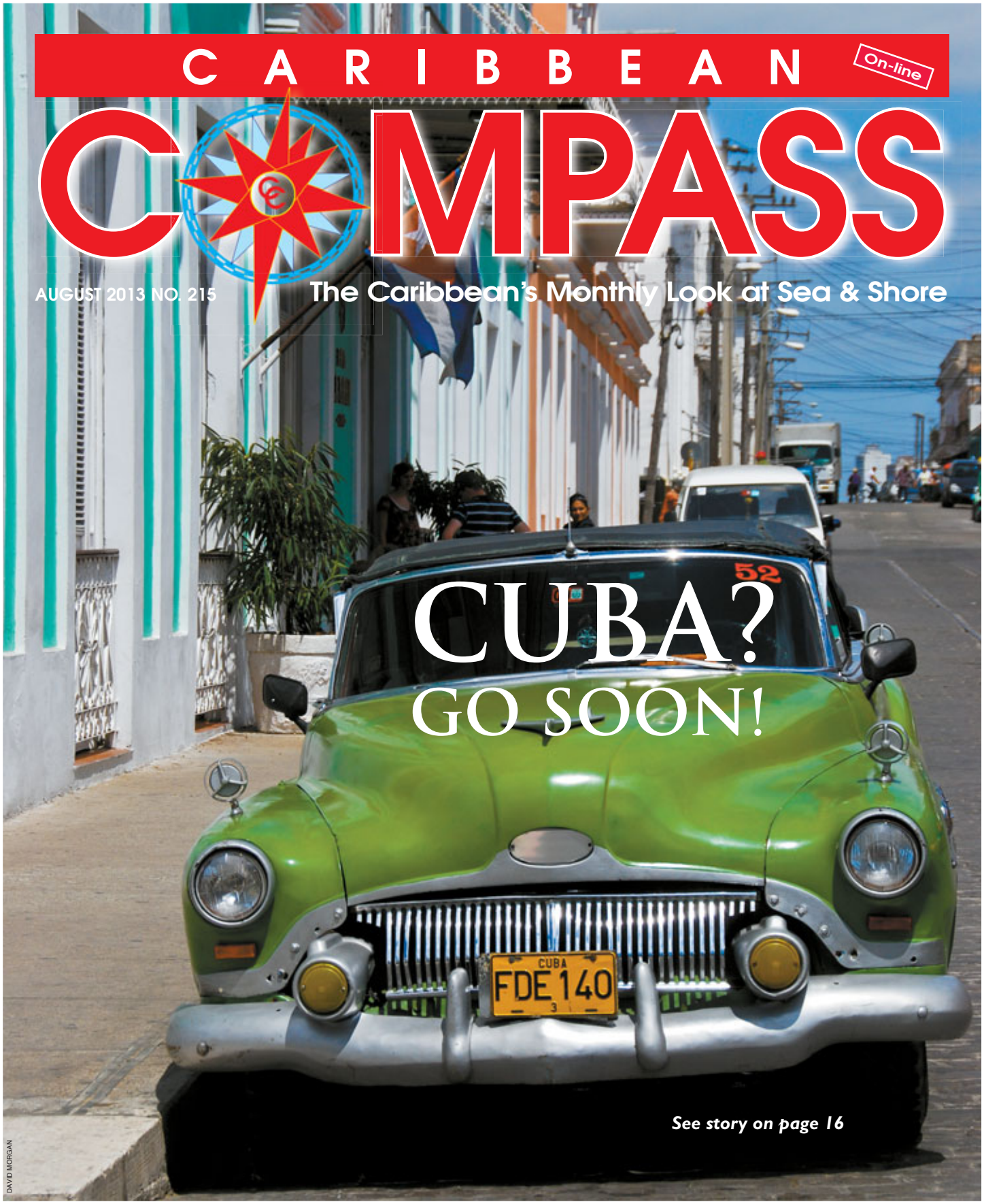
CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
AUGUST 2013 NO. 215
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



CUBA? GO SOON!

See story on page 16

DAVID MORGAN



POWER BOATING

Michigan Wheel Marine

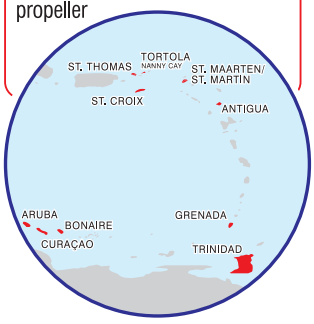
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AUGUST 2013 • NUMBER 215

BILL HARRIS



KAY WILSON / WWW.INDIGODIVE.COM



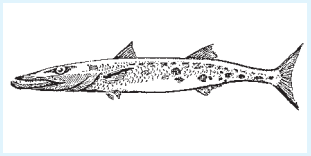
Boat Rides Rule!

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EC$130M per Year

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ISSN 1605 - 1998

Cover photo: Kiwi cruisers David Morgan and Brenda Webb spent six weeks exploring Cuba, the focus of their sailing season in the Western Caribbean



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.**

'*Caribbean Compass* has proven to be the premier guide to yachting in the Caribbean... the magazine does a great job of keeping readers in-the-know on destinations, yachting news and trends.'

Christy Recaii, writer
St. Lucia

Click Google Map link below to find the *Caribbean Compass* near you!

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Info & Updates

Grenada Dinghy Pass Marked

S/V Silverheels III reports: Thanks to the generosity of the yachts *Tusen Takk* and *Nirvana*, and the chandlery Island Water World, the two poles marking the northeastern end of the dinghy route through the reef between the Mt. Hartman and Hog Island anchorages are illuminated again. Refurbished white lights on both poles, one slightly higher than the other, together with a new white flag from IWW, will increase visibility.



CHRIS DOYLE'S SAILORS GUIDE TO THE WINDWARD ISLANDS

Remember to pass these poles close by, keeping them to seaward.

The southwestern end of this narrow (dinghy only) channel is in line with the large white house with a bright red roof, situated on the headland of L'Anse aux Epines. The pair of marker poles is near 11°59.884N, 61°44.689W

This Hartman/Hog dinghy route is illustrated on the Prickly Bay to Hog Island sketch in the Grenada section of Doyle's *Sailor's Guide to the Windward Islands*.

Opening Times for St. Maarten Bridge Now Year-Round

From now on there will be no different high season and low season opening times for the bridge into Simpson Bay Lagoon on the Dutch side of St. Maarten. The year-round bridge opening times will be:

Outbound 9:00/11:00AM and 4:30PM
Inbound 9:30/11:30AM and 5:30PM

It is expected than when the new bridge across the lagoon is completed, probably next year, its opening times should be tuned with the Dutch bridge.

Buoy Replaced at Proselyte Reef, St. Maarten

The yellow navigational buoy located west of Proselyte Reef, off Phillipsburg, St. Maarten with a flashing light was reported missing on July 15th. It was replaced on July 19th by a yellow buoy with a west cardinal marker day mark, top mark and light with the same characteristics as the original (VQ(9) 10s).

Formerly called "Man o' War Shoal", the reef was renamed for *HMS Proselyte*, a frigate that struck the shoal and was wrecked there in 1801. It is now a popular dive site. Give the Proselyte Reef area a wide berth when approaching or departing Great Bay or the southeast side of St. Maarten.

Mariners are asked to be on the lookout and advise the port on marine VHF channel 12 if the drifting buoy is spotted.

For more information contact Eddy_Johnson@portofstmaarten.com.

Radio News

• After 25 years of providing free weather and routing information for extended offshore passages to his fellow sailors via shortwave radio, Herb Hilgenberg — better known to many as "VAX498" or "South Bound II" — retired on June 1st and is no longer on the air. Herb provided daily coverage, seven days a week, for the North Atlantic between the Eastern Seaboard and Europe, the Caribbean Sea, the Bahamas Islands and the Gulf of Mexico.

An engineer by profession and a sailor at heart, Herb and his wife and daughters cruised from Toronto to the Caribbean in 1982 and 1983 aboard their 39-foot Corbin cutter, *South Bound II*. In January of 1984, Herb accepted a senior management position in Bermuda and sailed *South Bound II* to Bermuda, where his family joined him. There he quickly learned that disasters owing to unexpected heavy weather were a common occurrence amongst yachts transiting between the Eastern Seaboard and the Caribbean. Weather forecasting became Herb's primary hobby.

By 1987, after getting his advanced Amateur Radio License and after updating his meteorological and forecasting knowledge, he started the South Bound II Net, first on ham radio, then on marine frequencies. Herb returned to Canada in 1994, where he continued the popular HF marine weather forecasting and routing service. His service to the yachting community resulted in many recognitions and awards, and many lives saved. His voice on the airwaves will be missed.

• The St. Martin cruisers' net channel has changed from VHF 14 to VHF 10; the timetable — 0730 hours, Monday through Saturday — remains the same.

—Continued on next page

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St Lucia
Rodney Bay Sails
Rodney Bay

St. Vincent
Barefoot Yacht Charters
Blue Lagoon

USVI St Croix
Wilsons' Cruzan Canvas
Christiansted



—*Continued from previous page*

Trinidad Circumnavigator Honored in Grenada

On June 18th the Grenada Yacht Club held a gathering to celebrate the 80th birthday of one of the club's Life Members, Harold La Borde, of Trinidad & Tobago. Grenada's Minister of Tourism, Alexandra Otway-Noel, members of the media and members of the Yacht Club Committee were present. Harold La Borde has been an Honorary Member of the Grenada Yacht Club since 1973.

Harold La Borde first came to Grenada in 1954, in an 18-foot sailboat, accompanied by two friends. They spent ten days on the island and then sailed back to Trinidad.



Left to right: Harold La Borde, Commodore Richard McIntyre, Minister of Tourism Alexandra Otway-Noel and Kwailan La Borde at the Grenada Yacht Club. The La Bordes, the first Trinidadian circumnavigators, are Honorary Life Members of the club

His second visit was in 1959 in *Humming Bird*, a 27-foot ketch, which he built himself. The boat had no engine, no toilet, no sink and no electric lights — yet for Harold and his wife, Kwailan, it provided a honeymoon venue.

On their way to England on *Humming Bird* in 1960, Harold and Kwailan stopped off again in Grenada, with Buck Wong Chong as crew.

His next boat was the 40-foot *Humming Bird II*, also self-built. He chartered the boat out of Grenada for three years, and then the couple set off around the world in 1969. Their son, Pierre, who was five years old at the time, accompanied them. Harold and Kwailan were awarded their nation's highest award, the Trinity Cross, for being the first Trinidadians to sail around the world.

They returned to Grenada in 1973 with one additional son, Andre, who was then two years old. In the same year, the couple was made Honorary Life Members of the Grenada Yacht Club at a ceremony held at the Club. The Governor General at that time, Dame Hilda Bynoe, attended the ceremony.

In 1984, Harold, Kwailan and Pierre sailed around the world again in *Humming Bird III*, a 55-footer, which Harold built with the assistance of a team of young men from depressed areas of Trinidad. They returned home in 1986, after stopping off in Grenada. Since then Harold has sailed to Grenada over 40 times.

Harold is the author of three books, *An Ocean to Ourselves* (1962), *All Oceans Blue* (1977), and *Lonely Oceans South* (1987). Kwailan is the author of *Wind, Sea and Faith* (2010).

Eight Bells



• JAMES CABOT JOHNSTON. Jim Johnston died on July 3rd in St. Vincent, at the age of 68. The long-time Bequia resident was the son of Tom Johnston, founder of the famous Moonhole community of free-form "cave dwellings" at the western end of Bequia. Jim lived at Moonhole from the age of about 12 and attended Mapps College in Barbados. He went on to the University of Colorado, worked in the oil industry in the US, and returned to Moonhole in 1987.

Jim enjoyed sailing and owned the ketch *O Second Life*. In 1989, he met his future wife, Sheena. At the end of an extended sailing trip to the Bahamas, Jim told Sheena that if they still managed to be friends after all those months cooped up on a yacht it was clear that they should spend their lives together.

He is survived by Sheena, her daughter and granddaughters, his two children from a previous marriage in the United States, and many friends.

—*Continued on next page*



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• LAURY TIMOTHY STOWE. On July 8th, Laury Stowe, age 41, was at his popular dive shop in Bequia when he was fatally electrocuted.

Along with Ron Williams and Dave Stone, Laury founded the full-service PADI dive



ISLANDTIMEGALLERY.NET

shop Bequia Dive Adventures, located on the Belmont Walkway on the shore of Admiralty Bay. Laury had been diving since his teens and was a PADI Master Scuba Diver Trainer. His love of diving was infectious and, along with the rest of the Bequia Dive Adventures staff, he contributed to the local youths' appreciation of the sea and its importance by hosting training for student groups in the summer seasons. Laury was known as an excellent and talented instructor — calm, flexible and patient.

He is survived by his wife, Joanna, and three young children, and many more family members and friends.

Cruisers' Site-ings

The newest yacht club in Grenada has news: Petite Calivigny Yacht Club is offering half price on new membership fees until the end of this year. Want to sign up to receive their terrific new newsletter? Visit www.pcycgrenada.com!

Department of Corrections

Ooops! We forgot the photo credit for Jim Hutchinson's article about the Ky-Mani



Marley concert in Carriacou that was published in the July issue. Those dynamic shots of the performance were taken by Rawle Patterson of Carriacou.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Nauti Solutions of Grenada and Rainbow Inn of Grenada, both in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 44.

Good to have you with us!





Summer berths from just $400 a month

Lying just above 12 degrees North, Grenada is south of the main hurricane belt and is growing in popularity among yacht owners during the summer months – not least for its spectacular carnival which takes place from 9 to 13 August.

Port Louis Marina provides a safe, secure berth with all the amenities you'd expect from a full-service marina run by Camper & Nicholsons. And the 'Spice Island' of Grenada guarantees a genuine, warm welcome.

From 1 June to 30 November a **32 foot yacht can berth for just $390 USD** per month. It's **$595 for a 40 footer**, and **$1,095 for a 60 footer**.

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1 June to 30 November 2013

LOA in feet	Monthly: $/ft/day
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up to 40	$0.48
up to 50	$0.53
up to 60	$0.59
up to 65	$0.66
up to 75	$0.67
up to 80	$0.83
up to 100	$0.85

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Sea Hawk Paints' Smart Solution is the next generation in antifouling technology and is engineered to be the most effective environmentally friendly antifouling paint available. Smart Solution provides equivalent performance to traditional antifoulants, but utilizes completely metal-free biocides resulting in no bioaccumulation in the environment. The coating's reaction to salt water creates a slick film that encapsulates the hull, providing enhanced speed and premium performance against growth. Smart Solution is Lloyd's Registry Certified and compatible over existing antifoulants.

For more information on Sea Hawk Paints see ad on page 12.

Perkins Parts Sale Now at Parts & Power

Parts & Power are running a special offer on over 80 Perkins service parts until September — 20 percent off! Please mention *Caribbean Compass* when placing your order.

Also, visit Parts & Power's informative new blog at partsandpower.wordpress.com.

For more information on Parts & Power see ad on page 9.

Unique Birdwatching Trips in Grenada

Four Caribbean Horizons guides participated in the recently held bird-guide training workshop at St George's University and are equipped with binoculars, scope and reference books to take interested birders to habitats frequented by two birds found only in Grenada, the endemic and endangered Grenada Dove and the Hook Billed Kite



THE CROSSLEY ID GUIDE EASTERN BIRDS

(pictured above). As well as the Lesser Antillean Tanager, which is found only in Grenada and St. Vincent, Grenada has a wide variety of shore, lake and forest birds to see.

For more information on Caribbean Horizons see ad on page 39.

How's Your Marine Insurance?

Offshore Risk Management writes: The cost of insurance for boats, marinas and anything marine-related has changed so much over the past few years many people cannot afford to insure properly. Or they have cut back on coverage to get the premiums to an affordable level, often underinsuring or "running bare". In addition, insurers have pulled out of the market, tightened their rules or imposed conditions to protect underwriters and not you, their customers.

We offer Better Boat Insurance, with customized insurance coverage, installment payments, personal claims service, expertise since 1972, and lower insurance costs. For decades we have insured thousands of boats and marine professionals worldwide, marinas, terminal operators, charterboats, rental operators, cruising couples and families, ferryboats, water-taxis and commercial operators from dinks to dreadnoughts.

For more information on Better Boat Insurance see ad on page 31.

Fuel Purifiner from Intouchable Marine Services

IMS, a newly operational Marine Service Provider serving St. Martin/St. Maarten and the rest of the Caribbean, has added a new product to its catalog: the MLS Fuel Purifiner. It works as a first line of defense in protecting your diesel engine's fuel.

Prevent engine shutdowns from blocked Racor filters or water in your fuel. The Purifiner removes 100 percent of water and 95 percent of solids from your fuel. It is easy to operate, with no serviceable parts and no throwaway cartridges. It gives you warning of fuel problems before they affect your equipment and allows you to clean (polish) your own fuel.

Other products available include: Kubota Generators by Phasor Marine ("The pleasure of power, the passion of design!") and Driftgate 2000 ("The Home of On Board and Mobile Charging Systems").

IMS services include surveying, consultancy, marine engineering, interior and exterior finishing, all boat repairs and maintenance, and project management.

For more information on Intouchable Marine Services see ad on page 10.

Grenadines Dive Holds Workshop in Mayreau

Seventeen youths from the island of Mayreau can now boast of their skills in scuba diving, thanks to a diving workshop conducted by Grenadines Dive in June.



—Continued on next page

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The one-day workshop, spearheaded by Glenroy Adams of Grenadines Dive, was aimed at promoting confidence and skill-set building for the youths. Glenroy and his staff journeyed from Union Island to Mayreau to conduct the sessions.

Theoretical training on scuba gear and the basics of diving was delivered to the kids, who listened attentively and asked several questions. They were also given a career talk on scuba diving and the prospects of being a professional diver. The children were excited to know that they could be the next dive shop owners, instructors, marine biologists or researchers.

Glenroy and the team then demonstrated practical skills such as clearing the mask, retrieving the regulator and vital safety drills in the shallow waters. In batches of six the children in full diving gear quickly took to the bottom of the seabed with their supervisors. Some of them were thrilled to see that they made it through their very first underwater experience.

The workshop was a success with the youngest participant being 14 and the oldest 17, with a mixture of boys and girls. These kids are quite familiar with Glenroy, since he provides transportation via his boat for them to travel to and from Mayreau to attend secondary school in Union Island during the week. Grenadines Dive has been in operation for over 21 years, providing community support in different areas.

For more information visit www.grenadinesdive.com.

Palm Tree Marine Now Northern Lights Dealer in Grenada

Palm Tree Marine, located at Le Phare Bleu Marina in Grenada, is the latest appointment in an extensive Caribbean dealer network for Northern Lights, overseen by Parts & Power in the British Virgin Islands as the regional distributors.

Parts & Power Managing Director Tom Gerker says, "We are delighted that Palm Tree Marine has been appointed. Grenada is an important country for Northern Lights owing to the size of its marine and yachting industry. Having local dealers with the technical ability to assist with installations and after-market support is extremely important to us, and with Palm Tree Marine we can ensure we will continue to meet those local market needs."

Northern Lights is a world-renowned supplier of marine generators, marine engines and marine air conditioning (through their Technicold brand) equipment.

For more information visit www.CaribbeanNorthernLights.com.

Sunsail Announces New Yacht Charter Base in St. Lucia

Sunsail has announced the opening of a new charter base at Marigot Bay, St. Lucia, for the coming winter. Simon Conder, Head of Marketing, says, "The new base provides the ideal gateway for guests to sail to and discover multiple itineraries in the Windward Islands, including Martinique and Guadeloupe to the north and St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the south. When we look for new charter destinations, we want to be able to provide guests the ability to maximize their time with us and discover a variety of destinations from one base; St Lucia is perfect for this. St. Lucia also provides many affordable flying options from all around the globe, making it very easy to get to."

Meanwhile, Sunsail has substantially reduced its staff and fleet at Blue Lagoon, St. Vincent.

For more information visit www.sunsail.com.



A. WARD

Deefer Diving Launches First Carriacou-Built Catamaran

Hillsborough Bay, Carriacou, saw the launch of a very special boat on June 8th. *Bobcat* is the first catamaran to be built in Carriacou, home of the famous Carriacou Sloops. Its launch was the culmination of a seven-month build project. Purpose-built for diving and excursions, *Bobcat* measures 29.6 feet long and 15 feet wide. It can comfortably carry eight divers and two staff on a two-tank dive to any of the 30 beautiful dive sites around Carriacou.

For more information visit www.deeferdiving.com.

Top Service at Red Frog Beach Marina

At Red Frog Beach Marina & Rainforest Resort at Bocas del Toro, Panama, seafarers receive a level of service not typically found in the emerging market of Central America. Its rustic beauty is complemented by a modern fuel dock, floating docks, a brand-new bathhouse and laundry facility as well as unbeatable dockage offers for long-term customers. With some new property upgrades, unique itineraries and economic feasibility, long-term stays are even more enjoyable. The marina is safely tucked within a hurricane-free zone of lush mangroves, naturally protecting its contents. The marina's berthing capacity is for yachts up to 250 feet with an exceptionally deep draft of over 20 feet. The facility's proximity to the Panama Canal — just 133 nautical miles — is also a big convenience.

For more information visit www.redfrogbeach.com.

News from Free Cruising Guides

Free Cruising Guides is pleased to announce that its Director, Dr. Catherine Hebson, and its Caribbean Marketing Manager, Amaia Agirre, have both been invited to speak at the Seven Seas Cruising Association's Melbourne, Florida "Gam" in mid-November. Dr. Hebson, creator of Free Cruising Guides' Caribbean Security Index, will address security concerns and strategies for cruisers; Ms. Agirre, an experienced cruiser in all quadrants of the Caribbean, will discuss current intricacies and etiquette in clearing in and out in the Caribbean.

In addition, Luis Duprey has been appointed the Eastern United States Sales Manager for Free Cruising Guides. Mr. Duprey is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico and fully bilingual. He has worked for 15 years in marketing and sales in the hospitality industry, and will be in charge of presenting Free Cruising Guides products to vendors on the eastern seaboard of the US.

For more information on Free Cruising Guides see ad on page 34.

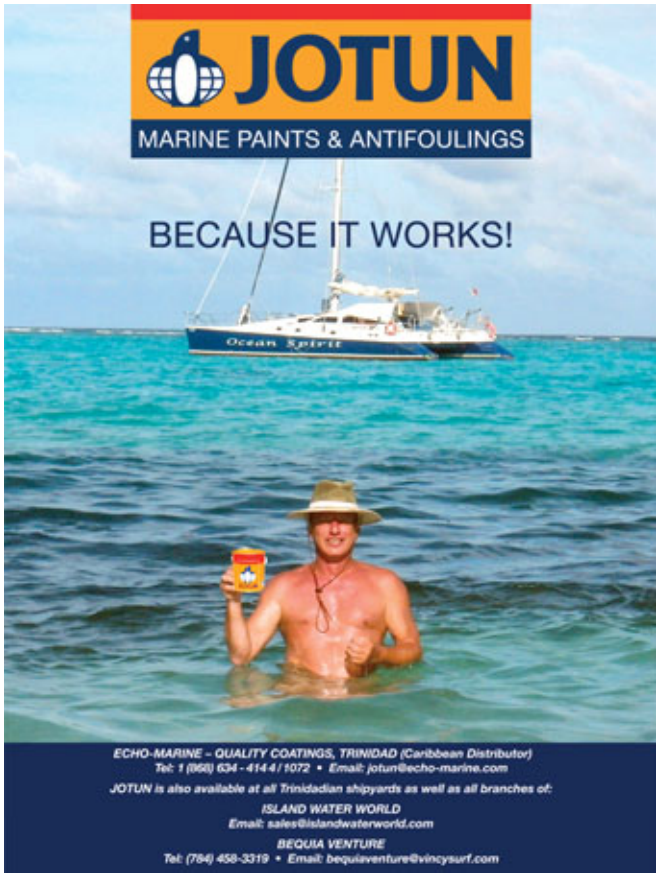
Register Now for Antigua Charter Yacht Show Discount

Registration for Antigua Charter Yacht Show 2013, to be held December 6th through 12th, is now open. This year's show, as usual, will take place at the Nelson's Dockyard Marina in English Harbour, and at the Falmouth Harbour Marina and the Antigua Yacht Club Marina, both located in Falmouth Harbour. A shuttle service runs between the three marinas during show hours.

Ten percent early registration discount is given to yachts that register and pay their registration fee by August 31st.

For more information visit www.antiguayachtshow.com.







Caribbean ECO-News

Yacht Charter Brokers Cut Use of Plastic Bottles

Des Ryan reported in the July 2nd edition of Sail-World.com: The Caribbean-based Charter Yacht Brokers Association (CYBA) has launched the second year of its 'Going Green to Save the Blue' campaign in which it encourages charter yachts around the world to use fewer plastic water bottles.

It will again award its Save the Blue Award to any yacht captain who fills out a survey at www.cyba.com/goinggreen and can answer "yes" to the first two criteria plus check off eight additional criteria, all of which indicate an effort to preserve the environment.

Here are the questions which yacht captains are required to answer:

• Do you reduce plastic water bottle waste by producing your own drinking water? (We understand that some clients still want bottled water — we just want to know that you offer your own water as an option.)

• If you do not have a watermaker, do you reduce plastic water bottle waste by purchasing water in large containers?

• Have you made sure your "green specifications" are posted online?

Yachts that qualify will receive a Going Green ribbon to display at charter shows in St. Thomas and Antigua this winter. Yachts scoring the highest on the survey will be awarded CYBA's Most Eco-Friendly Yacht award, one for power and one for sail in each show.

The effort is intended to make an impact on the amount of waste that yachts have on the smaller islands of the Bahamas and Caribbean, where recycling is non-existent.

"We hope that with broadened awareness, more yachts will rely on their own reverse osmosis watermakers for drinking water, reducing the number of plastic bottles to be disposed of in the landfills," CYBA reported.

ARC Boats Leave Green Wake

Sailing allows us to travel long distances with relatively low carbon emissions, but the reality is that all yachts burn diesel for motive power and to generate electricity. Conscious of this impact, Atlantic Rally for Cruisers' (ARC) organizer, World Cruising Club, has teamed up with local non-profit forestry organizations in the event's starting and finishing points, Gran Canaria and St. Lucia, to develop and sponsor a carbon offset project. The project involves planting trees where they are most needed, to help offset the carbon emissions created during the ARC crossing.

The ARC sets sail from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in November each year. The finish destination is Rodney Bay, St. Lucia. An alternative route to St. Lucia is also available via Mindelo, Sao Vicente in the Cape Verdes.

In 2012, World Cruising Club expanded their environmental commitment by creating the ARC Forest project in St. Lucia. Working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the St. Lucia Rotary Club, the initiative aims to help preserve the riverbank in the town of Dennery, which was badly affected by hurricane flooding two years ago. The trees planted at the site are a mix of species native to St. Lucia and crop trees producing spices, limes and nuts that will benefit the local community.

Carriacou-Nova Scotia-Carriacou Sea Turtle Marathon

Marina Fastigi reports: She was a black beauty and in July 2009, after nesting, had been tagged in her rear flippers by Kido Foundation turtle monitoring team on patrol in Petit Carenage Beach, Carriacou.

Adult sea turtles nest every two or three years, in the same location or near where they were hatched.

We had not seen her during the 2011 nesting season, but on July 2012, we received an e-mail from Prof. Julia Horrocks, Department of Biology, UWI, Barbados Sea Turtle Project, stating that marine biologist researcher Michael James, PhD, of Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada, caught our same leatherback female during his field research in the cold waters of Nova Scotia! (See the interesting research of Dr. James on foraging leatherbacks in the North Atlantic here: http://science.dal.ca/RESEARCH/Researcher_Profiles/Mike_James.php.)

This news was exciting: our turtle had made an amazing round trip, a swimming marathon — and this recorded event was proof once more that Carriacou's nesting





leatherbacks migrate hundreds and even thousands of miles north during the summer to their feeding grounds, where they find their staple diet of giant jellyfish.

Sea turtles are part of the balance of the ocean. Leatherbacks, more than other turtle species, feed mainly on jellyfish and jellyfish prey on larval fish (among them yellowfin tuna). The massive decline of turtle populations is among the factors allowing the explosion in the numbers of jellyfish in the ocean, affecting the needed regeneration of now dwindling precious fish stocks for human consumption.

When one of our tagged female turtles fails to show up after two years, we worry about the possibility that she was slashed by a propeller or hooked as by-catch on a long-line set by a fishing vessel, or poisoned by methyl-mercury (present in elevated concentrations in much of the ocean food chain) or choked by a discarded plastic bag, mistaken for a juicy jellyfish! In fact, in 2006 another leatherback had nested in Anse La Roche and was tagged by Kido, but was reportedly found dead stranded on a beach in North Carolina, USA. We were sent a photo of the remains and her tag numbers.

We are happy and relieved every time an old turtle friend returns to nest repeatedly on Carriacou's two main nesting beaches, Petit Carenage and Anse La Roche, both part of the proposed High North National Park.

And on the night of July 8th, 2013 we were there to welcome our Kayak-Canadian leatherback nesting in Petit Carenage, four years after her first recorded nest.

Dr. James sent us the photo on the left of our turtle on the deck of his research vessel in Nova Scotia, in July 2012. The other photo was taken after she nested in Petit Carenage this year.

Marina Fastigi, PhD, is the director of YWF-Kido Foundation, a Carriacou-based NGO. For more info visit YWF-Kido Foundation on Facebook.

Reporting Breeding Birds to eBird Caribbean

All birders and would-be birders on yachts are invited to join eBird Caribbean to help to record bird sightings and nesting activity.

—Continued on next page

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This information is especially critical during our summer months, as there are gaps in the sightings recorded and all observations would greatly help to improve the data bank.

The Caribbean islands, through both their origins and their isolation from the mainland, have given rise to an astonishing number of endemic species. Of the 564 Caribbean bird species, 148 (26 percent) are endemic, meaning they exist nowhere else in the world.

Despite countless hours of research, scientists have still not completely documented the breeding seasons and breeding ranges of some Caribbean bird species, much less learned how nesting patterns change from year to year or differ from one location to another. Because of the rapid changes occurring to many species' environments such as habitat destruction, global warming and introduced predators, understanding breeding patterns is very important for bird conservation.

Birders observe breeding behavior all the time — whether it is watching heron nests at a local rookery or finding a bananaquit or gray kingbird nest while on a hike — and eBird Caribbean needs your help documenting birds' breeding patterns in the Caribbean. Just as counts of individuals on each checklist you submit help eBird provide up-to-date information on occurrence and abundance, your nesting observations can help map breeding patterns on a regional or even global scale. Reporting breeding activity on eBird Caribbean is quick and easy, thanks to an option eBird has added that allows eBirders to report breeding codes while entering checklists.

For more information on eBird visit http://ebird.org/content/Caribbean.

For more information on the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds visit www.scscb.org.

Sandwatch!

The UNESCO Sandwatch Project provides a framework for school children and local communities to work together to critically evaluate the problems facing their beach environments and develop sustainable management solutions. It is an educational process through which school students and community members learn and work together to scientifically monitor their beach environments, so as to critically evaluate the problems and conflicts, and then to develop and implement sustainable activities to address these issues.

Sandwatch started in the Caribbean in 1999, and has become an international activity. Visit www.sandwatch.org and sign up for the newsletter, The Sandwatcher. The latest edition has news about students helping turtle hatchlings in St. Croix, replanting sand dunes in the Bahamas, addressing storm damage to beaches in Turks & Caicos, helping with recycling efforts in Barbados, and much more.

For more information visit www.sandwatch.org.

Bonaire's Marine Park is Under Threat

Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) reports: Fifty years of advanced environmental legislation on Bonaire was recently overturned when changes were made to zoning laws to permit the construction of a large "party pier" in the Bonaire National Marine Park. STCB and STINAPA Bonaire, the island's two marine conservation organizations, have filed court appeals intended to reverse the changes.

STCB created a new website that pulls together the information you need to understand the issues: www.savebonairemarinepark.org. You can follow the Save Bonaire Marine Park initiative on Facebook as well.

Lobster Conservation in the Grenadines

[*Editor's note: The author's name was not attached to this report. Please get in touch and we'll happily give you credit!*] Glenroy Adams is a man on a mission to see the Tobago Cays Marine Park reach a point where it is highly populated by lobsters, which would be a greater attraction for marine-based tourism in St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

On one of his routine conservation trips we went along to experience what Adams has been doing since 2010 in the Southern Grenadines; he calls it his "little project". On this trip in May 2013 he was joined by two of his friends, Nancy and Lorne Saul-Demers. Nancy is a conservationist who works for the REEF organization conducting reef checks and fish counts in the Grenadines.

Adams normally buys live spiny lobsters (*panulirus argus*) from the local fishermen and secures them for transport to the Tobago Cays. We set off early, collecting the live lobsters from the storage area, and boarded the twin-engine boat belonging to his dive shop based in Union Island, and headed for the TCMP.

Lobsters meals are high in demand at restaurants, making these sea creatures a common target for fishermen. Glenroy chose to release lobsters in the Tobago Cays because fishing is prohibited within the Marine Park boundaries. At the same time the government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines stipulates a closed season for lobsters (May 1st to August 31st) as well as minimum size limits, restrictions on fishing gear, and restrictions on taking females with eggs. A combination of the two protective schemes, Adams thinks, will give the lobsters time to multiply.

It was time for the team of divers to place these crustaceans in their new safe haven. Carefully they took each lobster to the seabed where they quickly flapped their tail fins, taking off to find a comfortable crevice to call home. Spiny lobsters can live up to a hundred years.

Speaking to Glenroy back at his home while sipping a cup of coffee and enjoying the Grenadines sea breeze he said that his dive shop (Grenadines Dive) has been in business since 1990, which has enabled him to engage in a lot of conservation efforts around the Grenadines. One such effort is the hunting of lionfish.

Lionfish have beautiful fan fins and are striped reddish brown in colour. They are voracious predators that eat native fish and crustaceans in large quantities, including both ecologically and economically important species such as grunts, snapper, Nassau grouper and cleaner shrimp. Lionfish can wipe out the reef fishes in a flash. Glenroy takes the initiative to regularly mobilize a dive team of local fishermen and comb the reefs around the southern Grenadines for these predators.

He is very passionate about the underwater world and marine protection, which has been his livelihood for the past years.

For more information visit www.grenadinesdive.com.

Teaching Eels to Eat Lionfish in Carriacou

Diane Martino reports: On July 6th, the Lumbadive dive shop in Carriacou held another Lionfish Derby. Only four divers participated but they did a great job by culling 27 lionfish.

One lionfish had fallen off a spear on its way to the surface. Twenty-three were donated to that night's Fishermen's Birthday celebration, held at the Old Rum Shop in Tyrrel Bay, giving many people the opportunity to taste this fish for the first time.

Three lionfish were given to spotted moray eels. We have started to teach the eels and nurse sharks to eat the lionfish, seeking their help in the control of this invasive fish. The eels are very responsive. They grab the lionfish and wrap it with their body to crush the spiny fins, and then eat it. We noticed that at sites where are lots of moray eels we rarely see lionfish.

Lumbadive PADI 5 Star has a Lionfish Derby every Saturday at 2:00PM. For only US$10, all equipment is included as your second dive of the day.

For more information contact dive@lumbadive.com or call on VHF channel 16.





REGATTA NEWS

Dominica's First Kabuli Cup a Winner

For the first time, the Triskell Tour, a multi-island rally for keelboats, included a yacht race held in Portsmouth, Dominica. The Triskell Tour, held May 8th through 12th, took 30 yachts on a course from Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe to Marie Galante, Dominica, les Iles des Saintes, and back to Guadeloupe.



HUBERT WINSTON

The Dominica Kubuli Cup 2013 was deemed highly successful and the first of many to come. This event within an event saw more than 25 vessels from Guadeloupe, Martinique, Marie Galante and Antigua take part. Trophies went to winners in three classes, with the top prizes awarded to the F40 trimaran *Plan D'Enfer,* skippered by Bruno Escales; the J/120 *BNP Paribas,* skippered by Philippe Champion; and the KL 18 *Eo,* skippered by Vincent Trancart. The evening was capped with grilled fish and barbecue for more than 105 people.

The inaugural Dominica Kubuli Cup was made possible by the collaboration of Jean-Michel Marziou, President of the Triskell Association of Guadeloupe; Andrea Spadoni and Mark Bastide le Person of the Portsmouth Indian River Yacht Club; and Hubert Winston of the Dominica Yacht Club.

The winners of the four scored legs of the Triskell Tour itself were *Plan D'Enfer* in Multihull Class and *Cap Creole,* a Shamrock 950 MK2 skippered by Pascal Durand, in CSA Class.

Dominica Brewery Ltd., the makers of Kubuli beer, were the proud platinum sponsors of the Dominica Kubuli Cup 2013. Gold sponsors were the Dominica Marine Center, Pirates Ltd., and LIME Dominica Ltd. Plans are underway for expanding marketing and reaching higher numbers for next year's edition, scheduled for May 7th through 11th, 2014.

Meanwhile, the Dominica yacht clubs are in the planning stages of creating a rich calendar of sailing events for the Nature Island. There will be another yacht race at Portsmouth on October 12th and 13th, a sure magnet for boats from Martinique, St. Lucia, Dominica and Guadeloupe attracted to two days of eventful racing.

In December, Dominica will host its signature event, highlighting its Optimist program, plus Hobie Cats, crazy crafts, local sailboats and different CSA-rated races for cruisers and racers alike.

For more information contact info@dominicamarinecenter.com.

The Triskell Association's next event will be the Triskell Cup in November — see ad on page 13.

Belize's San Pedro Lobsterfest Regatta 2013

Alan Usher reports: Twenty young Belizean sailors from Belize City, Placencia, and San Pedro skippered Optimist dinghies in blustery, 18- to 25-knot winds and waves of three to five feet off Banyan Bay Resort during a thrilling Lobsterfest Regatta, held May 25th and 26th and organized by the Belize Sailing Association and the San Pedro Sailing Club. For some of the skippers, this was their first regatta.

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PETER JONES / SAN PEDRO SAILING CLUB

Yards before the finish, Trent sneaks through to the lead as Faith inches out Jerdon for second

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San Pedro's fleet of eight boats was augmented by two boats brought from the mainland by the Belize Sea Scouts. By taking turns in the ten boats, each sailor was able to race six times. The course was an Olympic triangle that allowed spectators to see, understand, and enjoy the action.

Sailors began on the Saturday morning by getting to know all about crocodiles and meeting an adult live croc, courtesy of American Crocodile Education Sanctuary (ACES). Next — minus a live specimen — experts from the Belize Shark Project discussed sharks with the sailors and provided free, fun, and expert shark face-painting for the rest of the day, while answering questions.

After these presentations, the sailors were divided into two evenly matched fleets of ten. Each fleet raced four times. The day's races placed the top five skippers from each fleet in the finals. However, the other ten were far from done: On the Sunday they raced against each other in a two-race, runner-up series. The top three were Tyler Garbutt of Placencia, Davin Puc of San Pedro, and Carlos Villatoro of Placencia.

Then the top ten from Saturday took to the boats for their two-race final. The first of these two two-lap races was the most dramatic race of the regatta. Faith Noel of San Pedro, who had sizzled to the top of Saturday's leader board with one first and three second-place finishes, looked to be continuing her dominance, but Jerdon Anderson of San Pedro and the Sea Scouts' Trent Hardwick would not let her break free of their pursuit. Both Jerdon and Trent had taken a first away from Faith on the Saturday, and in this race, the lead changed several times. Faith rounded the final mark ahead of Jerdon and Trent. Then Trent maneuvered between Jerdon and Faith, but still behind. Suddenly, and barely 15 yards from the finish line, the crest of a wave caught Trent's boat. He surfed that crest, cutting between his two surprised rivals to a stunning victory. The wave deposited him across the line barely a second ahead of Faith and maybe a half second more ahead of Jerdon.

Ten-year-old Trent's third place in the next race was sufficient to award him the regatta's First Place plaque. Kevin Velasquez' fourth and first place finishes secured second place overall for him, and Jerdon Anderson placed third, after a fifth-place finish in the second race.

Yet in some ways, nobody had a better regatta than San Pedro's Faith Noel. For consistency she had no equal. Faith entered the sixth and last race having placed no lower than second in her first five races. Her no-doubt-exhausted seventh place finish in the last race dropped her to fourth in the regatta. Still, her performance is one worthy of full respect.

There were many winners in this regatta. The Belize Sea Scouts presented the Award for Sportsmanship during the 2013 San Pedro Lobsterfest Regatta to San Pedro's Mitchell Sersland. They particularly noted Mitch's willingness to help others, and eagerness to cheer them up, too. Out of the 20 sailors in the regatta, eight skippers sailed to at least one first place and, no fewer than 15 of the 20 sailors in San Pedro's regatta enjoyed a podium place at least once. That speaks to the spirit of this particular regatta, and to its degree of success. Congratulations to all the sailors who came for the way they handled themselves on and off the water.

For more information visit www.yachtsandyachting.com/news/170395/Getting-young-people-out-sailing-in-Belize.

Podium Call in Bonaire for St. Lucia's Olympian Beth Lygoe

Jerry Bethell reports: The first Men's and Women's South and Central American Kitesurfing Championship was held in Bonaire during the first week of June. Beth Lygoe of St. Lucia broke onto the world stage here at Atlantis Beach with an exceptional first-time performance.

After competing in last year's Olympics in the Laser Radial sailing class, this time Beth put all her sailing experience into her life's passion — kitesurf racing. Having previously competed in European kitesurf freestyle events, Beth was now attempting to qualify for the World Championships to be held in China at the end of the year. And boy, what a start she had. After months of intensive training at Cas en Bas, where she lives in St. Lucia, she came up against some of the top women in this sport during these championships — and crossed the finish line in second place in her first official race!



St. Lucia's Beth Lygoe has flown from Olympic-level dinghy racing to championship kitesurfing

In this sport you need a minimum set of four different size kites to match against changing wind strengths. Beth is lacking the smallest size, and on the second day with prevailing strong winds she struggled with an oversized kite. To manage three second places on that occasion was really very impressive.

Not only that, but she went on to tally up, over the four days and 16 races, a total of one first, 13 seconds, a third and one retirement, to take women's overall second place on the podium. The first-place woman was Nayara Licariao of Brazil.

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, Beth is training for the European Championships, which start on July 27th. Go, Beth!

For full results visit http://sailwave.com/results/2013SMAKiteracingOpeningSeries.html.

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The 9th ProKids Bonaire Windsurfing Event

The ninth ProKids Bonaire started on May 31st with a total of 87 participants in the different age categories registering for windsurfing Slalom, Freestyle, SUP and Freestyle Night Sailing competitions. Spectators could not only enjoy the windsurfing competition but also other sports such as beach soccer, beach volleyball, bolas and dominos. The event's general coordinator, Gerrald Victorina, Race Director Viktor Wijnand and Head Judge Nathaniel "Mac" Mac Farlane, together with the other judges and officials, did a great job in making the event a success.

Elton "Taty" Frans, who was chosen to be the spokesperson for ProKids Bonaire 2013, also won first place in three men's categories — Freestyle Night Sailing, Slalom and SUP (Stand Up Paddleboard) — during the event. Other first place winners were:

Slalom	
Under 9	Gian Martis
Under 11	Stefan de Bell
Under 13	Iosu Balzaretti
Under 15B	Elton Domacase
Under 15	Jean Paul da Silva
Under 17	Nik Eerenbeemt
Women	Monique Meijer
MAS	Juvannie Agostien
Freestyle	
Under 7	Astrid Ruggiero
Under 9	Coleta Abrahamsz
Under 11	Ethan Thielman
Under 15	Stepherd Gustowsk
Under 17	Amado Vrieswijk
Men	Demenson Thode
SUP	
Under 13	Ro-Angela Rosaria
Under 17	Jurgen Saragoza
Women	Monique Meijer

Next year, ProKids Bonaire will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. The committee has already started planning an even bigger event.

For more information visit www.prokidsfreestyle.com and Facebook page Prokids Windsurfing Bonaire.

USA's Screve Wins International Opti Regatta in St. Thomas

Carol Bareuther reports: Covering the fleet and staying in front proved successful strategies for 15-year-old Romain Screve. Screve won the 21st International Optimist Regatta presented by Glacial Energy and held out of the St. Thomas Yacht Club, US Virgin Islands, from June 21st through 23rd. At the conclusion of the final two races, the California-based sailor lengthened his lead from three points to a very comfortable 20. That's quite a feat considering the keen level of competition in the 81-boat Advanced Optimist fleet and wind conditions that ranged from barely breezy to gusty in squalls.

Screve not only won the overall championship, but also the 13- to 15-year-old Red Fleet.

In the 11- to 12-year old Blue Fleet, it was 12-year-old Severin Gramm from Florida who finished first. This is the first time Gramm has sailed in the Virgin Islands.

British Virgin Islands ten-year-old, Rayne Duff, won the age ten and under White Fleet.

The trophy for Top Girl was awarded to 14-year-old Paige Clarke, from St. John, USVI. Clarke also finished an impressive eighth overall.

A record 33 junior sailors competed in the Green or Beginner Fleet this year, which bodes well for the future of the sport. In the end, it was ten-year-old Will Jackson from the Cayman Islands who emerged victorious.

DEAN BARNES



Romain Screve leads the pack to win the 21st International Optimist Regatta

The USVI's Clarke also won the Pete Ives Award, given for a combination of sailing prowess, sportsmanship, determination and good attitude both on and off the water.

Meanwhile, it was the USA's Thomas Rice who earned the Chuck Fuller Sportsmanship Award.

A total of 113 sailors competed in the Advanced Red, Blue and White Fleets and beginner Green Fleet. The Advanced Fleets completed ten races and the Green Fleet a total of 18 races over the three days of competition. Sailors hailed from nine nations and territories: Antigua & Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, St. Maarten, the USA and the USVI.

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The International Optimist Regatta presented by Glacial Energy is organized under the authority of the Virgin Islands Sailing Association and it is a Caribbean Sailing Association-sanctioned event.

The week started off with the Sea Star Clinic, run by local coaches and coaches from OptiSailors.com, and included the one-day Sea Star Team Race. The team race was won by the Pilo 1 Team made up of Mexico's Henry Saavedra and the USA's Romain Screve, Matt Logue and Wiley Rogers. The team is named for the sailors' coach, Esteban 'Pilo' Rocha.

Major event sponsors include Glacial Energy and Sea Star Lines as well as Gill North America, the exclusive importer and distributor of Gill-brand foul weather gear in North America including the Caribbean, the US and Canada.

For full results, visit www.regattanetwork.com. Also visit the International Optimist Regatta presented by Glacial Energy on Facebook.

Banana Bowl One-Design Racing in St. Maarten

The two-part Banana Bowl that was sailed June 22nd and 23rd in St. Maarten consisted of an advanced group of sailors ("Ripe Bananas") and a training group



("Green Bananas"). This event was sailed in Jeanneau 20 daysailers with an average of three crew, on a Simpson Bay Lagoon course adjacent to the airport runway. The event was organized by Lagoon Sailboat Rental whose mission is to promote one-design sailing that builds sailing skills in the advanced and beginner categories.

In the Ripe Bananas seven teams took part. Nobody felt comfortable predicting the final outcome after nine races. In the end, neither of the two big winners in the last few years in one-design sailing ended up with podium places. Instead the win went to Han de Bruyn Kops who had the Soons brothers, Pieter and Paul, crewing. Second was Robbie Ferron and third was Simon Manley with crew Luc Knol. Frustration and elation were traded regularly as teams got stuck in wind holes and others got highly advantageous gusts. Many of the experienced sailors were scoring right in the front of the pack, followed by a position right in the back of the pack. A youth team from Anguilla helmed by Ethan "Rumple" Lloyd took two first places and impressed all with their serious approach to the sport. The sailors enjoyed an after-race lime on the waterfront at Budget Marine following the event.

In the Green Banana event four teams took part. One from Port de Plaisance skippered by Jesse Peterson, one from Milton Peters College, one from Budget Marine and one skippered by the Soons Brothers with their "Ripe" helmsman of the previous day acting as coach. The Soons brothers dominated the series of three races, although in the last race they were pipped at the post by the Milton Peters team. The Port de Plaisance team consisted of employees who operate the marina at Port de Plaisance and welcome many visiting sailors to Sint Maarten. In this event the relatively inexperienced teams sailed in gusty conditions in the Simpson Bay lagoon and were challenged with sailing the boats effectively in these conditions. Two boats had coaches (Soons and Milton Peters) and were significantly ahead of the others.

Team Antigua Tops Premier's Cup

The Premier's Cup Youth Regatta held in Tortola July 13th through 15th was won by the team from Antigua. Competing were ten teams from nine different islands. The



Team Antigua with their coach, Karl James, and BVI Premier Dr. D. Orlando Smith

regatta is for sailors aged ten to 18 years.

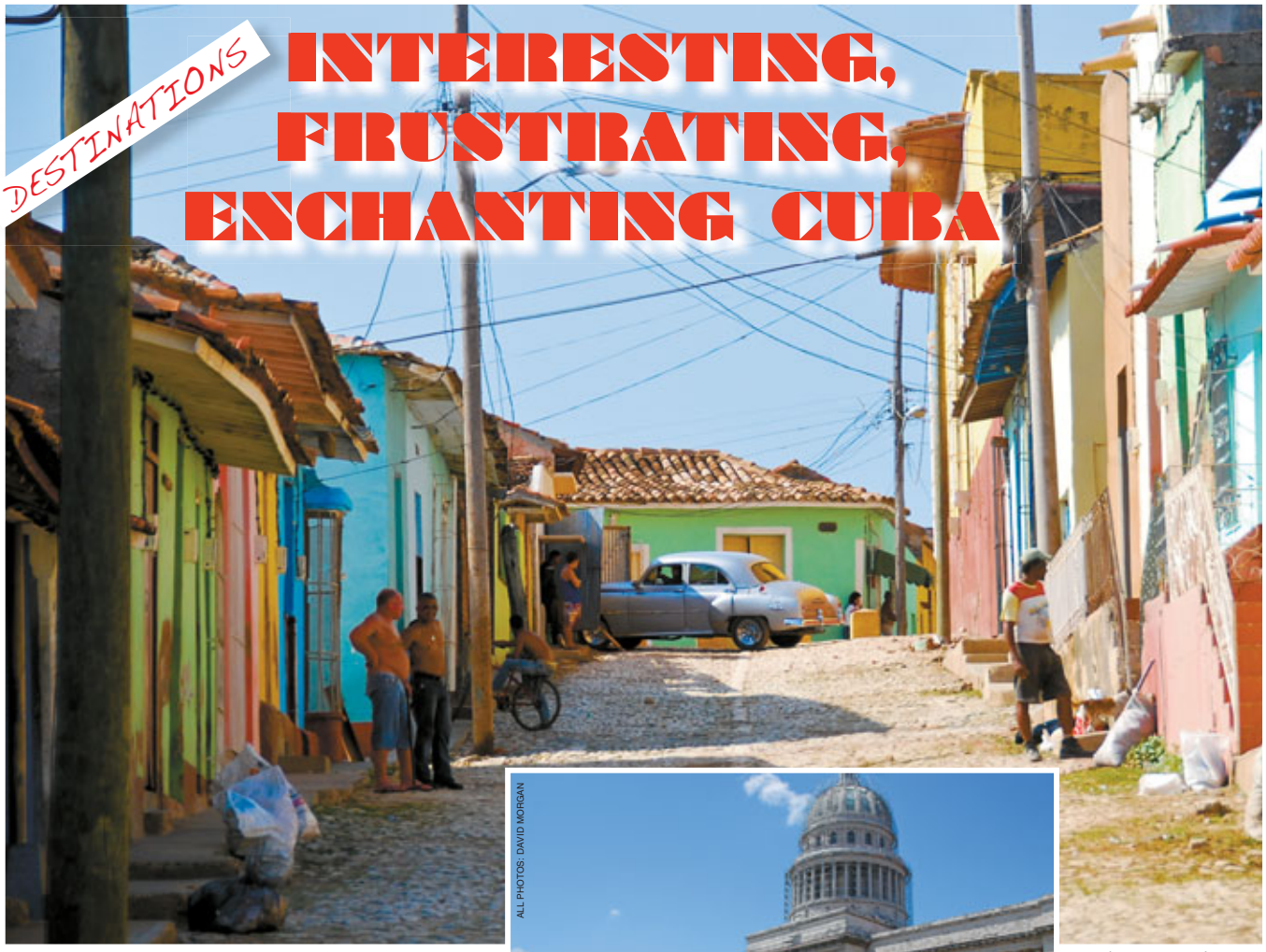
The Team Antigua members were Janield Smith, Stephon Dundas, David Jackson, Lewis Fitzgerald, Rhone Kirby and Jules Mitchell. The team was sponsored by the National Sailing Academy, the Antigua Yacht Club and the Ministry of Sport.

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DESTINATIONS

INTERESTING, FRUSTRATING, ENCHANTING CUBA



ALL PHOTOS: DAVID MORGAN



Above: Atmospheric backstreets in Trinidad where locals spend a lot of time sitting outside their houses
Left: Old American cars in front of the distinctive Capitolio building in Havana
Below: Vendors in the backstreets of Havana selling mangos for a few cents each

ALL PHOTOS: DAVID MORGAN



Planning on sailing to Cuba? Go soon and take plenty of patience with you advises Brenda Webb.

Sailing away from Hemingway Marina in Cuba, with 15 knots of wind on the beam under sunny skies, the smiles on our faces were wide.

The past six weeks spent exploring this fascinating Caribbean island and its southern archipelago had been an amazing experience for this Kiwi sailing couple. Heading north for the summer, David and I were taking with us thousands of photos, hundreds of wonderful memories and plenty of cheap Cuban rum.

Cuba was definitely one of the most interesting countries we'd visited in our eight years of cruising but also one of the most frustrating. Fidel Castro's communist regime seems determined to lay a difficult web of red tape for cruising yachts to navigate their way through.

We knew before we went to expect long-winded check-in/out procedures so weren't surprised, and it would be hypocritical to complain as New Zealand has complex Immigration rules that frustrate many.

We arrived in Cuban waters in early March, after a fairly lively sail from Mexico. In Cienfuegos, our port of entry, clearing in involved onboard visits from ten officials (Customs, Immigration, Health, Agriculture, Veterinary, Police, Port Captain, Dockmaster and two sniffer dogs (explosives and drugs) with their handlers and, owing to several other yachts arriving and leaving, the process took all day.

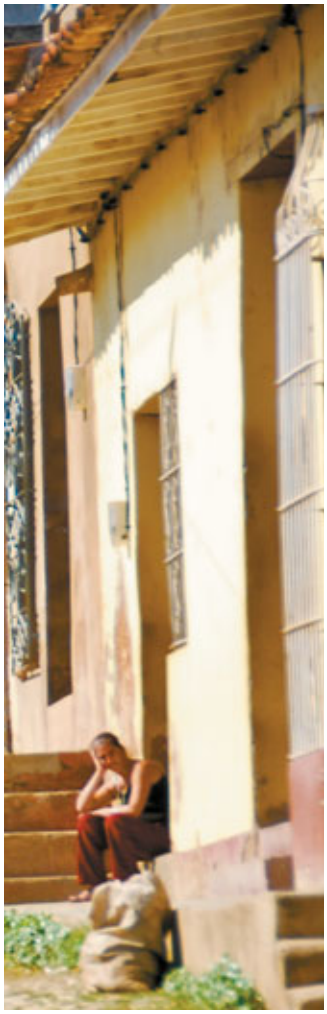
Stories vary between cruisers about protocols and procedures. We heard that officials in Cayo Largo confiscate any fresh produce. In Cienfuegos ours was thoroughly checked, as were all our dry goods and tins, but nothing was taken. While our check-ins and -outs always seemed to take forever, others were more fortunate.

Cruising friends who opted to only visit one port — Hemingway Marina in Havana — had their clearing in over and done with in less time than our "re-check" took. Luck of the draw, I guess.

Once issued with our cruising permit (*despacho*) we figured the worst part was over. Wrong — in the four ports we visited, officials insisted on coming on board to do paperwork as well as search our boat, *Bandit*. At Cienfuegos, Cayo Largo and Havana we had to take *Bandit* to the dock. On the isle of Juventud we anchored off and therefore had to bring two huge black-booted officials to *Bandit*. Having just spent the day in Nuevo Gerona provisioning, there wasn't a lot of room in our tiny tender and one black boot landed firmly on my fresh tomatoes — oh well, tomato pasta for dinner!

What we found overall was that Cuban officials are exceptionally polite, friendly and helpful. The only exception was in Havana where, on both check-in and -out, the coast guard fellow asked for gifts or money, which was disappointing as his colleagues were all entirely professional. With Hemingway Marina charging an additional ten percent for gratuities on top of the bill we were happy to firmly say no to his persistent requests. (NB: This charge is "discretionary" but we were pressured to pay it.)

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When issued with the *despacho* you must state on it the ports you want to visit and if you haven't put a port down, then it's difficult (but probably not impossible) to go there. We spent much of our time in isolated anchorages in the southern archipelago between our official "ports" and were never bothered by officials. However we did hear that officials are far more vigilant on the north coast and unexpected visits from the coast guard are the norm. It's worth noting also that many areas on the north coast are out of bounds.

Having got through entry formalities in Cuba we then had to get our heads around the monetary system. Cuba has two currencies: the CUC (convertible peso), which is equal to the US dollar, and ordinary pesos or *moneda nacional*. It's not always easy to get money from ATMs (our New Zealand debit cards would not work) so we were pleased we'd taken plenty of euros, which we then changed for CUCs and pesos at *cadecas*. We understand VISA cards are okay but, obviously, not American ones.

Using local pesos wherever possible is definitely the way to go; we used them at the fruit and vegetable markets to buy a week's worth of provisions for less than five dollars. Peso restaurants serve a pretty bland diet of pizza or toasted sandwiches but at one dollar for two it's a dirt-cheap way of eating. Those with a sweet tooth will love the soft-serve ice cream at just a few cents.

Stories about the average Cuban wage differ; we were told it is about US$20 a month. We found Cuba an incredibly cheap country but it pays to be careful, as there are plenty of locals around happy to take gullible tourists' money. Always check whether the price quoted is in CUCs or pesos — it does make a huge difference!

Cuba had always been the focus of our sailing season in the Western Caribbean and we fell in love with it. Formalities aside, we found the people incredibly friendly and helpful, the scenery beautiful and the music and dance culture fantastic. Yes there are political issues and frequently we cursed the communist regime when we saw desperately poor people, substandard housing, sick unneutered and stray dogs, and sickeningly thin horses (slaughter is forbidden).

Our month-long visa soon ran out. Extending it was not a problem… only (like everything here) time consuming. We didn't understand how much paperwork we needed — proof of medical insurance (difficult when you can't find an internet café with a printer), boat papers, marina documentation and pre-paid stamps bought from a bank — miles from the Immigration office! Once we had all this, getting the extension was a simple process carried out by ever-helpful and friendly officials.

From a sailing perspective the southern archipelago was magical, with gentle winds, spectacularly clear water, fantastic snorkelling and abundant fishlife. We spent several weeks in and around Cayo Rosario, Cayo Hicacos and Cayo de Dios.

The anchorages were fantastic and crayfish (spiny lobsters) abundant. Be warned though — you can be fined for taking crayfish as it is "government property". Despite this, most evenings, under cover of darkness, we had local fishermen turn up hoping to exchange a bucket of crays for anything from a length of rope to a bottle of rum.

Cienfuegos was a good place to leave *Bandit* at anchor to explore the once thriving and now beautifully restored town of Trinidad, while on the north coast both Hemingway Marina and Varadero provide safe marinas to leave boats for travel to Havana and Viñales.

After much deliberating we opted to double back from Cienfuegos and cruise the stunning southern archipelago again, then go around the western tip of Cuba and up to Havana. The southern coast sailing was kind but once around the western tip we found ourselves with both opposing wind and current and it was a real bash up to Havana. The few anchorages we visited were mangrove cays with distinctly murky water with the possibility of lurking alligators. Swimming and snorkelling were definitely off the agenda!

Inland travel in Cuba was easy, with buses cheap and reliable and *casas particulares* (private homes with rooms to rent for around $20) a great way of getting to know the locals. Being able to speak basic Spanish was hugely rewarding and helpful — especially the time we left our passports on *Bandit* when heading to Viñales for a few days.



The well-behaved spaniels that sniffed their way over Bandit *looking for drugs and explosives during check-in at Cienfuegos*

Below: One of many deserted beaches in southern Cuba, this one on Isla de Juventud





Above: Oxen are a common sight in the rural Viñales valley, a worthwhile inland trip from either Havana or Cienfuegos

Below: Bandit's *skipper with the result of an afternoon's snorkel in Cayo Rosario — before learning that taking lobsters can result in a fine!*



After much paperwork, phone calls by our *casa particular* hosts and a cap-in-hand visit to Immigration, we were permitted to stay.

Our advice to cruisers thinking of visiting Cuba is GO.
Go while it's still a fairly authentic experience.
Go before Cuba opens itself up to more tourists.
Go before it becomes just another Caribbean island.
Just go.

You Oughta Go Ta Gwada — Guadeloupe, That Is!

by Bill and JoAnne Harris

We have thoroughly enjoyed sailing up and down the spectacular islands of the Eastern Caribbean. Okay, maybe not so much when the boat parts break along the way, but at least we are fixing the boat in beautiful places. We always explore these islands to their fullest, both by land and by sea.

We have had memorable adventures in Guadeloupe. The first time we sailed to Guadeloupe, we arrived from Dominica at one of the places at the top of our list, Deshaies. We had a great sail facility, all in one. The pleasant surprise for us was that the French West Indies are wonderful in that you can check yourself in for all three agencies via computer and pay a fee of just 5 Euros for your entry.

We walked the town, which is extremely charming! The streets, homes, and shops are all lovely and quaint. You recognize right away that you are in an adorable French Caribbean village complete with gingerbread detail on the homes and decorative shutters on almost every building. Everyone is walking around



with other boats that we had been traveling with since we had left Florida for our second cruise south in December 2010.

The island is shaped like a butterfly; one wing is called Grande-Terre and the other Basse-Terre, with the Rivière Salée running between the wings. We did not venture into the river because of our trimaran, *Ultra's*, 26-foot beam and five-foot draft. [*Editor's note: The Rivière Salée is currently closed to sailboat traffic; the bridges will be in the closed position for repairs for the next several months.*]

Deshaies

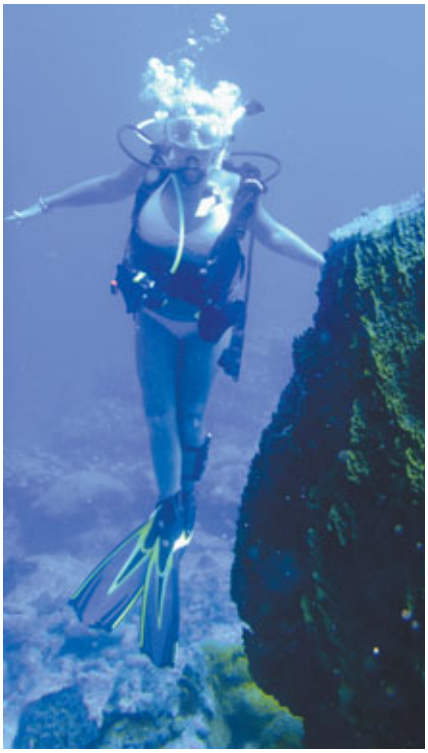
Upon our arrival in Guadeloupe, we dropped the hook and headed to check in with Customs, Immigration and the Port Authority at Le Pelican, which is a gift shop full of local art, an internet café and check in/out with a baguette. Also, Bill has to spread the word to all of you that the best rotisserie chicken in the Caribbean is at the Superette on the waterfront. You can even reserve a chicken for pick-up the next day.

We have hiked along — and in — the Deshaies River countless times. This is one of our favorite hikes ever. It consists of hiking straight up the river, scampering up and over giant boulders. FANTASTIC! We have been here in both the rainy and dry seasons, and the hike is different every time. The great thing is when you are hot you just jump in and take a swim. One of the best parts of the hike is what looks like a hundred-foot waterfall, which is located in a dazzling grotto. This is not to be missed; you must go inside it. After you hike up the river, you can hike back down or you can walk the paved road back down to town.

The village of Deshaies has also been the film site of a BBC series called "Death in Paradise". We love this show. When we were in Deshaies the first time, they were filming the first season and we were able to watch. While here, we also visited the Botanical Garden. One of our favorite places to have an ice-cold beer after a long hike is La Kaz.

'Aquarium' Diving

Farther south along Guadeloupe's west coast we anchored *Ultra* in sand at Bouillante and then took a short dinghy ride over to Pigeon Island and tied it to one of the many mooring balls to do some fantastic diving and snorkeling at the Jacques Cousteau National Park.



Above: JoAnne indicates the size of a barrel sponge at Jacques Cousteau National Park

Left: Bill, dinghying ashore for more adventure, with Ultra *moored in the background*

There are so many fish, you feel as if you are in one huge aquarium. The coral and sea life are extremely healthy and flourishing. The barrel sponges are so large that Bill can go in head first and actually fit his shoulders and scuba gear inside them without ever touching the sides!

Nearby Malendure Beach is very popular and it is full of delightful restaurants and shops.

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Iles des Saintes

This is a group of small islands off the south coast of "mainland" Guadeloupe. While sailing to Iles des Saintes, we had our first encounter with whales, without being on a tour. Throughout our sailing from Texas, along the Gulf Coast to the Bahamas, up and down the US East Coast and down to the Caribbean we saw numerous dolphins, but never whales. We were approx-



Checking out the shopportunities in the Saintes

imately eight miles out from Terre-de-Haut, when a pod of whales came cruising by *Ultra*. We were stunned! *Do we get the camera or do we savor the moment and just watch the show?* It was amazing. The whales just glided gently by, rolling on their sides and looking right at us. WOW. Making eye contact with such a huge creature of the sea was truly awe-inspiring.

After that exhilarating experience we arrived in the charming harbor at Terre-de-Haut, complete with picturesque bright red roofs trimming the waterfront. We have spent in all about two months at Terre-de-Haut. We always moor the boat off Bourg des Saintes, which is the only village. We absolutely love this place. Bourg des Saintes, is small and quaint, with narrow streets filled with delightful shops and cafés. There is a great produce and fish market along the waterfront. You can sit in the plaza and listen to beautiful music while you people watch. There is phenomenal scuba diving and snorkeling, great hiking and pristine beaches. You can hike, bike ride or take a scooter up and down these tremendous hills, rides which will take you to some stunning beaches and magnificent vistas. There is a fine hike to Napoleon's Fort and another to his Lookout Tower. Across the harbor is Ilet a Cabrit, where you can hike to the ruins of Fort Josephine. The hikes are quite the workout, but well worth it! [*See "Sailors' Hikes" by Chris Doyle in the May 2013 issue of* Compass.]

Everyone is extremely friendly. Every time we return, the locals give us a kiss and warm welcome back. There is so much to do here if you enjoy hiking adventures and being in the water, and it is a good place to just chill, too.

Marie Galante

Just east of Iles Des Saintes is Marie Galante, another of Guadeloupe's offshore isles. Here we had a fantastic time exploring. With our boat buddies from *Sabbaticus* and *Sol Mate*, we rented a hatchback car and loaded all seven of us into it. So fun! One big happy family on a road trip adventure, up and down the streets of Marie Galante around the entire island. We visited several rum distilleries; our favorite was Bellevue Distillerie. Some of the windmills at the distilleries even had the sails on them to grind the sugarcane. Here we also visited the breathtaking sinkhole and the natural bridge Mother Nature made of stone. Be sure to take a beautiful hike to visit the eco-museum of Marie Galante, the Habitation Murat. It dates from 1600 and was one of the largest sugar plantations on the island. While there, we saw fields of oxen hard at work pulling loads of cane on carts. There are some spectacular beaches, too. Unfortunately, due to weather, we did not get to stay too long on this tranquil island.

Pointe-à-Pitre

Back on "mainland" Guadeloupe, we dropped the hook just outside of the marina at Pointe-à-Pitre. Bas-Du-Fort is a superb marina complete with fuel, water, chandleries, mechanics of all kinds, restaurants and a delightful produce/fish market just across the harbor along the town waterfront. We also had some important mail forwarded to the marina from Texas and it came with no problem; the marina staff had it waiting for us when we arrived.

The ladies in the market at Pointe-à-Pitre dress up in beautiful Creole costumes that are complete with eye-catching hats. Please just be sure you ask to take their photo — they will be quite offended if they catch you snapping a photo without asking permission. This is an industrial port and definitely a "big city". While in the anchorage, you will see cranes that look like giant giraffes and enormous container ships gliding by at night. There is endless shopping, too. If you can be there on a Saturday, there is a wonderful Street Fest happening. When we were there the first time, the streets were all blocked off and all the stores were open, tons of booths were set up selling everything under the sun, and there was lots of great music and street food.

Zip Lining With a Twist

While we were in Pointe-à-Pitre, we splurged and rented a Fiat car for two days over Easter Weekend — appropriate, since it was shaped and colored like an Easter egg! We explored the island to its fullest and toured the entire island.

On our list was to do some zip lining with a twist. Located across from the zoo and botanical gardens up



in the mountains, it is not only a zip line, but also an obstacle course. It was complete with all kinds of moving parts that you must strategically make your way through while being suspended approximately a hundred feet above ground. The great part was that for 20 Euros and with no guide, we could do the course as many times as we wanted. That is definitely our style!

As if that was not enough adventure, we decided to step it up a notch. We love extreme hiking and rappelling, and here was the perfect place to do it. The outfit that we went with took us up to the incredible Guadeloupe National Park. The rainforest was majestic! We have done this several times before in other countries, but this was even more of a great adventure, complete with magnificent canyons, rivers, waterfalls, and rappelling. We donned Harley Davidson helmets, wetsuits, rappelling gear and — the sexiest part — a shiny black vinyl diaper. This was to protect the wetsuits as we came slipping and sliding down the natural waterfalls during the canyoning part. We proceeded through the canyons and it was like a Hash hike on steroids, full of extreme terrain and rappelling down the faces of waterfalls as high as a hundred feet. Woo-hoo! Slipping and sliding and jumping — so exhilarating! We highly recommend this if you enjoy adventure with a twist. We felt completely safe and secure in our harness equipment, and the guides were extremely professional. After a wonderful day with our guides, we returned to their headquarters and celebrated a stellar day with a few little cups of *planteur* and *'ti punch*, both made the French West Indian way, with several shots of their local *rhum agricole*.



Above: Guadeloupe's unique combination zip line and obstacle course was worth repeating

Left: The hike along the Deshaies River is a perennial favorite

We hope that you make time to spend on this beautiful island. You will not be disappointed. There is something for everyone. We cannot stress it enough, "You oughta go ta Gwada!"

Captains JoAnne and Bill Harris both hold 100-ton US Coast Guard Master Licenses and sail aboard their trimaran, S/V Ultra. They enjoy writing cruising articles for a variety of publications. To follow their sailing adventures visit www.jandbyachtultraadventure.blogspot.com.



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by Devi Sharp

A Circumnavigation of Marie Galante — on Scooters

The small island of Marie Galante lies south and east of Guadeloupe and has beckoned us for years, but the timing was never right to make the trip east into the wind and then explore an island that has few protected anchorages. But now, with little wind, the timing was right and my husband, Hunter, and I seized the moment. We motorsailed the 15.2 nautical miles from Isle des Saintes to Grand Bourg, the main town on Marie Galante. The small harbor was well protected, but it was too small for us and the other two boats we were travelling with, plus mooring was at a town dock, so it was noisy and not very private. The larger bay at St. Louis, the next largest town and to the north, was more attractive. "Large" is relative when talking about towns on an island of 61 square miles and 12,000 people. St. Louis offered a nice bay and a town with every thing we needed. Like Iles des Saintes, Marie Galante is part of Guadeloupe, which is a department of France.

The island of Marie Galante appears quite flat from a distance and is sometimes called *la grande galette* (the big pancake). Up close, this limestone-based island reveals quite a bit of topography including two rivers and the high point, Morne Constant, rises to 670 feet. The landscape of Marie Galante is dotted with ruins of stone windmills, dating back to around 1780. By 1830 there were 105 windmills. Oxen teams were used to augment the wind and by the late 1800s, steam power replaced the oxen. Cotton, tobacco and coffee have also been important crops. There are three rum factories in operation and there is still quite a bit of other agriculture on the island.

We and our friends on other boats decided the ideal way to see the island was to rent scooters and spend the day circumnavigating the island, taking the back roads, detouring for places of interest and finding a nice spot for lunch. There were six of us and we all rented single scooters except one couple, which worked out well because the backseat rider on the double navigated for the group. The first stop was the Gueule Grand Gouffre, at the north end of the island. It is a sinkhole at the sea with an arch in the 200-foot high wall. There was talk about how cool it would be to kayak from the sea through the arch and into the sinkhole.

—Continued on next page

DEVI SHARP



Top: Turn the throttle and go, just like driving a dinghy. We can do this!
Above: We thought it would be fun to kayak from the sea through the arch and into the Gueule Grand Gouffre sinkhole



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We scanned the horizon for windmills and followed the side roads to the ruins of the Desruisseaux windmill and from there we could see the Moulin de Bézard, a windmill where they do demonstrations on how windmills were once used, putting on the cloth sails and letting the arms spin. We headed inland and followed narrow farm roads to a small cluster of houses and the Moulin de Bézard. No one offered to set the sails on the windmill, but we did disturb a hen from the landing above the machinery. I climbed up to her ledge and found a nest with six large eggs; no wonder she was unhappy about our intrusion. A man drove up and explained that there was no one to conduct a demonstration, but he could sell us some cane syrup or guava syrup for *ti punch* drinks, or some coconut that had been dried and sweetened. I did buy some coconut and snacked on fresh guava from a nearby tree.

The next stop was one of the three active rum distilleries. We took the side roads through the fields planted with cane and other crops, past small communities of just a few houses to the Distillerie Bellevue. The distillery was fully functional and we were allowed to walk anywhere we wanted unescorted. We stopped at the bar for a few rum drink samples, then poked around the rum factory getting close-up looks at the cane pressing equipment and peering into huge vats and boiling cane syrup. Here we were able to see a windmill with the sails on the blades. The distillery was in full production and a cloud of cane syrup steam made a sweet and delicious smell.

Lunch was next on our agenda, so we hopped back on our scooters and headed to the coastal town of Capesterre de Marie Galante. We had scrumptious salads with vegetables, local fruit and prosciutto. The next stop was the Habitation Murat, a former plantation site and museum. The grounds were beautiful but since it was during the lunch hour (12:00 to 2:00) the museum was closed. Well, that is a good excuse to return.



We continued our clockwise circumnavigation stopping in the town of Grand-Bourg for a cold drink and on to the Poisson Pere Labat Distillery, which was also closed for the extended lunch hour — another reason to return.

There was still an hour and half before we needed to return our scooters so we scooted up the road that parallels the St. Louis River. The lush valley was bursting with vegetation; the mango trees were laden with green mangoes, there were papayas, breadfruit, guava and many other fruits and vegetables. Cows grazed between cultivated fields and farmers worked the fields with teams of oxen.

We returned the scooters and as we walked back to our dinghies we heard drumming and saw women in traditional dress, two yoke of oxen and a huge canoe. The traditional canoe (*kanawa*) was a replica of the canoes that carried the Carib people between the islands of Dominica, Marie Galante and Guadeloupe. After much fidgeting the teams of oxen hauled the canoe onto the beach, followed by singing, drumming and, we suspected, quantities of rum.

Marie Galante is slow and tranquil but, like so many of the Eastern Caribbean islands, it has a multicultural history. Christopher Columbus landed on Marie Galante in 1493 and named the island after one of his boats, *Maria Galanda*. Caribs fiercely defended their island and Columbus moved on to friendlier islands. The French attempted to colonize in 1648 and struggled to overcome the Caribs. It was not until 1660 that the French defeated them and sent the survivors to Dominica. The Dutch and British attempted to invade the island, and the island changed hands many times before it was ceded to France in 1815.

We moved our boats to the Ilet Vieux Fort anchorage and snorkeled around Ilet du Vieux Fort. This tiny island was teeming with nesting bridled terns. In our snorkeling circumnavigation of Ilet du Vieux Fort we saw a great variety of sponges and a beautiful sea fan forest, and swam through two underwater arches. We then moved the boats to the calm Anse Canot anchorage, which is only comfortable when there is no north or east swell.





Clockwise from top: Women in traditional dress prepare to accompany the drumming and dancing when the canoe (right) is hauled out of the water

Two teams of oxen were used to pull the replica dugout canoe ashore. Such craft once carried the Carib people between the islands of Dominica, Marie Galante and Guadeloupe

The windmill with cloth sails at the Distillerie Bellevue demonstrated the former use of windmills to crush sugar cane

I am determined to return to Marie Galante to explore the many hiking trails — and, of course, another rum distillery.

Devi Sharp is a retired wildlife biologist and exploring the Caribbean with her husband, Hunter, on their sailboat, Arctic Tern.

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Fire Aboard!

by Denise Simpson



'The fire started licking up the mast until the carbon caught alight; the mast buckled...'

On June 14th, the captain of the aluminum Jongert 2400M *Uisge Beatha*, anchored in Prickly Bay, Grenada, woke up at about 3:30AM to go to the heads and found thick black smoke inside the boat. He immediately woke up his crewmember. They crawled along the floor under the smoke to find the grab bag containing their documents, and a fire extinguisher. Then they tried to find the source of the smoke, which is presumed to have come from an electrical fire. They called on VHF channel 68 for help, but unfortunately the fire had already damaged the radio. For ten minutes or so they tried to control the fire with fire extinguishers but the smoke became overpowering. Crawling on their hands and knees again beneath the smoke, they reached the door in the saloon — only to find that they were trapped, as it had failed and locked in the closed position. They crawled forward again and climbed out of a deck hatch. The captain stayed on the foredeck using the deck-wash hose to try to fight the fire through the cracked windscreen, while the crewmember went for help at Prickly Bay Marina.

The big inflatable *Rescue 1*, operated by Darren Turner, Managing Director of Prickly Bay Marina [*see article 'Prickly Bay's* Rescue 1*' by Denise Simpson in the July 2013 issue of* Compass], was dispatched. On the way to the burning vessel, Darren phoned the coast guard repeatedly but could not get through so he called 911, who dispatched the fire brigade to the coast guard station within minutes. The coast guard was asked to bring their portable fire pump, but unfortunately it was out of commission.

At about 4:20AM *Rescue 1* came alongside the burning vessel; a nearby cruiser had also come aboard to try to assist. Shortly afterwards, two firemen arrived at the scene aboard a coast guard vessel. Darren went down a forward hatch to find the boarding ladder for the firemen, as the topsides of the boat were so high to climb up and nobody could board her at the stern because of the thick black smoke and heat pouring out aft. Upon boarding the firemen donned their breathing apparatus and safety clothing and the captain briefed them on the interior layout of the boat. They entered through a forward hatch, but when their breathing apparatus ran out of oxygen they had to be pulled back to safety.



'The captain gave the order to abandon ship. Everyone then stood off and watched helplessly...'

At about 5:00AM, Davide, Prickly Bay Marina's dockmaster, came aboard bringing as many fire extinguishers as possible from the marina, bar and Prickly Bay Restaurant, as the boat's fire extinguishers were trapped down below. Davide then returned to the marina and continued to assist with communications.

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By this time the burning boat's deck-wash pump had stopped working and the fire was raging. Fire extinguishers were aimed through cracks in the saloon windows, but to no avail. The captain gave the order to abandon ship. The coast guard vessel came alongside and picked up the two firemen, the captain and crewmember got into their dinghy and Darren lowered himself back onto *Rescue 1*.

Everyone then stood off and watched helplessly, with the captain and his crewmember in tears.



The next day, the burnt-out hull of the three-year-old, 80-foot sloop was secured to the tug Flying Buzzard

The flames and black smoke continued to get worse. The fire started licking up the mast until the carbon caught alight; the mast buckled and fell into the sea. Owing to the heat inside the yacht, the topsides hissed where they touched the water. Darren contacted cruisers in the bay (some of whom were just waking up) on VHF channel 68, warning them to move their vessels away from the burning vessel in case of explosions. He then phoned the Port Authority and received co-ordinates for where he must try to tow *Uisge Beatha* in case the vessel should start to drift — which thankfully did not happen as the windlass, deck and anchor chain seemed to melt into one mass of molten metal and adhere to the inside of the hull and hold the yacht in place!

There were several explosions from gas bottles, which could be heard like cannon shots over the sound of the screaming fire that was being fed by approximately 3,000 liters of diesel. So much smoke was created that it only started to abate about 12 hours later at sunset. Ignited flares could be seen through the vessel's cracked saloon windows. Thankfully, the aluminum hull, although buckled, distorted, torn and twisted, contained all the explosions and debris so there were no injuries and no environmental damage to the bay. Small amounts of debris such as ropes, bits of sailcloth, fenders, etcetera were picked up by *Rescue 1* and *Uisge Beatha's* dinghy throughout the day.

SOL Petroleum and RUBIS were contacted in case of a diesel spillage and to ascertain what sort of environmental damage control measures could be put in place if needed. Darren also phoned the university and airport to warn them of the toxic smoke blowing their way.

At about 4:00PM, the still smoldering vessel started to take on water through holes near her waterline owing to the number of dinghies coming past to look and creating small waves that lapped in. After purchasing every bung and type of patching material possible from the local chandlery in Prickly Bay (all of this stock was wiped out in one go) helpers started to patch up the holes with life jackets, foam, bungs, etcetera. Brett, a local commercial diver from Underwater Solutions, was on standby all day long after making an assessment and plans with Darren and Davide for sunrise the next day.

At 6:00 the next morning, once the hulk was cooler to touch, Brett came and inspected the anchor and chain. He later returned and, with the help of the yacht's owner, who showed him where through-hull fittings had been, he made sure they were all bunged tightly.

That afternoon, Darren contacted Mike on *Flying Buzzard*, a cruising tug [*see article 'Salvage and Salvation' by D'Arcy O'Connor in the June 2013 issue of* Compass], who was elsewhere in Grenada. Mike immediately drove to Prickly Bay to assess the situation and returned later that evening with *Flying Buzzard*, escorted into the bay by *Rescue 1*, and under floodlights they secured the burnt-out hulk to the tug. Mike then put a high-capacity electric pump into the hulk and, after nearly two hours of pumping, the seawater was removed. The next day Mike started to weld and patch the holes properly and start on the clean-up operation of the hulk.

Neil Bachelor from Flying Fish Ventures, a local insurance assessor and surveyor, came out to do the initial report and then the owner's insurance assessor flew in from overseas to identify her and write his report.

Uisge Beatha's captain and his crewmember took up the kind offer from Inge on *Homeward Bound* of a place where they could shower and try to relax after their ordeal. There were many offers from local businesses and cruisers of clothing, accommodation, and more. Both the skipper and crewmember stayed on island for approximately another ten days to sort out the insurance before heading out.

Darren from *Rescue 1* and Mark, a cruiser from *Sea Life*, went around to the coast guard base the next day and helped to repair their portable fire pump.

LESSONS LEARNED

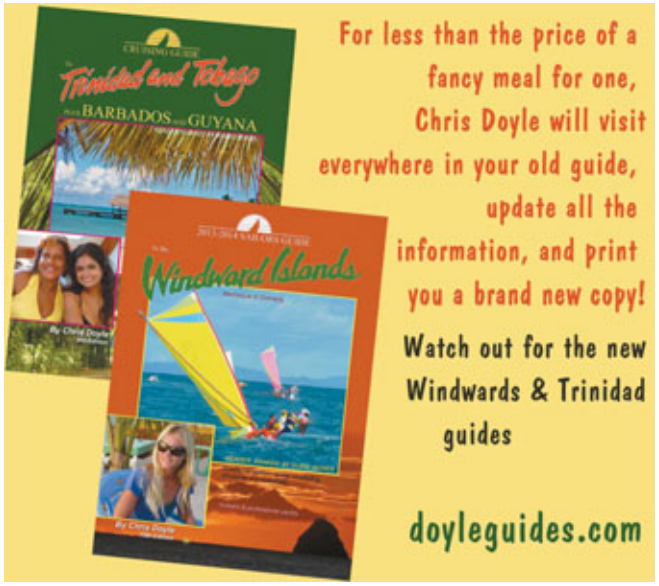


Boat Owners and Captains

- Below, spread your fire-fighting equipment around the boat and mark clearly where it is stored or mount it on bulkheads in plain view. Keep a fire extinguisher or two in a sealed bag above deck.
- Show all crew where fire extinguishers are kept and how to use them.
- For sealed engine rooms, use a built-in fire-suppression system or a fitting that you can spray a hand-held extinguisher into, so that you do not have to open up the area and thus feed the fire with oxygen.
- Install smoke detector alarms — they may give false alarms, but they may also save your life! Remember, when you are asleep you don't always detect smoke and might die in your sleep.
- Service all fire-fighting equipment on a regular basis — the cost is very small relative to what you have to lose.

Rescue Services

- Think in advance about what fire-fighting equipment you might need. *Rescue 1* now has its own fire pump and de-watering pump.
- Maintain all fire-fighting equipment in a ready-to-go state or it will be a "no show" when most needed.





Visitors to the Caribbean Say Boat Rides Rule!

When crusty, salty sailors try to imagine what activities in the Caribbean the average landlubber tourist loves, they might think that lying on the beach, duty-free shopping or casino gambling would top the list.



KAY WILSON / WWW.INDIGODIVE.COM

In informal tally of recent TripAdvisor posts indicates that boat rides are the best-liked tourist activity in the Eastern Caribbean

But guess what, sea gypsies? According to a recent informal poll of "activities travelers recommend" on TripAdvisor, tourists love a boat ride just as much as you do.

In search of an informal snapshot of the overall watersports scene in the Eastern Caribbean today, *Compass* took a look at the activities most often recommended on TripAdvisor by visitors to 13 islands/island groups: Tobago, Grenada, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Martinique, Barbados, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Antigua, St. Kitts, St. Maarten, the British Virgin Islands and the US Virgin Islands. This picture, we figured, would be meaningful because the information is offered by visitors who enjoy an activity so much that they spontaneously recommend it to others — they don't just *do* something, they are inspired to promote it. We did look for evidence of "manufactured" or solicited recommendations and, in this selection, didn't find any.

Day Sails and Boat Tours Far in the Lead

Boat rides (i.e. day sails and boat tours) were recommended almost twice as often as the next most popular activity, which was touring on land (including "island tours", eco-tours and excursions to historic sites). A very close third was scuba diving.

The land and the undersea world are obviously popular places to go, but getting out on the surface of the sea by boat is something that even non-yachting tourists really adore. Out of the 130 TripAdvisor posts we looked at (13 islands times the ten most recent "activities travelers recommend" per island), boat rides were recommended 49 times, land tours 27 times and scuba diving 25 times.

Those three activities alone accounted for a whopping 101 of the 130 recommendations, and then there was a wide gap. The next most popular activity — relaxing on the beach — was recommended only five times. (We love that these visitors consider "relaxing" an activity.)

Snorkeling and surfing got three recommendations each; and kayaking, kitesurfing, horseback riding, spa treatments and Segway tours got two each. Stand-up paddleboarding (SUP), jet-ski guided tours, scooter rentals and bicycling received one recommendation each. ("Create your own perfume" also got one recommendation; hey, there's something for everyone.)

Tallying up the water-related versus land-based activities, there were 86 recommendations for water-related activities and 44 for land-based activities — not surprising when people are visiting small landmasses surrounded by tropical waters.

The tallies varied by island, too, ranging from no recommendations for boat rides coming from Tobago (we have to wonder why not, with its beautiful coves, reefs and coastline) to nine out of the ten most recent recommendations from the USVI being for boat rides.

SUP and Kitesurfing on the Rise

While boat rides were a runaway favorite overall, we also looked with interest at some of the one- or two-vote outliers.

Over the past few months, the news that the government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines was considering overturning its law banning the importation of jet-skis caused a tsunami of negative feedback (the government has not yet announced a decision as this issue of *Compass* goes to press), so it was interesting to note that, although jet-skis are available to rent in at least ten of the countries we looked at, there was only one TripAdvisor recommendation out of the 130 for a jet-ski activity. Watersports do go in and out of fashion (for example, waterskiing, which was as popular as Camaros and The Ronettes in the 1960s and '70s, was not even mentioned in these most recent recommendations), and the Personal Watercraft Industry Association itself admits that sales of jet skis in the US peaked (along with the Backstreet Boys and Rubik's Cubes) in 1995. Www.ibisworld.com, the world's largest independent publisher of US industry research, concurs: "The personal watercraft manufacturing industry is currently in the decline phase of its life cycle."



JEREMIETRONET.COM

The exciting emerging sport of kitesurfing, here in the Tobago Cays

Meanwhile, a couple of other outliers — both in tune with today's fitness trends — are clearly on the rise.

Stand-Up Paddleboarding, with one recommendation, has, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported last year, "risen from invisible to red-hot." The report continues: "According to the Outdoor Industry Association, 1.24 million people SUPed last year, up 18 percent from 2010. Sales of SUPs, which are denser, heavier and more buoyant than surfboards, doubled between 2010 and 2011, according to Reid Inouye, publisher of *Stand-Up Paddle* magazine. Cristina Kochevar, watersports category manager for West Marine, the country's biggest watersport retailer with 308 stores, would not release sales figures but said, 'SUP is going gangbusters — the biggest growth initiative in our company.'



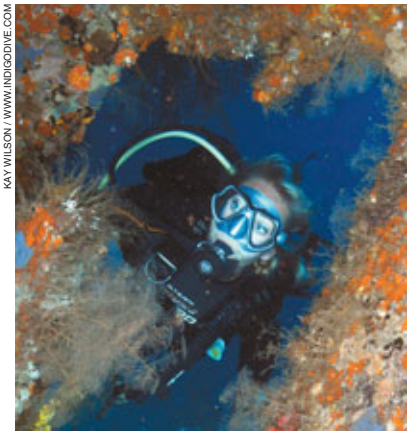
WWW.SUPTHEMAG.COM

Fun for all ages and skill levels, SUP has gone 'from invisible to red-hot'. As rental availability increases, will we see more recommendations?

"Rentals, typically around $20 an hour, are also jumping; 'We began renting SUPs two years ago, and now they're 40 percent of our business,' says Mike Ong, owner of California-based Southwind Kayak."

Time magazine, August 28th, 2012: "The sport known as SUP has been growing fast… SUP involves standing on an oversized surfboard and using a single lightweight paddle, ideally somewhat taller than oneself, to glide over water… And because it's low impact and relatively easy to master, it has found fans among every age group."

Here in the Caribbean, the Highland Spring HIHO, a windsurfing event in the British Virgin Islands since 1979, has added two SUP classes. A Standup World Tour event was held in Anegada last year. Puerto Rico hosts the San Juan SUP Cup. SUP rental and tour businesses have already sprung up in all of the 13 countries we looked at, and as well as paddling in flat water independent SUPers have found fun "point breaks" to ride in islands ranging from from Aruba to St. Vincent to St. Barths.



KAY WILSON / WWW.INDIGODIVE.COM

Next to boat rides, perennially popular scuba diving was the next most recommended water-based activity, and third overall

And, for those seeking thrills, kitesurfing (a.k.a. kiteboarding) looks to be just as much of a sensation. Wikipedia describes kitesurfing as a surface water sport combining aspects of wakeboarding, windsurfing, surfing, paragliding and gymnastics into one extreme sport. A kitesurfer harnesses the power of the wind with a large controllable power kite to be propelled across the water on a kiteboard similar to a wakeboard or a small surfboard.

The International Kiteboarding Association (IKA) is an International Class Association of the International Sailing Federation (ISAF). In 2012, the number of kitesurfers was estimated by the ISAF and IKA at 1.5 million persons worldwide with a global market worth US$250 million. The South and Central American Kitesurfing Championship 2013 was held in Bonaire. With the Eastern Caribbean being famous for wind, kitesurfing schools are springing up like grass after a heavy rain; and specialist yacht charters are being based on supplying gear and sailing to prime kitesurfing destinations — usually any place open to the tradewinds that is protected from choppy seas — in the BVI, Anguilla, Antigua and the Grenadines.

Cruisers, too, are riding the new wave, and in addition to their noodles and kayaks, you'll now see SUPs and kitesurf gear on private as well as charter boats.

SUP and kiteboarding appear to being the rising stars, especially for the young and fit. But meanwhile, coastal cruises and day sails have been going strong ever since the legendary *Kon Tiki* and the original *Golden Eagle* hit the waves in St. Thomas and St. Maarten in the very early 1970s. For the tourist who just wants to get out on the water, perhaps with a stop for snorkeling and a rum punch after, there will always be boat rides.

YACHTING A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO GRENADA'S ECONOMY

Tourism Sub-Sector Adds Over EC$130 Million Annually and Generates More Than 900 Jobs

"The marine and yachting segment of the Grenada tourism industry is a major contributor to the economy of Grenada. It is almost certain that it outstrips the international cruise segment, and it is quite possible that it is comparable with the resort tourism segment. It also appears that the marine and yachting segment has been able to perform this well with only limited government investment and marketing and promotion."

This is according to a recently completed seven-month study that assessed the impact of the marine and yachting sector on economic activity in Grenada. Having determined that the sector is having a net positive impact on the economy of the country, the study also made recommendations on improving the business climate for the marine and yachting sector in Grenada.

The Economic Impact Assessment of Grenada's Yachting Sector was undertaken by the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG), through funding provided by CARTFund and administered by the Caribbean Development Bank, in cooperation with the Grenada Ministry of Tourism, the Grenada Board of Tourism, and the Grenada Central Statistical Office.

This study found that the net annual economic impact of the sector on Grenada's gross domestic product is estimated at EC$130,382,053 (US$48.6 million). The direct impact on employment is estimated at 750 jobs and the induced employment impact is estimated at 162 jobs, for a total of 912 jobs. According to the data from the Grenada Board of Tourism, 2,941 yachts entered Grenada in 2012.

Robbie Ferron, the founder of Budget Marine group of chandleries, was consulted for the study. He noted that while benefits from yachting in the Caribbean come from two main streams — recreation and services — there are few countries that can take advantage of both. For example, Trinidad & Tobago is now established as a service center, while St. Vincent & the Grenadines is primarily recreational. Grenada, it seems, has the potential to capture both types of activities. When the island's yachting resurgence started in the 1990s, Grenada was primarily a cruising destination, but since then the sector has diversified with haul-out, storage, repairs and maintenance, which have become key services.

This economic impact assessment suggests that the most profitable segment in yacht tourism for Grenada is long-term stays. In particular, the sub-segment that appears to have the greatest potential comprises those boat owners who have a home elsewhere in the world, and base their yachts in Grenada, using the yachts as a "second home".

The study noted that the calculated economic impact of yachting is understated in a number of ways, including the fact that spending in communities, especially by yachting visitors who are in Grenada for extended periods, has not been captured. Many of the small suppliers dealing with yachts operate in the informal economy, and so it is difficult to assess the impact from this spending.

Much of the growth and development in Grenada's yachting sector has been spontaneous, with the private sector leveraging the island's comparative advantages of location and topography. In 2000, the sector got a significant boost with the passage of the Grenada Yachting Act, 2000, which helped to strengthen the competitiveness of the Grenadian yachting sector and served to attract new investment.

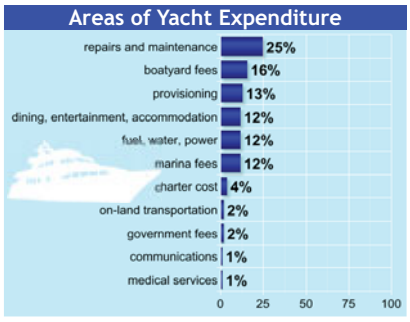
Grenada's physical, legislative and regulatory infrastructure and other necessary conditions are in place for the development of an internationally competitive yachting sector. At the same time, improvements are necessary in order for Grenada to be, at least, a regional leader.

Both yachting visitors and persons in yachting-related businesses were surveyed for the study. Among other things, respondents were asked to indicate areas of concern regarding the environment for yacht tourism. The three main areas of concern were Customs (including transaction and hassle costs in clearing of parts and spares, and a recommendation for a bonded warehouse), Immigration (including inefficiencies in procedures for checking in and checking out), and Human Resources & Skills. Although there is a shortage of skills in a number of technical areas, MAYAG is currently conducting a skills and needs assessment.

Respondents on the supply side were asked to list the yachting destinations that they viewed as their main competitors. St. Lucia was most often cited, followed by Trinidad, Antigua and St. Maarten.

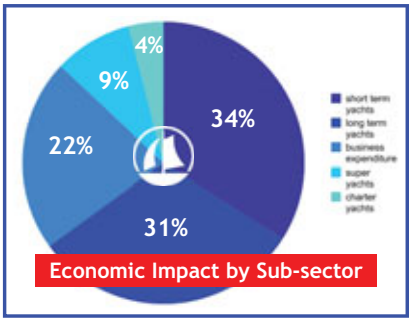
In terms of assessing the customer experience, yachting visitors to Grenada gave an overwhelmingly favorable assessment of the destination.











The yachting sector is an important part of the tourism product in the Caribbean. The sector is promoted in all the countries of the OECS, as well as in Panama, Colombia, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, the French West Indies, St. Maarten, the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, among others. With a few improvements, Grenada has the potential to become a regional leader

"Overwhelmingly Favourable"

- feedback on quality of yachting experience in Grenada -

BARRACUDAS

by Rebecca Bowers

Do you remember your first barracuda encounter? Silly question. If you've ever met with that marvelous creature in the wild, you remember it.

9 May 2013, 1040 hours
Benner Bay Lagoon, St. Thomas, USVI

Here I was, sitting on the settee of my boat, listening to an audiobook and sewing, when I heard such a racket outside. I thought that my dog, Robin, had once again fallen into the drink. He has such energy that sometimes he just can't help but run round and round the boat, and occasionally his zealousness and toenails have slid him into the water of the lagoon. But, after the initial uproar, I heard no splash of dog in water. Then he began barking madly at some invader into his world. He's a very good watchdog.

I honored Robin's frantic barks and rose from the settee to check it out. And... a HUGE barracuda was flopping about in my dinghy. Three-and-a-half feet long, exceeding the beam of the dinghy.

Said dinghy is a Tortola. Hard body, very, very stable. And while I haven't actually tried to walk on the gunwales, I have sat on them many times. Stable enough to land a massive fish.

I called bloody hell to my nearest neighbor, Tommy, that he's got to come over and get this poor distressed animal. And I wasn't just talking about the toothy savage. I was pretty distressed too, as, of course, was Robin.

Tommy couldn't hear my words, but he acknowledged the cries. By this time — and it was very few minutes — the fish had stopped floundering around as much and I realized that, with not too much threat from the critter to my person, I could drive my dinghy over to Tommy's boat rather than wait for Tommy to row over. Consequently, after donning a housedress, I eased myself in with the killer. Told Robin to stay on the houseboat. Then, once I had started the outboard, Robin jumped in, too. He obviously didn't trust his mom alone with this dangerous brute.

Tommy had clad himself too (we're very informal here in the lagoon), and stood on his boat's deck. "What am I supposed to do?" he queried.

What a silly question. "Get it out!" I screeched. Jeez. Men.

He grabbed a pair of old cut-off jeans — good thick material — and boarded my dinghy. The once-fearsome fiend was mostly still by then. At which time Tommy — very bravely — arranged the cutoffs in his hands and grabbed the poor fishie, which was practically inert, and heaved it overboard. At first it was sinking, upside down, then its gills quivered a bit. Another sinking, then more gill action.

Finally, the beast rose to the surface once again, gills a-flutter, and swam away. I'm trusting that it flipped onto its tummy before it got too far.

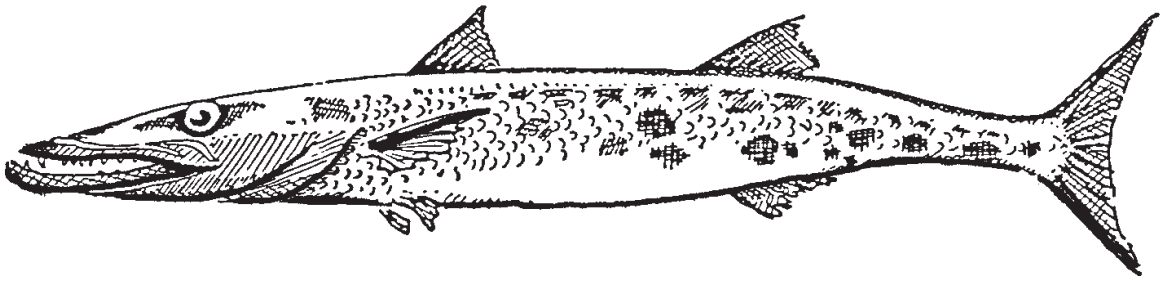
In the ways of people who have shared in a tragedy or at least a life challenge, Tommy and I chatted a bit. Robin kept watch. I lambasted myself for not taking photos of this glorious predator. Duh.

Everyone who has spent much time in tropical waters has most likely encountered such a wickedly grinning carnivore; therefore, this was a good time for Tommy and me to share Initial Barracuda Experience stories. Here's mine.

It was my first year here — 1985 — and I was with a friend who wanted to do some boat work in clean water; we went to Hawksnest beach on St. John. I was merrily snorkeling around when IT joined me. The biggest barracuda to ever live. You think I'm kidding? It was also by far the scariest. IT kept following me, even when I turned around to return to my friend's boat. IT was studying the best point of entry for biting into my flesh, without a doubt. Then I realized that I was not making any inroads towards my return. Instead, I was being pulled ever farther away. Seeking a safe haven, I headed over to a rocky little cay in Francis Drake Channel and made landing. I perched atop a rock and finally my huge-toothed companion turned away. Thwarted. Whew. But, what now? Since Dick wasn't in sight, he would not come to my rescue for who knew how long.

In those days, the Bridge Bar at Ramada Yacht Haven Hotel was the place for boaters to meet and party. St. Thomas was one of three top spots for chartering in the world, the others being Newport, Rhode Island, and the Med — in summers. Winters were all for St. Thomas. The stories from those glory days.... But that's for another time. One thing I will say here is that it was very, very fun and exciting and thrilling. Enticing. Very.

Anyway, there I sat, chilling atop a rock on a cay in the channel. Unable to do anything about my situation.



You have to remember: it was my first year doing this stuff.

Lo and behold, a charterboat swept very nearby. Then the person who had been steering noticed me and turned over the helm to his mate, hopped into his dinghy, released it from the big boat, and made its way to poor ol' me. He grinned, I grinned sheepishly, and when he was close enough, I loaded myself into his inflatable dinghy. He asked about my boat. When I told him, he grinned even wider. He knew Dick. And I knew this captain who rescued me. Jeff. Quite a reputation among the ladies at Bridge Bar.

He told me that we were in Current Cut, and it was no surprise that the current was whisking me along the wrong way.

Once we reached Dick's boat, a brief explanation served, and Jeff returned to his charter. He no doubt waxed lyrically of the rescue to his passengers. That's the kind of thing vacationers remember. What they extol to their friends back home.

You see, I had been snorkeling topless.





The Day We (Almost) Sank!

by Neil Sanders

It was a regular bright sunny tropical morning in the Grenadines as we dinghied out to a borrowed yacht for a day sail to a nearby island for lunch. The three of us had been looking forward to a Robinson Crusoe beach barbecue and a snorkel from an exquisite beach rarely visited by other yachts. The breeze was perfect as we sailed away from the harbor and we soon settled into lazy sailing under the jib alone. We rounded the point and came up on the wind but clearly needed more sail so up with the main and we reached briskly towards our destination.

As we came under the lee of our island destination we lost the wind, so on with the engine for the short leg into the bay. The necessary glance over the stern showed water reassuringly spurting from the exhaust but rather oddly also showed no propeller wake. A double-check that the engine was in fact in gear failed to generate any wake whatsoever. Strange, I thought!

Once before the same problem had occurred when the propeller shaft flange had disconnected itself from the gearbox so up with the engine hatch in the cockpit sole to investigate.

The first glance confirmed that the flange was in fact turning but where was all that water coming from... and where was the propeller shaft? Oh no! The water was pouring into the boat through the stuffing box and the shaft, complete with propeller, had completely disappeared. We were sinking!

We still had sails set but not yet filled with wind, with little sea running, so we had the opportunity to do something to stop the water pouring into the boat. A glance into the cabin showed no water yet above the cabin sole. I grabbed a nearby towel and with my head down into the engine hatch as far as I could reach twisted the corner into a plug and forced it into the stuffing box, calling for help for something with which to jam it in place. This sufficiently reduced the water coming in that I was able to raid the galley for a wooden pot handle to jam between the makeshift towel plug and the gearbox flange. Fortunately I had shut off the engine first. As I was head down in the bilge I heard a loud bang and felt the boat lurch as we gybed all standing. Luckily no one was seriously hurt and we now had some breeze so we headed for home while I addressed the next problem.

'Oh no! The water was pouring into the boat...'

Down below, the water was lapping at the top of the floorboards so on with the bilge pump to get rid of it. I was familiar with the boat, as I had sailed her several times before, so I was perturbed to find the bilge pump made no difference whatsoever. Usually it emptied the bilge at a reasonable rate but no water was issuing from the stern outlet. Okay, I thought, this boat has a heavy-duty hand pump fitted under the engine hatch for just such an emergency. But, no pump! It had mysteriously been removed since I last sailed on the boat.

So how to get the water out of the boat? We were towing a heavy RIB and outboard engine astern and would need all the sailing performance we could get to sail upwind back onto the mooring. With so much water aboard, it would take us forever to sail back. Back in the cabin I searched the galley for a pan that would fit through the floorboards and into the bilge to bail out the water by hand. Filling the pan I emptied it into the galley sink to drain it overboard — but all that happened was that the sink filled up and failed to drain out. Now what?

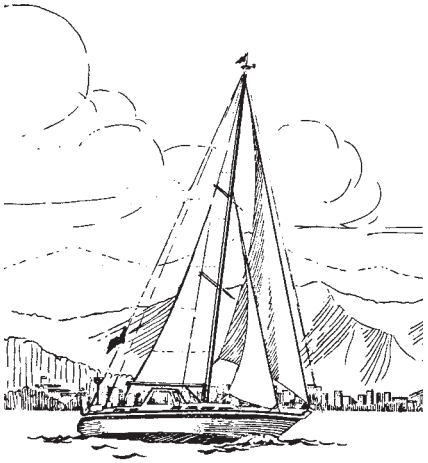
I remembered being told that the seacocks had been turned off so maybe that was the problem. The sink seacock was located in the under-sink locker and a glance into the locker showed it packed with an assortment of bottles and pans. Now I had to empty it without the contents falling into the open bilge and frustrating my efforts to get rid of the water. So into the forecabin floor space went the contents of the under-sink locker. When emptied, I discovered that a false floor had been built into the locker over the top of the seacock. So with some difficulty I managed to pry up the flooring and get at the closed off seacock. With it open the water obediently exited the sink and I could once again continue to bail out the bilge.

After half an hour of bailing the water was sufficiently lowered for me to finally relax just a little. We were now under control. The water was exiting the boat faster than it was entering so we were no longer technically sinking.

The boat was sailing considerably better and I was happier about being able to sail back onto the mooring with the heavy dinghy astern. I decided to sail above the mooring, drop the jib to clear the foredeck and sail onto the mooring with just the main. Everything went according to plan with just one exception. I had not allowed for the huge braking effect of the dinghy astern. Our first attempt left us a good ten feet short of the buoy. Luckily I still had just enough way on to kick her head to port so we could reach out and try again. She responded beautifully and obediently gathered speed. With sufficient way on I tacked her back for a second try but once again the heavy dinghy countermanded my efforts. She just failed to make it through the tack and we were stuck in irons. I broke out a handkerchief of headsail and backed it to port. She responded immediately and we were through the tack and able to reach back to the mooring buoy once again.

Gathering speed I now knew just how much the dinghy would slow us so I headed directly for the buoy and she stopped right on top of it. Unfortunately at this point the crew got the boat hook fouled in the rigging and we drifted clear of the buoy before he was able to free it. It was round once again for another attempt to sail onto the mooring.

I'm glad to say our third attempt was successful and we finally tied up to the buoy after a series of adventures none of us is likely to forget. It could all have turned out quite differently. There are lessons to be learned before complacently jumping aboard a boat you think you know.



JANE GIBB



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Caribbean Cruising and Crime Prevention

Part 3:

OPERATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT FOR THE CRUISING SAILOR

by Frank Virgintino

Regarding crime, the worst possible risk is the risk that is unaccounted for. Operational Risk Management (ORM) is a process that can be applied to identify, assess and then mitigate risk.

Identifying risks starts with an honest assessment of all of the factors relating to crime as they affect us while cruising. Stay aware of your environment: what is the risk of crime in a marina, at anchor and underway?

By assessing a risk or recognizing a risk level we can determine if it's within our means to control it or reduce it. Risk beyond our control should be avoided altogether.

To mitigate risk, we should avoid the riskier anchorages and destinations. Believing that we can find a "safe" area in a high-risk destination because there is some attraction there — for example, fuel is cheap — is a form of hope. Hope is a wonderful thing and an important facet of any optimistic outlook, around which all cruising plans should be developed. It isn't, however, to be relied upon to reduce risk.

Make a Risk Management Plan

Write your own Ship's Risk Management Plan, listing every type of risk relating to crime that you can think of, and noting where that risk is located. This exercise alone will help you.

There is never a time when you are risk free; what is noteworthy is *how* risky a given area or route is known to be. All of us have a general knowledge of this. We know that we can be mugged while on land and we know that the boat can be broken into while in a berth at a marina or at anchor. But knowing is not the same as acting and we need to act to identify the various risks, to understand each of them, and to make a plan that takes them into account.

Risk levels are calculated by determining the product of two basic variables — the probability of an event occurring and the severity of that event's consequences. If there is low probability of the event's occurrence and the consequences are minimal, there is little or no risk to account for. To properly calculate a risk level we must understand both variables.

Probability is the likelihood that a problem or incident will occur. You should always consider the probabilities and make them work in your favor — i.e. spend most of your cruising time in places or situations where crime is unlikely to occur.

The severity of a risk should be viewed in terms of the worst possible consequence and how you would expect to deal with it. The severity of losing a piece of equipment in a marina is very different from the severity of being boarded by armed robbers at anchor during the night. Think about how you would act in various crime scenarios, and discuss them with your crew. Everyone on the vessel needs to know how to react to a situation when it arises without having to give it much thought. People respond differently under pressure and one way to reduce the pressure is to rehearse "what if?"

Don't React in Haste

I recall an incident where a cruiser was anchored out; it was just getting dark. The owner was in the head and his guest heard someone alongside. He went out, bent over the gunnel and saw a man in a local boat and in a moment of fear clubbed the fellow over the head with a winch handle. It turns out the man was a fisherman who had fish that he was delivering and had brought it to the wrong boat. The fellow ended up in the hospital and the owner had a very complicated time dealing with the authorities.

Any act of aggression or violence leads to more of the same and cool heads should always prevail — never easy in a difficult situation. That is why discussing and planning risk management with your crew is so very important. Review with everyone on board what can happen and what you would choose to do if it did happen. In 2001, Peter Blake of America's Cup fame was shot and killed aboard his boat at the mouth of the Amazon River awaiting Customs clearance. At around 9:00PM a group of six to eight armed, masked robbers boarded Peter's boat, the *Seamaster*. As one of the robbers held a gun to the head of a crewmember, Blake sprang from the cabin wielding a rifle. He shot one of the assailants in the hand before the rifle malfunctioned; he was then fatally shot in the back by one of the robbers. The action cost him his life.

In a similar incident some years back, a woman was cruising with her husband and son on their sailboat and while at anchor three men came alongside and pointed a gun at the husband indicating that they were going to board. The son, aged nine, was next to his father in the cockpit, but the mother was below decks. She heard and understood what was happening and came up through the forward hatch with a pistol in her hand. Before she could get on deck, she was shot through the head. The robbers took what they wanted and made a hasty departure leaving the father and son unharmed.

The point is to try to rehearse what you would do in a tense moment and predict how the other crew on your boat might respond. It is very important to understand that the reaction to a problem or incident is as important as the incident itself. There is no guarantee of the outcome in any situation, but if there is a plan in advance, it almost always makes for a better outcome.

The Best Plan is Risk Avoidance

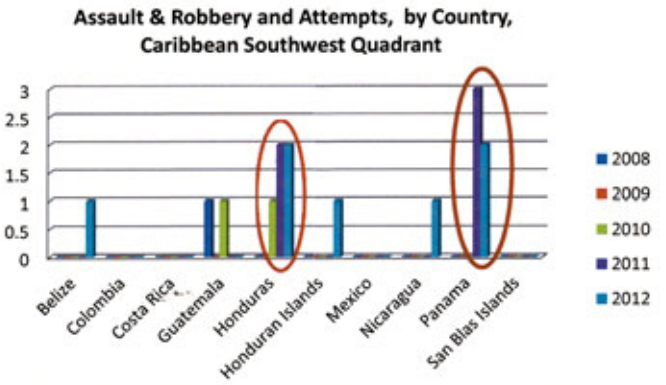
We must also learn, if our plan is to be effective, how to mitigate risk. Avoiding the risk is always the best possible tactic. There are many ways to avoid risk. The first is to know what and where the risk is. Local information is always good to check no matter where you go. This should be sought at anchorages as well as marinas and also determined for destinations and routes as well. You can also review data that is available through the internet. Consult Noonsite at www.noonsite.com as well as www.safetyandsecuritynet.com to review current information regarding crime at different locations in the Caribbean. Also, use the Caribbean Security Index (CSI), which gives probabilities for different types of crime throughout the Caribbean. It is offered free at www.freecruisingguides.com.

The CSI provides data for the entire Caribbean in many different formats all relating to probabilities. For example, here is a table of cumulative reported incidents for Grenada for the period 2008 through 2012.

CRIME	#	%
Theft	34	81
Burglary	5	12
Robbery	0	0
Assault	1	2
Assault and Robbery	2	5
TOTAL	42	100%

Of the 42 crimes that were reported, 34 were theft. This tells us that the probability of violent crime in Grenada in that time period was low; however, the chance of losing something due to theft was relatively high, so you learn that it would be prudent there to lock your boat and dinghy carefully and account for all gear.

Let's look at another table, this one for reported incidents of assault and robbery in the Caribbean Southwest for the period 2008 through 2012.



It clearly demonstrates that Honduras and Panama had the highest incidence of violent crime in that time period. It follows then, that before you set a course and a route for your cruise, it would be best to review what happened in those two countries and then decide whether the objective is worth the risk.

Operational Risk Management as Safety Equipment

As stated previously, ORM is a process that can be applied to identify, assess and then mitigate risk. To work it must be applied; it must be followed through.

The results may look like common sense, but just the process of working through the factors may offer the degree of objectivity necessary for you to realize when you're headed into dangerous waters.

If you speak to anyone who has gotten into a tight spot, it is very likely that they allowed emotions or an external influence to override sound judgment, as may have been the case with Peter Blake. It's very easy at a barbecue to discuss what you would have done or what someone else should have done, but unless you prepare yourself and your crew for what can arise, you will be at a higher level of risk.


BOSHOFF

Be alert, but at the same time beware of a knee-jerk adversarial reaction; you'll probably be pleased to meet the majority of folks in local craft approaching your yacht

We do not go cruising to put our crew and ourselves at risk unnecessarily. Planning to identify, assess and mitigate risk is the best way to manage it. It is not an easy subject to discuss, especially on a sunny day when everyone is happy and looking to set sail. However, it needs to be done and today more so than ever before. Being a victim of crime when you and your crew are aboard is a frightening experience, but even the loss of a dinghy can have negative consequences for what would have otherwise been a wonderful cruise. It is emotionally upsetting for everyone, creating a sense of being violated and exposed. There may be the need to call your insurance company, report the incident to the police, and reroute your trip in order to make a stop to purchase another dinghy and engine.

Most cruisers simply hope that crime will not happen to them, as if hoping is going to make the difference. By making a plan, we become more conscious of our environment and the risks associated with it. When we incorporate Operational Risk Management (ORM) procedures into the process, we add a degree of discipline and a margin of safety. We work so very hard on making our cruising lifestyle happy and enjoyable — why not make it as safe as possible from crime as well!

Frank Virgintino is the author of Free Cruising Guides (www.freecruisingguide.com).



AUGUST 2013

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
Complete projects involving communications before the 17th, when squalls involving a shipmate or cruising pal of the opposite sex could throw you off course. You can ease the sheets after the 23rd, when these aspects reach their zenith and begin to taper off.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
There will be choppy seas in creativity during the middle of the month, culminating on the 23rd. Romance will provide a welcome distraction until the 17th. If you remain objective you will sail through into fair winds and following seas after the 23rd. Your creative efforts will succeed in the next month.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
Your domestic situation could suffer a tropical low, with pickiness and misunderstandings in the first two weeks. This aspect will clear up on the 17th and you will find an even keel and renewed wind in your sails of love.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Use this time to complete repairs and projects on board. Don't let fluky winds in your love life bug you after the 17th. Engage your sense of humor and use it to power through to better weather.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
It will be full sail in your cruiserly creativity from the 9th to the 23rd, so use this time to best advantage by completing some challenging boat projects.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
Romance will be the main wind in your sails until the 17th. Inspiration and verbal abilities will catch a fair breeze after the 24th and broad reach you through the next month.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Some minor contrary currents back home may interfere with freshening winds in your love life during the first two weeks, but they will subside after the 28th and leave you free to enjoy romance well into September.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
Now is a good time to complete any repairs on board, but don't start anything new. Efforts made now will help in boat business later.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
Romance may be in the doldrums so put your energies into creativity and engage your verbal skills to assist in new onboard projects between the 9th and the 24th.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
Your love life will continue on its current course until the 17th when it could fall way off to leeward and make you consider other options for the use of your time.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Ingenuity will be adversely affected by poor propagation in communications between the 9th and the 24th. You may find a new course to sail in romance after the 17th, when a new temptation sails into port to divert you.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
Your desired landfall will be finishing projects onboard before month's end. Don't be lured onto the rocks by discontent in your love life.

Island Poets

The TOFFs

The TOFFs are off to sea again,
To test their skills and ply the main.
Friends tell them that they are insane,
The "Two Old Funky Farts!"

Their boat is old, it creaks and moans,
The TOFFs hoist sails with grunts and groans;
It's much too much for their old bones —
And all the other parts!

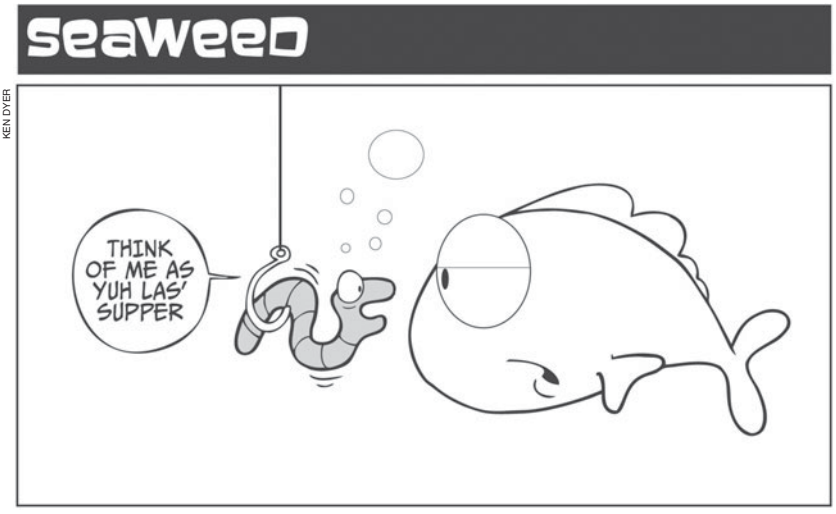
It seems the TOFFs cannot abide
Landlubber life, and too beside,
They love the ocean, wild and wide,
And all of sailing's arts.

TOFFs know the sea god is not kind
To those who've left their youth behind;
When seas are kicking, they must find
The calm within their hearts.

Some say, "Why can't they just be walkers?"
"They must be crazy, off their rockers!"
"Headed for Davy Jones's lockers!"
And similar remarks….

Still, raise a glass and say a prayer
For TOFF-like sailors everywhere,
Old mariners with style and flair,
Like "Two Old Funky Farts"!

— Nan Hatch



The Hurricane Hero

by Lee Kessell

Throughout the Eastern Caribbean islands, hurricanes are a fact of life, but they do not happen every year. Most of them go north and devastate parts of Florida or else they hit places like Cuba or the Cayman Islands. Our story takes place in a small cove in the north of the island of St. Lucia, a very beautiful island of wild mountains and sunny beaches in the lower Caribbean. The island had been given dire warnings of the vigorous season ahead and even the fishes in our cove had heard these warnings and were frightened. Not so many years before the cove had been mauled by a hurricane, and so all the fish mothers and fathers were frightened for their children and even the Sea Stars trembled.

"We're going to have to do what we can to protect everyone," Harry the Sergeant Major Fish said to his best friend Jim the Pork Fish. Jim nodded, "But what?"

"I've been thinking about it and I have a plan. I reckon that if a hurricane does hit, we could take shelter in hollows under the big rocks." When Jim looked skeptical, Harry said, "Come on and I'll show you."

'We're going to have to do what we can to protect everyone,' Harry the Sergeant Major Fish said

So Jim followed Harry to a large heap of tumbled boulders in the northern corner of the bay. "If we could get everyone to help, I'm sure we could hollow out caves under the rocks and with any luck, we could survive nicely."

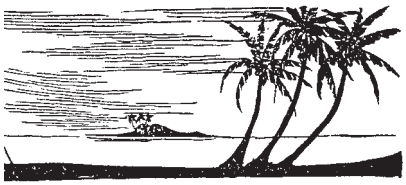
So Harry, with the help of Jim, began organizing his forces, just like in a human battalion. Harry knew that he would need many caves under many boulders so he got all the Jaw Fish together and had them hollow out the caves. Many other fishes fanned their fins and tails to brush away the sand and rubble. The Parrot Fish were very good at getting pieces of dead coral out of the way by chewing through them and puffing out the fine sand. Far quicker than anyone had thought possible, all the work was done; the hurricane shelters were completed and Harry breathed a sigh of relief.

But what about the Sea Stars, who had collected to see how Harry could help them? "If you bury yourselves in the sand behind the rocks here, I'm sure you'll be all right, and the Sea Cucumbers too. Squirt out as much fluid as you can so that you can lie as flat as possible and sink down into the sand."

Well, time went by and everyone was in a state of alert. When the seas began to build up and the rain and the lightning struck, all of the fish rushed to their hiding places and cowered down, trying to comfort each other. The hurricane had hit and as the storm raged, the sand built up around the rocks and everything was as black as night as if they were imprisoned in the deepest cell. The fish children cried in terror and the mothers, shaking with fear themselves, tried to comfort their little ones. The fathers, although frightened, had to pretend to be big and strong and they embraced both mothers and children. So the hurricane raged on for many hours until it seemed like days had gone by, but at last, very slowly the waves lost their force, the sun came out through ragged streamers of clouds and Harry pushed his way out of his hiding place.

The hurricane had not been as ferocious as predicted and as Harry had hoped, the weather had come from the direction that left the north corner of the bay sheltered. All the Sea Stars and the Sea Cucumbers burrowed their way out of the sand and went back to the sandy places where they lived. The fish went back to their former homes. The Parrot Fish, who lived on the reef, returned to find that this time the reef had survived quite well. Yes, everyone was happy. But before they left they all joined together and shouted, "Good on you Harry, our hurricane hero!"

THE END



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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2013

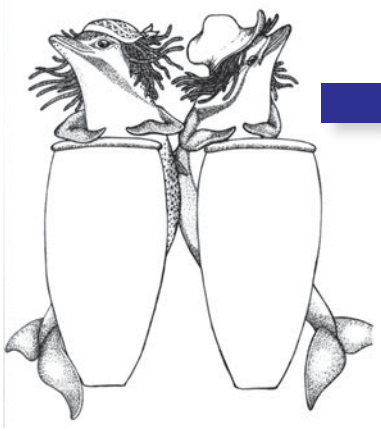
Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this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

August 2013		21	0000 (full moon)	11	1655
DATE	TIME	22	0045	12	1752
1	0746	23	0136	13	1851
2	0834	24	0226	14	1949
3	0922	25	0315	15	2045
4	1009	26	0403	16	2140
5	1056	27	0452	17	2233
6	1141 (new moon)	28	0540	18	2324
7	1226	29	0628	19	0000 (full moon)
8	1311	30	0716	20	0014
9	1356	31	0804	21	0104
10	1441	**September 2013**		22	0153
11	1528	1	0851	23	0243
12	1616	2	0937	24	0332
13	1708	3	1024	25	0423
14	1802	4	1107	26	0509
15	1900	5	1153 (new moon)	27	0557
16	1959	6	1238	28	0644
17	2100	7	1325	29	0730
18	2159	8	1414	30	0816
19	2257	9	1504		
20	2352	10	1559		



SALTY'S BEAT BY NATHALIE WARD

Sharks — Wired For Hunting

Sharks have prowled Earth's seas for more than 400 million years. And for more than 100 million years, they have been nearly unchanged in form. Together with their closest relatives, the skates, rays, guitarfishes and sawfishes, they are collectively known as *elasmobranchs*. Elasmobranch means "strap gills", which refers to the five to seven pairs of gill slits on the head. Water exits through these slits after having entered through the mouth or spiracles (small holes on top of the head in some species) and having passed over the gills, which extract oxygen.

Altogether, there are about 480 species of sharks, one-third of which are threatened with extinction because they are over-fished or killed incidentally in swordfish and tuna catches. All have certain anatomical features in common, most notably the fact that their skeletons are made entirely of cartilage as contrasted to the bony fishes whose skeletons contain true bone. Also, unlike most bony fishes, sharks do not have well-developed ribs or a swim bladder. Thus, sharks are slightly negatively buoyant. And despite the lift from a large oil-rich liver, they sink slowly unless they continue to swim.

Sharks are different in other ways, too. They have the same five senses we humans have plus a sixth sense — electrosensitivity — that helps them find live prey. All living things emit electrical fields, either with the beat of the heart, muscle movement or with the brain. Animal prey can effectively hide or camouflage themselves, but they cannot conceal their electrical fields. Sharks detect those electric currents through specialized pores called *ampullae of Lorenzini*, named after the 17th century anatomist who first described them.

Hundreds of pores around their faces act as homing devices and detect the electrical currents that other organisms emit. The salty aquatic environment transports those electrical currents toward the shark. The pores look like tiny black specks dotted around the shark's snout. If you were to pull an Alice in Wonderland shrinking trick and dive into one of those pores, you'd land in a river of electrically conductive jelly. You'd also have to navigate through a forest of *cilia*, or tiny hairlike cells, that move in response to the electrical currents and trigger the release of neurotransmitters in the shark's brain. Those neurotransmitters then alert the shark that a potential dinner looms nearby.

Sharks can sense the tiniest changes in electrical current, down to one-billionth of a volt. Moreover, Discovery News reports that if two AA batteries were connected 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) apart, a shark could detect if one ran out!

Weird Shark Names

Sharks often have odd common names. The cookie cutter shark, for example, derived its name from its habit of removing small circular plugs (like cookie cutters) of flesh and skin from whales, dolphins and large fish, including other sharks. A vacuum is created when the cookie cutter shark's lips attach to the victim. It then takes out an oval-shaped bite of flesh by using its saw-like teeth, leaving behind a cookie cutter-shaped wound.

Check out the illustration at right. Guess the common name for each species. *See the answers on page 45.*



The Sky in August 2013

by Scott Welty

The Planets in August 2013

MERCURY, JUPITER, AND MARS - All up in the morning twilight — Mars and Jupiter all month, while Mercury does a dive to the Sun later in the month. (See Figure 1.)

VENUS - Almost stationary in our western sky in the evening, setting at 2130 hours.

EARTH - Going on summer vacation... or do you say "holiday"?

SATURN - Setting a couple of hours after Venus and riding in Virgo.

Sky Events This Month

3rd - GET UP! Jupiter, Mars, Mercury AND the crescent moon in the eastern sky. (See Figure 1.)

6th - New Moon

12th - Crescent moon and Saturn ride together. (See Figure 2.)

11th through 13th - Perseids meteor shower. (See below.)

20th - Full Moon

The Perseids

This is the most popular and busiest meteor shower of the year. We are especially lucky this year as the waxing crescent moon won't be washing out our nice dark sky. Best viewing is from late night to early morning hours. The shower is called the Perseids because the meteors seem to radiate from a point within the constellation Perseus. You don't need to be able to find Perseus to look at meteors though as they can streak across the sky anywhere but will all be traveling in roughly the same direction. Just lie down and look up! At its peak this shower can produce over 100 meteors per hour.

More Exo-Planets!

Big news last month! Astronomers have confirmed that there are three planets orbiting in the habitable zone of one of the stars of the three-star system — Gliese 667. The star system is a tantalizing 22 light years away. Too faint to see with the naked eye, the system sits just off the tip of Scorpio (see Figure 3). The star has a total of six or even seven planets orbiting it, with three in the zone where liquid water can exist (see Figure 4). This is important, as we know of no way for life to form other than with liquid water as the key.

The question of "Are we alone?" may becoming moot. A few years ago we didn't even know if there were any other planets out there let alone any other life forms. Now we know that planets are the norm in a galaxy filled with billions of stars and for sure some of those are going to have liquid water on them. How long until we detect intelligent signals from one of these?

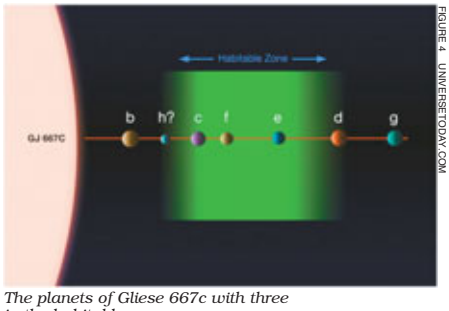


FIGURE 4 UNIVERSETODAY.COM

The planets of Gliese 667c with three in the habitable zone

And the beauty of all this is our firm understanding that the laws of physics that we discover in our laboratories are the same laws that apply 22 or a million light years away. Our laws are truly universal. We know that the periodic table of elements, for example, isn't the Earth's periodic table, it's the universe's periodic table. Same for Newton's Universal gravitation, Einstein's relativity, and so on.

The frustrating part is how stinking far 22 light years is. Our fastest manned space ships have only gone about 50,000 km/hour or about 14 km/second. Compare that with the speed of light at 300,000 km/second. If we could travel AT the speed of light it would take 22 years to get to this outpost. At a pokey 14 km/second it would take about 440,000 years to get there. The distances involved in things outside our own solar systems are depressingly and breathtakingly huge.

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

So, a final thought. If we completely screw up our pretty little planet there will be NOWHERE to run.

Scott Welty is the author of The Why Book of Sailing, *Burford Books, ©2007.*



FIGURE 1

August 3, 0430, Looking east: Jupiter, Mars Mercury and crescent moon



FIGURE 2

August 12, 2030 hours. The moon helps you to find Saturn. There's Venus too!



FIGURE 3

Wave to the nice creatures orbiting Gliese 667c



BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

The Mysterious

Francis Sancher

Crossing the Mangrove *by Maryse Condé, First Anchor Books Edition, ©1995, ISBN 0-385-47633-7.*

In the novel *Crossing the Mangrove*, originally written in French in 1989 and translated into English by her husband, Richard Philcox, Guadeloupean author Maryse Condé has vividly depicted the colours and vibrancy of her homeland, imparting a delightful island feel. She has not only painted a landscape of the village, Rivière au Sel, the location for the story, but her brush strokes have also created vivid portraits of her many characters — even Francis Sancher, who is at the heart of the story though his heart beats no more.

Sancher is an outsider who comes to the village with the ominous prediction of his own demise. However, readers know not much more about this mysterious and melancholic stranger at the end of the book than at the beginning of the story when Mademoiselle Léocadie Timothée finds him murdered, "face down in the sticky mud with his clothes soiled."

But *Crossing the Mangrove* is not a murder mystery. Rather, the author uses the incident to comment on the Rivière au Sel community and the people who inhabit it. Condé does so by unfolding the story via a wake, where the villagers of Rivière au Sel relate, either verbally or through internal monologue, their experiences with Sancher, a man hated by some, loved by others.

As the mourners tell of their individual relationships with Sancher, whose ancestral history began in Guadeloupe, their experiences intertwine, creating a rich tapestry of Rivière au Sel's society, with Sancher at its centre. As they express themselves, some of them release emotional the shackles that bind them and move on with their lives.

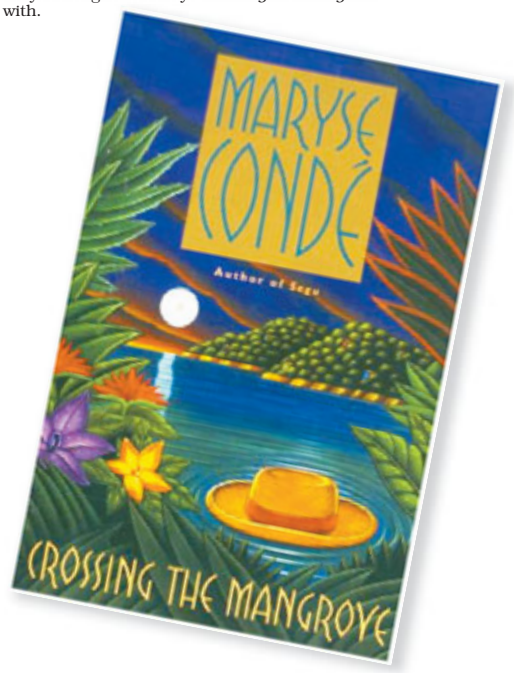
In all, 20 speakers tell their stories of either loathing or being fascinated by Sancher. Moïse the postman, known as The Mosquito, starts the tale wagging. "I was the first to know his real name." Francisco Alvarez-Sanchez: "Moïse repeated the words to himself as if they gave him a right to the deceased, a right he was unwilling to share with either of the two women who had loved Francis or with the two children he had planted in their wombs, one of whom was already shooting up fatherless under the sun, the other who was getting ready to enter this world as an orphan with nothing but two eyes to cry with."

Meeting the newcomer on the road one day, the postman offers him a lift home and ends up offering to help him repair his dilapidated house. The two become friends. Soon Moïse moves in with Sancher, causing some wicked sneers. The first night they had spent under the same roof was enlightening for Moïse.

"Francis Sancher was not at all what he imagined… His mind was not cut out for the size of his body. Francis Sancher was weak and whining, as scared as a new boy in a turbulent schoolyard, like a newborn arriving in the world of the living. His sleep was not filled with voyages to paradise, but struggles with invisible spirits who, judging from his shouts, struck their red-hot irons into every corner of his soul."

But that's not the only insight to Sancher we receive from Moïse. When the villagers stopped Moïse and asked him what Sancher was doing, "they were told he was a writer", though no one knows what he has written. Towards the end of the story readers learn that the title of the book he is working on is *Crossing the Mangrove*.

Despite the book's abundance of characters, Condé's artistry keeps the beautifully structured story flowing effortlessly. *Crossing the Mangrove* is a wonderful book to spend time with.



JUST LAUNCHED!
Cruising Life
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Cruising Life: The Best Stories from Caribbean Compass
is a collection of 49 outstanding articles selected from more than 200 issues of ***Caribbean Compass***.
Ann Vanderhoof, author of An Embarrassment of Mangoes and The Spice Necklace, says, "Given a new life beyond the magazine, the pieces in this collection resonate and sparkle in a very different way, offering new pleasures. Beyond its entertainment — the first piece had me hooked — the collection is sure to spark ideas in both cruising sailors and armchair dreamers."
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Cruising Life: The Best Stories from Caribbean Compass*, compiled by Sally Erdle and Rona Beame. Compass Publishing Ltd. ©2013. Color photos. ISBN 978-976-95602-0-8. eBook (Kindle) US$8.95 (US$10.95 in some locations).*

Over the years the suggestion has been made, "Why don't you do a 'best of *Compass*' book?" For many of those years, it was because producing the monthly *Compass* magazine didn't leave time to tackle a book project. Then, unexpectedly, writer, former cruiser and *Compass* correspondent Rona Beame offered to help. In 2006, stories began to be selected from back issues, authors were contacted to ask for reprint permission, and nautical book publishers in the US were approached. A publishing deal was nearly made when the recession hit, the publishing industry contracted, and the project was put in stowage.

Fast forward to last year, when Cap'n Fatty and Carolyn Goodlander sailed their new yacht, *Ganesh*, into Bequia on the first leg of their latest circumnavigation and asked the familiar question, "Why don't you do a 'best of *Compass*' book?" Upon hearing the story, Fatty and Carolyn, with many books under their belts, extolled the joys of digital self-publishing. *Cruising Life: The Best Stories from Caribbean Compass* is the result. An eBook, it can be read on Kindles and iPads, and those without eReaders can download a free app from Amazon to read eBooks on PCs or Macs.

Cruising guide author and *Compass* contributor Chris Doyle, who has sailed the Caribbean since 1969, says, "*Cruising Life* is a fabulous collection of classic *Caribbean Compass* articles. Sally and Rona have done an amazing job of mining the *Compass* archives to come up with a book that is lively, fun and describes not only cruising life, but life on the waterfront. The Adventure chapter will put paid to the notion that Caribbean cruising has become ho-hum. Chapters on Humor, Travel, Poems, Book Reviews and Recipes provide vignettes that create a colorful and representative picture of the Caribbean."

It wasn't easy to select the 49 articles that appear in this book. As authors whose work doesn't appear in the book will no doubt agree, "best of" is perhaps a misnomer — what's "best" is, of course, subjective. This collection, chosen from more than 200 issues of *Caribbean Compass*, is in fact a sampler aimed at giving lasting insight into the unique culture comprised of people living aboard their own boats and sailing their own courses through the Caribbean Sea.

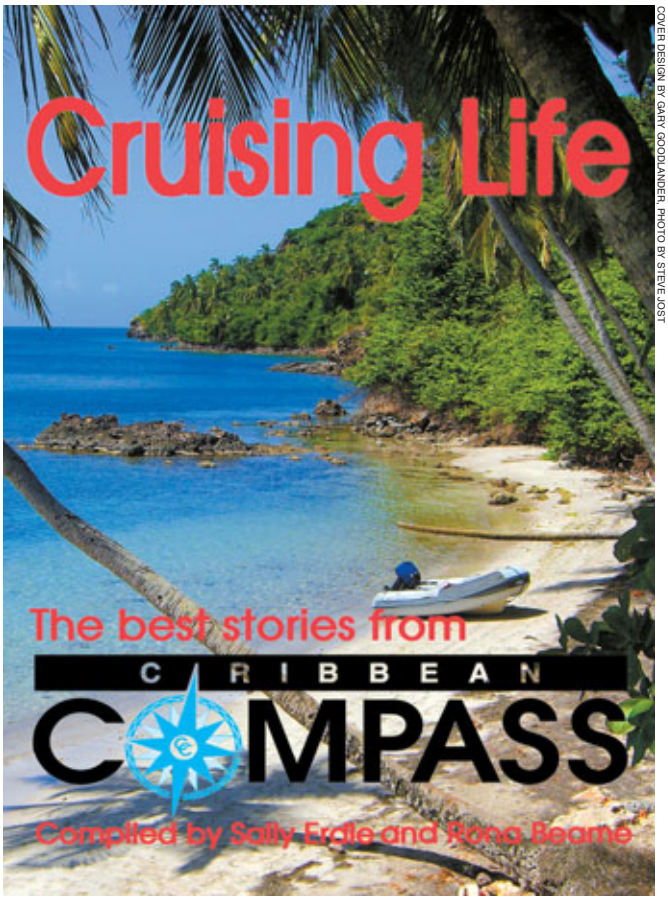
The selection ranges from Ruth Chesman's gripping first-hand account of falling overboard in mid-channel and Thomas Warner's poignant recollection of losing his boat in Hurricane Marilyn, to Peter Roren's comically surreal Venezuelan money-changing experience and Donald Stollmeyer's hilarious iconic dollar-bus ride. The locations described span the Caribbean from St. Croix to Cartagena and from Barbuda to Guatemala. Cruising cooks share gourmet galley secrets and poets offer rocking rhymes for island times. Sailors spin yarns about anchorages where few have dropped the hook, as well as providing offbeat looks at the islands everyone "knows".

Just as when choosing destinations for a cruise, it was agonizing to leave things out. So we hope for a future voyage! Meanwhile, there's an outstanding wealth of insight, information and pure reading enjoyment in these 49 superlative stories.

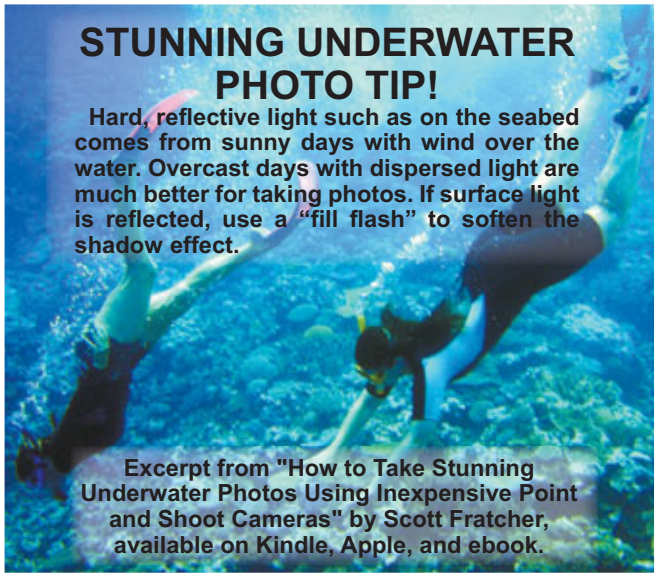
Bob Bitchin, founder of *Latitudes & Attitudes* magazine and creator of Cruising Outpost (www.cruisingoutpost.com) says, "I can say without hesitation that the new book *Cruising Life: The Best Stories from Caribbean Compass* is packed with more first-hand knowledge of what you will find once you arrive in the Caribbean than any cruising guide or travel book. The writers whose work has been published in *Caribbean Compass* magazine know more about the Caribbean than just about anyone else I could think of. They have shown expertise that makes cruising the Caribbean a real pleasure. This book is a 'must have' for anyone who has visited, is visiting or plans to visit the beautiful islands of the Caribbean."

Elaine Lembo, Deputy Editor of *Cruising World* magazine, says, "Just as you were when these stories first appeared in *Caribbean Compass*, in this compilation you are right back on deck (and in the water, in some cases!) with the many contributors whose talented output is directly related to the authenticity of their amazing sea tales."

Check out a free preview and buy the eBook at www.amazon.com/Cruising-Life-Stories-Caribbean-ebook/dp/B00DO8PHJ4



COVER DESIGN BY GARY GOODLANDER. PHOTO BY STEVE JOST



GOOD GUIDES ARE TIMELESS

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Tide's Table

by Ross Mavis

Litany on Legumes

Whoever coined the phrase "it isn't worth a hill of beans" obviously wasn't a cook. Possibly the misconception about beans comes from our early childhood. Ever since Jack was chided for selling the family cow for a mere bag of beans, we think of beans as having little value. Bean lovers of the world unite! Join with me and shout at the top of your lungs: "We love beans!" "Beans are beautiful!" "Beans make a meaningful contribution to life!"

Beans and lentils are of the legume family. There are many thousands of plant species that are considered legumes. All are not fit for human consumption. Those more common ones that are edible include beans, lentils, peanuts, soybeans and peas. Clover and alfalfa are also legumes but are used primarily as animal feed. That being said, these two grazing crops are becoming popular as human dietary supplements. Legumes are a staple throughout the entire world. They are high in protein and have some Vitamin B, carbohydrates, fats and minerals. Add to these benefits the fact that beans taste wonderful in many different types of dishes.

Legumes are considered one of the oldest foods known. They date back more than 4,000 years. They can be prepared fresh or in their dried state. Most beans served fresh are still in their pods or seed cases. Dried, shelled beans will keep almost indefinitely. Fresh green and yellow beans are found almost year round in our markets. Broad beans, such as Lima and Fava beans, are eaten fresh without their pods and are making a slow return to tables in North America. Fresh soybeans, *edamame*, are now served as an appetizer. Beans come in various colours, shapes and sizes. I encourage you to try several different varieties of dried beans. Soldier, navy, cannellini, pinto, cranberry, black and kidney beans all are distinctive in colour and flavour.

Both Mexican and Spanish recipes use dried beans to good advantage. Refried beans are a must with tortillas, tacos or fajitas. *Frijoles negros*, or black beans, are fantastic in soups and dips or with rice. Try them at a specialty restaurant first if you wish; I know you'll become a fan. Home-baked beans have always been an East Coast favorite.

Beans of all kinds now provide the opportunity to bring variety, flavour and nutrition to your Caribbean cruising table for just pennies a serving.

Okay. You knew it would just be a matter of time until I broached the subject, so wait no longer. Gas! What about the undesirable, intestinal gas sometimes caused by beans? There are several schools of thought on this matter. Eat enough beans regularly and they won't rumble inside you, according to some less windy folk. Others believe the gas-causing agents are diminished when you dispose of the water in which beans are soaked. My wife's Mum always added a little baking soda to the soaking water. Now if anyone should know about the dangers of intestinal gas, it had to be Nana. She raised eight kids in a very small home. So, try adding a little baking soda, about a teaspoon, to the water in which you soak your beans (although some say this has a negative effect on the beans' nutritional value or texture). If the problem persists to the point of causing a breakdown in family harmony, buy one of those commercial pills that guarantee a gas-free society. But, whatever you do, don't give up on beans.

Really great-tasting beans will soon be "has-beans", to quote my wife.

Soaking

You can store dried beans in an airtight container for a year, which makes them a great cruising staple. After that they become tougher with age but are still quite palatable. Rinse dried beans in a sieve or colander and sort to remove any small stones or grit.

If you have the time, soak the beans well covered in water in a large bowl overnight. Allow space for them to expand as they double in size as they soak up the water. Next morning, drain and rinse the beans before using them in your recipe.

If you aren't able to soak beans overnight, here is a faster method that works almost as well. Put beans into a saucepan, cover them with water and bring to the boil. Simmer for about five minutes. Remove from heat, cover the pot and let soak for about 1 1/2 hours, depending on the age of the beans. Then cook as usual. Older beans take longer to soften as the skins are tougher. You can salt beans while soaking if you wish. Some claim beans become tougher when soaked in salted water but recent tests disprove this. You can add your salt after they are soaked and cooked if you wish.

Once beans have been soaked and the skins softened, they are ready to cook in your favorite recipe. Of course, beans in tins are ready to use — a perfect quick and nutritious addition to meals underway or in port.

Here is a recipe I encourage you to try.



Pasta and Bean Salad

Traditional pasta salad is extra special in this European version with the addition of garbanzo beans (chick peas) and tuna. Remember to let the salad rest and chill in the refrigerator for an hour or more before serving. This allows flavors to blend nicely.

1 Cup dry pasta (macaroni or rigatoni)
1 medium-size tin garbanzo beans (chick peas)
1/4 Cup olive oil
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 Cup finely diced red onion
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon rosemary leaves
1/2 Cup chopped parsley
1 medium-size tin tuna, drained and flaked (or cooked fresh tuna)

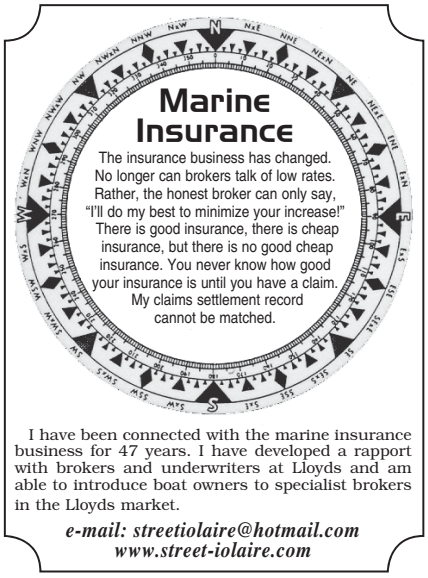
In a large saucepan, bring two quarts of salted water to the boil. Add dry pasta and cook until just tender. Drain and reserve pasta. Open garbanzo beans and drain, reserving beans (or use pre-cooked dried garbanzos). In a large bowl, whisk olive oil, lemon juice, diced onion and herbs until well blended into a salad dressing. Add garbanzos and pasta, tossing well with the dressing. Flake tuna and toss briefly with the beans and pasta salad. Salt and pepper to taste and let rest in refrigerator for an hour or more before serving.





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GET A DOG

Dear *Compass*,

Regarding the recent articles by Frank Virgintino on how to avoid being a victim of yacht crime in the Caribbean, naturally it's a good idea to avoid dangers of *any* sort, but the ongoing emphasis on crime might give the wrong impression. If you go into the website safetyandsecuritynet.com and check crimes against yachts for the last three years, considering the huge


NYCC

A schipperke (left) and her mate

number of yachts in the Caribbean east of a line drawn from Aruba to the western end of Haiti, the crime ratio is not that bad. Just take note of the pockets of crime and avoid them.

Regarding being alert to being boarded, in the 60 years I have been involved with cruising yachts I have never heard of a boat being boarded that had a barking dog aboard. The ideal watchdog for a yacht is a schipperke. They take up little room, are excellent swimmers and are superior watchdogs. But do not have a schipperke unless you are good at training dogs. Otherwise they will train you and will bark at everything, driving you and your neighbors nuts.

For many years in the early 1960s on *Iolaire* we had a schipperke. She was so smart she was bilingual. In the French islands we called her Shit, and in the English-speaking islands she was named Merde. She answered to both names. She would bark if anyone came near the boat, but when we told her to be quiet she would stop barking.

A powerboater we knew who did not like to have a dog on board, but realized how effective a barking dog was, installed a sensor light that would go on if anyone approached the boat. Wired to it was a tape recording of a barking dog.

Finally, regarding dinghy theft, HOIST IT OR LOSE IT. In areas of dinghy stealing there is no other solution.

Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

WHO WERE THOSE GUYS?

Dear *Compass* Readers,

In early January this year we were beating our way east approximately 20 miles northwest of the northwestern tip of Haiti in our Canadian 48-foot trawler. Seas were heavy and our paravanes on booms were deployed to keep the rolling to a reasonable level.

At around 0200 hours we started watching a radar target about eight miles east-southeast of our position, originally heading due north. Abruptly this target turned toward us and continued to work its way directly to us. We had all our lighting on to identify us, thinking that the approaching radar target was possibly a drug interdiction vessel or Coast Guard vessel. This vessel closed on us rapidly on a collision course with our starboard bow. At that point (I guessed about 50 feet) I quickly broke off to the northeast to avoid contact. While this was happening we were hearing an electronic sound like *wee-wee–wee-wee–wee-wee*, not really loud and not to be mistaken for a siren.

I tried making radio calls, but they went unanswered. Also, there were no lights other than running lights on this vessel. I caught a glimpse in some reflected lights of this vessel's pilothouse windows. It was definitely larger than us. We veered off to avoid collision, both vessels maneuvering erratically due to the rough seas, then we eventually headed back to our original easterly track. This intruder did not follow.

We do not have a clue as to the intent or nationality of this vessel, but I am sure we would have collided if evasive action had not been taken. We made a decision not to light this vessel up with our searchlight in case it could be somehow interpreted as a provocative act.

Do any Forum readers have any idea what this was about? If boarding was this vessel's plan, I think the rough seas would have prevented that. I wondered if it was a local fishing boat thinking we were poaching on its grounds.

Bill McNamara
M/V Shunda

SAND MINING FOR CARRIACOU?

Dear *Compass*,

We recently heard some disturbing news. Different and unrelated local sources expressed to us their concerns about Anse La Roche beach in Carriacou, Grenada, being slated for commercial sand mining.

Anse La Roche is rated highly by worldwide tourism agencies and noted in every brochure in Grenada as the most outstanding natural jewel in Carriacou.

Anse La Roche cove for decades has attracted visitors both local and foreign, yachts and a few tall ship cruises in a quiet yet efficiently rewarding way for all: there is a culture of enjoying the area, yet not polluting or destroying the jewel.

Once a week, the passengers of the tall ship *Mandalay* visit Anse La Roche beach. Anse La Roche is also popular with Kayak (Carriacou) families, who love to picnic there and spend prime time together, especially during weekends and holidays, enjoying swimming in clear water and an undisturbed natural and safe environment.

In addition to the attraction, the Anse La Roche beach, along with Petit Carenage beach, is also the productive nesting ground of three different species of sea turtles, the critically endangered Leatherback and Hawksbill and the endangered Green.

These two pristine and unspoiled beaches are part of the proposed National Park of High North (OAS–Government of Grenada document 1988).

Anse La Roche is a seasonal beach. The beach accumulates its sand over a ground base of coral gravel and limestone plates only a few feet deeper. The patterns and levels of sands shift with each rainy season, when five deep gulleys are formed by the action of



Mandalay's *passengers at Anse La Roche*

heavy rains, carrying mud and organic debris into the cove from the steep hillsides of High North. The sand then backs up again after the rains and acts, together with the coastal vegetation, as a natural filter keeping the coral waters clear from run-off and protecting the land from ground seas and rising waves.

To alter the dynamic equilibrium of this coastal ecosystem may irreversibly affect Anse La Roche's sand, land and reefs.

So far we were unable to find out if there is any truth to this alarming news. To date no area in Carriacou has been officially declared open for sand mining, yet we understand that forthcoming legislation may allow for such a possibility. In fact, it has now been published in the national press that at least two beaches on mainland Grenada are now open for sand mining.

At a recent consultation, the majority of residents said "no" to sand mining on Carriacou. Will it be right to destroy beaches that are so important to both humans and endangered species?

If this practice is allowed, will Carriacou not lose much more than the short term benefits being considered?

Marina Fastigi, PhD
YWF-Kido Foundation director
Carriacou

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

CRUISING THE DEEP SOUTH

Dear *Compass* Readers,

We are anchored off of the little village of Domburg on the Suriname River, in the South American country of Suriname. Suriname is one of the three Guyanas (Guyana - formerly British Guiana, Suriname - formerly Dutch Guiana, and French Guiana) located on the northeast coast of South America.



Ready for a freshwater experience? Guiana means 'land of many waters', and rivers are the lifeblood of Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana. Pictured here is a ferry wharf in Guyana

Guiana is an Amerindian word meaning land of many waters, and we can tell you that after spending a month in Guyana, and now our first week in Suriname, it certainly does live up to its name. They only have two seasons here, the Wet Season and the Dry Season, and we are well into the wet season. It usually rains every day during the wet season, and often multiple times a day. The land bordering the river is thick jungle and rainforest, except where there are settlements like Domburg.

The people here speak Dutch and Talkie-Talkie (kind of a local Creole made up of several Amerindian languages, Dutch and English). Most of the music on the radio is American rock and rhythm 'n' blues, and we like that. We have taken the bus into the capital (and only) city of Paramaribo twice; once to clear in with Immigration, and the other trip was just for touring and seeing the sights.

We like it here in Suriname; it is a clean and friendly place. We expect to be here for a few more weeks, and then we are on to the town of Saint Laurent du Maroni on the River Maroni in French Guiana, about a 100-mile sail to the east.

We recently posted four blogs on our time on the Rio Orinoco Delta on Sailblogs.com. Part One and Part Two are pilots (sailing directions) for the Rio Macareo and the Rio Grande (and tributaries), and Part Three is a compilation of our daily radio reports back to civilization. The Rio Orinoco Delta is a very remote area, populated by the Warao tribe of Amerindians in several hundred thousand acres of rainforest and jungle — what spectacular bird life! The final part of our four posts has over a hundred pictures of the wildlife, the Warao, and the beautiful emerald rainforest — check it out!

Lilly and Tom Service
S/V Tiger Lilly

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

Be sure to 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. Please keep letters shorter than 600 words. Letters may be edited for length, clarity and fair play.

Send your letters to: sally@caribbeancompass.com or Compass Publishing Ltd. Readers' Forum, Box 175BQ Bequia VC0400, St. Vincent & the Grenadines

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WHAT'S ON MY MIND

THE MORNING NEWSPAPER

by Ryan Weaver

The newspaper is full of terrible news. I lay down the paper and shake my head to reboot.

This refurbished courtyard in St. Croix was formerly part of the Danish king's stables. The watering trough has been replaced by a concrete fountain. A rooster considers this his throne. He struts to and fro, chest puffed. Presently a rival jogs into the courtyard. Instant violence!

Ahhh, cockfight ambience — another reason I'm happy that my girlfriend, Yllithia, and I gave up instant coffee on the hotel balcony some days back. Namasté Café here is pure charisma. Historical courtyard, clean bathroom, snobbishly intellectual book exchange, organic baked goods, coffees arranged in rank of caffeination…

Yllithia leaves here every morning refreshed and eager to savor St. Croix. I leave hoping merely to survive. The difference between us is this: Yllithia reads about a war brewing between Oz and Munchkin Land and I read the newspaper.

The day we discovered Namasté Café, Wednesday, I purchased a copy of *The Avis*. When I was a journalism student I wrote for a tabloid-format paper like this. One of my jobs was to compile the Crime Log. Most crimes were petty misdemeanors, something for old people to cluck over. I expected *The Avis* to be similar. But this was the front-page headline: CHURCH SLAYING SUSPECT APPEARS IN COURT. *What?!*

Look, only a poor sport shoots the messenger. *The Avis* and also, later, the *Virgin Islands Daily News*, impressed me as non-biased, well written, and grammatically immaculate messengers, but their headlines were consistently abysmal: FISH MARKET ASSAULT, SUSPECT IN ST. CROIX SLAYING CAUGHT AT PUERTO RICAN AIRPORT, JURY BEGINS DELIBERATIONS IN HOSPITAL GROUND SHOOTING…

What non-sequiturs these headlines seemed, glancing up as I did at the peaceful courtyard, its wide colonial arch exiting onto a cobbled street. Each cobble had a sickle of golden sunlight upon it. Locals strolled by and they were golden too.

I returned to the newspapers day after day. Every page read like a Crime Log. All this absurd violence I was reading about couldn't help but seem… *gratuitous*. That scared me.

Until Wednesday our St. Croix days had been vintage Caribbean. What wasn't to enjoy? We had a week booked at Hotel on the Cay, on Protestant Cay. A private islet! Its beach came with a privileged view of St. Croix rising like a green pompadour over Christiansted. Just south was the park, thick old trees, and angular, yellow-painted Fort Christianvaern. Hotel on the Cay is immediately a hilarious accommodation. I showed up to an orientation on Sunday and stood there alone. A maintenance man eventually strolled by. I asked what happened to the orientation and he looked at his watch and shrugged his shoulders. "Harold must've lost interest," he said. But as long as one accepted it for what it was, Hotel on the Cay was wonderful.

Every afternoon we water-shuttled over for the Fort Christian Brew Pub happy hour. Locally brewed draft beers. World-class wings for $10 and please pitch leftovers to the tarpon. From any table a postcard view of sunset beside a refurbished sugar mill tower. Ahhh, vintage Caribbean.

The pub hosted a crab race one night. I stared into the plastic bin critically for a long time before choosing mine. Plus, it was pleasant listening to the crabs' shells clack in that chalky calcium way. Finally I picked a surly booger. They wrote my name for it — McCrabberton — on a piece of masking tape and stuck it on its shell.



Jack Bay beach — long, pure, untrammeled. Why couldn't I relax?

When the MC dumped the bucket McCrabberton shot toward the inner circle… lost interest, meandered a bit… *then scuttled to victory!* The MC handed us a jewelry store coupon. I begged a trade with a lady who won a sunset cruise. Yllithia and I boarded *The Jolly Roger* a few days later. Everybody there was college-aged and in a festive mood. We drained two yellow Igloo coolers of rum punch (ten gallons) in an hour.

Another day we rented a car. Yllithia and I have a thing about island beaches: we have to see them all. I can't help but rank new beaches against other beaches. This annoys Yllithia because she doesn't like her experience pigeonholed or downplayed. The problem is, I'm spoiled. I step upon a beach your average American tourist sings weepy hymns of thanks over and I might rank it around my 55th percentile. But two St. Croix beaches made it *way* up there.

In my John Dough [sic] Tourist Category, the Carambola Beach Resort and Spa ranks, as I say, *way* up there. Teak lounge chairs on a teak dais, crescent beach, turquoise wavelets, frigid beer delivery. Carambola, according to its website, was "created to celebrate the unspoiled beauty of the Caribbean by Laurence Rockefeller in 1986." It does feel like a celebration, too, a private one unaccountably open to the public.

In my Robinson Crusoe Category, Jack Bay soared into the top 10th percentile at first sight. Long, pure, untrammeled, hemmed in, invisible from the road, requiring an otherworldly hike among head-high grasses that, when tousled by the breeze, sound like dry rain. Jack's is a beach with sex appeal because a couple can loaf upon it and imagine they're alone on all the earth, and that it is their duty to be fruitful and multiply…

—Continued on page 45

CALENDAR

AUGUST

1	Public holiday in many places (Emancipation Day) and Jamaica (Independence Day)
2	Carriacou Children's Education Fund Annual Charity Auction. ccefinfo@gmail.com
2	Nevis Fruit Festival. Dept. of Agriculture: (869) 469-5603/7302
2 – 4	Bonaire Heineken Jazz Festival. www.bonairejazz.com
3 – 6	48th Carriacou Regatta Festival Sailing Races. www.grenadagrenadines.com
4	St. Maarten to Anguilla Pursuit Race. info@smyc.com
4 – 5	Carriacou Junior Sailors' Regatta. www.facebook.com/carriacoujuniorsailing
5	Public holiday in Grenada (Emancipation Day Observance)
6 - 7	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Emancipation Day & Culturama)
8	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Eid al Fitr)
9 – 11	Aruba Regatta. Aruba Regatta Foundation, http://aruba-regatta.com
10	Public holiday in Anguilla (Constitution Day)
12 – 13	Grenada Carnival. www.grenadagrenadines.com
16 - 25	Carifesta XI (festival showcasing CARICOM member states' cultures), Paramaribo, Suriname. www.carifesta.net
18	Windward Cup Local Sloop Races, Carriacou
20	FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay, Tortola; West End, Tortola; and Nevis
25	Carib Great Race (powerboats) from Trinidad to Tobago. www.ttpba.net/greatrace
30 - 31	Curaçao North Sea Jazz Festival (with Diana Ross, Gladys Knight, Erykah Badu, Harry Belafonte, Paul Anka, Sonny Rollins, Los Lobos and more). www.curacaonorthseajazz.com
31	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Independence Day)



WILFRED DEDERER

Spring Bay, Bequia

SEPTEMBER

6	Public holiday in Bonaire (Bonaire Day)
10	Public holiday in Belize (St. George's Day)
14	Dinghy and IC24 Races, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Club Náutico San Juan (CNSJ), www.nauticodesanjuan.com
14 – 15	Curaçao Sunfish Championship part one. cursailing@gmail.com
16	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (National Heroes' Day)
19	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Independence Day)
19	Fire Ball FULL MOON Party, Trellis Bay, Tortola, www.aragornsstudio.com/fire.htm. Bomba's Shack Full Moon Party, West End, Tortola
21	Public holiday in Belize (Independence Day)
21 - 22	Curaçao Sunfish Championship part two. cursailing@gmail.com
22	Autumnal Equinox
24	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Republic Day)
28	Seafood & Fishing Festival, Antigua. www.antiguabarbudasportfishing.com

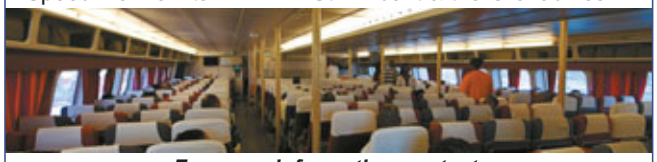
All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of Compass *went to press — but plans change, s o please contact event organizers directly for confirmation. If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com*

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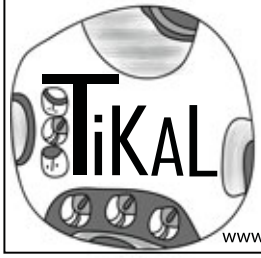


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—Continued from page 15

Regatta News

St. Barth YC 2012-2013 Dinghy Championships

The final event of the Optimist and Laser series organized by the St. Barth Yacht Club took place on June 22nd.

In the Optimist series, the surprise of the day was Erel Largitte winning the last race of the season against the leaders, Mathéo Magras and Alan Strok. Nevertheless, Alan won the 2012-2013 Optimist Championship. At 14 years old, Alan will graduate to the Laser next year. Although he was leading for a few months, Mathéo Magras took second place only one point behind. In third position and first female, Alice Pru put enough points between her and her pursuers to hold a podium place despite her absence on the Saturday.

In the Lasers, it was no surprise that the day was dominated by Benoit Meesemaecker, who also won the 2012-2013 Championship. He was followed by Rhone Finlay from St. Martin who also won the Youth Laser category.

The Club would like to thank all the partners who accompanied it throughout the season: Collectivité St. Barths, Island Water World, TP Sail Event, La Cave du Port Franc, Caribbean Signs, Voyager St. Barth and Great Bay Express.

For more information visit http://stbarthyachtclub.com.

On the Horizon:

Triskell Cup 2013 for November

Serious racing and serious partying, French Caribbean style, are coming up from November 1st through 3rd in Guadeloupe. This sailing event is conducted with a single purpose: to sail in a spirit of friendliness.

Now recognized as one of the largest regattas in the French Caribbean, the Triskell Cup is distinguished by the number and the diversity of its participants. At present, in addition to boats from the nearby islands of Martinique, Antigua and St. Lucia, crews from France, Italy, Holland and French Guiana are expected. Make sure your country's flag is flying, too.

2013 will be the 13th edition of the Triskell Cup. Don't miss it!

For more information see ad on page 13.

Caribbean Dinghy Championships Cancelled

CSA President Peter Holmberg reports: The Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA) has decided to cancel the annual Caribbean Dinghy Championships, which were scheduled to be held in Antigua from November 15th to 17th. The CSA directors have decided that there are now enough existing dinghy events in the region, and that sanctioning and supporting existing events is a more effective means of promoting dinghy sailing than organizing and hosting a separate event.

The CSA intends to enact several new programs to more effectively foster, promote, and support dinghy sailing in the region.

For more information about the CSA visit www.caribbean-sailing.com.

Rallies All Over the Place!

• NEREID'S RALLY, with departures from both Trinidad and Tobago in September, has been organized to showcase two of the Atlantic's best-kept yachting secrets: French Guiana and Guyana. In Guyana, with strong backing from the Minister of Tourism, Industry & Commerce and support from the Coast Guard, MARAD, the Defence Force, the Police Force and the Guyana Revenue Authority, a successful first leg is virtually guaranteed. The official welcome, hosted by the Minister for Tourism, will take place at Hurakabra Resort.

A two-day fête set to coincide with the rally conclusion in French Guiana will be held thanks to the ongoing support of the Mairie of Saint Laurent du Maroni, the Gendarmerie, Marina - Saint Laurent du Maroni, and local partners including Tropic Cata.



At Saint Laurent du Maroni in French Guiana

For more information visit www.marinaslm.com/rally.

• Jimmy Cornell, author of *World Cruising Routes*, has announced the start of a new transatlantic rally, the ATLANTIC ODYSSEY. For the first time in a transatlantic event, participants will have a choice of departing and finishing ports as well as start dates:

Atlantic Odyssey I starts on November 17th from Arrecife, Lanzarote, bound for Martinique.

Atlantic Odyssey II starts on January 12th, 2014 from Santa Cruz de la Palma, bound for Grenada.

The inaugural event of the Atlantic Odyssey features complimentary docking fees for the week before the start, an attractively low entry fee, and complimentary entries for families with children under 16 on board. The finish of Atlantic Odyssey II in Grenada will coincide with the celebrations marking the 40th anniversary of Grenada's independence.

For more information visit www.atlanticodyssey.org.

• The ARC (ATLANTIC RALLY FOR CRUISERS) is a "must do" for many sailors, and attracts over 200 boats and 1,200 people every year to sail 2,800 nautical across the Atlantic from Gran Canaria to St. Lucia.

In addition to the traditional "1st, 2nd, 3rd" ranking, this year prizes will also be awarded to yachts in the Cruising Division that are placed fifth and tenth on handicap, adding an element of uncertainty and fun to the results. Adlard Coles Nautical Publications and Yachting World Magazine will be the sponsors of gifts presented to these "winning" boats.

Andrew Bishop, who has run the ARC since 1998, explains, "I have been looking for a new way to award prizes to yachts in the Cruising Division that recognizes a crew's sailing achievement, but which also introduces a random element. Crews can sail to win, but to deliberately sail to be placed fifth or tenth will be impossible! Especially when also taking into account the motoring hours of other boats and the motoring adjustment factor. We have decided that changing the traditional ranking order would be a great way to reinforce the message that competition in the ARC is all about the fun of taking part!"

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

—Continued from page 40

What's on my mind

Then I read the newspapers. Looking back in light of them, I couldn't help but remember a few things... differently.

During our auto-circumnavigation we'd seen enclaves of third-world ghetto. Over the numerous shuttered shop windows in Christiansted are black iron Xs. Colonial, charming, but what about those hidden-shackle padlocks at the center of every X? MasterLock doesn't make a better or more expensive model. Why go to the expense without good reason?

On Thursday afternoon I visited Fort Christianvaern. Alone (Yllithia and the Munchkins had gone to the beach), I lingered. I took pictures of everything. I read every placard on the walls. I crouched in the low brick cells that looked more suitable for cooking pizzas than housing men, even incorrigible ones. I studied patches of dilapidation (like tree rings, the colors in any given inch of fort denote its age). Then I reached the officer's quarters, converted into a museum, and read everything in there too. The museum news was terrible too! Indigenous peoples eradicated, the atrocities of slavery, and then — in my lifetime — Hurricane Hugo.

In 1989 Hugo steamrolled St. Croix. In the morning, as survivors emerged from the rubble, chaos ensued. Roving gangs looted and sniped from atop buildings while the Coast Guard evacuated innocents. President H.W. Bush deployed 1,000 military police, federal marshals and FBI agents. They restored order in three days and left.

What?! How do Cruzans prepare for a hurricane nowadays? Put up the storm shutters or stockpile the guns? Do they more fear God's wrath or man's? What would *I* do? I'd retreat post-haste to Protestant Cay, of which I had a grand view presently from the bulwarks. For sure! It'd be the safest place on all St. Croix, aside from maybe this fort. I could almost see Yllithia on the beach over there, a halo over her head. So tranquil! So happy! So *news-less*!

Saturday — one final morning at Namasté Café. Leaving, we run into Butch and Lina, one of the few other couples at Hotel on the Cay. Butch and Lina are *de facto* St. Croix ambassadors. They've been vacationing here (with increasing frequency) for 20-plus years. They've never had a bad experience to speak of. Had we? "No," Yllithia says. "Common sense is all it takes!" Butch replies, as if that statement itself is common sense.

I want to lay a doomsday speech on them that begins with "On the contrary," but am loath to rain on their parade. Plus, if I'm honest with myself, we really hadn't had a bad experience. And the island was beautiful, and the weather had been great...

Whatever. I stand by my paranoia. It wasn't just in my head — *it was in the newspapers!* Also on the internet. I just Googled "violence on St. Croix" and learned that in 2011 the homicide rate on St. Croix was ten times higher than the national average (*USA Today*), and that in December 2012 the Police Commissioner reported that six officers had been shot in as many months, one fatally... *on St. Croix!*

Look, don't shoot the messenger! There will always be die-hard fans, locals, people with a vested interest, who will scoff at the dark clouds I've word-painted over St. Croix. Maybe they've only ever seen the sunshine, like Yllithia (but, like her, I'd bet they never read the paper). Thomas Jefferson said "I do not take a single newspaper, nor read one a month, and I feel myself infinitely the happier for it."

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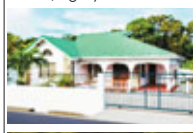
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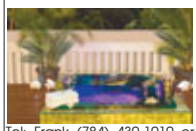
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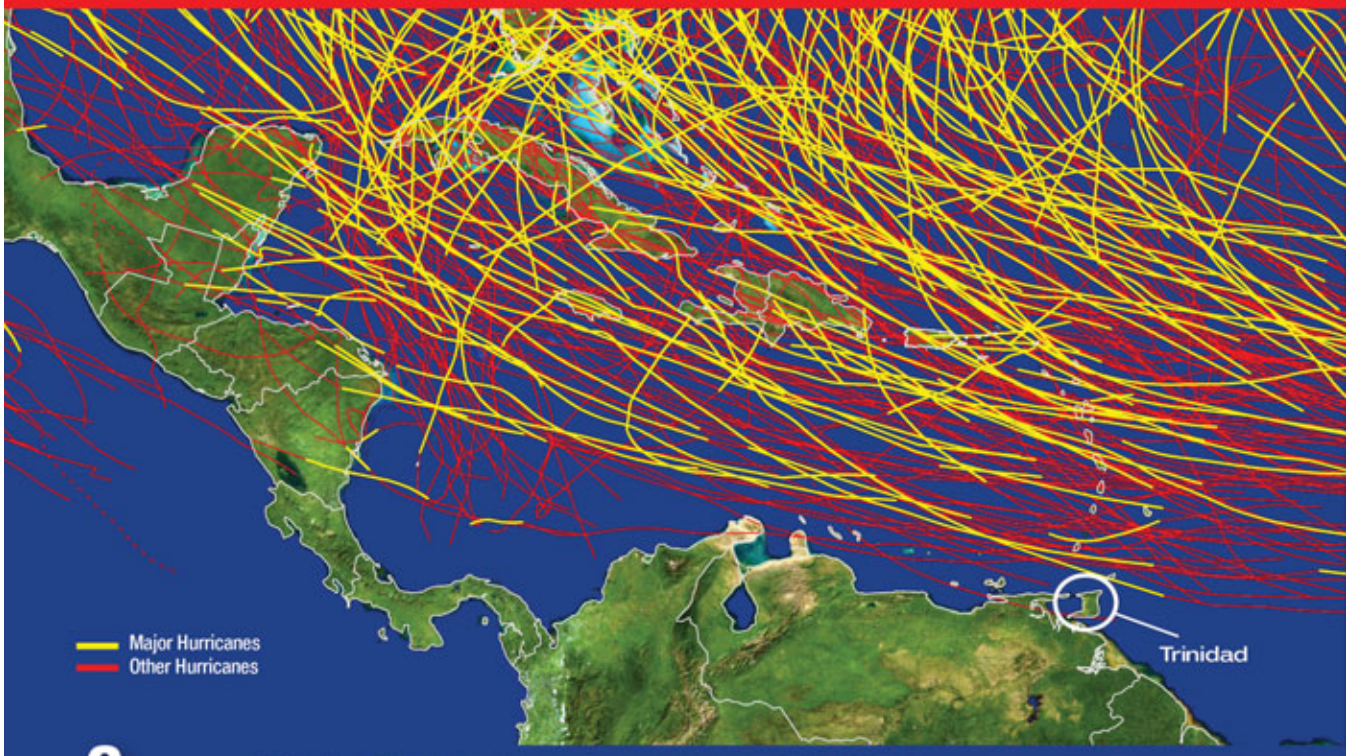
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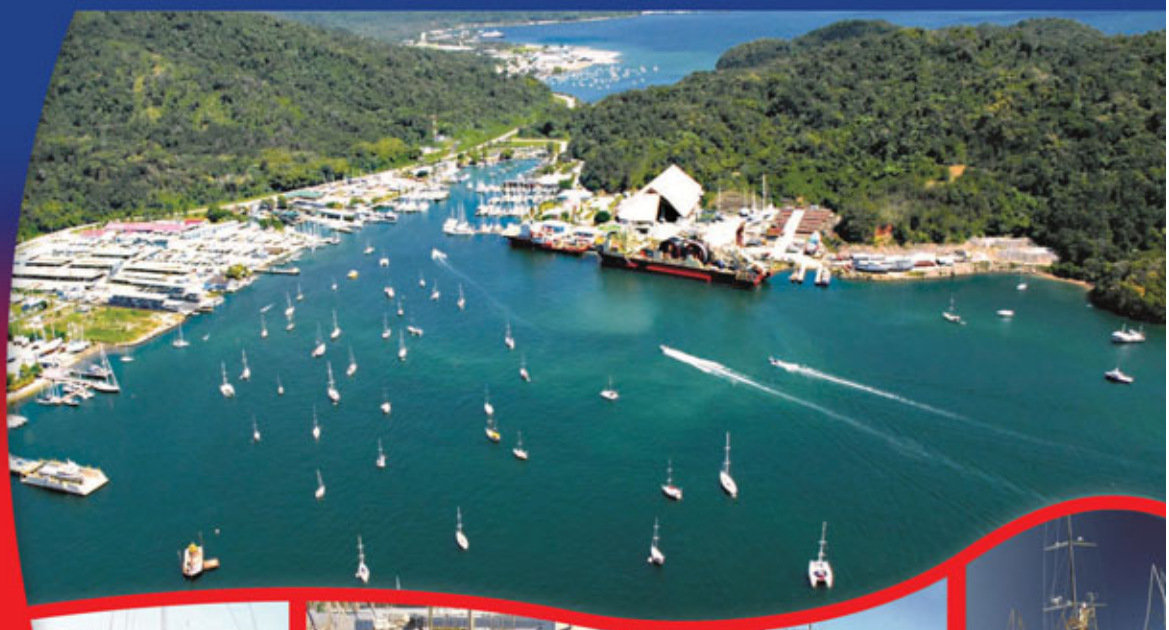
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