biggest change has been in the police presence. The number of police stationed in the Dockyard Police Station has increased by about 50 percent. The senior police officer for the area has been moved from the All Saints Police Station to Nelson's Dockyard, English Harbour. The Dockyard Police Station is now open 24 hours a day with the front desk manned and all other officers out on patrol either in vehicles or on foot. Stop-and-search procedures of suspicious vehicles and persons are already in place. VHF radio traffic is monitored at the police station and the police have two-way radio communications. Specific officers have been appointed to liaise with different sections of the community, with a particular emphasis on the community taking positive action either directly through the police or through the Crimestoppers programme.

The relaxed approach to the liquor licensing laws has been tightened up. While not impinging on the pleasure of the majority of revellers, drinking until the early hours of the morning has been curbed, thereby reducing the risk of vulnerable persons being on the streets and targets for criminals.

English Harbour and Falmouth are currently full of yachts, possibly due to a reduction in the number of charters as a result of the international economic situation. There are still plenty of crew enjoying the bars and restaurants of the area, but there seems to be a greater recognition that not only does Antigua need to protect its visitors but also that the visitors need to behave responsibly. The carefree atmosphere of English Harbour and Falmouth has returned, but with a subtle change: it is more mature and its residents, police and visitors are all a little wiser.

For more information visit www.abma.ag.

Bonaire Underwater Clean-Up

Karen Chelswick reports: The project started as Happy Hour chatter among the sailboat cruisers moored along the shoreline in Kralendijk, Bonaire. It was evident to all that the surge from Hurricane Omar in October, 2008, had caused a dramatic increase in the amount of debris (mainly tires and wooden planks) that was lying in the shallows and on the reef. One cruiser counted 68 tires within the span of five boats. The group voted to offer its services to the Marine Park. Din, the Chief Ranger of the Marine Park, attended a meeting and it was agreed that three park staff and the park boat would work with the cruisers to pick up any tires that were free of coral or sponge growth.

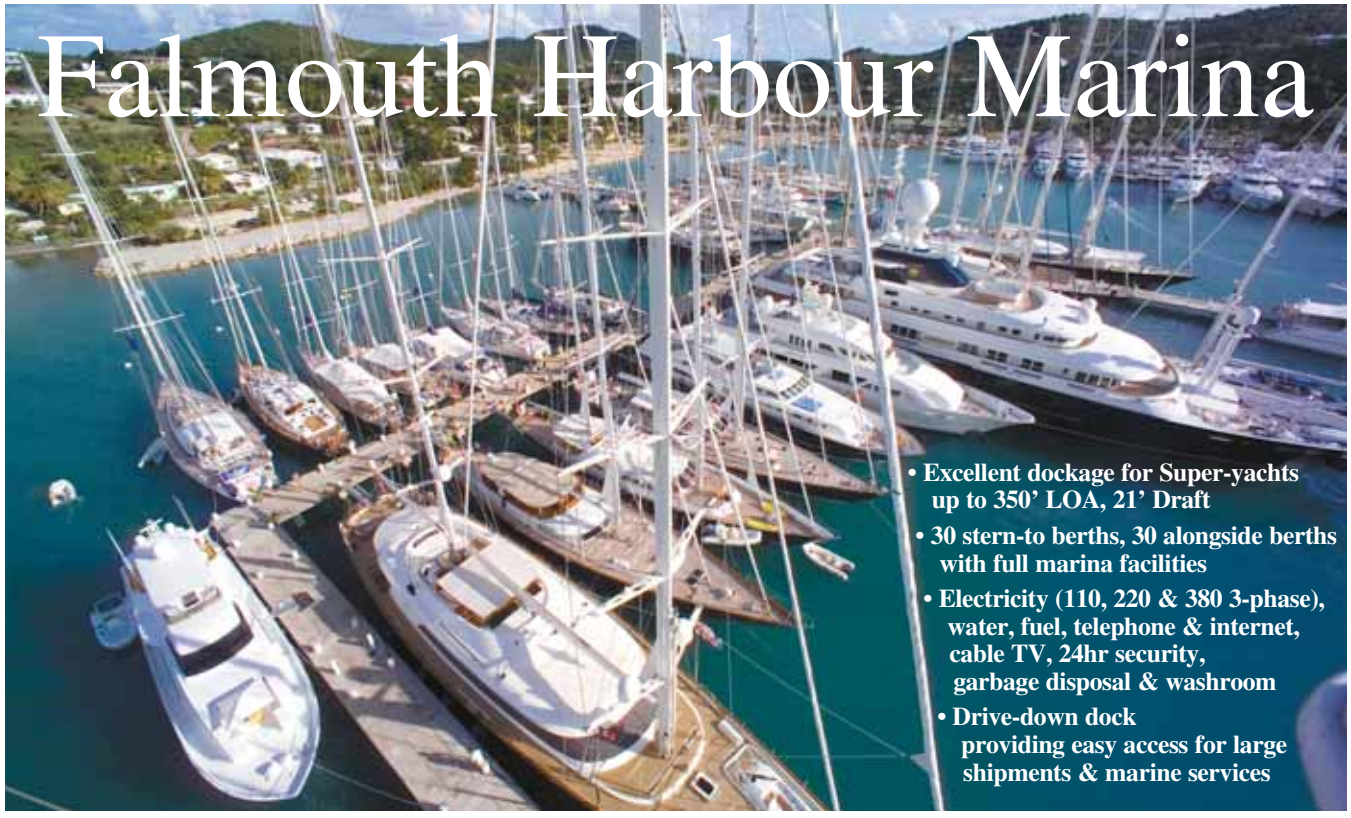


Visiting cruisers got tired of all the tires on the seabed, and partnered with Bonaire Marine Park staff in a clean-up

Cruisers from all of the boats in the mooring field participated. More than 40 people were organized into teams made up of divers, swimmers and boat workers. Toucan Dive Shop kindly provided free air fills for the divers on January 29th. The group worked for three hours to retrieve more than 60 tires, which eventually filled a garbage bin on the commercial dock. The event was so successful, that the boaters agreed to complete the cleanup of tires from the remainder of the mooring field and adjacent reef.

In the interim, boaters gathered and piled tires lying in the vicinity of their boats. Then, on February 5th, the boaters completed the tire project. In all, over 120 tires and a large piece of docking were collected. Next, the cruisers carefully removed, from the reef top, wood from the wreckage of the three main docks along Kaya Playa Lechi and Kaya J.N.E. Craane.

—Continued on next page



www.antigua-marina.com falmar@candw.ag Tel: +1 268 460 6054 Fax: +1 268 460 6055

—*Continued from previous page*

On February 19th, a boatload of wood planking was recovered with the help of the marine park staff. Air fills for this day were provided by Carib Inn.

The cruisers have just made a dent in the dock wreckage. A large percentage of the wood remains on the reef top, destroying coral and sponges.

Some of the dive shops that were approached to provide free air for the project declined to participate. The project has gone on, nevertheless, with the sailors using their own resources. As a group, the boaters look forward to more participation from the dive businesses to improve the reef from which they derive their income. Now, thanks to the cruisers, shore divers, local and visiting, who frequent this area can better enjoy and appreciate the beauty of this portion of Bonaire.

Panama Canal Yacht Club Demolished

The historic buildings housing the 80-year-old Panama Canal Yacht Club in Cristobal Port, Panama, were demolished on February 28th, after a judge had reportedly ruled only the day before that the Panama Ports Company owned the property and a demolition permit was issued. Club members were promptly notified of the ruling, but not that demolition of the club, built only a decade after completion of the Canal itself, would take place the next day. Panama Ports Company personnel told visiting yachtsmen using the club facilities that the marina docks and dinghy dock would be closed until further notice, and boatowners were told to remove their boats by April 1st.

In a recent statement, Panama Ports said that the company has only exercised its right to make use of the areas that were given to it when it won the concessions for the ports of Balboa and Cristobal after they were privatized by the Panamanian government in 1997. The statement, as reported in the *Panama Star* newspaper, said that the lease contract the company had with the club expired a long time ago, therefore, the club was illegally occupying the land. However, according to a yacht club source, the club's administration paid rent to Panama Ports until February 2009 and therefore there was nothing illegal in the occupation of the land.

The PCYC was a major resource for yachts preparing for a Caribbean-to-Pacific transit of the Panama Canal as well as those completing a transit from the Pacific side.

The Panama Ports Company, a subsidiary of the multinational conglomerate Hutchison Whampoa Limited, will reportedly use the land for container storage.

Eight Bells

Three long-time Caribbean cruisers have recently died.

Fred Gunther of the yacht *FREE* died of colorectal cancer on February 13th. Fred Gunther and Teri Rothbauer started cruising in 1989 and entered the Caribbean in 1991. Teri writes, "Sure there were days when the refrigeration, windlass, outboard and wife all quit working, but Fred was usually able to fix them. Fred decided the secret to cruising was to repair whatever broke as soon as possible because otherwise the to-do list got to be overwhelming. He believed in humor, and as *Compass* contributor O.B Servant, he saw things that made others laugh.

"By 1993 Fred found that cruisers are willing to help their local community at Christmas with a little encouragement on the yachtie radio net and organization. That year in Venezuela he helped run an auction of boat treasures that raised several thousand US dollars which were spent on food delivered to people who were hungry. For many years in Trinidad Fred, a.k.a. Ho Ho Ho, collected donations from cruisers, and with the vital help of Jesse James of Members Only Maxi Taxi Service, made sure that those less fortunate in the local community got a little something special at Christmas." Fred wanted people to remember him fondly, and if they feel they needed to do something to mark his passage, they could do a good deed for a friend or stranger.

FREE is in Trinidad looking for a new owner. Teri is switching to land cruising in the RV she and Fred bought a few years ago to ensure they never had to put down roots, and still uses the sailingonfree@aol.com address since the new RV is named *FREE TOO*.



Caribbean cruisers Fred and Teri with their land yacht in California (the islands were still 'on his mind' —note his Peake's cap!)

John Bryan IV of the yacht *Adhara*, better known to *Compass* readers as contributor John St. John, and to music lovers in the Virgin Islands as a singer, songwriter and guitarist, died on February 19th of malignant melanoma.

—*Continued on next page*

A warm welcome awaits you and your yacht at Port Louis

port louis GRENADA WEST INDIES






Port Louis, Grenada

Nowhere extends a warmer welcome than Port Louis, Grenada. Visitors can expect powder-white beaches, rainforests, spice plantations and a calendar packed with regattas and festivals. Grenada is also the gateway to the Grenadines, one of the world's most beautiful and unspoilt cruising areas.

Now there's another good reason to visit. There are 50 new fully serviced slips for yachts of all sizes up to 90m available right now for sale or rental.

Sitting alongside the marina, the forthcoming Port Louis Maritime Village will include luxury hotels, villas, restaurants and bars, plus some of the finest boutiques and shops in the region.

Limited availability

Slips are available for sale or rental. For a private consultation to discuss the advantages of slip ownership, please contact our International Sales Manager, Anna Tabone, on +356 2248 0000 or email anna.tabone@cnmarinas.com

To fully appreciate this rare opportunity, we highly recommend a visit. To arrange an on-site meeting please contact our Sales and Marketing Co-ordinator, Danny Donelan on +1(473) 435 7432 or email danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com

Camper & Nicholsons YACHTING SINCE 1782 MARINAS

ITALY | MALTA | TURKEY | WEST INDIES

—Continued from previous page

His sister Jeannie Bryan Coe writes, "Everywhere he went, John either had a friend or he made one. He taught us all an important life lesson, and he lived that lesson: live your life to the fullest and don't wait for some day." See photos and reminiscences from John's friends and add your own at www.john-saint-john.com.

Jérôme Janicot age 57, of the yacht *Santana*, died on the night of March 8th, apparently as the result of a fall at a dock at Clifton Harbour, Union Island in the Grenadines. He is survived by his wife Sylvie, many friends and family members.

Watch for Stolen Yacht

The 2005-built Bénéteau Cyclades 43.3 *Ishtar* was chartered from VPM charters at Le Marin, Martinique, on February 28th and was not returned as agreed on March 7th. The sailing yacht is considered missing and possibly stolen.



Every year, one or more bareboats go missing from the Eastern Caribbean charter fleet. As of press time, Ishtar's *whereabouts were still unknown*

Ishtar is white with a "VPM – Bestsail" logo and specially designed blue decoration stripe on both sides. There are only four vessels of this model with this particular decoration stripe in the whole Caribbean (mainly based in Martinique and St. Martin). The boat's name and homeport ("FdF", for Fort-de-France) are in blue on the transom. The boat has dark blue sailbags and bimini, with a solar panel above the bimini. The hull number is FR-BEYE4133K506.

The charter crewmembers' names given are Jan Minarik (Czech passport), Milos Gaspar, (Czech passport), Miroslav Dolezalek, (Czech passport), Petr Dombrovsky (Australian passport, born in Czech Republic). All are male.

The yacht was reportedly seen in Dominica March 2nd; apparently it was intended to pick up an unnamed crewmember there. Informed sources speculate that the yacht is being used for smuggling drugs or illegal immigrants. It is reported that three years ago Milos Gaspar stole a Lagoon 410 from Guadeloupe, and that the yacht was recovered in the Cape Verde Islands.

We are also reliably informed that Petr Dombrovsky may have been used unwittingly, having been engaged as a qualified captain to guide a group of Czech businessmen on a cruise aboard the missing yacht. Dombrovsky's wife reportedly received an e-mail from him on March 9th, from Margarita, Venezuela.

If the yacht is seen, notify the police or coastguard immediately. If you have any information about the whereabouts of this yacht, please contact cochsen@mcs-germany.com.

Yacht Sunk at Rodney Bay, St. Lucia

Melodye Pompa reports: On March 12th, a vessel sank just at the entrance to the channel into Rodney Bay Lagoon, St. Lucia. She is submerged with about 75 percent of her mast sticking out of the water canted at a 45-degree angle. It appears that the keel is held firm in the sand (at least for now). She is about 30 yards to the northwest of the end of the north breakwater to the channel. The green entrance light is at 14°04.6N 60°57.3W.

It is not likely that the sunken vessel will be a hazard to navigation to yachts as she is rather closer to both the shore and the breakwater than any yacht would normally be. She is, however, a hazard to the water toys and to the local fishing boats.

The St. Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority will reportedly move the boat soon.

World Heritage Status for Grenadines Explored

A meeting of some 30 delegates from the neighboring nations of Grenada and St Vincent & the Grenadines was held in Kingstown, St. Vincent on March 17th to discuss the possibility of nominating the Grenadines island group as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

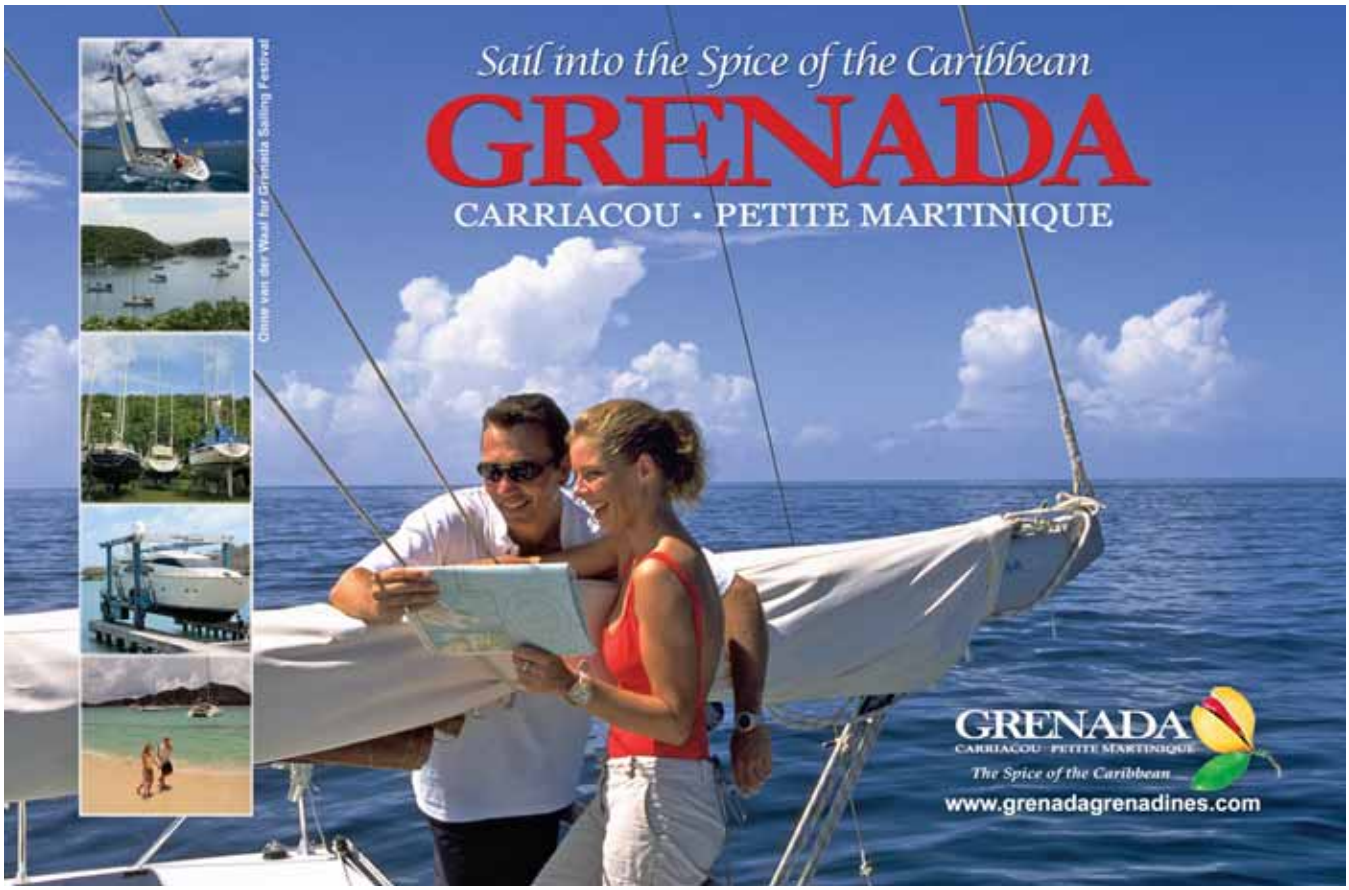
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.

Existing World Heritage Sites in the Eastern Caribbean are Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park in St Kitts & Nevis, Morne Trois Pitons National Park in Dominica, and The Pitons in St Lucia. Those at the meeting, including representatives from relevant ministries in both countries' governments as well as numerous NGOs, strongly felt that the unique cultural and natural heritage of the Grenadines as a whole is worth protecting and preserving at this level, and agreed to explore the idea of proposing both countries' Grenadines as a continuous transboundary World Heritage Site.

For more information on World Heritage Sites visit whc.unesco.org.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertiser West Indies Regatta of St. Barths, in the Market Place, pages 44 to 46. Good to have you with us!

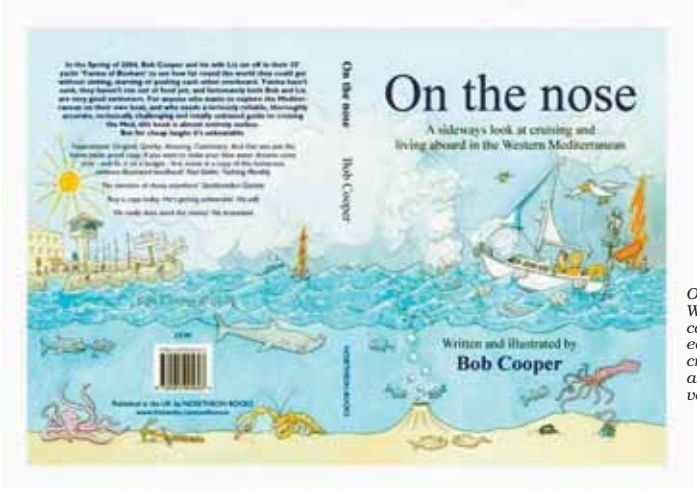


BUSINESS BRIEFS

Fun New Book at Budget Marine Trinidad

Ruth Lund reports: Budget Marine Trinidad has a limited number of copies available of *On the Nose*, an amusing new "cruising life" book illustrated with cartoons, which should have a market among cruising folk in the Caribbean. Although the setting is Mediterranean, the cruising lifestyle portrayed so well is universal. The author, Bob Cooper, was recently in Trinidad with his wife Liz on their yacht. They plan to travel up the island chain and eventually west. The author hopes to write and illustrate a second volume relating to his experience in the Caribbean.

For more information on Budget Marine stores throughout the Caribbean see ad on page 2.



Okay, it's about the Western Med, but the comedy applies equally well to any cruising ground—and a Caribbean volume is planned

Northern Lights' Next-Generation Generator

Northern Lights, a globally recognized manufacturer of marine diesel generator sets, has introduced the first in the new generation of marine power solutions – the M944T.

Producing 38kW at 60Hz, or 32kW at 50Hz, the M944T is the new industry leader in power density in the 32 to 40kW range. Based on a heavy-duty industrial engine block, the M944T is custom marinized and engineered for optimal marine performance.

The M944T also represents a step forward in the evolution of Northern Lights marine generator sets. This new model is the first Northern Lights generator to utilize a revolutionary new frame design, in which the sound enclosure shares a base frame with the generator set, creating a compact power-and-sound-attenuation package that reduces noise and vibration while maximizing engineroom space. The design also allows for the easy installation of an additional set of vibration mounts for a smoother, quieter package with only minimal increase in height. Fuel and oil drains are located outside of the sound enclosure for easy connection and forward and rear exhaust exit options are also important design features. While the M944T is the first Northern Lights model to showcase this leap forward in design, the entire range of 5-38kW Northern Lights generator sets will receive this design treatment in the near future.

Easily customizable, the M944T is an ideal system for vessels looking for increased power in the footprint of a 25 to 33kW machine.

Founded in 1958, Northern Lights is a leading manufacturer of marine-diesel generators and propulsion engines. The company's products are distributed through a global sales and service network to over 40 countries.

For information on Northern Lights agents in the Caribbean see ad on page 26.

Big Boat Crews, Brokers Praise Port Louis, Grenada

Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina and Grenada received excellent reviews in the March edition of the *Triton* magazine, where Captain John Campbell of the 147-foot *S/Y Timoneer* wrote: "We have found Grenada to be the most friendly and welcoming of all the islands we visited this year. The officer in the Customs/Immigration office could not have been nicer or more helpful. Even the paperwork is easier here than elsewhere farther north. The crew and I all gave Grenada a gold star for effort, facilities and, above all, friendliness." Regarding Camper & Nicholsons' Port Louis Marina, he complimented the staff on their professionalism. "Perhaps the best asset that the marina has is its staff. We found everybody eager to please in every way. They all seemed truly pleased to see us, and I hope that they manage to retain this spirit as they get busier."

And on a trip organized by the marina earlier this year, personnel from International Yacht Charter Group, The Sacks Group Yachting Professionals, International Yacht Collection, Yachtstore, Northrop & Johnson, and Jill Bobrow, the Editor of *Showboats International*, visited Port Louis Marina and toured other sites in Grenada. The brokers ended their visit with a cruise of the Grenadines on the *M/Y Touch*, stopping at Sandy Island, Carriacou, Mayreau, Mustique and Bequia. Speaking of the large high-end charter vessels these brokers represent, Port Louis' Marketing Coordinator Danny Donelan said, "Traditionally yachts have always been sent to the north of the Caribbean — in particular Antigua, St. Martin, USVI, BVI — but we are working really hard to ensure that Grenada is included in the itineraries of these charter companies. We intend to make Grenada one of the hot spots for yachting in the Caribbean."

For more information on Port Louis see ad on page 6.



A highlight of the recent yacht charter brokers' orientation tour of Grenada was a visit to Belmont Estate to see cocoa being grown and processed

CIRExpress Now Ships St. Maarten to Antigua

Need help getting things from here to there? CIRExpress has announced its new shipping and consolidation service from St. Maarten to Antigua. Sailings are biweekly.

Soon CIRExpress will also be transporting to Rio Haina Port, Dominican Republic.

For more information see ad on page 35.

New Moorings Village, Tortola

Following a multi-million-dollar investment, yacht charter specialists The Moorings have opened the new Moorings Village in Tortola, BVI. The new Moorings Village facility aims to be the most modern and environmentally friendly charter base in the Caribbean. Located on an extension at the southern end of the previously existing property, the complex was designed entirely around the needs of sailors. A business center with free wi-fi internet access is on site, along with a full-service restaurant and dockside market. Environmental considerations were central to the design of the new base.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

A desalination plant provides 60,000 gallons of water daily, plus the laundry operation recycles treated water that saves 12,000 gallons daily. The new marina also includes a flow-through breakwater assisted by a pump that can circulate over 50 million gallons of water in a week. This system has improved the water quality in the Road Town harbor.

For more information visit www.moorings.com.

St. Vincent: Buhler's Yachts Burns

On the evening of March 3rd, the long-established boatbuilder, Buhler's Yachts, located at Calliaqua on the south shore of St. Vincent, burned to the ground.



DUGGIE 'NOSE' JOSEPH, THE NEWS

Buhler's Yachts of St. Vincent, where boatbuilding, fiberglass repair work and spray-painting were done, was destroyed by fire in early March

Established decades ago by American multihull builder Vance Buhler, and more recently run by Vincentian Matthew Llewellyn, the facility was well known for building many of the large fiberglass day-charter catamarans that operate throughout the Eastern Caribbean. One was nearing completion when the fire occurred.

Rodney Bay Businesses Say 'Thanks, Yachties!'

In St. Lucia on February 5th, Bryden & Partners partnered with Rodney Bay Marina for a two-hour "Customer Appreciation Celebration", offering free drinks and entertainment for over a hundred yachtspeople whose vessels were berthed at the marina. "It's really to show appreciation for the support which we have received from our customers over the last 12 months," Marina General Manager Cuthbert Didier said. About 40 percent of the participants from the last Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) were still on the island and many of them were at the function.

Sales and Marketing Manager for Bryden & Partners, Paul Marshal, said his company was co-hosting the event because it operates a shop in the marina and all the marina's customers are potentially Bryden's customers as well. He added that Bryden & Partners had been a supporter of the ARC for the last 15 years and would continue to do so.

St. Lucia Resort Says 'Take a Walk!'

The Pitons of St. Lucia and nearby Soufriere are spectacular places to anchor and dive, but it's worthwhile to take the time to explore ashore, too. And now there's a new stroll. Jalousie Plantation's new Rainforest Walk winds its way from the beach up the forested hillside on the lower slopes of Petit Piton and will eventually serve as an access point to the resort's new rainforest spa. St. Lucia's Minister for Tourism, Allen Chastanet, officially opened the new Rainforest Walk on February 6th as part of a tour of the new luxury villas and facilities at the resort. The circular walk is short — about 15 minutes — and open to the public.

Located in the Valley of the Pitons, a UNESCO World Heritage site, the Jalousie Plantation includes 192 acres of rainforest.

St. Thomas' Spring Yacht Show

The St. Thomas Spring Charter Yacht Show will take place from April 21st through April 23rd at St. Thomas Harbor and Yacht Haven Grande Marina, organized by the Virgin Islands Charter Yacht League, Yacht Haven Grande and the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism.

For more information contact VICL Director Erik Ackerson at (340) 774-3944 or at erik@vicl.org.

Cruising Rally Association Picks Nanny Cay, BVI

The Cruising Rally Association has announced that Nanny Cay Resort & Marina, Tortola, will be the Caribbean Host Marina for its sailing events. The first Cruising Rally Association event to be hosted by Nanny Cay will be the Atlantic Cup Rally, departing on May 3rd and finishing in Bermuda. The Atlantic Cup offers cruisers departing the Caribbean the camaraderie and competition of an 850-mile rally. Pre-start festivities and skippers' briefings begin on May 1 at Nanny Cay. The Atlantic Cup is open to well-found offshore boats at least 38 feet long and crews of two or more. It is not limited to veterans of other Cruising Rally Association events.

The second event to be hosted by Nanny Cay is the Caribbean 1500, slated to start November 2nd. The 2009 Caribbean 1500 Rally will be the 20th annual running of this event, making it the longest-running offshore cruising event in the Americas. Steve Black, President and Founder of the Cruising Rally Association, anticipates a record entry of returning ralliers for the anniversary activities.

For more information on Cruising Rally Association events visit www.carib1500.com.

New Dining Option in Dominica

Heaven's Best Guest House & Restaurant is located on the northwestern side of Dominica overlooking Douglas Bay, a two-minute drive from Purple Turtle beach. Heaven's Best Guest House & Restaurant offers American and Caribbean cuisine prepared by Executive Chef Heskeith Clarke. To ensure that only the freshest ingredients are used, phone (767) 445-6677 and let them know in the morning if you plan to dine there that evening. No bar — BYOB.



Ready for something new in Dominica? Try a meal at Heaven's Best

For more information visit www.heavensbestguesthouse.com.

Read in Next Month's *Compass:*

Round Grenada Race Record Shattered

Surprising San Juan

Refitting a 'Given Up' Boat

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Local Racers Compete in National Sailing Event

A fleet of 23 local sailing craft competed in the Digicel Work Boat Regatta, held in the waters off Grenada's Grand Anse Beach on January 31st and February 1st. The locally built open boats came from various seaside communities of Grenada, each having its own indigenous style of boat. Also competing were the GSF16s, a one-design fleet of traditional style, Grenada-built 16-footers especially designed to enable local sailors to match race.

The Digicel Work Boat Regatta is part of the annual Grenada Sailing Festival, presented by Port Louis and Camper & Nicholsons, in association with the Grenada Board of Tourism. The event includes international yacht racing (see report in last month's *Compass*).

This year, five community classes raced over the two days: Gouyave Canoe, Gouyave Sloop, Petite Martinique, Sauteurs and Woburn. The absence of a Carriacou Class this year reduced the numbers from last year's 30 entries. However, two keen new boats built in the village of Grand Mal joined the Sauteurs and Gouyave Sloop Classes, as there are not enough boats yet for them to have their own class. Racing was tight as usual, and featured regular competitors such as Bertrand Noel sailing *Planass*, who topped the Sauteurs Sloop Class in 2006, and former Skipper of the Year Lennon Marshall on *Riot Act*.

The GSF16 Match Racing got underway with the Junior National Team Sailing Race, sponsored by Coca Cola and Budget Marine. Community teams draw for which boat they sail from the fleet kept by the Grenada Sailing Festival. The experience and tactics of Michael McQueen and Vaughn Bruno, now instructors for the Grenada Yacht Club Youth Sailing Program, made the difference, and it was a popular repeat win for last year's winners, Team Woburn. Four-time Junior Champion Team Gouyave came in second, in front of the Petite Martinique crew.

In the Senior National Team Sailing Championship, sponsored by United Insurance, Team Petite Martinique took first, in front of Gouyave and last year's champions, Sauteurs.

The final race was for the title of Skipper of the Year, contested by the winning skippers from each class: Gouyave Class winners Carlyle Joseph and Ted Richards; Petite Martinique's Emmanuel Bethel; Andy DeRoche of Sauteurs; and Michael Charles from Woburn. Carlyle Joseph took the lead from a good start and led the fleet for much of the race. However, Andy DeRoche picked his time and moved past at the last mark to bring home GSF16 *Gybe Talk* to victory, winning the coveted title of Digicel Work Boat Regatta Skipper of the Year 2009, plus a US$1,000 cash prize. Petite Martinique's Emmanuel Bethel also passed the early leader to take second place and a prize of US$500. Carlyle Joseph came in third to win his prize of US$250.

Patricia Maher of title sponsor, Digicel, joined Race Chairman Jimmy Bristol to present plaques and cash prizes provided by ScotiaBank to all the winners, and Alyssa Bierzynski of Coca Cola and Nicholas George of Budget Marine presented plaques and Budget Marine vouchers to each winning team member in the Junior National Championships. United Insurance's Trevor Renwick presented plaques, Budget Marine vouchers and FLOW vouchers to the Senior Championship winning team, and plaques and Budget Marine vouchers to second and third place winners. All participating boats received packs including T-shirts and racing gloves from Budget Marine, plus Mount Gay Rum, Heineken beer and Red Bull energy drink. Boats that did not win a place in their class also received packs including Budget Marine and FLOW vouchers.

The event organisers would like to thank Digicel, ScotiaBank, United Insurance, Coca Cola and Budget Marine for their strong support keeping the Work Boat Regatta one of the biggest and most popular national events in Grenada, Petite Martinique & Carriacou. Thanks also go to Bryden & Minors, Independence Agencies and Spice Isle Fish House for support for crewmember lunches. Particular thanks also goes to Electrical Contractors, Deyna's Tasty Foods, MCs DeLeon Walters and Jericho, and DJ Blackstorm, who set up in some very bad weather.

Digicel Work Boat Regatta 2009 Winners



Gouyave Canoe Class
1) *Ah Heat in Ah Food*, Carlyle Joseph
2) *Cockroach in Front Fowl*, Cecil Commissiong
3) *Demon Dog*, Edwin Sanderson

Gouyave Sloop Class
1) *Classic*, Ted Richards
2) *Riot Act*, Lennon Marshall
3) *Endeavour*, Javid George

Petite Martinique Class
1) *D Matrix*, Emmanuel 'Mano' Bethel
2) *Solo*, Aiden Bethel
3) *D Trap*, Clayton DeRoche

Woburn Class
1) *Top Ranking*, Michael Charles
2) *Unity*, Syten Bernadine
3) *Old Dog*, Alan Noel

Sauteurs Class
1) *Passage*, Andy DeRoche
2) *Plannass*, Bertrand Noel
3) *No Retreat No Surrender*, Jason Charles

GSF16 Match Races

JUNIOR NATIONAL TEAM SAILING CHAMPIONSHIP
1) Team Woburn
2) Team Gouyave
3) Team Petite Martinique

SENIOR NATIONAL TEAM SAILING CHAMPIONSHIP
1) Team Petite Martinique
2) Team Gouyave
3) Team Sauteurs

WORK BOAT REGATTA SKIPPER OF THE YEAR
1) Andy DeRoche, Sauteurs
2) Emmanuel Bethel, Petite Martinique
3) Carlyle Joseph, Gouyave



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TOBAGO CARNIVAL REGATTA 2009

A WELL-TRIED *BLUFF* BEATS OUT NEW *PRIDE*

by Orbin Ollivierre



ALL PHOTOS: WILFRED DEDERER



Top: Always an attraction, the local boats are admired by visitors at Pigeon Point Beach

Above: Bluff *of Bequia emerged the winner in the 'big boats' class*

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page



Tobago's spectacular Pigeon Point

Dem ol' people use to say, "Needle an' pins, needle an' pins, when ah man marries, his trouble begins." But not so fo' me. Ah ain't got no problems wid me marriage. My problems began when ah built *Bluff* an' start to do serious racin'. Dat was in 1995, some 14 years ago, when it was jus' *Baltaza*, *Trouble*, *Iron Duke* an' t'ings were ah bit flat. Since dat time, ah had to fight off names like *Don't Doubt*, *Braveheart*, *Perseverance*, *Cloudy Bay*, *Spank*, *Confusion*, all of Bequia, plus *Ace* an' *Aces*, *Passion* an' *Hurricane* of Carriacou an' *Troublesum*, *Vengeance* an' *Fast Forward* of Tobago. Like if dat ain't trouble enough, Arnold decide he go' build another one. He name it *Bequia Pride*, ah pretty boat, paint an' all.

Well, it de 9th February and Bequia boats *Bluff*, *Perseverance* an' *Bequia Pride* about to get dey first clash. Yes, we sailin' from de ramp in Paget Farm to Port Elizabeth fo' catch de *Admiral Bay*. Yes, we invited to de Tobago Carnival Regatta. We leavin' on de 10th so we sailin' around, put de boats onboard an' leave tomorrow. As ah say, we start at de ramp up to Semple Cay mark an' ah stickin' wid she. Ah sure dey go' be some bettin' ashore but whoever do dat have to be crazy. First time out, we turn West Cay an' *Bluff* ahead an' ah getting' away. But not to be. De wind was a bit puffy an' down one hit, main sheet cleat, jib sheet cleat, an' all seven men swimmin'! Dat de end ah dat! Somebody tell me dey lose ah hundred dollars. Ah say, "Serve yo' right!" At dusk, we finish puttin' de boats aboard. We left close to nine o'clock Sunday, passin' Canouan to pick up *Nerissa J* an' den Carriacou pickin' up *Ace* an' *Passion*.

We dock in Tobago fo' eight o'clock an' awaiting Immigration. What ah process! Is around 11 o'clock, somebody who is anybody mus' be speak to somebody, if yo' know what ah mean, den de line start to move fast. After dat, Customs, den out de gate. After 24 hours at sea in rough weather, to be held fo' six hours at Immigration an' Customs! What torture! Like if dat ain't enough, ah see ah army truck pull up an' men wid gun jump an' tell us jump in. Ah say to meself, like we turn refugee but no, dat was we transportation to wey we stayin', well protected! We in ah place called Lambeau, two big houses right on de highway. We go' catch taxi easy an' put up wid de noise all night: traffic don't sleep in Tobago.

Tuesday morning is here. Time to tek off we boats an' get dem to de sailin' ground at Pigeon Point. But ah tell yo' what, around ten o'clock, all hell break loose. Wind gustin' up to 25 knots so we can't sail, have to be towed round. But dat went well. We go' rig tomorrow an' sail.

Wednesday an' de weather lookin' good. Breeze about 15 to 18 knots, water smooth because - yo' won't believe it - we sailin' inside de Buccoo Reef. De water very shallow an' all de boats handicap because we can't use we dagger boards. An' we can't start until two o'clock. Dat mean we got low tide. De racecourse say three lap round an' round in ah circle. We had to walk de boats way out to get de rudders hang. Anyway, two o'clock is here an' off. De first class go: *Tornado*, *Nerissa J*, *More Worries* den *Limbo* an' *Ace*. Now de big boys: *Bequia Pride*, *Bluff*, *Passion*, *Vengeance* an' *Troublesum*. Well, we start, all boat gone an' *Bluff* stick in de moss bottom. Ah had to fight hard fo' mek ah close second. *Bequia Pride* beat me by ah few ticks. *Passion* lost she rudder an' *Troublesum* didn't mek it; she retire hurt, ah don't know from what. But from de time ah see both *Vengeance* an' *Troublesum*, ah know dey not goin' trouble us none. But ah tell yo' somet'in'. Is de first regatta ah goin' to an' not even ah drink when we come ashore! But is only day one: we go' see what happen tomorrow.

Well, tomorrow is here an' not lookin' good. It's squally, rain an' wind gustin' up to 25 knots, 30 in de squalls. Dat continue through de day so no sailin' open boats, not even inside de reef. Tomorrow we go' do two races.

Around one o'clock on Friday, Anderson show up wid de chart, sayin' we go' do six laps. Ah say, no way. We ha' fo' do two races an' fo' one, it go' tek too long an' second, we go' get giddy head goin' round an' round in ah circle an' lose count. We go' do three laps first race, an' two last. We all agree an' off we go, *Tornado* an' *Nerissa J* first because *More Worries* say he had enough. Den *Limbo* an' *Ace* den us. Ah mek sure we floatin' good dis time an' off we go. *Bluff* tek de lead, one lap, two laps. Ah see *Tornado* crew swimmin' an' only she sails above water. We t'row ah bucket fo' dem an' wish dem luck. Nothin' go' happen in here, de water shallow an' dem shark go' stay outside de reef, says me, hopefully! As ah say, ah tek de lead an' stay up front to finish, *Bequia Pride* second an' *Passion* third. *Limbo* beat out *Ace* an' *Nerissa J* beat out *Tornado*. De course tek about one hour; next' one at 3:30.



Looking good, the newly launched Bequia Pride *won the first race*

Last race start. De breeze still strong, we go' do it fast. *Bluff* tek de lead again, not much competition. De course short dis time an' once ah get in front, crapaud smoke dem pipe! De only difference dis time, *Tornado* stay in front an' *Limbo* beat out *Ace* all de way. As fo' *Bequia Pride*, ah hope ah didn't damage dat. Ah still ain't get ah beer. But from a sailor's point ah view, what's new?

We left Tobago one o'clock Sunday evening an' it still blowin' ah gale outside, rough like hell. We go' have another rocky night. We do de reverse trip an' reach back in Bequia one o'clock Monday. Ask me if ah go' do it again!

I would like to thank the organizers fo' invitin' us. Ah know ah lot ah money was spent transportin' us an' housin' us; dose were de big t'ings. But, ah can tell yo', is de little t'ings dat count. Get dem right an' yo' good to go!



And they're off! Where local boats were one constructed for fishing, whaling and the movement of cargo and passengers, today's island boatbuilding scene is largely driven by competitive racing

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Community Spirit in Bequia Pride

by Cheryl J. Johnson

When I was a little girl (a long time ago) we, all of us children, used to congregate at the widest area in the community, when the moon was out, to play ring games*. While we played, the older folks, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and older cousins, would sit on the periphery with an eye on us to ensure good behaviour, while they shared traditional knowledge.

They talked of the crops they were growing, the dishes they cooked and the medicine they prepared. Fundamental to their discussions would be arranging for "swap labour", which is the exchange of services, mainly on farms, but also to help in moving a house or in the construction of one, or just helping out with community needs. Those were the days of real service, sharing and volunteerism.

This spirit of cooperation was evident and strongly felt up to the Eighties. People who work in the social services report that a lot of communities appear poorer now, owing to the low levels of community involvement.



Proud boatbuilder Arnold Hazell as his latest creation was nearing completion

But this is not so in Bequia. Some residents of the southernmost village, Paget Farm, came together to build a boat, and did so, with support from residents and the business community. Community spirit still exists and it is evident in *Bequia Pride*.

On a walk one Sunday morning, I noticed a new boat and a lone man working. Curious, I walked up to investigate, and that's when I realized that Doyle, the man who came into my workplace sometime ago asking for donations, was related to this project.

The *Bequia Pride* boat-building project began with a discussion by some villagers who felt that Paget Farm needed a community boat in readiness for the 2009 Bequia Easter Regatta.

The actual building was done mainly by Arnold Hazell, a boatbuilder of over 30 years experience, who has his own boat, *Perseverance*. The project lasted for about three months. The cost of materials for the boat, approximately EC$35,000, was raised by persons who shared the dream; they took sponsor sign-up sheets to individuals and businesses on the island to seek donations.



Bequia Pride *in action at Tobago Carnival Regatta 2009*

Bequia Pride was completed in time for this year's new Tobago Carnival Regatta. So on Sunday, February 8th, 2009, in Admiralty Bay, they loaded *Bequia Pride*, its gear and a seven-man crew aboard the ship Admiral Bay, and along with five other Bequia boats they headed to Tobago. *Bequia Pride* got a test run in the Tobago Carnival Regatta, and won one race. [*See related story on page 12.*] Whatever shortcomings identified with the boat would certainly be ironed out by April, and the interest of all Bequians will be piqued and hopes high to see if *Bequia Pride* will fill them with delight at this year's Bequia Easter Regatta. Paget Farm in particular will be proudly watching its own community boat.

The organizers of *Bequia Pride* wish to thank all the "kind-hearted individuals who and the business community which have contributed to the realization of *Bequia Pride*."

Arnold Hazell, the boatbuilder, says, "I feel proud that we can come together to do a project like *Bequia Pride*."

**Most traditional Caribbean ring games start with one player standing inside a circle of other children. The children forming the ring sing (a popular song is "Brown Girl in the Ring") and clap their hands. At a certain point, the center person is called upon to perform a dance step or some other "motion". After performing a "motion", the center player selects a partner and dances in the center of the ring with him or her. The player who was selected then becomes the new center player and the former center player rejoins the children forming the ring.*

16TH ANNUAL ST. CROIX INTERNATIONAL REGATTA



ROB JONES

by Ellen Sanpere

One trimaran, three Rhodes 19s, and two dozen "big boats" braved rough weather during the St. Croix International Regatta, held February 20th through 22nd, 2009. Conditions during the prior week were far from optimal for boats coming to Teague Bay from St. Thomas, Tortola, Puerto Rico and even Christiansted Harbor, keeping registration numbers down. By the end of two days' racing, many skippers and crew expressed gratitude the damage wasn't worse, and most enjoyed the challenging conditions and legendary Crucian hospitality.

DNF (did not finish) and DNC (did not come to the starting area) notations were rampant on the results sheets, as gear failures took competitors out of the running. Kevin Rowlette's Olson 30, *Rushin Rowlette*, tore her headsail, came back for more and then broke her mast. *Pipedream*, Peter Haycraft's Serena 38, was damaged early Sunday, when another boat's mooring lines parted after a night of rockin' and rollin' in the Teague Bay anchorage. Winds held steady at 20 to 25 knots with gusts up to 30 knots; seas were up to nine feet and seldom laid down during the night, in harsh-for-the-Caribbean winter weather. Happily, rain showers held off for most of the racing — it *is* Paradise, after all.

The all-volunteer regatta staff provided racers and supporters a terrific shore venue at the St. Croix Yacht Club. Friday night's Cruzan Rum party was complimentary for entrants, offering free rum, entertainment and great appetizers under the regatta tent. Saturday evening's Crucian Pig Roast was also a big hit with the racers after a day of broaching and bashing around the buoys. Out on the channel course, the resident dolphins showed off the newest tiny addition to their pod and dodged the speeding keels at the starting line.

Principal Race Officer Sue Reilly set courses in the Buck Island channel and ran six races for Jib & Main and Racer/Cruiser classes. After two warm-up races around the buoys, she sent them off to Gallows Bay (Christiansted) to wow the tourists and local spectators. The Spinnaker classes ran the course on Sunday to avoid congestion in the harbor and did a total of seven races. Trophies were awarded to each class winner, and one skipper in each fleet took home his (or a large crew member's) weight in Cruzan Rum.

Morgan Dale brought his newly renamed Melges 24, *Boogaloo*, to a second-place finish in Spinnaker 1, but few can win against the Stanton brothers' finely tuned Melges 24, *Devil* ^{3}. Robert Armstrong's J/100, *Bad Girl*, was the only boat in the class flying a symmetrical spinnaker and was unable to beat the *Devil*, despite having a crew just back from Key West with a resounding win on a similar J/100, *Good Girl*. Crewman Charlie Nicolosi said, "We were lost dogs, racing by ourselves."

An eighth place in Race One relegated St. Thomas veteran John Foster to a second in Spinnaker 2 on his Kirby 25, *The Good, Bad and Ugly*, behind Chris Thompson's J/27, *J Walker*, also from St. Thomas. "We had good pressure from both the weather and the competition," said Thompson, "We kept it conservative and had minimal gear failures." Slim Chris recruited crewmember Frank Barnes to balance the scales while cases of Cruzan Rum in assorted flavors were piled on for the winner of the most competitive class in the Spinnaker fleet.

Tortola's Guy Eldridge took a decisive lead in the Racer/Cruiser class on Saturday (and the Cruzan Rum on Sunday) in his Beneteau First 10-R, *Luxury Girl* over the Haycraft's ill-fated *Pipedream*. Chris Haycraft, at the helm for his ailing father, was given redress and finished second in the class. Peter Haycraft was also honored with the Commodore's Trophy for best visiting yacht over many years. Cynthia Ross, the only real "Girl" on the course, came in third on her J/30, *J Doe*. Hers was also one of only two boats that finished all six races in that class.

Skipper Steve Schmidt brought his Santa Cruz 70CR, *Hotel California, Too*, from Curacao and "had fun but broke stuff." He was amazed there weren't "more carnage, protests and race committee (mistakes)." Schmidt single-hands the big sled between Caribbean racing venues and said that he was delighted with the largest pick-up crew he's ever found. He finished second in Jib & Main, giving Tony Sanpere's winning J/36, *Cayennita Grande*, some very close competition.

Sanpere recently bought the used J/36 in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and had an untested crew consisting of old hands, young blood and brand-new racers who had never sailed together before. He had not wired the new instruments yet and flew an old headsail, but managed to win Jib & Main class all the same. On the Gallows Bay race, he flew a bright red nylon 120-percent "wind seeker" jib that sure *looked* like a spinnaker to those in the back of the pack. "I liked the harbor course and had hoped to sail the Beauregard Bay course on Sunday. It's more challenging than the windward-leeward courses," he said, citing depths, navigation and air traffic issues. He was pleased with the new boat and the new crew: no major breakage, no one hurt.

Joe San Martin took honors in the Multihull class on *Piglet*, the only entry, having warned competitors in the past, "No more Mister Nice Guy."

Many of the winners and also-rans planned to continue competition in the second leg of the Caribbean Ocean Racing Triangle (CORT) series, which continued in March with the Culebra International Regatta and concludes with the BVI Spring Regatta in early April. CORT Organizer Angel Ayala who sailed his J/80, *Sun Bum II*, to a fourth place finish in Spinnaker 2, raffled away free tickets on Cape Air as part of the series promotion. *Mary-Ellen* skipper Howard Silverman won the tickets.

Inside the reef, two former junior sailors, Billy Gibbons and Jae Tonnachel, came in second and third, respectively, in the Rhodes 19 class, with the win going to new SCYC commodore, Allan Mallory.

Regatta director Julie San Martin announced good news for the future of the St. Croix International. Finding a name sponsor had eluded San Martin after Innovative backed out two years ago, but she has secured affiliation for next year with the National Hospice Regatta Alliance, a 29-year-old Annapolis, Maryland, charity. Having a charitable event allows solicitation of (US) tax-deductible contributions for running the regatta and raises sorely needed funds for and awareness of end-of-life care for an aging population. The prizegiving was interrupted several times as checks totaling US$2200 were presented to Tracy Sanders of Continuum Care, St. Croix's hospice. Since establishment in 2000, Continuum Care has helped over 800 families on the island. Affiliation with the National Hospice Regatta Alliance will be of immeasurable benefit in the future to racers, patients and families.

St Croix International Regatta 2009 Winners

Main & Jib (8 boats)
1) Cayennita Grande, J/36, Antonio Sanpere, St. Croix
2) Hotel California, Too, Santa Cruz 70CR, Steven Schmidt, California
3) El Presidente, Thomas 35, Jeff Fangmann, St. Croix)

Racer/Cruiser (5 boats):
1)Luxury Girl, Beneteau First 10R, Guy Eldridge, BVI
2) Pipedream, Serena 38, Peter Haycraft, BVI
3) J Doe, J/30, Cynthia Ross, California

Multihull (1 boat)
1) Piglet, Newick, Joe San Martin, St. Croix

Spinnaker 2 (8 boats)
1) J Walker, J-27, Chris Thompson, St. Thomas
2) Good, Bad & Ugly, Kirby 25, John Foster, St. Thomas
3) Glory Daze, J/24, Chuck Pessler, St. Thomas

Spinnaker 1 (4 boats)
1) Devil ^{3}, Melges 24, Chris Stanton, St. Croix
2) Boogaloo, Melges 24, Morgan Dale, St. Croix
3) Bad Girl, J/100, Robert Armstrong, St. Croix

Rhodes 19 (3 boats)
1) Allan Mallory
2) Billy Gibbons
3) Jae Tonnachel



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'That Was an Incredible Ride!'



by Chris Doyle

Although it started on February 23rd, the first RORC Caribbean 600 had good strong Christmas winds with the usual intensifying squalls that come with them. Some 27 boats representing nine countries entered this 605-mile non-stop offshore yacht race, a good turnout for this new event. Run by the Royal Ocean Racing Club (UK) and Antigua Yacht Club, with a course zigzagging north as far as St Marten and as far south as Guadeloupe, it could become the Caribbean equivalent of the Fastnet — without the risk of truly life-threatening weather.

The start line off English Harbour, Antigua, was long, as is necessary for a fleet that included boats up to 115 feet, as well as those as small as 34 feet. I was on the press boat; we were rolling and pitching and the only non-sailor among us was about to feed the fish. Most of the boats were reefed as they milled around before the start. We had to go full ahead to get in front of *Region Guadeloupe*, the ORMA 60 trimaran with hot racers John Burnie and Claude Thelier aboard, as it came hurtling by at about 20 knots in a rain squall — it was only when it had gone by I realized they had not yet put up their jib. For sheer size and power, Mike Slade's 100-foot Maxi, *ICAP Leopard*, looked majestically impressive with 14 crewmembers all sitting out on the rail (see cover photo).

There were three starts 20 minutes apart, after which the boats beat upwind for nine miles to leave Green Island to port. The three Class 40s — more sports boats than ocean cruisers — were making impressive speed to windward, not their favored point of sail.

One of the very cool things about this long-distance race was that you did not have to forget it once the boats went out of sight. Each boat was fitted with a transponder, and the RORC website (http://caribbean600.rorc.org) had a course map on which you saw the position of every boat. As you held the mouse over a boat's icon, a photo would come up with the details of the boat and the speed it was making at the time.

Perhaps not surprisingly, line honors went to *Region Guadeloupe*, which finished in the multihull record-setting time of 40 hours, 11 minutes and 5 seconds, for an average speed of around 15 knots, which would have meant considerably more speed through the water with all the tacking. Says John Burnie, "That was an incredible ride!"

Region Guadeloupe was followed a few hours later by *ICAP Leopard*, to set the course's monohull record of 44 hours, 5 minutes and 14 seconds — 13 minutes less than she took to complete the 2007 Rolex Fastnet, a race of roughly the same length.

On handicap, Adrian Lee's Irish Cookson 50, *Lee Overlay Partners*, beat *ICAP Leopard* by over an hour on corrected time to win IRC Class Super Zero, Canting Keel and the prize of Overall Winner of the RORC Caribbean 600 under IRC.

Local knowledge also counted. In IRC 1, Bernie Evan-Wong's Mumm 36, *Café Americano High Tension*, was the class winner. The Antiguan boat showed experience and Evan-Wong showed courage: he injured his ribs but refused to throw in the towel, carrying the injury for over two days. In IRC Two-Handed, Willy Bissante's Class 40, *Lou*, from Guadeloupe, came out on top.

"We wanted to set a course which showcased the Caribbean, giving the competitors some stunning scenery, but also we wanted it to be a challenge," says Stan Pearson, one of the committee who devised the course. "The feedback we are getting says that we have achieved both of those things."

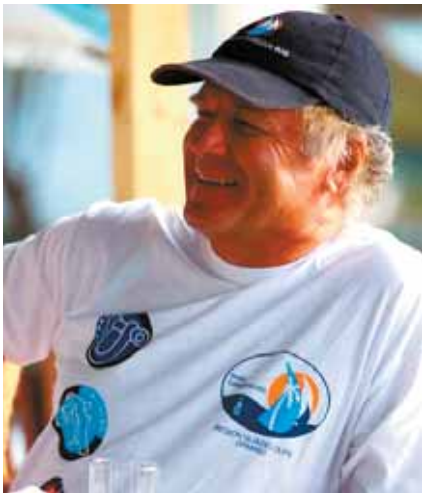
Commodore of the Antigua Yacht Club, Elizabeth Jordan, commented after the race, "To bring an exciting new event to the Caribbean has long been a dream of the members of Antigua Yacht Club and with the efforts of the RORC the dream has become a reality. The RORC Caribbean 600 can be added to the calendar of the most prestigious events in the Caribbean."

Thanks to Louay Habib for information used in this report. For full results visit http://caribbean600.rorc.org.



ALL PHOTOS: TIM WRIGHT

Top: Line honors went to Region Guadeloupe, *owned by Guadeloupe sailor Claude Thelier. Launched in 1990 as* Primagaz, *Laurent Bourgnon sailed her to Route du Rhum victory twice. In 1994, she set the west-to-east singlehanded transatlantic record at 7 days, 2 hours, 34 minutes, 42 seconds*
Above: The inaugural Caribbean 600 fleet blasts off from Antigua



Region Guadeloupe's *happy skipper John Burnie. A founder of this new event, he's an RORC member and his day job is managing the Nautor's Swan charter base in Guadeloupe*

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FINE TURNOUT FOR FIRST RUNNING

by Jeff Fisher

Clear skies and a fair breeze welcomed the first annual South Grenada Regatta held at Le Phare Bleu Marina and Resort, situated where a valley meets the sea, just across from Calivigny Island on the south coast of Grenada. This small harbour has a distinctive, old, red lightship on one of the docks. Beaches border well-tended gardens interspersed with tropical hardwood cottages, a fine setting for the weekend sailing event held February 27th through March 1st.



Cruising Class and J/24s set out for novel racecourses on Grenada's south coast

The Rocky Pontoons, an impromptu quartet from Switzerland, created some great music on the Friday night to launch the festivities. Fourteen boats signed up for the two races that would take place the next day. The weekend would include more than just yacht races. There was a very elaborate "pirate's trail" that involved manoeuvring through various obstacles, both on land and at sea — great entertainment for the kids. Off the beach there was junior sailing with both Lasers and Optimists on the Sunday. Another fun event — speed trials using somebody else's 15-horsepower dinghy over a marked course — was available to quench our thirst for speed.

The Saturday arrived with great weather for sailing. A Fun Class, a Cruising Class and three J/24s made up the monohull fleet; a lone multihull — Fredrik Jensen's *Rattata* — went out for a go at the appropriate times. Two races along the south coast were run: the Glovers Race, from Le Phare Bleu Marina downwind, around Glovers Island and back; and the 12 Degrees race, upwind along the south coast to the Westerhall marker at 12°N, then downwind to Point Salines where another marker at 12°N was rounded.

In Cruising Class, the Hobie 33 *Category 5* finished first in both races. Jason Fletcher's Albin Stratus 36, *Apero*, was overall second and Scott Watson's Jeanneau Sunfast 52, *Boxxer*, third. In the Fun Class, the sharpie *Hogfish Maximus* took top honours overall, with Rodney Hall's *Caradow* second and Tosho Yakkatokuo's *Gibswill* third. In the Js, it was *Die Hard* with a first and a second who took the day; *Tempest*, driven by Mark Solomon took second place, followed by Bru Pierce on *Blew By You*.



The Category 5 *crew, winners of the Cruising Class. Young crewmember Kenzo Szyjan (fourth from left) also won the Optimist races*

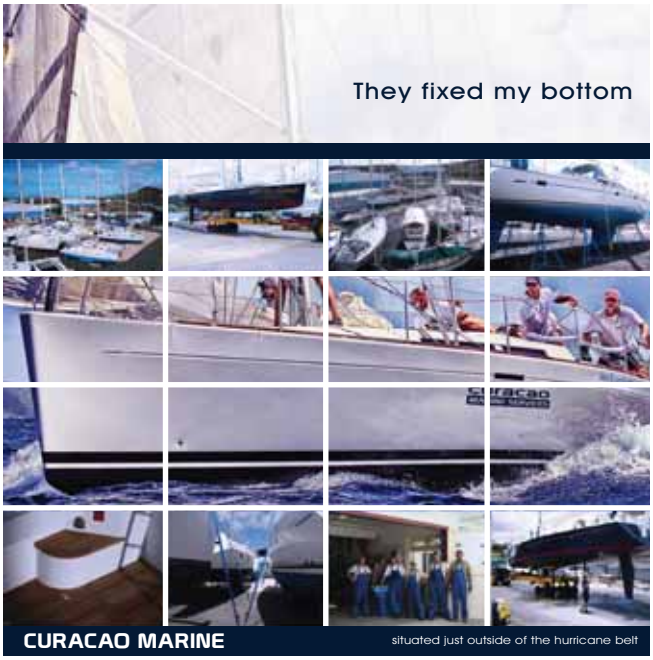
Besides boosted egos, the prizes given by the sponsors were well received. Robbie Yearwood on *Die Hard* received a small outboard from McIntyre Brothers and wine from North South. Chris Morejohn on *Hogfish Maximus* received free dinners from Le Phare Bleu. And Richard Szyjan on *Category 5* as overall winner received two trophies from Art Act Design, rum from Westerhall Rums, weekend accommodations, wine and champagne. Second and third placers also received liquid prizes.

Sunday was for the junior sailors in the Optimists and Lasers. Four races were run during the day just in front of the marina. Kenzo Szyjan won all four races in his Optimist Class, second was Shakeem Collins and Kwasi Paul third. In the Laser Class Kevin Banfield was the winner followed by Vaughn Bruno with Michael McQueen in third place.

After the prizegiving and awards, more fine music from The Rocky Pontoons rocked away the night.

The year 2009 has seen the launching of many new Caribbean regattas, and the new South Grenada Regatta is a worthy addition to the calendar.

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Dismasting Marks Holmberg's Sole Loss in 'Great Experiment'



Above: Match-racing men: winning skipper Peter Holmberg with regatta organizer Robbie Ferron
Below: Holmberg and Fitzgerald nearly neck-and-neck; when the breeze dropped, it got tricky

This year has seen a number of new yacht racing events in the Caribbean, and not least among them is a dedicated Match Racing series in the lead-up to the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. "There's a tremendous amount of interest among sailors in match racing," said Budget Marine founder Robbie Ferron. "This new event gives us the opportunity to promote new and exciting forms of racing to the Caribbean." Ferron also serves as steering committee chairman for the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta.

The inaugural Budget Marine Match Racing regatta took place in Simpson Bay Lagoon, St. Maarten, on March 3rd, with three-person crews racing windward-leeward courses aboard Jeanneau Sunfast 20s. An ISAF-sanctioned Grade 5 event organized by the Sint Maarten Yacht Club, it had a total prize purse of US$9,000: $5,000 for first place; $3,000 for second; and $1,000 for third.

Six crews raced. World match-racing champion Peter Holmberg from the US Virgin Islands defeated English skipper Marc Fitzgerald in a straight-set, 3-0 victory, to win the finals. Fitzgerald is the skipper of Sir Peter Harrison's Farr 115, *Sojana*. Russian match-racer Eugeny Nikiforov placed third.

Holmberg's lone loss in the five-flight round robin that determined the finalists was in a tight race with Fitzgerald in the second race of the day. It wasn't a matter of deficient tactics or boat speed, however; Holmberg and his team were forced to withdraw after their Jeanneau 20 was dismasted on the second windward leg. "After we cleaned everything up we found a cotter pin on deck so I think the leeward shrouds came loose before we tacked," he said.

"I just told the fellas, 'For the rest of our lives we can say we beat Peter Holmberg in a match race'," laughed Fitzgerald. "We just don't need to discuss the details." Holmberg and Fitzgerald advanced to the finals with identical 4-1 scores in the round robin.

Good boat handling paid a premium in the early racing, conducted in 16 to 18 knots of puffy breeze. For the afternoon series of final races, the wind moderated to a more manageable ten to 12 knots.

"Good stuff in the morning," said Holmberg. "It was very settled and heavy air so you had to figure out how to go fast in that breeze with these boats. So that was a challenge for the crews. In the afternoon a couple of squalls came through and the breeze dropped so it got pretty tricky. So you had to balance it out between covering your opponent and sailing to the next puff."

Before the racing began, Budget Marine's Ferron said the new match-racing series would be "a great experiment." Afterwards, he deemed the experiment a success.

"Match racing is here to stay," he said. "We all know it's going to get bigger. The question is how. This was a great start and I'm very satisfied. I'm committed to make sure something evolves to continue what we've started."

Holmberg seconded those thoughts. "My personal dream is to see more match racing here in the Caribbean," he said. "We started one in the Virgin Islands this year, and now Budget Marine has successfully run this event. I think we'll learn what we did from this year and make some improvements for next year. I'd be happy to help them to see if we can grow it some more."

In the shorter term, however, Holmberg had to figure out what to do with his prize winnings. "I'm going to split it with my crew, like always," he said.



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Big Wind, Big Swell, Big Excitement!

by Stéphane Legendre

The 29th edition of the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, held March 5th through 8th, will be remembered for its winds and the damage they caused. Although winds eased a bit for the last day of racing, 25 knots gusting to over 35 was Heineken racers' lot for the first two racing days. At least six masts came down, a few hulls were holed in collisions, and spinnakers exploded like colourful popcorn. Racers also suffered from an assortment of injuries — fortunately nothing serious enough to endanger their lives.

That was the bad part, but the fun was present every minute of the races and, as usual, back on land the excited crews had a lot to tell about their "red hot" racing day.



STÉPHANE LEGENDRE

Spinnaker Class 2 at the start. Yeoman XXXII *(sail number GBR124) ended up second in class. Fresh from an overall win at the Pineapple Cup,* Privateer *(second racing boat from right) was first*

On the squally Saturday, when I boarded a Farr 65 from the UK-based OnDeck racing and charter company, I knew the day's racing was going to be rough. But I never imagined that by the end of the day we would have broken a genoa halyard and leach, and ripped the mainsail, which caused us to abandon the race.

On the Friday, competitors braved impressive winds and seas on the round-the-island course. On the Saturday, the organization took the very wise decision to cancel the Marigot Race's finish line with its nine-foot swell, and end the race off Simpson Bay instead, but the party took place on Marigot's village square just the same. That was the major change on the water. On land, Philipsburg's evening party took place on the Kim Sha Beach on the Friday, as did the Sunday closing ceremony.

There were 237 boats registered this year, ranging from the Farr 115 *Sojana* (in her fifth Heineken) to Gunboat catamarans to Melges to bareboats. This is quite a turnout, considering the international economical context and the difficulties encountered by sponsors.

As Steering Committee Chairman Robbie Ferron puts it: "How do you measure the success of a regatta? Is it the number of boats that enter? Is it the number of protests heard? Is it the closeness of the sailing? Or is it the number of beers consumed? Unfortunately, success is not easily measured empirically — although the numbers might help. The ultimate success has to be found in the energy and excitement of the event, which probably converts into number of boats and close finishes and beers consumed, but also stands on its own."

Lost Horizon, owned by the indomitable James Dobbs from Antigua, was named "Best Boat" of the regatta; the J/122 recorded four straight wins to dominate the Spinnaker 4 Class.

See you all next year for more fun and excitement!

For complete results (including Bareboat and Multihull Classes, and IGY Commodore's Cup) visit www.heinekenregatta.com.

St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2009 Winners

Spinnaker 1
1) *Team Selene*, Swan 80, Selene Maritime, USA
2) *Sojana*, Farr 115, Peter Harrison/Marc Fitzgerald, UK
3) *Nikata*, Swan 82s, Matt Hardy, UK

Spinnaker 2
1) *Privateer*, Farr/Cookson 50, Ronald O'Handley, USA
2) *Yeoman XXXII*, Rogers 46, David Aisher/Barry Lewis, UK
3) *Storm*, Reichel Pugh 44, Peter Peake, Trinidad & Tobago

Spinnaker 3
1) *Lazy Dog*, Bénéteau 44.7, Sergio Sagramoso Puerto Rico
2) *Mad IV*, Grand Soleil 40, Clive Llewellyn, France
3) *Barra*, Morris 48, Bruce MacNeil, USA

Spinnaker 4
1) *Lost Horizon*, J/122 - James Dobbs, Antigua
2) *El Ocaso*, J/120, Rick Wesslund/Mike Caldwell, USA
3) *Elandra*, Bénéteau 40.7, Calvin Reed/John Linton, UK

Spinnaker 5
1) *Augustine*, Bénéteau 42, Tony Sayer, Antigua
2) *Speedy Nemo*, Dufour 34, Raymond Magras, St. Barthelemy
3) *Kick'em Jenny*, Bénéteau 36.7, Ian Hope Ross, St. Maarten

Spinnaker 6
1) *Bad Girl*, J/100, Robert W. Armstrong, USVI
2) *Jurakan*, Melges 32, Dave West, BVI
3) *Budget Marine/Gill*, Budget Marine/Andrea Scarabelli, St. Maarten

Non-Spinnaker 1
1) *Rapajam*, Bénéteau 53F5, Ralph Johnson, Barbados
2) *imaginesailing*, Bénéteau Oceanis 461, John Dickinson, USA
3) *Acadia*, Frers Custom 48, Burt Keenan, USA

Non-Spinnaker 2
1) *Streaker*, Soverel 30, Sandy Mair, BVI
2) *Elethea*, Bénéteau First 38, Rick Gormley, Antigua
3) *Schtroumph*, Bénéteau First 39, Jean-Michel Valade, St. Martin



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REGATTA NEWS

No Record for 'Challenging' Pineapple Cup Race

Held since 1961, the 811-mile distance race from Fort Lauderdale, Florida to Montego Bay, Jamaica, has officially concluded for 2009. Roger Sturgeon's STP65, *Rosebud/Team DYT* (Fort Lauderdale), took line honors with an elapsed time of 2 days, 11 hours, 28 minutes and 35 seconds, just one hour shy of the race record set in 2005, and won IRC A class. Daniel Woolery's King 40, *Soozal* (Alamo, California), won the four-boat IRC B class, while Jack Desmond's Swan 48, *Affinity,* won the three-boat PHRF class. Ron O'Hanley's *Privateer* took the overall title for the 29th running of this ocean-racing classic, and collected the silver Pineapple Cup. The Pineapple Cup is awarded based on a PHRF conversion in order to combine both fleets.

Twelve boats started the biennial race, ranging from the 70-foot *Denali* to the 36-foot *SpiderGlide*.

Privateer finished on the morning of February 9th. "In all honesty we didn't think we were in contention when we got in," said O'Hanley. "The race was very challenging and we felt we sailed a good race, but we also knew the breeze was heavy behind us. PHRF ratings are very wide and historically it's been mid-size boats that have won." O'Hanley praised his crew, which has been together since 2003.

"We had plenty of wind," said Sturgeon, whose *Rosebud/Team DYT* was greeted at the finish line with the traditional case of Jamaica's Red Stripe beer. "But it was more on our nose and not typical for this race, not in those proportions."

The Pineapple Cup – Montego Bay Race is sponsored by the Lauderdale Yacht Club, the Montego Bay Yacht Club, the Jamaican Yachting Association, and the Storm Trysail Club (Larchmont, NY), and administered by the SORC Race Management team.

For full results, visit www.montegobayrace.com.

'St. Maarten's Best' Sail NECOL Regatta

On February 7th and 8th, most of St. Maarten's best sailors were on the starting line for the third annual NECOL Regatta, providing intense competition in eight teams. Conditions that were never too strong or too light provided ideal racing off Baie Nettle in the Simpson Bay Lagoon.

The winner of the fleet of Lagoon Sailboat Rental Jeanneau 20s was Andrea Scarabelli with his Budget Marine/Gill team who, with 28 points, had a commanding lead over the second place team headed by Frits Bus (42 points). Third place with 48 points went to Bernard Sillem and his Dutch French Connection team. Paul Miller (fourth place) squeezed Robbie Ferron into fifth by a point and Lyn Rapley (sixth place) did the same thing to Shag Morton (seventh place). Ruargh Findlay brought up the rear, yet still had two third places on the Sunday morning, reputedly with the help of his Optimist sailing, tactically proficient son, Rhone Findlay.

The sailors particularly appreciated the regatta because the competitors were so close and the results show some of the top sailors coming way down the fleet on occasion while many of the lower-end finishers regularly enjoyed periods at the front of the fleet. The fleet sailed 13 races and the end results were largely a result of consistency.

This year the regatta included a Laser fleet. Ernst Looser and Bill Mintz took on three of St. Maarten's youth sailors, with the result being that Ernst had to fight Jolyon Ferron down to the last race to gain his lead. Both Ernst and Jolyon tied for first with 11 points but the tie was broken by Ernst having four first place finishes to Jolyon's three. Third place went to Harry Antrobus who just nudged Stephen Looser into fourth place by one point. Bill Mintz brought up the rear, keeping the youth sailors on their toes.

Also announced at the awards was the St. Maarten Yacht Club and Lagoon Sailboat Rental Sailor of the Year 2008: Rien Korteknie.

The NECOL regatta is the Sint Maarten Yacht Club's regatta that focuses on sailors present in St Maarten. NECOL is a marine technology company long established on St. Maarten that is led by Andrew Rapley, who also served as Race Officer for the event.

16th Budget Marine Valentine's Regatta, Antigua

The 16th edition of this event was held from February 13th through 15th, and continued a tradition of good regattas held in flat waters with a great spirit of sportsmanship. Organized by the Jolly Harbor Yacht Club, the regatta consisted of two racing days in the Five Islands Harbor adjacent to Jolly Harbor, with a 15-boat fleet. Winds were always 12 knots but never exceptionally strong.



Don't give an inch! The most closely competitive class in Antigua's Valentine Regatta was Racer Cruiser, where Encore *sailed to victory by just one point*

The racing class was dominated by Jamie Dobbs' J/122, *Lost Horizon*, sailed by a top-notch crew that made few mistakes. The indomitable Bernie Evans-Wong followed him around the course in the Cal 40 *Huey Too* at a fairly consistent distance to take second, and third place went to Paul Hoj Jensen and Sven Harder in the Dragon *Compass Point*.

The most competitive class was the Racer Cruiser, where Jerry Bardoe's Contention 33, *Encore*, managed to squeeze ahead of Tanner Jones's J/30, *Blue Peter*, by one point. A tough battle between the 6 Metre *BIWI Magic* and Tony Sayers' Beneteau First 42, *Augustine*, for third ended with a tie of 18 points, and went in favor of the former, skippered by Geoffrey Pidduck.

The spirit of this regatta was best captured by the Cruising Class, in which a mixed group of passionate sailors drive a variety of boats around the course with great spirit and old sails. Coming out on top was Colin Jones sailing a Columbia 34, *Cydia*, with great skill. David Milner sailed his Van de Stadt 30, *Fiesta*, into second place and Charles Kenlock took third place with the British Folkboat *May*. Winners of the Racer Cruiser and Cruising classes both received US$1,000 worth of Micron 66 paint, sponsored by Interlux.

Sailors welcomed Jean-Michel Marizou and crew from Guadeloupe, as the rest of the sailors were locally based. Race officer Stephen Parry flew in from the UK to again officiate the event. Additional prizes were Osculati binoculars, Leatherman Skeletools and Xantrex inverters (all available at Budget Marine).

The event is sponsored by Budget Marine chandlery, which has its oldest "branch" in Jolly Harbour. Budget Marine, operating in the Caribbean since 1982, has locations in Antigua, Bonaire, Curaçao, Grenada, St. Maarten, St. Martin, St. Thomas and Trinidad.

St. Croix Valentine Optis: Sail and Bail!

Ellen Sanpere reports: The St. Croix Yacht Club hosted its annual Valentine Optimist Regatta in Teague Bay, February 20th through 22nd. A Race Clinic for the youngsters was held on the Friday, and Principal Race Officer Ronnie Ramos and his all-volunteer race committee ran ten races in especially tough conditions. It was rough inside the reef, according to Regatta Director Julie San Martin, and "sail and bail" took on a greater urgency as capsizing and righting became routine throughout the two-day competition. "The kids were just worn out," she said.

Competitors came from Tortola's Royal BVI Yacht Club, St. Thomas, St. John, Frederiksted Community Boating and St. Croix Yacht Club, with many of the dinghies brought to St. Croix on larger "mother ships" by cooperating parents. The junior sailors were also offered housing by volunteer hosts.

Kyle Brego of St. John, one of the older and larger skippers at age 14, used his weight to good advantage, winning top honors over Addison Hackstaff, first finisher in the Blue Fleet. Kyle won the Red Fleet, and Colin Brego topped in the White Fleet.

—Continued on next page



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—*Continued from previous page*

At the shortest end of the experience range, Curtis "CJ" Walker, 13, of St. Croix won the Green Fleet, followed by Harry Hoffman and Casey Bergstrom. Good finishes and fewer DNFs was the key.



ROB JONES

In windy conditions, crew weight was an advantage. On the lighter end of the scale, Mollee Donovan placed fourth in Blue Fleet

The winners were:

Overall (16 boats)
1) Kyle Brego
2) Addison Hackstaff
3) Jonathan Woods

Blue (6 boats)
1) Addison Hackstaff
2) Jonathan Woods
3) Jason Putley

Red (3 boats)
1) Kyle Brego
2) Augustina Barbuto
3) Barney Nockolds

White (7 boats)
1) Colin Brego
2) Owen McNeil
3) Thomas Walden

Green (10 boats)
1) CJ Walker
2) Harry Hoffman
3) Casey Bergstrom

World ARC Nears Finish in St. Lucia

The inaugural World ARC cruising fleet, comprising 37 yachts from 13 nations that set off from St. Lucia in January 2008, is expected to "close the circle" in St. Lucia as this issue of *Compass* goes to press. After a stopover at Grenada's Port Louis Marina in early March, the yachts were expected to visit St. Vincent & the Grenadines before a scheduled rendezvous at The Marina at Marigot Bay, St. Lucia on March 26th. A parade of sail will end the circumnavigation back at Rodney Bay, 15 months and 25,000 nautical miles after the World ARC commenced.

The rally's final ocean passage sailed from South Africa to Brazil via St. Helena. Organisers World Cruising Club took the decision to route the rally via South Africa, an option that has proved timely, since pirate attacks off the coast of Somalia have caused Lloyds of London to withdraw insurance cover in the Red Sea.

Meanwhile, the entry list is open for World ARC 2010/11 and to date 34 yachts have entered. World ARC is open to monohulls with a minimum LOA of 40 feet (12.19m), and multihulls between 40 feet (12.19m) and 60 feet (18.29m). Minimum crew requirement is two people onboard each yacht. World Cruising has published the proposed itinerary for the 2010/11 World ARC at www.worldcruising.com/worldarc2010/itinerary.aspx.

Celebrations Trophy, Guadeloupe

The Celebrations Trophy Regatta will be held at Petit Cul de Sac du Marin and Gosier Bay, Guadeloupe, on April 18th and 19th, organized by the Triskell Organisation. The race is open to Beach Catamarans, Liveaboard Catamarans, Coastal Monohulls and Liveaboard Monohulls. All races will be windward - leeward courses.

For more information visit www.triskellcup.com.

Transcaraibes Rally to Hit Jamaica

On April 22nd the Errol Flynn Marina in Port Antonio, Jamaica, will be hosting one stopover of the 10th annual Transcaraibes Rally 2009. As many as 25 yachts are expected to be participating in this year's rally, which includes Jamaica for the first time. The rally starts in Guadeloupe and includes stops in St. Martin, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba. The group will be in Port Antonio through April 25th when they will depart on the final leg of the Rally to Cienfuegos, Cuba. It is expected that a number of the yachts will also call at Port Antonio on their return to Guadeloupe.

For more information on the Rally, visit www.Transcaraibes.com.

St. Barts Hosts New Event for Island Boats

The inaugural West Indies Regatta, to be held May 1st through 4th, is open to all traditional West Indian sailing craft. The idea for the Regatta was formed by LouLou Magras of St. Barts and Alexis Andrews of Antigua. St. Barts used to be the main port of call for down-island trading vessels. They would sail up to exchange rums, fish and produce for liquor and cigarettes to be smuggled back to the Windwards. As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, entries include six Carriacou sloops and the *Alexander Hamilton*, a Nevis schooner. With a renewed interest in traditional sail gaining momentum throughout the Lesser Antilles, it is hoped that the regatta will promote and encourage traditional West Indian boatbuilding.



DOUGLAS PYLE/CLEAN SWEET WIND

A Carriacou cargo sloop in Gustavia, St. Barts, circa 1975

For more information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 44 through 46.

Largest Ever ARC Europe Set to Go

It was 21 years ago that the concept of ARC Europe first came to fruition when the inaugural event, then named "TransARC", set off in 1988. In 2000 the rally was re-named ARC Europe to better reflect its association with the world-famous ARC (Atlantic Rally for Cruisers).

ARC Europe is based on the format of the ARC and enables yachts to cruise west to east to Europe at the end of the Caribbean season as part of a fun rally. There are two starting points on the same date, namely St. Augustine in Florida and Tortola in the British Virgin Islands where on May 7th, for the first time, ARC Europe will be starting from Nanny Cay Marina.

For more information visit www.worldcruising.com/arceurope.

Scotiabank Caribbean Opti Regatta in June

The Caribbean Sailing Association-sanctioned 2009 Scotiabank Caribbean International Optimist Regatta is celebrating its 17th year of fostering junior sailing in the Caribbean. Hosts of the 2009 event, to be held June 19th through 21st In St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, are the St. Thomas Yacht Club and the Virgin Islands Sailing Association.

"We hope to host more than 96 sailors this year (last year's participant number), despite the challenging economy because youth sailing provides wonderful physical, social and cultural opportunities," says regatta director Cindy Hackstaff. "Our regatta is a great way to practice for the Optimist North American Championships, which start June 30th in Boca Chica, Dominican Republic."

Junior sailors from eight to 15 years of age are expected from the US Virgin Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, St. Maarten, the Dominican Republic, Spain, the U.S. mainland and elsewhere.

What makes this event special, says Hackstaff, "is that we have an extremely high caliber of racing amongst the young sailors, plus we always have great sailing conditions. Many sailors use the pre-regatta clinic (June 15th through 17th) for training, and we also have a team racing event. Finally, we have fun activities and evening events that cater to youth sailors, although the parents have a great time too."

"The idea of the clinic is too offer high-level coaching to a wide range of skill levels," says Agustin 'Argy' Resano, who is heading up the clinic with Optisailor coaches Gonzalo 'Bocha' Pollitzer and Manuel 'Manny' Resano, as well as Leandro Spina from the No Excuses Sailing Team in Florida.

For more information visit www.styc.net.

21st Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament, St. Thomas

July 12th is the date set for the 21st Annual Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament at Hull Bay Hideaway, St. Thomas. This one-day inshore fishing tournament offers the best prizes and attracts more participants that any other of its kind in the Virgin Islands.

First organized by the Northside Sportfishing Club in 1987, the tournament last year attracted 247 anglers, including 35 junior anglers, aboard 68 boats. Last year, Derek Quetel, aboard a 27-foot Rambo, *4 KIT 2*, reeled in a record-setting 54.11-pound kingfish and took home prizes that included US$2,000 in cash. Quetel, who also won Best Boat and Best Captain, won in three of over a dozen prize categories. Award categories also include lady anglers, junior anglers and other fish species like jack, bonito, tuna, mackerel and dolphin.

The Annual Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament is one of many activities that celebrate French Heritage Week in July. As well as being a fun-packed day for the whole family, this Tournament benefits the Joseph Sibilly School, St. Thomas Rescue, The American Red Cross and The Family Resource Center, as well as provides college scholarships for students of French descent.

For more information, contact tournament director Monica Lester at (340) 774-5206.





DESTINATIONS

Bonaire: The Island with the Ice Cream Sea

by Jack Foard

PK was delighted the moment she first smelled land five miles east of Bonaire. Her nose went into a spasm and she danced around my feet all the way to Kralendijk. Kralendijk is a colorful town with lots of bright colors, yellows and blues, with architecture that I suppose would be called gaudy Dutch colonial.

Desiré volunteered to get *Famous Potatoes* shipshape while PK and I headed in to clear Customs and Immigration. Bonaire officials rank very high in friendliness and efficiency and it took little time to clear in.

"Welcome to Bonaire; we hope you enjoy your time here," said each agent I spoke to with a genuine smile.

There is one thing I long for after spending a month or two in remote tropical areas of the world where there is little hint of civilization. That would be ice cream!

I knew Bonaire had to have an ice cream shop and as soon as I cleared Customs and Immigration I went in search of it. It didn't take long. Right across from the dinghy dock I found the mother lode, in the Harbor Side shops. What a joy it was to lean my hands against the chilled glass and peer down into the freezers. I quickly settled on a big cup of mint chocolate chip. PK trotted expectantly at my heels as I walked back across the cobblestone street, precious ice cream in hand, and scrambled back into our dink. I cast off the painter and just floated away, sitting on the bow with my feet dangling in the still, clear water, the sun hot overhead.

As I spooned the cold creamy treat into my mouth I looked down at the cup in my hand and realized that the mint-green ice cream mimicked the light-green mint-colored water at my feet, and scattered rocks on the white sandy sea bottom looked like much like hunks of chocolate. Suddenly I felt like I was floating in a sea of mint chocolate chip ice cream. What a wonderful feeling, to be floating in such a delicious sea... a magic carpet ride. (Wow, it reminded me of my hippy days long ago.)

Two large green-and-blue parrotfish seemed suspended in air beneath me and they were soon joined by a school of blue tangs, darting and flowing under my feet, then yellow-and-black striped sergeant majors took their place.

I finished my ice cream and PK was thrilled to lick the cup clean as I picked up my dive mask and snorkel and slipped silently into Octopuses Garden. PK was not about to be left behind and she dove in after me and climbed up on my back. We floated just off the sea wall in about five feet of water, mesmerized by the flashing kaleidoscope of colorful fish. A big spotted brown moray peered up at me from under a ledge, his mouth opening and closing to push water through his gills making him look ominous. Brave little yellow-tailed damselfish swam past his gaping mouth without a care in the world.

Was this like heaven? I wondered briefly. No, this was Bonaire, the diver's paradise I had longed to visit since I became a scuba diver in 1966.

Oh my, I could have snorkeled along the sea wall for the rest of the day, but I knew Des was waiting patiently back at the boat.

Des and I hooked up our Brownies Third Lung hookah rig and dove right off the back of our catamaran, down to the thick growth of coral that began 30 feet below us along the edge of the shelf that fell off into the dark blue depths. The healthy, vibrant coral formations got thicker and more luxuriant as they spilled over the cliffs into the clear deep waters below.

The coral gardens were teeming with multicolored tropical fish, from tiny blue wrasses to fat green parrotfish. When I breathed very quietly I could hear big red and gray stoplight parrotfish munching on hunks of algae-covered coral.

I paused frequently to see how many fish I could identify, never seeing fewer than 20 different species and occasionally a new fish I had never seen before.

There are 98 official dive sites surrounding Bonaire, but the truth is the diving right along the mooring field was so outstanding that we didn't really need to go anywhere else. At any time of the day or night we might look off the transom of *Famous Potatoes* and see scuba bubbles boiling to the surface. At night, glowing fireflies drifted deep below us as intrepid night divers explored the coral cliffs below. At times it all seemed more like an aquarium than a wild ocean, and Des was able to relax and enjoy her first night dive here without any worries.

We enjoyed day after day of superb diving around Bonaire and Klein Bonaire, but all too soon it was time for us to set sail for Aruba.

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Before leaving Bonaire there was one person I just had to meet: Captain Don Stewart. Way back in the 1960s he realized the uniqueness of Bonaire and he worked hard to protect its natural wonders, long before it was the cool thing to do. He did it out of love.

He was way ahead of his time, building the first "eco dive resort" in Bonaire: Captain Don's Habitat.

I heard he could often be found at Rum Runners on the beach at his resort, so we went there for dinner on our last night in Bonaire. Our waitress pointed him out and eventually I caught his eye and smiled at him. Without hesitation he returned the smile and hobbled over to our table, shuffling slowing along on old wooden crutches. He's an old man now, probably in his 80s.

He greeted us like we were old friends and told us that he had just bought his crypt that very day and was feeling rather celebratory! Smiling like a Cheshire cat, he let me know that his health was failing and his days were numbered but that he sure had enjoyed each and every one of them, pounding my back for emphasis. Before parting, he grabbed my hand and squeezed it hard and encouraged me to "enjoy each day of your journey." And with that he was gone.





Above, PK enjoys a snorkeling trip as much as her humans do

Left: The author (left) with scuba diving legend Captain Don Stewart



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LOOK AT THE TIME!

(Are We Cruisers or Are We Snoozers?)

by John Rowland

Unbelievable!! It's a quarter to February!!! As I write this, it is 2345 hours on January 31st, 2009 and we're still in Prickly Bay, Grenada. I just checked the log-book. We arrived August 14th, 2008. That's over five months ago!

If we stay here for St. Valentine's Day, we'll have been here six months! Are we cruisers or are we snoozers?!? How did this happen?

The log says we arrived on August 14th, '08. As usual when we arrive in Grenada, there is a long list of things we need for the boat and a shorter list of maintenance and repair items that require the boat be on the hard to complete or that require technical assistance to assure a satisfactory completion. Since we had not contacted Spice Island Marine ahead of time, we could not secure a haul-out date until October 3rd, 2008. (Note to self: A schedule may be the enemy of a true cruiser but, sometimes you take things to extremes!) That gave us about six weeks to accomplish the tasks which did not require the yard and to enjoy Grenada and the cruising community which it attracts.

Enza Marine supplied the help our ailing refrigerator required. Island Water World and Budget Marine supplied access to the various bits and pieces we had not been able to find farther north in the island chain. Many of the tasks cleared the list as the days progressed.

We also had time to reacquaint ourselves with many of our favorite restaurants and bars in Grenada. We are members of the Grenada Yacht Club and Christine, the lady who runs the restaurant there, still serves the best curried goat in the islands. Space does not permit a complete listing of all of our favorite haunts in Grenada but, rest assured, as each task was accomplished there was a commensurate reward in the form of a visit to one of those establishments.

As soon as we arrived we realized many of our friends were already in south Grenada. Our friends introduced us to new folks and soon our circle of social contacts grew significantly. August and September dissolved in a river of tasks completed, pleasant outings to our favorite haunts and social engagements with cruising friends, both old and new.

Then it was time to haul out at Spice Island Marine. Once hauled, we spent about a week making arrangements for the work we wanted done: new bottom paint, new davits, and installation of solar panels, just to name a few. With things organized for our return and the boat safely strapped down and stanchions chained together, we made our planned two-week trip to North America to catch up on Nancy's parents, our children and, of course, the grandchildren. On our trip, we even managed a couple of days at the Annapolis Boat Show to procure a few much-desired items.



The number of cruisers at the wine bar's weekly Ladies' Night is steadily increasing. Why are we not surprised?

When we returned, October was waning and it was time to execute the plans we had put in place before we left. We all know how the schedules associated with boat projects tend to creep. As October slipped away and November became a reality, living on the hard morphed from an adventure to an inconvenience to a state of existence closely akin to having a tooth requiring a root canal. We changed our scheduled launch date so many times, the yard manager threatened to charge us for the White-Out correction fluid required for the changes. (Actually, I believe he was kidding. At least I couldn't find the line item in the bill.)

But at last the work was done. As she sat in the straps of the travel-lift, new bottom paint gleaming and the new davits sparkling like the work of art they are, the "on the hard" ordeal seemed worth it.

On November 14th, 2008, we splashed. We dropped the hook in a protected spot just south of the Prickly Bay Coast Guard dock, among our friends' boats. There were a few leftover tasks, which we attacked amidst speculation on when we could depart from Grenada. In the meantime, with the official end of hurricane season behind us, more and more of our friends were arriving, some coming up from Trinidad or Venezuela and some coming back from an extended stay in North America. Our social calendar filled with happy hour gatherings, pot lucks, having folks to dinner on our boat, going to dinner on other boats, and so on.

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Then there was the e-mail from my nephew telling us there would be a gathering of our clan for American Thanksgiving at his home in Kentucky. A chance to see some of the grandchildren and children! A chance to see my niece and nephews whom we had not seen in four years! A chance to see the grandnieces and nephews, some of whom we had never seen! With the prediction of settled weather and three of our friends anchored around us, we hopped a plane and left the boat on the hook for a week. When we returned, filled with turkey and chocolate chip cookies, knees still sore from the traditional Thanksgiving Day touch football game, we realized, unbelievably, it was December!!!

Now we started looking for a "weather window" to make the run up to Carriacou. This is never an ideal trip, with the prevailing winds this time of year on the nose, the seas generally on the nose and the currents, you guessed it, on the nose. More comfortable to spend the holiday season among your friends and the welcoming and friendly people of Grenada.

On Boxing Day (December 26th for the uninitiated), a pot luck/jam session is organized at Whisper Cove Marina. Cruisers from five different bays in south Grenada converge on the event by bus, taxi and dinghy — perhaps some even swam? An outstanding afternoon and evening of renewing old friendships and meeting new people. Far better than getting beaten up on an uncomfortable passage.

Then it is January. The New Year ushered in the company of friends and the Christmas Winds have arrived. To add to the weather mix, exceptionally cold and stormy weather coming off North America keeps the Atlantic churned up with gale-force winds, driving higher than normal seas down into the island chain. Also, an unusual combination of meteorological features spawns a multitude of storms, squalls and generally wet, miserable conditions. Every day we have choices; we can make an uncomfortable passage or we can take advantage of the things Grenada has to offer and enjoy the cruising community here. There is a wine bar that offers a "Ladies Night Special" on Thursdays. For several weeks Nancy has joined a group to take advantage of this and each week the number of ladies in the group is increasing. What a choice: Go out with a group of our friends for a glass of wine and pleasant conversation or make a passage with the boat doing an imitation of a corkscrew-style roller coaster? Well, maybe we can go Friday? But each day there are more choices. Get tossed around by confused seas while making three knots with the wind on the nose or go to the best sushi restaurant in the islands? Get your brains beaten out going to weather or go to a beach bar and listen to a great blues band? Day after day we must make these difficult choices. Folks, this ain't rocket science!

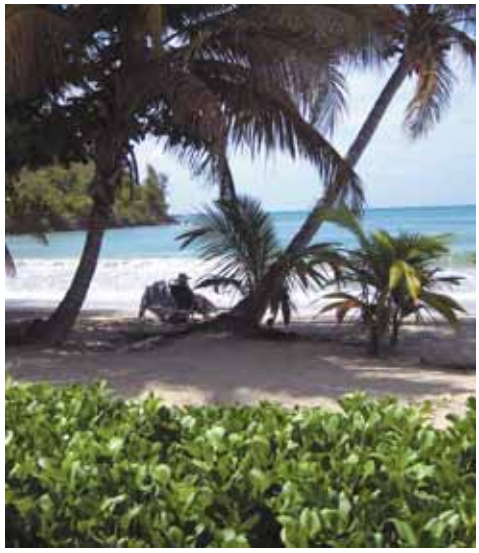
So here we are, at a quarter to February, enjoying the comfort of Grenada and the cruising community, waiting for a weather window. Life is good!



CHRIS DOYLE (2)

Above: With an ample choice of boatwork, recreational and social opportunities, the anchorage at Prickly Bay on Grenada's south coast has been a popular cruisers' hangout for decades

Below: On the beach at the head of the bay. Are we cruising or are we snoozing? Do we have to choose?







Leaving the Caribbean: THE BASICS

by Don Street

Timing is Important

Skippers leaving the Caribbean often make the mistake of leaving too soon, and get their tails kicked.

Boats leaving the Caribbean for Florida often find themselves in trouble if they leave before mid-April. They run into a "norther" — a northwest wind, dead on the nose. This wind then clocks to the north and then northeast, making the Silver Bank and the Bahamas a dead lee (deadly) shore. Boats heading farther up the US East Coast also frequently run into trouble with a late-season northwesterly, blasting them with high winds and a severe temperature drop. But by late April, the northers that force their way down to Florida are not too strong.

Boats heading northwest to Charleston, Morehead/Beaufort, or the Chesapeake should wait till mid- or late May, as they are traversing an area where subtropical hurricanes can crop up through April and possibly later. These small, intense subtropical hurricanes were only spotted in recent years when weather information was gathered from satellites. Prior to this, since they were small and in an area where big ships seldom go, there were not enough reports of these storms to show up on the weather charts.

When heading for Europe via the Azores, a boat should not leave the Caribbean before mid-May. A look at the North Atlantic weather chart shows that if you leave after mid-May you have a good chance of getting to the Azores, and possibly on to Europe, without going through a gale. Unless you are extremely unlucky, you will only be caught in one gale at the most.

On the back of Imray-Iolaire planning chart #100 are weather charts showing wind direction and frequency, and areas where gales and waves of more than 12 feet can be expected. These show that boats leaving the Caribbean in April for northern Europe will probably be hit by two gales, possibly three, and that waves higher than 12 feet can be regularly expected. Regarding wave heights of "12 feet", oceanographers and surfers point out that waves will get in sync and build up to double the height of the swell. Thus, if a 12-foot swell is running, one must expect waves of 24 feet or more.

Also, it must be remembered that when gale-frequency charts speak of "Force 7 or over", they do not state how far over Force 7 the gales will be. In April one can expect gales of Force 8, 9 and possibly 10.

Leaving the Caribbean in mid-May means the boat is not up in the gale area until June, when the gale frequency is low. If a gale is encountered, it most probably will not be as strong as an April gale. Nevertheless, before leaving the Caribbean the boat should be given a very careful check; she should be prepared to weather a gale.

The Traditional Route to Florida

The traditional route to the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area departs from St. Thomas or Puerto Rico, taking a course of roughly northwest, skirting the northern edge of Muchoir and Silver Banks and the northeastern edge of the Bahamas, until you reach the northeast Providence Channel. Then swing west, through the northeast/north/west Providence Channel and on to Florida. On this route you should be broad reaching, or sailing dead downwind before the Trades.

This trip should be duck soup, but unfortunately it has proven to be a great problem for insurance underwriters. I think the reason such a great number of boats are lost off the Bahamas is that they are coming from an area of high islands with, in most cases, deep water right up to the shore, then transiting an area of low islands with off-lying reefs and shoals extending two, three or even four miles offshore.

A faster route with fewer navigational dangers is to head west from St. Thomas, skirt the north coasts of Puerto Rico and Hispaniola, then sail through the Old Bahama Channel favoring the Cuban side (it is better marked and has deeper water close to shore). Then head north to the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area.

To the Carolinas

The best routing is subject to much debate. I favor leaving from St. Thomas and heading roughly northwest, using the same route as one takes to the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area, passing north of the Muchoir and Silver Banks, and via the Bahamas. But instead of going through the Providence Channel, pass north of Grand Bahama, run over to the Gulf Stream, pick up the Stream and head northwards. With luck you will carry the Trades all the way up to the Gulf Stream, then with the Stream underneath you will be wearing seven league boots. If a northwest front is predicted you can duck into Charleston and either wait it out or continue north via the ICW. If there is no norther predicted, ride the Stream right up to Morehead City/Beaufort.

To the Chesapeake

If you can't negotiate the ICW (your mast must be able to pass under the 65-foot high bridge just south of Norfolk, and your keel must draw less than nine feet), sail a rhumb line from the Eastern Caribbean to a point 100 miles east of Norfolk, Virginia, at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. When you approach the latitude of Norfolk, turn west.

In April one can expect gales of Force 8, 9 and possibly 10

Cape Hatteras, just below the Chesapeake, has been known as a graveyard for ships for over 500 years. Many people feel that the only way to pass Cape Hatteras is to either have it 30 miles to the east of you (i.e. be in the ICW), or 200 miles to the west of you. Imagine a boat riding the Gulf Stream northward up the coast near Cape Hatteras. If a northwester comes in, the wind switches north and then northeast, giving 20, 30 or even 40 knots of wind against the three-knot Stream.

—Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

The resulting sea conditions are such that no progress can be made. Once the wind goes northeast, Cape Hatteras and the coast north of it become dead lee shores.

Most yachts will be able to obtain warnings of approaching northwesterly winds. But when a northwester blows through, not only are you beating to windward but the temperature drops — sometimes to freezing. Every single member of the crew must be fully outfitted for severely cold, wet weather.

The Bermuda Route

Heading north via Bermuda, leave the Eastern Caribbean and aim for the North



Before leaving the Caribbean, every boat should be prepared to weather a gale

Star. The wind should be on the beam, giving a good fast reach. If the wind is north of east, don't worry about staying on the rhumb line, just trim the sails and adjust the course so that you are going as quickly and comfortably as possible. Even if you are driven below the rhumb line, at about latitude 27°N the wind will ease off and by latitude 29° or 30° it will frequently die out altogether. Usually when you come out of the calm spell, the wind comes in from the southwest. If you are west of the rhumb line, ease sheets and head for Bermuda. The loom can be spotted 30 or more miles off. Entering St. George at night is not advisable as shore lights make it difficult to correctly pick out the navigation lights.

Boats heading for the States via Bermuda should be sufficiently provisioned and prepared to by-pass Bermuda if necessary. Bermuda attracts gales like a magnet, and entering the narrow St. George Channel in gale conditions is extremely dangerous.

When leaving Bermuda to head for the States, wait until late May or early June. It is essential that you obtain a really good long-range weather forecast. It is pretty much a rhumb line course, but try to ascertain what the Gulf Stream is doing. Frequently there is a southeast meander, which will stop you almost dead.

Bermuda to the Azores

A popular route from the Caribbean to Europe is from the Virgin Islands to Bermuda, then from Bermuda to the Azores.

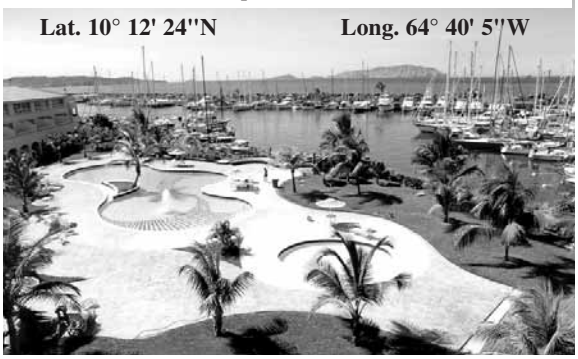
When leaving Bermuda for the Azores, deciding what course to take can be difficult. There is a straight rhumb-line course of 1,680 miles to Flores, which frequently leads right through the Azores High and results in either a slow passage under sail or long periods under power. To avoid the Azores High, you can work your way gradually up to 40° or 42°N, run along that latitude and finally turn south to the Azores. This route usually produces plenty of wind, but it is likely to be rough and cold.

There is a midway between these two routes as shown on the chart. Look at the distances of the Northern Route — 1,800 miles, the Middle Route — 1,720 miles, and the rhumb-line or Great Circle Route — 1,680 miles. While in Bermuda, check the position of the Azores High and make your decision.

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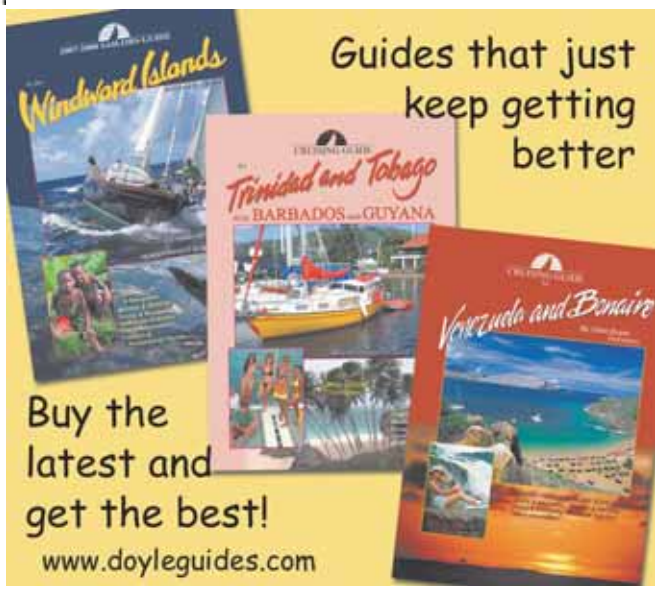
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At my yacht-service business in the Azores, one of the most persistent problems found aboard yachts arriving from the Caribbean is contamination in fuel tanks. This is usually caused by water, dirt, sludge, microbes or a combination thereof. When this slurry is churned up after a few days at sea, it can choke fuel filters, and fill water separators and sediment bowls. If not dealt with, eventually the engine may refuse to run.

Water can enter the fuel tanks through the on-deck filler pipe if the O-ring is old, cracked and leaking, or through a buildup of condensation, which also plays a part in the growth of microbes and bacteria. Dirt and other crud can also come onboard at almost any quayside pump.

If you can get into your fuel tanks for a cleaning and inspection before setting out to cross the Atlantic, you may save yourself a lot of grief at sea. This is especially true with a yacht that has sat for a year or more with few movements and partially filled tanks.

The next time a fuel tank is "empty", consider opening the inspection hatch, the fuel suction pickup or the fuel gauge flange for a cleanout. A small DC pump with a nitrile impeller, some hose and a length of copper or PVC pipe is about all the technical equipment you'll need. Obviously, you are trying to reach the lowest point in the tank where the water, crud and corruption will gather (usually near the fuel suction or pick-up pipe!). The rigid copper or PVC should be long enough to comfortably reach the bottom of the tank so you can vacuum the contents into a sludge container to take to the oil recycling barrel. It's interesting to put the first quart or two of tank effluent into a clear container for inspection.

When the tank is empty, don't be afraid to reverse the pump and rinse the tank in behind the baffles with a bit of fresh diesel. If you have a decent-sized inspection hatch, reach in and wipe the tank sides and bottom with a clean cloth.

BEFORE CROSSING AN OCEAN…

by Duncan Sweet

While you are concentrating on the fuel system, change the primary and secondary fuel filters and make sure you have enough filters for your crossing: four primary and three secondary filters should be a minimum. If you have an unusual primary fuel filter/water separator, stock up — they may be harder to find where you are going. It's also a good idea to refer back to the original engine manufacturer's filter numbers. The filter now fitted, if not an OEM part as per the manual, may be far removed from what was originally specified.

The engine's saltwater circulation and cooling pump is also a potential offshore headache. If there is any evidence of salt building up on the pump body or, heaven forbid, a slight drip, it is time to change the water seal (and check the bearings and cam). While you are at it, change the impeller and keep the used one as a spare.

While you have the pump dismounted for service, check all the rubber cooling hoses for signs of old age, cracking, splitting, chafe and rusty hose clamps. More than likely the hose leading away from the saltwater pump goes to the heat exchanger, which is a favorite place to find all the missing bits of impeller blades that have broken off over the years. If possible, remove that cooling hose and gently try to remove any rubber bits you find in or near the heat exchanger entrance, which may restrict the cooling water flow and cause the engine to run hotter than normal.

Another seldom-remembered potential glitch in the engine room is the air cleaner or air filter element. It's usually a simple task to remove the unit and give the inside a good cleaning or, if fitted, replace the air filter element. Also make sure any engine room blowers or extractor fans are working and the ducting is intact, as giving the engine plenty of clean unrestricted airflow is essential to efficient diesel combustion.

The alternator(s) will normally do a lot of battery charging on a crossing and replacing the fan belt is a task more easily accomplished in harbor than in a six-foot swell. If you haven't done it for a while, replace all the belts fitted in your engine room now: it's cheap insurance. Carry at least one spare of each.

Another pre-crossing task many people avoid is going aloft and having a good look around the rig and rigging. Use a comfortable bo'sun's chair, pick a calm day and take your time — and a camera! A very short knot in the chair's halyard will make it a lot easier at the top to look closely at the mast cap and all fittings and fixtures. Please go up on two halyards and don't use a snap shackle on the chair.

On older rigging, look for signs of de-swaging where one or more of the 1x19 strands may have broken, normally just out of sight inside the body of the swaged terminal. You are looking for any stainless steel strands that appear to be "relaxed" as they are no longer under tension; they'll stand ever so slightly proud of the companion wires on either side. If you are not sure, press on the strands with a small screwdriver, trying to detect a slight movement at the break. Terminals with a lot of rust discoloration are especially suspect. A high percentage of de-swaging is at deck level, especially in lower shrouds, but can happen to any swaged fitting. If the swages are seriously discolored, polish them with a green pad from the galley and look closely for one or more thin black lines indicating hairline cracks in the swage body, usually near the wire end of the terminal. Many of these failures are in swages susceptible to salt water running down the wire and, with time, building up inside the swage body.

Any strap toggles should be checked carefully for cracks where the steel has been bent 180 degrees. All clevis and split/cotter pins should be looked at with care, as well as shroud and stay tangs, spreader attachment points and the spreader tips where the cap shrouds come in contact or pass through them. If something doesn't look right, it probably isn't. If you see something you don't understand, take pictures to show to the rest of your crew or a rigger. If the spreader boot or rigging tape has not been off in a while maybe it's time to remove it and have a look, as this is a favorite spot for moisture and salt to build up and start problems. Also check the top of the roller furling gear for halyard chafe and correct wrap-stop or fairlead positioning. Make sure all sheaves are turning easily and are lubricated as well as the spinnaker and topping-lift sheaves, if fitted. Have a good look at all masthead fittings, VHF antenna and cable, wind instrument, masthead/tri-color light, etcetera, which should all be solidly fastened with no signs of chafe, stress or fatigue and able to withstand a few weeks of ocean.

And then make sure you have plenty of snacks for the night watches.

Duncan Sweet is the owner of Mid Atlantic Yacht Services, Horta, Faial, Azores.

Easter Time Traditions in Trinidad and Tobago

by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

Trinidad and Tobago have a rich mixture of cultures and customs attributed to the various ethnic groups that call them home. This mixing is evident in the unique way we celebrate many worldwide observances such as Christmas or Carnival, and Easter is no exception. Although we do carry out some of the same activities as others around the world, such as Easter egg hunts, tea parties and Easter Bonnet competitions, at Easter time Trinidad suddenly becomes populated with "bobolee" effigies and Tobago has goat and crab races.

On midnight Carnival Tuesday (Fat Tuesday) we say goodbye to the Carnival season and enter the Lenten season. On Palm Sunday, Roman Catholics in Trinidad parade the streets singing hymns and waving palms to symbolize what people did to welcome Jesus to Jerusalem. Some young palm fronds are also woven into crosses. On Good Friday, the Stations of the Cross are carried out as early as 4:00AM on Mount St. Benedict above St. Augustine in the north of the island and on San Fernando Hill in southern Trinidad. Holy Week celebrations are especially big in the southern town of Siparia where people from all over the nation visit to take part in the Holy Thursday and Good Friday Masses held at the La Divina Pastora Roman Catholic church. To accommodate this, the town centre is blocked off from vehicular traffic and vendors are allowed to sell their goods, including clothes, food and housewares.



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, REPUBLIC OF TRINDAD & TOBAGo

A unique Easter pastime in Tobago is very serious goat racing

On Good Friday a traditional meal of ground provisions (root crops) and fish is eaten, as well as hot cross buns, which are soft sweet buns with a cross made of icing on the top symbolizing the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. On Easter Sunday, there is an elaborate Sunday lunch with baked pork, roast chicken and ham.

Throughout the country, individuals or entire villages set out effigies locally referred to as bobolees, which represent Judas. They are usually placed along the roadside or hung on trees and beaten by passersby as a punishment for Judas's betrayal of Jesus. In recent years some of these effigies have been fashioned to the likeness of local political leaders and also "punished", so to speak.

Non-religious activities traditionally held at Easter time include kite-flying competitions. These are popular on both islands on Easter Monday, and are made possible by the high winds usually present around this time of year.

Other activities include horse racing, originally held at the Queen's Park Savannah in the capital city of Port of Spain in Trinidad since 1838. However, all horseracing events are now held at the Santa Rosa Park in Arima. Other racing activities include the aforementioned crab and goat races held at Buccoo Village on Tobago. These are noisy events as spectators yell and cheer to encourage their favourite to win.

Goat racing, which has been held for 84 years on the island, is thought to have developed as a response of the grass roots to the favorite pastime of the upper class. These races take place with all the pomp and pageantry that would accompany a horse race, such as the parading of the animals, announcing the favourites (who hold colourful names like Troublemaker and Be-My-Hero) and placing bets. Mind you, these "steeds" are not any ordinary goats but are specially bred for racing, with long legs being a favoured characteristic. They have their own trainers and are fed a special diet - including stout! Their care also involves taking baths in the sea. The track used for goat races is similar to that used in horse racing, as there are starting gates, and consists of a 100-metre stretch of turf. The jockeys don't ride their animals, but instead keep them tethered on a long rope and run either behind or next to them, and so the speed of the jockey is also put to the test. The rope also serves to guide the animals.

Crab racing is also popular, generally using large blue crabs. The track may be straight or a circle drawn in the sand and the first crab to get out is declared the winner. The crabs are harnessed, using a short length of string, and a bamboo twig is used to guide and encourage the crabs to the finish line. Of course the winning crab's owner takes the prize while the winner ends up in the pot as curried crab and dumplings — a traditional Tobagonian dish.

Finally, there are many who just want to enjoy the long Easter weekend with friends and family and opt for spending it at the beach, which is locally termed a "beach lime".

So, whether religious or secular, traditional or not, the celebrations around Easter time in Trinidad and Tobago are yet another example of the diversity found on these islands.



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NORTH SAILS REPRESENTATIVE



(Crucian Racing Isn't All About Yachts...)

by Ellen Sanpere

As things go on St. Croix, it's an old tradition. Caribbean hermit crabs (*Coenobita clypeatus*) have been around since before Columbus landed in 1493. Racing them goes back to the early 1990s, at the Wreck Bar's Crabatorium, where the audience was mostly adults needing something to amuse them while drinking.

Tito and Sue Bacallao, Crucian transplants since 1980 and 1990, respectively, lived on a series of boats in Christiansted Harbor until 1997, including the Hunter 37, *Saltfish*. Tito also crewed on racing boats in St. Croix for fun.

The weekly crab meets started in 1993, at the Kings Alley Marina Bar, later expanding to Styxx Bar on the Christiansted boardwalk. When Kings Alley closed for endless reconstruction, racing moved next door, to the Brew Pub on Mondays. Clawing their way to the top of the sport, Tito and Sue took the decapod derby to Cheeseburgers in America's Paradise on Wednesdays, and to the Tamarind Reef Hotel on Fridays, bringing fast-paced competition and generous purses to East Enders and island visitors in venues their children can enjoy as well.

Red legs, small to mid-size shells (mostly whelks), a fierce pincer claw and clever (but never vulgar) names mark these special racers, which are recruited from the beaches of St. Croix. They are housed in spacious "crab condos" tastefully furnished with soil and seagrass, and fed a high-tech diet of veggies and dogfood for a two-week racing programme, after which they are released. No special training is given the tiny trotters, and Tito reports that wild crabs in the paddock area often try to get *into* the cages to feast on the free food. Completing the stable scene are five dogs rescued from the animal shelter.

Born in Cuba, raised in New Jersey, Tito transports about a hundred crabs in a large plastic box to the venue, along with three 5-gallon buckets, microphone and PA, an overhead clamp lamp, a fan, masking tape and a large bin of toys for the kids to take home as souvenirs, win or lose. "It's one hundred percent luck," he says.

Originally from Philadelphia, Sue manages Quiet Storm, an apparel shop on King Street and often has to run to make the 5:00PM start of registration on Monday nights at the Brew Pub. By 5:01, there is a long line of visitors, locals and Crab Groupies, waiting to pick... um, *choose* crabs from the box and name them. Some will put names on five or more, in hopes of having a winner.

Barefoot, deeply tanned and looking like the archetypical beach boy, Tito takes up the microphone and welcomes the crowd with a voice that would be successful on a network television game show.

—Continued on next page

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The first order of business is to create a racetrack on the Pub's cement floor. He volunteers an audience member to stand on the foot shape he has drawn on the floor with chalk. A rope is looped around the volunteer's ankle. The other end of the rope holds a fat sidewalk-chalk crayon, which Tito uses to draw a small circle for a starting line, a larger finish line circle, and a third, even larger, stay-away-from-the-finish line circle. He chalks in four compass points and joins Sue at the pari-mutual window (two chairs and a box of crabs) to begin the entry process.

ERIC CHRISTMAN



TERESSA PANKOVITZ



At left, punters pick their crabs at the pari-mutual window, and at right, the popular racetrack snack vendor, Miss Judith

Sue records the name given each crab on her master list and on a small sticky note for the crab "owner," then collects the US$2 per crab entry fee. Tito writes the chosen name with a felt-tip marker on masking tape affixed to each crab's shell and places the contender in a white bucket.

When everybody has their crustacean competitors named, Tito begins his spiel about the crabs. "These are hermit crabs," he says, holding one carefully, "and they have a pressure claw that can be painful but not fatal." Oddly, no volunteers come forward to help demonstrate.

Racing fans may bring a personal crab. "There's a $2 entry," says Tito, "plus $50 for a drug test. Just kidding about the drug test. *I'm* not going to make him pee."

Then he outlines the racing card: There will be four heats; two crabs from each heat run in a final race to determine the evening's winners. Three "drink" races are also run, and three crabs in each will win a prize.

On an island with few rules, there are only two for crab racing, and the Groupies help with the volume: "DON'T POINT YOUR FINGER" (at the crabs, as that will make the highly-strung thoroughbreds stop in their tracks) and "DON'T STOMP YOUR FEET" which could also "wipe out the competition". If anyone violates those rules, masking tape *will* be used to assist that person (usually an adult) in controlling his or her behavior.

Tito works the crowd, calls for last-minute crabs, and introduces creatively costumed Miss Judith, the Peanut Lady, who has developed a speech of her own to sell bags of peanuts and candy from a converted baby stroller. She does a queen wave and works her way through the crowd while Sue takes a few more entry fees from latecomers. Tito mentions the *haute couture* Crab Race T-shirts, featuring a racing crab with flaming shell, available in child and adult sizes. At last, out of breath, Tito is done with the speech and asks if anybody wants to hear it again. The Groupies yell, "NO!" (some yell, "YES!") and the races begin.

Tito and Sue bring two white plastic buckets containing the crabs to the center, carefully dump the crabs into the starting circle, and invert the buckets over them. Tito holds the microphone above Sue's kazoo as she blows a nine-note cavalry charge. They lift the buckets up and away, and the crowd yells, "CHARGE!"

Two piles of crabs start racing, well, most of them anyhow, crawling in every direction. Not all can do the distance, it seems, as the sturdy steeds must carry their chariots on this turf. Their "owners" yell their names, cheering them on. There isn't time to overcome a bad start, as there are plenty of competitors sprinting home. Tito does the call: "There's Blue heading north and Rangoon to the east; Old Bay's on top, and Buster is going south." Who knows how he can read the tape on their shells, but he does.

As the first two crabs cross the finish line circle, Tito announces their names. Sue snatches them up, puts them in the red Rest Bucket to wait for the final race, and records the winners. Then she joins Tito in scooping the remaining contestants into the starting buckets for the next event. As they pick up crabs on the south and west, other crabs run to the north and east into the sandal-footed crowd. "If he goes for your toes, don't worry," Tito declares. "They don't eat much!"

When four heats are finished, eight crabs are in the Rest Bucket, and the first drink race is announced: three winning "owners" will get free drinks or rum or a gift certificate from a St. Croix eatery. Tito mentions each prize donor again, Sue sounds the kazoo, and, they're OFF! By this time, someone in the crowd has had an arm taped to her waist, with much fanfare and cheering.

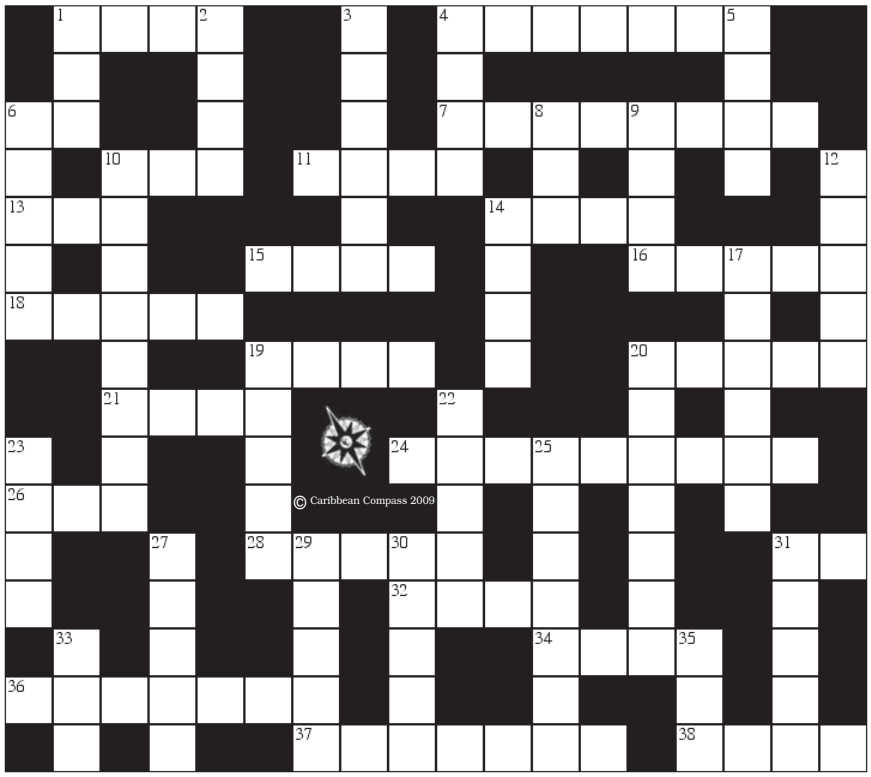
The eight finalists run their race to determine the final order. After two more drink races, the prizes are awarded. Tito again describes each prize, for example, a show at the Harbormaster Club, a Salt River nature trip in kayaks, a sail on the schooner *Roseway*, a jeep tour in the rainforest, bar tabs, two-for-one dinners, gift certificates, and the coveted Silver or Gold (RUM, that is), among others. Each winning "owner" comes forward for a handshake and huge smile from Sue, who presents the homemade certificates. Swapping prizes is facilitated.

Out on the boardwalk, people stroll as the moon rises above the Cay and the clear harbor waters lap gently against the boats at anchor. Children pull at their parents' arms to peer at the giant tarpon swimming below the planks. The Crab Groupies order another round of brew, while Tito and Sue pack up the crustaceans for another day at the races on St. Croix.

Ellen Sanpere lives aboard Cayenne III, *an Idylle 15.5, in Christiansted Harbor and regularly takes her lumps at Tito & Sue's "crab meets" (sorry!) at the Brew Pub. She is looking to change shells and find a terrestrial condo in the area.*



Compass Cruising Crossword



'Back'

ACROSS

1) Without a preventer, this can be dangerous if the mainsail gets caught aback
4) Opposite of backward
6) The wind backs from NW to W to __
7) Word for "port", back in time
10) You see rainbows when it's at your back
11) You can back this to slow or steer a boat
13) Toward the back
14) A mizzenmast is the ____ at the back of a yawl
15) With 8 Down, sea coming back in at high speed
16) Back____: standing rigging from mast to stern
18) Back ____: speaks badly about a crewmember?
19) Taxi-driver's cry: "Back to the ____?"
20) Lateen-rigged Malabar vessel
21) Small, flat-bottomed boat
24) Flat slabs of cork or wood strapped to the feet to walk in loose sand
26) A transom is at the back ___ of a 19 Across
28) Back _____: lumbar support for helmsman's seat
31) The wind backs from SW to S to __
32) Pertaining to the mouth
34) Churning 21 Down off the stern is a ____ that the props are 36 Across-ing.
36) Back off
37) Type of Allied cruising ketch
38) Rail farthest 12 Across

DOWN

1) Not the back of the boat, the ___
2) A full one comes back every month
3) Go back _____ the ship
4) Back and _____: a way of using the sails to make way in a narrow channel.
5) Small boat with a V-shaped back end
6) Early mariners used these to find their way back to port
8) Agitation caused by meeting of currents
9) Back them to slow a rowboat
10) Back _____: unable to make way due to current or lack of wind
12) On the open ocean (2 words)
14) "Mind your back____!"
17) Behind the boat
19) Back_____: a navigational instrument once used to measure the altitude of a celestial body
20) _____ back: using less
22) Back_____: inlet away from bay or river, or stream backed up in its course by an obstruction
23) "Backbone" of a 18 Across
25) A plank just above the 22 Down
27) _____back: The backward slant of the leading edge of an airfoil
29) Back-hand _____: lines that are laid left-handed
30) A harbor is where you ____ _ boat (2 words)
31) Small _____: light lines for miscellaneous uses
33) ___ back: pushed in 35 Across by wind or current
35) Back a ___ off a bolt

Crossword Solution on page 33

STUDY UP ON YOUR SPANISH FOR CRUISERS, AND THEN TRY THIS WORD PUZZLE ¡DISFRUTE!

Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski

A PUZZLE FOR THE SPANISH ISLANDS

D	E	R	E	C	H	A	D	R	E	I	U	Q	Z	I
U	B	A	N	O	R	A	D	U	Y	A	B	F	M	S
S	A	P	C	R	A	F	O	T	A	P	A	R	A	A
U	D	R	F	O	N	D	E	O	D	A	N	I	L	N
M	A	R	S	S	T	Y	I	R	E	I	D	O	E	O
B	N	O	O	R	O	F	A	M	E	S	E	E	C	M
P	L	A	Y	A	L	L	A	E	O	T	R	N	O	B
O	O	D	Z	A	R	P	E	N	I	C	A	T	N	R
U	D	I	C	E	L	H	E	T	M	B	V	R	A	E
H	O	L	A	U	V	U	A	A	A	O	E	A	N	E
S	T	A	C	F	B	R	S	Y	R	E	R	D	A	T
E	T	S	E	G	U	T	E	H	I	S	A	A	I	N
J	I	S	E	O	I	G	O	C	N	T	N	P	O	E
D	O	M	I	L	O	N	A	W	A	E	O	R	P	U
N	O	R	T	E	A	M	R	O	V	A	F	R	O	P

ANO
AYUDAR
BANCO
BANDERA
BANO
BARCO
BUENOS DIAS
CERVEZA
COMIDA
DERECHA
DISCULPAME
ENTRADA
ESTE
FONDEO
FRIO
FUGA
HAY
HOLA
IZQUIERDA
MALECON
MAR
MARINA
MASTIL
NADA
NO
NOMBRE
NORTE
OESTE
PAIS
PLAYA
POR FAVOR
PUENTE
SALIDA
SEMAFORO
SI
SOL
SOLO
SUD
TIPO
TODO
TORMENTA
VERANO
ZARPE

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 39



APRIL 2009

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)
While your love life is experiencing slack tide, concentrate on creative projects and your communicative skills — a ham license, perhaps?

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)
Spend time with sailing friends this month and just enjoy yourself and their company.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)
Use all that Gemini versatility to tidy up projects onboard and clear the decks to be ready for good things sailing your way.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Hey, liveaboards! Home is where a Cancer's heart is, and this is a good time to spend there, fixing it up and making it comfortable and efficient.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)
Use your creative energies to put wind in the sails of your business or financial prospects with new ideas.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)
You will find April full of little irritations and aggravations. Don't let them get to you — these are just choppy seas, not storms. Some good could come out of these conditions if you keep a clear head.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)
Keep an even keel in spite of small obstacles on your course caused by others on board.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)
Communications may be garbled and your love life in the doldrums. Hang in there; conditions will clear when you least expect it.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)
Take some time to give a hand to someone who needs it. It will make you feel worthwhile and ease someone else's burden.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)
Try to be flexible and accepting of others' needs on board. Being stubborn and pedantic will only make things worse.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)
Your famous objectivity will prove invaluable this month. Don't take on other's problems, which would deter you from your course. Good things will happen around the 19th.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)
You'll have lots of energy this April. Use it to positive effect by concentrating on your charted course and not letting circumstances get you down.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS
1) BOOM
4) FORWARD
6) SW
7) LARBOARD
10) SUN
11) SAIL
13) AFT
14) SPAR
15) TIDE
16) STAYS
18) STABS
19) SHIP
20) COTIA
21) PUNT
24) BACKSTERS
26) END
28) FRAME
31) SE
32) ORAL
34) SIGN
36) REVERSE
37) SEAWIND
38) TAFF

DOWN
1) BOW
2) MOON
3) ABOARD
4) FILL
5) DORY
6) STARS
8) RIP
9) OARS
10) STRAPPED
12) AT SEA
14) SIDE
17) ASTERN
19) STAFF
20) CUTTING
22) WATER
23) KEEL
25) KEELSON
27) SWEEP
29) ROPES
30) MOOR A
31) STUFF
33) SET
35) NUT

CARIBBEAN CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

Island Poets

Caribbean Customs are really quite a chore.
The process for a yachtsman is such an awful bore.
Regulations differ wherever you may go,
And yachtsmen think it is a farce when they are treated so.

In Trinidad you have to leave one hour from checking out.
All others give you twenty-four, and still there is some doubt.
How long you have for checking in is anybody's guess.
If overtime is payable you're under some duress.

In Bequia on a Sunday we moored at 5 PM.
The Customs launch demanded that we go at once to them.
"The office will stay open today till six o'clock.
You must go now and clear or else a hefty fine we'll dock."

Arriving at the Customs Hall the queue was to the door.
They're raking in the overtime, we really felt quite sore.
No weekday evening did we see the Customs launch go out.
'Twas just to get the extra pay, that's what it's all about.

English Harbour's office is smart and clean and new,
But after you have visited they'll have you in a stew.
You're lucky if you get a smile; it's usually a grunt.
However nice you try to be you're subject to this front.

In Rodney Bay Marina the Immigration guy
Is often absent from his desk, I do not tell a lie.
But if you moan you've wasted time and have to go to sea,
It's clear they do not care a toss — at least it's clear to me.

Anguilla's rules permit a yacht to stay just in Road Bay.
To go to any other place, a fortune you must pay.
One hundred dollars every day for every smaller yacht,
But superyachts pay little more. Is this fair? It's not.

Of the process in Grenada we cannot now complain.
We're made to feel quite welcome — at least that's in the main.
No grunts or scowls are aimed at us when we go in to clear.
Perhaps while filling in their forms, they'll offer us a beer!

In Martinique and Guadeloupe no money changes hands.
It is quite clear to one and all you're welcome in these lands.
Clearing in is simple, no complicated form.
And no one needs to get uptight, that really is the norm.

Dominica's got it right, we've found it quite okay.
When you check in, there is no fuss; you are allowed to stay.
For fourteen days you can enjoy this island in the sun.
No further visit is required; your clearance out is done.

So why cannot the OECS, which all were British jewels,
Get their act together and simplify their rules.
However much we argue and try to make a noise,
The answer is quite simple: it's all jobs for the boys.

When sailing in these islands we have not many fears.
But cries to sort out all these rules are falling on deaf ears.
Our carefree life's not free of care, here's where we all get caught:
You have to pay due homage to officials in each port.

But think a bit, how you would do,
With scruffy yachties in a queue?
Perhaps some humour you might lose.
So relax, stay cool, don't blow a fuse.

But finally one wonders, if we all ignored the rules,
And sailed around the islands without checking in like fools,
If we all rebelled together and didn't play their game,
They could not send us all right back to start from whence we came.

— Rocco Relic

Grenada Morning

The harbor is still with the glassy calm of early morning,
And sailboats face obediently northeast,
The beauty and the peace invade my heart,
And for my eyes provide a feast.
Thank God that I am here today to see His works' perfection,
And not absorbed in mundane tasks in four or five directions,
That I see the bougainvillea. It clambers up the trees
And cascades over walls, intense with color in the breeze.
Dark clouds bring gentle rain; perhaps the blossoms feel a thirst,
Or perhaps rain makes their colors glow until it seems they burst
And shower me with the rainbow of their hues, so strong and sweet,
Until I am suffused in them — a vapor, mist, complete!

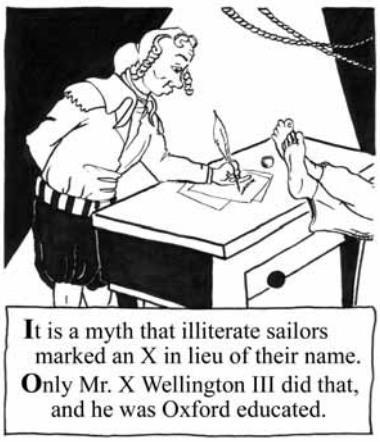
I'm blessed to be a living witness to this myriad glory,
It seems that paradise is here, and heaven an allegory!

— Nan Hatch

parlumps marooned



FACT-OIDS



Peter Pelican Battles for His Life

by Lee Kessell

Continued from last month's 'Peter Pelican Flies South'.

The rain was pelting down hard and jagged spears of lightning were piercing the sea between Peter the big brown pelican and the shoreline, but as yet no wind was blowing. Peter had come too far to turn back and find shelter in Haiti so, like it or not, he had to risk the lightning bolts and try to make the sheltering cliffs of Puerto Rico. Better to be killed quickly by the lightning, Peter thought, than to struggle against a hurricane and drown slowly.

As he flew nearer, the lightning almost blinded him, but as Peter couldn't pick a route through the bolts, it was up to his guardian angel to guide him through. The noise of the lightning was even worse than the intense light of the flashes, because it sizzled and cracked with a deafening force that almost blew Peter's heart out of his chest and threatened to paralyze his muscles and send him plunging into the rising waves.


A.THODY

Flying with his eyes squinted to thin slits, the lightning danced so close to Peter that a blue glow gleamed all over his body and spun off the tips of his wings. He looked like a blue sprite leaping from wave crest to wave crest, but there was no one to see him.

The first breath of wind glanced off the sea and Peter thought he was doomed but the hurricane hadn't finished playing with him yet. There was a long pause and then a heavy gust knocked Peter sideways. This is it, he thought, but again the wind stopped. The reprieve was only short-lived because the next moment a tremendous roar came sweeping over from the land, almost drowning out the sizzle and crack of the lightning.

A guardian angel was surely looking after Peter because in the nick of time he suddenly found himself right in front of a high cliff and an updraft of air wafted him up the sheer rock face and blew him into a limestone cave just beneath the cliff edge. Peter tumbled over and over right to the back of the cave where it was dry and dark and he lay still, panting and exhausted.

Without pause the hurricane swept across the land, blowing everything before it and the cliff shook with the impact. Peter struggled up to squat upon his webbed feet. He shook his seared wings and began carefully to groom each feather, spreading the oil from the glands at the feather roots to shield him from the cold and help him to fly again should he escape from the cliff alive.

When he had finished, Peter looked out of the cave mouth and what he saw was a discouraging sight. Whole branches of large trees came flying over the edge above him and were blown into the sea. Coconuts flew like cannon balls, whistling as they went. Great fronds of palm leaves tore themselves to shreds against the jagged cliff edge and leaves that had been ripped from the trees and minced into a green sludge with the terrifying sound of machine-gun fire added to the hellish uproar.

Peter wondered how safe he really was in his high cave with the spray beginning to mist the air around him. Would the waves he could hear beating against the base of the cliff rear so high that he would be washed down into the sea? He waddled slowly to the entrance and peered down. The waves were rearing and biting at the cliff wall almost reaching the entrance to his cave. So he hurried back just as one wave, higher than the rest burst at the cave edge, sending a froth of cold water after him. But it drained harmlessly back into the sea.

By now Peter was so tired that he had to close his eyes and try to sleep, but he could only doze. And when sleep did overtake him for a few minutes, he dreamed of a huge black demon trampling and destroying his home in the peaceful swamp back in Jamaica.

So the long hours of the night passed and when daylight struggled into the cave, a sudden quiet came with it. Peter was stiff and hungry and he thought with relief that the hurricane had gone. Then he realized that the quiet and calm had happened too quickly and he knew it was the eye of the hurricane!

Peter also knew that when the wind returned it would be even worse because it would blow directly into the cave and the waves would crush and drown him. He had to get out while he could and find a shelter somewhere on land. Peter spread his wings and ran as fast as he could to the edge of the cave and launched himself into space. The same updraft of air caught under his wings and forced him high over the cliff top. Peter soared and turned until he was flying over the land.

As he searched for a shelter he looked upon a countryside smashed and tangled. Huge trees lay broken and uprooted, tree trunks had been sliced into matchsticks and all that he could see of the little shacks of the people who lived scattered across the countryside were the short stone pillars that had supported the wooden walls and tin roofs. There were no people visible at all.

Peter was looking for a clump of rocks or another cave to shelter in when he saw an old stone wall, a ruin that had been a fort long years ago, and he settled for that. The wall was strong and high enough to deflect the wind that would come roaring out of the sea, so Peter glided down for a close inspection. There were lots of broken branches and other bits of vegetation piled against the base of the wall and nearby were shallow depressions filled with water. Peter wasted no time in quenching his thirst and then looked about for something to eat. Amongst the storm leavings he found some dried coconuts that had been smashed against the wall into many pieces and Peter used the hook on the end of his bill to scrape out the oily dried flesh clinging to the dark shells. It was nourishing and good and as he ate Peter felt his strength returning.

With renewed hope he scratched out a nest for himself deep amongst the twigs and splintered branches, where a buttress built into the wall gave added protection. A small snake had found the spot too, but Peter let it be. It was harmless and although he could have swallowed it at one gulp he was happy to let it share his good fortune.

With the first gust of wind swirling in from the sea, Peter huddled close against the old stones, tucking his head down into his chest and cradling his body with his strong, warm wings and then he waited. The gusts grew in strength and then, with a roar that was far worse than anything Peter had experienced so far, the hurricane that had almost claimed him for its own was searching for him again.

Read the final part of Peter Pelican's adventure in next month's issue of Caribbean Compass.

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

Biodiversity describes the number and variety of organisms — plants and animals — in an environment. It is very important to preserve biodiversity as every organism has its place in and makes its contribution to the health of its environment. So, what happens when something happens to destroy part of that environment?

That's actually what is happening in the northern parts of the Caribbean, especially in the Bahamas and the Turks & Caicos Islands. A foreign fish was introduced there by accident and seems to have made itself at home. Unfortunately, this extra fish is not adding to the biodiversity of the region because it has a huge appetite and eats up all the baby fish, lobsters, crabs, etc., on the reef. Destroying all the reef fish may have serious ecological and financial consequences for the Caribbean region in years to come.

The new fish is the red lionfish (*Pterois volitans*). A few specimens probably escaped from an aquarium in Florida after Hurricane Andrew in 1992. They reproduced and are now an enormous threat to the reefs of the Caribbean.

The red (or common) lionfish is usually found in the Indian and western Pacific Oceans. It was first described by Linnaeus himself in 1758. It can grow up to 43cm (17 inches) in length and has very distinctive red, maroon, brown and white stripes with spots on its fins. It also has a series of very poisonous spines along its long, feathery fins. There is no record of anyone dying after touching the spines but lionfish stings are excruciatingly painful.

Red lionfish are solitary creatures. They loiter in reef caves or under coral ledges waiting for their prey. When they see a fish or baby lobster above them, they make a fast lunge upwards and grab it, swallowing it whole.

How can we protect our reefs and waters from this intruder?

Firstly, fishermen, swimmers, boat owners and anyone else who uses our waters must be educated about the dangers of the red lionfish. They need to know how to handle the fish if/when they catch one. Apparently, it is very good to eat but difficult to prepare! So it's best if the catcher wears thick gloves to take the spines off the fish.

Secondly, we need to find a natural predator. There only appears to be one predator here in the Caribbean and that is the fish called the grouper. Some large groupers have been found with pieces of lionfish in their stomachs. Perhaps fishermen could catch fewer groupers to allow those left to multiply and eat up the lionfish!

The red lionfish is a fish which can adapt very quickly to a new environment. Although it came from a tropical habitat, it has been found in temperate waters of the United States as far north as New York. Keep an eye out for it and notify your local fisheries officers if you see one.

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Medical Emergency in Mexico

by Ann Westergard

Despite feeling a little rough around the belly, Skipper Doug was ready to leave Isla Mujeres. We were headed south aboard our new-to-us Valiant 40 towards whatever port on the Yucatan coast we might reach during high daylight, maybe even Belize. So we moseyed downwind, close to the off-lying reef to avoid the current. It was a good day to be doing exactly what we were doing.

Doug dozed in a warm corner all morning, saying he's just got a little indigestion and he'll feel better soon. But finally he said, "I think we'd better stop at Puerto Moreles." Yes, sir! By mid-afternoon, we were anchored off the small town, behind the reef.

Doug slept, all curled up, took the occasional charcoal pill, one of the half dozen over-the-counter remedies that constitute our 'medical kit', had a shower, slept, and moaned, and slept. Next morning he sprang to life, but immediately wilted.

Ashore I located El Centro de Salud, open and not busy. Bad sign (and good). Doug, now in substantial pain, was ready to go there right away. I'd been parsing symptoms from my yard-sale medical dictionary and believed we were steaming towards appendectomy. The clinic *doctora* concurred.

Within the hour we were in a taxi, bouncing towards a private hospital, Hospital Americano, 25 miles north in Cancun. How did we find the hospital? We asked a man on the street who spoke English. He thought the public hospital would be too busy and other private hospitals too expensive. Isn't that how you make all your decisions?

Hospital Americano looked like a construction site, busted concrete in buckets and rebar sticking out of the walls. But the *Urgencia* door was open and we were ushered into a reception room by a concerned woman who, with little formality, listened to my broken Spanish, then ordered a blood test and an ultrasound. Within minutes other forces were marshalling around us, including an ultrasound *doctora* in high-fashion high heels, and a gastrointestinal surgeon in Dockers. Through the chatter, like a flock of birds around us, the clear voice of an English-speaking *doctora* came through.



Yes, she said, the appendix. Doug collapsed into a wheelchair, which went up the elevator into room 309, clean, plain, simple, clean. Protocols were followed, which I recognized and took comfort in. Doug got an IV, the surgical team got phone calls, and the business office got a swipe of my Visa card. I got a phone for a Hail-Mary call to my US insurance company, which offered translation service and 'medical guidance' but who knows what else?

The organ had ruptured, but by about 6:00PM it was gone forever and Doug had been fitted with a gasket and a drainage bag, plus a couple of small puncture wounds. I didn't even know removal would be laparoscopic until it already was! We both slept to the comforting sound of the IV pump.

Next day back in Puerto Moreles I shanghaied a cruiser off the street (good thing we're all so easy to spot!) for help moving the boat to a mooring behind a seawall in a marina — one less thing to worry about. The cruising community is wonderful in that, and many other, respects.

And I must say, this hospital was just right for us — a small family-style place, not corporate; B&B rather than resort. Records were handwritten or typed, not a computer in sight (except in accounting!), but so what? The ultrasound was there, the IV drip machine (that half the nurses were too short to hang bags onto), the operating room and the laparoscopic-whatever in it. Carefulness and good intent were in the air, plus the surgeon had done hundreds of appendectomies. And, despite its external appearance, the hospital was clean. We didn't know any of this in the beginning, and maybe should have found out, but how?

Eventually it became almost fun. The nurses trained Doug to report 'pee-pee' and 'poo-poo'. He trained them to always bring jello when they brought food from the cafeteria downstairs. Doug shuffled around on *paseo* with his skinny new *novia* on wheels, admired the new baby in the next room, watched TV (whole 'nother story there, and not pretty!) and slept all he wanted.

Dealing with medical emergency is not a situation you can ever really prepare for, or, if you felt satisfactorily armed, you'd have so little life left, why bother? We went from 'indigestion' to emergency surgery in 36 hours. We're not the only people that this has ever happened to, and, although in our cruising life we don't spend time looking for it, a structure exists to deal with these situations. I'll bet in most cases it's a good-enough structure, too.

The only advice I can give is to make sure you can get some money into your credit card account if you have to. We had to pay all bills in full before we left (no cash, no splash!). Our insurance, which was supposed to partially cover life-threatening conditions outside the US, is still shuffling papers. Now I know how to say in Spanish "It's only money" and "I bought my husband's life" and, for a laugh, "Maybe not quite so much money as that!"

So I'm sticking to my general world view, which is that the orbit of *Galivant* and her crew intersects with many other unseen orbits and cycles, Halley and Hale-Bopp, shipwreck and disease, but also benevolence and good fortune. The best luck of all was that we weren't offshore, miles from anywhere or anyone. Doug said that if he had actually died, it would have been doing something he wanted to do: sailing in Mexico.

I just wish I could stop that sympathetic throbbing in my own iliac quadrant!



CREW VACANCIES!

email: crew@tradewindscruiseclub.com

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The Many Pleasures of Pumpkin



I never tasted pumpkin cooked as a vegetable until I came to the Caribbean. In Trinidad especially, it is the most popular member of the squash family. Last year Trinidad produced more than five million kilos of pumpkin.

Once I learned how easy it is to cook and how good nutritionally, pumpkin became a galley mainstay. Pumpkins are used to make soup, stews, curries, pumpkin butter, pies, custard, bread and cookies. Although the Caribbean pumpkin is a different variety than those of North American Halloween fame, you've still got to wonder why they waste all that good food just to make a candleholder.

The biggest pumpkin on record is over 1,500 pounds!

Pumpkins are grown on all continents except Antarctica. They are even grown in Alaska and Siberia. Pumpkins originated in Central America. Seeds from related ancestor plants have been found in Mexico, dating back over 7,000 years. Native Amerindians used pumpkin centuries before the Europeans arrived. The explorers soon made pumpkins a staple in their diets and brought them back to Europe, where they became a new foodstuff. Early settlers used pumpkins for stews and soups and desserts. In addition to cooking, the New World Europeans also dried the shells and cut strips to weave into floor mats. The settlers learned from the natives to make "pumpkin pie" by removing the seeds from the shell, filling the hollow with milk, honey and spices, then baking it.

One cup of cooked pumpkin has 24 calories with one gram of protein. The orange flesh is a dead giveaway that pumpkin is a source of beta-carotene, a powerful antioxidant. Beta-carotene is converted to vitamin A in the body. Vitamin A is essential for healthy skin, vision, bone development and many other functions. Pumpkin is also a tasty source of carbohydrates and potassium, and is high in fiber.

Eating pumpkin seeds reportedly helps men avoid prostate cancer. They were once recommended as a cure for freckles and snakebites.

Pumpkin seeds are a great, healthy snack. A handful of shelled pumpkin seeds tossed into a salad adds flavor and crunch. It's odd that islanders usually do not eat nutritious pumpkin seeds.

Pumpkin Seeds
Pumpkin seeds
Salt and spices to taste

Wash seeds. In a pot of water dissolve 2 Tablespoons salt and spices such as hot pepper, curry, or cumin — whatever is your taste. Bring to a boil and add seeds. Simmer for 15 minutes. Drain, add more salt and/or spice if desired, and bake in a 350°F oven for ten minutes.

Pumpkin Broccoli Chowder



3 Tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 Tablespoon soy sauce
1 ripe tomato, diced
1 large potato, diced
4 Cups chicken stock, canned or fresh
1 bunch broccoli, tops cut into small florets, stems julienned into strips
3 Cups fresh pumpkin purée
1 Tablespoon maple syrup or honey
1/4 to 1/2 Cup canned evaporated skim milk

In a skillet, heat olive oil over medium-low heat. Add onions and sauté slowly for 6 to 7 minutes. Add soy sauce and diced tomatoes and cook, stirring often, until tomatoes' juice has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Transfer sauté to a soup pot. Deglaze the skillet with a little stock, add to pot, and add remaining stock and pumpkin purée. Heat, stirring often. In a separate pot, cook diced potato in one-half Cup boiling water until tender. When done, using a slotted spoon, transfer to soup pot. Save remaining liquid. Add the broccoli to potato cooking liquid and blanch for 4 minutes, covered. Add broccoli and cooking liquid to soup pot. Then stir in enough milk to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Let soup cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until hot and the flavors have blended, 8 to 10 minutes. Do not let soup boil. Serve hot. As an entrée, serves four.

Curried Pumpkin Soup
1 medium onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tablespoon Madras curry powder
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine
1 Cup grated raw pumpkin
2 Cups chicken broth
1 Tablespoon cornstarch
1 1/2 Cup milk
1 bay leaf
Salt and spice to taste

In a large soup pot, sauté onion and garlic in butter, add curry powder and cook, continually stirring, for 3 minutes. Add pumpkin, bay leaf, salt and spices; then add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Put a small part of this mix in a new small pot, add cornstarch and heat until cornstarch is dissolved. Add back to pumpkin mixture and cook until mixture has thickened and is bubbling. Serves 4. (Add whatever garden veggies you may enjoy.)

Pumpkin Bread
2 Cups cooked pumpkin, mashed
1/4 Cup canola oil
2 Cups sugar (half if you desire)
1 egg
1 Tablespoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking soda (not powder)
2 1/2 Cups baker's flour
1/4 Cup raisins, crushed peanuts or grated fresh coconut (optional)

Mix all ingredients until batter is smooth. Fill greased bread pans. Bake at 350°F for about 90 minutes. Watch after an hour, as smaller baking pans will cook faster.

Pumpkin Fritters



1 Cup baker's flour
1 Cup mashed boiled pumpkin
1 Tablespoon sugar
1 Cup milk
2 eggs
2 Tablespoons baking soda
2 Tablespoons oil
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
Salt to taste

Combine all dry ingredients in a good-sized bowl. In another bowl, mix wet ingredients. Then mix dry and wet ingredients together. An electric mixer will save effort. Drop by the spoonful onto a hot, greased griddle or skillet and cook both sides until golden brown. Serve with stewed pumpkin or any other vegetable.

For the Gardener

Pumpkins should be planted on mounds about a foot high to increase drainage from the roots. Plant seeds one inch deep, with about four seeds per mound. The mounds should be in rows, with five or six feet between each mound and between each row. Because pumpkin vines "run" along the ground, they require a minimum of 50 square feet per mound. When the young plants are well established, thin each hill to the best two or three plants. The first fertilizer should be a pinch of starter 12-24-12. After the vine begins to spread, mix equal parts of 12-24-12 with calcium nitrate. When the blossoms appear, use calcium nitrate equal with 12-12-17-2.

Pumpkin plants should be kept free from weeds by hoeing and shallow cultivation. Irrigate if an extended dry period occurs in early summer. Always mark where you planted the seeds so you can water the roots directly; watering the vines and leaves can start a fungus problem. Pumpkins tolerate short periods of hot, dry weather pretty well. A long dry period will cause small fruits, and a hard rain after a dry period will cause the fruit to split open. A long wet period will cause the fruit to rot.

Bees are necessary for pollinating squash and pumpkins, and may be killed by insecticides. When insecticides are used, they should be applied only in late afternoon or early evening when the blossoms have closed for the day and bees are no longer visiting the blossoms. As new blossoms open each day and bees land only inside the open blossoms, these pollinating insects should be safe from contact with any potentially deadly sprays.

Always cut pumpkins from the vines carefully, using pruning shears or a sharp knife, and leave three to four inches of stem attached. Snapping the stems from the vines results in many broken or missing "handles". Pumpkins without stems usually do not keep well. Wear gloves when harvesting fruit because many varieties have sharp prickles on their stems.

Tide's Table

by Ross Mavis

Sopa con Frijoles Negros

My wife Willa and I took a trip to Cuba a while back. It was a great way to put a refreshing hole in the Canadian winter and I developed a love for several things Spanish: the people, the language and the food. My determination to learn the language hopefully will allow me to become better acquainted with the people and their food.

This year, I've been taking Spanish lessons from a long-suffering lady from Colombia. I've refuted the adage that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. However, great patience is necessary for an old dog to perform new tricks. Jumping through hoops is more akin to an assisted shuffle through double doors of a nursing home. High-wire work resembles an assisted, halting grope along a well-lit corridor. But at least I'm trying.

A lesson I learned about traveling to any foreign country is that most (not all, but most) people travel because they want to experience all aspects of other cultures. So when our Cuban friends attempted to ply us with North American food like pizza, hamburgers and fries, we were not excited. We flew at some expense to a foreign country to experience most aspects of a different culture. Frijoles Negros, por favor. Black beans, please. Beans, rice, plantain, yucca, pork and seafood dishes were the foods we wanted.

One day we were on an eco-tourism trip into the mountainous jungles of Cuba. Our lunchtime arrival at a large resort was later than planned. A more punctual group of tourists had mostly consumed the buffet. Our Cuban guide was very embarrassed and apologetic for the lack of what she called "good food".

I happened to notice Cuban workers eating at a rough lunch table in one of the rooms off the main dining hall. I asked our guide if we could have what they were eating. She was somewhat appalled to think we would want such "common food". It was a stew of black beans, rice and chicken. We assured her that this was exactly what we had been wanting! We were promptly served a plate containing a delicious, spicy epicurean delight. Many of the Cuban workers came to see what I suspect they thought must be "crazy gringos" eating such common food when they could have good North American stuff.

Black beans are also called turtle beans and are very popular in most Central and South American countries. These legumes have a black skin and a white, creamy interior. The beans are high in vitamin B, carbohydrates, fat and minerals. Bland in flavour, adding peppers, cumin, coriander and other spices can hot them up. Like many other savory dishes, black beans improve in flavour and texture when cooked in advance. Whenever I eat black bean dishes, I reflect fondly on our Cuban, Mexican, Guatemalan and Colombian friends.



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Black Bean Soup

1 pound dried black beans
2 Tablespoons corn oil
2 large onions, diced
6 to 8 cloves fresh garlic, diced
1 Cup chopped fresh tomato
1 chili pepper, crushed
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon cumin seed, ground
1 teaspoon coriander seed, ground
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons fresh cilantro for garnish
(Coconut cream, optional)

Choose beans carefully, removing any that are wizened and any small pieces of rock or grit. In a large bowl, add beans and enough boiling water to cover them. Let soak until water is absorbed: about one hour is sufficient. Beans can also be covered with cold water and left to soak overnight if you wish.

In a deep pot with a heavy bottom, cook diced onion in oil for about five minutes. Add beans, diced garlic and six cups of cold water. Bring this mixture to a boil over medium heat, skimming off foam that might rise to the surface. Reduce heat and continue to simmer, covered, for 60 to 80 minutes. Beans should be fairly soft at this point. Add all other ingredients and simmer covered for another hour. Taste for seasoning and adjust for salt and pepper.

Let soup cool and then refrigerate overnight. Next day, warm serving bowl(s) of soup in the microwave, adding chopped fresh cilantro and a dollop of coconut cream (fresh or canned) if available.

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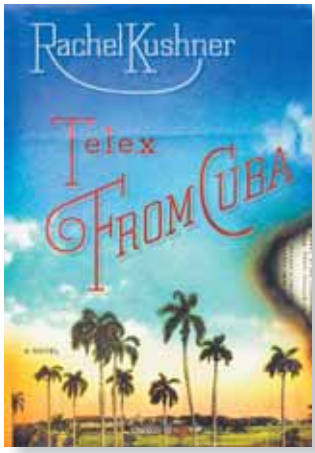
BOOK REVIEW BY THE CARIBBEAN BOOKWORM

CUBA ON THE CUSP

***Telex from Cuba**, by Rachel Kushner, published by Scribner, New York, © 2008. 320 pages. ISBN 978-1-4165-6103-3.*

Cuba has been under wraps so long that most of us can recall little specific about its pre-Castro persona. To observers and visitors in the 1950s, however, it was a happening place with a bustling economy, synonymous with nightlife, romance and outdoor adventure. Wasn't there something about class divisions, a mass of workers ridden hard and heedlessly by the wealthy upper class, and the often unethical manipulations of corporate and government imperialists (American as well as Cuban), that sparked the "people's revolution"?

Telex from Cuba focuses on that period at the cusp of revolution. It's set in the American "fiefdom" of eastern Cuba that had its headquarters at Preston. United Fruit and nickel mining interests ruled not only the canefields and mines. They also pulled strings that controlled the Cuban government and economy, as they worked as one with the United States government. Cuban leaders, first Prio, then Batista, were in cahoots with the oligarchs and operated like imperialists in their own country.



Telex from Cuba is a novel, but Kushner's parents lived in that American enclave during its heyday and were among those forced out when Castro came to power. They have told their daughter a lot about the place and it is on this material that the novel is based. Their daughter has been listening to all these stories carefully.

She knows the *Avenida* lined with mansions filled with servants, the constant dust from the nickel mines, the intense labor of the sugar harvest. Much of this is reported by the children who, as they did in the Fifties, roamed their world freely, seeing with clear eyes the intrigues of the enclave. No one without such good insider connections could have nailed the flavor of the era and place so well.

There's a character to illustrate just about every category of person in the colony: children, servants, wives and workers, politicians, cabaret dancers. In less skilled hands it could have been a cobbled-up catastrophe of cardboard stereotypes. Luckily, Kushner makes their stories blend and seem perfectly natural, not at all forced.

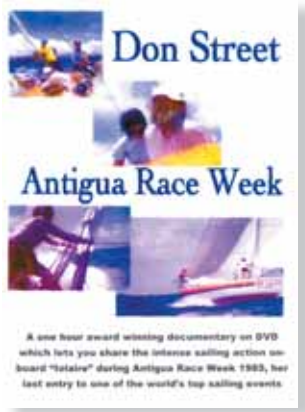
It's nice to see historical events like the Cuban revolution spot-lit from this oblique angle. Of course, Cuba was changed drastically in every respect by the events of 1958. But even those "bit players" of the American fiefdom had stories to tell, and felt the changes with regret, loss, even homesickness when they left.

And it adds depth to our current views to be reminded that the Castro family was a land-owning elite, and the deposed Batista was of landless peasant stock. Know too, in case you've forgotten, that United Fruit and the US government were like an old married couple who finished each other's sentences and treated Cuba like a child. And the brutally difficult work of harvesting the sugar cane was not performed by downtrodden Cubans, but by even more downtrodden Haitians.

If you're at all interested in Cuba (and with it about to reopen to the world, that's probably everyone in the Caribbean), read this book. It will color your understanding of the last 'free' Cuba. It's a nicely written book about a special time and a special place. *This book is available from Amazon.com.*

DVD REVIEW BY SALLY ERDLE

Antigua Week a Quarter Century Ago



***Don Street: Antigua Race Week** © 2005 Sea-TV.*

When I suggested on a recent Sunday afternoon that we watch this re-released DVD, my husband, Tom, groaned. "But this is 24 years old... and it's an hour long!" After the first five minutes, he muttered "I have to have a Heineken with this," and from then on, his attention was so fully engaged that even the post-lunch hammock couldn't lure him away.

The footage was shot in 1985 aboard Street's then-80-year-old engineless yawl, *Iolaire*, during her last outing at Antigua Sailing Week. *Iolaire* is competing for a podium place in Cruising Class, crewed by family and friends including Don's wife, Trich, and four-year-old son Mark, mate Lesley Duncan from Grenada, and Timi Carstarphen. Street is best known as a cruising guide author and magazine writer, and it's sometimes forgotten that he was a top-notch competitive skipper as well.

Also racing are well-remembered yachts ranging from classics such as the 1936 L. Francis Herreshoff ketch *Ticonderoga* and the 1925 ketch *Sumurun*, to the customized Cal40 *Huey Too* and the Soverel 42 *Legacy*.

Most boats racing in Antigua Sailing Week these days probably don't have four-year-olds in their crew, but when a larger boat overtakes *Iolaire* Mark pipes up from his station in the cockpit, "Dada, is that *Kialoa*?" — and he's right. And Trich shows herself to be an ace relief helmsman.

Iolaire is only 46 feet on deck, and narrow, so the camera is never far from the action on deck and the feeling is very much "you are there". The camera work and editing are professional but workmanlike, depending on simple, accurate recording of the experience rather than showing off a locker full of cinematographic effects and tricks. Also refreshing is the blessed absence of background music and beat, so you hear all the skipper-crew interplay, the sounds of the boat and the sea, even occasional commands given on nearby boats. Any voice-over is minimal and to the point. Nothing distracts you from "being" aboard *Iolaire* during the racing. The insertion of course maps, however, is most helpful for orientation before each race.

Antigua's famous mid-week layday and the post-racing Dockyard Day are not neglected. The tugs-of-war (both on land and in dinghies), limbo and beer-chugging contests and crazy craft race are evergreen. Do they still even do a wet T-shirt contest? No matter. And Street, made a sheik for the day, is in his glory, with personal belly dancers and all. Why belly dancers in Antigua? Again, no matter. It's all silly fun, crews blowing off steam between and after the very serious days of racing.

Iolaire's swan song sings. She went out in style, placing third overall in class and only five points away from first, despite being early over the line at one start (yes, the skipper used the "S" word on camera).

As the credits rolled Tom sighed, "They don't make 'em like they used to." I didn't know if he meant boats, skippers, crews or sailing documentaries. But they do make Antigua Sailing Weeks like they used to, and there will be one — the 42nd — running from April 26th to May 2nd.

All of Don Street's DVDs are available at Island Water World, www.imray.com, www.sea-tvproductions.com, or from streetiolaire@hotmail.com. A full description of all DVDs can be found at www.street-iolaire.com/works.htm.

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Dear Compass,
Reading the January and February issues of the *Compass* with the stories of the yacht fees in St. Martin (both French and Dutch sides), higher fees in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and ridiculous enforcement of Customs and Immigration rules in Trinidad & Tobago, makes me wonder if it is time to head west. Thank God I am old enough to have enjoyed the Eastern Caribbean in the golden years from 1955 to 1975, before mooring and anchoring fees, and when the Customs and Immigration process was (to a very large extent) friendly and inexpensive and regulations were not enforced to the letter of the law.

If my *Li'l Iolaire* had not been destroyed by a catamaran dragging down on her in Hurricane Ivan, and if I were a few years younger, I would head west and join my old friend Dave Ferneding. Dave is cruising Colombia, the San Blas islands and Panama during the winters, laying his boat up in either Cartagena or Panama (both are south of the hurricane area) for the hurricane seasons and spending his summers in Maine. He says that from the yachtsman's standpoint, the Colombia-Panama area is the safest in the Caribbean. Dave has worldwide experience. After chartering in the Eastern Caribbean from the early 1960s to the mid-1980s, he forsook the Caribbean to skipper big power boats and make money, but then went back to his true love: sailing.

He reports that not only is the southwestern Caribbean safe, but also the Customs and Immigration officers are friendly, there are seldom any harbor charges, anchorages are uncrowded, food and beer are cheap, the people are friendly and there are no hurricanes.
Don Street
Iolaire

Dear *Compass*,
In February's *Compass*, a news item on entry requirements to the USA by boat or air noted that this now requires ESTA authorization (free) for visitors traveling under the Visa Waiver Program. The website given in that article is incorrect. (I went into that website and it demanded a US$59 fee per application.)

The correct website for ESTA application for free authorization is https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/esta.html?_flowExecutionKey=_c819B3B10-947C-A604-B8C9-ACC406559AC6_k899E8B69-04F1-262F-28FE-6411EF86B524.

Whew! It's a long address, but we used it and got through with it for free.
Mike Hatch
Cynara

Dear *Compass*,
In the last two issues (February and March) I have enjoyed particularly the account of the visit to the San Blas Islands by Jack Foard, and the piece on Mariann "Why Knot" Palmborg by Peter Roren. Suffice to say in the latter case, that I wrote and you published a poem, "Mozart under the Coconut Fronds." The only thing missing in the tribute was a picture of her red vehicle, bedecked in white ropework and parked beside Bequia's open market!
Richard Dey
Massachusetts, USA

Dear *Compass*,
Thanks to Peter Roren and Norman Faria for their remembrances of Mariann Palmborg in the March *Compass*. My first introduction to Peter and Mariann came when we landed in Tortola in January 1995 and received our first official mail package as cruisers. In that issue of *Cruising World* magazine was an article by Peter entitled "How We Came to Bequia". We, like Peter, had never heard of Bequia before, but that story put the island on my list of must visits.

Every time I saw Mariann in the past eight or so years of landing in Bequia, she would grab my arm and ruffle through her satchel for a flyer or brochure about her latest passion. And, unlike most of the rest of us, when she took on a new passion, she kept on with the old ones: her ropework, the Bequia Regatta, the Sunshine School Auction, the concerts and, most recently, the puppies.

When we arrived in early January this year, I looked for her but by then she was already back in Norway, and I just didn't want to ask about her — a premonition, maybe?

Even though one or two times a year was the extent of our face-to-face contact, she was an integral part of Bequia for me and I will miss seeing her.
Melodye Pompa
S/V Second Millennium

Dear Compass,
We are currently cruising the Caribbean on our boat, *S/V Rigole*. We enjoyed Kevin Gray's article on Nevis in the March issue of *Caribbean Compass*, as we too shared many of his experiences.

We had the pleasure of meeting Kevin in Nevis in January, but have lost contact information for him. We would like to keep in touch. I hope Kevin reads this issue and will contact us.

We really enjoy your publication.
Alexis and Chick Pyle
S/V Rigole

Dear *Compass*,
On reading the March 2009 issue, number 162 today, we find a possible error in information.

The Earth orbits the Sun once every 365 days (approximately), and the planet meanwhile spins every 24 hours (approximately). The Moon circles the Earth once every 28 days (approximately), revolving on its axis exactly one time per orbit.

Question: From a given vantage point on Earth, does the Moon appear to rise earlier or later on successive days?

Now, through our sailing days we are always reminding ourselves that two of our best navigation tools are the ones we are born with, our eyes, and that we should be aware of our surroundings and constantly reviewing them, especially in areas such as the Tobago Cays and the like.

—Continued on next page

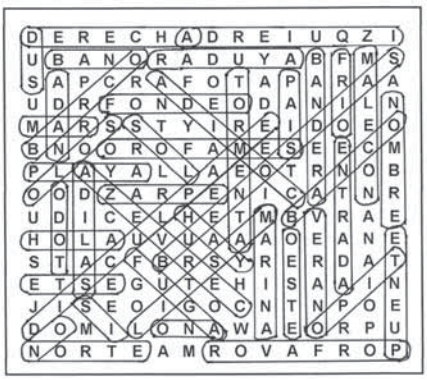
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A PUZZLE FOR THE SPANISH ISLANDS
Solution



—Continued from previous page

So, when we saw the moon at the point of Waxing Gibbous and approximately two days from full last night, March 8th, we noticed a problem with the information given in the table under "Meridian Passages of the Moon: March and April 2009" in said issue. The table informs us that it was a New Moon on the 7th of March and that it will not be a full moon until 21st March 2009. This information is supplied from another source, we understand, but it would seem that it may be somewhat misleading for sailors in the Caribbean who read it and take it as read. The source might be from a 2009 almanac to guide said sailors and your editorial maybe able to bring it to their attention to have it reviewed.

Anyway, we thought it was worth checking into just in case the sundowners were having a detrimental affect on our visionary sensors.

Oh, and by the way, if anyone tried answering the question above by calculating it mathematically, then they may want to review their watch-keeping arrangements and run awareness training for themselves and crew.

Ray and Irene McTear
S/V C-Drifters

Dear Ray and Irene,

Thanks for bringing this to our attention, as did a surprising number of others. It's good to know that there are so many readers who refer to our Meridian Passages of the Moon — you must really be out there sailing (or at least planning for the next full-moon party)!

We'll let our resident lunatic explain what happened to last month's tables.

CC

Dear Moontable Readers,

Yes — I must admit that was *last year's* Meridian Passages of the Moon for March and April! For some mysterious reason I pulled the wrong template out of my files archive, and the Full Moon happened wrongly, 11 days later than it's supposed to happen — the right date would have been the 10th of March.

I'm really sorry about the "Screw Moon" and here is my promise to all Navigators and Full Moon Party Goers:

The next Full Moon will be on April 9th. And it will be correct in the *Compass*! Why am I so sure? April 9th is my birthday!

Keep the sundowners going — there's nothing wrong with your vision.

Wilfred Dederer
Compass Design and "Astro Specialist"

Hi *Caribbean Compass,*

I read in March's *Compass* about the Swedish yacht being robbed in Wallilabou, St. Vincent, on February 1st.

The yacht that I skipper was robbed the night after; between the hours of 11:00PM and 1:00AM someone came down into the middle cabin of the boat and stole an SLR camera (this was the last day of the trip and our guests had documented their first sailing trip with their two young children onboard), some cash, phones and a Blackberry right from next to the head of a sleeping guest.

We were on a mooring and tied stern-to in the northern end of the bay in front of a small restaurant. When we arrived, we were immediately shafted. The boatboy told me it cost 20 dollars for the mooring, which I paid; half an hour later, the owner came to collect his 20 dollars for the mooring. When I confronted the boatboy, he told me his 20 was for *tying* me to the mooring! For 20 dollars, I would have secured my own mooring (as I pretty much always do) if I hadn't been misled.

The robbery was reported to the police, who informed me that this type of thing has been "going on for months". Which kind of contradicts what Mr. Russell stated in his reply to Captain Kjell's letter — that is, that Wallilabou has only a handful of incidents each year. As for acts of violence, I think the only act of violence to come will be against these thieves when they wake the wrong person: someone caught aboard my vessel in the night would not be walking off.

This night there was someone on the docks (a watchman or policeman, perhaps?) shining a flashlight around the bay and somehow this person slipped right by.

What I cannot understand is how no one in this small community admits to knowing anything about robberies from yachts, nor are they doing anything about it, yet are all capitalising on the sailboats visiting the bay. No one seems to give a hoot, as long as the boats keep coming and the money keeps coming in. All the electronic gear that is stolen is getting sold locally for sure. On that note, I noticed the next day in Cumberland Bay (it was too late to leave for St. Lucia that day after I dealt with the police, or I would have left St. Vincent right then) a boy of about eight years old using a 500-dollar pair of binoculars.

It's not just up to Mr. Russell to try and make the bay safe; I know he is making an effort and it's sad he seems to the only one who gives a damn. It is up to the community to make their area a safe place. Who wants to anchor their boat in a bay that needs security lighting and special patrols to keep you safe?

There are so many other beautiful places to anchor in this part of the world. I will never be returning to Wallilabou with any of my guests.

Ben Findlay
S/V Carla

Dear *Compass*,

Some comments on *Compass's* March Forum:

Dorsett's anchorage rating system produced a big surprise. The letter says that the system specifically penalizes rolly anchorages. Yet it rates Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou, which has had a remarkable amount of rolling over the past six months, as in the top two for comfort. Perhaps it makes a difference when you are there? And maybe you have to be in a place for a while before you rate it?

Regarding eSeaClear, my fear is that as soon as it becomes generally accepted, then it becomes mandatory. One letter says, "...but most modern day computer literates will have no problem." Well, a lot of us are not computer literate and have no intention of becoming so. I think there should be a grandfather clause that people born before, say, 1970 don't have to file anything on line. More terroristic than that, though, governments are learning that the only cost of making us fill out another form is to put it on line and set a $300,000 fine (CARICOM's eAPIS security fraud). We do all the work, waste all the time, and pay all the cost. They don't have to print a form or even have anyone read it. The thing is, you see, terrorists can't pay the $300,000 fine, so they will have to declare themselves. My country's previous administration was equally clever.

Poor Wallilabou Bay. I've got some friends there: people at the Wallilabou Anchorage, in the Boat Boy Association, and others. But now they're going to have security lights and a permanent coast guard boat. Those reassured by such things, enjoy, for it really is a beautiful place. Say "hi" for me.

Finally, the insurance advocate who shows us how an uninsured yacht could lose a whopping $100,000 judgment even if (mostly) in the right. My math on the same numbers shows it a net loss of only $10,000... only? Anyway, compare that to the crushing $300,000 for failing (or forgetting, as Chris Doyle did twice while trying to remember eSeaClear) to file APIS – should that pointless nightmare return. And I actively dislike yachts that say, "Don't worry, we have good insurance." I have no interest in wasting my time and sanity on your insurance company and lawyers over something that should be dealt with now. By the way, whether you have insurance or not, taking your own responsibility is your best insurance.

"One Man" Hutch
S/Y Ambia

Dear *Compass*,

I am encouraged, which I hope is not misplaced, with the development and introduction of eSeaClear. [*As reported and commented on in past issues of* Compass, *this is an electronic Customs clearance form option for yachts, now available in certain Eastern Caribbean countries; see www.eseaclear.com.*]

It is long overdue for the politicians in the islands to reexamine the deeply unpopular checking-in and checking-out process that has been passed down the ages from some 200-year-old Merchant Shipping Act. I wonder how many people have gone home after a sailing holiday saying "never again" to the paperwork.

More than 99 percent of all inter-island recreational sailors have just, several days or weeks ago, arrived by air from Europe or North America and had their passports validated. Why have to do it again and again every time you sail from one sandy beach to another?

ESeaClear can be successful but it needs an additional feature:

Allow arriving holidaymakers who are going sailing to purchase a "sailing permit" to cover the island groups they want to visit. These permits could be issued by the individual countries they wish to sail to, plus cover a time period. The details could be included in the eSeaClear data so Customs will know that they have paid their dues. A sticker, such as used for a vehicle licence, could be displayed on the boat. Customs and Immigration now have their information, and dues have been paid, so it should not be necessary, having secured the permits, to present oneself to the authorities. In addition, with a valid sailing permit one should not have to check out and check in all the time. Perhaps two adjoining countries with such sailing appeal as St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada could try and make this work. I am sure it will improve their income while allowing holidaymakers more time to enjoy their sailing.

Terry King-Smith
Dorado of Beaulieu

Dear *Compass*,

In response to recent letters in the *Compass* relating to yachtsmen's negative experiences at the Customs and Immigration Offices at Chaguaramas in Trinidad, we would like to put on record our own more positive experiences.

We have attended these offices five times over the last year and on every occasion we have been dealt with professionally and in a most cordial manner. More recently we applied for an extension of our stay in Chaguaramas; we arrived at the appointed time and were duly given the requested extension. This process took less than 20 minutes, during which time we found the Officers to be both polite and helpful.

We trust this letter can be published as we consider it important as visitors to retain good relationships with local officials.

Paul and Sue Rush
S/V Coulibri

Dear *Compass*,

Cruising has its moments.

On January 20, 2009, Barack Obama was sworn in as president of the United States. I'm a US citizen, and was in Bequia that day for the remarkable event that will change the world as we know it.

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

Being a stockholder in the outcome, I realized that I was not alone. The day was spent in the lobby of the Frangipani Hotel, with the owner, Son Mitchell. As the ex-Prime Minister of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, he has a political bent. As a resident of the country, he was excited about the goings-on in the US as much as I was.

Son had invited his friends and family to share the moment. He served us champagne and appetizers, and made us comfortable in the sweltering heat as we watched the process unfolding in the freezing cold of Washington DC. When I swung my head around to see who all was there, it was a snapshot of a remarkable flow of colors and thoughts sharing this moment as one. Electrifying, we all were riveted to the flat screen, and it was so inspirational we forgot to toast with our drinks. Everyone was a shareholder in that moment.

There were people from all the islands, Canada, the US, Europe, and we all were rooting for the same thing. We were focused on the possibilities of the future, as the future was that moment.

Captain Art Ross
New Hope, Pennsylvania, USA

Dear *Compass*,

My earliest boating days were on the waters of the 30,000 Islands of Georgian Bay, part of Canada's Lake Huron. I had bought from my father in the 1980s his old plywood eight-metre cabin cruiser *Seaborn II*, refurbished it, renamed it *BOLD* in his honour (his initials), and ran it from Lake Superior to the Erie Barge Canal in neighbouring New York State.

In Georgian Bay, sandy bottoms with good holding are precious. So I grew up with the impression that an anchor was a fickle friend. The only times I felt secure was when we sandwiched bumpers against a sheer rock wall with sturdy lines to trees ashore, or when we enjoyed the occasional luxury of tying to a dock. One of my most sobering memories of those days was an incident that happened one windy night.

It was late in the season. The warm day was forecast to turn abruptly wild that evening with westerly winds of 30 knots that would hold through the night. As my small family and I in *BOLD* closed with Beausoleil Island I was hoping the floating dock in Frying Pan Bay would have space available, and I was lucky, ours was the only boat in that small land-locked bay.

The wind came up as promised, but at our dock in the windward corner of the bay the water was still, even though the cockpit curtain strained and shook its tube framing. But with a sturdy dock on the other end of my lines I was content and we fell asleep.

In the early hours of the morning we woke to the unusual sensation of insistent rocking under us. I knew something was wrong. I got up and peered out into the black night. We were still safely tied to the dock, but the shoreline looked alien, cocked strangely with none of the features I remembered from the evening before. It took awhile before I recognized the awful truth: the dock was no longer where it had been earlier that night. *BOLD* had wrenched it from its moorings and it had crossed the bay, coming ashore on the leeward side, fortunately rotating so that it hit the beach before *BOLD*, and thus caused us no damage. But as you might imagine, the damage it caused to my confidence lives on. The infallible was proved to be fallible.

So now, Dear Reader, we skip forward to a recent day. The scene is the beautiful Tobago Cays, and our boat is now a sailboat, a Bénéteau 423, my beloved *BOLD* now only a memory. But I recognized the same wind, that constant wind that always stirs the blue-green water of the Cays. I had anchored in the past there, but now I knew the use of the new mooring balls was to be encouraged and I had no problem with that. The moorings were new and I knew they would be in good condition, so I felt totally confident in them.

The stronger than usual wind that had been a constant feature of the last few weeks continued through the night, but I had felt that same confidence that Frying Pan Bay's dock had offered. Hmm.

About seven o'clock the next morning, I lay in bed thinking of the day's planned activities when suddenly I felt a shock which was a little different from the other bangs and rustlings of the boat. I asked my wife "what was that?" and then looked up through the front hatch. The roller-furled jib and sheets were like cross-hairs against the sky, and aimed exactly at another boat's mainmast just a couple of metres away.

"We've hit another boat!" I shouted as I popped out the hatch. I could see a small group of faces watching me from the cockpit of the other boat, and for a moment I considered that they had hit the bow of our boat with their port side while passing too close. But then I noticed that we were beam-on to the waves and I knew that couldn't be right.

Indeed, something was certainly wrong, as I could see the mooring ball still attached to the bow of our



boat, with its warp streaming back along my port side. Looking downwind I saw another small group of boats at anchor at some distance, but I knew I was a long time from hitting them. The mooring warp was not long enough to reach our propeller, so I started the engine and got the sailboat back into its previous position and lowered the anchor. I was incredulous. What had happened? I pulled the mooring ball aboard at the bow and examined the warp. The thick rope was attached to a length of chain, which led to an assembly involving a thick stainless steel bolt. It was clearly the bolt that had separated from something on the sea floor and caused the mooring to fail. But an examination of the bolt showed no damage at all. Clearly the bolt seemed to have unscrewed itself due to the motion of the mooring ball in the waves.

I felt VERY lucky that there was also no damage either to our boat, or to the beautiful Jeanneau that we had hit. It seemed most likely that our bow roller had struck their shrouds or chain plates, but there wasn't a mark on either boat. A few hours later the Park Rangers came by and I was able to give them back their errant mooring ball and warp. They did seem to be genuinely disturbed and assured me that they would be checking all the moorings in the park. The concern is that there seems to be a fault in design; if this can happen to one mooring it will happen again. The problem needs to be addressed, and I'm sure the conscientious park staff will put this right.

For me, the spectre of Frying Pan Bay still remains, and I'm sure that the universe is still having its small entertainment at my expense. But so far it's an innocent laugh. Later that day I put out a second anchor.

Brian Domander
Toronto, Canada

Editor's note: We asked Lesroy Noel, Education Coordinator of the Tobago Cays Marine Park, for a response, which follows.

Dear *Compass*,

Responding to the letter from Brian Domander, the management of the TCMP would first like to sincerely apologise to Mr. Domander and others who were involved in the collision. TCMP is equally concerned about the potential danger of unsecured moorings; we are seeking ways to rectify the situation.

More than 20 yachts visit our park each day and we have provided the optional service of moorings to encourage yachters not to anchor on the sea beds by offering a secure alternative. Therefore the safety of the visitors, yacht crew and craft are important to TCMP. We strive to provide the best, stress-free and relaxing visit to maintain our slogan of a "paradise visit".

In light of this we have reported the incident to the supplier of the moorings, Environmental Mooring International Inc. In our dialogue with them they pointed out that this situation is an unusual one, given that the moorings were installed just over nine months ago. They are currently investigating the matter to assess what went wrong. The TCMP is expecting a detailed response from Environmental Moorings shortly.

In the meantime, Park Rangers are currently checking each and every mooring to ensure the situation doesn't repeat itself.

Lesroy Noel
Education Coordinator
Tobago Cays Marine Park

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

Please include your name, boat name or shoreside address, and a way we can contact you (preferably by e-mail) if clarification is required.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

APRIL & MAY 2009

Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this and next month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs 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. Times given are local.

Note: the maximum tide is 3 or 4 days after the new and full moons.

For more information, see "Tides and Currents" on the back of all Imray Iolaire charts. Fair tides!

April

DATE	TIME
1	1721
2	1822
3	1920
4	2014
5	2104
6	2152
7	2239
8	2325
9	0000 (full)
10	0012
11	0100
12	0150
13	0241
14	0332
15	0424
16	0514
17	0602
18	0648
19	0732
20	0816
21	0859
22	0942
23	1028
24	1117 (new)
25	1210
26	1308
27	1410
28	1513
29	1616
30	1715

May

DATE	TIME
1	1810
2	1902
3	1949
4	2035
5	2121
6	2206
7	2253
8	2342
9	0032
10	0000 (full)
11	0124
12	0216
13	0307
14	0355
15	0442
16	0527
17	0609
18	0652
19	0734
20	0818
21	0905
22	0956
23	1051
24	1152
25	1257 (new)
26	1402
27	1505
28	1604
29	1658
30	1747
31	1834



WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Good Service in the Caribbean

by Chris Doyle

I have had a couple of interesting incidents this year, not in ways I particularly wanted, but you always learn a thing or two. And one of the things I learned was that, despite the standard complaints you hear about the Caribbean, you can get service here that is second to none.

It started when I was sailing to St. Lucia from Bequia. The diesel outboard on my catamaran, *Ti Kanot*, started racing. "Uh oh", I thought, "what can this be?" Clearly I was going to need a mechanic, so the sooner I started looking the better. I consulted *Sailors Guide to the Windward Islands*, and found I had highly recommended Alwin Augustin. Now, I admit I had never met Alwin, though I knew his reputation, so it looked like I would soon find out whether he lived up to my recommendation.

I soon had him on the phone listening to the engine. A fuel problem seemed a possibility, so after he hung up I changed the fuel filter, and the engine did seem to run a lot smoother for about an hour. Then it raced again a couple of times, and suddenly there was a loud bang followed by silence.

I lifted the engine cover and was met by a depressing sight. Half of the timing belt was lying loose, and the other half had been turned into a sort of fine wool and distributed all over the engine. Not a good sign.

It was the 11th of December. My partner, Ginny, was arriving in St. Lucia on the 14th and flying out from St. Kitts on the 2nd of January. The next day Alwin came aboard and together we got the motor off the boat and into his van — a distinct advantage of having an outboard, however cumbersome.

The next day he let me know what had happened. The governor had come apart, releasing the pressure on the timing belt that had been chewed up and then come off. This had caused all sorts of bad things to happen with pistons and valves.

He also had a rather long list of bits that would need replacing. Unfortunately, this model of Yanmar diesel outboard is not made any more, and parts are sometimes available, but not always. Further, if they are only available in Japan, they take some weeks to arrive — for some reason the company who sells them will not use FedEx.

So first thing Monday I was up looking for Ian Cowan at Island Water World. As the manager of a chandlery, Ian is one busy man, so you have to catch him when you can and pray not too many people come in before he has time to do whatever you need him to do. But he is master of parts and soon found out where all the parts resided, and we had those available on order.

The one stuck in Japan was the complete governor — I would be on my own for that. Luckily I managed to track down Sean Clark, who runs Island Girl Charters in Tobago. His fleet contains a sister ship of *Ti Kanot*'s that has a motor of the same type, and he kindly agreed to get a mechanic to remove the governor and FedEx it to me. I had a fit when I tracked the governor and saw that it had gone to Puerto Rico from Tobago, but it eventually got to me — that is how FedEx works.

The first batch of parts came in missing a few, so the next order went in. We were now a few days away from Christmas and Alwin went to work. It looked like we might make it. Then Alwin called: the main drive wheel for the timing belt, which is made of some kind of fiber, broke as he removed it. (Having looked at it, I cannot see how it could be removed without breaking it, and the manual is no help.)

Back to Ian. Mastri, the dealer, was soon to close and would remain closed well into the New Year. But if a part was available and if they sent it out right away, I might still get it on Christmas Eve. Everything clicked and I did. Alwin worked over Christmas and Boxing Day and delivered the working engine the day after Boxing Day.

To me, this was incredible service from everyone. Alwin, who had never seen a diesel outboard before, read the manual (which looks like gibberish to me), figured it out and worked seriously overtime to get it running. He did a fabulous job. Ian corralled all the parts, and as I saw the faxes I know it was not that easy. Sean was wonderful to take a part off an engine and then FedEx it to me — just one yachtsman helping another.

I doubt this repair would have happened at this speed, over a major holiday, anywhere else in the world.

But that was not the end of my travails. With the engine repaired, we began pushing hard up the islands so I could get Ginny onto her plane, and the usual Christmas winds were blowing. I happened to be looking at the windmill when the whole blade assembly took off like some demented spacecraft in a bid for freedom and crashed into the sea. Ooops. (This I found out later was my fault. When I reassembled it, I think I must have left off the lock washer.)

I had bought it at Budget Marine, so I sent them an e-mail telling them what had happened and asking if they had the relevant parts, and if not, could they get them? They e-mailed back the next day saying that they did not have the parts in stock, and that FedExing would be far too expensive. But they offered to take the necessary parts from one of the new units they had in stock and sell them, and when I arrived in St. Martin they had all the parts ready and waiting for me. When did you last get that kind of service from one of the big chain stores in the USA?

So I say, despite the occasional complaint you hear, that when it comes to service for yacht equipment, the Caribbean is now right up there with the best.

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Admiral Yacht Insurance	UK	12
Anjo Insurance	Antigua	14
Antigua Classic Regatta	Antigua	14
Art & Design	Antigua	MP
Art Fabrik	Grenada	MP
Atlantic Yacht Deliveries	UK	MP
B & C Fuel Dock	Petite Martinique	29
Bahia Redonda	Venezuela	27
Barefoot Yacht Charters	St. Vincent	8
Barrow Sails & Canvas	Trinidad	MP
Basil's Bar	Mustique	37
Bay Island Yachts	Trinidad	43
Benhanzin Entertainment	Antigua	10
Bichik Services	Martinique	MP
Bogles Round House	Carriacou	36
Budget Marine	Sint Maarten	2/MP
BVI Yacht Sales	Tortola	43
Camper & Nicholsons	Grenada	6
Canash Beach Apts.	St. Vincent	MP
Captain Gourmet	Union Island	36
Caraibe Greement	Martinique	11
Caraibe Greement	Martinique	MP
Caraibe Yachts	Guadeloupe	43
Carene Shop	Martinique	28
Caribbean Marine Electrical	Trinidad	MP
Caribbean Propellers Ltd.	Trinidad	MP
Caribbean Woods	Bequia	MP
Carriacou Silver Diving	Carriacou	MP
Ciao Pizza	Union Isand	36
CIRExpress	St. Maarten	35/MP
Clipper Ship	Martinique	MP
Cooper Marine	USA	42
Curaçao Marine	Curaçao	17
Diesel Outfitters	St. Maarten	42
Diginav	Martinique	28
Discovery Marigot	St.Lucia	31
Dockwise Yacht Transport	Martinique	19
Dockyard Electric	Trinidad	MP
Dominica Marine Center	Dominica	MP
Dopco Travel	Grenada	25
Down Island Real Estate	Carriacou	MP
Doyle Offshore Sails	Tortola	3/MP
Doyle's Guides	Caribbean	28
Echo Marine - Jotun Special	Trinidad	17
Electropics	Trinidad	MP
Falmouth Harbour Marina	Antigua	5
Fernando's Hideaway	Bequia	MP
Food Fair	Grenada	39
Fortress Marine	St. Kitts	9
Frangipani Hotel	Bequia	30
Fred Marine	Guadeloupe	20
Gourmet Foods	St. Vincent	37
Grenada Marine	Grenada	25
Grenada Tourism	Grenada	7
Grenadine Island Villas	Bequia	MP
Grenadines Sails	Bequia	30
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KP Marine	St. Vincent	12
Le Phare Bleu	Grenada	16
Lulley's Tackle	Bequia	30
Marc One Marine	Trinidad	MP
Marina Zar-Par	Dominican	15
McIntyre Bros. Ltd	Grenada	13
Mid Atlantic Yacht Services	Azores	MP
Navimca	Venezuela	39
Navtech Electronics	Trinidad	
Northern Lights Generators	Tortola	26
Old Fort Estates	Bequia	MP
Perkins Engines	Tortola	18
Petit St. Vincent	PSV	34
Porthole	Bequia	MP
Power Boats	Trinidad	MP
Renaissance Marina	Aruba	22
Salty Dog Sports Bar	Bequia	39
Santa Barbara Resorts	Curaçao	23
Savon De Mer	Caribbean	MP
Sea Services	Martinique	21
Ship's Carpenter	Trinidad	MP
Sling's Upholstery	Carriacou	MP
Soper's Hole Marina	Tortola	35
Spice Island Marine	Grenada	24
St. Thomas Yacht Sales	St. Thomas	43
Superwind	Germany	29
SVG Air	St. Vincent	41
Technick	Grenada	MP
Tikal Arts & Crafts	Grenada	13
Trade Winds Cruising	Bequia	35
Transcaraibes	Guadeloupe	MP
Turbulence Alternative Energy	Grenada	MP
Turbulence Sails	Grenada	24
Turbulence Sails	Grenada	MP
Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout	Carriacou	29
Vemasca	Venezuela	38
Voiles Assistance	Martinique	MP
Volvo	Martinique	27
Wallace & Co	Bequia	30
Wallilabou Anchorage	St. Vincent	14
West Indies Regatta	CW	MP
WIND	Martinique	MP
Xanadu Marine	Venezuela	38

MP = Market Place pages 44 to 46

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FOLDING T-TOP

FISHMASTER Marine Towers and Accessories





The first universal T-Top that folds for fixed bridges and storage, and it's affordable, strong, silent and easy to install. The Patent Pending design offers an affordable option to many boat owners who could not previously own a T-Top because of fixed bridges or storage constraints. The Fishmaster T-Top is the lowest priced in the market compared to comparable models and adjusts to fit any boat with center console up to 50" wide.
FT00001 - Available in Navy Blue

COOLFREEZE CF-40 PORTABLE FREEZER

WAECO mobile solutions



Perfect for outings with the family! These versatile units are suitable for either 12 or 24 Volt AC and 115 or 230 Volt DC. Gross capacity: 39 quarts, 1.3 cubic feet, holds 48 twelve ounce cans. Average power consumption: 45 Watts Weight: 37 lbs.
Quality features: Detachable lid (lid mount at the front), interior light, vertical space for standing 1.5-liter returnable bottles, CF special electronics.
Dimensions: Exterior - 22.8" L x 17.5" H x 14" W
WA30040

TEAK SWIVEL COCKPIT TABLE

NOA



A very versatile, adjustable, removable and elegant teak table that stows flat. The ingenious frame gives you greater freedom for festive meals on board. You can move around in the cockpit without the table being in the way. Suits all types of boats. Built to resist the harsh elements of the sea, the frame is manufactured from saltwater-resistant anodised aluminum and all moving parts are extremely hardwearing. 70 x 42 cm SV00602

SOLARA SLIM LINE SOLAR PANELS



KY10068 - 68 watt KY10023 - 23 watt

Solara solar panels are made with stainless steel backing plate and are small, pliable, very thin and light. When stuck or screwed onto a flat surface, the solar panels can be walked on and shape themselves to slightly-curved surfaces. Due to the synthetic surface there's no fear of broken glass. These high-power solar cells are extremely efficient.

What you need

HX850S FLOATING MARINE TRANSCEIVER WITH GPS

STANDARD HORIZON



Designed to be a work horse, the HX850S includes 6 Watts of transmit power, die cast chassis, ergonomically shaped with rubberized armor for a non-slip grip and heavy duty belt clip. This advanced FLOATING handheld VHF/GPS includes a 12-channel GPS receiver allowing the radio to transmit a DSC call with your coordinates, perfect for a ditch bag. In addition the HX850S can transmit and receive Digital Selective Calls (DSC) including Position Polling. Advanced features include: Full dot matrix display with Full Page Radio with channel names, Radio/Position, Radio/SOG/COG pages, SC-101 Digital Selective Calling including; Position request and Position report, Volume & Squelch indication on display, NMEA output on cradle for connection to your favorite fixed mount GPS, SOS strobe light, NOAA Weather with alert and a speaker microphone jack allowing connection of optional accessories. LC08501

What's on Sale

XTOOLS - Tools that float!
30%* OFF!



6.5" Bullnose Pliers with sheath
SZ90001
Now $11.16

9.0" Bullnose Pliers with sheath
SZ90002
Now $12.11

10" E-Z Release Dehooker
SZ90004
Now $9.97



XTOOLS - Shakespeare



PSD Combo:
- Mini Dehooker
- 6.5" Bentnose Pliers
- Plier Sheath

SZ0008
Now $15.75

MARINE GREZ-OFF

30%* OFF!



Top-rated Marine Degreaser - Twice hailed as a "Best Performer" in an independent boater's consumer report with top marks for effectiveness, safety and environmental impact.
Heavy-Duty Biodegradable Formula - Quickly and completely cuts through oil, grease and grime.
Ideal for: outboards, inboards, I/O's, asphalt drives, dock and mooring, equipment and more. Great bilge cleaner too!

KM22732 - Quart / KM22701 - Gallon
Now $6.95 **Now $18.37**

*Discounts valid for April 2009 while stocks last.

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Published by Compass Publishing Limited, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and printed by Trinidad Publishing Company Limited