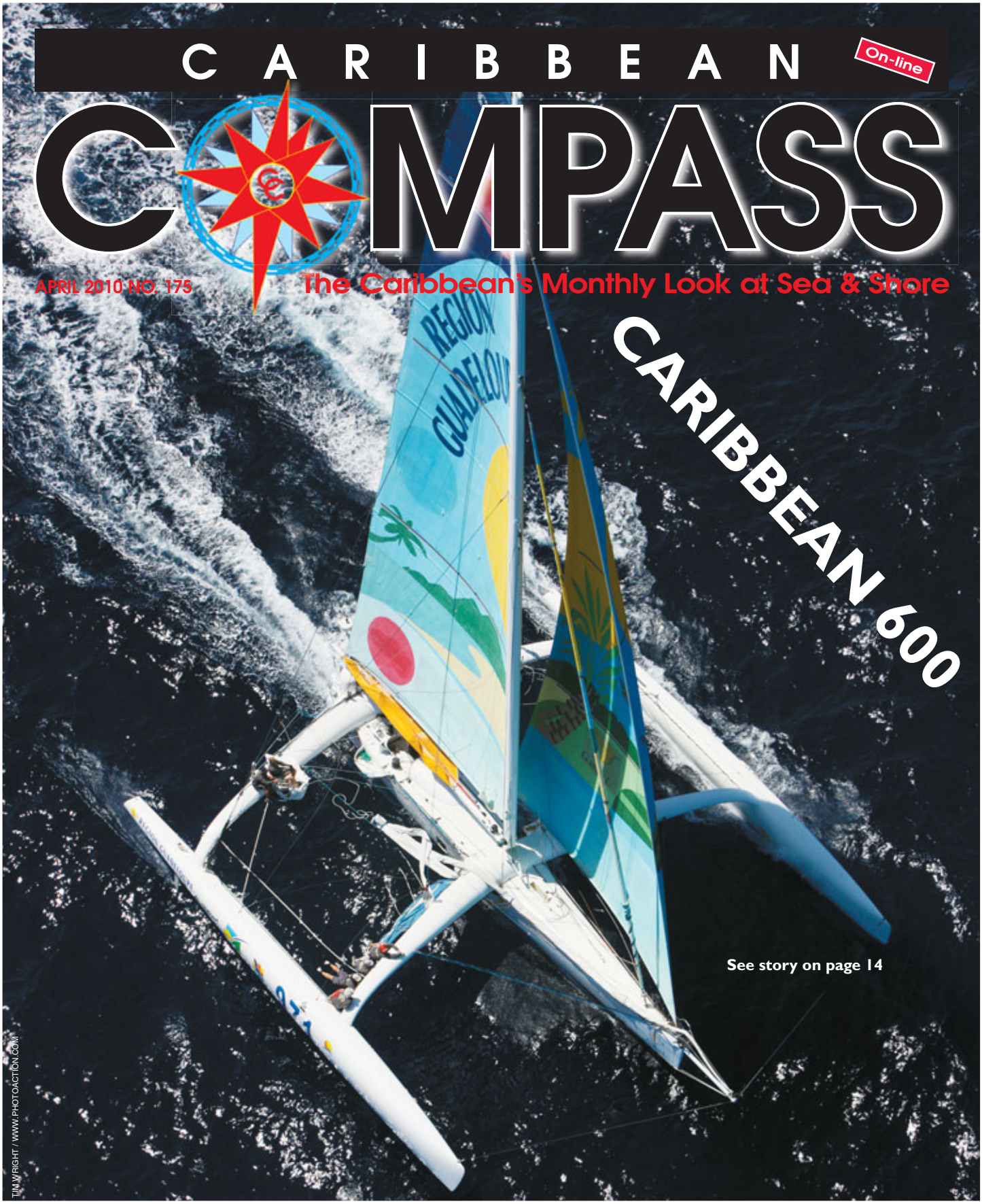
CARIBBEAN COMPASS
On-line
APRIL 2010 NO. 175
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

CARIBBEAN 600



See story on page 14

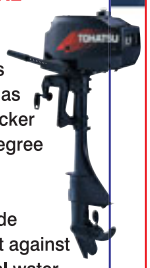
TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

TOHATSU Outboards

Technology for the next generation

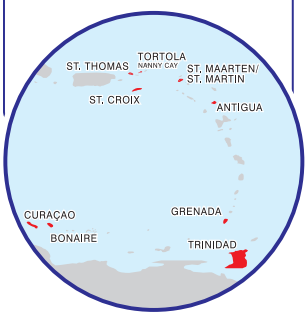


3.5 HP TWO STROKE
TOH/M003.5BS

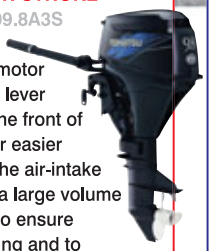


The 3.5 HP engine is for small dinghies, has a CD ignition for quicker starts and FN 360 degree steering.

Made from high grade aluminium to protect against corrosion, all internal water passages zinc coated for superior corrosion resistance, safety lanyard as standard.



9.8 HP FOUR STROKE
TOH/MFS009.8A3S



The 9.8 HP motor has the shift lever located on the front of the motor for easier operation. The air-intake system has a large volume air silencer to ensure engine starting and to suppress air-intake noise during engine operation.

This motor has a wide anti-cavitation plate which effectively restrains the propeller from cavitating. The large trim tab helps to achieve effortless steering at high speeds whilst also providing corrosion protection.

WATCH WITH LARGE DIGITS
OPT/3018

NEW ITEM



At an affordable price, this watch has the following features:

- Has a new display with very large digits.
- The new starting timer is easy to set and reset and has a synchronize function in case you missed a signal.
- It beeps every minute, during the last minute every 10 seconds.

DAVIS MOTOR CADDY
DAV/430



Motor Caddy makes lifting and moving cumbersome motors safer and simpler. It is sized to be quickly attached to most outboards from 2-15 horse-power.

This improved design features a longer strap to fit 4-stroke motors and an added security strap for today's streamlined engine cases. Made of UV resistant materials that will endure the marine environment.

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Trinidad & Tobago
Soca Sails, Ltd.
Chaguaramas

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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APRIL 2010 • NUMBER 175


STEVE BRETT

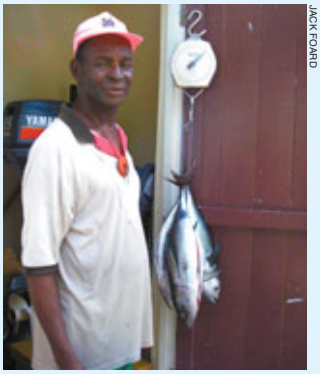
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See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

CMPA caribbean marine publishers association

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Cover photo: Tim Wright / www.photoaction.com Region Guadeloupe, *first to finish in the second Caribbean 600 Race*



***Compass* covers the Caribbean! From Cuba to Trinidad, from Panama to Barbuda, we've got the news and views that sailors can use. We're the Caribbean's monthly look at sea and shore.**

"We were first introduced to the *Caribbean Compass* by a fellow cruiser in Jamaica in 2007 and have been hooked ever since. The first-hand accounts of sailors' knowledge, experiences and impressions of various islands has influenced our journey and broadened our horizons. We have saved articles about places we're anticipating traveling to, and the advertisements direct us to parts and services. To us the *Compass* is a very valuable resource with information that would be difficult to get from any other source."

— Bev and Bill Bate, *El Shaddai*

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Info & Updates

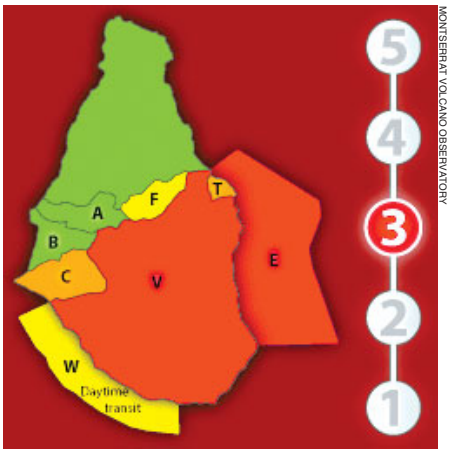
Grenada Reopens Ports of Entry

The Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada reports: With the passing of the H1N1 "swine flu" threat, the restrictions regarding ports of entry for yachts have now been lifted. Grenada's Ministry of Health has announced that entry requirements are now as they were pre-H1N1. A medical officer will be retained at the Grenada Yacht Club, but yachts can now clear in at any of Grenada's ports of entry, which include St. David's Harbour, Prickly Bay, St. George's (Grenada Yacht Club) and Hillsborough, Carriacou.

For more information contact mayagadmin2@gmail.com

Montserrat Volcano Hazard Level Drops

The Hazard Level System divides the southern two-thirds of the island of Montserrat into six zones, plus two Maritime Exclusion Zones. Access permission for each of these zones is dependent on the Hazard Level, which ranges from 1 to 5. Last December, the National Disaster Preparedness and Advisory Committee raised the Hazard Level to 4 — the second highest — after recording increased activity at the Soufriere Hills Volcano.



MONTSERRAT VOLCANO OBSERVATORY

Recently the Hazard Level was reduced to 3, after the Director of the Montserrat Volcano Observatory revealed that the partial dome collapse on February 11th had significantly reduced the risk to the area. Currently, vessels are not permitted in Maritime Exclusion Zone E, but are permitted daytime transits of Maritime Exclusion Zone W.

For more information visit www.mvo.ms

Container Ship Sinks Off St. Lucia

On the evening of February 21st, the 400-foot Antigua-flagged container ship *M/V Angel N* rolled and sank off the south coast of St. Lucia about two miles from Vieux Fort after leaving that port bound for Barbados. The 12-person crew took to the lifeboats and no one was injured.



Bottoms up! The container ship Angel N *rolled and sank off St. Lucia shortly after leaving the port of Vieux Fort on February 21st*

The next day, yachts anchored nearby awoke to an unusual sight. David Lyman of *S/V Searcher* says, "A single container floated into Malgretout Bay. Within 15 minutes people in the village of Soufriere had heard the news and arrived on the scene in a variety of boats. Others came to the beach by car. The container was soon pried open and the contents were quickly distributed. There were ovens, microwaves, TVs, and case lots of peanut butter, beverages and crackers."

—Continued on next page



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According to a Barbados newspaper report, the ship's agents in Barbados, Da Costa Mannings Shipping, said the vessel experienced a "stability problem". Journalist and former merchant seaman Norman Faria writes, "One can only raise



DAVID LYMAN

The ship's capsize was a windfall for St. Lucians who salvaged some of the cargo

questions until the formal inquiry is held. One major area of questioning would be whether the containers on deck were too heavy and/or piled too high. As the vessel was turning left into the channel it could have met strong currents and seas inducing the capsize. Another question investigators will be looking into is whether the cargo was properly secured at Vieux Fort and previous ports."

Presently, about 15,000 containers are lost every year from ships, mainly because of storms or incorrect stowage.

Days after she rolled, the *Angel N's* stern sat on the bottom with her bow awash at position approximately 13°42.0715 N and 60°59.4944 W. Divers are investigating.

Meanwhile, Devi Sharp aboard *Arctic Tern* reported boatboys selling, and even giving, salvaged peanuts to the cruisers in the Soufriere anchorage, "and when we left the bay, the tide line was full of Coke labels".

Thanks to John Kessell for additional information in this report.

Yacht Ransacked at Puerto Cabello, Venezuela

According to a report from the Venezuelan security agency ONSA, while the skipper of the German-flagged yacht *Avaroa II* went ashore to clear Customs at Puerto Cabello at 2:00PM on February 22nd, burglars arriving in a peñero boarded and violently ransacked the yacht, taking items of value and damaging the interior. The yacht, which had just arrived from Curaçao, was anchored in front of the marina.

For more information visit www.onsa.org

Aruba Adopts eSeaClear System

Sander Vellinga reports: As of March 2010 the Aruba Customs has started to implement the eSeaClear system, www.eseaclear.com, for yachts visiting Aruba. This system allows yachts to fill out Customs clearance forms online before arrival. As the vessel will have to be cleared both by Customs and by Immigration, the captain will still need to do the paperwork for Immigration separately. Arriving yachts will have to tie up at Barcadera Harbor to clear before they can go to an anchorage or to the marina. For those yachts not using the eSeaClear system, Customs and Immigration forms can be found on the website of the Renaissance Marina: www.renaissancemarina.com

Boaters Provide Ongoing Help for Haiti

Kerry Biddle-Chadwick reports: When an earthquake devastated Port-Au-Prince, Haiti in January, people and agencies worldwide opened their hearts and pockets to help, and the Red Cross in St. Maarten was one of the first. People from all over the island poured in to drop off food, water and clothes for the quake victims. Many cruisers on the island at the time gave their time to help sort and pack clothing for shipping. The Red Cross provided a light breakfast and lunch to sustain the volunteers during the task of detangling piles of clothes and sorting and folding them into separate boxes for men, women, girls, boys and babies. The hours were long and the boxes heavy and after a couple of days of packing and manhandling those boxes, the aches and pains of muscles not usually used by sailors made themselves known.

This is a long-term project because of the scale of the devastation. People are still bringing donations of money, food and water to the St. Maarten Red Cross from around the island and from nearby islands. It took a few days to organize the logistics of getting the first containers shipped, but containers that are now being shipped are getting efficiently to their destination.

Meanwhile, Harry Birch of yacht *Fairwind* out of Tortola is recruiting cruising yachts in St. Maarten to take medical and other supplies to Ile à Vache off the southwest coast of Haiti, where there is a safe anchorage from which to offload supplies for people on the outer edges of the earthquake area who are being overlooked by the international aid agencies. Once the supplies are in Ile à Vache, Pastor Papie Jean of Coeur Pour Haiti will take them by motorboat to the mainland to be distributed to the people who need them most. Captain Harry is working in conjunction with the St. Maarten Red Cross in his efforts to organize the humanitarian run to Ile à Vache. He can be found at the Turtle Pier cruisers' get-together on a Wednesday evening, or he can be contacted on captharry@hotmail.com

Also, solo sailor Donna Lange, a director of Oceans Watch North America (www.oceanswatch.org), a not-for-profit organization which links cruising yachts with needs in…

—Continued on next page

Port Louis Marina – another great reason to visit Grenada

Port Louis GRENADA WEST INDIES






Grenada remains one of the most unspoilt and welcoming cruising destinations in the Caribbean.

Now, with Port Louis, visiting yachts can enjoy the security and convenience of a beautifully appointed, fully serviced marina – located in the lagoon adjacent to the island's capital, St George's.

Grenada's southern location allows for year-round cruising, including the summer months, and with an international airport just five miles away, Port Louis is the ideal base for exploring the wonderful islands of the Grenadines.

As a Port of Entry, it's easy to clear in and out through Port Louis, and our 24-hour security, dockside facilities and marina-wide wi-fi all contribute to making your stay safe and relaxed.

Port Louis is owned and operated by Camper & Nicholsons Marinas, and our friendly and knowledgeable staff are on hand 24 hours a day to welcome yachts of all sizes from 20ft to 300ft.

For more information about securing a berth at Port Louis, including the opportunity to purchase on a 30-year licence, please contact our Sales and Marketing Co-ordinator, Danny Donelan on +1 (473) 435 7432 or email danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com

Port Louis Marina – just one more reason to visit the 'Spice Island'.

www.cnportlouismarina.com

Camper & Nicholsons YACHTING SINCE 1782 MARINAS

ITALY | MALTA | TURKEY | WEST INDIES

—Continued from previous page
…islands worldwide, is coordinating yachts wanting to take part in a humanitarian run. She can be contacted at donna@oceanswatch.org



Sorted and packed with cruisers' assistance, these supplies are ready to ship to Haiti

Finally, Michael "Beans" Gardiner, singer/songwriter/entertainer from Tortola and co-founder of the Good Samaritan Foundation on Ile à Vache can help with Customs clearance questions and any other information that you require about Ile à Vache. He can be contacted at captbeans86@hotmail.com

Barbados Faces Beach Issues

Norman Faria reports: Following complaints about harassment of visitors, Barbadian authorities appear set to increase police patrols on selected beaches. Minister of Tourism Hon. Richard Sealy said his Ministry would be looking into the matter.

The Daily Nation newspaper quoted Bougainvillea Beach resort owner, Gordon Seale, as saying that "itinerant vendors" were harassing tourists and selling "more than what they appeared to be selling". The vendors became rude and aggressive when visitors declined to purchase anything, he said.

Seale, a former President of the Barbados Hotel Association, also said that when several cruise liners call at the Bridgetown port on one day, thousands of passengers crowd onto some of the beaches. This places a strain on hotel guests, locals and others who wish to use the beaches as well.

In addition, Seale said the operation of jet skis needs to be properly policed. Jet ski operators often ply the crowds offering rides for rental, weaving their watercraft among bathers and anchored yachts at high speed while emitting noise and gasoline exhaust.

Barbados's main economic sector is tourism, with close to a million visitors annually.

Tobago Cays Park to Require Holding Tanks

Recently completed reef surveys have indicated that there are significant levels of nutrients entering the water within the confines of the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP). This is having a negative effect on the health of the marine environment, especially the coral reefs; it also holds the potential to become a public health hazard. The primary mode of nutrients entering the water within the TCMP is via the release of vessel-borne sewage.

The primary objective of the TCMP is to protect, conserve and improve the natural resources of the Tobago Cays for present and future generations, making the issue of nutrient over-loading one of critical importance.

The use of holding tanks on vessels has been identified as the most effective means of reducing the amount of untreated waste that enters the marine environment, thereby eliminating the potential of a public and/or environmental health problem. Consequently, the management of the TCMP has taken the decision that effective September 30th, 2010 all boats visiting the TCMP must be equipped with and use holding tanks while in the TCMP. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the immediate expulsion of that vessel. In the case of a charter vessel failing to comply, its licence to operate within the park will be terminated.

Yacht skippers are also reminded not to obstruct the channel when anchoring in the passage between the islands of Petit Rameau and Petit Bateau in the Tobago Cays Marine Park. This is the main entry route for yachts arriving from the north and heading to the main anchorage behind Horseshoe Reef. Likewise, it is the main exit route for boats departing toward the north. Please leave the channel clear.

For more information contact tcmp191@hotmail.com

Cruisers' Site-ings

The photo gallery for Antigua Charter Yacht Show 2009 is now available at ***www.antiguayachtshow.com/photocats2009.asp***

The fourth edition of the *Cruising Guide to the Dominican Republic* is now available free on-line. The new edition has 35 more pages and describes seven additional harbors and anchorages, as well as including additional information on many aspects of cruising the Dominican Republic. The fourth edition of the guide will soon be published in Spanish and will include all the photos that are in the English edition. The website is interactive with users and with Facebook.
Visit ***www.dominicanrepubliccruisingguide.com***

Come to the Carriacou Maroon!

The Grenada Board of Tourism reports: The Carriacou Maroon & String Band Music Festival is a cultural education and entertainment event. Maroon culture is about thanksgiving and prayers to the source of all life, production and prosperity. Its African origins are depicted through drumming, singing, eating of "smoke food" and other rituals. During the festival, April 30th through May 2nd, visitors will experience a genuine maroon in its natural, home setting. There will be presentations of the Big Drum nation dance, quadrille dance, Shakespeare Mas and other cultural art forms by both local and visiting groups. String band music is very popular on Carriacou and has historically been a main source of entertainment at social functions. String bands from several other Caribbean islands will also be performing.

Venues will move from Bogles Village to Belair Heritage Village to Paradise Beach. The festival closes with a "Last Strings" party at Coconut Bar in Hillsborough.

For more information see ad on page 5.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Carriacou Maroon and String Band Festival, page 5; Club Nautique du Marin of Martinique, in the Market Place section, pages 43 through 45; Ocean World Marina of the Dominican Republic, this page; Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour (since last month), page 19; and World Cruising Club, page 11. Good to have you with us!







BUSINESS BRIEFS

Island Water World Last Online Game Winner Drawn

The third and last winner of Island Water World's Online Game prize of a dinghy-outboard combo, worth US$3,200, is airline pilot Hervé "RV" Nizard.

Over the last three years, Hervé, a Frenchman residing on Dominica, has been developing an eco-resort (www.citruscreekplantation.com) in La Plaine, on the east coast of Dominica. His strong commitment to sustainable development is further outlined by his alternative energy company Sustainable Earth (www.sustainableearth.dm), serving the Caribbean.

Before coming to Dominica, Hervé sailed his catamaran, a Lagoon 380, for two years with his family up and down the Caribbean island chain. Previously Hervé lived for 17 years in Guadeloupe, where he still owns Air Tropical.



Hervé Nizard on his way to pick up his prize at Island Water World headquarters in St. Maarten

From November until the end of January every online shopper at Island Water World's new e-commerce website — www.islandwaterworld.com — was eligible to win a Walker Bay Air Floor Hypalon AF240 dinghy and Mercury-5HP-outboard combo. Previous winners were Vassil Kurtev from Bulgaria, currently visiting St. Maarten, and Russell "Sprout" Morton from Antigua. The game ended in January but Island Water World's website features great daily give-aways and super online specials!

For more information on Island Water World see ad on page 48.

70-Ton Lift for Marina ZarPar, DR

Frank Virgintino reports: Marina ZarPar, SA, of Boca Chica, Dominican Republic, has commissioned its new 70-ton Travelift marine hoist. Rafael Baez, President of Marina ZarPar, indicated that its 28-foot beam would allow the marina to haul the many catamarans that have previously not been able to find local service.



The machine's hydraulically operated slings can be adjusted quickly to conform to the ideal lift center of any craft and the location of the new pit will allow boats with drafts of up to ten feet to be hauled.

The working area of the marina has been constructed of reinforced concrete with a rating of 150 tons capacity to allow hauled yachts to be set down in a clean and stable environment.

For more information see ad on page 14.

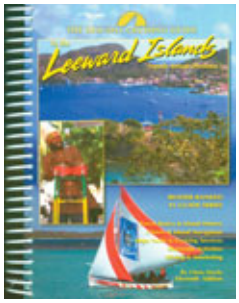
There's More at Marigot, St. Lucia

Charles Ballah reports: Marigot Beach Club & Dive Resort is a special tropical hideaway in St. Lucia. Enjoy the privacy of our luxurious, newly refurbished rooms or villas, each with its own private facilities, with panoramic views of Marigot Bay and the turquoise Caribbean Sea. On site are a freshwater swimming pool, gym, fully equipped dive shop, gift shops, spa studio, tours and internet desk, as well as a fine restaurant and bar serving both traditional Caribbean and exquisite international cuisine.

Doolittle's Restaurant — the hotel's delightful waterfront restaurant and bar — is named after the original 1967 movie "Doctor Doolittle", starring Rex Harrison, which was filmed here. Doolittle's is a fun and friendly meeting place for guests, divers and yachtsmen and yachtswomen alike, where you can sample both Caribbean and continental fare or delicious cocktails while experiencing a dramatic Caribbean sunset in "the most beautiful bay in the Caribbean" (ask Mr. Michener!).

For more information see ad on page 35.

Latest Edition of Doyle's Leewards Guide Available



The 2010-2011 *Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands, Anguilla through Dominica*, by Chris Doyle is now available. This is the 11th edition of the complete guide to this area for yachtsmen, divers and watersports enthusiasts published by Cruising Guide Publications. As boaters have grown to expect, it's packed with up-to-date information, color sketch charts, key GPS coordinates, photos (including anchorage aerials), a service directory, and lots of good advice in a handy, six-by-nine-inch, spiral-bound book.

For more information see ad on page 35.

Jolly Harbour, Antigua, Extends Summer Storage

Kate Kenlock reports: Jolly Harbour Marina, Antigua, announces the extension of its summer storage facility. The newly completed yard has a dedicated cradle storage area for boats up to 70 feet. "We have three types of cradle for summer rental," Festus Isaac, Marina Manager explains. "Two sizes of six-leg, and an eight-leg type for customers with boats between 55 and 70 feet. But they are booking fast!"

Extensive work on the area has taken place over the last few months with a special mix of aggregate replacing over 50 tons of soft material removed from the site. The material has been packed down to produce a very firm surface for the cradles to sit on. Each cradle is then secured with tie-downs to ground anchors.

The boatyard has been a favourite for many years with the yachting community as it is one of the only storage facilities in the Caribbean that also stores on concrete.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page
Other storage options include keel-hole, and welded and tied-down stands.
For more information see ad in Market Place section, page 43.

Island Dreams Expanding to Port Louis, Grenada
Island Dreams of Grenada have opened a new office at Camper & Nicholson's Port Louis Marina. Owner and Manager Mark Sutton says, "We have looked after a



Welcome to Island Dreams' new office at Port Louis Marina, Grenada

number of boats at the marina already, and it is proving very popular with owners leaving their boats for short and long term periods. We will continue to look after boats at Le Phare Bleu Marina, and are pleased to have two outstanding facilities from which to offer our Yacht Management and Guardianage services. With Skype, digital photos and e-mail, we are now able to work much more closely with owners and keep them better informed of work underway. Our new website enables clients to log in to see all the work lists, documents and photographs relating to their boat."
Island Dreams, established in Grenada since 1999, specializes in the care of yachts during the owner's absence. From a basic guardianage and checking service, to management of maintenance, installations and haul-out, services are tailored to meet the requirements of the yacht owner.
For more information on Island Dreams visit www.islandreamsgremada.com. For more information on Port Louis marina see ad on page 6.

Renewal at Marina Bas Du Fort, Guadeloupe
Marina Bas-Du-Fort in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, has recently renovated its technical zone, with a new 6,000-square-metre paved area and the construction of four buildings for professional service providers. Since 2005, the marina has added a new fuel station, waste disposal facility and improved electrical services. Future plans include a new marina office building. Marina Bas du Fort continues to work toward Guadeloupe's nautical development by welcoming more cruisers.
For more information visit www.marina-pap.com

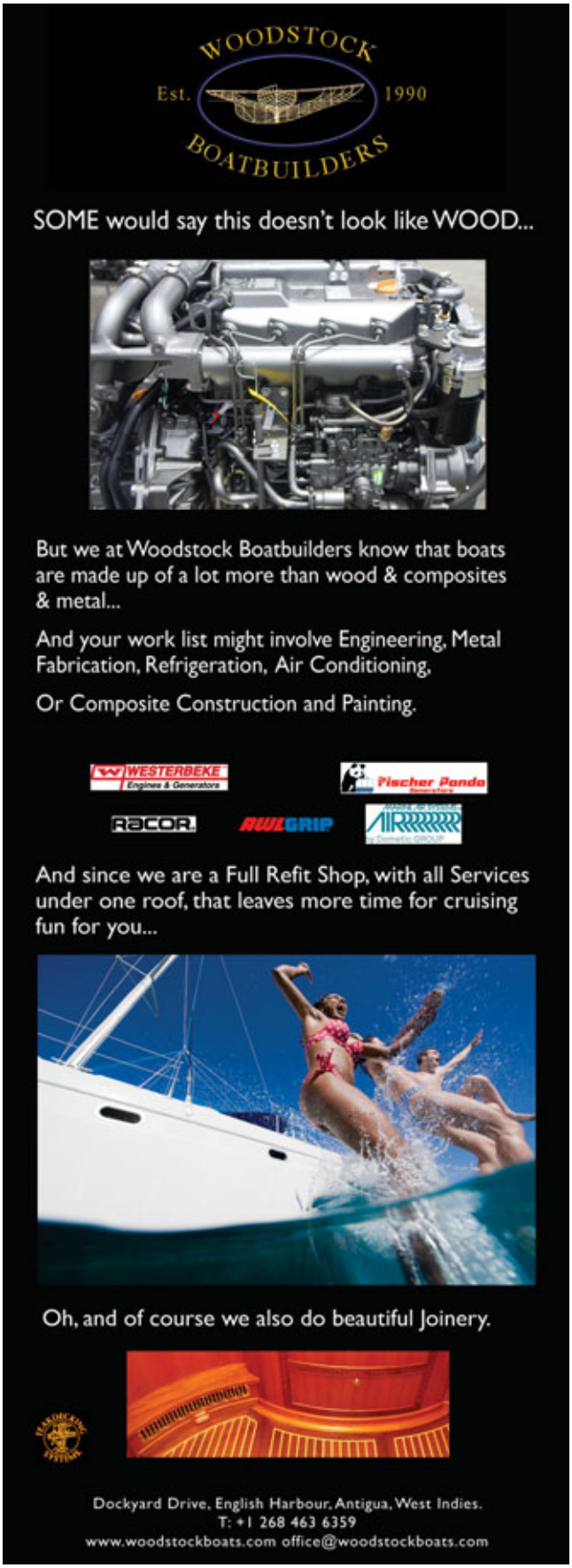
New Waterfront Bar in the Grenadines
Julia Messmer reports: My husband Michael and I recently opened a bar on Union Island. Neptune Bar is located on the waterfront in the Clifton Beach Hotel, right across the street from Captain Gourmet. We're open daily from 10:00AM and have



daily Happy Hour from 5:00 to 7:00PM. We always have a cool breeze, all kinds of cold drinks including blender drinks, and show various sports on a large flat screen TV, emphasizing English football.
For more information contact (784) 433-3329 or neptunebar@gmail.com

St. Lucia's SMMA Has New General Manager
Nadia Cazaubon reports: The Board of Directors of St. Lucia's Soufriere Marine Management Association (SMMA) has appointed a new General Manager. Newton Eristhée assumed duty on February 1st. Mr. Eristhée is an environmental specialist with several years' experience in marine resource and environmental management.
For more information contact neristhee@smma.org.lc

Long Range WiFi Solution for Boats
Liesbet Collaert reports: The Wirie, a long-range wireless internet system invented and developed by cruisers for cruisers, is a complete WiFi system that provides much longer range and more stable connections for wireless internet on your boat. It is easy to use and install, waterproof, very powerful, upgradeable, affordable and has a variety of mounting options.
Mark Kilty and I, like most budget-minded cruisers, used to take our laptops ashore to access the internet. During these trips, the laptops had to endure rain, spray and shock. Once on land, a WiFi hotspot had to be located. We got tired of the hassle and looked for an affordable, decent product to access the internet from our boat. When we didn't find what we were looking for, we built it ourselves, and called it The Wirie, a combination of our boat name — *S/V Irie* — and WiFi.
A sailing trip in April 2009 proved The Wirie's effectiveness and qualities. Other cruisers showed interest, more Wiries were built, and the concept became a success in the Caribbean over the following months.
For more information visit www.thewirie.com









GRENADA SAILING FESTIVAL 2010

WORK BOAT WORKOUT!



The Grenada Sailing Festival is an annual regatta featuring top-notch racing not only for yachts, but also for traditional local sailing craft, a.k.a. work boats, drawn over the years from the Grenadian communities of Gouyave, Sauteurs, Woburn, Grand Mal, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Until this year, the Work Boat Regatta was embedded in the midst of the Festival's yacht racing series. This year the Work Boat Regatta was given more "elbow room" by shifting it to the weekend following the yacht races, February 6th and 7th — coinciding with Grenada's long Independence holiday weekend.

Record crowds on Grand Anse Beach enjoyed two days of extremely competitive sailing action at the Grenada Sailing Festival Digicel Work Boat Regatta 2010. While the sailing action took place on the water there was plenty of fun, music, food and family activities on the beach.

Before the start, a fleet of 32 colourful boats made an impressive sight drawn up along the shoreline. They included 22 boats from the sailing communities on the island of Grenada, plus ten from the sister islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. At the briefing, all skippers received a toolbag courtesy of Southern Electrical, with flashlight, multi-purpose lamp or penknife, together with T-shirts, Digicel caps and phone cases.

The two breezy days of competition started with class racing, with each village generally having its own style of boat and therefore its own class. Grenada's "fishing capital", Gouyave, builds both canoes and sloops. A series of six tightly fought races determined the class winners, who would enter the Skipper of the Year GSF16 Match Race Final, staged on the Sunday.

In the Gouyave Canoe Class, perennial competitor *Etieron* proved unbeatable with straight first places, followed by *Dat Pay Dat* and *Vat Flu*. In the Gouyave Sloop Class, the veteran *Classic* took first in front of former title-holder *Riot Act*, with *Reborn* in third place. A new boat, *No Retreat, No Surrender*, took first place in the Sauteurs Class, with *La Diablesse* and *Mill Reef* taking second and third. Another straight set of firsts brought long-time regatta participant *Unity* once again into first place in the Woburn Class, with newly built *48 Hours* in second place and well-known *Top Ranking* in third.

Prior to the match race for Skipper of the Year were the GSF16 Junior and Senior National Team Sailing Match Races, with Budget Marine and Coca Cola sponsoring the Juniors and United Insurance the Seniors. The GSF16s are identical wooden 16-foot, jib-and-sprit-main rigged, open boats built in Gouyave in the local manner with design input from early Sailing Festival supporters Buddy Melges, Terry Nielsen and others. Community representatives make a blind pick for the GSF16 boat their teams are to sail.

The Junior Teams took to the water first and after a thrilling race Petite Martinique in *Mr. X*, skippered by Jenik Bethel, came through in front of Shevon Sampson and the Gouyave Team in *Tomorrow's Worry*, followed by Odiand Decoteau and his crew from Carriacou in *Homer*. The Senior Team race proved just as exciting, with Carriacou, Gouyave and Woburn in contention from the start. Finally it was the Carriacou team, skippered by Christopher Ewer, who crossed the line first, with Shakeem Collins and the Woburn crew second, and Gouyave taking third with Kevin Banfield at the helm.

Then it was time for the race everyone had been waiting for — the GSF16 Skipper of the Year Match Race final. Before the start, there was a race-off between the Gouyave Sloop and Canoe Class winners to fill the one place in the final for Gouyave. *Etieron* and *Classic* fought it out, with *Classic* and her crew winning.

At last the final five lined up on the shoreline and the race began. Positions changed, tactics came into play, winds changed — all combining to make the final race the height of tension as the crowd on the water's edge cheered their teams on. In the final run to the finish line, Ted Richards of Gouyave in *Tomorrow's Worry* caught the breeze and sailed through to take the coveted prize of US$1,000 and Skipper of the Year title. He was followed by Jason Charles from Sauteurs in *Pink Gin*, winning US$500, with last year's title winner Andy De Roche of Petite Martinique taking third prize of US$250 with *Mr. X*.

Grenada Sailing Festival Digicel Work Boat Regatta winners were presented with trophies, cash prizes, Budget Marine vouchers and Special Package Prizes from FLOW, ScotiaBank crew backpacks, and Mount Gay Rum and Heineken. Finally there was a grand finale firework display courtesy of Spice Island Fireworks and a live performance from Boogie B.

The Grenada Sailing Festival would like to thank all sponsors and supporters for making this event such a success: Digicel; the Grenada Government & Grenada Board of Tourism; ScotiaBank; United Insurance; FLOW; Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis; Heineken, Mount Gay, Water One and Bryden & Minors; Southern Electrical; Courts; Independence Agencies; Deyna's; Grenada Electrical Contractors; Horizon Yacht Charters; Island Dreams Yacht Services; Presents; and Spice Isle Jewellery. Also many thanks go to the Royal Grenada Police Force, Grenada Coastguard, Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority and particularly the Grenada Board of Tourism Clean-Up Crews who worked tirelessly through the weekend.

For more information visit www.grenadasailingfestival.com

St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta:

COMPETITION AND COMPASSION



ROB JONES

Bad Girl! *This J/100 was overall winner in Spinnaker Racing Class*

THE St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta was held February 19th through 21st. This long-standing premier event in St. Croix, and the first leg of the three-regatta 2010 Cape Air Caribbean Ocean Racing Triangle (CORT) Series, saw 66 entries on the starting line.

The CORT series is traditionally a trio of regattas held in the US Virgin Islands, British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. In addition to the St. Croix event, CORT 2010 includes the Puerto Rico Heineken International Regatta, March 19th through 21st, and the BVI Spring Regatta, March 29th through April 4th. Sailors joining the three-race CORT series pay an entry fee in addition to fees charged for the individual races, and CORT participants are scored separately within their CORT classes. To win CORT you must compete in each participating regatta.

In the St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta Spinnaker Racing Class, St. Croix resident Robert Armstrong's J/100, *Bad Girl*, handily won the overall prize — skipper Jens Hookansen's weight (eight cases) in Cruzan Rum — as well as a first place in Spinnaker Racing A for the CORT Series. Hookansen and his all-Crucian crew scored four bullets in six races. Though helmsman Hookanson was born in St. Croix, he has lived in the US since age 16 and had never before sailed in this annual regatta. He liked the race to Christiansted, followed by windward-leeward courses in the channel. Tactician Carlos Skov was especially touched by the win, as his mother was the first hospice patient on St. Croix. Armstrong and crew received an invitation to the National Hospice Regatta Championships, to be sailed in Rochester, New York next June. Chris Stanton and his brothers' *Devil*^{3}, also of St. Croix, took second place in class, tied for points with Dave West's Tortola-based Melges 32, *Jurakan*.

In Performance Cruiser Class, Bernardo Gonzales' Beneteau 35s5, *Bonne Chance*, of Puerto Rico, also scored four bullets in six races; this gives *Bonne Chance* a first in class for the CORT series as well. Second was St. Croix's Tony Sanpere aboard his J/36, *Cayennita Grande*. The two traded bullets throughout the racing.

In Racer Cruiser Class, Arthur Eldridge's First 10R, *Luxury Girl*, came from Tortola to top every single race.

The Optimist Class sailed 11 races, with the overall trophy going to ten-year-old Sam Morrell from Tortola. He's been sailing since he was seven, and said he was challenged by the shifty winds on the Saturday. Sam took home his weight in sports drink.

On the one-design course inside Teague Bay, Chris Schreiber took honors in the Rhodes 19 Class. He was also challenged by the wind shifts on the Saturday, which put a premium on tactics and positioning. "Sunday was a gorgeous day," he said, "with ten to 14 knots of steady breeze." Matthew Flood escaped the cold in Westbrook, Connecticut, and sailed his chartered 19-foot keelboat to a second-place finish.

While the weather did not permit the newly added Kiteboard Classes to get off the beach, all 15 entrants opted to donate their entry fees to hospice care, and they said they'd all be back next year.

The event raised funds and awareness for hospice care on St. Croix. Regatta Director Julie San Martin announced that the US$50,000 fund-raising goal was met through entry fees, donations and sponsorships. Continuum Care Foundation director Tracy Sanders, who said she was "stunned at the response" to the regatta and its goals, gratefully accepted the regatta proceeds, saying they will be used immediately for medical equipment and medications to give patients end-of-life comfort and dignity.

A significant portion of the island's residents have inadequate insurance coverage, if any; funds raised by the regatta will help provide compassionate care for St. Croix's terminally ill patients. Pain and comfort medications, oxygen, adjustable beds, wheelchairs, walkers and other medical equipment can now be provided at no cost. Hospice care also includes education and support for the patient's family, including grief counseling.

Continuum Care staffed a medical tent at the regatta, and treated people with sunburn, splinters and hangovers, and one child who had a seizure. Supplies were donated by The Medicine Shoppe and Mt. Welcome Pharmacy, and the unused medical essentials will be donated to Haiti relief.

In the Cape Air CORT standings for Spinnaker Racing A, the BVI's Kevin Rowlette, aboard his Olsen 30, *Rushin' Rowlette*, finished second. Third was Puerto Rico's Luis Juarbe's Henderson 30, *Soca*.

Perennial favorite, St. Thomas' John Foster aboard his Kirby 25, *The Good Bad & Ugly*, topped the Spinnaker Racing B class in the CORT series standings. St. Thomas' Paul Davis driving his J/27, *Mag 7*, followed Foster in class.

In the CORT series' Racer Cruiser class, the BVI's Peter Haycraft's Sirena 38, *Pipedream*, finished first. New Hampshire's Thomas Mullen, aboard his J/95, *Shamrock VII*, placed second.

—Continued on next page



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Finally, in the CORT series Jib & Main class, St. Croix's Howard Silverman was in first place aboard his Jeanneau 54, *Mary Ellen*. Jib & Main competitor Steve Schmidt was awarded the Commodore's Trophy for Best Visiting Yacht (and best margaritas!), the Santa Cruz 70, *Hotel California, Too*, and Tortola's Peter Haycraft won the Cape Air ticket raffle, as part of the CORT series.

CORT prices will be awarded at the end of the BVI Spring Regatta on Sunday, April 4, 2010.

Thanks to Ellen Sanpere and Carol Bareuther for information in this report.
For complete St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta results visit www.stcroixregatta.com
For more information about the Cape Air CORT Series, visit www.sailcort.com



The Performance Cruising Class's Cayennita Grande *(center) and Racer Cruisers* Pipedream *(left) and* Luxury Girl *(right)*

ELLEN SANPERE (2)

St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta 2010 Winners

Spinnaker Racing (CSA - 9 boats)
1) Bad Girl, J/100, Robert Armstrong, St. Croix (9)
2) Devil 3, Melges 24, Chris Stanton, St. Croix (20)
3) Jurakan, Melges 32, Dave West, Tortola (20)
Performance Cruiser (CSA - 3 boats)
1) Bonne Chance, Beneteau 35s5, Bernardo Gonzales, Puerto Rico (8)
2) Cayennita Grande, J/36, Antonio Sanpere, St. Croix (12)
3) El Presidente, Thomas 35, Jeffrey Fangmann, St. Croix USVI (16)
Racer Cruiser (CSA - 4 boats)
1) Luxury Girl, First 10R, Arthur Eldridge, Tortola (6)
2) Pipedream, Sirena 38, Peter Haycraft, Tortola (12)
3) Ambivalence, S2 7.9, James Kloss, St. Croix (20)
Jib & Main (CSA - 8 boats)
1) Maineiac, Pearson 10M, Kevin Weatherbee, St. Thomas (9)
2) Windflower, Alberg 35, Stanford Joines, St. Croix (11)
3) Barbaric Yawp, Tartan 30, Taylor Babb, St. Croix (16)
Large Multihull (CSA - 3 boats)
1) Chaos II, Tremolino, Lynn Parry, St. Croix (7)
2) Piglet, trimaran, Joseph San Martin, St. Croix (11)
3) Rainbow Rider, Fountaine Pajot/Bahia, Ray Styles, St. John (24)
Optimist
WHITE FLEET (3 boats)
1) Sam Morrell, Tortola (12)
2) Ryan Woolridge, Tortola (17)
BLUE FLEET (6 boats)
1) Jason Putley, Tortola (18)
2)Robert Poole, Tortola (21)
3)Mollee Donovan, Tortola (22)
RED FLEET (4 boats)
1) Rhone Findlay, St. Maarten (13)
2) Matthew Oliver, Tortola (16)
3) Harry Hoffman, St. Croix (32)
GREEN FLEET (7 boats)
1) David Kleeger, St. Croix (18)
2) Paige Clarke, St. John (22)
3) Alec Kuipers, St. Croix (26)
Rhodes 19 (One Design - 6 boats)
1) Chrys, Chris Schreiber, St. Croix (18)
2) Rhode Trip, Matthew Flood, St. Croix (43)
3) Rhode Runner, Morgan Dale, St. Croix (51)



Afternoon rainbow over Hotel California, Too, *winner of the Commodore's Trophy for Best Visiting Yacht*



Sailing the RORC Caribbean 600 on the ORMA 60 *Region Guadeloupe*

by John Burnie

The RORC Caribbean 600, a 605-mile non-stop offshore yacht race, was co-founded by Stan Pearson and John Burnie in 2009. In this, the second event, John Burnie was competing again aboard Region Guadeloupe, *the multihull course record holder.*

At the end of a windy RORC Caribbean 600 last year, cold, exhausted and wringing wet, the famous Sir Steve Redgrave expression (made after he won a fifth Olympic Rowing Gold Medal) entered my mind: "If anyone sees me get on this boat again they have my permission to shoot me!"

One year later, all that seems to have faded from memory, despite any earlier rational judgements. Once again, a team was press-ganged into boarding the famous trimaran *Region Guadeloupe* to try to better our previous multihull course record of 40 hours 11 minutes 22 seconds. One cannot adequately describe what it is like sailing a yacht like this, especially when the yacht is at full speed, or "wicked up" as we call it. Tough and wet are inadequate descriptions — you have to be there to experience what even a good camera cannot capture. Ed Danby, a crewmember in 2009 who previously sailed the huge multihull *Club Med* with Grant Dalton around the world in record time, described the 2009 RORC experience as "rough".

Region Guadeloupe is indeed a rare racing machine. Only 12 ORMA 60 trimarans were ever made and this boat is arguably one of the most famous. She started life as *Primagaz* and won the transatlantic Route du Rhum twice in succession. The vessel, now owned by Claude Thelier of Guadeloupe, is designed to be raced by one person, so accommodating eight crew can only be described as challenging. A large expanse of netting serves the only "living area" and the centre-hull navigation area is tight. Hygiene facilities are "elementary". There is, however, plenty for all the crew to do, especially during a race with so many legs as diverse and varied as the Caribbean 600. These multihulls have wing masts, which rotate and cant to windward; this windward "lean" is to de-power the rig in higher winds, much as a windsurfer does. The controls and rams require substantial crew muscle power to make the adjustments on hydraulic rams and sheet muscle boxes. At high speed the crew have to hang on tight and the motion of the yacht can be violent and unpredictable.

This year, four of last year's crew returned to compete again, including Claude, Stéphane Squarcioni, Mark Stevens (a.k.a. captain of *Hyperion*) and myself. We were joined by James Pascal from Horizon Charters in Grenada, Julian Spier and Olivier Moal (captains of *Hamilton II*) and tactical specialist Nick Lykiardopulo (last UK winner of the Sydney-Hobart in *Aera*). This year Mark and I did much of the "driving" with Olli and James providing the muscle power and Julian helping in all areas. With no other multihull entered, we set ourselves the target of finishing the race in less than 40 hours, requiring us to average a speed of around 15 knots.

—Continued on next page



Owner Claude Thelier and skipper John Burnie led the crew of the only multihull in this year's 605-mile, non-stop Caribbean offshore race. They won line honors and vowed to continue to try and break the record they set last year



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Santa Barbara Plantation
AT SPANISH WATER

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The wind and sea conditions were considerably more benign this year — good for the trimaran, as she is very fast in flat water. However, we could see from the outset that meeting our target would be a challenge.

In a fair breeze of ten to 15 knots, the 25 monohulls started ahead of us and already we were beginning to feel anxious about the performance of the bigger boats against our trimaran in any light upwind conditions. In particular, the potent Farr 80 *Beau Geste* arrived in the Caribbean with an awesome record of success. Racing with a highly professional crew on board, including Gavin Brady, we had no doubt that this yacht could match us for speed in certain conditions and threaten our ambition to finish first on the water as well as steal the FKG prize for the first boat to reach St. Martin.

Racing towards the laid North Sails Mark off Barbuda we quickly established contact with the bigger boats and traded gybes with *DSK*, the strong Swan 90, and *Beau Geste*. The monohulls, sailing deeper than us, stayed closer to Antigua longer and we were forced to gybe offshore to keep up the apparent wind angles required on a multihull. This course favoured our progress and, passing a breaching whale, we were first to round the Barbuda Mark and make course for Nevis. Our weather predictions were reasonably correct up to this point and we consolidated a good lead, fast reaching with our large gennaker, crew lying on the net in shorts and T-shirts.

As we rounded Nevis and headed up towards St. Kitts, the race really began to take shape. Light airs in the gathering gloom forced us to gybe frequently as we made painfully slow progress under the lee of St. Kitts and Statia and towards the Saba turning point. In the dark we could see *Beau Geste's* lights approaching us as she clawed back all the advantage we had made earlier. In the final light-air patch under Saba, the mighty monohull was only a few hundred yards behind us — the race to St. Barts and St. Martin for the FKG prize was now really on — but any chance of beating our course record was gone. Breaking free into 15 to 17 knots of wind, we accelerated up to 22 knots and reached off in the dark towards St. Barts. By the time *Beau Geste* broke free we had already put nearly ten miles between us, consolidating our desperate lead. We rounded St. Barts in very dark conditions after a close encounter with the Russian-owned, Starck-designed superyacht *A* — with both vessels travelling on a converging course at over 40 knots it kept our navigators on their toes!

Then… disaster. In a lumpy sea while gybing towards St. Martin the gennaker split right across the middle. The large sail disintegrated into several pieces as we furled it away. We closed our minds to the matter and reached on at close to the same speeds with the large genoa, crossing Proselyte Reef buoy and claiming the FKG prize for first vessel to St. Martin for the second year running.

The light airs promised at St. Martin and Tintamarre failed to materialise and we beat out hard and fast into a building wind that was more south than east. And there the wind remained for the next 250 miles, slowly strengthening and continually clocking further south. Our navigator and tactician, Stéphane and Nick, by now had made a bold and winning decision. We would take a deep tack towards Antigua and then take the lay line to Nevis — we would approach Guadeloupe passing Montserrat on the "wrong side" (just as *DSK* did in 2009). The route took us boldly some 90 miles off to the west of the rhumb line, but in doing so we kept in a good passage of air all the way to Les Saintes in effectively two tacks.

Upwind in lumpy seas in an ORMA 60 is hard going — wet and bumpy. The yacht launches over the waves, accelerating up to 18 knots and then crashing back to 11 knots in the troughs. Having lost contact with *Beau Geste* we were very anxious as to how well she would do against us in the conditions. In the end she chose a very different route and that alone enabled us to gain distance. Southwest wind is really quite rare in the Caribbean and it is unusual for it to blow at strength for any period of time. (The RORC Caribbean 600 website, caribbean600.rorc.org, has a great tracking program and it is very interesting to see how each of the yachts fared in this gruelling beat south towards the French Islands. One can access the site and re–run the whole race, looking at the course each vessel took.)

With the weather predictions "out the window", we were acutely aware that the "gate would soon close". We knew we had to get through the island gaps around Les Saintes and beat any holes in the wind under Dominica. Our plan was to sail in the middle between the islands and Dominica and pass outside Marie Galante — any attempt to follow our usual courses clearly would lead to a wind desert in the bay up towards Pointe-à–Pitre. As it happened we found strong wind under Marie Galante (and a small hole!), but the reach to Desirade was our really fast leg with reaching speeds up to 28 knots. Mark and I helming had several anxious moments with the boat very "on the edge" in inky conditions. We surprised several fishermen off Desirade as we powered through and gybed towards Barbuda and Antigua.

As light returned we found ourselves gybing again off Antigua and headed back around the North Sails Mark for the second time. We reefed early, barehead-



PHOTO BY LUCY TOUCH

The Farr 80 Beau Geste *took line honors for monohulls and won the trophy for Best Yacht Overall under IRC*

ed in lots of wind, before the hard beat up to Redonda. Even now we had no idea how we were doing against the fleet. Any sail seen was scrutinised in case it was one of the competition. In fact, all we saw were cruising yachts and again several breaching whales. We rounded Redonda in a good steady breeze and scorched off to the finish line at 25 knots in a wind clocking between south and southwest. On the last leg we covered the distance from Redonda to the finish line in one hour and 40 minutes — a record that will rarely be beaten due to the extraordinary wind direction and strength.

At the finish line we are unsure if we led. "Are we first?" we asked Stan Pearson, the co–founder of the race. "No, you are third home," he replied — without explaining the others had retired! A wonderful reception was waiting for us in English Harbour with every superyacht in the bay sounding their very impressive claxons and horns. We inevitably produced the "losing champagne", some of which was drunk, most of which was sprayed on the welcoming crowd at the Antigua Yacht Club Marina.

To conclude, this year's was indeed a different race. Not only because of the milder conditions but also because of the extraordinary wind directions and strengths — none of which any of the more reliable forecasters picked up on prior to the race. It was "seat of the pants" decision-making for the tacticians and navigators and the smaller yachts suffered terribly as the wind eventually closed down; this was in fact something we were worried about all the way around the course. Despite fast sailing we were 16 hours longer on the water this year and we were very lucky to have wiggled through the course inside the deteriorating weather window. We were also very lucky that we never really needed to use again the big downwind gennaker we destroyed off St Barts. During the race we saw wind directions vary from 110 to 248 degrees, which is highly unusual in a tradewind area. You may see this occasionally in thundery conditions, but when the wind was at 215 it blew at 18 knots for at least eight hours.

Many boats could have done so well but for bad luck, especially the smaller yachts. *Dolfijn*, a Swan 38, looked to be leading on handicap and *Noonmark*, a Swan 56, also looked to be heading for the podium. The boats that reached the French Islands later than us were faced with frustratingly light conditions and many were forced to retire. Full marks therefore to Willy Bissante from Guadeloupe who persevered and finally finished on Saturday — some three days after us. Claude amused me with some Gallic humour on this: "Ah, ee iz French. Ee 'as to sail on because ee 'as no fuel on ze boat!"

The RORC Caribbean 600 is to me an extraordinary race — it is quite unlike any offshore race anywhere else in the world. Unlike many of the established offshore classics, this race starts and ends in the same place. In addition to that, if the wind is in one particular direction, the fetch, reach and upwind legs are unlikely to be prejudicial — in normal tradewind conditions the 13 different legs on the course will ultimately balance out — so a "downwind yacht" or "upwind yacht" will normally not necessarily be favoured. The two events run so far have, despite abnormal conditions, produced wonderful racing. Many of this year's retirees (forced to retire because of flight schedules), have indicated their desire to return for unfinished business. As in the Sydney–Hobart and the Fastnet, it is possible for almost any size of yacht to win the race on handicap. This year the big boats prevailed, but last year a Cookson 50 won and Bernie Evan Wong's Mumm 36 very nearly won overall; also a cruising Swan 56 with furling sails came second overall only to *Leopard* in the CSA classes in 2009. But for a highly unusual wind pattern, a Swan 36 might have led the way in 2010.

For us on *Region Guadeloupe* the record still remains the challenge. Next year, due to swelling crew numbers and interests, it is our intention to enter two ORMA 60 Multihulls. In true Caribbean tradition we shall be also competing for a barrel of rum. Not necessarily French *rhum* of course — but who knows?

For full results visit caribbean600.rorc.org



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Fun for All at South Grenada Regatta

by Jeff Fisher



Le Phare Bleu Marina hosted its second annual South Grenada Regatta on the 26th and 27th of February at Petite Calivigny Bay.

This picturesque little valley ending at small white beaches on each side of the yacht docks offers a perfect setting for this event. One beach was decorated with Optimist dinghies and their undulating sails. The other was alive with kids as they navigated the many obstacles of the "Pirates' Trail". And in the middle, the yacht docks hosted 21 competing vessels representing eight nationalities, the boats as different from each other as they could be. They included a beautiful staysail schooner, a Swan 53, the extensively modified "was a Hobie 33", charter yachts, cats and pocket cruisers.



From the Opti fleet (above), to the Racing Class winner (left), to the crew of the Overall Regatta Winner (top right), every sailor had fun at this now-established event

The Optimists and their sailors came from all over the island. The Grenada Yacht Club and the Gouyave Sailing School are doing a great job of teaching youngsters the art of sailing. This growing fleet of boats is made possible by the efforts of Mr. St. Bernard, who is building them in Gouyave at his small boatyard. Fourteen kids competed on the Saturday over a course just off the docks and visible to all cheering parents shoreside. After seven races it was Kwesi Paul at the top, followed by Kimo Sampson and Shakeem Collins. Fourth place went to Reese Grans, and Noah Bullen rounded out the top five. Budget Marine donated certificates to all the entrants, and prizes for the top three.

Meanwhile on the other beach, kids were lining up to try and beat the clock around the aquatic obstacle course. After swimming out to the sunken ship's mast and clambering up to the crow's nest, there were points to be made by throwing stones into a floating can, re-capturing some water from a container, hooking fake fish from the water and tossing rings. The final leg was to pull oneself ashore in an inner tube and race to a finish horn stopping the clock. There were classes for all ages, so each one had a chance to be the champ of their group. Thirty-five kids manoeuvred their way through the course; average time was about six minutes.

The grown-ups with a desire for speed and excitement also had their day. To beat their clock, they had to take a high-powered inflatable dinghy around a prescribed course.

On the Saturday the winds were light, about 12 to 15 knots. The keelboats' first course took the fleet from a start off Calivigny Island downwind for four miles, around Glover's Island and back up to weather and the start/finish line. The second race of the day, for the Westerhall 12 Degrees Cup, went the other way: east to a mark on the latitude 12 degrees north line, only about two-and-a-half miles to windward, and back.

Sunday was welcomed with the regular tradewinds returning for the third and last race for Le Phare Bleu Cup — an easy two-mile reach going south, and back, with an extra windward beat for those flying a spinnaker.



After two perfect-picture days of yacht racing the Racing Class winner was Grenada-based Richard Szyjan on the "former Hobie 33", *Category 5*. Cruising Class was dominated by Robbie Yearwood and the Team Island Water World crew in his J/24, *Die Hard*. *Apoc Apoc Morenito*, a Spanish Oyster Lightwave 395 with Cesar Roch at the helm, took the Fun Class title. The Multihull class was won by Hervé Leconte on the French Outremer 45 *Teoula*. Good and useful prizes included an outboard from McIntyre Bros, a two night stay at Petite Anse Hotel, St. Patrick's, a Carib Sushi meal, Native Spirit Scuba snorkeling, massage by The Conch, Art Fabrik voucher, outboard service from Palm Tree Marine Diesel Engineers, and bottom cleaning by UnderwaterSolutions. There were also some nicely designed and locally made trophies donated by Act Art&Design. The *Die Hard* crew was further fortified with huge bottles of champagne and other liquid libations for winning the title of Overall Regatta Winner. A highlight of the prizegiving party was the visit of Hon. Minister of Tourism, Glynis Roberts, who underlined the importance of such events as the South Grenada Regatta for the tourism industry.



The Pirates' Trail was a huge hit with the kids

Three live bands shared the nightlife through the weekend, rocking the evenings with a great variety and quality of music.

Thanks go out to Gold and Silver sponsors Netherlands Insurance, Westerhall Rum, Le Phare Bleu, Real Value IGA, Budget Marine and North South Wines. The hard-working race committee and the event's many enthusiastic supporters must also be commended on a very successful weekend. South Grenada Regatta will be an annual event; the dates for the third South Grenada Regatta will be released later this year.

For full results visit www.southgrenadaregatta.com



REGATTA NEWS

5th Annual Cruise to Carnival

Stéphane Legendre reports: The annual Route du Carnival cruise to Trinidad's Carnival started this year on February 6th in Martinique, where we were hosted by the Port du Marin marina, our faithful partner from the beginning. This year, ten boats enjoyed the cruise to calypso land. We benefited from ideal weather conditions all the way to Trinidad. Ten to 15 knots of east to southeasterly winds and generous sunshine accompanied us all the way.

St. Lucia's Rodney Bay was our first stop, and then a long day at sea took us to Bequia, where we gathered at Maria's French Terrace restaurant for our cocktails, briefing and evening meal. The next two days were delightful — beautiful sailing to the Tobago Cays and then to Petit Saint Vincent, where we were almost by ourselves.

An overnight sail took us to Chaguaramas for clearance, and then we moved to our base in Trinidad, the TTSA (Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association). A loud and friendly party just across the road welcomed us to join them, but few went over after being underway the night before.

Sunday, February 14th, was the big day of the King and Queen Show — the most superb spectacle I have ever seen during carnivals. Gigantic costumes, some of them 20 feet high and 30 feet long, were paraded on stage in front of the judges who picked the most spectacular one. This was followed by the competition for the Calypso Singer of the Year. By midnight everyone was tired and it was time to go back to the boats.

Following Monday's excursion to the rainforest, on the Tuesday buses took us to the Parade of Bands in the streets of Port of Spain. A joyful crowd of Trinidadians, for whom it is so important to be there, paraded and danced all day long in the sunshine, arrayed in feathers and glitter, bikinis and beads.

By mid-afternoon all the ralliers were back on their boats, resting up for the Route du Carnival 2010 prize-giving ceremony. This concluded, once again, a fun cruise to a place where boats normally only go for storage and repairs.

Very special thanks to Sharon-Rose and Jesse James of Members Only taxi, who did a wonderful job as usual in providing land transportation in Trinidad.

Come and join us next year!

For more information visit www.transcaraibes.com



Worth sailing to — Trinidad's spectacular Carnival!

Jolly Harbour Budget Marine Valentines Regatta

John and Heather report: The Budget Marine Valentines Regatta held February 13th and 14th was a huge success, despite the clouds, winds and challenging seas on the Saturday. The race courses were west of Jolly Harbour Marina on the west coast of Antigua. This was the 17th annual regatta hosted by the Jolly Harbour Yacht Club (JHYC). We were able to have four races on the Saturday and two on the Sunday, in two classes: Spinnaker and Cruising.

Team Budget Marine on a Melges 24 took first place in the Spinnaker Class overall, with Team Compass Point on a Dragon in second place and Team Jolly aboard another Dragon in third place. In the Cruising Class, Team Fiesta on a Van De Stadt design took first overall, with *Cashtoki*, a Hanse 43, in second place and *Cydia*, a Columbia 34, third.

We would like to thank ABSAR (Antigua Barbuda Search and Rescue) for making sure we had a safe regatta. Post-race parties at the Foredeck marina bar on the Friday and Sunday, and on Saturday a fantastic dinner at Alporto's, with music, dancing and a raffle that raised money for the JHYC youth sailing program, rounded out the weekend. Thanks to Sugar Ridge Resort, Sterling's and Shades, Alporto's restaurant, Oasis Salon (Jolly Harbour and Redcliffe Quay), Oyster Shell Cruises, Miramar Sailing, Oasis salon, and HME Designs, who made donations for the raffle prizes.

JHYC has a new schedule for regular Saturday sailing. There will be eight races per series (winter, spring, summer and autumn). The schedule works around other sailing regattas and events throughout the Caribbean. We will also have several weekend getaways throughout the year. All are welcome to join in.

JHYC's youth sailing program is going strong with free lessons available to Antiguan kids from age 8 to 18. If the child cannot swim he or she will be taught first, also free of charge. We also have sailing lessons available for all others and adults on Sundays, for a fee of EC$50.

For more information visit www.jhycantigua.com



Taking it light in the Cruising Class on Valentine's Day in Antigua

Tobago Carnival Regatta 2010

For the second year running, the Tobago Carnival Regatta took place in its new time slot and venue — February at Pigeon Point. After 26 years of being raced out of this island's Crown Point in the month of May, this new time — the weekend after Trinidad Carnival — and venue are becoming established. This year's event, held February 18th through 21st, featured remodeled courses and categories for Optimist dinghies, kiteboards, windsurfers, and Bum Boats (traditional local open sailing boats), in addition to a J/24 class and two Performance Cruising classes.

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Although this year the overall number of yachts was down to 13 and there were no Melges or Maxi Classes as there had been last year, Regatta Promoters Ltd manager Niki Borde noted, "We had more participants from Barbados, and a wider range of competitors, with the youngest racer 13 years old in the Optimist Class". Organizers expect the numbers of yachts to pick up as racers get accustomed to the new placement of the event as the last regatta of the Southern Caribbean Circuit (after Carriacou Sailing Series and the Grenada Sailing Festival, both in January).

Borde added that crowd participation was at a high this year with the introduction of shoreside "Island Games"; those honours were swept up by the Tobago Bum Boat crews.

The winners in the yacht classes were:

Performance Cruising 1 (5 races)
1) *Wayward*, Oceanis 43, Jerome McQuilkin, Trinidad (9)
2) *Wasabi*, Melges 24, Jeffrey Chen, Trinidad (12)
3) *Jaguar*, Frers 43, Peter Morris, Trinidad (13)

Performance Cruising 2 (5 races)
1) *Petit Careme*, First 38, Rawle Barrow, Trinidad (6)
2) *Generation*, J/29, John Holland, BVI (9)
3) *Tabasco*, Swan 40, Henry Crallan/Lars Schuy, Trinidad (19)

J/24 Class (8 races)
1) *Jahaji Bhai*, James Arrindell, Trinidad (9)
2) *Island Waterworld*, Robert Yearwood, Grenada (17)
3) *Ambushe*, Stephen Bushe, Trinidad (22)

For more information visit www.sailweek.com

Holmberg Wins Budget Marine Match Racing

Sue Pelling reports: Peter Holmberg and his all-star team including Ben Beer and Maurice Kurg were up against some of the world's most talented match racing crews, including the likes of Gavin Brady and Peter Isler, at this ISAF-sanctioned Grade 5 event held in St. Maarten on March 2nd.

Racing identical, non-spinnaker Jeanneau SunFast 20s supplied by Lagoon Sailboat Rentals, Holmberg won two races in the best-of-three final against Gavin Brady, securing the US$5,000 top prize. Brady, in second place, was awarded US$3,000, while Peter Isler, who enjoyed an interesting petit final against Chris Nesbit and his team from San Diego, took third overall and a prize of US$1,000.

Holmberg summed up the well-organized event: "It's a fun event, but we always get serious as soon as the start gun's fired. Gavin is a fun guy to race against and we had some good, close racing. I have a good team and we work together really well. We'll certainly be back next year."

Brady, racing with Marc Plaxton and Tucker Thompson, gave it a good shot in the finals. In the second, and what turned out to be the closing race of the final, Holmberg won the start and led a close battle keeping careful cover on his opponent. Brady reeled in Holmberg on the last run to the finish but it was too late and Brady had to settle for another second place, with just an eight-second deficit.

Plaxton said Holmberg sailed a better final: "Basically they were just a superior, all-round team and although Brady sailed like a total pro and did a phenomenal job, he had a crew who'd never sailed together except for half a day's practice. Racing against the likes of Holmberg, who has been sailing together with his team for 20 years, was a hard one to match, so hats off to him. They out-sailed us and totally deserved the victory."

The race of the day had to go to Chris Nesbit and his amateur team who had a dream win against two-time America's Cup winner Isler in the first race of the petit finals. Nesbit, who has only been on the match racing circuit for the last year or so, sailed a near-perfect first beat and after two rounds had extended his lead at the finish to 23 seconds over Isler. Isler, praising Nesbit's performance, said: "Chris Nesbit and team sailed really well. I know they've been focusing on match racing for the last year and been doing a few Grade 2 and Grade 3 events, so they clearly have what it takes."



Hmm, what do the rules say about this?

For full results visit www.heinekenregatta.com

***Elandra* Takes Bumper Gill Commodore's Cup**

Sue Pelling reports: Calvin Reed and team, sailing *Elandra*, a production Beneteau First 40.7 in the competitive Racing B class at this one-day regatta held in St. Maarten on March 4th, managed to hold off not only similar designs such as a J/120 and a couple of A40s, but also five sister-ships.

At the prizegiving ceremony at Port De Plaisance, Nick Gill, chairman of the event's sponsoring company, presented the team with a selection of Gill products, including a Gill Regatta Master starting watch and kit bag.

Now in its sixth year, and held as a run-up to the Heineken Regatta which started the next day, the event attracted a bumper entry of 47 boats. According to Robbie Ferron, event chairman, the boat of the day is calculated by the deltas. "When we've measured the deltas — that is, the differences between boats on corrected time — the boat that wins the most decisively in the most competitive class is the overall boat of the day."

The windward/leeward, two-mile courses were set in Simpson Bay, and the fleets raced in light to moderate, tactical, and patchy conditions on a relatively large rolling sea.

Glamorous head-turners such as Irvine Laidlaw's Wally 82, *Highland Fling*, Tom and Dotty Hill's custom Reichel/Pugh 75, *Titan XV*, and Bill Alcott's Andrews 68, *Equation*, were also out in force for the race. With America's Cup super-stars Peter Holmberg on the helm of *Highland Fling*, and Peter Isler driving *Titan XV*, it wasn't surprising to see these two bow to bow throughout the day. *Titan* tore a spinnaker in Race Two but her impressive speed against powerful *Highland Fling* (with a 35-metre-high rig) was still enough to secure two first places, with the latter taking second. The ten-year-old, stunning looking *Equation* took a well-deserved third in class.

In Racing C, local sailor Ian Hope-Ross aboard his Beneteau First 36.7, *Kick 'Em Jenny* hoped to better his runner-up position from last year but was unable to hold off the Beneteau First 10R, *Luxury Girl*, and once again settled for second overall in class.

In Racing D, Peter Peake's Reichel/Pugh 44, *Peake Yacht Services Storm*, gave Dave West's Melges 32 *Jurakan* a run for her money but was unable to break her two impressive bullets, taking second in fleet. Paul Solomon and his Trini team made their racing debut at the regatta on the Henderson 35, *Blackberry Enzyme*, and also had a good day, finishing fourth behind the third-placed Melges 24, *Budget Marine*.

For full results visit www.heinekenregatta.com

High-Profile St. Maarten Heineken 2010

Sue Pelling reports: Few events match St. Maarten Heineken Regatta's unique cocktail of fun and serious racing. Under the leadership of Sint Maarten Yacht Club commodore Robbie Ferron, who set up the regatta 30 years ago, this Caribbean classic continues to go from strength to strength.

This year's event, March 5th through 7th, attracted high-profile sailors including America's Cup legends Peter Isler, Peter Holmberg and Gavin Brady, round-the-world sailors Kenny Read and Wouter Verbraak, Olympic/America's Cup skipper Andy Beadsworth, and double Olympic silver medallist Margriet Matthijsse. As well as the big names racing on the latest, powerful ultra-light racing machines, and a healthy mix of big Swans, Farrs and custom builds, yachts in the 30- to 40-foot range, including a bumper 99-strong Bareboat division, made up the majority of the fleet.

The "big boat" line-ups were exceptionally strong, with Tom and Dotty Hill's new custom Reichel/Pugh 75, *Titan 15*, up against George David's Reichel/Pugh 90, *Rambler* and Irvin Laidlaw's Wally 82, *Highland Fling*, and Roberto Galperti's Swan 90, *White Lie*, against Patrick Adams' Swan 100, *Varsovie*, Peter Harrison's Farr 115 *Sojana*, and Christopher Besser's Swan 80, *Team Selene*.

The first race of the series started off Simpson Bay on a course that took most of the fleet around the Island to Great Bay. After a night of partying, most classes raced from Simpson Bay on the Saturday but this time to Marigot. The final day of racing was from Marigot back to Simpson Bay. Members of the press were aboard the 70-foot motor yacht *Mystic*, reaching speeds of 62 knots to capture the action.

The final day saw a big-boat battle between *Titan*, *Highland Fling* and *Rambler*. *Titan* benefited from a strange twist of fate when she blew out her A5 spinnaker. With no option other than to hoist a slightly flatter A3, it proved to be the perfect choice of sail when the wind shifted to a tighter angle. Revelling in the 20-knot squalls, and sailing right on the edge, Peter Isler, in a fine demonstration of downwind sailing, stormed *Titan* past *Highland Fling* and *Rambler* at blistering speed not only taking line honours but also an impressive first overall in class. Artie Means, navigator aboard *Titan*, said, "It was a fantastic day out there, with all three of us doing 17 to 20 knots downwind side by side and trading back and forth. It was probably one of the best day's racing I've had."

Hans-Joachim Tiggels and team from Germany, sailing a Beneteau Oceanis 523, *Acele*, were the overall winners of Bareboat 1, with the Duketown Official Royal Sailing Team finishing second. Ronald Gessel and team in a Harmony 52, *Neerlands Glorie*, who was leading the fleet going into today's final race, suffered a disqualification following a protest hearing and had to settle for third overall.

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The Wally 82 Highland Fling *took third place in Spinnaker 1 Class*

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One of the closest regatta-long battles was in Spinnaker 3 between the Trinidadian Reichel/Pugh 44 *Peake Yacht Services* sailed by Peter Peake and team, and Richard Matthews and team from the UK aboard the Tom Humphries design *Oystercatcher XXVI*. These two raced neck and neck, but *Oystercatcher XXVI* won the day. Going into the last day's race, any one of three boats — *Peake Yacht Services, Oystercatcher XXVI* or Paul Solomon's *Blackberry Enzyme* — could have won overall. Neil Mackley, *Oystercatcher's* trimmer, commented, "The key to our win was choice of headsail. We opted for a jib rather than the spinnaker, which paid off big time."

The winner of Bareboat 6 was Robbie Nitche and the team from Germany sailing a Dufour 455, *Let Me Go*, with three straight wins. Nitche, new to the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, said, "I like the courses and the three-day format, and the parties of course. We'll be back."

After the prizegiving, competitors and guests danced the night away on the beach as reggae superstar Maxi Priest and his band played into the early hours, concluding yet another successful St. Maarten Heineken Regatta.

For full results visit www.heinekenregatta.com

April's Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, one of the world's premier classic yachting events, hosts between 50 and 60 yachts every year and enjoys a wonderful variety of competitors. Traditional craft from the islands, classic ketches, sloops, schooners and yawls make up the bulk of the fleet, and are joined by the stunning Spirit of Tradition yachts, J Class yachts, and Tall Ships. Entries for the 23rd annual event, to be held April 15th through 20th, include *Velsheda, Rebecca, Aschanti IV, Lazy Leg, Taru, Bequia, Saphaedra, Rainbow* and *Godspeed*.



LUCY TULLOCH

At the Antigua Classic, yachts large and small share the race course and the admiration

Gig rowing, a single-handed race, sailing dinghy racing, and partying of course, are all traditional parts of this well-loved regatta.

The sailing, combined with Antiguan hospitality, plenty of rum, sunshine, and great camaraderie in a friendly relaxed atmosphere, places the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta in a class of its own.

For more information see ad on page 10.

Regatta for Traditional West Indian Sail in St. Barth

The West Indies Regatta is a three-day event held annually over the May Day weekend in St. Barth, celebrating traditional West Indian sail. With a renewed interest in traditional sail gaining momentum throughout the Lesser Antilles, it is hoped that the regatta will reintroduce, promote and encourage traditional West Indian boatbuilding.

This year, from April 30th through May 2nd, the line-up of traditional local boats is set to include seven Carriacou sloops now based in Antigua, plus a Carriacou sloop from Anguilla and an all-female crew sailing the Palm Island-based Carriacou sloop, *Pink Lady*. Also on the starting line will be the *Alexander Hamilton*, the last schooner built on the beach in Nevis.

The fun includes parties with live music and slideshows on the dock as well as model boat races with David Wegman. Once again, live on the Saturday night at Le Select: New York funky jazz with Tuey Connell.

For more information see ad on page 10.

Atlantic Cup Rally Takes US Cruisers Home

The Atlantic Cup Rally will depart from Nanny Cay Marina on Tortola, May 2nd, and arrive in Bermuda four or five days later. The Atlantic Cup is the companion rally to November's Virginia-to-Tortola Caribbean 1500 rally and offers the opportunity for returning cruisers to enjoy an 850-mile rally. Not limited to veterans of the Caribbean 1500, the Atlantic Cup is open to sailors with well-found offshore boats at least 38 feet (11.58 metres) long and crews of two or more.

"Over the years, we have found it best to split the return trip from the BVI to the States into two legs. In the spring of the year, two shorter weather windows seem to be more frequent than a single longer one," said Steve Black, founder and president of the organizing Cruising Rally Association. At Bermuda, the rally waits for the next weather window to start the second leg. At that point, smaller groups of boats head off for different US destinations.

Skippers may elect to join the Cruising Class or the Rally Class for the event. Boats in the Cruising Class are not scored and participate to enjoy cruising in company. Boats sailing in the Rally Class will be assigned PHRF handicaps and will compete in several classes.

For more information visit www.carib1500.com

The Caribbean Classic Rum Cruise

The Classic Rum Cruise is a rum-sampling cruise in company starting in Antigua that visits the Eastern Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe, Iles des Saintes, Marie Galante, Dominica, Martinique and St. Lucia.

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This year, May 3rd through 17th will be the third edition. To provide an insight into the development of rum distillation throughout the island chain, both historic and modern distilleries are visited. Many distinct blends will be sampled, with ample opportunity to acquire a bottle or two of your favorites.

The 2010 Classic Rum Cruise is led by Brian and Pippa of Miramar Sailing Ltd. of Antigua & Barbuda. Participants should be seasoned cruisers with good seamanship skills and experience of Customs and Immigration procedures, sailing in Atlantic Ocean conditions, and anchoring. Yachts must be in sound condition and equipped with working VHF radio, safety equipment, at least one GPS and nautical paper charts of the proposed sailing grounds. Skippers must be capable of maintaining their yachts without supervision and carry sufficient parts to enable repairs.

For more information visit www.classicrumcruise.com

Heading to Europe? Join the Fun with ARC Europe!

Heading to Europe? Entries are still being received for this year's ARC Europe transatlantic rally, which departs from Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola on May 6th.



Taking off for Bermuda in last year's ARC Europe

ARC Europe enables yachts to cruise west to east to Europe at the end of the Caribbean season as part of a fun rally. The Rally is open solely to cruising yachts, so they are allowed to motor in calm periods; results are calculated for each leg and prizes awarded.

It was 22 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 westbound ARC (Atlantic Rally for Cruisers).

By breaking the eastbound Atlantic crossing into several legs, ARC Europe helps make the passage a memorable way to voyage to Europe. During the six-week event, yachts will gather at Nanny Cay in early May, before departing the British Virgin Islands and crossing the Atlantic in company. A fleet from Florida will join those who started in Tortola at Bermuda, before crossing the Atlantic and exploring the Azores archipelago, and reaching the European continent at the end of June. Yachts can then join rally stages to Lagos in southern Portugal, or to Plymouth in the UK.

Organised by cruising rally experts World Cruising Club, ARC Europe is open to cruising monohulls with a minimum length of 27 feet (8.23 metres) and cruising multihulls from 27 to 60 feet (8.23 to 18.29 metres) LOA. The rally attracts largely offshore cruising yachts with an average LOA of 45 feet (14.15 metres).

The provisional entry list already includes yachts from eight different nations — Canada, France, Gibraltar, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the USA.

For more information see ad on page 11.

Combat de Coques 2010: Martinique in May

No, it's not a cockfight; it's a "hull fight" – in other words, a regatta! The ever-popular Combat de Coques will be held this year from May 13th through 15th, raced in the waters off Martinique's south coast. There will be competition in the following classes: Racing, Racing-Cruising, Surprise, Liveaboard Multihulls and Beach Cats. Enjoy Martinican hospitality and music after the races. The organizing host club is Club Nautique de Marin. Come and shake a tail feather!

For more information see ad in Market Place section, pages 43 through 45.

Barbados Mount Gay Regatta 2010 Date Change

Renata Goodridge reports: The organizing committee of the Barbados Mount Gay Regatta would like to let all sailors know that the Barbados Mount Gay Regatta dates have been changed because of the 20-20 Cricket World Cup, which lands on the weekend originally planned for racing. (Sailors and cricket — don't even get me started!).

The new dates for the Barbados regatta are May 20th through 23rd, with registration and the Skippers' Briefing on Thursday May 20, and racing for the next three days in the beautiful waters offshore of this precious island.

For more information contact sailfast@caribsurf.com

Puerto Rico Vela Cup

The Puerto Rico Vela Cup regatta, organized by Club Náutico de Fajardo and hosted by the Yacht Club Palmas del Mar, will take place from May 28th through 30th. There will be classes for Spinnaker Racing, Performance Cruising, Jib and Main, J/24, IC-24, Snipe and Beach Cats.

For boats arriving from other islands, Customs and Immigration Service is available Monday through Saturday from 0800 to 1630 hours at the ports of entry in San Juan, Fajardo, Ponce, Mayagüez and Culebra. Non-US citizens arriving by private boat must have a visa.

Register before May 14th and get a discount.

For more information visit www.puertoricovelacup.com

HIHO Adds New Categories

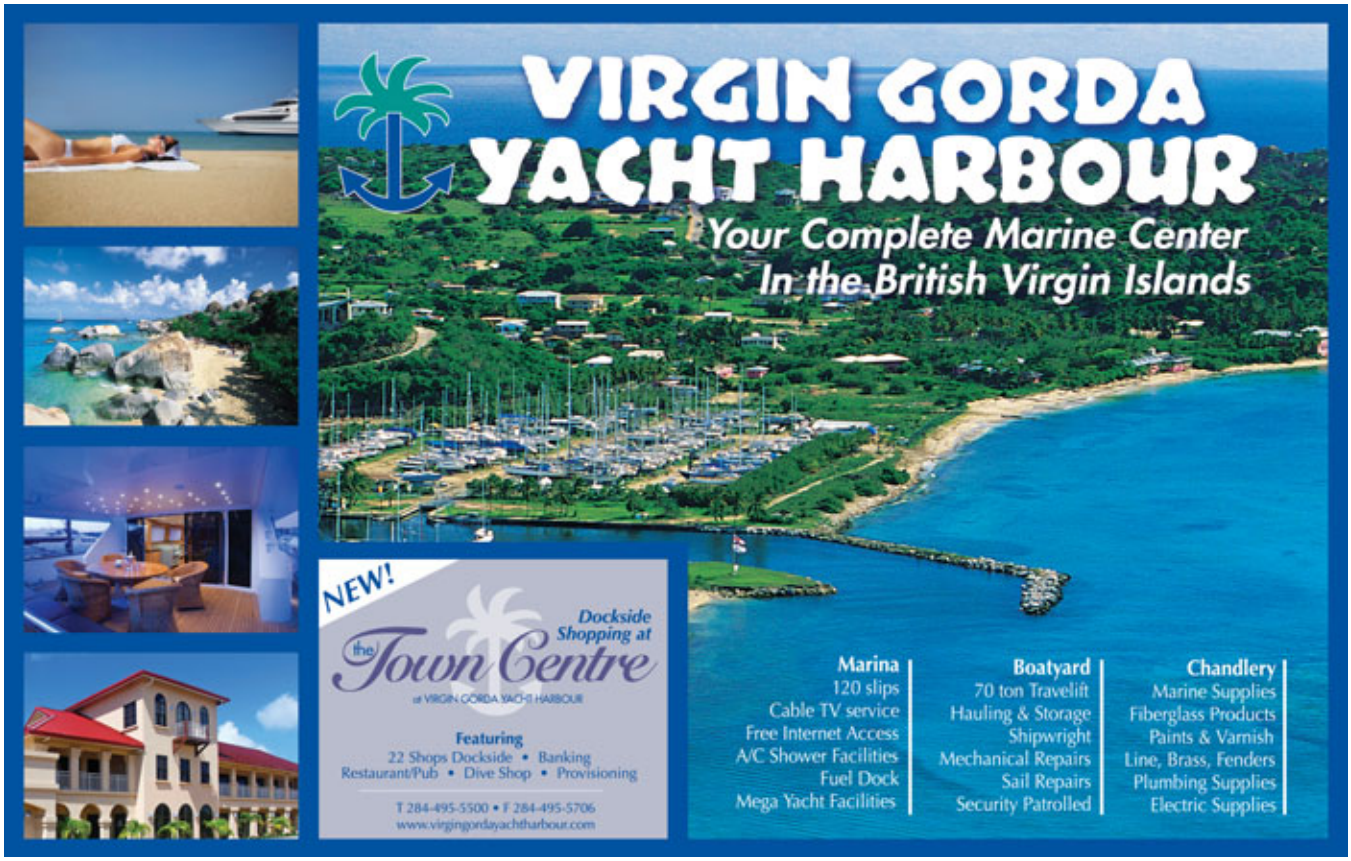
The 26-year old Highland Spring HIHO, an eight-day watersports adventure, visits multiple islands in the BVI. The 2010 event is set for June 27th through July 4th.

This year's event has added a fleet of Weta 4.4-metre trimarans. The Weta trimaran, a one-design, performance multihull that can be sailed single-handed or double-handed, was awarded the "2009 Boat of the Year (dinghy)" by *Sailing World* magazine, and is capable of over 17 knots. It is powered by main and jib and asymmetrical kite for downwind runs.

The 2010 HIHO will also feature a new sport: standup paddleboard racing. Says Andy Morrell, who won the HIHO event in 1986 and started running it through his company Ocean Promotions in 1993, "Starting with this year's event, we will add other watersports categories that we think are in demand or up-and-coming."

The HIHO regatta starts at The Moorings marina on Tortola, then the fleet sprints up to the top of the BVIs, and then spends a week coming back downwind. A fleet of captained Moorings catamarans serves as mobile homes for the racers. Along the way the regatta stops at Anegada, Virgin Gorda, Eustatia, Bellamy Cay, Peter Island, Cooper Island, Sandy Cay (National Park), Norman Island, Jost Van Dyke and Little Thatch, and features parties at every stop.

For more information visit www.go-hiho.com

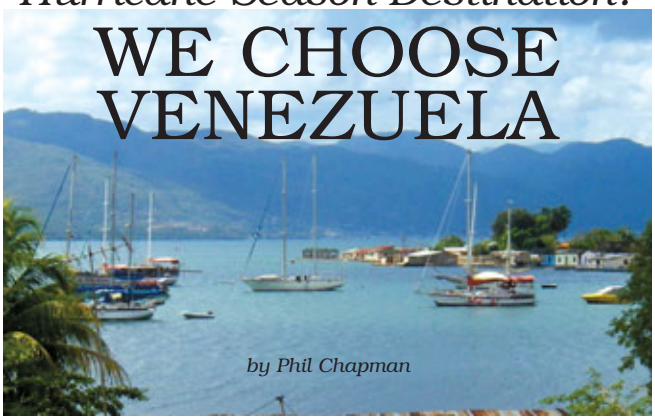






Hurricane Season Destination?

WE CHOOSE VENEZUELA



by Phil Chapman

Guacarapo is just one of the numerous anchorages in the Gulf

Along with a couple hundred other British and European boats, *Chaser 2*, with my wife Yvonne and me aboard, arrived in St. Lucia with the ARC rally some years ago, and since then we have travelled north, south east and west-ish. Many more cruisers arrive from North America, too, and hang around the Eastern Caribbean. Newcomers especially are keen to explore the Virgin Islands, and then travel south through the Leeward and Windward Islands.

In my experience while sailing in the Eastern Caribbean, the further south one travels the more "Caribbean" it becomes. When we arrived in St. Lucia with the ARC, we were a little disappointed. The Caribbean flavour that we had experienced 20 years previously had almost disappeared; anchorages were now restricted or buoyed, everywhere was crowded, and the boat boys wouldn't even let us anchor before fighting to sell us their wares.

Come April, most of us are thinking of where to go during the hurricane season.

Some may decide to stay in the northern islands and risk running for shelter and riding out a hit. Many insurance companies do not cover for any claim as a result of a Named Storm, and others insist that you travel south of a supposed "hurricane zone". Insurance companies have variously designated the southern border of this zone as 12°40'N degrees north or 12°N, but after Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Emily struck Grenada in 2004 and 2005 respectively, some companies drew the line at 11°5'N. (Seems they insure us fully as long as there is no risk of a claim!)

Grenada was and is still a favourite, but is not quite far enough south to keep many insurers happy. Even if your insurance permits staying there, good anchorages in Grenada are becoming increasingly difficult to find, with the introduction of mooring buoys and marinas. Grenada's available anchorages therefore become more crowded, and many cruisers don't like to stay in even the nicest marina for six months. Grenada is English-speaking though, a plus point, and there are good chandlers and stores. The haul-out facilities are quite good, too. There are fewer of the fruit-vending boat boys who drive us crazy in the more northerly islands, and it's as safe as anywhere to walk the streets, so Grenada in my opinion is still a reasonable summer-season option.

An alternative is the twin-island nation of Trinidad & Tobago. Tobago is beautiful and there are one or two good, safe anchorages. Although there is not too much in



Between the anchorages at Punta Cachamaure and Pericantal is the town of San Antonio

the way of shops and stores, it's a good place to travel to while in the area. Trinidad is another lovely island. The haul-out yards are some of the best I've seen, though you are restricted as to whom you employ to do any work on your vessel. Budget Marine has a chandlery here; so too does Peake's marina. Again, Trinidad is English-speaking. There are some good shopping centres and Port-of-Spain is a colourful town. From a safety-and-security point of view it is reasonable; the usual common sense rules apply. For those that feel it is dangerous outside the gates, there is a water taxi that takes you from one marina to the other. Anchorages are few; most people stay in one of the marinas or rent a mooring buoy in Chaguaramas, but the moorings have been known to drag in bad winds and are crowded. One downside is that it does rain a lot (at least in typical years, 2010 has been an exception so far): nearly every day you have to shut the hatches and move the cockpit cushions; painting and varnishing becomes very difficult.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

Where else? The ABC islands receive very good reports, as do Colombia and Panama, but are a bit far west for those who plan to return to the Eastern Caribbean islands for the winter season.

Eastern Venezuela, however, is within reach. Venezuela has had some bad press regarding crime, but Venezuela is a huge country — it has nearly 2,000 miles of coastline and some 300 offshore islands, so "Venezuela" will be in the headlines more often.

So, where to go in Eastern Venezuela? Coming from the east, Porlamar in Isla Margarita is often the first port of call; you can clear in here and it is a good stop en route to Venezuela's mainland and other offshore islands. Marina Juan can do the clearance for you, or you can do it yourself at the port captain's office. You will then be legally in Venezuela; you do not have to clear out to go to the mainland or any other island. Porlamar is a popular anchorage, though I'm not sure why. It is rolly at best and quite uncomfortable on many days, even in good weather. The surrounding area is scruffy but the shopping is good; it's a duty-free island, so some items are bargains. Many yachts stay in Porlamar for the whole summer and it can get crowded and noisy. There are many who live aboard here all year.



The anchorage between Cachicatos and Guacarapo is popular

Many more cruisers have a great summer in Venezuela, staying in the marinas in the town of Puerto La Cruz (PLC) such as Bahia Redonda (an excellent marina with swimming pool and haul-out), TMO and Aqua Vi. Many of these cruisers, though, just sit in the marina day after day and never sail anywhere else in Venezuela because of fear of crime. Some won't even set foot outside the marina gates, which is a shame because downtown PLC has a lovely promenade that is safe to walk daytime and evening, as is Marina Plaza, with cinemas and ten-pin bowling. Marina Bahia Redonda and TMO have good haul-outs, and PLC has two or three good chandlers. If you want marina life, this area is very good.

Mochima, a fjord-like bay set in a National Park, is a good place to visit, with some nice restaurants and lovely beaches, but restrictions apply for length of stay.

Near the town of Cumaná, Marina Cumanagoto is a good stopover; fuel is available here at Venezuelan prices, the staff is very helpful and friendly, and there is a small commercial centre with several cinemas. There are also several restaurants and a newly opened supermarket. Cumaná, about a 20-minute walk from the marina, is a bustling market town. The main streets are heaving with shoppers and stall holders. There are shops of all kinds and most things can be bought here. When we need fuel, we come and spend a few days in the marina, do some shopping and maybe watch a movie. For us, a few days in the marina is long enough; some of the motorboats here have music systems more powerful than their outboards so it can be a little loud, especially at weekends, though I have seen the Guardia Nacional telling the boatowners to quiet down.

An area that sometimes gets overlooked is the Gulf of Cariaco, partly because not a lot happens here. The gulf is a well-protected area stretching 30 miles east from Cumaná and is about eight miles at its widest point. Because it's an enclosed body of water, the sea never builds too high, whatever the strength of the easterly wind. Sailing is good, whether tacking from one shore to the other while travelling east, or enjoying great downwind sailing on return. There are many secluded and some more populated anchorages on both sides, and one can spend many weeks here moving from one place to another. The gulf is not for everyone; the fishing villages are small and, although very friendly, there is little or no entertainment. Walking is good; wildlife and birdlife is rich.

The anchorage between Cachicatos and Guacarapo is a popular spot to base a yacht. You can anchor in about four metres of water within 100 metres of the beach. It never rolls here, although sometimes you get a bit of fetch when the wind blows hard from the east. Rarely, during the summer you get a windshift during the afternoon that lasts for about an hour. This can cause a few big waves. The anchorage can take all the cruising boats of Venezuela, though rarely are there more than 20.

Medregal Village's boatyard here is a good place to haul out; prices are better than most. There is a restaurant and bar at Medregal Village Resort. There are two other cruiser hangouts in the area, run by cruisers. Cocobongo is run by Sven and Eva, who sold their boat to buy a beach house where they have built a log-fired pizza oven. A little further east is El Fajin Verde (The Green Sash, owing to the fact that it has a green stripe across the roof). This place is only open one day per week but serves English-type food as well as Caribbean-style rotis. Every place has its own dinghy dock.

There are no shops here but a bus can be arranged to take cruisers to the market town of Cariaco. A boat trip can be arranged across the gulf to San Antonio, a beautiful village with a few shops and general stores. Cocobongo or Fajin Verde can arrange all that is necessary; they also provide laundry service, water, gas, internet and wifi for patrons.

There is also a kiosk on the road, run by the wife of one of the fishermen, which sells most basic foodstuffs and drinks. Another English couple, also ex-sailors, lives nearby; they sell fresh free-range chickens, ducks and eggs.

So for what it's worth, our opinion based on our experience travelling throughout the Eastern Caribbean so far is this: Grenada is good, Trinidad is better, Venezuela is better still, and the Golfo de Cariaco is the best hurricane-avoidance destination. Firstly, it's well below anyone's hurricane zone (for example, Puerto Real on the north shore is at 10°34'N). Secondly, there's no need to pay mooring or marina fees. Thirdly, it is tranquil — the real South America, the real Caribbean. Fourthly, one can continue sailing, whether it be day-sailing and returning at night to the same anchorage, or sailing to other anchorages within the gulf, or voyaging farther afield to Isla Tortuga or Isla Blanquilla (you won't find bluer waters or better snorkeling). Finally, it is as safe as anywhere; you can walk the streets and foreigners are welcomed warmly, there are no hassles from boat boys, we never lift our dinghy and people here don't lock their houses, you can safely leave your boat on anchor and travel the interior of Venezuela. You can relax.





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Springtime in the Caribbean brings thoughts of calmer winds and gentle seas for the remainder of the cruising season. Springtime also is a time when we think of where we will end up for the hurricane season that begins in June.

For most cruisers the approach of hurricane season means making plans for hauling out in Trinidad, Grenada or, if you have a benevolent insurance company, even St. Lucia or Antigua. The more adventurous even consider making the journey farther afield to Venezuela, Bonaire and Curaçao.

Other sailors use the rationale that they need a change from sailing up and down the island chain each season, seeing the same glistening white sand beaches and friendly faces on their favorite islands.

There is another alternative that permits sailing throughout the entire hurricane season in protected waters and provides a new adventure that is totally different from the Eastern Caribbean — sail west to Panama!

The French impressionist painter Paul Gauguin was the ultimate adventurer. Gauguin is forever remembered for leaving the comfort of France and traveling to the South Pacific in search of his dreams. Most sailors can relate to Gauguin as we sail into secluded Caribbean anchorages in our search for adventure.

Gauguin's journey started in France but in reality it started at a small house near the



current-day village of St. Pierre, Martinique. Today there is a small museum that can be visited where Gauguin lived and painted on Martinique.

Gauguin must have grown tired of the beauty of Martinique because he did not stay long in St. Pierre. Instead, Gauguin sailed west toward Panama. It is his journey, rather than searching for a hurricane refuge or forsaking the Eastern Caribbean, that inspired our own journey aboard *Aspen*, our Island Packet 38-foot sailboat, to Panama.

Panama — home to conquistadors, pirates and Indians. Also, Panama is well below the hurricane belt and is easily chosen by insurance companies as a safe refuge during hurricane season. The sail from Trinidad, Grenada or even Gauguin's Martinique is downwind and an offshore passage that only took us ten days as we made landfall in the magical San Blas Islands of Panama in the middle of November 2009.

The San Blas Islands immediately reminded us of the spectacular Tobago Cays. There are differences. First, there are 340 islands that make up the San Blas Islands instead of the handful that comprise the Tobago Cays. Secondly, there are no bareboat charter boats in the San Blas Islands! This meant that we could watch a boat arrive at an anchorage and not have to stand on the bow screaming and waving them away. Third, the fishermen sell lobster — US$5 for six lobsters. This is quite a bit cheaper than the Eastern Caribbean as we recall. But why buy fish and lobster when you can spearfish for them right from your boat? Yes, spearfishing is allowed in the San Blas.

Checking into Panama at the San Blas island of Provenir is the legal option, instead of waiting until arrival at Colon to do so. However, beware that a visa and cruising permit for Panama are only valid for 90 days, after which you are supposed to leave the country. Sometimes you can arrange to remain longer by talking with an agent and paying a small fee.

The San Blas Islands are very similar to the Bahamas of 200 years ago. There are no grocery stores, roads or stress. Dugout canoes are the primary means of travel for the indigenous Kuna Indians who govern the San Blas Islands. The Kuna sometimes paddle around the anchorages selling fruit and vegetables. There is also a better-organized fruit-and-vegetable operation that appears in a motorized dugout canoe every one or two weeks, if the weather is favorable and there are enough yachts around to entice them.

The women onboard the dugout canoes sell a local handicraft called molas. Molas are spectacular and intricate needlework that will brighten up your salon and some are even on the walls of museums far and wide. You WILL buy molas by the dozen. Molas, molas, molas are everywhere in the San Blas. We became mola'ed to death, yet still bought enough for all our family, friends and distant relatives. We are fairly certain that Gauguin must have had a collection of molas too!

Summer in Panama simply means it is the rainy season. The rainy season can be described with one word — WET! If you think the rain in Trinidad is excessive, just come to Panama. They measure the rainfall here in feet (or metres if you prefer). These deluges are daily occurrences and they are accompanied by lightning. The chance of getting hit by lightning in Panama is around 99 percent. Those boats that do not get struck are definitely in the minority!

Panama has endless opportunities for exploring. The anchorages near the mainland of the San Blas are where pirates hid for 400 years during the 1500s through the 1800s. Sir Francis Drake and Sir Henry Morgan are two of the more notorious pirates that had bases in the jungle in the San Blas area.

The jungle is a dark and forbidding place in Panama. There are more poisonous snakes, spiders and saltwater crocodiles here than we have ever seen or ever wish to see again! Yet the jungle has beauty around every corner. Sloths hang from branches, parrots darken the skies all around us and there are troops of monkeys everywhere howling and dancing through the treetops. The sea is alive and the reefs are exceptionally healthy around the islands. Not even inept fishermen like us can go hungry here!

The distances between anchorages in the San Blas range from half a mile to five miles. All of the islands are behind a barrier reef so the seas are minimal when sailing between islands. There are no huge seas sweeping between the islands here like there are between St. Lucia

and Martinique, approaching Bequia or at the north ends of St. Vincent and Grenada. There isn't even an Anegada-type passage to negotiate here.

During the rainy season the winds range from calm to higher in the frequent squalls. There are also westerly winds that can rip through the anchorages without warning, bringing gusts to 50 knots at times. If you happen to get in trouble there is no coast guard to come and help you. Only your fellow cruisers will be nearby to lend you a hand.

The cruising area of the San Blas islands is so large that the morning net uses single-sideband radio instead of VHF. The Panama Cruisers' Net meets daily at 0830 on SSB 8107 USB. It is an invaluable resource. The broadcasts include the weather, a vessel check-in as well as question and answer announcements. The local VHF channel for a particular anchorage area is 72.

The most popular anchorage in the San Blas islands is within the Lemon Cays. There are cruisers who spend the entire hurricane season sitting in this one spot, playing volleyball on one of the cays, snorkeling and just enjoying life. This anchorage is similar to Georgetown in the Bahamas, but with a lot fewer boats.

If you really get desperate for supplies you can anchor near the runway at Nonomulu near the Carti Islands and take a four-wheel drive vehicle across a very rough road (the only road in the San Blas Islands), which eventually joins the Pan-American Highway that goes to Panama City. This tends to be at least an all-day adventure. Think of the bus journey in the movie "Romancing the Stone" and you will have an idea what you are in for.



There are two guidebooks that cover the San Blas Islands. The newest is *The Panama Cruising Guide* by Eric Bauhaus. The older guidebook is *The Panama Guide* by Nancy and Tom Zydler. We found that each guide supplements the other and both are useful. Just don't expect a Chris Doyle guidebook telling you the exact route to take between islands!

Meeting guests in the San Blas is simple. Tell your guests to fly into Porvenir on a commercial single-engine plane from Panama City and look for your boat. The tiny runway is the largest object on the cay so finding you or your boat is a snap.

The nearest haulout facility is at Shelter Bay Marina in Colon. This is a nice and relatively new marina where you can store your vessel in the water or haul out for long-term storage. The marina is safe because the old US Fort Sherman army base that Panama now owns surrounds it. Panama has well-armed guards patrolling the extensive perimeter of the old base to keep everyone away.

You would expect that Panama, one of the world's largest ports, to have extensive marine stores. Think again! There are very few marine stores in Panama, and the main one, Abernathy,

Above: The San Blas Islands immediately reminded us of the spectacular Tobago Cays, but there are differences!
Below: A fruit-and-vegetable operation appears in a motorized dugout canoe every couple of weeks... maybe



caters mainly to big sportfishing boats. Any sailing gear, parts for your refrigeration system or the like can be ordered through the local Marine Warehouse dealer — they are the best source for parts and equipment in all of Panama.

The natural beauty of the San Blas, for the short time he was here, probably inspired Gauguin in several of his paintings. Gauguin worked on the failed French Panama Canal effort before losing his job and falling ill — they have dengue fever here, just like in the Eastern Caribbean. There are also other nasty diseases like malaria here, too. Our family physician made sure that we took our daily anti-malaria tablets in the San Blas.

There is a major problem about spending hurricane season in Panama, instead of the Eastern Caribbean. Once hurricane season is over and you want to move on, where do you go?

The routes are well known:

- Head north to Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, and Mexico to spend the cruising season in the Western Caribbean
- Bash your way east along the coast of Colombia, stop in Aruba, Curaçao or Bonaire, then sail north and make landfall in Puerto Rico before struggling back to the Eastern Caribbean cruising grounds
- Hug the coast of Colombia, stop in Aruba, Curacao and Bonaire, and then really bash yourself and your boat to death by sailing east against the easterly tradewinds and adverse current to Grenada.

We will be taking a fourth alternative for getting back to the smiling faces, glorious beaches and yes, even the bareboats in the Eastern Caribbean. We will be following Gauguin's voyage westward through the Pacific, chasing the green flash and sailing far over the horizon to new places before returning home to the enchanting Windward and Leeward islands of our dreams.

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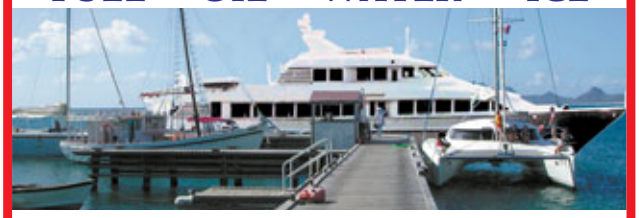
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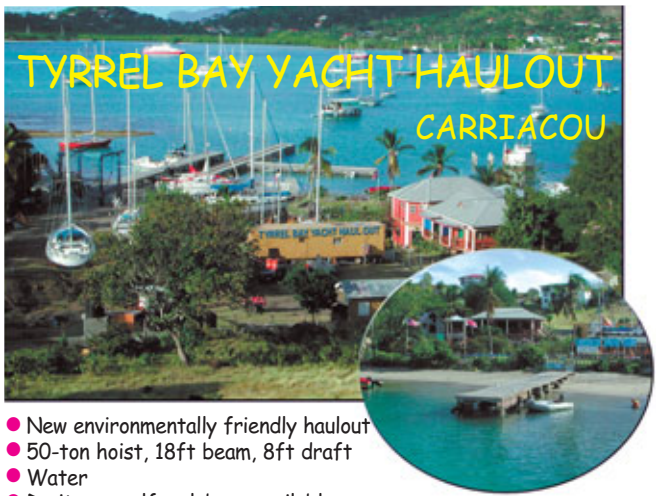
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Help us help you! By taking a few minutes to participate in our 2010 *Caribbean Compass* Readers' Survey, you can help us meet your needs.

In Part I, we'd like to find out how we can make *Compass* even more informative, entertaining and useful to you.

In Part II, please tell us your views on a number of issues of interest to boaters in the Caribbean. This information will not only help us to plan future features, but will also produce data to present to relevant authorities.

Finally, in Part III, please tell us about yourself. It helps us if we know who we are talking to!

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire and returning it to us. Drop it at our office, mail it to:

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or fax it to (784) 457-3410. For each questionnaire returned by May 25th, a donation will be made to Haiti earthquake relief.

Part I: Caribbean Compass

DELIVERY

1) Where did you obtain this copy of *Caribbean Compass*?

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___ Antigua
___ Guadeloupe
___ Dominica
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___ Barbados
___ St. Vincent
___ Bequia
___ Union Island
___ Carriacou
___ Grenada
___ Trinidad
___ Margarita
___ Puerto la Cruz
___ ABCs
___ Elsewhere (name _____)
___ Online

What was the name of the outlet (shop, bar, marina, yacht club, etc.) where you got it?

_____

2) On average, how often do you read a copy of *Compass*?

___ Every month
___ 1 or 2 out of every 3 issues
___ 1 or 2 out of every 6 issues
___ This is the first one I've seen

3) How easy do you find it to obtain a copy of *Compass*?

___ Very easy
___ Easy
___ Difficult
___ Very difficult

Where do you have difficulty finding it? _____

4) How many people usually read your copy of *Compass*?

___ Just me
___ 2
___ 3
___ 4 or more

5) About how long do you typically spend reading an issue of *Compass*?

___ Less than 30 minutes
___ 30 minutes to an hour
___ One to two hours
___ More than two hours

6) About how long do you keep an issue of *Compass*?

___ A day or two
___ One week
___ Two weeks
___ A month or more

7) Do you like *Compass's* current tabloid newsprint format?

___ Yes ___No Why? _____

If not, would you rather see it on glossy paper in magazine format?

___ Yes ___No Why? _____

8) What boating publications do you read regularly besides the *Compass*, and how often?

_____

CONTENT

9) Which regular articles/authors do you usually read, and how do you rate them on a scale from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent)?

	Usually Read	Seldom Read	Rating
Info & Updates	___	___	___
Business Briefs	___	___	___
Regatta News	___	___	___
Eco-News	___	___	___
Chris Doyle	___	___	___
Don Street	___	___	___
Destinations	___	___	___
All Ashore...	___	___	___
Crossword	___	___	___
Word Search	___	___	___
Sailor's Horoscope	___	___	___
Island Poets	___	___	___
Cartoons	___	___	___
Children's Stories	___	___	___
Dolly's Deep Secrets	___	___	___
The Caribbean Sky	___	___	___
Meridian Passage Moon	___	___	___
Book Reviews	___	___	___
Recipes	___	___	___
Readers' Forum	___	___	___
Calendar	___	___	___
What's on My Mind	___	___	___

10) Rate the subjects below: 1 (I would like more of), 2 (about right), 3 (I would like less of).

___ Reports on sailing regattas
___ Articles on cruising destinations
___ Articles about bluewater passages
___ Articles on land tours and travel
___ Reports on environmental issues
___ Articles about marine life and ecology
___ Reports on cruising issues
___ Articles on local culture and folklore
___ Stories of people's lives and achievements
___ Articles on regional maritime history
___ Nautical/Caribbean fiction

11) Are there any subjects not now covered that you would like to read about?

_____

12) How would you rate the length of the major articles?

___ Too short ___ About right ___ Too long

13) How would you rate the proportion of photographs and illustrations to text?

___ Too many pictures ___ About right ___ Too few pictures

ADVERTISING

14) How would you rate the usefulness of the advertisements in *Compass*?

___ Very useful ___ Useful ___ Not very useful

15) Have you ever purchased a product or service after reading about it in the *Compass*?

___ Yes ___ No ___ Not yet, but plan to

16) How would you rate the proportion of advertisements to articles?

___ Too many ads ___ About right ___ Too few ads

OVERVIEW

17) Taking everything into account, what do you like best about *Caribbean Compass*?

_____

What do you like least?

_____

18) Do you recommend *Compass* to your friends?

___ Yes ___ No

19) What suggestions do you have?

_____

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Part II: Issues

SECURITY

1) Security for yachts is getting to be more of a problem.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

2) Local authorities are taking adequate action to ensure security.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

3) The Caribbean is relatively safe compared to most other tourist destinations.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

ENVIRONMENT

4) The introduction of Marine Parks is a good idea.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

5) Charging yachts an entry fee for Marine Parks is fair.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

6) If yachts are charged a fee to enter a country, part of that fee should be put toward proper facilities for disposal of yachts' garbage.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

7) Disposal of yacht garbage should be banned on islands without proper facilities.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

DESTINATIONS

8) Besides good shelter and holding, what makes an anchorage desirable? Rate each item from 1 (unimportant) to 10 (extremely important).
___ Dinghy dock ___ Friendly people
___ Moorings ___ Clean environment
___ Shops and restaurants ___ WiFi
___ Marina facilities ___ Security patrol
___ Fuel and water ___ Other (please state) _____

What makes an anchorage undesirable? Rate each item from 1 (not a concern) to 10 (a major concern).
___ Security problems ___ Overcrowding (boats)
___ Harassment ___ Overcrowding (moorings/docks)
___ Noise ___ Lack of facilities
___ Unclean environment ___ Other (please state) _____

9) The use of jet skis (PWCs) is restricted or banned in some places in the Caribbean. Do you prefer to be in areas without jet skis?
___ Yes ___ No ___ Don't care

10) Good free anchorages are becoming hard to find.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

11) What makes a "working" (repairs, maintenance, etc.) destination desirable? Rate each item from 1 (unimportant) to 10 (extremely important).
___ Low crime rate ___ Skilled service providers
___ Value for money ___ Favorable weather
___ Duty-free concessions ___ Other (please state) _____

CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION

12) Most Customs and Immigration officers in the Caribbean are efficient and courteous.
___ Strongly agree ___ Disagree
___ Agree ___ Strongly disagree

13) Within the Greater and Lesser Antilles, I have found the Customs and Immigration officers in the following ports to be the most efficient and courteous:

_____

_____

I have found those in the following ports to be least efficient and courteous:

_____

_____

_____

14) I use the eSeaClear system where it is available.

___ Yes ___No Why or why not? _____

ISSUES WRAP-UP

15) What suggestions do you have regarding the issues listed above (security, environment, Customs/Immigration)?

_____

_____

_____

16) What other issues are of importance to you?

_____

_____

Part III: Demographics

1) I am...
___ a first-time or infrequent visitor to the Caribbean
___ a regular or long-term visitor to the Caribbean
___ a citizen or legal resident of the Caribbean
___ I haven't visited the Caribbean yet

2) If a visitor, are you staying...?
___ on your own private cruising boat
___ on a crewed charter yacht
___ on a bareboat charter yacht
___ in shoreside accommodation

3) If a citizen or legal resident, do you own a boat?
___ Yes ___ No

4) If you are a cruiser in the Caribbean, do you...?
___ spend most of your time on the move
___ spend most of your time in one port
___ stay aboard except for the summer
___ stay aboard year-round

5) If you are here on a boat:
Did you arrive with a race or rally?
___ Yes ___ No
Do you plan to stay for more than one year?
___ Yes ___ No
In which year did you arrive? _____

6) About how many days per year is your boat...?
___ At anchor ___ On a mooring ___ In a marina slip
___ Underway for more than a day sail ___ Hauled out

7) What is your nationality?

_____

8) Sex: ___ Male ___ Female

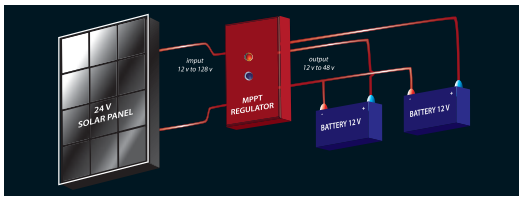
9) Age: ___ Under 24 ___ 25 to 44 ___ 45 or over

10) How would you describe *Compass* in your own words?

_____

Thank you for taking part!
Stay tuned to *Compass* for highlights from the results of this survey.

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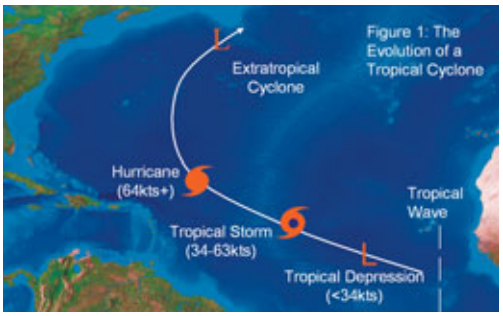
The Evolution and General Track Patterns of Atlantic Tropical Cyclones

by Amanda Delaney

There is little worse than hearing the news that a tropical storm or hurricane could threaten your location. Not only does it ruin your plans but it forces you to make critical decisions such as, can I get the vessel out of harm's way in time and, if I can't, where can I safely moor and wait out this system? Certain areas of the Caribbean Sea are more prone to tropical cyclone impacts than others. Having the general knowledge of how a tropical cyclone develops and where these systems impact areas across the Atlantic Ocean can help you make the appropriate preparation and plans ahead of the tropical cyclone season.

How does a tropical cyclone evolve?

The majority of tropical cyclones originate from tropical waves. Tropical waves, also known as easterly waves, originate off the western African coast near Senegal where dry Saharan air meets the moist air over the Atlantic waters. The surface winds converge to the east of the tropical wave and generate a line of thunderstorms that can be viewed on satellite imagery.



Most tropical waves will not produce a tropical cyclone for several reasons. The first is that the sea surface temperatures across the tropical Atlantic Ocean are not warm enough to sustain a tropical cyclone. Sea surface temperatures generally need to be at a minimum of 26.5°C (80°F). The other reason is that there are areas across the tropical Atlantic Ocean where winds aloft are too strong to sustain thunderstorms near the tropical wave. These winds will rip the thunderstorms away from the tropical wave and this disrupts any further organization along the tropical wave.

If the sea surface temperatures reach or exceed the 26.5°C threshold and the winds aloft across the tropical Atlantic Ocean subside or become calm, then the thunderstorms associated with the tropical wave will continue to become more numerous and persist. This becomes known as a tropical disturbance: where numerous thunderstorms develop but are not yet organized near the tropical wave and the surface winds have not begun to turn cyclonically. Once the surface winds begin to turn cyclonically and form a closed surface circulation, or low, then a tropical depression has formed. A tropical depression generally produces maximum sustained winds of less than 34 knots.

A tropical depression will evolve into a tropical storm when the thunderstorms around the center of circulation begin to develop a more cyclonic pattern (this appearance can be seen on satellite imagery) and the sustained winds near the center increase above 34 knots. Once the tropical depression is classified as a tropical storm it will be officially named by the US National Hurricane Center.

A tropical storm can strengthen further in the right environment. The outer bands will further tighten near the center of circulation, the barometric pressure continues to fall and an "eye" develops at the low center. Once the sustained winds have reached 64 knots, the tropical storm is classified as a hurricane. Hurricane winds can range from 64 knots to more than 135 knots (see Figure 1).

The Saffir Simpson scale categorizes the strength of Atlantic Ocean hurricanes as follows:

Category 1:	64-82 knots
Category 2:	83-95 knots
Category 3:	96-113 knots
Category 4:	114-135 knots
Category 5:	135 knots or greater

Once a hurricane strengthens to a Category 3 system, it is recognized as a major hurricane.

A hurricane can meet its demise in several ways. The first is if the system moves over a large landmass. The system will quickly weaken inland once it is cut off from its warm water energy source. The second is if the hurricane moves over cooler waters. The hurricane is unable to generate as many thunderstorms near the center of circulation and the system begins to transition from a tropical cyclone to an extratropical cyclone. In this case the tropical cyclone begins to look more like a large gale or storm that you would find in the mid-latitudes. Usually these tropical cyclones weaken upon encountering stronger winds aloft again that will push the thunderstorms away from the center of circulation. Generally these extratropical cyclones merge with a cold front or become a gale or storm, depending upon the strength of the winds once the transition is complete.

Where do tropical cyclones form and where do these systems generally track?

Tropical cyclones generally originate in one of two ways: either along the tail end of a stalled cold front or, as we just discussed, from a tropical wave. During the first scenario, an area of low pressure can develop along a stalled cold front, typically over the northwestern Caribbean Sea, north of the Bahamas or along the US Gulf or East Coast. These lows generally strengthen quickly over warm ocean waters and become their own separate identities from the cold front. When tropical cyclones form in the western Caribbean waters, these systems can track northeastward over the Bahamas to the open Atlantic waters. Or, a tropical cyclone can also turn west or northwestward and move inland over Central America or over the Gulf of Mexico and impact either the southern US or Mexico. The tropical cyclones that develop along cold fronts can occur at any time of the year but they more commonly occur in the western Caribbean Sea during May through June and during October through November (see Figure 2).

As previously mentioned, tropical waves originate off the western coast of Africa and will track westward along approximately 06°N to 20°N. These waves can move anywhere between five to 20 knots and will move through the eastern Caribbean Sea every three to four days from May through November.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

A tropical wave can be tracked on a surface map and is represented by an "inverted" trough, or a line that appears like an archer's bow pointing west. Tropical cyclone development generally occurs along these tropical waves during late June through early October when the sea surface temperatures across the tropical Atlantic Ocean are optimal and winds aloft are generally calm across this region.

Once a tropical cyclone is spawned by a tropical wave, these systems generally track west or west northwestward from western Africa to near approximately 50°W to 55°W, transiting along the southern periphery of a strong high centered near the Azores. From there the tropical cyclone's track can diverge and is heavily influenced by the weather features to the north. If a high is centered near Bermuda, then the tropical cyclone can continue on a more westward track that will generally take it through the eastern Caribbean Sea, or impact the northern islands, such as the Leeward Islands, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. If the high to the north is far enough west, the tropical cyclone will continue westward until impacting Central America or turning into the Gulf of Mexico and impacting the southern US or Mexico.

If the high near Bermuda weakens and a cold front tracks off the eastern US, then the tropical cyclone can turn more northwestward out ahead of the front. Depending on the position of the front, a tropical cyclone can track through the Bahamas and impact the eastern US coast. Other times the tropical cyclone can recurve completely toward the northwest to north and eventually northeastward, therefore remaining out in the open Atlantic waters (see Figure 3).

As we progress into later October and November, the tropical waves that move off the western African coast begin to weaken due to the sea surface temperatures becoming cooler in the eastern Atlantic Ocean. Any tropical cyclones that develop are more likely to track more northwestward and eventually northward ahead of cold fronts that are farther south during this time of year.

Where are tropical cyclones most likely to impact in the Eastern Caribbean Sea?

The greatest threat from tropical cyclones over the Eastern Caribbean Sea generally comes with the tropical waves from the east. This usually occurs during July through September. The threat generally shifts to the west during May through June and from October through November. During July and early August, tropical cyclones that form from tropical waves will generally impact the Leeward Islands (at times the northern Windward Islands), the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Towards the end of August and September this track usually shifts farther north where the greatest threat is generally to the northern Leeward Islands, Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Typically the southern Windward Islands and the Netherlands Antilles are spared any direct impacts from tropical cyclones. Please note that these are general climatological tracks and that tropical cyclones can deviate from the above-mentioned paths.

What to look for regarding tropical cyclones, and evasive action to be taken

There are several signs to observe prior to the arrival of the tropical wave:

- The barometric pressure will drop two to four millibars.
- Northeast winds will rapidly increase 24 hours prior to its arrival.
- Stronger tropical waves will produce showers and thunderstorms. The stronger thunderstorms will produce locally enhanced winds up to gale force and building seas.

Once the tropical wave has passed, the winds will shift and ease out of the southeast and the barometric pressure will gradually rise.

A decision should be made two to three days prior to a tropical cyclone impacting a region on whether it is safe to escape well ahead of the system or find a safe port that will provide protection from the cyclone. When a tropical storm watch or hurricane watch is issued for an area, tropical storm or hurricane force winds are possible in the region within 48 hours. When a tropical storm warning or hurricane warning is issued then tropical storm or hurricane force winds are more likely to occur, impacting that region within 36 hours.

If you decide to seek shelter in a port, make sure you take all of the necessary preparations of tying down the vessel, securing everything inside and sealing any hatches.



Figure 2 (left) shows typical cyclone paths during May-June and October-November. Systems can form in the Gulf of Mexico along old fronts, or develop in warmer waters of the northwestern Caribbean and track west-northwestward into the Gulf. Systems may also track northeastward and into Florida or the Bahamas

Figure 3 shows general tropical cyclone tracks during July-September. Systems typically form near the Cape Verde islands and track west-northwestward. Upon nearing the northeastern Caribbean, systems can track northwestward or northward, or move west-northwestward across the northern Caribbean

Here are the conditions that you will encounter while sheltering through a hurricane:

- Swells will gradually build two to four days before the arrival of the hurricane.
- The barometric pressure will slowly drop two to three days prior to the hurricane's arrival. A rapid drop will occur within 24 hours before landfall.
- The winds will gradually increase.
- Clouds will increase and the outer bands of the hurricane will produce scattered showers and thunderstorms within 24 hours prior to landfall. The thunderstorms associated with the outer bands need to be monitored closely for the potential of any waterspouts or tornadoes associated with them.

If the eyewall reaches your area, expect the strongest winds and numerous thunderstorms to occur at this time. The barometric pressure will continue to decline.

If the eye (or center) of the hurricane tracks over the area expect:

- The winds to ease for approximately a few minutes to an hour.
- Thunderstorms to diminish and the barometric pressure to bottom out.
- The skies may clear briefly but this will only last a few minutes to an hour at most.

Once the eye of the hurricane moves through, the region will be impacted by the eyewall again with winds coming from the opposite direction and numerous thunderstorms. The barometric pressure will steadily increase while winds and thunderstorms diminish and swells slowly (usually after one to two days) abate as the tropical cyclone moves away from the area.

Conclusions

If you plan on visiting the Eastern Caribbean Sea during the Atlantic tropical season, always stay up to date with the latest tropical activities and consult a professional meteorologist in case you need to alter your plans or take evasive action because of a tropical cyclone threat. If you are going to be transiting in a tropical cyclone prone area, always have a hurricane port in mind where you can shelter in case a hurricane threatens and you are unable to get safely away from the system in time. Keeping these plans in mind will allow you to avoid a potentially dangerous situation during the tropical season.

Amanda Delaney is a Senior Meteorologist at Weather Routing Inc., which provides routing/forecast assistance and Meteorological Consultation for yacht/cargo ships, in business since 1961. Contact wri@wriwx.com or visit www.wriwx.com





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Near-Catastrophic End of a Voyage

by Peter Garnett

YOU make your plans, equip your boat with everything you need: instruments, charts, publications, safety equipment, medical supplies, etcetera. You study all the things that a seagoing captain must know and you plan your passage meticulously, taking into account weather, tides, currents and other factors. If you have done all this right you should arrive safe and sound at your destination.

That feeling of triumph on safe arrival when you have overcome all obstacles and arrived just as you planned is, for me, one of the greatest rewards of voyaging under sail. So it has been for Marie and me in all our tens of thousands of miles of voyaging in our Cape Dory 40, *Timespinner*. That is, until the last passage, which was not even a very long one.

Our latest voyage of three years had taken us from Maine, USA, to Spain, Madeira, the Canary Islands, back across the Atlantic to Barbados, then around the Caribbean in a clockwise direction until we were in January in a pretty little marina at La Ceiba on the north coast of Honduras, where we were waiting for a succession of nasty weather fronts to clear before continuing to Rio Dulce, Guatemala. We had made two false starts, driven back by strong headwinds which, combined with a knot of contrary current, made progress impossibly slow and uncomfortable.

At last things looked better and we determined to set sail. The passage was about 120 miles from La Ceiba to Cabo Tres Puntas, where we would spend the night and wait for the high tide to cross the terrifyingly shallow bar at the Rio Dulce entrance. That meant an overnight passage and there was no need for an early start. We had time for a good steak lunch ashore first.

The passage was uneventful. The wind failed and we had to motorsail some of the way. Checking the tide prediction, we found that we would miss the high tide at the Rio Dulce bar, so we put in at Bahia La Graciosa, about 14 miles away, to await the high tide next day.

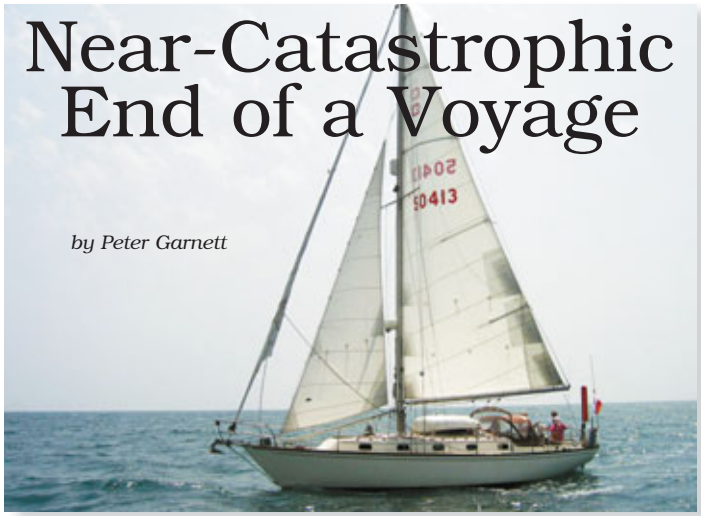
La Graciosa is a lovely anchorage, quiet and well sheltered. It appeared utterly deserted apart from a few seemingly empty houses on the shore and a solitary Indian silently fishing from a dugout canoe in the distance. The quiet was absolute. Marie was not feeling well and turned in early without dinner.

In the middle of the night she woke me, saying she had great pain and thought she had food poisoning. We decided to stay where we were and wait until she got over it but she got worse. Her belly was hard and swollen and the pain was becoming hard to bear. This was more than the common dose of food poisoning or gastroenteritis that normally gets better on its own. Marie needed medical attention. We tried calling for help on the VHF but there was no response. There was nothing for it but to hoist anchor and go as fast as we could to Livingston and find medical help. Never mind the tide — even if we went aground we could still call for help.

It was still dark but we had GPS waypoints from our entry. Motoring at full speed, we arrived early on the tide but cleared the bar by inches, at most, if we did not plow a furrow in the mud. Livingston is one of the few ports of entry where Customs and Immigration officers still come out to yachts at anchor. In response to our call a doctor came too. He examined Marie briefly, muttered something about salmonella and prescribed some medicine, which I collected ashore. Then we moved about a mile upriver and anchored, waiting for an improvement before continuing.

There was no improvement, but nor, so far, was it obvious that we had an emergency. The emergency became apparent when Marie woke me in agony about four in the morning. She could not eat, drink, or eliminate, had not peed since the previous day and was beginning to swell up with edema. There was no response to my call for help on the VHF but Marie remembered having seen in one of the cruising guides a telephone number for emergency assistance for tourists. We called it, using the Iridium satellite telephone, and spoke to Omar Solis. He immediately contacted the Coast Guard and arranged for a boat to be sent urgently. It was not his fault that it arrived some four hours later because they could not find us, although we were less than a mile away and the boat was lit up like a Christmas tree with all lights on, including our deck floodlights.

Finally, in daylight, the boat arrived. There was the same doctor who had seen her the day before, half asleep and unshaven and in an impatient mood, and a nurse. We had thought that there would be some sort of a medical clinic in Livingston, which is a sizeable town, but on the way there, Marie learned that there was none. When she asked where then were they going, the nurse suggested that they go another 11 miles along the coast to Puerto Barrios.



Health issues have forced Timespinner's *sale*

There they were met at the dock by Omar Solis, who drove Marie to the hospital, waited there all day while she was X-rayed and given some treatment and finally released, too weak to walk. He drove her to a bank (we had no local currency) and to a pharmacy, where he helped her buy more medicines, and put her on a boat back to *Timespinner*.

This latest treatment had no more effect than the first. By the middle of the night she was really bad. She had swollen up until she looked as if she weighed 300 pounds and it appeared that her kidneys were not working. We had exhausted the local medical capability and we had to do something before she died.

There is an American doctor who runs a clinic called The Jungle Medics. It is on Lake Izabal, some five hours motoring at six knots. We would go there. Marie called once again to Omar. With his usual efficiency he called The Jungle Medics and the closest marina to advise them that we would be arriving with a medical emergency. So, well before dawn, as soon as it was light enough to see the river, we weighed anchor. Then, to our consternation, we saw that the local fishermen had laid nets completely surrounding us.

Not for the first time did I bless *Timespinner*'s long keel underwater shape. No "modern" yacht with fin keel and separate rudder could have escaped without entanglement of the rudder and quite probably the propeller as well. We just went slowly ahead. The net buoys disappeared as we passed over and bobbed back up in our wake. Full speed ahead and we were on our way.

The trip up Rio Dulce is utterly spectacular, especially the canyon. At any other time we would have enjoyed it slowly but we just kept on boring upriver, not even slowing for shoals and obstructions. On arrival at Bruno's Marina we found that Omar had been as good as his word. Line handlers were waiting, as was Omar himself, having driven up in his own car. Marie was seized and whisked off before I had even tied up my mooring lines. I wondered if I would see her again.

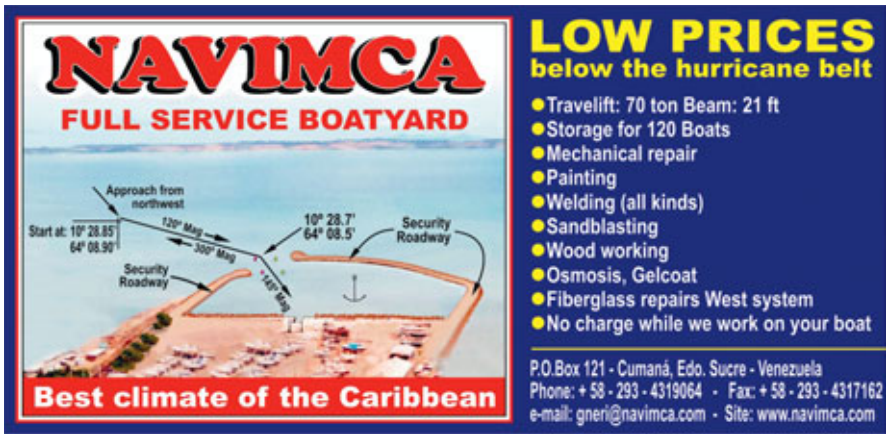
In fact, the next time I saw her was several days later in a hospital in Guatemala City. The American doctor, Brian, had taken one look at her and said she must go to the city RIGHT NOW! He called a colleague and arranged emergency treatment for her on arrival. As if we were not indebted enough to Omar, he volunteered to drive her there, a five-hour trip.

Well, it all ended well. Her treatment at that hospital was as good as she could have received anywhere in the world. Her problem had been an intestinal blockage just below her stomach due to an adhesion, the legacy of a previous operation. By the next day she was feeling almost well, apart from a foot-long scar on her belly, and was released a few days later. We are now taking life easy while she recuperates in the absolutely gorgeous ruined city of Antigua, Guatemala, while *Timespinner* languishes in a marina in Rio Dulce. The sad note is that our voyage and our voyaging days are over for good. Marie has been warned that she can never again be far from medical attention in case of a recurrence.

Timespinner is for sale. She needs some cosmetic work on the exterior but is in excellent condition otherwise. We would be happy to sell her at less than half her market price if only somebody would take her off our hands "as is" from Rio Dulce and we could just fly home and carry on with our lives. This would be a wonderful opportunity to acquire a superb cruising yacht ready to go, with all necessary cruising equipment. [*Editor's note: See classified ad on page 46.*]

There must be a moral to this story, but I am not sure what it is. No amount of learning and preparation can defend against such an act of fate. It is just to know that such things can happen.

Anybody cruising in Guatemala should know that the Tourist Assistance Program of the Guatemala Tourist Board is highly efficient and nothing short of wonderful. Omar Solis deserves a medal. Medical attention in the capital city is world class, the nursing care superb and to top it all off, they have an excellent, healthy cuisine. Here's hoping you'll never need such assistance, but it's good to know it's available.



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GRENADA FISH

by Jack Foard

IT was 4:27AM, time to get up and go fishing. I had a date to meet a Grenadian fisherman, Lenny Harris, on the beach at around 5:00. I poured a cup of hot coffee, grabbed my hat and sunglasses, cranked up the dinghy and puttered in to the beach to meet Lenny by his plywood skiff, *Sting*.

My wife and I had sailed our Admiral 38 catamaran up from Prickly Bay the evening before and anchored just north of the town of Gouyave in 15 feet of clear water. We came to join the local celebration of Gouyave's "100th Fisherman's Birthday". I met Lenny on the beach when I stopped to ask him a few questions about the event.

I asked Lenny what it was all about. He pondered the question for a moment, then told me that the best he knew, someone in the government had officially appointed Gouyave the "fishing capital of Grenada" 100 years ago and it was all about that declaration. He wasn't too sure Gouyave was still the fishing capital in reality, as all the big long-line fishing boats hailed from the St. George's area, but Gouyave still had lots of fishermen and the weekly Friday Night Fish Fry had people coming from all over the island for the street party and fantastic fresh seafood dishes prepared by local vendors.

I thought it would be fun to see how the local fishermen fished in their tiny skiffs, so I asked Lenny if I could fish with him.

"Ah course, Mon, sure. Meet me here at five in da mornin' den," he said without hesitation. And that's how I now found myself lugging fishing gear across the beach on this dark tropical morning. The fact that I offered $20 to pay for gas may have helped put the smile on his face.

We chatted as we made several trips up to his little locker in a building erected by the Japanese government for local fisherman. "Dem build lots a buildings for da fishermen so we would vote for dem to kill de whales," he said.

By 5:30 we were ready to go, but the heavy 16-foot wooden skiff was sitting on logs 40 feet from shore. Suddenly three men appeared from different directions to help. Other logs were borrowed from other boats and we quickly had a rolling log path to the sea.

As we rolled Lenny kept saying to me, "Watch da feet now, you watch da toes, careful now." It was later in the day I noticed he had a very badly deformed toe on his right foot where the boat crushed his foot years before.

Lenny got the motor started and we chugged away from the beach into the flat dark sea. There was no wind and not a ripple on the surface.

"Dis is no good fo' da fishin'," said Lenny. "Da baits don' work well like dis and da fish don' bite dem." But we both agreed the breeze would likely pick up when the sun came up.

"Dis mornin we go' fish mos'ly right off da point dey," he said pointing to Marin Point about a mile to the north.

"Do you usually fish there or do you have other spots, too?" I asked.

"I catch mos' my fish all out dey but sometime da fish are somewhere else and I does go wey dem are."

"Like Willie Sutton, only fish instead of money," I said. He clearly didn't get my reference to the famous bank robber. "Do you have any idea why the point is so good?" I asked.

"Don' know for sure but I t'ink maybe da reef comes up dey from deep and da squids like it 'cuz wen I cut da bellies of da tuna open always dem full ah squids."

Lenny trolls about a dozen little plastic lures that are supposed to mimic squid. We attached strings of four lures of various colors to each main line, the two main lines we attached to bamboo outriggers. I asked Lenny which was his favorite color. He pondered this a long while. Finally he pointed to a red and yellow one, "Dis one migh' be da bes'," he offered.



This black fin put a smile on Lenny's face

The action started just as the sky began to brighten. Lenny looked at me and said, "I go' one now," and he reached back to start hauling in a blackfin tuna.

The first 200 feet of the main lines were heavy twine, probably about 300-pound test and easy to pull in hand over hand. Only the last 150 feet were monofilament line, 120-pound test, and a lot harder to grip. Lenny wore rubber sleeves on both his index fingers to protect them from being cut should a big fish race away and cause the line to slice deep into any flesh trying to resist. Lenny showed me his little toe that had gotten the monofilament wrapped around it by mistake a few weeks ago. The deep gash was almost healed.

The breeze strengthened and the seas were beginning to get bigger. Lenny was busy scooping water from the bottom of the boat with a plastic bleach bottle cut away to make a perfect bailing scoop. I could see the water streaming down the inner seams of the boat where the sheets of plywood were nailed to the headers.

I asked Lenny if Grenada lost many fishermen to the sea.

"Oh ya, we los' a few a year or two ago. Some guys, dem don' know much 'bout da sea, some of dem, 'specially da young ones. Dem don' even know da cardinal points ah da compass, some dem. You ask dem which direction da sun go down and dem don' know!" He shook his head.

He looked at me and calmly said, "You got a fish on yo' line, yo' know."

I had the line in my hand all this time but the line was attached to the long bamboo outrigger so I felt no tug. Looking at the outrigger I could not tell it was under a load but Lenny knew I had a nice tuna on.

I pulled hand over hand, making sure to let the twine pile up neatly on the deck free of my toes. When I got to the monofilament then things got harder. I had my rubber finger sleeves on and even with them I could hardly hold onto the line. I was embarrassed; Lenny made it look so easy. I had to twist my hand severely to keep a grip and it was fairly slow going. Finally I was rewarded with not one tuna, but two fat blackfins!

Lenny laughed and said, "Yeah, mon, you da fisherman!" as he unhooked my fish and tossed them to the bow where they flapped and sloshed in the never-ending stream of sea water that seeped in, now bright red with fish blood.

We caught a few more tuna over the next hour but by 9:30 they had stopped biting. Our final fish was a small four-pound bonito, or "bonnet" as the locals call it.

"Dem not hungry now," Lenny announced. With that he declared it was time to go home.

As we approached the beach other fisherman began to line up logs for us. It was again a group effort and this time much more work to bring the boat up the beach.

Again Lenny chirped at me like a worried mother hen, "Yo' be careful da toes, now, watch da toes."

Two of the men who helped us haul the boat up the beach stopped to chat with Lenny for a few minutes. After some discussion one man walked away with a tuna and the other, in a threadbare T-shirt, with the bonnet.

I asked if he had sold the fish, since I didn't see any cash change hands.

"Da tuna, he gets dem from me mos' days. He just pay me later."

"And did you sell the bonnet?" I asked. I really don't like bonito but the locals seem to think they are just as good as any other fish.

"Jus' give it. Him ha' a family. Dem ha' fo' get somet'ing fo' eat, yo' know."



Kids having a sand ball fight on the beach at Gouyave





APRIL 2010

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
Since you Aries rams can *never* make a decision, you'll poll the crew and let democracy reign throughout April.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
You'll throw the charts and caution to the winds, and let your inner scallywag sail the ship of your destiny this month.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
The decision is made, your course is true; you'll only sail the ocean blue.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Your course this month will be straight ahead into the dark waters — no tacking necessary.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
Drop the "aarrgh"! Shyness has won you over, modesty is at the helm, and now you are — for once — at a loss for words.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
The rum will go to your head this month — damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Put all your ballast on the port side and get it over with. Who cares what other sailors think?

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
You'll win over the crew this month with your sweet disposition and a generous week of shore leave.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
Throughout April, you archers will be sailing with an empty quiver — and loving it.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
The winds pick up, you're sailing free; no need for orders, just let it be.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Glide! The engine will be in neutral this month — and so will you.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
After studying the charts and setting your course, don't forget the next steps — upping anchor and setting your sails.

REMEMBER
to tell our advertisers you saw their ad in *Compass!*

Crossword Solution

ACROSS
4) MARK
7) PROTEST
10) INTO
11) SLOOP
12) CLUB
13) WOOD
14) LOCAL
16) EASTER
18) AGES
19) AROUND
22) BEQUIA
24) CAT
26) YACHT
28) CLUES
30) SIZE
31) SAINT
33) CLASS
34) FRIDAY
37) SIGNAL
40) GENOA
41) SAILS

DOWN
1) SAIL
2) GOOD
3) DE
5) VINCENT
6) DOUBLE
7) PRIZES
8) SCHOONER
9) APRIL
11) SAILING
13) WAR
15) ANGLE
17) ENDER
20) REGATTA
21) UP
23) ISLAND
24) COURSE
25) FISHING
27) REEF
29) SPRITS
32) PLAN
35) AFT
36) RIG
38) AS
39) LA

PIRATES

Island Poets

Pirates of the Caribbean!
A rollicking adventure, seen
By young and old, not meant to be
In any way reality!
Great entertainment, much enjoyed,
You missed it? You cannot avoid
The reruns screened incessantly
On HBO or NBC!

Your screen is filled with clashing swords,
The villains get their just rewards,
The Hero sets things right again,
Hoists up his sails and plies the Main.
Though we romanticize upon
The era, we are glad it's gone.
But has it gone? Has it survived?
Or has this era been revived?

No Spanish gold or merchantmen
To tempt a twisted mind, what then
Entices pirates of today?
I think it's drugs, then by the way
They stop to ravage innocents
For what's on board a yacht, and then
They seem to need to terrify
The vulnerable yachtsmen, why?

Perhaps they get an ego boost
Before returning home to roost.
How can we stop this latest scourge?
Is it now necess'ry to splurge
On guns or hand grenades or flares?
Report the incidents? Who cares?

If fixing things was up to me
I'd blast those pirates from the sea.
I'd feel no guilt about the slaughter,
I'd laugh to see them dead on water,
They took a precious thing from me,
My peace of mind while on the sea.

— *Nan Hatch*

LOST THEIR WAY

Bleached bones
of long-lost schooners
lie on the shoals.
They'd misread the range marks
and missed the channel.
Abandoned now
in the tropic mud,
crewed only
by lonely
pelicans and frigate birds,
ghosts of mariners past.

— *Nicholas Lee*

parlumps marooned

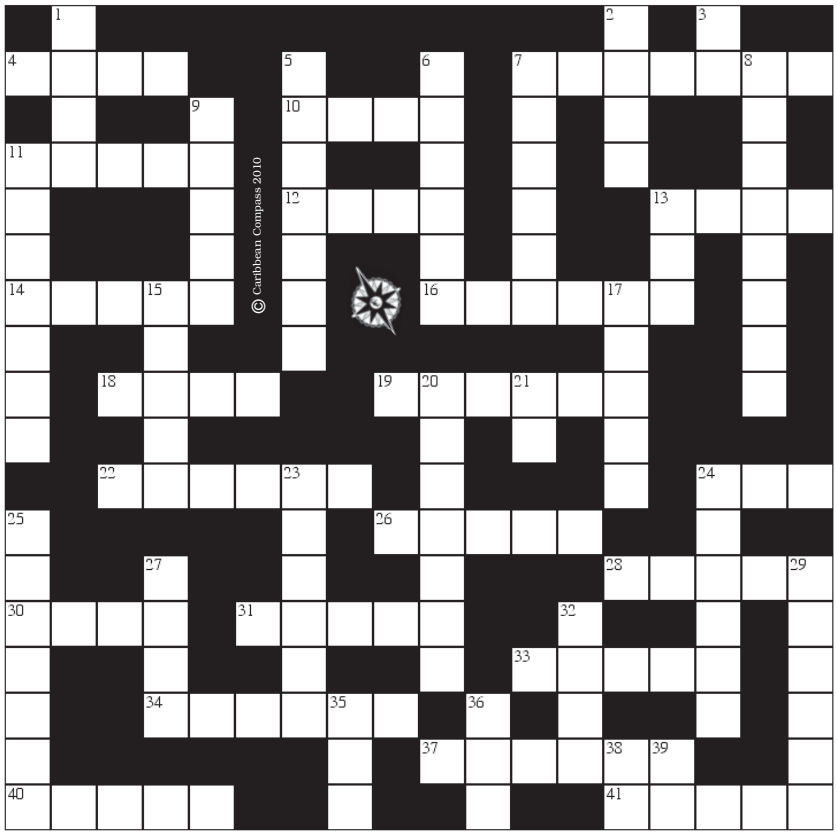


jerry-toon



"I think there's something wrong with our navigational system, because judging by the icebergs, I don't think we're in the Caribbean."

Compass Cruising Crossword



'BEQUIA EASTER REGATTA'

ACROSS

4) Race course turning point
7) Objection to rule infraction
10) 'Get ____ it!'
11) Most common 36 Down
12) BSC: 22 Across Sailing ____
13) 22 Across 6 Down-ender hulls are made of this
14) A 6 Down 17 Down is a _____ open sailing boat
16) This regatta's special holiday
18) 'Oh God, our help in ____ past…'
19) Monday's race is _____ the cans
22) 'Island of the Clouds'
24) Two-hulled vessel (abbrev.)
26) The single-handed _____ race is on Sunday
28) Watch the other helmsman for _____ when he'll tack
30) The 6 Down 17 Downs are classed by ____
31) The first word in many island names
33) The regatta has a separate _____ for J/24s
34) The yachts' first race day
37) A horn is a _____ that the race has started
40) Large jib
41) Yankees, screechers and bloopers, for example

DOWN

1) A Crazy Craft might do this
2) With 34 Across, the start of the Easter holiday
3) Caribbean for 'the'?
5) With 31 Across, this is Bequia's 'mainland'
6) Between single and triple
7) Winners' rewards
8) What the Friendship Rose is
9) The regatta occurs in this month, usually
11) There are races for many types of _____ craft
13) A tough race can be like this
15) Trim 41 Across to the _____ of the wind
17) With 6 Down, a type of transomless hull
20) Series of boat races
21) Toward the wind
23) Saturday is the Round the _____ Race
24) Race track, of sorts
25) The 6 Down 17 Downs were originally _____ boats
27) With 3 Down, a favorite beach bar
29) Essential parts of 6 Down 17 Downs' rigs
32) Designed sail arrangement
35) Not fore
36) Cutter, ketch or yawl, for example
38) 'Steady __ she goes!'
39) One of Columbus's ships was __ Pinta

Crossword Solution on page 30

Whether you call them yachties, cruisers or boat people, nothing is more emblematic of their culture of camaraderie than the shared potluck meal. Pauline Dolinski sets the table in this word search puzzle.

A YACHTIE POTLUCK PUZZLE

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

BAGUETTE
BAKED BEANS
BEER
BREAD
BROWNIES
CAKE
CASSEROLE
CHEESE
CHIPS
COOKIES
CORN
CUPS
DESSERT
DIP
DRINK
EGG
FISH
FORKS
FRUIT
FUN
GARLIC BREAD
GLASSES
ICE
MAIN COURSE
PARTY
PASTA
PIE
PLATES
POP
POPCORN
PUDDING
RICE
SALAD
SODA
SOUP
SPAGHETTI
SPAM
SPOONS
TART
TEA
WATER
WINE

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 37

Trevor and Ernie Escape the Blowhole

Part One

by Lee Kessell

Trevor and Ernie escaped the blowhole, only to end up in an even worse plight. How did it happen?

Trevor just can't keep out of mischief and every time he visits his cousin Ernie in Barbados he gets him into a lot of trouble. Trevor lives in a suburb of Castries, St. Lucia and feels very superior to Ernie who lives in a weatherboard cottage set on coral blocks in a little village high up above the sugarcane land of Sweet Bottom. Ernie's house looks out across the wild Atlantic Ocean. Ernie's dad is known in the village as Uncle Solly, and the ladies of the church charity club call his mum Aunt Josephina. Nyna is his little pest of a sister who is always complaining that she doesn't have any adventures because Trevor and Ernie won't take her with them, but Nyna doesn't know how lucky she is.

Now, Uncle Solly had bought the boys two old bikes that Trevor said he wouldn't be seen dead on at home, but it was better than walking. Aunt Josephina was happy to get the boys out from under her feet and every day she packed them a sandwich lunch, only hearing half the story of the trouble they got into. Uncle Solly didn't say much as he believed that boys will be boys.

"They were looking right out to sea through a natural picture window"

Trevor and Ernie wanted to go and see Barbados's famous Animal Flower Cave, but it was a long bike ride. Sunday seemed the best time for it, as Aunt Josephina cooked breakfast early so that she and Nyna could get to church. Aunt Josephina had given up insisting on the boys going to church with her, as they were too much trouble, so she made them the usual sandwiches and asked where they were going.

"We'll ride up the coast," Trevor replied, but he dared not say how far. Grinning at poor, pouting Nyna, Trevor rode off with Ernie. Once on to the coast road the boys peddled hard through the village of Bathsheba, past the working Morgan Lewis Mill, inland to the crossroads, turned north to Benthams and on to the very northern tip of Barbados and the Animal Flower Cave. By the time they reached the parking lot for the Cave visitors, the boys were so tired that they dropped their bikes, breathed in great gulps of air and then ate their lunch. They hung about the bar entrance waiting for the next tour and Trevor climbed all over the old cannons that had been salvaged from wrecked ships and placed there as an added attraction for the tourists.

At last a group of Americans gathered outside the bar and the tour guide collected their tickets, unlocked the doors to the entrance to the cave and gave an account of its history. Trevor was too impatient to listen but Ernie wanted to be prepared for anything. The pretty guide warned that the large coral steps leading down into the cave were very slippery near the bottom and everyone should be especially careful. She added that the steps had been built around 1912 and as they were so historical, no changes had been made. She held a flashlight to guide the way and in the semi-darkness she didn't notice the two boys hanging back at the end of the line because they didn't have tickets.

Deep in the cave at last, the guide switched off her torch and they all gasped at the sight before them. They were looking right out to sea through a natural picture window, the same that the two English explorers in their ship had looked into from the sea, way back in 1780. The guide next pointed out the shallow pool filled with the brightly coloured "animal flowers", explaining that they were sea anemones and that they waved their tentacles in the water to catch and eat tiny prey. Some of the visitors leaned across the water and touched them and it came as a surprise when the tentacles closed on their fingers. The pretty guide laughed and went on to tell the story of the parties that were held at night in this very cave, adding that at the turn of the last century groups of young merrymakers arrived by horse and buggy for weekends of fun. She shone her torch overhead to show the brackets where the lanterns had hung as the revelers danced the night away. As she talked, nobody noticed that the daylight was fading. Suddenly a deep roll of thunder shuddered through the cave and the guide snapped to attention.

"Everyone, turn around and go out! Be careful, but hurry — the sea is going to fill the cave and when it does, it bursts out through the blowhole. We don't want to go with it!" The tourists shoved each other to get out of the cave with the guide pushing the last one up the steps, and then she locked the door.

But what of Trevor and Ernie — unseen and locked down in the darkness of the cave?

Make sure you get your copy of the May issue of Compass *to read the gripping end of the story.*

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

There is another strange-looking creature that would lose its home if coral reefs disappear. It has no bones, blue blood, a smart brain and lots of legs. Can you guess what it is? An octopus, of course.

Octopuses can be found in seas all over the world. They are easily recognized by their chunky bodies and eight legs with suction cups to hold on to their food. The mouth is at the centre of the arms and inside the mouth is a hard beak. The octopus uses the beak to crunch up the crabs, shrimp, lobster and many kinds of fish in its diet.

The octopus usually hunts at night and stays in a crevice in the reef during the day. Because it has no bones, it can squeeze through very tight spaces in the reef, a useful trick to escape from predators like moray eels and sharks. It also has another trick to move quickly away from danger. It usually 'walks' along the sea floor but it can also use jet propulsion to swim faster, sucking in a mouthful of water then expelling it out backwards so that the octopus is pushed forwards. At the same time, the octopus can eject a cloud of dark ink, which hides it from whatever is chasing it.

Octopuses are highly intelligent and have good short- and long-term memories. They have been known to use their flexible legs to open jars to reach the contents. They can break out of aquaria to look for food. A recent article in *The Biological Bulletin* describes how the Atlantic Longarm Octopus (*Octopus defilippi*, found in the northern Caribbean) can fold its arms in such a way as to look and move like a flounder. This disguise can also help it to avoid predators.

How many hearts do you have? Your single heart pumps blood to collect oxygen from your lungs and distribute it to the rest of the body. Human blood is red because it is rich in iron. An octopus, on the other hand, has three hearts and its blood is blue because it is rich in copper. One of the octopus's hearts pumps blood through the body. The others pump blood through the octopus's two gills to pick up oxygen.

The octopus seen most often in the Caribbean is the Caribbean Reef Octopus (*Octopus briareus*), which can grow to lengths of 60cm (2 feet) or more. It is usually blueish-green in colour with brown markings but it can change colour to suit its surroundings. It can even change the texture of its skin from smooth to rough when necessary.

These remarkable creatures are well-adapted for life on the reef so let us try not to destroy their home.



EXPERIMENT

To demonstrate jet propulsion, blow up a balloon and let it go. What happens?

The balloon shoots forward and rockets around the room. When the air inside the balloon rushes out, the balloon is propelled in the opposite direction.

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2010 ©

THE SKY IN APRIL

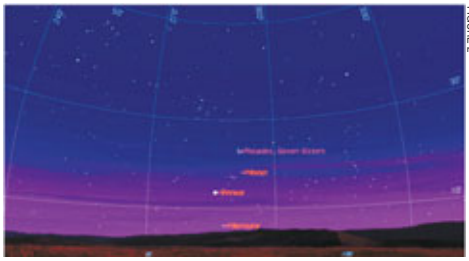
by Scott Welty

The Planets in April
MERCURY - A chance to view in the evening early in the month
VENUS - Returning as an evening star
MARS - About straight up at first dark and setting at midnight
JUPITER - Rising between 0400 and 0500 hours all month
SATURN - Rises near sunset and sets in the early morning; riding along in Virgo

Sky Events This Month
4th - Mercury and Venus set together around 1900
14th - New Moon
16th - Look for crescent moon, Venus, Mercury and the Pleiades in the western twilight (See Figure 2)
28th - Full Moon

The Southern Cross

April is an excellent month for viewing the Southern Cross. It is low and due south at around 2200 hours for most of the month. See Figure 1 — it looks like a CROSS! The Southern Cross was visible as far north as Greece in ancient times (before radio). Due to long-term variations in the Earth's orbit (precession of the equinoxes) the Southern Cross was forgotten by northern people and then "re-discovered" (ironically) in the Age of Discovery. It is now depicted on several national flags. On the Australian flag (Figure 3) you see the four main stars that make up the Southern Cross and a fifth one that is usually plainly visible as well.


FIGURE 2

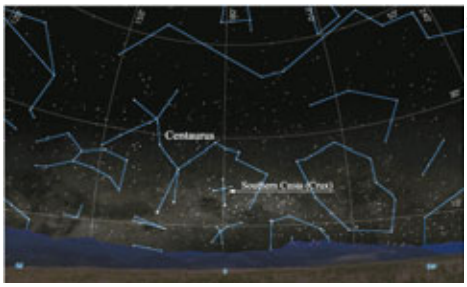


FIGURE 1


FIGURE 3

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

Hey, what's your sign? Every major newspaper has a horoscope section and virtually none has a regular astronomy section (except *Compass*, of course). Astrologers played a somewhat significant role in the history of astronomy. Kepler himself, who developed the three laws of planetary motion that allowed Newton to develop his theory of gravity, also worked as an astrologer and probably believed in some way that star and planet positions had some effect on events on Earth. Today we don't think that, right? Think about it. Whether a particular planet is "in" a particular constellation means little. The planets are relatively close to us while the stars that make up a constellation are

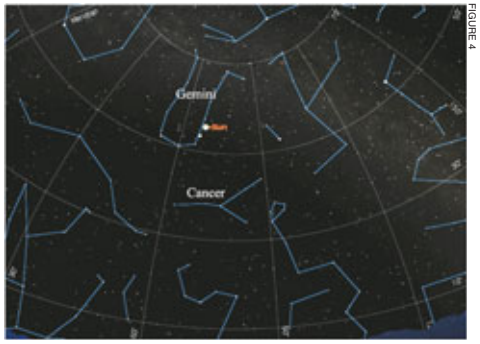


FIGURE 4

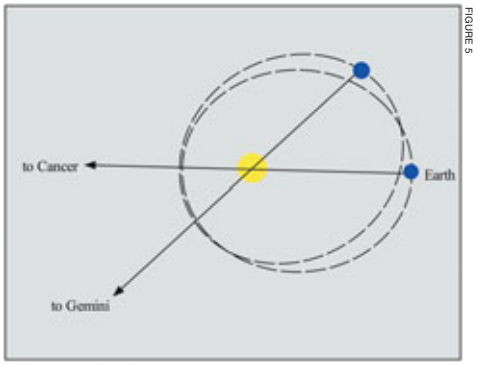


FIGURE 5

many, many times farther away and are typically huge distances from each other and only form a shape and are only "in" that constellation as viewed from the Earth. Besides, by what forces would our actions be affected by star/planet positions? The gravity on you due to, say, Jupiter is way, way less than the gravitational pull on you due to the doctor who delivered you. That's interesting. Maybe we should have an astrology of doctors. "What's your sign?" "Dr. Saul Rolfstein, what's yours?"

And another thing. Your zodiac sign is supposed to be based on which constellation the sun was in on the day you were born. Let's look at this. My sign is Cancer (I like long walks in the park and pogo sticks), as I was born on July 12th. Figure 4 shows the sun's position on that day way back in 1950. Hmmm... Looks like the sun was in Gemini! What's the deal? Well, historically, when they made up all this jazz, the sun *was* in Cancer. Since that long-ago time, though, our elliptical orbit around the sun has rotated enough to throw all the signs of the zodiac off by about one (Figure 5). Your sign was connected to a date and then never corrected for the shifting of the Earth's orbit. So not only is there nothing to astrology, it's not even right within itself!

Pass the wine.

Scott Welty is the author of The Why Book of Sailing, *Burford Books, 2007. Follow him at www.sailing-science.com.*



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WE SHIP AROUND THE WORLD!



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; i.e. tide the floods from west to east. 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!

DATE	TIME
April	
DATE	TIME
1	0137
2	0232
3	0328
4	0423
5	0516
6	0606
7	0654
8	0739
9	0821
10	0903
11	0943
12	1024
13	1107
14	1152 (new)
15	1239
16	1331
17	1425
18	1523
19	1621
20	1719
21	1815
22	1908
23	2000
24	2050
25	2140
26	2231
27	2323
28	0000 (full)
29	0018
30	0113
May	
DATE	TIME
1	0209
2	0304
3	0357
4	0446
5	0553
6	0617
7	0658
8	0739
9	0820
10	0901
11	0945
12	1032
13	1133
14	1217 (new)
15	1315
16	1414
17	1513
18	1611
19	1705
20	1757
21	1846
22	1935
23	2024
24	2115
25	2207
26	2301
27	2357
28	0000 (full)
29	0052
30	0146
31	0238

Part Four:

The Spanish Virgins and Puerto Rico

The Spanish Virgins

West of the US and British Virgins are the Spanish Virgins, a wonderful area to explore. Ashore they are like the British Virgins were in the late 1960s and early '70s, and space does not permit the listing of all the anchorages.

An examination of the chart and a check of my guide will reveal almost a dozen anchorages in and around Culebra and its offshore islands. Bahia de Almodovar, on the southwest coast of Culebra, is fantastic, although on the weekends powerboats invade and party all day and night. Starting late April, when the danger of northerly ground swells has diminished, Flamingo Bay on the north side of Culebra and the deserted bay on the north side of Culebrita are excellent.

On the eastern end of Vieques there are two of the best anchorages in the entire Eastern Caribbean, Bahia Icacos and Bahia Salina Del Sur. This area was once a US Navy gunnery and bombing range, thus the only chart of the area was a DMA chart not available to the public. However, I managed to obtain a photostat of the chart from a fellow ex-submariner, enabling Imray to make the chart of this area, Imray Iolaire chart A 131. After the Navy moved out in 2003 these wonderful anchorages could be used 365 days a year. However the Interior Department decided to find and blow up the unexploded ordnance and the US Coast Guard Sector San Juan reports that various waters are off-limits from time to time. Phone (787) 289-2041 for relevant Notices to Mariners.

To the west of Bahia Icacos and Bahia Salina Del Sur one finds any number of bays which bear investigating. Ensenada Honda offers solitude in the mangroves; Sun Bay features a gorgeous, long sweeping beach but might be rolly. The bottom of Puerto Real isn't great holding, but you're near the town of Esperanza.

Puerto Rico

The eastern coast of Puerto Rico has only one uncrowded anchorage, on the west side of Isla Pineros in Pasaje Medio Mundo. Otherwise the coast has only marinas; these are usually crowded, although space can be found on weekends. (Many sailors say the way to cruise Puerto Rican waters is to go to the anchorages during the week, and on Friday afternoon go to a marina. On Saturday, take care of laundry, shopping, refueling and taking on water. Depart Sunday afternoon for the anchorages that will be empty again by sundowner time.)

The southwestern corner of Puerto Rico, the La Parguera area and the area eastwards to Puerto Quijano provide many choices of anchorages. The main anchorage off La Parguera may be crowded, but the offshore ones anchored close behind a reef are almost always deserted.

There are good anchorages on the south coast, but few deserted ones. The anchorage just east of Bahia de Guanica is seldom crowded. Isla Caja de Muertos, a public park, will be deserted during the week, but packed with day-trippers during the weekend. In Bahia de Jobos one can find quiet anchorages east of Salinas.

As you can see, the statement that there are no uncrowded anchorages left in the Eastern Caribbean, or that all anchorages are littered with mooring balls, just does not hold water.

Good Guides

The cost of a guidebook in comparison to the overall cost of cruising in the Caribbean is infinitesimal. Buy all the guides that are available for the area you intend to cruise; they complement one another. Study all of them, and cross-reference them.

Chris Doyle covers the Windwards, Leewards, and Trinidad & Tobago in three separate books (www.cruisingguides.com). His are the standard books that are given to all bareboaters in the Windwards and Leewards. They cover all the major anchorages well, plus, since they are reissued every couple of years or so (though the navigational information seldom changes) they are pretty much up-to-date on formalities, marine-oriented facilities ashore, bars, restaurants, etcetera.

Similarly, Simon and Nancy Scott's guide to the Virgin Islands (www.cruising-guides.com) has been written primarily for bareboaters and the information is similar to that mentioned for the Doyle guides. The Scotts' guide also has some very interesting information regarding the flora and fauna found in the Virgin Islands.

Steven Pavlidis has also written guides to Puerto Rico, The Virgins, the Leewards, the Windwards, and Trinidad & Tobago (www.islandhopping.us/books.html), and Bruce Van Sant's *Gentleman's Guide to Passages South* (www.cruisingguides.com) also has sections on Puerto Rico and the Spanish Virgins.

Imray's *Grenada to the Virgin Islands 2nd Edition* (www.imray.com) is a translation of Jacques Patuelli's French guide. It gives a good overview of the entire island chain, but covering all the islands in one volume means only the major popular anchorages can be described.

My guide is divided into three volumes — *Puerto Rico, the Spanish, US and British Virgin Islands; Anguilla to Dominica;* and *Martinique to Trinidad* — that cover all the islands in the Eastern Caribbean in detail and describe every possible safe anchorage for a boat drawing seven feet or less. These books are known for providing exceptionally good inter-island sailing directions and harbor piloting directions. They have not been updated since 2001, but rocks don't move — or, if they have been moved by creation of new breakwaters, marinas or dredging, these changes will be on the Imray Iolaire charts. So, with Street's Guides and Imary Iolaire charts, the mariner is up-to-date with expert navigational information. In the Caribbean, only Island Water World (www.islandwaterworld.com) stocks Street's guide. In the States, order from iUniverse or Armchair Sailor/Bluewater Books; in Europe, order from Imray or Kelvin Hughes.

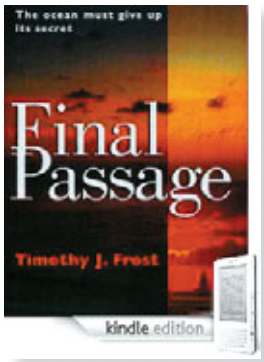
Be sure to buy the Scotts' guide if you are cruising the Virgins. If cruising the Windwards or Leewards, buy the relevant Doyle guide. Supplement the above guides with the relevant Street guide, and any information not found in Scott or Doyle will no doubt be included in Street, and vice-versa. Circle in red in Street's guide all the harbors and coves that are not in the other guides and you will be virtually guaranteed an uncrowded anchorage. (If there is another boat there, it probably also has my guide on board.)

Guides are not that expensive; most cost about the same as a good dinner ashore. Buy all the guides available for the area you plan to cruise and you can't lose.

BOOK REVIEW BY THE CARIBBEAN BOOKWORM

Caribbean Bookworm Visits the Internet!

Final Passage, *by Timothy Frost*. At this point in a book review it is customary to add publishing information, ISBN number and the like. But *Final Passage* is an e-book, available solely on line, for download to your computer, Kindle, iPhone, or other e-book reader. So, do a search on Amazon for "Final Passage by Timothy Frost". And in the sidebar, you'll find a neophyte e-book reader's primer.



How about the reading process? I eventually read all 8,317 "locations" in this book on my iPhone Touch. "They" say that the delivery mechanism of any e-book vanishes from the reader's awareness, leaving only the words and the story. Almost, but holding my dainty little unit, I was always aware of the Touch — trying to find something major wrong with the experience, frankly. But I couldn't.

So — how's the book? It's very good. Our hero Martin Lancaster's life is in upheaval for reasons that are revealed in the course of his preparations for a high-stakes transatlantic yacht race. Underlying all is Martin's quest to finally learn the truth about his father's death aboard his own vessel in the Atlantic years earlier.

Of course the plot points reveal themselves like the body of a fan dancer during her act, and, like a fan dancer, people sometimes get carried away. But it's all reasonably plausible, and once you're in, you'll stay until the end, I think. The characters are engaging, the pacing brisk, the dialogue snappy (even if the Americans do sound like Brits) and the conclusion thrilling. It's written so clearly and directly that I can just see the action-packed movie that could be made.

And how often do you read books set during a transatlantic yacht race and down-island cruise, where you can comment knowingly on someone's watch-standing practices, for example. It's a refreshing change from the usual urban thrillers.

For a limited time the book is available to download free from Barnes and Noble, or for US$0.99 at Amazon. The same book through Amazon in the Kindle Store costs US$2.99.

No More Soggy Boat Books?

Getting into e-book mode takes a bit of study, as there are several vendors, several formats, and several e-book readers. But think of all the space you could save on board if you went the way of the flickering photon. An entire library in the palm of your hand — be still, o beating heart!

I don't own an actual e-book reader like the Kindle, the Nook or the Sony Reader. I tried to download the free version of *Final Passage* onto my laptop first, of course, but found it was not available to me outside the US. In the Caribbean, some wifi locations at marinas and hotels take their service via satellite direct from the US (Hughes Network is one provider), and at those places the free download would work, since no one would know you weren't in the US.

Amazon offers two options. You can download this book, and others, of course, for 99 cents. You can also download their new software "Kindle for Windows" for free, and then you can read Amazon's Kindle e-books straight from your PC. I personally don't want to sit at my PC to read a book, but it can be done.

If you are already a Kindle owner, you simply visit Amazon's Kindle Store and do whatever you usually do. Your version, however, costs US$2.99, which includes international wireless delivery via Amazon Whispernet.

I do own a Touch, upon which I could have directly loaded this book by using its built-in Safari browser to visit Amazon, but only if I were in wifi-land, which I was not. When I went to a wifi place with the Touch to buy the book, Amazon was smart enough to tell me I already owned it, and to load my Touch with the 99-cent version. And that's how I read it.

There is a now a Kindle Global DX version with international download capability. One complaint about the Kindle is that you need a light at night to read it. The smaller iPhone and Touch have their own adjustable lighting, and I did enjoy my Touch e-book reading experience in my bunk during wakeful wee hours. The compact portability and always-availableness of the Touch was great.

Often, as I read, I'm thinking of who else I know that might enjoy the book. Right now, though, you and your e-book are like Siamese twins. If someone could devise a way to make these books swappable, I'd really be happy (authors may disagree). In the meantime, my experience with *Final Passage* is encouraging me to expand my horizons in the brave new world of electronic books.

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Tide's Table

by Ross Mavis

Heat for All Climes



On your next shore excursion, acquire a bottle of the local flame and use it to enhance this simple chili recipe

No matter where we live, food that provides energy by heating the body and stimulating the circulation is important to us. Consuming food in cold climates is much like putting wood on a fire. In warm climates, food provides the same energy but also helps us dissipate internal heat through perspiration. This is my justification for loving food, especially good food and specifically hot, spicy food.

North Americans are relative newcomers to hot, spicy food. Our Spanish, Asian, Indian and Caribbean cousins know more about spicy food benefits than most people. The very fact that most European and North American cultures now recognize that scientific proof shows spices to have medicinal values rests my case. One of the more popular spices that impart both flavour and heat is the chili pepper.

Capsicum is the "heat" compound found in hot peppers. This compound is a potent releaser of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which lowers body temperature. It does this by causing the brain to command the body to break into a sweat, feel hot and bring blood to the face and surface of the skin. This helps dissipate heat quickly, and it is for this reason that dishes seasoned with hot peppers are so popular in tropical countries.

Caribbean markets provide a cornucopia of fresh hot peppers — bird, scotch bonnet, 'flavour', habanero — and groceries stock innumerable varieties of hot pepper sauces.

A friend from Bangalore, India informed me that his country takes no back seat to the Caribbean when it comes to hot peppers. Some are so hot that a person unaccustomed to its fire can suffer not only pain but also respiratory damage from its ingestion. Now we're talking big time.

But why is it that so many people revere such hot, spicy dishes and even super-charge them by adding yet hotter hot sauces? It appears to be the sheer enjoyment of "pushing the envelope" closer and closer to bodily injury while relishing a spicy rush that tickles hot sauce fanciers' palates.

A commercial variety of hot pepper sauce I have enjoyed in the Caribbean is Baron's Hot Sauce. Another, whose name prompted me to purchase it, was called "Heat of a Woman Scorned". There are literally hundreds of hot sauces available throughout the world.

Total immersion in hot sauce culture is not to be taken lightly. A friend actually gave me a guided tour of his hot sauce cupboard before dinner one evening. Imagine my admiration for this asbestos-tongued individual to hear of his latest most cherished acquisition. For Fathers' Day he had been given a "do-it-yourself" hot sauce kit, complete with rubber gloves, goggles, respirator, fire extinguisher and one or two finely ground indecently incendiary-type peppers. There isn't a guy out there who doesn't covet my friend's collection.

For hot sauce lovers and those who just like hot, spicy food, the Caribbean is paradise. You'll find curries, rotis, and other delights at eateries ranging from deluxe restaurants to roadside shacks. For cooking on board, if you're like me, you like quick and easy. On your next shore excursion, acquire a bottle of the local flame and use it to enhance this simple chili recipe.

Your Intensity Chili con Carne

2 Tablespoons (60 ml) cooking oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 Tablespoons (60 ml) chili powder
1 pound (500 g) ground beef or pork
2 tins (540 ml each) red kidney or black beans
1 tin (796 ml) diced tomatoes
Salt and hot sauce to taste

To a large cast iron fry pan over medium high heat, add cooking oil, onion and chili powder. Stir to incorporate while cooking until onion is soft. Add meat and stir occasionally, cooking until all signs of pink are gone. Add beans and tomatoes and cook for another 30 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Salt to your taste and add hot sauce to your desired intensity. Serve with buttered buns or bread.

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THE SPICE LOCKER BY SHIRLEY HALL

The nutmeg tree is the only tree that grows two spices. Mace is similar to nutmeg with a slightly sweeter aroma. The nutmeg is actually a shell-covered nut that grows inside a small apricot-shaped fruit. Mace covers the nutmeg's shell: a bright red lacy net that is removed by hand after the nutmeg is harvested. It is used to flavor baked goods, meat and fish dishes, sauces and vegetables, and in preserving and pickling-spice mixtures.

It is hard to find anything more purely red than fresh mace. When I carefully open a yellow-green nutmeg fruit, see the red mace and get a faint whiff of nutmeg, it just makes me feel good. Considering the universal popularity of these two spices historically, a lot of Europeans must have felt the same way. Arab traders brought mace to Europe in the sixth century A.D. In

Make Space for the Flavor Ace: Mace!

England during the 1500s one pound of mace was worth three sheep.

Nutmeg grows throughout the tropics, but Grenada is where it is cultivated on estates. Driving across from St. George's to Grenville on the east coast you see several government nutmeg buying and processing stations. On the driveways of many homes, mace is drying flat in the sun on cardboard. While it cures, its intense aroma develops while its color fades. Mace has several levels of quality. High quality mace retains an orange-ish red color, but some types dry to light tan. Grenada is second to Indonesia for production of mace.

Nutmeg trees are native to Indonesia's Moluccan Islands. They are large tropical evergreens that can reach 60 feet. The trees are either male or female, and both are needed for pollination. Small, light yellow blossoms precede the pale yellow fruit. As it ripens the fruit will split to expel the seed.

Nutmegs are grown from seeds (nuts) and after about six months they are ready to be transplanted. If you see trees during your island drives, look for sprouted seeds. The trees bear after seven years, but reach full productivity at 15. These trees continue to bear fruit for about 50 years. A single mature tree can produce 2,000 nutmegs per year. A pile of fruit large enough to make 1000 pounds of nutmeg produces a single pound of mace. This naturally makes mace more valuable than nutmeg.

A whole dried mace is termed a blade. The flavor of mace is very delicate, so it should be carefully stored in a cool dry place and used quickly to maximize the flavor. Ready-ground mace is easier to use, but the flavor and aroma will fade faster than whole blades. Dried blades can be ground as needed, but dried mace pieces are not easy to crush. A trick is to dip the mace blade in a tiny bit of hot water. The softened blade and the liquid can then be used in the recipe. One mace blade will season a dish for four. Mace should be added at the end of the cooking process, if possible, and the mace blade should be removed before serving. In baked goods and roasted meat recipes, mace is added at the beginning with the other ingredients.

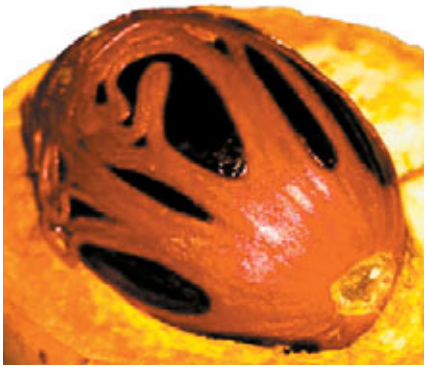
Mace is used to flavor white sauces, lasagna, meat and vegetable stews, pastries, and some East Indian desserts. Add some to potatoes or sweet potatoes for something new. Hot chocolate drinks and tropical punches improve with a little mace. It is high in calcium, phosphorus, and magnesium.

Chocolate Cherry Pieces
1/2 Cup butter, softened
1/2 Cup brown sugar
1/4 Cup granulated sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 Cup all-purpose flour
1/4 Cup cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon ground mace
1 Cup seeded dried cherries, minced
1 1/2 Cups rolled oats
1/2 Cup chocolate chips
Pinch of salt

In a large mixing bowl blend the butter and sugars until fluffy. Whip in the egg and vanilla extract. Sift together flour, cocoa, baking powder, mace and salt, and add to the mixture in the large bowl. Beat until smooth before stirring in the oats, chocolate chips and cherries. The final mixture will be very stiff. Drop Tablespoons of dough onto greased or non-stick baking trays about an inch apart. Bake 10 to 12 minutes at 375°F or until the tops appear dry but not browned. Remove and allow to cool.

Coconut Muffins
1 Cup grated coconut
3 Cups all-purpose flour
3/4 Cup brown sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground mace
1 egg
1 Cup milk
1/4 Cup orange juice
1/3 Cup vegetable oil

In a large bowl combine flour, sugar, grated coconut, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and mace. In another, smaller bowl beat the egg and combine with milk, vegetable oil, and orange juice. Slowly stir these into the flour mixture until dry ingredients are just moistened. Don't worry about the lumps. Spoon into greased muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes at 425°F.



Mace covers the nutmeg's shell: a bright red lacy net

All Day Yam Bread

This takes a while to rise but is worth the time and effort.

2 packages dry yeast (4 1/2 teaspoons)
1 1/2 Cups very warm water
6 Cups unbleached white flour
1 Tablespoon salt
1 Tablespoon brown sugar
Pinch of ground allspice
Pinch of ground mace
2 Tablespoons soft butter
1 Cup cooked yam (or sweet potato), mashed
1 egg for glaze

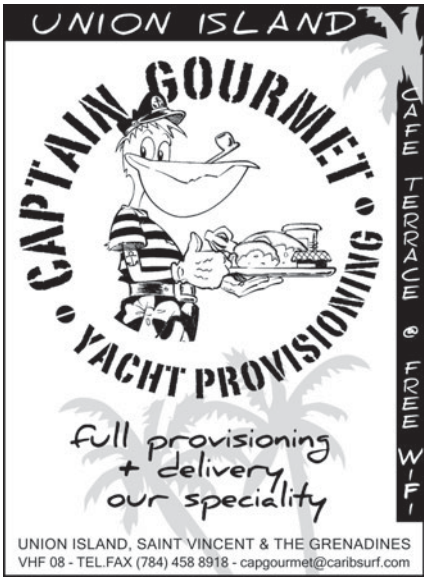
Dissolve the yeast in the warm water. In a large bowl, whisk flour with the salt, sugar, allspice and mace. Stir in the yeast mixture. Add butter and mashed yam. The dough should be moist. Knead for ten minutes by hand. Then put dough in a greased bowl, cover with a damp towel, and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk. Punch dough down and let rise again, about 45 minutes. Punch down and shape into one large round loaf, or divide. Let rise once more for another 45 minutes. Beat egg with a teaspoon of water and use as glaze for top of bread. Bake at 425°F for 45 minutes or until the loaf sounds hollow when tapped.

Spice Locker Mix

Really, almost all your spices! We love our seasoned salt, and this is easy. Just mix together almost any and all dry spices you have in your spice locker with salt. This can also be done with crushed fresh spices if available. For best quality and freshness, both versions must be refrigerated in a sealed container. Here's a mixture I like.

1 Tablespoon ground cayenne pepper
1 Tablespoon garlic powder
1 Tablespoon onion powder
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
1 teaspoon dried savory
1 teaspoon ground mace
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon dried sage
1 teaspoon dried marjoram
1 teaspoon dried grated lemon peel

Combine everything, add salt to taste, store in a sealed container and refrigerate.





The Food Fair

Stock Up

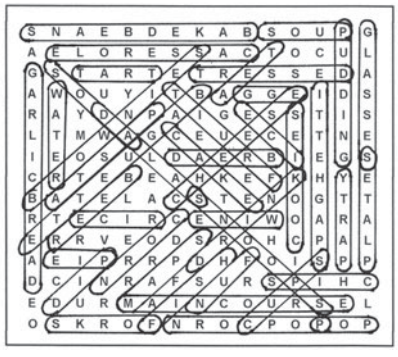
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GOOD GUIDES ARE TIMELESS

Rocks don't move — or if they do they are shown on up-to-date Imray charts. Regarding marine infrastructure, virtually every island puts out a free marine trade guide every year, which is much more up-to-date than any guide; similarly, the tourist departments put out a free annual guide for bars, restaurants and hotels.
With all these updates readily available, Street's guides are timeless.



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Dear *Compass* Readers,

In a *Caribbean Compass* April 2003 article, "Bilge Alarms and Couplings," Chris Doyle stated, "Installing a bilge alarm should be high on everyone's list of 'to-do' jobs, way before getting the refrigeration back working and the radar back in action". He gave excellent advice, but he may not have known that most bilge alarm "test buttons" give a false sense of security because they test only the buzzer and the light, and do nothing to test the float switch and the bilge wiring. Failure to test the complete system often results in failure to give a warning of high bilge water and a possible boat sinking. The boating community should be aware of this hidden danger.

Virtually every boat sinking begins with high bilge water due to weather, hull damage, a ruptured hose, a broken hose clamp, a corroded pipe, a leaking shaft seal, a broken through-hull fitting or an inoperative bilge pump due to a clogged impeller, a burned-out pump motor, a dead battery, corroded electrical cables or an inoperative float-switch. Whatever the reason for high bilge water, the key to dealing with it is an early warning before critical electrical and propulsion systems and the leak itself are covered by the rising bilge water, and while there is still time to get passengers into life jackets, deploy extra pumps and to send out a distress call. David Pascoe, a respected Florida marine surveyor, wrote in *Boat Safety at Sea*, "One of the most important safety devices you can have aboard is a bilge high water alarm. The value of a bilge alarm is that it warns you when water is accumulating in the bilge. And with that warning, you get the opportunity to do something about it before tragedy strikes."

Most boat owners think of a "bilge alarm" as a simple electrical system consisting of a float switch, a buzzer, a light, a test button, a mute switch and inter-connecting wiring, and costing around US$100 for one compartment. But, as mentioned, the "test button" tests only the buzzer and the light. The problem is compounded by short float-switch electrical leads, which require electrical splices within the humid and corrosive atmosphere of the bilge. The only meaningful test for this simple system is to periodically flood the bilge to verify that all system components are actually operable. Any bilge alarm is certainly better than no bilge alarm, but boat owners should always be concerned with long-term reliability. If you can't test the complete system, you have no assurance that a bilge alarm will warn you of high bilge water when it finally occurs!

BilgAlarm (www.bilgalarm.com) offers a bilge alarm system with test buttons that test the complete system, including bilge sensors and bilge wiring. There are no float switches or other moving parts to foul or fail, and the warning siren can't be inadvertently turned off because the mute button automatically resets at the conclusion of each test or emergency. BilgAlarm has been engineered for both power and sail boats and is available for up to 16 bilge compartments in 12 or 24 VDC. Sunderland Yacht Management chose BilgAlarm for 16-year-old Abby Sunderland's solo circumnavigation attempt in *Wild Eyes*.

Mark Lorentzen
For BilgAlarm

Dear *Compass*,

Re: the sinking of *Helen Mary Gee*: Don Street's "Letter of the Month" in December 2009's *Compass* implies that our beautiful home was deficient in some way. The *HMG* had a double-action Whale high output manual pump. She had two electric bilge pumps, the main one as large as I could get in the bilge space, and two shower-tray automatic pumps. I would like to see Don Street pump a large hand pump from 3:30AM till 6:00AM on his own! I had always kept in my mind the idea of disconnecting the water intake from the engine and using that as a pump. Where does he think my starter was? You have guessed it, under water. I would remind everyone out there that the *Titanic* sank.

I am surprised Mr. Street did not expound on the value of a filter on the pump intake line, as most hand pumps stop because of rubbish across the valves.

The biggest thing that helped us save ourselves was the securing of the floors, which meant that in our injured state we could still get around inside the boat. The good-quality handheld VHF sent its signal at least 20 miles; a mobile phone would not have helped (people do take craft out with only a mobile). The EPIRB signal was picked up within minutes at around six o'clock; the signal was not picked up again and the unit was turned off at 11-ish, so the satellite sweep had a six-hour minimum sweep time. (The EPIRB has since been checked and works A-OK). You can never put too much safety kit on a boat, but you have to stop somewhere. Unfortunately ours did — in water a mile and a half deep.

Regards,
Paul Glavin

PS The new *Helen Mary Gee* is a Wauquiez 48 Pilot saloon and leaves the UK soon for the sunshine. Slower, stronger, and meets the approval of the purse-strings holder.

Dear *Compass*,

The February issue describes an attack by armed bandits in a pirogue on a German yacht traveling from Trinidad to Grenada. There have been several such attacks or threats in the last three or four years in this very area, all by armed men.

Several months ago I wrote *Compass* proposing that businesses throughout the Caribbean band together to address piracy and other crime that so affects their livelihood. To my knowledge no person or entity has initiated such a combined effort of people and organizations to address these incidents that indirectly rob business and employees throughout the Caribbean.

One travel agent in Puerto la Cruz, Venezuela lamented, "We have four travel agencies here, and not enough business now for one." Venezuela is hard hit, as is described by another article in the February issue of *Compass*. But word about crime gets back far and wide to people with boats who can and want to cruise the Caribbean and they decide to stay in their home waters of Canada, the US or Europe. Hundreds or even thousands of businesses and jobs are impacted in the Caribbean.

Now we have a stir of action over this incident of the German yacht so brazenly attacked en route from Trinidad to Grenada. We have a list of good intentions by governments and other organizations to implement patrols, make radio facilities available and buy new equipment for surveillance over area waters, and other good ideas.

Next, organizations such as YSATT (Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago) and MAYAG (Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada) need to collect data to evaluate the follow-up on "Actions Taken" and "Actions Planned" listed in the *Compass* February issue, page 8, and *Compass* (and any other Caribbean newspaper and magazine wanting to make sure the good promises are realized) needs to publish evaluation reports. The kind of actions outlined in the "Actions Taken" and "Actions Planned" report could easily spread throughout the whole Caribbean Sea and revolutionize safety for boaters, fishermen and all. All concerned should jump on this initiative action and push it to the hilt. It could be a sea change in the Caribbean security picture.

But the promised "Actions Planned" must happen. Follow-up in a systematic way would make it more certain progress was actually made. If everyone is serious about the promises made, and I assume they are, such follow-up should be welcomed by everyone. As enthusiastic Caribbean cruisers, we will look forward with keen interest to reading the first follow-up evaluation report; in *Compass*.

Compass, thanks for all you do for the great Caribbean Sea.

William Gloege
S/V Gaia

Dear William,

MAYAG and YSATT will follow up on this issue with their respective governments and we have asked them to report the results to us for dissemination to our readers. See news from MAYAG below.

CC

Dear *Compass*,

With reference to the robbery of *Triton* between Trinidad and Grenada, the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG) can report the following progress on actions and measures to improve security in this area to date (early March):

• The Grenada Coastguard has offered to implement a "float plan" system whereby cruisers notify (by telephone [473] 444-1931/2) the Grenada Coastguard when leaving Grenada for Trinidad. The cruisers then confirm their arrival to the Trinidad & Tobago Coastguard [868] 634-1476 or ttcgops@gmail.com, so authorities would be alerted to any yacht failing to arrive after a reasonable time. Boat size, colour, number of crew and other details would also be recorded so this information would be available should a search be required.

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The same process would be in place for boats heading north from Trinidad. MAYAG is to publicize this procedure.

• The Grenada Coastguard has reinforced its close relationship with counterparts in Trinidad, and while not in the yachting arena, there have been recent operations where a high level of cooperation and communication between the two forces has been effective.

• MAYAG is looking at assisting with improving Coastguard VHF range and the frequency of patrols. While the Grenada Coastguard has expressed its commitment to work more closely with the yachting community, the question of funding and allocation of limited resources is pertinent. Better publicity of telephone contact information for the Coastguard has been suggested as an effective measure that can be implemented in the short term.

• MAYAG organized a Yacht Security Forum for Wednesday, March 17th at De Big Fish restaurant in Prickly Bay, with all cruisers invited and MAYAG, Coastguard and Royal Grenada Police Force representatives in attendance. The objective of this is to look at all aspects of yacht crime, and how we can work together to reduce it.

While Grenada has one of the best security records in the Caribbean, the RGPF is concerned that this may have encouraged complacency. The forum will consider how to provide better information to yachting visitors — especially those new to the Caribbean — on basic crime prevention measures that should be taken. Among other topics to be discussed at this meeting are the reporting of yacht crime, the patrolling and coverage of recognized anchorages, and "neighbourhood watch" style boat-watch arrangements.

MAYAG will report to *Compass* on the outcome of the Yacht Security Forum.

Anita Sutton
MAYAG

Dear *Compass*,

We fell for a scam in Los Roques.

Clearance into Los Roques, as Chris Doyle says in his *Cruising Guide to Venezuela and Bonaire*, involves first getting permission from the Guardacosta located behind the jetty at the west end of little town on El Gran Roque.

Then one takes the form along the beach and gets stamps from the National Park office, the Guardia Nacional and finally, in the little white office near the airstrip entrance, the Autoridad Unica for Los Roques. It is at this last one where the park fee (if it is to be levied) is paid.

After always having met polite and friendly Venezuelan Coastguards, our experience in Los Roques was to be different. The Guardacosta asked none of the usual questions and saw problems with us immediately. Coming from the ABCs, we were not cleared in to Venezuela. Eventually, they begrudgingly conceded the well-known regulation that a yacht in transit could be permitted to remain for up to three days. The scam was that they insisted that Park fee per foot still had to be paid and to them. They pointed to a new official sign on their office wall that appeared to back this up. Correctly, they pointed out that no other officials would request further payment.

The Park authorities confirmed that yachts "in transit" can only anchor at El Gran Roques and any anchorage of entry or departure. But yachts "in transit" are not required to pay any Park fees. So the Coastguard was right; no one else was going to ask us for money! On reflection, the sign on the Guardacosta office wall announced the new fees in Bolivars resulting from the recent devaluation, not a change in procedure. Of course, the Coastguard as a military organization is not authorised or set up to collect revenue, taxes or dues, and any money paid to them is pocketed. We should have known better!

Los Roques was not all disappointment. There was mobile phone coverage; restaurants and bars with internet, more shops than we expected, including butchers and a bakery. Pedro Diaz, the owner of the restaurant in the main square, La Chuchera, speaks perfect English. While there are no elected representatives, he vigorously took on the authorities for us. He says he can also source water and fuel and give any updates on the regulations for Los Roques. He can be contacted by phone (+58-237) 221-1417, cell/mobile (+58-414) 313-1895, or lachucheralosroques@yahoo.com

Ian and Westa Hopkins
S/Y Marsha Claire

Dear *Compass* Readers,

I don't know how many of you, like me, used prepaid GSM phones. I am very fond of Digicel and have used them for years so I am fairly used to what their service costs. Roaming in general costs not much more than at home, if you are between Grenada and St. Lucia, whether you are calling a Caribbean island or the USA, though you do get charged by the minute, with a minute minimum, rather than by the second as you do at home.

However, recently while using my Grenada SIM in St. Lucia, my credit went down so fast I knew something was wrong, and luckily I had a record of how much money had gone on and the calls I had made. I called the 100 number and they found I had been overcharged about $39, and they did very quickly refund the amount. The next day the same thing happened, and they again agreed the charges were way high and refunded about $50. The third day I got canny and started recording each call and what it was costing, it seemed clear I was being charged almost double the rate.

Once again they promised to refund fast, but what I was really interested in was why this was happening and how I could stop it. The operator felt it probably had something to do with VAT being put on in Grenada. I have not yet found a solution, but those of you like me, who do prepaid roaming, might want to pay close attention to what you are being charged.

Anyway, with that little problem, I thought I would use my LIME phone and give that a go. Roaming, as long as you are calling in the Caribbean, incurs pretty much the same charge as you would pay if you were back in the country of your SIM. However, that all changes if you roam and call the USA or some non-Caribbean country. I used my Grenada SIM in St. Lucia to call the USA and it broke my $90 credit in about 13 minutes. The charges in this case are US $3.20 (or EC $8.54) per minute, close to seven times what Digicel would charge for a USA call using a Grenada SIM in St. Lucia. So, unless you just stick to making Caribbean calls, you need to get a new LIME SIM for each island. In the case of LIME you can find the roaming rates on time4lime.com.

Happy phoning,
Chris Doyle
Ti Kanot

Dear *Compass* Readers,

Just a few thoughts on today's yachting scene. When I started sailing some 60-plus years ago, most of the boats were gaff-rigged and had bowsprits with deadeyes and lanyards on the shrouds. Looking around at the modern yacht, what do we see? Bowsprits, deadeyes, lanyards — and some of these mainsail headboards are big enough to be called gaffs. The more things change the more they stay the same.

Frank Cookson
S/Y Raring III

Dear *Compass*,

Rita was a pure ginger cat. I had her since I was four. She's been the best cat I've had. I thought that Rita would be with me until she died of old age, but I was wrong.


BELA ALMEDA

When I came to the boatyard, and I saw how reckless the drivers were, I was afraid this might happen.

Only yesterday, after I'd finished school, I went upstairs to look for her, but couldn't find her anywhere. After Mom left, I played electric guitar for awhile; but then dad came home, and told me Rita had been hit by a car! I didn't believe it at first, but I did, when I saw her cold, black eyes.

We buried her under an old, bulbous, shady tree, where she shall rest forever, for eternity.

I don't know what life will be like without her, Rita, my pet, my friend. I've spent over half my life with her, but now she is gone, and I'll never see her again.

But is that true? I like to think not. I like to think that her soul came home and that she is with me now. As long as we never forget her, she will never truly be dead.

I'll never forget you, Rita.

Adam Brown, 12 years old
S/V Merlin

Dear *Compass*,

Heading north recently, we decided to try Cumberland Bay on the northwest coast of St. Vincent after an absence of 22 years. We'd sailed past many times in the intervening years, put off visiting by a dodgy security history and my own comments in the log of 1988: "Intercepted 1 mile off by 2 rowing boats clamoring to take our stern line ashore, more swarmed us once in the bay and we ended up with a boat either side, yelling at each other over our cockpit as to who had the prized stern-line job. Nice bay but hassle from boat boys and resulting scrapes on the topsides didn't make for a good experience."

So, it was with a little trepidation that we entered this February. Two yachts were already there, stern to at the south end of the bay. One boat approached us. Its occupant wore a battered woven palm leaf hat, huge Rasta tail that would have been the envy of any Canadian beaver, and a big smile. Joseph introduced himself and welcomed us to Cumberland. He directed us to the north end of the bay, saying it was calmer. It may have been, but also just happened to be opposite Mojito's Restaurant, which he had an interest in.

However, with his expert help, we were soon anchored and shore-tied — no hassles at all, just lots of advice and local information happily given.

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Over the next hour we were visited by fellows in a few other small boats, hoping to sell us fish, fruit, meals, etcetera, but each was very polite, if told "no, thanks" they didn't push, just wished us a nice day.

Another hour passed and a large skippered charter cat arrived. Ignoring Joseph's advice, the skipper dropped his anchor across ours (despite an almost empty bay) and shore tied alongside us. Being a cat, of course it went almost up the beach and ended up with its bow inside and almost touching our stern. Our protestations were ignored by the "professional" skipper, until Joseph re-appeared, saw the problem and persuaded the cat's skipper to move, which he then did.

We spent three days there, hiked to Wallilabou Bay (looking pretty sad as the film set crumbles), and hiked/bused to the lovely bay of Chateaubelair on the last day to clear Customs. The Customs officer couldn't have been nicer but seemed pretty bored as checking boats here was a bit of a rare event. He did admit there was still an occasional issue with yacht crime in Chateaubelair Bay, but stressed that whenever a yacht was in the anchorage, the police regularly patrolled the seafront. Then, in the police station to do the Immigration bit, we were met by a very formidable-looking lady who glared at us. Until, that is, she looked at our passport photos and then burst out laughing. After that, she was our best friend!

Wherever we went, the scenery was gorgeous, the people we met couldn't have been nicer. Everybody had time for a chat and we never once felt at risk.

While Cumberland Bay was probably prettier and undoubtedly less developed in 1988, the 2010 experience was a hundred times better. We have met so many cruisers who say they completely leap-frog the entire island of St. Vincent for security reasons; they are missing one of the loveliest islands. We have read of more serious security issues in Antigua than most other places during the last year, but would you cross Antigua off your list? Probably not. Give St. Vincent a try; you might love it too!

Charles and Caroline Lamb
S/Y Itza Purla

Fellow Cruisers,

In early March we sailed south from Rodney Bay, St. Lucia and stopped overnight in one of the anchorages along the St. Vincent coast. We'd had an equipment failure and so got a little beat up near the end of the trip so we went to bed early and slept soundly through most of the night. During the night, someone came onboard and into our boat through an open hatch and took our netbook and camera. We have an aft cabin and the fan was on, and we didn't hear anything to cause concern; he (?) must have been quite stealthy.

The people in the bay were quite upset that this happened and worried how this could affect business, and vowed to investigate and we hope they can apprehend the perp. We also reported it to the police and they came and took a full report.

I am not advising against stopping in St. Vincent, but suggest that we cruisers should be aware that burglary can happen anywhere at anytime and be prudent in securing our boats at night or anytime we leave them. We were remiss in not doing this and being tired is not enough excuse — as a result, we've lost our communication and pictures.

Lou and Lydia Dequine
S/V Secondhand Rose

Dear *Compass*,

There are things that we all covet in life. Things we desire that make a statement. In the world of regattas, the object of desire is THE HAT. Hat? What hat, you ask? How can a simple hat be so important in the world of sailboat racing? What makes a lowly piece of protective apparel so distinguished in the world of go-fast "rock star" sailors?

If it is bright red, emblazoned with the logo of Mount Gay Rum and uniquely embroidered with "Mount Gay Rum Regatta Barbados" then you have sailed in the home court of the Mount Gay regattas worldwide! Only if you have been on the course in Barbados, that small gem of an island 90 miles to the east of the Caribbean Chain, can you earn this symbol of seamanship and competitive prowess. It's what brings boats hard to windward to compete. It's a badge of honor in the world of sailing. It is the ultimate prize worn with pride by each and every competitor. You can't buy this proof positive of worthiness. It's not for sale. You can only earn it by being there and sailing in the venue!

So why am I, a 63-year-old confirmed cruising zealot, talking about regatta racing? Our boat, *Mo'Guffy*, beloved as she is, is no speedster. She's built for comfort. She's wide and stable, a home on the water with amenities and creature comforts. Yet, for the past 12 years we have charged forward, counting the seconds till the horn blared at the start of the first race in Cruising Class A at the Mount Gay Regatta in Barbados. No illusions of taking the prize: only the desire to sail and do our best — and, of course, GET THE HAT!

It's been the highlight of my sailing year for the past 12 years, but in 2009 it got better still! In 2009 the Race Committee allowed an official Cruising Class B with our own courses, a staggered start (no cluttered start lines) and a great chance to catch those long reaches and let a cruising boat do its work. *Mo'Guffy* got second place overall, with the bimini up! Sacrilege to many, but with many competitors sporting biminis, even wind generators and other superstructure, this was true to the spirit of a genuine Cruising Class. Not for us taking out the stove, the head and most of the sails to lighten the boat! No Sir, this is a cruising boat and we will compete on our own terms. And congratulations to the organizing committee for seeing that there is a large section of the boating fraternity that likes to sail this way. And while the race fleets got to beat their way up Barbados' south coast, we in Cruising B had an unfettered view of the tranquil west coast.

This year — May 20th through 23rd — it is going to be even better for real cruisers, with off-day events, the Barbados Tourism Authority promising to lay on an island tour for cruisers who make the effort to be here, a real Bajan lime with barbecues on the beach, and more soon to be announced.

And of course, everyone on the crew GETS THE HAT! Get more information at www.sailbarbados.com or www.barbadoscruisingclub.org

Ian Hickling
S/Y Asmara

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.

We do not publish individual consumer complaints or individual regatta results complaints. (Kudos are okay!) We do not publish anonymous letters; however, your name may be withheld from print at your request. Letters may be edited for length, clarity and fair play.

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BOOKS BROUGHT BY BOATS

Charter Yacht Consultant Ann-Wallis White has spearheaded a drive to collect children's books in the US and send them via yacht to the children of the Lesser Antilles. She works in harmony with book-donation organizations such as Books for International Goodwill, Hands Across the Sea and Boaters for Books.

One facet of the program involves providing books for children ages two through 16 to the libraries of island schools, particularly schools on the smallest islands or in out-of-the-way places on the larger ones. Ann-Wallis, who first visited the islands in



ELAINE LEMBO



KAREN KELLY

Above: Students at the Bequia Seventh Day Adventist Primary School with their new books
Left: At Paget Farm Government School, Ann-Wallis distributes books from the back of a Bequia 'pick-up taxi'

1974, was recently back in the Grenadines aboard the yacht *Matau*, along with Elaine Lembo of *Cruising World* magazine, marine photographer Billy Black, Kim Kavin representing *Yachting* magazine and the blog Charter Wave, and Karen Kelly of Nicholson Yachts, to make some deliveries. Iris from *Shaitan of Tortola*, and Duff and Chris on *Sudiki* have also provided ongoing help with getting books to eager young readers in the Grenadines.

Ann-Wallis, who is based in Annapolis, Maryland, says, "Usually, I just get the books onto boats, and do not have the excitement of taking them to the schools. After quietly sending books to the Caribbean for 35 years, one of my most exciting moments was in Union Island. One little boy looked me in the eye, fingering the book in his hands, and said, 'THIS is a good book for me to read, as I am very interested in ancient history and archaeology'. To me," Ann-Wallis adds, "that was thrilling."

Ann-Wallis and friends have also channeled brand-new youth sailing instruction manuals to the islands, and recipients so far have included junior sailing programs at the Antigua Yacht Club, Jolly Harbour Yacht Club, Royal BVI Yacht Club, St. Lucia Yacht Club, St. Vincent Youth Sailing Program, Grenada Yacht Club and St. Maarten Yacht Club. More are currently en route to a fledgling program on Union Island. She says, "For many years I have supported local children having access to sailing programs and feel it is really important in developing and maintaining the relationship between those 'at sea' and those 'on land'. Access to dinghy sailing is THE common ground."

What's next? "Having just returned from an exciting trip delivering books to St. Vincent, some of the Grenadines and Grenada, I am starting to gear up to collect and pack books for next fall's migration of crewed charter yachts from Newport, Rhode Island, and Annapolis, Maryland. I don't want these books recycled into paper towels!"

For more information visit www.Big-Books.org, www.HandsAcrosstheSea.net, www.boatersforbooks.org, or contact Ann-Wallis at awwyc@comcast.net

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CALENDAR

APRIL

1	Annual *Compass* Writers' Brunch, Bequia. sally@caribbeancompass.com
1 – 5	Round Guadeloupe Race. www.triskellcup.com
1 – 5	Bequia Easter Regatta. www.begos.com/easterregatta
2	Good Friday. Public holiday in many places
4	Magic Show, poetry, dance performance. Friendship Bay Hotel & Beach Resort, (784) 455-2620
5	Easter Monday. Public holiday in many places
5	Buccoo Goat, Donkey and Crab Races at Mt. Pleasant, Tobago
6	Buccoo Goat, Donkey and Crab Races at Buccoo, Tobago
6 – 11	Les Voiles de Saint Barth. www.lesvoilesdesaintbarth.com
11	Around St. John Race, USVI. St. John Yacht Club (SJYC), (340) 776-6101, jamesswanstj@yahoo.com
15 – 20	Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. *See ad on page 10*
22	International Earth Day
23	Guadeloupe to Antigua Race. www.sailingweek.com
23 – 25	Palmas Del Mar International Billfish Tournament, Puerto Rico. www.palmasdelmaryachtclub.com
24 – 30	Antigua Sailing Week. www.sailingweek.com
24 – 7 May	Fireball World Championships, Barbados. www.fireball-worlds.com
28	FULL MOON. National Heroes' Day; public holiday in Barbados
30	Queen's Day. Public holiday in Dutch islands
30 – 2 May	Carriacou Maroon and Regional String Band Music Festival. *See ad on page 5*
30 – 2 May	West Indies Regatta, St. Barth. *See ad on page 10*

MAY

1	Labour Day. Public Holiday in Anguilla, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and St. Lucia
1 – 3	St. Lucia J/24 Open Championship. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), (758) 452-8350, secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
1 – 9	St. Lucia Jazz Festival. www.stluciajazz.org
2	The Atlantic Cup, Tortola to Bermuda, starts. www.carib1500.com
3 – 17	Classic Rum Cruise, Antigua to St. Lucia. www.classicrumcruise.com
6	ARC Europe Rally, Tortola to Europe, starts. *See ad on page 11*
8 – 9	Anguilla Sailing Festival. www.anguillaregatta.com
8 – 9	St. John Commodore's Cup, SJYC
13 - 15	Combat de Coques, Martinique. *See ad in Market Place section*
13	Ascension Day. Public holiday in some French and Dutch islands
15 – 16	Captain Oliver's Regatta, St. Maarten. www.coyc-sxm.com
20 – 23	Mount Gay Regatta, Barbados. www.sailbarbados.com
22 – 24	Green Island Weekend, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
24	Whit Monday. Public holiday in many places
24 – 29	Ernest Hemingway International Billfish Tournament, Cuba. yachtclub@cnih.mh.cyt.cu
24 – 31	BVI Music Festival. www.bvimusicfest.net
27	FULL MOON
28 – 30	Foxy's Wooden Boat Regatta, Jost Van Dyke, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), Tortola, BVI, (284) 496-8685, mvh@surfbvi.com, www.weyc.net
28 – 30	Puerto Rico Vela Cup. www.puertoricovelacup.com
29 – 30	Martinique-to-St. Lucia Race. Yacht Club de la Martinique (YCM), tel (596) 63 26 76, fax (596) 63 94 48, ycmq@wanadoo.fr
30	Anguilla Day; Public holiday in Anguilla. Indian Arrival Day; Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago
TBA	Canouan Regatta. Canouan Sailing Club, tel (784) 458-8197

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

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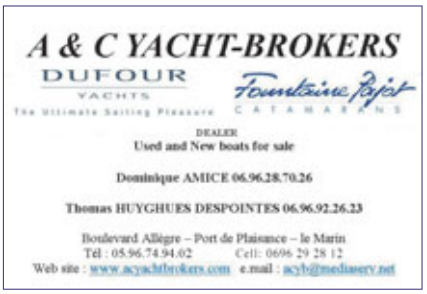


















St. Lucia



St. Maarten



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Caribbean Propellers Ltd.	Trinidad	MP	Grenadines Sails	Bequia	22	Sea Services	Martinique	15			
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CW = Caribbean wide
MP = Market Place pages 43 to 45

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