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COMPASS
DECEMBER 2012 NO. 207
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



GRENADA TO PUERTO RICO OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

— See story on page 16

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SHARP

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Cover photo: Carriacou's Windward anchorage, seen through the lens of photographer Jason Pickering (www.jasonpickering.com)



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.**

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Info & Updates

Causeway Construction in St. Maarten Lagoon

Boaters should be aware that dredging and pile driving are currently occurring in the Simpson Bay Lagoon, St. Maarten for the construction of a cross-lagoon causeway bridge. The causeway is being constructed from the north of Yacht Club Port de Plaisance to the airport runway. The completed causeway will be a maximum of



28 feet off the water. Vessels currently wishing to transit the lagoon should stay within the marked channel and exercise caution with regard to the construction.

Upon completion of the bridge, vessels taller than 28 feet wishing to transit the full lagoon will be restricted to the opening of the center portion of the causeway, which will be a two-lane "swing" bridge, with vessel traffic passing in both directions at the same time. The opening times of the swing bridge have not yet been determined. The St. Maarten Marine Trades Association has recommended that the swing bridge operate "on demand". The goal of the new causeway/bridge is to ease the traffic congestion in the Simpson Bay Area. The bridge is expected to be complete by the end of 2013.

The St. Maarten Nature Foundation has been very active in removing numerous sea creatures that make their home in the Simpson Bay Lagoon and safely transporting them away from the causeway construction site. The Epic Love the Lagoon Project is advocating for government to use the opportunity of having heavy equipment in the area to remove shipwrecks from past hurricanes from the Lagoon.

Sales Tax Worries Antigua Yacht Interests

Key players in Antigua's yacht tourism industry are concerned that the Antigua & Barbuda Sales Tax (ABST) will have a negative effect on their business. The ABST is payable at 15 percent on a wide range of services and goods.

In recent years, thanks to changes in yacht insurance after Hurricane Ivan, Antigua has augmented its winter sailing season business with storage of yachts during the summer months, providing many companies on the island with year-round work. However, when the ABST came on stream yachting wasn't taken into consideration, and industry leaders on the island fear that when the owners of stored boats "get back here and find they have all been charged 15 percent on their bill that they're not normally charged, they are going to head off. If something isn't done, then we are going to see a major exit out of Antigua come end of next season." Although yachts in transit are considered to be an export market and therefore zero-rated, yachts which stay in Antigua for more than 90 days are liable to have ABST applied to their invoices.

Visiting yachts often see Antigua & Barbuda as a "high-cost" country, albeit one that provides high-quality service. However, with growing competition from other islands, particularly 'duty free' St. Maarten and less expensive Trinidad & Tobago, cost has become an increasingly important factor.

The Antigua & Barbuda Marine Association has approached the authorities to tackle the problem and is hoping for a solution.

Telfor Does It Again!

Jeff Fisher reports: Telfor Bedeau is famous for circumnavigating Grenada by windsurfer, and for rowing around the island twice — once in each direction. To celebrate his 73rd birthday in October, he decided to kayak around.

At seven on the morning of October 6th he set off from Soubise, heading south. He had expected to make it to La Sagesse or Prickly Bay, but the weather and tide were favoring him and encouraging him to press on. After a brief stop at Petit Bacaye to empty the kayak of water and take a stretch, Telfor paddled in the shelter of the south coast bays to Hog Island for another short rest. A bit over eight hours after leaving Soubise he paddled into the lagoon in St. George's to complete the first leg of the voyage.

The toughest but shortest leg of this circumnavigation took place on his day of birth, October 15th. Setting out again from Soubise, this time headed north, fighting both the current and the wind to punch through to Sauteurs and beyond to Petite Anse Resort four hours later. Navigating the breakers into the beach took some doing and left him wondering about the next day's battle to launch himself back out.

—Continued on next page

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Jet Stream, Leopard 45

Antigua Barbados British Virgin Islands Curacao Dominica Grenada Martinique Panama Puerto Rico St.Croix St.Lucia St.Vincent Trinidad and Tobago

—Continued from previous page

At nine the next morning, he walked his craft out into the breakers, timed it right, and boarded his kayak for the final and more relaxing portion of the challenge. Once around the corner to sheltered waters it was easy going to Dragon's Bay where he stopped briefly for some refreshments and photo ops.



JEFF FISHER

He pulled ashore in St. George's Lagoon at about 3:00PM, completing another legendary circumnavigation.

Cruisers' (and Racers'!) Site-ings

• Study up! The new 2013-2016 ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing are now available at ***www.sailing.org/tools/documents/ISAFRRS20132016Final-%5B13376%5D.pdf***.

• Looking for a last-minute holiday gift that keeps on giving with a Caribbean twist? See ***www.handsacrossthesea.net/HolidayGiving.htm***.

The Seven Seas Cruising Association

If you're new to cruising you might not yet be familiar with the Seven Seas Cruising Association — but you should be. With nearly 10,000 members worldwide, the SSCA is the world's largest non-profit organization of voyaging cruisers. Every member is a "commodore" and receives the monthly *Commodores' Bulletin*. This 48-page handy publication is packed with information, advice and inspiration from members who are actually out there cruising the world. This means that members get the most up-to-date information on anchorages, Customs and Immigration, costs and "what to do and where to go." In addition to being in print, the *Bulletins* are online at www.ssca.org.

The SSCA sponsors "gams" (gatherings of sailors) throughout the world. Members and their guests join old friends and meet new ones, attend educational seminars, roundtable discussions and hands-on demos, share experiences and enjoy each other's company. Jimmy Cornell will speak at the 37th Annual Seven Seas Cruising Association Gam at Melbourne, Florida, from December 7th through 9th.



BARBARA THEISEN

Trinidad annually hosts the first SSCA gam of the year — on New Year's Day!

For more information, go to www.ssca.org.

Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction, Bequia

The Bequia Sunshine School is a non-profit organization for children with special needs. The annual Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction has become a significant source of income for the school and a huge source of fun for all who attend. The 2013 auction will be held at the Gingerbread Restaurant on the waterfront in Belmont, Bequia on February 17th. Viewing starts at noon and the auction at 1:00PM sharp. Donated food and drink will be on sale, with all proceeds going directly to the school.

Lend your support by donating items for the auction such as boat gear, art and handicrafts, unwanted gifts, household goods, jewelry and other new or gently used items. Donations can be dropped off at the school during regular school hours, or at Wallace & Co. Chandlery and Fishing Supplies. Attend the auction and bid for that rare gem that you just can't resist!

For more information visit www.bequiasunshineschool.org.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Basic Blue of St. Lucia, on page 7; Sailing Services, Caribbean wide, on page 11; L'Ile Marine of St. Martin, on page 17; JJ's Paradise of St. Lucia, on page 35; Voodoo Child Charters of Bequia, on page 30; and Bonne Baguette, Marine House, Radiator & Hose Works, Stephanie's Hotel and Tapas by the Bay, all of St. Lucia and all in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45.

Good to have you with us!



AHOY, HAITI!
THE SISTER FLORA FLOTILLA

by Frank Virgintino

I have been visiting the small island of Ile-à-Vache, located at the southwest corner of Haiti, for over 15 years and have always found it to be a delight. It has been a safe and welcoming anchorage for sailing boats for as long as can be remembered. There are no cars, no electricity and no telephones. The anchorage at Port Morgan is at the northwest corner of the island. All approaches to this easy entrance bay must be from the west as the northeast side of the island has considerable amount of reef. [*See "A Cruise Though the South Side of Hispaniola" in the May 2012 issue of* Compass.]

Nearby is a community known as Madame Bernard. Just up the hill in Madame Bernard is the orphanage of St. Francis (L'Oeuvre St. François d'Assise) run by a Canadian nun, Sister Flora. She is all of five feet tall and probably weighs a hundred pounds wet. Sister Flora is both humble and strong and to meet her, regardless of one's personal faith, is an experience that will leave you with a life-long memory.

For over 30 years Sister Flora has taken care of orphans in Haiti. Her clinic, orphanage and school are institutions on the island. She is loved by everyone. When asked what makes her sad, she replies, "When someone tells me that a child is too far gone and not worth investing in." She never asks for anything and simply believes that those who will come to help and to give will come. She has a little smile that lets you know that everything is going to be all right. Her school and orphanage is neat and clean and she has built it over the years, brick by brick, through donations and with the help of volunteers.

In 2013 Marina ZarPar in Boca Chica, Dominican Republic, will be sponsoring a cruise in company — the "Flora Flotilla" — to visit Ile-à-Vache. The flotilla is scheduled to depart Boca Chica on February 8th. Boats that want to join should arrive at Marina ZarPar (www.marinazarpar.com) no later than February 4th. Meetings will be held to discuss routing and stops along the way.

I will organize and lead the group. The overall trip is approximately 250 nautical miles. The flotilla will take about four days to sail to Ile-à-Vache, stopping at lovely Isla Beata en route.

There will be no charge for the cruise other than the US$100 registration fee, which will be used to defray the cost of organizing the event. Any funds left over will be donated to the Sister Flora orphanage. Marina ZarPar will provide a 20-percent discount on slips and moorings for all flotilla vessels. Participants will be able to visit PriceSmart in the DR should they wish to purchase supplies for the orphanage. Good used clothing for children up to 15 years of age, books, pencils, crayons and any type of school supplies are very welcome. Sister Flora has told me that powdered milk is at the top of her list and is the item that the orphanage runs out of most often.

The cruise should prove to be exciting and interesting for those who want to visit Ile-à-Vache. In addition, any support that is given to the school and orphanage will be so very much appreciated.

Additional information on the orphanage can be found at the Free Cruising Guide website (www.freecruisingguide.com). There is also additional information on the island of Ile-à-Vache at www.friendsofileavachehaiti.com.

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

FRANK VIRGINTINO



In February, a yacht flotilla bound for Ile-à-Vache will help Sister Flora provide for Haitian orphans




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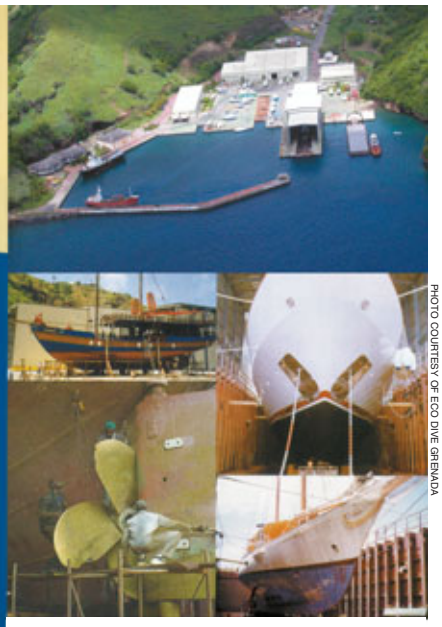


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www.freecruisingguide.com

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Island Water World Sponsors Underwater Sculpture

As reported in The Barnacle (www.barnaclegrenada.com): October 11th saw continuing development of the world's first Underwater Sculpture Park, with the installation of a new version of The Cyclist. Since artist Jason DeCaires Taylor installed the first underwater sculpture in 2007, the park — located within the Moliniere-Beausejour Marine Protected Area approximately one mile north of St. George's, Grenada — is now internationally recognized as a must-see attraction. The original statue of The Cyclist was damaged beyond repair and removed in 2011. Local artist Troy Lewis created the replacement statue.



Island Water World, who also donated the bike that he is riding, sponsored the new Cyclist sculpture. Island Water World is a chain of marine chandleries in the Caribbean that has been serving sailors for over 40 years. The distinctive Island Water World courtesy bikes can be found at their stores throughout the Caribbean, where they make doing local errands easier for customers who don't have land transport.

The installation of the new sculpture was completed over two days with support by two local business owners, Christine Finney of www.ecodiveandtrek.com and Howard Clarke of www.grenadaseafaris.com; both companies offer tours that visit the Underwater Sculpture Park.

For more information on Grenada's underwater sculpture park visit www.grenadaunderwatersculpture.com

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

Marigot Beach Club Introduces New Chef, New Wellness Treatments

David Shimeld reports: Marigot Beach Club's restaurant, Doolittle's, has a new chef, Titus Eysee, whose food is beyond compare. Plus, every night at our two-for-one Happy Hours, 5:00 to 7:00PM, there will be a free raffle for 25 percent off all spa treatments. Once a week there will be a free raffle for a completely free spa treatment. And — don't forget, there's a free bag of ice for those who drink or dine with us.

As you'd expect at a health retreat, there are many healthy activities to enjoy at Marigot Beach Club Spa & Wellness Retreat. November 1st saw the opening of our new spa and holistic facilities. From gentle activities like Pilates and yoga to more energetic activities like power walking and aqua gym, there's something suitable for every fitness level — so come along and dive in!

Workshops and group activities include transcendental meditation, pranayama breathing, and lymphatic brushing classes. Treatments include steam room, infrared sauna and flotation tank. Sport and fitness activities include rainforest power walking, yoga, Pilates and aqua aerobics. The Soothing Touch Spa offers massage, reflexology, body wraps, and scrubs.

For more information see ad on page 33.

Lagoonies Bar & Café Returns to Lagoon Marina, St. Maarten

If you were a cruiser any time from the early 1990s, many of you would remember the old Lagoonies Bar — one of the last classic, good old fashioned watering holes where sailors and marine professionals from all over the world could meet to exchange information, have rowdy evenings full of laughter and live music and indulge in a delicious warm meal with plenty of grog to go around.

—Continued on next page



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Lagoonies was always great value for money and a popular stop-off where cruisers could take a break from their long passages: to provision up, work on their yachts, find the right people or parts or just relax for a few days before heading out to sea again.

On a quiet day in 2004, Lagoonies closed its doors and many of the regulars were left wondering what would replace it. Over the next several years, the property was re-developed and what is now the new Lagoon Marina is in full swing again — with Lagoonies Bar and Café in front and center.

It has a fresh new look with a traditional feel of a boatshed (big new roof!) and includes a lovely outdoor terrace for waterfront dining and cocktails. Live music again fills the air on Friday nights and 5:00 to 6:00PM is Very Happy Hour every night. Lagoonies is still the place to meet, eat and drink with the best Lagoon sunsets to enjoy Happy Hour, beautiful waterside dining and dancing or just checking your mail with a real coffee, lunch specials every day, fresh fruit and vegetable juices... besides the cold beers. Ask about our weekly specials!

For more information see ad on page 25.

Art Fabrik is Recycling, Upcycling and Downcycling

Chris and Lilo report: When we first heard about "upcycling" we thought people were talking about biking up a hill! Recycling has nothing to do with bikes… well, not exactly true: bikes can be recycled too.

The interior décor in our Art Fabrik boutique on Young Street in St. George's, Grenada, is built with recycled materials that we collected long before Hurricane Ivan. In those times "treasures" were everywhere: behind the bushes or on the side of the road, on top of dumpsters. You just had to have the guts to pick them up and load them in the car without people thinking you were vagrants. We recycled and upcycled them; now those charming *trouvailles* give our place this special touch that is so extraordinarily funky.

What is new in our seldom-seen handmade creations is a product made by a young Grenadian lady: Rita Julien, from Diamond Estate in St. Marks, a parish on the west coast of Grenada. She is making crocheted shoulder bags out of non-biodegradable plastic bags, the most terrible plastic that otherwise destroys marine wildlife. Her little son cuts the plastic into strips and she does the crochet. She is very enthusiastic and proud of her craftwork. We are working with her to make the shapes, the décor and style of her creations ever more beautiful. We have a selection in different styles and sizes. By buying one of her blue beauties, you help her to earn an income for her and her children.

What we also offer for this season is fair trade craft jewelry made from recycled materials including phone cards, bottle caps, aluminium cans and magazine paper. We in our studio make different ornaments and a special surprise: lucky cranes, folded in the ancient Japanese origami technique, hanging on a string to decorate your homes or boats, Christmas tree, anywhere. They bring luck when they swing in the moving air.

We are asking everyone to bring or send us old dressmaking patterns to wrap the jewelry that we sell in the boutique. Your sewing dream of that special dress that you never made is may be somewhere in a locker, drawer or in a box in the garage. We'd love to get those patterns to downcycle!

Remember we are the batik queens of the Caribbean.

Art Fabrik wishes all Compass *readers a Merry Christmas and a good 2013.*

Rodney Bay, St. Lucia — Tapas on the Bay!

A great tapas experience should enthrall the senses; small, delectable bites of food shared with friends at a leisurely pace in a beautiful place with lively conversation

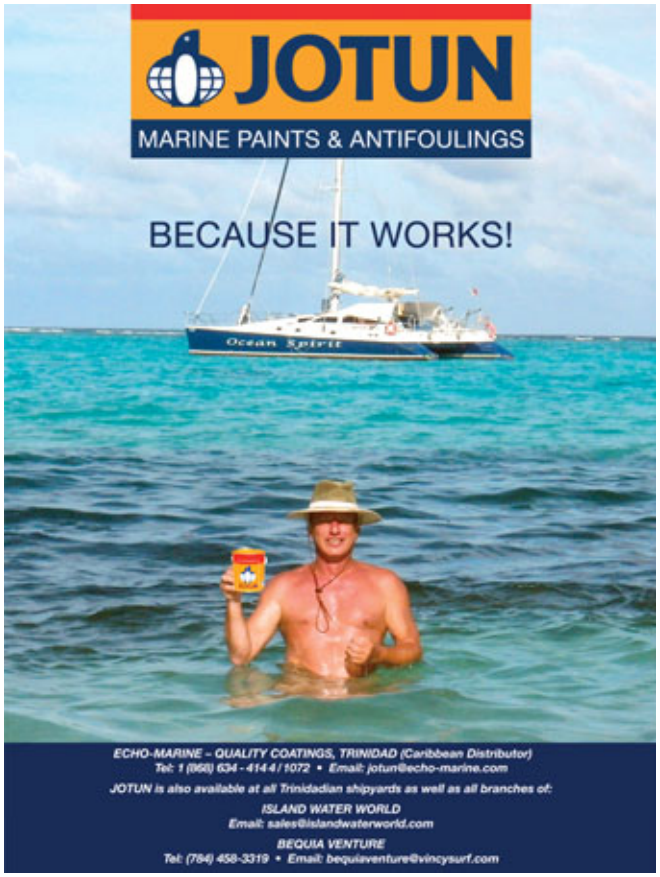


and laughter. You'll find all this and a warm St. Lucian welcome at Tapas on the Bay, a vibrant, funky bar, dining and liming spot which offers "little dishes from around the world", right on the water beside a convenient dinghy dock in Rodney Bay Village.

Enjoy a glass of Spanish wine or Sangria with olives and home-baked bread at the cool, stone-fronted bar, or take a table on the deck overlooking the Rodney Bay Marina to enjoy a selection of tapas with a few cold beers in the constant Caribbean breeze. Local freshwater shrimp pan-fried in garlic are a must-do and the menu is full of beloved tapas dishes like tortilla, chorizo, croquetas and traditional paella.

—Continued on next page







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The lunchtime menu board changes weekly and features local catch, salads and hearty pies. Groups and parties should try their Pitchers & Platters that offer a Taste of Tapas for sharing, washed down with jugs of killer cocktails like Rum Zinger and Ginger Mojito. Weekly Wine Specials are sold by the glass, and buckets of Piton Beer or Corona are priced to keep parties happy all day.

Sailors, tie up at the secure, well-lit dinghy dock at the rear of Tapas for easy access from Rodney Bay Marina (close to JQ and Baywalk Shopping Malls). Open for lunch from 11:00AM every day except Sunday.

For more information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45.

Tradewind Begins Daily Flights Between St. Barths and Antigua

Tradewind Aviation's non-stop service between St. Barths and Antigua commenced on October 17th. The first to serve this route, Tradewind Aviation's Premium Scheduled Service is offered twice daily in a modern fleet of Cessna Grand Caravans and Pilatus PC-12s operated by two pilots. Enjoy air-conditioning and complimentary drinks, snacks, wine and beer onboard.

Flights are scheduled to provide a convenient link for passengers transferring on daily airline flights to and from London on British Airways and Virgin Atlantic as well as to destinations throughout the Caribbean and to the continental US.

Passengers may also travel with Tradewind between Antigua and San Juan or St. Thomas with a stop in St. Barths.

VIP service from airline to Tradewind flight is complimentary. VIP service from Tradewind to British Airways via the new FBO 2000 departure lounge is available for purchase.

Booking is available at www.tradewindaviation.com and on the SABRE GDS under IATA Code: TJ.

For more information contact David Zipkin at dzipkin@tradewindaviation.com.

IWW's 2013 Catalog Now Available

Shopping for boat stuff? Visit any Island Water World shop and pick up your copy of the 2013 catalog. It's 424 pages in full color, loaded with great products — and many new products!

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

La Amada Marina, Cancun Joins IGY Marinas

IGY Marinas announces the newest addition to its international network of marinas, La Amada Marina in Cancun, Mexico. With 176 slips for yachts up to 180 feet, the marina is part of the La Amada Residences and Marina in Playa Mujeres. With a maximum depth of 12 feet, the La Amada Marina offers 24-hour surveillance, a boat repair facility with a 100-ton travel lift, fuel, provisioning, and a ship's agent.

For more information visit www.laamadamarina.com.

Divali Magazine on Indo-Trinidadian Writers

Indo-Caribbean Divali Publication announces the publication of its latest Divali souvenir magazine. Divali, the Hindu Festival of Lights, was observed as a national holiday in Trinidad & Tobago on November 13th.

The theme of this year's edition of the magazine is The Brilliance of Indo-Trinidadian Literary Writers. From the 1930s, Seepersad Naipaul and his family began to establish themselves as the first literary dynasty, not only among Indo-Trinidadians, but also among writers throughout the English-speaking Caribbean. Seepersad was followed by his son Vidia (VS), who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992, and has been



the only Trinidadian to claim this prize so far. The Naipauls have been followed by writers such as Neil Bissoondath, Rabindranath Maharaj, Ron Ramdin, Raymond Ramcharitar and Kevin Baldeosingh. Acclaimed women writers include Rajandaye Ramkissoon-Chen, Madeleine Coopsammy, Lakshmi Persaud, Ramabai Espinet, Shani Mootoo and Niala Maharaj.

The 80-page full-colour glossy magazine is edited by anthropologist Dr. Kumar Mahabir, an assistant professor at the University of Trinidad & Tobago.

Hard copies of the magazine are available in Trinidad through mail service for TT$40, which includes handling, registration and local postage. Electronic copies are available at www.scribd.com/my_document_collections/3409286.

74 Yachts Showcased at BVI Charter Event

The final awards dinner for the 31st annual British Virgin Islands Charter Yacht Show took place on November 9th on the beach at Nanny Cay Resort and Marina, new host venue for the event. The Charter Yacht Show is organized annually by the Charter Yacht Society of the BVI at the start of the charter season. This year close to 200 crewmembers from 74 luxury yachts offering sailing charters in the Caribbean showcased their boats and services to more than 100 local and international charter brokers and clearinghouses. More than 20 local businesses participated in the Opening Night Marketplace. The show, which is the largest in the Virgin Islands, kicked off on November 6th.

For the third year running, Sol awarded prizes for winners of the 'Best Boat' in four different categories. Sol Best Monohull winner was *Blue Passion* with Greg and Vanessa Langridge.

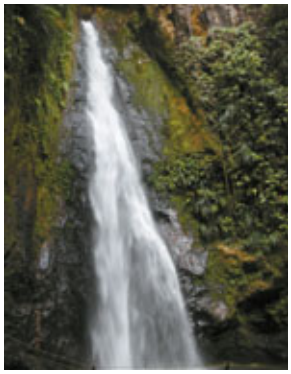
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The Sol Best Multihull under 55 feet was *Gypsy Princess* with Achilleas Tsiamis and Cleo Verheylewegen. Winner of the Sol Best Multihull over 55 feet was *Tiger Lily* with Harvey Jenkinson and Tracy Ford. Winner of the overall Sol Best in Show title was *Nutmeg* with Leopald and Ginette Richard. The winners in each category received two round-trip tickets from Beef Island, Tortola to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and hand-crafted recycled glass boats from Green VI Glass Studio. A panel of incognito judges toured all the participating yachts and met the crew to determine the best crew/yacht combination in each category.

The crewed yacht industry in the BVI generates more than US$35 million of business annually from high net-worth sailing charter guests who cruise the islands and enjoy the hospitality and natural beauty of the territory.

The Charter Yacht Society (CYS) is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1982 by independent owners of crewed yachts in the BVI.



See Syndicate Falls, Dominica

Mark Denebeim reports: Activities on the island of Dominica are often separated into two distinct regions: north and south. In the south, visitors usually begin in Roseau and visit Trafalgar Falls, the Emerald Pool, and perhaps Middleham or Titou Gorge Falls. In the north, starting a tour from Melville Hall Airport or the seaport of Portsmouth usually takes you to Red Rock in Calibishie, Toucari Bay and the Indian River Tour. The least visited natural attraction has been the 80-foot Syndicate Falls — until now.

Thanks to the promotional efforts of nearby landowners, Syndicate Falls is now an official tourist site with a rest room and refreshments available on site. There is a small access fee. Located just six miles, or about 25 minutes, from Portsmouth, the drive is up breathtaking Morne Diablotins, at 4,747 feet the second-tallest peak in the Lesser Antilles, where a National Park full of hiking trails awaits.

To obtain the necessary guide for an unforgettable tour of Syndicate Falls and the Dublanc River, call Russell at (767) 245-0959 or 617-7879, or ask one of the PAYS/Indian River Guides.

There are also home lots available for purchase adjacent to the Dublanc River, which is the launching point for the easy ten-minute river walk to the Falls.

For more information on Syndicate Falls Eco Estates, see www.SyndicateFalls.com.

New Inspiration at the Drop Anchor in Roseau

This season, Drop Anchor at Roseau, Dominica has a new addition to the property with Westport Tavern taking over the food and beverage management and yacht services of the property. The Holiday Season is sure to be filled with festive parties and excitement. On New Year's Eve, Drop Anchor will be ringing in the New Year with great holiday flair — special menu, cocktails and live music to dance into 2013, Tavern style! All yachts are welcome to celebrate New Year's Eve at Drop Anchor. Look for the blue lights over the water!

More Yachts Transported to the Caribbean

Dockwise Yacht Transport's semi-submersible ships are among the most extraordinary in the world. This year, two Dockwise ships, the 686-foot (209-meter) *Yacht Express* and the smaller 555.93-foot (169.49-meter) *Super Servant 4*, sailed to South Florida, having loaded in Genoa, Italy, and Palma de Mallorca, Spain, respectively. The cargo they carried — over 3,708.34 linear feet of luxury yachts — are worth a combined US$358,475,000 and either disembarked at Ft. Lauderdale or carried on with DYT to other drop-off points in the US and the Caribbean.

According to Graeme Lord from Fairport Yacht Support in Ft. Lauderdale, shipping his client's prized possession, the 136-foot (41.45 meter) *M/Y Lagniappe*, safely across the Atlantic takes lots of expertise. Lord has come to depend on DYT's dedicated service to yacht transport in arranging bookings of anywhere from five to eight yachts a year for the last 15 years. That's 50 to 100 yachts, he says, that he has either been involved with as a crew member or, more recently, as a "bookings and negotiations" coordinator for his own yacht support business.



ONNE VAN DER WAL

The 686-foot Yacht Express *in Martinique*

While the *Yacht Express* and *Super Servant 4* are DYT's own ships that have regular routes and utilize the float-on/float-off process that is unique to its fleet, the company can also oversee lift-on/lift-off services for yachts on other cargo ships if the need for meeting a schedule or delivering to a remote destination so demands it. Lord, who explained that M/Y *Lagniappe* is privately owned but charters in the Mediterranean, the US and the Caribbean, said that in all cases, it simply makes sense to use a company that specializes only in the transport of yachts.

DYT's global yacht transport routes for its semi-submersibles include the US East Coast, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean (St. Thomas and Martinique), the Pacific West Coast and the South Pacific.

For more information on DYT, visit www.yacht-transport.com.





REGATTA NEWS

Ship to Shore Party Crowns Bonaire Regatta

The 45th Bonaire International Regatta, held October 8th through 13th, saw 18 yacht entries, plus Optimists, Sunfish, beach cats, windsurfers, model "micro-boats", and even quickly self-built boats racing.



The Ship to Shore Boat Party hosted by Budget Marine Bonaire crowned the weekend: 100 metres of line were stretched along the shore for about 40 boats to tie stern-to. More than 600 people partied amongst the boats and the dock, enjoying live music from shore.

There were people sitting on shore, swimming and playing on boats and rafts all along the waterfront. After all of this activity, the organizers were happy to announce that their in-water cleanup the following day totaled four Polar beer bottles, one Smirnoff bottle, four soft-drink cans, two Popito bottles, one diaper — and one entire Kliko garbage can (still containing a stash of bottles).

The next Ship to Shore party will follow the Bonaire International Fishing Tournament on January 20th.

For full results of the 45th Bonaire International Regatta visit www.bonaireregatta.org/uitslagen2012.html.

Inaugural Clarke's Court Grenada Junior Regatta

Twenty young Grenadian sailors from Gouyave, Woburn, Grenada Yacht Club and Carriacou, aged seven to 18 years, enjoyed racing on October 20th in the first-ever Clarke's Court Bay Marina Junior Regatta. Classes were Optimist, Mosquito and Laser, for a fleet of 18 dinghies.

Clarke's Court Bay provided a perfect location, with conditions excellent for racing: 12- to 13-knot easterly breezes. Fifteen triangle races included five for Lasers, five for Optimists, four for Mosquitoes and one Masters' Race (a fun Optimist race for adults). Competition was fierce and racing tactics employed with skill and determination, with two official protests lodged. However the day was characterized by great sportsmanship and discipline, for which the young sailors and their coaches should be congratulated.



Shakeem Collins and crew Rees Evans took first place in an extremely competitive Laser Class. Brent McQueen dominated the Optimist Class, with Noah Bullen in second place. In the fleet of nine Mosquitoes, tiny 11-year-old Trevall James held on to the top spot by one point from Karzim James, who had three seconds and one first.

Mike Lee, a coach from Mambo ML Sailing Team in the UK, was impressed by the skill level of the young sailors and is looking for future members of his Sailing Team sponsored by Sperry Top-Sider UK and Rooster Sailing. Mike has offered to look at ways to introduce more dinghy classes in Grenada to help fill the gap between Optimists and Lasers and increase the potential racing experience for junior sailors on the island.

This was the first junior sailing event to be staged at Clarke's Court Bay, organized and hosted by Clarke's Court Bay Marina and helped by coaches Kevin Banfield, Michael McQueen and Randy Manwaring, plus a group of volunteers from Grenada Sailing Association and Grenada Sailing Festival, as well as cruisers based in Grenada. The organizers would especially like to thank Ellen Birrell of *S/V Boldly Go*; Ronny Ramos, Olympic sailor from Puerto Rico; and their Race Officers for excellent Race Committee organization; Jason Fletcher of Grenada Marine for providing additional dinghies; Nicholas George and Frank Pearce for providing and driving the safety and chase boats, and Dr. Joe Amechi, St. Augustine's Medical Services, for being Doctor On Call.

Sponsorship support was received from Budget Marine, Horizon Yacht Charters, Island Water World, Sailing School Grenada, Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, Coca Cola, Real Value Supermarket, Independence Agencies, Poli Natural Spring Water, and Glenelg Spring Water. Prizes for the raffle to raise funds for junior sailing were provided by Bananas Restaurant, Dodgy Dock, Le Chateau, Taffy's at Island View, BB's Crabback, Carib Sushi, La Boulangerie, Bluebeard Enterprises, La Heliconia, Le Phare Bleu, Horizon Yacht Charters, Budget Marine, Spice Isle Retreat, X Marine and The Merry Baker.

The winners were — Laser Class: first, Shakeem Collins/Rees Evans; second, Kwesi Paul/Justin James. Optimist Class: first, Brent McQueen; second, Noah Bullen; third, Ralph Francis. Mosquito Class: first, Trevell James; second, Karzim James; third, Sharkim Robertson. Masters' Race: first, Kevin Banfield; second, Mike Lee Team Sperry.

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Curaçao Sailor Wins North American Optimist Championships

Odile van Aanholt of Curaçao has won first place in the 2012 North American Optimist Championships



MATIAS CAPIZZANO

(Optinam), held in Mexico from October 20th through 28th. One of the most talented female sailors worldwide, the 14-year-old scored only 25 points out of 11 races; with four firsts, three seconds and three 5th places.

Competitors at 2012 Optinam included more than 140 sailors under 16 years from 18 countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Bermuda, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Uruguay. Second place went to Singapore's Samuel Neo Jiun Jie and third place to Sean Breannan of the USA.

For more information visit www.optiworld.org.

Holmberg Elected New CSA President

Thirty Caribbean regatta organizers and representatives of member national authorities attended the Caribbean Sailing Association's Annual General Meeting and Regatta Organizers' Conference in St. Maarten on October 21st, with attendees from Antigua, Barbados, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, Martinique, Puerto Rico, St. Barths, St. Maarten, and the British and US Virgin Islands.

Outgoing president Cary Byerley, who served the CSA for many years, handed over leadership to Peter Holmberg, previous Vice President of the CSA's Northern Region.

Holmberg, a world-class racing sailor, says, "My primary goal is to help organize CSA into a more professional organization. The Caribbean is now one of the leading sailing regions in the world, and we must be better organized and prepared to meet this opportunity and challenge. I will work with the other officers to better organize our internal operations, from establishing objectives and committees to improving our financial strength. On the sailing front, I will endeavor to have the CSA become the lead authority to sanction international events on the regional calendar, helping avoid overlaps and thereby ensuring that each island gets the maximum exposure and participation possible. We will also refocus on dinghy sailing, better supporting the Caribbean Dinghy Championships, and pursuing grants and development opportunities."

Other board members include Judy Petz of the BVI Spring Regatta, Dick Stoute from Barbados, Jaime Torres from Puerto Rico, Jean Trudo from Martinique, Michele Korteweg of the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, Penny McIntyre from Barbados, and Kathy Lammers and Alison Sly-Adams of Antigua Sailing Week.

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

Triple Jack Retakes Round Tortola Record

Trimaran *Triple Jack* recaptured her Round Tortola record on October 25th, flying around the island in 2 hours, 40 minutes and 18 seconds, taking ten minutes off Formula 40 *Soma's* record time set in April 2010. The 34-year old Kelsall one-off shattered her time of 3 hours and 33 minutes set in the 2009 Round Tortola Race. She covered 39 miles with an average speed of 12.68 knots and a top speed of 20.6 knots.

With an almost perfect southeasterly blowing, *Triple Jack* started close to Peter Island and flew up the south side of Tortola on starboard tack before bearing off for the spinnaker hoist off Scrub Island. Only about a third of the way along the north side of Tortola, the crew had to douse the chute and fetch to Soper's Hole under genoa. *Triple Jack* wiggled through this potentially time-sapping area of mixed currents and winds relatively painlessly before beating over to St John. From St. John it was, in theory, one straight shot back to Nanny Cay where every header had the crew anxiously looking at their watches. Owners Richard Wooldridge and Steve Davis were now feeling the pressure, exacerbated by being fed the wrong elapsed time – ten minutes more than reality. However, Steve carefully worked *Triple Jack* upwind along the south side of Tortola.

Richard said, "We have waited a long time for the perfect weather window and a 20-knot south-easterly was it. The crew work was fantastic; Mike Hirst played the mainsheet like a man possessed! We had our moments, like having to cut our spinnaker halyard to drop it; the attempt could easily have gone the other way but it was beautiful sailing out there." The crew comprised Richard Wooldridge, Steve Davis, Mike Hirst, Miles Fossey, Henry Leonnig and Tom Echle.

SOL St. Maarten Optimist Championship

The annual SOL St. Maarten Optimist Championship, held November 10th and organized by the St. Maarten Yacht Club, hosted sailors between the ages of eight and 15 representing Anguilla, Barbados, Curaçao, St. Barths and St. Maarten, sailed a fleet of 22 Optimists in Simpson Bay in perfect weather. Race Officer Paul Miller and judges David de Vries, Rien Korteknie and Andrea Scarabelli ensured that all went well.

In fierce competition Nathan Smith from St. Maarten secured first place overall, with Barbadian Scott Gittens second. The Senior Fleet (12 to 15 years) winners were: first place, Scott Gittens of Barbados; second, Leonardo Knol of St. Maarten; and third, Ilian Halbertsma of St. Maarten. The Junior Fleet (eight to 11 years) winners were: first place, Nathan Smith of St. Maarten; second, Luke Bacon of St. Maarten; third, Matheo Magras of St. Barths. First female overall was Katie Caputo. Eight-year-old Keivan Magras of St Barths received the sportsmanship prize: as the youngest competitor, he started, raced and finished all his races.

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This Optimist regatta has always been sponsored by SOL; other sponsors include Heavenly Water, Domino's Pizza, Budget Marine and Aqua Mania.

For more information about youth sailing in St. Maarten contact info@smyc.com. For full results visit http://regattaguru.com/smyc/minisite?series_id=6#Results_page;null=null.

First Ever Early Departure for Caribbean 1500

The Caribbean 1500 rally sails annually from Hampton, Virginia in two fleets: the main one sails 1,500 nautical miles to Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola, BVI, and the Bahamas fleet sails 975 nautical miles to Green Turtle Cay. This year 40 boats entered; over 1,200 boats with 5,000 ralliers aboard have sailed the Caribbean 1500 since it started in 1990. While in the past there have been weather delays, rally founder Steve Black confirmed that 2012 — the 23rd running of the event — is the first time in Caribbean 1500 history that it left early.

Before the rally's start, "Frankenstorm" Sandy complicated matters — about eight of the yachts that hadn't yet arrived in Hampton were hunkered down on the Chesapeake, while crews of some boats that had arrived flew out to tend to their shoreside homes, only to find themselves stranded as far afield as Toronto after flights were canceled. One yacht was safely moored in the Hudson River when the storm hit but missed the start of the rally thanks to New York Harbor being closed to recreational traffic.

After Sandy, it was apparent that another weather system was forming. The event's organizers determined that the BVI-bound fleet, by leaving early, should be well enough south and east of the center of low pressure to avoid the worst of the weather. The event officially started — one day early — on November 3rd, but under a "rolling start" system, skippers were allowed to leave whenever they felt ready. All arrived safely. *Wings*, a Hylas 54 from Annapolis, Maryland took BVI line honors.

November 16th's prizegiving ceremony at Peg Leg's capped a week of post-race activities at Nanny Cay.

For full results visit www.worldcruising.com/carib1500.

St. Lucia's Mango Bowl on a Roll!

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press in late November, preparations for St. Lucia's inaugural IGY/First Citizens Mango Bowl Regatta are being finalized. Taking place December 1st and 2nd, the new event will include Racing, Cruising, Catamaran, and one-design (J/24 plus Surprise) Classes. A full program of social activities is planned for the weekend, both at the St. Lucia Yacht Club and the IGY Rodney Bay Marina.

Press conferences on the island have highlighted the involvement of local youth in the sport and the importance of sailing to the island, from the recreational



and sporting aspects to the economic and career prospects yachting brings to the community, and the regional networking opportunities offered by the Mango Bowl Regatta.

We'll have a full report on the Mango Bowl Regatta in next month's *Compass*.

230-Yacht Fleet Bound for St. Lucia

The annual Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) rally starting each November in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria is the largest trans-ocean sailing event in the world. With the Caribbean destination of Rodney Bay, St. Lucia beckoning, it is a 2,700-nautical-mile passage on the northeast tradewind route, averaging 14 to 21 days.

ARC 2012 started from Las Palmas on November 25th; the bulk of the fleet is expected to arrive in St. Lucia in mid-December, with the flags of 30 nations represented.

The ARC enjoys the support of the Tourist Authority of Gran Canaria, the Port Authority of Las Palmas, Rol Nautic and the Saint Lucia Board of Tourism. ARC activities after arrival in Rodney Bay will include the Saint Lucia Tourist Board Welcome Party, a jazz night, ARC in the Park (live music), a Cultural Weekend of activities, the Marina Manager's Cocktail Party, lectures on Caribbean cooking and Caribbean cruising, the Pigeon Island costume party and the gala ARC prizegiving ceremony.

ARC 2012 was officially full, and a wait list started, in March 2012. The entry list for ARC 2013 is expected to be fully booked by February 2013. See full feature cov-

TIM BISHOP



erage of ARC 2012 in next months' *Compass*!

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

Grenada Sailing Week Starts January 31st

Sponsors including Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, Mount Gay Rum, Sea Hawk Paints and Island Water World will make the Grenada Sailing Week Camper & Nicholsons Race Series, January 31st

BOB GRIESER



through February 5th, 2013 a great experience: four days of competitive racing, one Lay Day on a beautiful beach, and six nights of hot parties!

Sailors will compete in the following classes: Racing 1 and 2, Cruising 1 and 2, Charter, Multihull and Fun.

—*Continued on next page*

Antigua:
Marine Power Svcs:
268-460-1850
Seagull Yacht Svcs:
268-460-3049
Bequia:
Caribbean Diesel:
784-457-3114
Dominica:
Dominica Marine Center:
767-448-2705
Grenada:
Grenada Marine:
473-443-1667
Enza Marine:
473-439-2049
Martinique:
Inboard Diesel Svcs:
596-596-787-196
St. Croix:
St. Croix Marine:
340-773-0289
St. John:
Coral Bay Marine:
340-776-6665
St. Lucia:
Martinek:
758-450-0552
St. Maarten:
Electec:
599-544-2051
St. Thomas:
All Points Marine:
340-775-9912
Trinidad & Tobago:
Engine Tech Co. Ltd:
868-667-7158
Dockyard Electrics:
868-634-4272
Tortola:
Cay Electronics:
284-494-2400
Marine Maintenance Svcs:
284-494-3494
Parts & Power:
284-494-2830



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Entries have already come in from Grenada, Carriacou, Trinidad, Barbados, the UK, the USA and Austria.

The Regatta Village at Port Louis Marina will have everything your crew may need — easy access to sailing courses, calm nights inside the lagoon, Customs and Immigration on hand, a pool and beach, the Victory Restaurant and Yolo Bar, a convenience store and nearby fuel dock, marine repair services, chandleries and provisioning stores. Registered boats get a 50-percent discount on dock space for up to ten days over the regatta period; contact danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com to ensure your place.

Online registration via www.grenadasailingweek.com is US$60 if paid by December 31st.

United Insurance Sponsors Grenada Work Boat Regatta

United Insurance is Title Sponsor for the Grenada Sailing Festival Work Boat Regatta 2013. The long-time supporter moves into the central role for the 20th Anniversary of the Grenada Sailing Festival, to be held February 1st through 3rd.

Grenada Sailing Festival has been proud to run the national Work Boat Regatta for 20 consecutive years — even staging the event only four months after Hurricane Ivan. Over these years the event has become important not only to the island's sailing communities, but to all Grenadians and overseas visitors too. It is a significant part of Grenada Sailing Festival's remit to support the continued development of the tradition of sailing and boat-building in Grenada and its sister islands. Continued support is being pledged by the Grenada Board of Tourism, Budget Marine, Camper & Nicholsons Marinas, Grenada Breweries Ltd, True Blue Bay Resort's Dodgy Dock, LIME, Coca Cola and Etang Water, Grenlec, Courts and Island Dreams Yacht Services.


BOB GRESER

Event organizers will work with the Grenada Sailing Association and Budget Marine to stage the Grenada Sailing Festival Junior Dinghy Sailing Championship on February 2nd. Grenada Sailing Festival thanks Budget Marine for its continued support to the Junior Sailing Programme.

The United Insurance Work Boat Regatta will be staged on February 2nd and 3rd on Grand Anse Beach, after a Sunset Lime on the evening of February 1st to welcome participating sailors from Carriacou, Gouyave, Petite Martinique, Sauteurs and Woburn.

For more information visit www.grenadasailingfestival.com and follow Grenada Sailing Festival on Facebook.

MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

DECEMBER - JANUARY 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!

December 2012					
DATE	TIME	21	1859	10	1044
1	0144	22	1944	11	1146 (new moon)
2	0231	23	2029	12	1245
3	0318	24	2116	13	1341
4	0404	25	2203	14	1433
5	0449	26	2252	15	1522
6	0533	27	2340	16	1608
7	0622	28	0000 (full moon)	17	1654
8	0710	29	0028	18	1740
9	0802	30	0116	19	1825
10	0857	31	0202	20	1912
11	0957			21	1959
12	1059	**January 2013**		22	2047
13	1204 (new moon)	1	0248	23	2135
14	1307	2	0353	24	2223
15	1407	3	0417	25	2311
16	1503	4	0506	26	2359
17	1555	5	0554	27	0000 (full moon)
18	1644	6	0646	28	0045
19	1730	7	0741	29	0132
20	1815	8	0840	30	0218
		9	0942	31	0304



Discovering Quiet Anchorages in the Eastern Caribbean

Part Two:

SAILING NORTHWARD FROM GRENADA

by Don Street

Sailors are continually complaining that all the anchorages in the Eastern Caribbean are overcrowded and loaded with mooring balls. This is not so. Yachtsmen exhibit the lemming instinct: they tend to follow each other to the same popular anchorages, seldom getting off the beaten track.

If you really want to enjoy exploring the Eastern Caribbean, buy not only my guide to the area you wish to cruise but also the relevant Chris Doyle guide to the Windwards or Leewards, and/or Nancy and Simon Scott's guide to the US and British Virgin Islands. The guides are not expensive: about the same price as a meal for two in a cheap restaurant or a meal for one in a very good restaurant. Also buy from Imray Nautical Charts and Books (www.imray.com) the memory stick that shows all the Imray-Iolaire charts for the area from Trinidad to St. Thomas. Read the relevant guides and crosscheck them while looking at the relevant chart on your laptop. Once you have decided exactly where you want to cruise, buy the relevant Imray-Iolaire chart. All this research can be done before you arrive in the Eastern Caribbean.

Last month we looked at finding quiet anchorages on a cruise sailing southward from Antigua (see the November 2012 issue of Compass *at www.caribbeancompass.com). Now we'll look at doing the same on a northbound cruise from Grenada. In the following text the numbers referred to are the pages in* Street's Guide: Martinique to Trinidad.

Read the pilotage details carefully — quiet anchorages are unfrequented by the masses for good reason!

Anchorage-Hopping Up Grenada's East Coast

Heading north from Grenada the usual route is up the lee coast of Grenada and on to Carriacou in one long, all-day passage with a really hard beat to windward the last four or five hours. It starts with a three- to five-mile (depending on your anchorage) sail dead downwind to Point Saline then 18 miles up Grenada's west coast, hard on the wind on a starboard tack — with frequent tacks inshore — until you reach the northwest corner of Grenada at Tanga Langa. It is then a course of 055 degrees magnetic to Tyrell Bay in Carriacou — 15 miles hard on the wind.

Unless the wind is well south of east and you have timed it to pick up a weather-going tide (check the back of Imray-Iolaire charts to see how to calculate the tidal current in the Eastern Caribbean) you will not be able to lay this course. The actual distance sailed will be 20 to 25 miles, possibly more. Thus from your anchorage on the south coast of Grenada to Tyrell Bay the actual sailing distance will be between 43 to 50 miles, with the last 20 or more hard on the wind fighting for every mile.

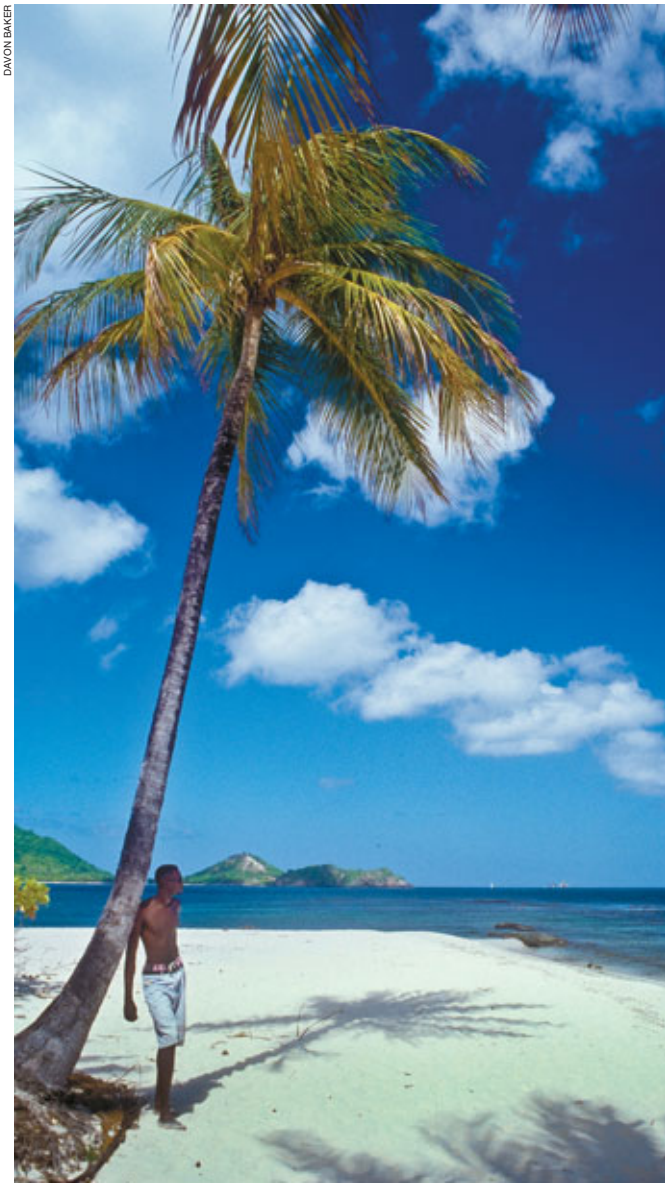
Rather than this all-day fight, experienced sailors can have an interesting "off the beaten track" trip north by sailing up the east side of Grenada. Spend four or five, perhaps six, days heading north to Carriacou, enjoying unfrequented anchorages all the way.

It is a five- or six-mile beat from Grenada's popular south coast anchorages to Lascar Cove, Petit Trou or Requin (pages 160/162). Start early, before the wind really starts to blow, and you are anchored in one of these deserted coves by 1100 hours.

The next day, again start early for the six miles to the town of Grenville (pages 162/165) where yours will probably be the only yacht.

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DAVON BAKER



No crowds, no problem. Veteran Caribbean sailor Don Street outlines where the confident navigator can really get away from it all



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Calivigny Bay, St. George's, Grenada W.I., POS 12°00'11N / 61°43'29W

—Continued from previous page

While in Grenville organize a full day's shoreside exploration to the Grenada Chocolate Factory (www.grenadachocolate.com/about.html) where organic chocolate is produced the "green" way as all electricity is from wind, water or solar. Not only is it produced the green way, but also earlier this year they made a major shipment of chocolate to England aboard *Tres Hombres*, an all-sail, cargo-carrying brigantine! Then on to Belmont Estate, a 400-acre working estate: take a tour, enjoy a big Grenadian lunch, then have a short kip in a hammock to digest the meal.


ANDY PELL

Follow this with a tour of the River Antoine Rum factory. This is a 200-year-old distillery whose power is provided by a water wheel.

The next day it is a six-mile reach to the uninhabited, undeveloped Sandy Island (page 165), not to be confused with the Sandy Island off Carriacou.

The following day, check the tidal information on the back of all Imray-Iolaire charts and leave on a weather-going tide for a 14-mile close reach at 035 degrees magnetic (if you have left on a weather-going tide) to the south coast of Carriacou.

The above anchorage-hopping cruise is certainly more enjoyable that the long nonstop haul up the lee coast of Grenada!

Left:
One with the universe in one of Grenada's many south coast hideaways

Right:
Out there.
The uninhabited Maria Islands off the southeast coast of St. Lucia

Carriacou to St. Lucia

Explore the south and east coast of Carriacou (pages 133/137), navigating inside the reef and anchoring at the village of Windward to see traditional wooden boatbuilding. Yours will probably be the only yacht amid the local cargo and fishing vessels. Also buy and test some Jack Iron, rum so strong that ice cubes sink in it like stones.

Proceed from Windward to Hillsborough to clear out of Grenada waters, then head north to clear into St. Vincent & the Grenadines at Clifton Harbour on Union Island. If springtime is in the air by now and the wind is firmly south of east, visit unfrequented Bloody Bay on Union Island.

Once Bequia is reached it is the milk run up the lee coast of St. Vincent and on to St. Lucia. This is well described in Doyle's guide, with good descriptions of shoreside explorations. However, what Doyle does not emphasize is that the channel crossing from St. Vincent to St. Lucia can be a tough one. Check the tidal information. If it is at all possible, do the run from the northwest corner of St. Vincent to the Pitons with a weather-going tide.

Alternately, after clearing out of SVG waters from Bequia, head northeast up Bequia Channel. If the tide is running west, short-tack up the Bequia shore, possibly stopping at Anse Chemin if the wind is south or southeast (page 94), or on to the uninhabited Baliceaux (pages 99/100). [*Note: you must leave SVG waters within 24 hours of clearing out. It is also possible to clear out at Mustique.]*

From Baliceaux take a straight shot 45 miles on a course of 030 degrees magnetic to Vieux Fort, clear in to St. Lucia [*if you clear in and out at one time, you have 72 hours to depart*], and then go anchor in Point Sable Bay off the nature reserve of the uninhabited Maria Islands (pages 63/64). In the spring, the wind should be south of east, so from Baliceaux to Vieux Fort should be a reach — perhaps a tight reach but a fast one.

From the Maria Islands or Vieux Fort, the milk run is northward up the lee side of St. Lucia as described by both myself and Doyle. However, in the spring with the wind south of east, a straight shot from the Maria Islands to Ste. Anne on the south coast of Martinique is possible. The first 15 miles course is 030, but then it is eased sheets course 010 for the next 30 miles.

North from St. Lucia

Boats arriving in St. Lucia with the ARC2012 will be deciding where to go next after all the fun in Rodney Bay winds down. See Part One of this article in last month's *Compass* for directions on heading southward from St. Lucia "off the beaten track".

Heading north from St. Lucia you have two options. The usual choice is the milk run up the lee coasts of Martinique, Dominica and Guadeloupe and onward to the English Harbour and Falmouth Harbour area of Antigua. This route is well described in both my and Doyle's guides, with Doyle giving much more shoreside information and my guide giving more navigational information to make the interisland passages easier and more comfortable.

A more interesting, off the beaten track course from St. Lucia is to head from Pigeon Island directly to Ste. Anne, Martinique — 22 miles on a course of 030 degrees magnetic. Check the tides and try to do this on a weather-going tide.

Anchor in Ste. Anne [pages 33/34), as during busy times there is little chance of finding a slip or anchoring space in Cul de Sac de Marin. Take the dinghy in to


ALAN MCDOUGAL

Marin, enter with Immigration and Customs, tie the dinghy at the shipyard, walk up the hill, and stock up with French cheese, wine and real Heineken beer direct from Holland. Take a taxi down the hill to the dinghy, and dinghy back to Ste. Anne. Then the next day depart early, before it really begins to blow, and sail around to the windward coast of Martinique (pages 33/46). This is the Street family's favourite cruising ground, with abundant anchorages where yours will most likely be the only boat. My guide covers this area in much more detail than Doyle's; allow a full week to explore the east coast of Martinique.

From the windward coast of Martinique sail direct 75 miles on a course of 350 degrees magnetic to Marie Galante (pages 158/159). This should be a fast hull-speed reach. Marie Galante has mile after mile of white sand beaches. Anchor almost anywhere along the lee coast, conditions permitting. (You can also dock in the small harbor of Grand-Bourg but it's a busy place.) Rent a car and explore, as Marie Galante has been largely bypassed by mass tourism.

From Marie Galante it is 30 miles hard on the wind to Desirade (pages 149/150), but you may decide after 15 miles to stop at Petite Terre (pages 151/152). At Desirade's Grande-Anse, both the channel and harbour have been dredged to seven feet. On Desirade you will discover the clock has been turned back 30 years.

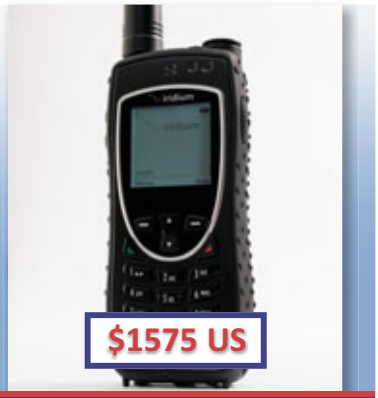
Then, from the channel between Guadeloupe and Desirade, it is a broad reach of 60 miles on a course of 335 degrees magnetic (often at hull speed) to the English/Falmouth Harbour area with a possible stop at Moule (pages 138/139), weather permitting.

—Continued on next pag

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—*Continued from previous page*

One of the nicest things about this route is minimal paperwork. Martinique, Marie Galante and Desirade are all French, so no more paperwork needs to be done until you leave. However, you will probably discover that no one in Marie Galante or Desirade is interested in giving you clearance papers, so on arrival in Antigua just show your entry papers for Martinique, explain where you have been and all should be well.



ALL PHOTOS: CHRIS DOYLE

Clockwise from top: Baie des Anglais is among the numerous coves on Martinique's windward coast; a serene sunset at St. Louis, Marie Galante; Ile Fourche, an uninhabited oasis between St. Barths and St. Martin



North from Antigua

If you are in Antigua and bound north and west, head first to the east and north coasts of Antigua (pages 94/106), then on to Barbuda (pages 114/119). Carefully read the piloting directions on the back of the Barbuda chart. Barbuda is another remote and beautiful place where you won't see many, if any, other yachts.

From Barbuda west it is 60 miles to St. Barths. The wonderful old St. Barths has disappeared; you are now arriving via Aladdin's magic carpet to the Côte d'Azur. In Gustavia you will have to pay a fee, even if anchored out on your own anchor. Expensive, but cheaper than an airline ticket to the south of France!

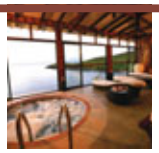
Heading west to St. Martin you can stop at the uninhabited island of Ile Fourche, but avoid it on weekends. Head for the north, French side of St. Martin where you can find uncrowded anchorages off the middle of the lee side of Caye Verte (pages 40/41), Anse Marcel (page 37), Baie de Gran Case (pages 35/37) and Baie de Friars (page 36). Check the back of A24 chart and the correction notices on www.imray.com for update information.

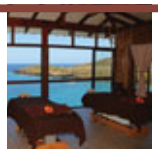
From St. Martin sail on westward to the Virgins — British, US and Spanish (chart A233: the double-sided Imray-Iolaire chart which is A231 and A232 printed back to back).

From the US Virgins, sail on to the Spanish Virgins, where the clock has run very slow. The Spanish Virgins are much like the British Virgins were in the early 1970s. From the Spanish Virgins sail on to the south coast of Puerto Rico. Use *Street's Guide to Puerto Rico, Spanish, US and British Virgin Islands* — the only guide that covers all these island groups in one volume. Cross check my guide with Nancy and Simon Scott's *Cruising Guide to the Virgin Islands* and you will be able to find quiet anchorages in both the US and British Virgin islands — as illustrated by my article on St. Croix that will appear in next month's *Compass*.













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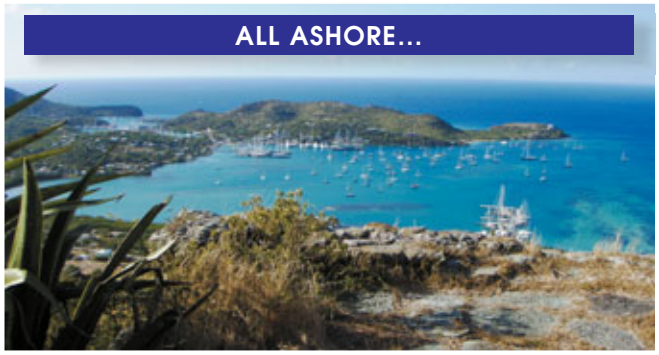
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Above: The view from Fort George

Left: Stone arch on Monk's Hill hike

Overlooking Antigua's Falmouth Harbour

by Devi Sharp

Monk's Hill is a prominent feature rising 588 feet above the north side of Falmouth Harbour, one of Antigua's most popular yacht harbors. Like so many places in the Eastern Caribbean with a good view, Monk's Hill has a fort and can tell a story that dates back to the 1600s. The fort is named Fort George or Great George Fort, supposedly after the patron saint of England. The hill itself was named after the owner of the land, Nathaniel Monk, who owned the estate that included the hill. The fort was built in 1689 to protect the town of Falmouth from the threat of an invasion by the French, who had recently captured St. Kitts. The structure was enhanced over the years and in 1713 it was built to its maximum size, which is about five acres. Although the fort was built for defense and protection, it has never seen any battles. The French had reportedly approached, but continued past to capture Montserrat after seeing the size and scale of the fort.

Today most of the fort is covered with scrubby brush or has tumbled down, but the walk is worth the view. My husband, Hunter, and I discovered this trail by following his nose and his keen desire to get on top of the highest hill in the vicinity of any anchorage. When we reached near the top we were quite surprised to find the ruins of the fort because you cannot see the fort structure from the anchorage. The climb up the hill is quite steep in places. The first quarter of a mile is on a road with light traffic. After departing the main road there is very little traffic and the route turns into a footpath.

Directions for the Monk's Hill Hike

Secure your dinghy at the Catamaran Marina, walk out to the main road from the marina and turn left (towards St. John's). Walk on the main road for less than a quarter mile past the St. Paul's Anglican Church and past a green bar plastered with Heineken logos. Take the second right past the green bar onto a gravel road.

Continue walking up the road as it climbs past lovely houses and barking dogs and into the saddle of the hillside. In about half a mile the road turns into a dirt track and you continue on the track in the same direction for about 100 feet to where the track ends. On your left there will be a footpath surrounded by many century plants. Continue on the obvious trail beneath the hill with a drop-off on your left side. Keep looking right for a cluster of century plants where the trail goes uphill between the century plants; at this point the trail will go away from the drop-off.

Shortly after going through the century plants you will come to a stone wall; this is part of Fort George. Continue walking parallel to the stone wall until you get to an "L" in the wall. Walk through the corner and you'll get to a stone structure where you will need to bear right (east). Continue on the trail and in a few hundred feet the trail ends at a rock road. Take a right turn and walk uphill to the top of Monk's Hill. The trail makes a Y at the communication tower where you will bear right and get a view of Falmouth and English Harbours. You can walk around the top for more great views.

It takes about one hour from the dinghy dock to the top of Monk's Hill.

At this point you can retrace your steps or go down a different way. If you choose to make a loop and go down a different way, you will retrace your steps to the rock road and head downhill on the road through the stone arch (about half a mile) until you come to a Y, where you will bear right. In a few hundred feet you will see one power pole on the left and two more on the right. At the second right-side power pole follow the steep dirt track downhill. It will widen into an overgrown roadbed; follow this until it turns into concrete with a rock wall on your left. At the T make a left and you will come into the main road where you will take a right and you are only a few hundred feet from the turn-off to the Catamaran Marina.

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







Cruising: That Magic Moment

by Frank Virgintino

Cruising is an art that must be practised to really understand and to enjoy. Its value cannot be deduced logically. It is an affair of the heart, something that cannot be rushed. Cruising is something that must be shared in order to reap what it has to offer. All of us who are committed to it make jokes about how difficult it can be as well as how costly, even uncomfortable. Yet most of us who do it, do it for a lifetime. William F. Buckley, the editor of the *American National Review* magazine and author of many books, including some on his sailing feats, commented as follows just before he died: "So, deciding that the time has come to sell the *Patito* and forfeit all that is not lightly done, and it brings to mind the step yet ahead, which is giving up life itself." He refers to his sailboat of many years and to what "is not lightly done". For most of us, our commitment to cruising is not something that is lightly done — it is something that we work hard to undertake and just as hard to continue.



GREG NEWBOLD

I remember seeing a documentary on television on a Sunday afternoon 40 or so years ago, about a cruise eastward on Long Island Sound. The author reviewed preparation of the boat, weather and chart review and an overview of the courses that would be taken to route the boat to its final destination. I was at the edge of my seat with anticipation when finally the boat reached its destination and the skipper ordered "anchor down". Everyone went swimming followed by a great lunch, sunbathing, reading and genial conversation. That was it for me — I was hooked, and have been for my entire life.

I have gone cruising, and not just cruising but cruising under sail. I have worked and I have toiled. Bad weather, broken gear and so many times problems that seemed so frequent and so many that when I heard cruising defined as "the process of moving from one exotic port to another to undertake repairs", I could easily relate to such cynicism. We seem always to work and repair, repair and work. The "to do" list seldom seems to grow shorter and, just when it does, a new list pops up with new items that need attending to. This adventure called cruising can often seem disheartening and complicated, not to mention costly. Sometimes, when I am really feeling down, I envy someone who simply putters around their garden or goes to a golf course with their putter. Then I reconsider and ask myself, "What is cruising and what is it to me?"

The famous American poet Robert Frost writes in his poem Song of the Wave, "Thinking naught of woe or grief, Dancing, prancing, like a leaf, Caring not for cliff or reef." We use those "songs of the wave" to transport us to wherever our hearts and minds dispatch us. If we thought of the adversities and complexities of our avocation, cruising under sail, perhaps few of us would undertake such adventure, for as Frost notes in referring to the waves, they think naught of woe or grief and we seem to follow suit.

As I struggle to justify the investment of time and money, not to mention the frustration caused by myriad problems, I come face to face with the questions, "What is it that reaches deep inside of me? What is it that finally satisfies me? What part of me really wants to sit back and avoid the challenge and discomfort, even danger that comes with cruising?"

Sometimes we get beyond just discomfort and have to deal with concerns about piracy or really bad weather. That occurred to me in the Caribbean recently when I experienced a two-week period of tradewinds that averaged 35 knots and higher. I moved 60 miles to the east with a weather forecast that predicted light offshore winds at night only to experience 35-knot winds the entire night.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

I went into a harbor and anchored, figuring that I would wait it out. The following day the wind swung to the southeast and I had to leave the harbor as it is open to the south and the waves coming in continued to grow larger. Overnight to the next anchorage we experienced 35 knots and above again. Reefed main and staysail, frequent tacking and finally some motoring got us under a headland where I managed to find shelter and a good anchorage in a very sheltered, very beautiful bay that is totally isolated. We waited for a day and proceeded 16 miles to a cape where we anchored and rested for two days before continuing on. As we continued on overnight, we encountered gusts that reached 45 knots with seas that were higher than ten feet, although how high they were could not really be determined because the night was pitch black. Out at sea, dark night, wind howling and seas very large. Anything can happen in such conditions and surely it is not a ride at Disney World where you can simply get off. I asked myself again, "What am I doing here? I must be crazy! I have spent more than 40 years of my life doing this in wind, rain, storms, fog, etcetera. Why am I still doing it?"

I ask myself that question over and over, searching for a suitable answer — for every time that I make harbor and decide I have had enough, I recoup, reset and go back to sea. What is this thing called cruising? What pulls us so hard to it?

Then I thought back to that first stop along the way — the harbor that opened to the south. It was a really great town with great color and interesting people and sights. The second anchorage along the way, under the headland, is a big bay of white sand where we anchored in ten feet of perfectly clear water while the wind howled and blew over the top of our mast. It was incredible: swinging to anchor there and taking a nap was worth everything.

The next anchorage was at a small island inhabited by fishermen. The anchorage was secure and outside the reach of any seaway. It was calm and the boat swung gently to her anchor. I went ashore and spoke with the fishermen who were playing dominos because it was too rough to fish. They "sold" (nearly gave) me a few fish, which we cooked and ate with white rice, washed down with some local beer we had aboard. And finally, the last leg, that last night when the wind surpassed 45 knots at times, when peering into the night was like peering into the blackness of the deepest part of the universe, followed by daybreak and finally landfall. The boat was finally back at the marina and washed clean of its salt, so many layers of salt, encrusted salt. Be sure to wash it all off. Wash the roller furling gear carefully; get the salt out of the drum. Do the laundry. Open the hatches and air out the boat. Get the boat shipshape and finally take a nap, a deep relaxing nap, a rest that tired bones and a weary mind could truly enjoy. Waking up and walking up the dock saying "hello" to all the others who were cleaning their boats or doing maintenance. Nodding the kind of nod that is a nod of acknowledgement, perhaps even encouragement.

Then in a moment, a flash in which I realized what it was that kept pulling me back in, just when I thought I had found a way out of my chosen avocation. It is *that magic moment* — a moment of such complete satisfaction and joy that it evades accurate description. It is only hinted at through forms that are whispers as we make our way along, a type of higher generality that those of us who go to sea cruising all hold in common.

I am blessed and truly happy to have had more than four decades aboard the boats that I have loved and catered to. The boats have also catered to me, both my mind and my soul. They have given me shelter and have transported me to and through wondrous adventures where the spirit can soar free. Sometimes frustrated with breakdowns, sometimes scared out of my wits, sometimes even convinced that I will stay home and take up golf, but always brought back to my love of cruising — for there I know, without a doubt, that if I commit myself to my passion to go to sea, to go cruising, that I will come again to my favorite anchorage: *that magic moment.*

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



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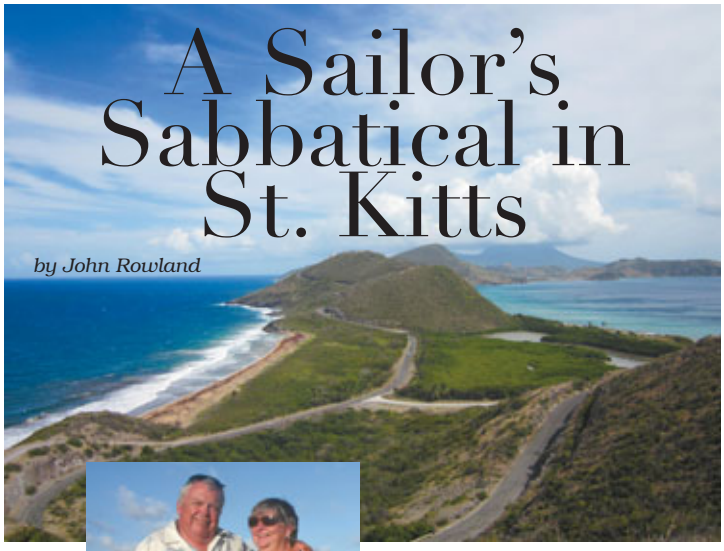
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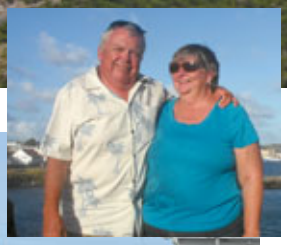
A Sailor's Sabbatical in St. Kitts

by John Rowland



MY wife, Nancy, and I sailed down to the Eastern Caribbean with the Caribbean 1500 Rally in November of 2005. Except for plane trips back to North America for family visits, funerals, weddings and every alternate Christmas, we've been sailing between the Virgin Islands and Trinidad & Tobago ever since. Beyond a few things stored at our children's homes, we own no property in North America.

By early 2012, we were discussing "taking a break", admittedly unable to define precisely what that meant. Nancy had taken up watercolor painting and limited space on the 38-foot *Silver Seas* forced her to pack up all her materials after each session. I was becoming tired of the constant maintenance and one thing after the other breaking. At times I wondered whether we owned the boat or the other way around. Nancy missed simple things like a bathtub and a blender. The list went on. I guess we had simply come to a point where the inconvenience of living on a 38-foot boat had overcome the thrill of sailing and exploring. But still we couldn't visualize exactly what our "break" would look like and where it would take place. We began to take a "we'll know it when we see it" attitude.





On St. Kitts, John and Nancy (center photo) enjoyed land-based proximity to both the Atlantic and Caribbean (top photo), while their Silver Seas *rested in a pit for some comfortably paced refit work*

One of our daughters and her fiancé booked a trip to St. Kitts for late February 2012, so we made our way up the chain to be in St. Kitts at the appointed time. We hadn't been to St. Kitts for over five years but it didn't take very long to be reminded why we'd had such a good time on our previous visits. The visit with Samantha and Todd went well, but late Christmas Winds (why conditions in late February and early March can be called "Christmas" anything is beyond me) kept us in Port Zante marina for a while, and the more we became reacquainted with St. Kitts the more that "we'll know it when we see it" feeling took shape.

So it's now October and hurricane season is winding down. *Silver Seas* is tucked into a pit in the yard below Fort Brimstone and Nancy and I are enjoying a comfortable apartment in Frigate Bay while we do some refit work on the boat, working at a very comfortable pace.

This "break" has enabled us to effect some needed refit activity without total disruption of our living space and do it at a reduced sense of urgency, such that we can actually enjoy the effort. Major plumbing changes, rewiring systems and removing systems made obsolete by newer systems we've added all require some major tear-up of the living space to get at things. Re-bedding gear in the running rigging and hatches is much easier to do when you are not living aboard.

What prompted us to choose St. Kitts? I can only say that we found ourselves comfortable here. Let me tell you how we see St. Kitts.

The Federation of St. Kitts & Nevis is the smallest sovereign state in the Americas. The population is about 43,000. St. Kitts is the larger of the two islands but its area is only 65 square miles and has a population of around 35,000. This contributes to the "small town" feel of the place. The people here tend to be friendly, tend to remember folks who are around for more than a few days, and work hard to make you feel welcome.

There isn't a large yachting community in St. Kitts. During the season it becomes a transient stop for folks moving between St. Martin and the more southern islands, a day-trip diversion for folks sailing out of Antigua, and a "check it off" stop for yachts cruising with a "bucket list". At times I miss the kindred spirit of other seasoned cruisers. The absence of a large yachting community is a change from the previous six years of the "summer camp for cruisers" atmosphere of Grenada or Trinidad in the off season. Then again, it is nice to strike up a conversation with someone at one of the local hangouts and be pretty sure the topics won't immediately run to what's broken on the boat.

Our little single bedroom apartment meets our needs quite nicely. The Atlantic Ocean borders the north side of the property and, since we are at a narrow part of the island, the Caribbean Sea is less than a ten-minute walk away. The swimming pool is 20 steps from our front door and the air conditioning comes in handy in the late summer. Nancy has a corner of the bedroom set up with a worktable and an easel, with room for all her art materials. Yes, we have a bathtub and a blender and a kitchen much easier to work in than our galley on *Silver Seas*.

St. Kitts is a beautiful island. There are spectacular views and outstanding beaches. St. Kitts is shaped like a mandolin. The island lies from east-southeast to west-northwest, say about 290 to 300 degrees, with the narrow neck of the mandolin on the southeast end. The Atlantic Ocean lies to the north of the island and the Caribbean lies to the south. At the very eastern end of the island is a narrow channel, across which lies the sister island in the Federation, Nevis. There are elevations providing views of the beaches on both the Atlantic and Caribbean simultaneously, with Nevis Peak, rising 3,232 feet on the opposite side of the channel, as a backdrop. There is some great swimming and snorkeling on the Caribbean side of the island. Other than the reef-protected beach at the Marriot Resort, the surf and the currents on the Atlantic side make the northern beaches quite dangerous.

—Continued on next page



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The west end of the island is dominated by the extinct volcano, Mt. Liamuiga, rising 3,793 feet over the capitol, Basseterre, and the cruise ship port, Port Zante. Save the town center, which is patterned after Piccadilly Circus, Basseterre is a typical Caribbean city — a mixture of old and new, local businesses, tourist attractions and North American contamination (e.g. Subway, KFC and Domino's Pizza).

St. Kitts is a fairly prosperous island. During the season, there are generally cruise ships visiting Port Zante every day. Since our last visit, five years ago, a cruise ship mall has been developed at Port Zante, rivaling the shopping facilities at Philipsburg, St. Marten, on a smaller scale. There are some lovely resort properties, including the Marriot Hotel complex. There are three universities on the island. St. Kitts is the home of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank. There is significant development ongoing, including a high-end marina and condo complex being built around the great salt pond at the eastern end of the island. Restaurants range from fine dining to our favorite beach-shack hangouts. There is a bit of a sophisticated element buried in a true small Caribbean island atmosphere. A mixture of locals, students, tourists and ex-pats make for an interesting community.



Other residents of the island include a large population of green vervet monkeys. These fascinating creatures roam all over the island. Their antics can be quite entertaining. They have been known to steal golf balls off the fairways at Royal St. Kitts Golf Club, snatch food left unattended and even, occasionally, visit the yoga class Nancy attends. Mostly they just "monkey around".

Since yachting is not a major economic factor in St. Kitts, there are no real chandleries here. Stainless steel hardware and many materials can be found in the hardware stores and lumber yards that support the ongoing construction as St. Kitts continues to develop. Since St Martin is only 50 miles away, most anything needed can be obtained in a reasonable time. Given the proportion of students and ex-pats in the island population, a reasonably wide range of North American products is found at the grocery stores. There is a bus system but, unfortunately, it does not service the eastern end of the island. There are plenty of taxis available and the cost is not unreasonable.

As a cruising destination, St. Kitts can be quite interesting. The best anchorages are on the south side of the east end of the island, marked Ballast Bay and White House Bay on the charts. These bays are normally flat and well protected, even if the winds are up, as long as the wind is east or north of east. If the wind turns south of east, however, things can get very rough. There are a number of good snorkeling sites between South Frigate Bay and the southeast end of the island, accessible via dinghy from Ballast or White House bays. Also within dinghy range are some great hangouts. In South Friar's Bay there is a cluster of classic beach bars, including one of our favorites, Shipwreck's. Moving westward, around the point from Shipwreck's you will come to Carambola, an upscale beach development aimed at tourists from the cruise ships. Moving farther westward you will come to another row of classic beach bars in South Frigate Bay where we have (surprise, surprise) another favorite, Patsy's. Not that we spend too much time there but, Patsy's is just a 12-minute walk from our apartment.

On the very eastern end of the island is Cockleshell Bay, which opens onto The Narrows, the channel between St. Kitts and Nevis. This is also a good anchorage in most conditions, except in winds south of east. There is a great beach here, some good snorkeling in the north end and, of course, some good beach hangouts, including another favorite of ours, Lion Rock.

St. Kitts has a rich history. If you are anchored in Ballast or White House Bay, know that Christopher Columbus was anchored there in 1493. Fort Brimstone at the east end of the island is the largest fort of its type built in the Caribbean. Up until just a few years ago, St. Kitts was a major producer of sugar cane.

If you visit St. Kitts and are interested in botanical gardens, one thing you should not miss is the gardens at Romney Manor. These gardens are as beautiful as we've seen anywhere.

So, how is "the break" going?

So far, so good. Nancy's painting is going well and I've taken on a couple of writing projects which have been rattling around in my head for what seems like years. The apartment is comfortable and we're enjoying being here. We are on track to get the boat back in the water in mid-December and ready for our daughter's visit in January.

We're still talking about what happens when *Silver Seas* goes back in the water. St. Kitts makes a great base with St. Martin, Anguilla, St. Barths, Statia, Monserrat, Antigua, Barbuda and Guadeloupe all within a day sail. Maintaining a land base and sailing when we feel like it has a certain appeal.

Left: Cockleshell Bay, another option for hanging on the hook or just hanging out

Below: Beach bars, like these at South Frigate Bay, are part of the attraction of life on St. Kitts



But sometimes, when we walk the beach, we miss the open sea. Dinner at the apartment is nice but not as nice as in the cockpit in a quiet anchorage. The swimming pool is convenient but not as convenient as diving off *Silver Seas*' swim deck. The air conditioning is comfortable on hot nights but nothing compared to the breeze on the water. When we came ashore we were actually questioning whether it was time to "swallow the anchor" but that doesn't seem to be the case. Don't be surprised if you see *Silver Seas* wherever you anchor in the Eastern Caribbean this season.



Holiday Happenings in the Islands



Don't feel deprived if you're not home for the holidays — the Caribbean offers compensations. Welcome to the region where poinsettias grow in gardens, steel bands play Christmas songs and tropical plants are decorated as Christmas trees. Don't miss the chance to enjoy the rich flavor of "black cake", a traditional fruitcake soaked in rum, washed down by guavaberry liqueur, *ponche de crème*, ginger beer or bright red "sorrel", a drink made from the sepals of the hibiscus-like roselle plant.

Christianity is the Caribbean's dominant religion, so Christmas is a highlight of the year. Most churches hold midnight services on December 24th and, of course, services on Christmas Day. Many shops open late into the evening on Christmas Eve. For most locals, Christmas Day is family time, while for visitors several restaurants offer special Christmas Day menus. Christmas Day and Boxing Day (December 26th) are public holidays in many places. A few islands add to the festivities by celebrating their carnivals in December, too.

Here is just a small selection of December's holiday happenings, running down the island chain from the Bahamas to Trinidad. There are many more events region wide, so ask around locally wherever you are.

Bahamas

Throughout the Bahamas, Junkanoo — a carnival-type celebration of freedom from slavery named after 17th century African slave trader John Canoe — is celebrated on December 26th from about 2:00AM until dawn with costumed parades and music. If you miss the Boxing Day festivities, you'll have another chance on January 1st as the sun rises.

Puerto Rico

Christmas celebrations in Puerto Rico begin early in December and include the traditional *parrandas*, which are families and friends bringing music from one house to another, supposedly taking people by surprise. From December 15th through 24th, churches conduct masses held at dawn featuring the singing of *aguinaldos*, the Puerto Rican versions of Christmas carols.

• Club Náutico de San Juan celebrates its 4th Annual Christmas Boat Parade on December 8th at 6:00PM with dozens of illuminated boats, awards and a Christmas Party. Visiting yachts are invited to stop in San Juan, participate in the Christmas Boat Parade, and enjoy the convenience of Club Náutico de San Juan's marina, right in the center of the vibrant city of San Juan.

For more information visit www.nauticodesanjuan.com or phone (787) 722-0177.

• On December 2nd at Aguadilla, a town on Mayaguez Bay on Puerto Rico's west coast, check out the Carnaval Aguadillano, a Christmas parade from Plaza Plácido Acevedo to Plaza Rafael Hernández Colón that will include floats, music and fun activities along the way. Then, on December 8th and 9th, at the Public Plaza in the San Antonio Community of Aguadilla, enjoy Parrandón Navideño, a traditional caroling festivity that will include many Puerto Rican Christmas ballads, with artisan exhibits, food kiosks and fun.

For more information on these events phone (787) 891-1460. For more information on Aguadilla for cruisers, see "Terra Firma Time in Western Puerto Rico" at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/jul12compass_online.pdf.

• On the island of Vieques, the Vieques Christmas Festival is scheduled for December 1st, and the 10th Anniversary of the Trova Navideña, an artistic show with live typical Puerto Rican music, runs from the 12th to the 15th.

For more information phone (787) 741-0290.

St. Thomas, USVI

• On December 7th at 8:00PM at the Antilles School, Arts Alive will present a Happy Holidays Classical Concert Fundraiser. Tickets are US$50 each and all proceeds will benefit the newly established Youth Scholarship Fund, assisting St. Thomas high school students who have been accepted to 2013 summer programs for the arts such as Interlochen, Mark O'Connor's camps and the Marian Anderson Quartet in Texas.

For more information visit www.tillettfoundation.org.

• "Deck the Hulls…!" Join the 13th annual St. Thomas Lighted Boat Parade along the Charlotte Amalie waterfront on December 14th at 7:00PM. Enjoy free dockage at Crown Bay Marina to better decorate, and live music and prizes awarded afterward at Tickles Dockside Pub.

For more information visit www.facebook.com/events/114968368657481.

St. Croix, USVI

St. Croix's 60th annual carnival-style Crucian Christmas Festival begins December 1st and runs into the New Year.

• On December 8th, the annual St. Croix Boat Parade festivities will begin at 1:00PM along the Christiansted boardwalk, with *moko jumbies*, street vendors and



KEVIN CULP GREER

more. The parade itself will start at 6:00PM and end with a firework display. This has become one of the biggest boat parades in the Caribbean.

For more information www.christmasparadestcroix.com.

• On the 16th, Christiansted Mini-Festival Village will open at Canegata Park, and a food, arts and crafts fair will be held there on the 21st. On the 22nd, the Ole Time Traditional Night Parade will travel under the city's Christmas street lighting from the Sunday Market Square to the Canegata fairgrounds.

For more information visit www.stxfestival.com.

• From December 19th through 22nd, from 5:30PM to 8:30PM, experience "Old-Time Christmas" at Estate Whim Museum.

For more information visit www.stcroixlandmarks.com.

• On December 27th, the Frederiksted Festival Village will open adjacent to the baseball stadium, with food booths, merchants, carnival rides and games. The annual boat races will be held off Frederiksted on the 30th with boats running from the Fish Market to the Frederiksted Pier. The VI Department of Tourism sponsors Cultural Night at the Festival Village that evening.

For more information visit www.stxfestival.com.

Tortola, BVI

Anchor at Trellis Bay for the New Year's Eve festival, with dancers, stilt-walking *moko jumbies*, a live reggae band, and artist Aragorn Dick-Read's Fire Sculptures. On this night, he places the sculptures on mounts in the sea, where they are fueled with firewood and set ablaze against a backdrop of fireworks.

Jost Van Dyke, BVI

Anchor in the bay, party and dance for two straight days and nights, feast on conch fritters and barbecue, then sleep it all off on the beach. That pretty much sums up the annual December 30th and 31st Old Year's Party — a masked ball at Foxy's Bar.

St. Maarten/St. Martin

The islands of the Netherlands Antilles have a unique Christmas celebration that comes straight from Holland, with visits from Sinterklaas and his mysterious minions, the Zwarte Piet (Black Petes). On the French side of the island, don't miss a visit to the amazing display of Santa Claus's house, a private home situated in Cripple Gate that is fabulously decorated for the season, open every day until January 15th from 6:00PM till 11:00PM.

• On December 1st, the Dutch side celebrates the official opening of Christmas season with the lightning of the Christmas tree in Philipsburg.

• The St. Maarten Yacht Club is hosting a Christmas Boat Parade on December 9th. *For more information contact info@smyc.com.*

• On December 31st, New Year's Eve will see live entertainment on the Phillipsburg Boardwalk and midnight fireworks.

St. Kitts & Nevis

The St. Kitts & Nevis National Carnival kicks off the day after Christmas with a traditional J'ouvert party and runs through New Year's Day. The Carnival celebrates local folklore and traditions through song, dance, drama and poetry, and with street parties, performances and musical competitions.

For more information visit www.stkittsneviscarnival.com.

Antigua

• On December 8th, it's Jolly Harbour Christmas: at 4:00PM Santa flies in to the commercial centre alongside the marina on a helicopter, and at sunset the team from the resort sing Christmas carols — many people join in, including those aboard…

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...yachts at the marina. This is also the Saturday of the Jolly Harbour Yacht Club Annual Regatta. The official launch of the Jolly Harbour Valentine's Regatta will take place after the carol singing.

For more information visit www.jollyharbourantigua.com/articles/jolly-harbour-christmas-festival-2.

• There will be Carols by Candlelight on the 14th at 6:00PM at the Antigua Yacht Club.

For more information visit www.antiguayachtclub.com.

• On Christmas Day there's a Champagne Christmas Party in Nelson's Dockyard from midday. All proceeds go to a nominated charity each year. A live band plays all day until the last person drops. Huge fun as the whole village, all the visitors from the marina and ex-pats from around the island descend on the Dockyard.

• On the 31st, Nelson's Pursuit Yacht Race "re-enacts" the English colonial-era navy chasing the French. The smallest boat entered (which will presumably take the longest time to sail the course) sets off first carrying the French flag, and all other boats start at intervals afterwards, based on their size and expected speed. This race has become hugely popular over the years and attracts a lot of cruisers.

For more information visit www.antiguayachtclub.com.

• On New Year's Eve there's a party in Nelson's Dockyard ending with fireworks from Fort Berkley at midnight.

Montserrat

Montserrat's culture is a mix of Irish and African traditions, and the latter take precedence during the annual Festival, which runs from mid-December to early January. Highlights include a Soca Monarch competition, the Night of Pan party, the crowning of a pageant queen, a calypso contest, and a street party and parade on January 1st. December 31st is a public holiday here.

Martinique

In Martinique, the typically French *crèche*, or manger scene, is re-created live on December 24th and 25th in many village squares or churches, with human figures and real animals. From December 24th through January 1st, every town and village in Martinique is in a holiday mood, with picnics, dances, fashion shows and much merry-making.

In Fort-de-France on December 30th (not the 31st; *Martiniquais* traditionally spend New Year's Eve with family), fireworks are launched at around 9:00PM from the historic harbor-side Fort Louis, and shops stay open late.

St. Lucia

St. Lucia starts to get really Christmassy from around Saint Lucia's Day, the Church feast day observed on December 13th. The 13th is also St. Lucia's National Day — actually celebrated all month long with parades, sports events, a Festival of Lights, a choir festival, market festival, and feasts.

• As the ARC yachts arrive in St. Lucia, events in the ARC Village at Rodney Bay Marina include Fête Kweyol on December 13th from 1:00PM, featuring traditional St. Lucian music, dance, drama and foods, and involving groups such as the Eastern Folk Band, Helen Folk Dancers, Masquerade, Toes and St. Lucian drummers. Digicel's Jazz & Blues Cabaret will be held on the 15th from 7:00PM. And on December 16th from 4:00PM, in an ARC Steelpan Playoff four top St. Lucia steel bands will battle for the People's Choice Award.

For more information visit www.igy-rodneybay.com and www.worldcruising.com/arc.

• On December 24th, the St. Lucia Yacht Club stages a wonderful twist on the boat parade: Carols Afloat. All are welcome.

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

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

• Nine Mornings — a unique Vincentian festivity associated with the Christmas season runs December 16th through 24th. Vincentians awake in the early hours of the morning and partake in sea baths, bicycle riding, dances and street concerts. In the rural areas, the final morning of the festivity usually ends with a steel band "jump-up".

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

• In Bequia on Old Year's Night, take part in a freewheeling bayside "pub crawl" along the newly renovated Belmont Walkway until champagne corks pop and fireworks explode over the anchorage at midnight. Then round out the night dancing in the sand at a beach bar.

For more information visit http://bequiatourism.com/events.htm#Christ.

Carriacou

• The 35th Annual Carriacou Parang Festival will be held from December 21st through 23rd. Parang is a type of string band music that is especially popular at Christmas time. It originated in Latin America and the amusing and controversial lyrics reflect on local political events, in particular the wrongdoings by politicians, and also the social and moral wrongs that occur in people's lives throughout the year.

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

Trinidad

In Trinidad, traditional parang music is performed around Christmas time, when singers and musicians travel from house to house, often joined by friends, neighbours and family, using whatever instruments are to hand. Modern parang music has developed a



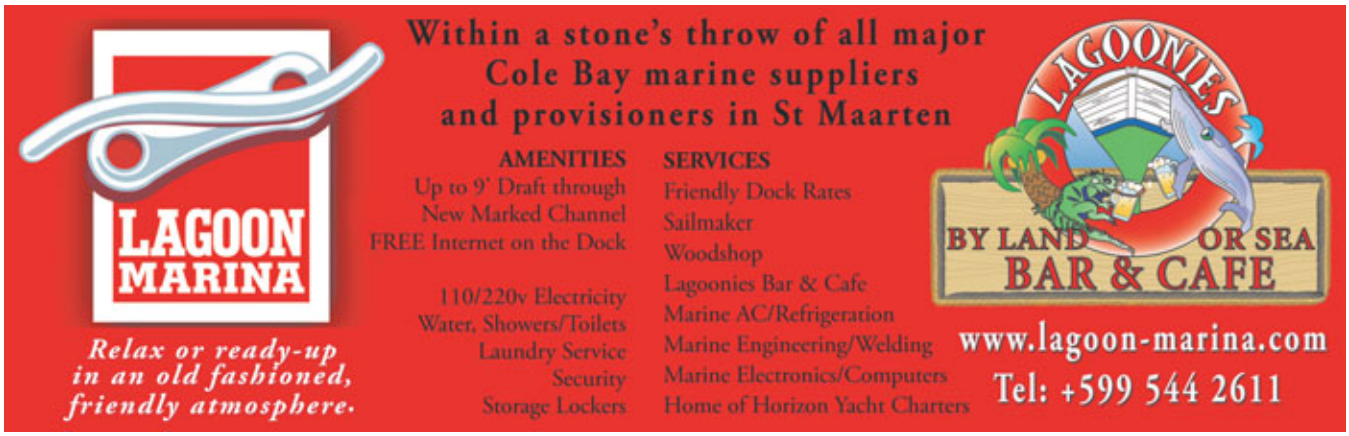
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season of staged performances called parang fiestas. Parang Season 2012 will end on December 15th at the Arima Tennis Club with the People's Choice Competition.

For more information visit http://parangmusic.weebly.com/parang-season-2012.html.

Thanks to everyone who provided information for this report. This information is correct to the best of our knowledge as this issue of Compass *goes to press; please confirm with contacts where provided to avoid disappointment.*

Happy Holidays to all — Caribbean style!





The Real Boat Boys of Bequia

by JA Trevelyan

After reading Chris Doyle's article, "Moorings Gone Wild", in the October 2012 edition of *Compass*, regarding the proliferation of moorings, I was particularly disturbed by his specific prejudicial rant regarding moorings in Admiralty Bay, Bequia. I decided that I would do some research and respond to his article. We have nothing but good things to say about the mooring operators/water taxis a.k.a. "Boat Boys of Bequia".

In his other cruising guides, Mr. Doyle has been content to only give factual information regarding moorings. It is in the *Sailor's Guide to the Windward Islands*, the sections for St. Vincent & the Grenadines, where he starts criticizing their moorings. By the time he gets to describing Bequia, he is very specific about his distaste for both the "Boat Boys" and their moorings:

Moorings are available. The usual charge is US$15 per night. They are uncontrolled and (except Daffodil's) without legal standing. While better than the way some bareboats anchor, they break free quite often, and if you take one, snorkel on it (before you pay) to make sure it is okay. Also ask for a receipt, or at least know to whom you are paying money. Those moorings on the south side, which are close to shore, are completely untenable in bad northerly swells, which usually arrive in the middle of the night. If you anchor close to an empty illegal mooring, you cannot be made to move. Similarly if you take a mooring and an anchored boat swings too close, you must move if they were there first. Rely on your judgment; the vendors are only interested in collecting the fee. Keep this in mind when they give you advice about shore services.

I looked back through his previous three editions of the *Windward Islands* and his statement regarding Bequia moorings and "Boat Boys" has not changed appreciably, while the moorings themselves certainly have. In Mr. Doyle's article regarding the proliferation of mooring balls in October 2012 *Compass* article he states:

These private moorings have no legal status; there is even a warning about them in the Bequia Customs office. You can anchor right beside one if you like; the owner has absolutely no rights over the seabed and cannot make you move, though some are likely to act like jerks about it. If you take one of these private moorings and you end up too close to a boat that is already anchored, you must move; such moorings carry no rights. If you decide to take one of these moorings, it is imperative to dive on it. However, if you do that, and find it is no good, the man who took your money will probably be long gone.

These statements are full of innuendo, misrepresented facts, questionable opinions and just plain bad advice; following his advice would be very poor seamanship. This axe grinding is out of character with his writings for other areas. Has he had an argument in the past with someone regarding a mooring in Bequia? Why the consistent harangue against Bequia moorings?

I went to the Customs Office in Bequia and found the posted page to which he referred. It is a statement from neither Customs nor the Port Authority itself. It is a notice from the Bequia Tourism Association. I asked for a copy, but none was readily available, so I took a picture and transcribed the statement to which he alluded. It was interesting to see that it was part of a page entitled "Notice for Yachtspeople" that also informed cruisers where to put their garbage and that dogs are not allowed on the island unless they have gained special clearance from Customs. This page is undated.

This highly vaunted piece of paper actually says, "Visitors are advised that moorings offered for rent in Port Elizabeth Harbour are unauthorized by the Port Authority, not inspected and not insured. Persons using and paying for such a mooring do so at their own risk. Any instances of harassment at anchor or on such moorings should be reported to the Port Authority. If anchoring at Princess Margaret or Lower Bay you are required to keep 200 yards/metres off shore as these bays are zoned by the Port Authority as swimming areas."

This is not a warning! The bureaucrats are simply absolving themselves from any responsibility over something they do not control. If they did control the moorings, the notice would just be reworded to say, "Boaters take moorings at their own risk, we will not be held responsible." And, what's most likely is the moorings would be maintained like Bequia roads. Notice too that nothing in the notice says the existing moorings are illegal and nothing says that "Daffodil's" are approved. The concept of "Approved" is meaningless and leads to mandatory moorings; the truth is that changing their status does not mean they will be well maintained.

Let's be very clear about legality. The word "legal" describes something that is permitted, recognized or required by law; conversely "illegal" describes contravening a specific law, especially a criminal law. People like to throw the word around to support their rhetoric but its misuse is inflammatory. There is no law on the books specifically dealing with Bequia moorings, so they are *not illegal*.

Contending that the mooring owner has absolutely no rights over the seabed is specious. These moorings have been active for more than a decade, blatantly visible to all, are being maintained, are providing income to citizens and are defended vigorously. Most judicial courts would give the operator serious consideration; therefore the moorings do carry rights.

Most boaters only see the little bobbing mooring ball, have no idea how it got there and afford it distain. Well, here are salient facts. Firstly they must hold the seabed. If there is lots of deep sand, a US$100 sand screw can be placed by a diver spending three hours wrestling it down. Admiralty Bay does not have sand everywhere, so six-foot-square slabs of concrete are being used. Steel reinforcing bar ("rebar"), attachment hook and concrete make a heavy slab costing US$400 that gets transported to the water. Divers must float it to the site, sink it with precision and settle it into the seabed; about a day's work — maybe more. Divers get about US$80 per hour for services. Now you need 60 feet (more in deep water) of 10mm chain ($3.95/ft.) or one-inch rope ($2.05/ft.) to slope up from the bottom; you must add to this the cost of clamps, thimbles, fixtures and a diver's time. Lastly the ubiquitous mooring ball (US$200) tops the structure. Each mooring represents about a US$1,500 investment by the owner.

Salt water is a harsh environment; boaters abuse the connections, run into the balls and accidentally chafe the lines. The mooring needs quarterly maintenance inspections; refurbishing parts and a diver's time run up the costs another $500 per year. Additionally the owner pays the "Boat Boy" to come out to secure you safely and collect the fee. All this is done for the US$15 from some of the moorings, some nights.

The Boat Boys understand this; they're hardworking, have to repair boats, motors and pay fuel costs too. Imagine their joy when they see a vessel drop an anchor beside mooring #1, play out tons of chain until past mooring #2 and snub just shy of mooring #3. They know from hard experience that the anchor can foul on #1 or #2, that the vessel's chain can chafe #2 and, if the vessel drags #3 will be damaged scraping barnacles off the hull. They are not able to rent out #2 or #3 because those are being blocked and, to add insult to injury, this anchored vessel is no income to them. You bet they have a right to speak to this captain. When the captain comes out spouting, "The cruising guide says that I don't have to ... blah, blah, blah!" tempers flare and things get out hand. For the anchored vessel, this is an unsafe practise, and is completely thoughtless and selfish. Really now, just who is being the jerk?

Those who have been anchoring for a while know that it doesn't go exactly like we were taught in boating school. Our nightmare is the crew that follows the compass due east to the perfect spot exactly between two boats and then drop the hook. When you voice your concern they laugh and say not to worry, the wind always blows from the east and the weather guesser said it's going to be easterly all week. HA! Squalls and thunderstorms don't follow any rules. They usually strike with gale force gusts that blast you around every point of the compass. The moored boats, with 99-percent probability, will circle, holding their positions. You may be a bit rattled but you will be in the same place and not have hit anything. But anchors are spiteful and, when twisted about rapidly will pop out of the bottom, gleefully abandoning their hold. You see it all the time; boats out there, anchors dangling, circling in the dark, trying to reset — that's if they're not tangled up, bashing into another boat.

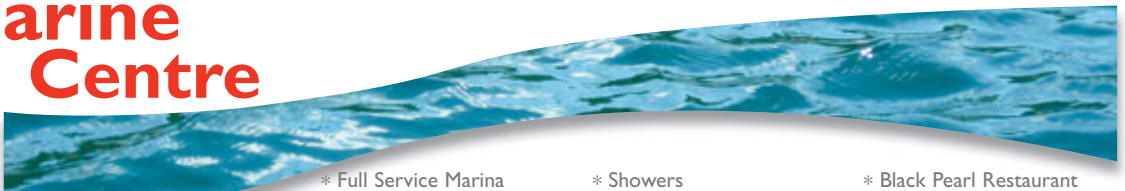
From any boater's viewpoint, you have to look at the economics of mooring. What's your boat worth — 100K, 500K, a million perhaps? If you had a mishap with another vessel, what costs would you incur? If insured at least the deductible — say $1500? That's 100 nights on a mooring. If you are self-insured, you are looking at your repairs and the other vessel's. That could get very expensive, especially if you ruptured its hull and it sank. Perhaps you get lucky and just gouge the gelcoat. Filling, matching and polishing it out will set you back $300 minimum; that's 20 nights on a mooring. So ask yourself, "Why am I quibbling over a $15 fee?"

How often does Mr. Doyle get to Bequia? Maybe he drops by for a few days, twice a year? We have been...

—Continued on next page

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...your one stop marine centre in the Grenadines

—Continued from previous page

...mooring in Bequia for six years and continue to do so. We stay for months and know most the "Boat Boys and Girls" by name. We have no investment in the process other than that of boaters and we think that gives us a right to voice our considered opinion. We have used several of the privately owned moorings; in every case have found the people responsible for them very conscientious about making sure that we were secure.

This summer our mooring has been diver-inspected by the owner as part of regular maintenance. When there has been adverse weather, additional inspections were made to confirm that no damage had occurred due to squalls. The owner informs us that he is going to be doing the inspection and, returns later to tell us the result. We have observed him checking other moorings just as diligently. Beyond the mooring care, he often stops by to chat, to see if there are any problems or just ask if he can do anything for us. Does this sound like a person only interested in the fee?



Regardless of whether you call them 'illegal', 'unauthorized' or 'spirit of free enterprise', if moorings are unregulated and an accident happens, what is your legal redress? This article's author and cruising guide author Chris Doyle both advise: 'There are good and bad moorings everywhere, but it's your responsibility to check'

After reading Doyle's article we started to closely watch the comings and goings of the "Boat Boys" who handle the moorings. In *every* case that we have observed, the boat was attached to the mooring quite professionally, in some cases with suggestions offered to make sure that two lines went independently through the eye to help prevent chafing of the boat's tackle. Unless the boat's captain proffered the payment right away, the "Boat Boy" left saying they would be back to collect the fee. When asked to provide a receipt, they did so without hesitation. When within earshot of our boat, we could hear them give general information about where the Customs building was located, the fact that several of the restaurants were closed for the off-season and politely answer the myriad questions posed. There did not appear to be any favouritism in their answers.

In the conclusion of Mr. Doyle's October 2012 article he makes a good point:

Moorings are rapidly proliferating in the Eastern Caribbean, and while some are good, too many are junk. No one should be allowed to put down a mooring, whether for optional hire or compulsory use, unless they can show that it is properly designed and being adequately maintained. We are far from that.

There are good and bad moorings everywhere, but it's your responsibility to check. We would suggest that here in Bequia there has been good progress. The old engine blocks and cement-filled barrels are pretty well gone. The moorings are presently optional and used at your own risk, but active mooring owners are maintaining them; from the sounds of it better and more frequently than elsewhere in many islands. Mr. Doyle has been known to moor in Bequia. Well, he must have personally dived on each one, was satisfied that it was safe and paid the fee.

Ideally it would be nice to have designated areas where one could anchor safely, or where one could take a mooring. The mixture of the two techniques has always caused problems. The anchored boat requires high scope ratios to get a good hold; the long chain and/or rode length is much greater than that of the mooring. When the wind veers, the anchored boat's greater turning radius cuts through the smaller circles the moorings maintain. Designated or not, the wise captain does not anchor amongst the moorings. He reduces the risks for everyone, but most purposely for himself.

We personally believe that people should have the option of taking a mooring or choosing to anchor in a safe area. When organizations demand that we take and pay for a mooring, we express our displeasure in a very effective manner. We remove the site from the favoured destinations list. Voting "No" with your wallet soon gets noticed.

Editor's note: Responses to previously published articles are usually placed in our Readers' Forum, and if necessary are trimmed to reasonable letter length. However, we have made this exception because, according to our periodic Readers' Surveys, boaters in the Caribbean are vexed by the issue of moorings more than anything except the issue of crime. While most acknowledge that there are times when a well-placed, well-maintained and reasonably priced mooring is just what they want, cruisers express concern about pricing, maintenance, and the rapid (sometimes "official" and sometimes completely uncontrolled) proliferation of moorings in desirable anchoring spots. Admiralty Bay in Bequia provides a test case.

We asked both the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Port Authority, which has authority over moorings, and Chris Doyle for their responses to Ms. Trevelyan's article. We specifically asked the Port Authority to inform us about existing legislation, i.e. whether persons are (as we believe) required to obtain permission from the Port Authority before placing a mooring, whether any owners of existing moorings in Admiralty Bay have obtained permission, and whether mooring owners have any seabed rights. (For example, if a yacht anchors near a mooring, can the mooring owner order the yacht move away?) Unfortunately, no reply from the SVG Port Authority was received by press time.

Chris Doyle did respond, and his reply follows.

I am happy for Ms. Trevelyan that she has a reliable mooring in Bequia put down by a conscientious operator. She has local knowledge, so this of course works. However, I have a responsibility to my readers and the majority of people reading my guides have no idea who they might be renting a mooring from. They could make the assumption that all moorings are reliable when many are not. If I were to tell people that it was a good idea to take a mooring in Bequia, and then they had a serious accident with their magnificent yacht, I would be guilty of gross negligence.

And believe me, accidents do happen owing to the nature of many of the moorings. When in Bequia I spend time diving and looking at the moorings; it is part of my job. I have not seen the evidence of the big improvement Ms. Trevelyan mentions. It is not unusual to see hefty chain leading down to a link after which there is very old and thin chain that was originally maybe quarter of an inch leading to a an old anchor or two buried in the sand.

In addition we have been lucky with big swells over the last few years. Mooring opposite the Fig Tree restaurant and on the nine-foot shelf can be quite untenable in big swells; I have watched it myself many times.

I am not against moorings *per se*, but they need to be run as a reliable business. The owners should have them marked in some way so people know whom they are renting from, and boaters should be given receipts. If that happens — and most importantly when it is clear that moorings are reliable and well maintained — I will be happy to recommend them.

I do not "have it in" for Bequia moorings any more than Union Island moorings, or those on any other island. As always, I write it as I see it, and I do snorkel and look at moorings for myself. So far that seems to have worked.

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SAILORS' PROFILES

A Hot Racer with a Warm Heart

by Marissa Nieves

Philip Barnard is a Vincentian-born sailor whose profession takes him to countries throughout the Caribbean and abroad. He first sailed on a racing boat, the Bequia-built ULDB *Punk*, at age 13, and pursued opportunities on neighboring islands including Martinique, Barbados and Trinidad during his early years. Philip reached the level where he was invited to crew with the US Virgin Islands America's Cup Challenge in 2000 and was selected to crew on the 80-foot *Skandia* (later renamed *Nicorette*), sailing in every major ocean race from Sweden to Australia. He sailed in Europe from 2000 to 2003 and ended his time there on the Maxi-cat *Orange*. Back home, his family owns and operates Barefoot Yacht Charters & Marine Centre. Philip is now CEO and skipper of Team Sail Caribbean and races the J/24 *Salt Fish*.



Philip is also an animal lover and has seen the best and worst of human behaviour towards them in most places he visits.

"As sailors and ultimately travelers," he says, "we all have the ability to make a positive or negative difference when we visit a country." The difference Philip has made, and which other sailors can make too, has changed the lives of many neglected, abandoned and injured mammals, birds and reptiles. From feeding strays around the dockyards or anchorages to taking injured animals to local humane facilities or seeking out a kind-hearted visitor or local to care for them when he (or you) cannot, any kind deed has a positive impact.

In the last few years, Philip has acquired three rescued dogs in St Vincent. These are the most heartwarming of all his humane stories as Mundaka, Peahi and Itchy Scratchy remain with him to this day.

Philip's nephews found Mundaka wedged in the shallow rocks of Argyle Beach on the windward side of St. Vincent when they were surfing one afternoon. It was clear the young pup had been washed ashore by the waves and was struggling for his life. As Argyle is an infamous beach used to abandon unwanted animals and pets, it seemed that Mundaka had been thrown into the sea in an effort to dispose of him.

The newborn puppy was brought home to Philip who provided him with shelter and a bed for the night. Mundaka was clearly exhausted, sleeping for 24 hours straight. "He wouldn't wake to eat or drink water," Philip said. "We all had to keep checking on him to make sure he was alive."

Sure enough, Mundaka finally rose, drank a little water and began his recovery. Day by day he grew and became more and more loved by Philip, who kept him for his own.

In 2007 Philip was approached at work by a gentleman in a pick-up truck who had heard about Philip's love of animals and wanted Philip to buy a much sought-after pit bull. Regrettably, the man's business was dog fighting and he had brought Peahi to use as a "bait dog", to demonstrate the prize dog's conditioning. Before the mauling and savagery could take place, Philip saved Peahi by purchasing him, rather than the pit bull that was for sale.

Peahi was traumatized from his experiences as a puppy and had serious trust issues with people for many years. He would allow only Philip to feed or touch him and was very wary of other humans. Gradually, though, Peahi mellowed but still remains fiercely loyal to Philip, waiting on the balcony when he leaves the house and ready by the door for his return.

Maybe the most horrifying story of all is the one of Itchy Scratchy.

Philip was on his way to work one morning when he found a limp puppy lying in the middle of the road, not moving. He parked his van and examined the puppy who was badly burned and totally unresponsive. Her tail had been snapped and broken and her burns required immediate attention. He took Itchy to the vet who advised Philip that her chance of survival was very low and it might be necessary to euthanize her. Phil pleaded with the vet to offer another alternative, and so was given packets of antibiotics and strict instructions to feed Itchy Scratchy every few hours.

For weeks Philip awoke in the middle of the night to give the puppy her medication. This act of kindness gave Itchy Scratchy the life she leads today. She was named Itchy Scratchy as she always scratched at Philip's leg for some petting and attention. It was assumed that her name would change when she left the household, but a year and a half later, Itchy still lives as part of the family.

In addition to individuals like Philip, there are organizations throughout the world that actively work toward reducing inhumane practices. The Vincentian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (VSPCA) is one of them. Philip hopes that sailors passing through these islands will make an effort to show their support. Volunteer help is welcome — come teach a puppy to walk on a leash or just give some human contact. If visitors are unable to provide their own time, donations of any other kind will assist the VSPCA in areas of education, spaying and neutering, rescue and rehabilitation.

Philip connects with the words of Mahatma Gandhi and strongly believes that, "the greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way it treats its animals." To see St. Vincent & the Grenadines sail towards being more compassionate toward animals is the ultimate vision for him.

For more information on how you can help, please contact the VSPCA at (784) 532-9327 or admin@vincentianspca.org, visit www.vincentianspca.org, or find them on Facebook.

FROM SEA TO STAGE, CARRYING A TUNE



by Ulrike Heidenreich

Who needs to go to La Scala or the Met or Madison Square Garden or Woodstock or…? We, here in Grenada, have it all in one, in the person of Nicola Bresciani, a.k.a. "Nico Barracuda". Nico is the most multifaceted singer and musician I have ever met, and I have met a lot. His voice impressed me at first sound, his personality at first meeting.

We were in De Big Fish restaurant at Spice Island Marine boatyard for happy hour, talking, drinking beer and having a good ol' time. Since most of us happy cruisers are of a "certain age" Nico's repertoire for the evening comprised songs well known to us and a welcome change from ear-exploding sounds so common today.

But then suddenly there was a different sound… had Pavarotti been resurrected? I looked up and Nico was singing "Volare" (my personal favorite) and I don't think Pavarotti, Domingo and Carreras would have been ashamed to sing with him (sorry guys). And all happy chitchat around stopped, afraid to break the spell! When was the last time you heard *any* entertainer bring a happy hour crowd to silence? Standing ovation at the end. Nico seemed to be surprised and asked, "Are they waiting for me?" "Yes, Nico — sing more opera!" Well, he did. Where in else the world is it possible to listen to fantastic music in a dreamy setting like Grenada, with good food, drink and a group of like-minded friends for just the dollars you spend (or don't) for your own needs?

But who is Nico? He gave me a quick run-down of his life and I must say it would make a 500-page book, especially if you fill the spaces between the lines. My own life has been a sort of gypsy existence, but compared to his I'm a homebody.

Born in Genoa, Italy, Nico first went to sea at the age of 15, working as a dish-washer on cruise ships, container ships, and tankers. Money earned was spent in traveling with guitar and sleeping bag. His travels took him to St. Barths and St. Martin, but money buys bread and his guitar didn't earn him money yet, so back to work. Being tired of "being the last man on the ship" he studied and got his 100-ton yacht licence, worked as high-seas cruising instructor in France — and played "lousy guitar". He traveled to North Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Far East: "I always liked geography".

In 1984 St. Martin had a "still lousy playing" waiter and maître d' on its shores. There a French-Moroccan lady captured his heart — back to Europe for marriage and work as skipper on a 50-foot ketch, which carried him back to the West Indies, to Carriacou — his love of a lifetime!

"I found my home," he says. "I strongly believe that we don't always belong to where we were born. Sometimes you have to find your place — I did. The 15 years spent in Carriacou were the best times of my life. I can't describe what Carriacou is for me. I learned, I listened, I absorbed, with a 'Kayak' way of life that is exactly me. I love Carriacou and the people are my family."

The nickname "Barracuda" originated in Carriacou: his "family" and fellow ex-pat Dominique Weber called him Barracuda Man. Like I said before, man needs to eat, so every day Nico spent six to eight hours spearfishing, "always with a very humble and respectful attitude to the sea, which I cannot live without".

In 1991 he went to Ohio for a couple of months to get qualified as a sound engineer, opened his first sound studio in Carriacou and started his first band (EC$150 plus food would get you the whole band for a night; I guess one has to start somewhere and grow). "So I started playing more and singing decently and playing acceptably (ha, ha, ha)." In his recording studio he met a lot of local musicians. One in particular — bass, pan and guitar player James Peter Quashie — taught Nico a lot about reggae and calypso. "Carriacou taught me everything I know today in music."

In 1995 Nico went back to sea, skippering a 61-foot Nova Scotia schooner that became his means of transport to different islands to — guess what? — play music. But this was not enough; with the help of master boatbuilder Alwin Enoe from Windward, Carriacou, a speedboat came to life, giving Nico faster transport to islands including Bequia, St. Vincent, Canouan, Mayreau, Palm Island and Union Island — to play music! The turtles in the Tobago Cays danced to his sound (overhearing the generator in the background)… and in 1998 his "beautiful son, Nashico Martin Bresciani, better known as Nanu" was born,

And then in 2001 Nico moved to Grenada, always singing and playing, better and better. He met new musicians and worked with Alister "Yellow" Douglas at Kool Dude Recording Studio. He added "Volare" to his repertoire in 2008 "with a kind of opera voice — I wasn't sure people would like it. I was wrong! I have had this opera voice since being a young kid but I was always shy of it; it sounds funny. But the people wanted more…"

Today Nico Barracuda is a well-known and accomplished musician playing almost every night in one form or another: the five-piece Barracuda Live Band; Spare Tyres, a lead singer and guitarist; or Barracuda Solo. His play list includes The Beatles, samba, reggae, good old folksongs, Italian love songs, blues, opera, oldies and "newies", or heavier beats and disco — you name it, Nico plays and sings it. Even determined non-dancers get out on the floor. His style is geared to each audience and venue. (I like him best in smaller more intimate surroundings, when he plays solo.) If you're in Grenada and like good music, catch Nico at numerous spots around the south coast.



For good causes Nico plays free of charge. He recently played a fund-raising event to support a talented young Grenadian violinist who has been accepted at the Berklee School of Music in the US. I don't know where he also finds the time to teach children, but he does!

Nico Barracuda has a dream: "My wish is to have a school of music and arts in Grenada."

Last and not least: "Thank you very, very much to all the people who have been supporting my music by coming to my gigs and encouraging me. And to all the bars, restaurants and hotels who hired me. And to Carriacou and the people of Carriacou who taught me how to walk and stand. And to friends like you guys who give me strength. Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to earn my living with doing what I love — playing music."

Uli Heidenreich is cruising the Caribbean aboard the catamaran Certitude.

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DECEMBER 2012

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)
Your energy levels will be dead calm but there will be a freshening breeze in romance after the 15th. Use your creativity to think of a novel and nautical way to celebrate the holidays. Perhaps a party on the poop deck is in order!

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)
There will be some rough seas in business early in the month and some fluky winds in romance after the 10th, but if you can stay on course, things should return to an even keel by the 15th.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)
Creativity is a slog to windward. Get those problems sorted out before the 21st so your mind is free to chart a course through some choppy seas in your love life around mid-month.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Although your personal barometric pressure will be low, you have opportunities in business and you will make some headway in that area. Don't get blown off course by petty issues — just enjoy the holiday season with friends. Perhaps Aries will invite you to the party.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)
Boat business complications will require some changes in course in the first ten days. Any discontent with crewmembers or boat buddies should blow over by the middle of the month, just in time for a happy Christmas.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)
Creative boat projects will be dampened by romantic squalls after the 15th, so get as much as possible done before then. Finding a fair breeze in romance will be a challenge, so keep a cool head and don't let minor differences spoil the holidays.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)
Other than a few days of contrary currents that may require several changes in course, this month is relatively aspect free. There will be lots of fun distractions after the 10th to keep you entertained.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)
Boat business will demand your attention for the first week but you don't want to neglect your love life as it could sail away around the 16th if you let it.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)
Put your energies to good use in inventive boat projects early in the month so your decks will be clear for romance after the 16th, just in time to make the holidays cheerful and rewarding. Set the autopilot and have a good time.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)
Concentrate on getting the boat ready for a grand time during the festive season. Make room for friends in the cockpit, polish the brass and slap on a new coat of paint to make your ship pretty for the holidays. String lights from the rigging and throw a celebratory bash on board.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)
Other than some occasional squally weather in your love life, this will be a happy time for partying and spending time with friends and loved ones. Make the most of it and you will have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)
Romance will demand your attention and will make the holidays truly memorable. There's a small chance of some petty counter-currents around the 16th, but keep a firm hand on the helm and you will sail right through them into a happy Christmas season.

PASSAGES

Island Poets

I feel the swells that meet the bow
In pitch-black dark, and hope somehow
We miss the Boca's single tooth.
I'm sleepy, tense — to tell the truth
I'm scared in case we hit that rock,
But we push on, without the shock
Of going aground. There's no alarm,
I tell myself, I must be calm.

The moon has set. Its gentle light
Has gone and leaves the still dark night.
The blackness of the early morn,
That time before the new day's dawn.
With little help from pale stars' gleam
The cliffs around me can't be seen.
I listen to the skipper's voice,
"More to the right," I have no choice.

I pull her right, and then I see
The Boca, clear as clear can be!
I feel the tension slowly go
The morning breeze begins to blow,
Sails setting, and the compass showing
Fifteen degrees. Hey there! We're going
Really well. We are on course;
Sea's kicking, but it could be worse.

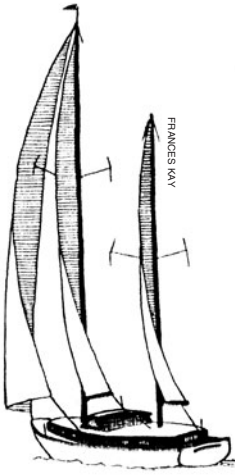
Out to the east I see the grey —
God's promise of another day,
The mainsail fills. The jib's unfurled,
We're set and challenging our world.
Let others have their power and speed,
That is not something that we need.
This passage has twelve hours to go,
No worries mate! We like it so!

— Nan Hatch

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CHRISTMAS CHEER

by Lee Kessell

"Christmas comes but once a year and when it comes it brings good cheer," chanted all the boys and girls at the village school — including little Maizie.

The village school was in the forest region of a little island north of Trinidad and south of St. Vincent. It was a simple little village where the women looked after the children and the men grew ground provisions such as yams, cassava and dasheen to take to the weekly market down by the coast.

Now it was the Christmas season and the children looked forward to the Christmas mid-day feast of jellied pig snout, chicken and rice, pig tails with red beans, chewy dumplings and, the best of all, sweet coconut cake. There were always a few toys from Santa and most of the girls got their wishes for little make-up purses with lipstick and powder, and the boys got their toy tractors, a toy gun or a boat to push around in a basin of water.

But what of Maizie? Like many island children, Maizie's mother had left her daughter in the care of her Granny to earn a better living abroad. Maizie's father had left before she was born as he wasn't the fatherly kind, so that was that. Now, after a few years, poor Maizie's mother was no better off than when she started out and it took all of her money just to pay her rent and save a little for a ticket home, leaving Granny to struggle on as best as she could. The old lady loved her little granddaughter and worked hard to buy her shoes for school and put food on the table.

'Maizie didn't expect a special Christmas feast or gifts from Santa'

Now Maizie didn't expect a special Christmas feast or gifts from Santa but as she joined in the playground chant she wondered what Christmas cheer really meant. "Cheer" — what a strange word it was, and to Maizie's seven-year-old mind it did not mean a feast, nor did it mean gifts from Santa. And who should benefit from the cheer? Maizie thought about how hard Granny worked, taking in sewing and mending, growing vegetables in her small garden and tending a few hens for their eggs to sell in the village. Granny certainly deserved some Christmas cheer, but how was little Maizie going to get it? Then she had an idea. Maizie began to collect all the pretty things she found in the forest: a lovely butterfly wing of shimmering blue; red and black jumbie beans; yellow and white cabbage moth wings; a few leaves that had fallen and turned bright orange; the striped feather from the tail of a dove; and wonder of wonders, a tiny feather from a hummingbird that shone like the stars at night. Then on a board given her at school, Maizie pasted all the pretty things in the shape of a heart and then wrote, in her very best letters, "I LOVE YOU GRANNY". The teacher was so pleased with Maizie's effort that she wrapped up the card in some silver paper she had saved from last year and tied it with a bright red ribbon she had kept as well.

Maizie was so excited that she could hardly wait for Christmas morning to present her gift. Granny cried with surprise and hugged Maizie tight. As she turned to tack the card up on the wall, there, hanging by the window was a red Christmas stocking filled with little gifts. A card attached said "Christmas cheer for Maizie". No, Granny had not put it there and it had not come from Maizie's mother. There is only one other person who could have done this, and that person is Santa.

"Happy Christmas, everyone!" from Santa.

THE END

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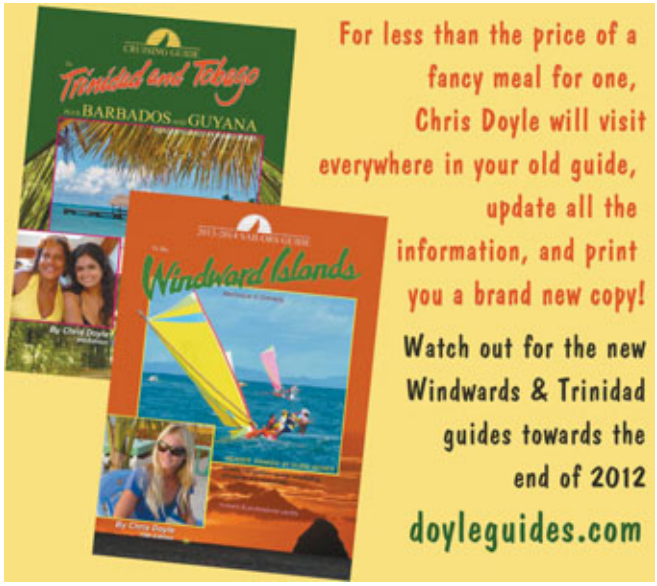
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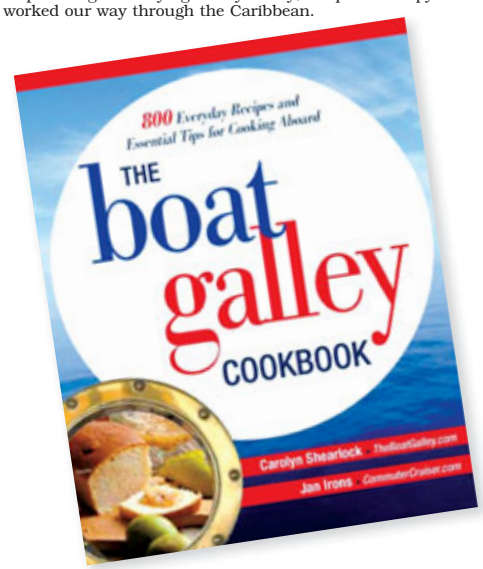
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BOOK REVIEW BY HEATHER HAMILTON

Taking Your Kitchen to Sea

I admit it: I'm a foodie. I love food: buying it, cooking it, eating it. So moving onto a boat, leaving behind my tricked-out kitchen and trading it in for a dinky galley, was a bit of a system shock for me. I considered buying new cookbooks — I'm always looking to expand my collection — but the selection of boating cookbooks available at the time gave me little new information I didn't already know, and the recipes were simplistic at best, a throwback to the bland food of the 1950s at worst. So I muddled along, improvising and relying on my trusty, dilapidated copy of *The Joy of Cooking* as we worked our way through the Caribbean.



Then, through a twist of fate, my stepmother reconnected with her old cruising buddy Carolyn Shearlock, who writes The Boat Galley blog, and had just completed a new cruising cookbook, *The Boat Galley Cookbook*. One read of the 33-page "sneak peek" (available in PDF at http://theboatgalley.com/cruisers-cookbook) convinced me that I simply *had* to get a copy.

For starters, the book, which Carolyn wrote with her friend Jan Irons, is — simply put — an indispensable guide to the transition from a land kitchen to a boat galley. With over 80 pages detailing how to equip a galley, provision in far-away ports of call, substitute equipment and ingredients, plan for a passage and cook underway, Carolyn and Jan give even the most newbie cook — or the experienced gourmet — the basics on how to manage the new environment of cooking aboard. You'll learn how to troubleshoot oven hot-spots, cook using a thermos, bake on top of the stove or on the grill, gravity-fill propane containers, defrost a marine refrigerator/freezer and buy and store food, with or without refrigeration.

But that's just the beginning: *The Boat Galley* is packed with over 800 recipes, well-organized with a section listing recipes for one-pot meals, five-minute appetizers, hot-weather meals and even recipes for cabbage. There are chapters with meal recommendations for passages, potlucks and holidays, and each individual chapter cross-references similar recipes, say, other soups and stews, found in other areas of the book. There's also a comprehensive list of substitutions, including how to construct mixes for popular items such as ranch dressing and taco seasoning, as well as from-scratch recipes for ricotta, cream cheese and yoghurt made from whole-milk powder.

Several of the recipe chapters begin with basic techniques and tips for the galley, from instructions on how to cut up and bone meat to step-by-step instructions on grilling — including instructions for making pizza on the grill. The seafood chapter is particularly useful for those inclined to catch their own dinner, with detailed descriptions of how to fillet fish, buy and prepare shrimp and crab, and harvest and cook lobster, clams, mussels and scallops.

While the cookbook is an excellent resource on cooking aboard, it's not geared toward the gourmet cook. It excels in the basics, providing instructions for making favorite foods you might not find while cruising — such as bagels, English muffins, or barbecue sauce — and provides lots of options for the inevitable use of canned meats and veggies. However, for the most part its recipes tend toward the simple side, and some are strangely Americanized, such as the recipe for goulash that doesn't contain paprika. The section on provisioning — and many of the recipes — rely on the authors' backgrounds cruising Latin America and miss the opportunity to discuss provisioning challenges elsewhere and to provide recipes using local ingredients from other parts of the world. For example, there is only one recipe using mangoes (black-bean mango salsa), and no recipes for other frequently found tropical fruits such as papaya, guava or plantains — but there are seven recipes containing peanut butter. Similarly, the authors assume you will be able to find tortillas locally and don't provide recipes for making flour or corn tortillas from scratch — one of my go-to recipes during my time in the largely tortilla-free Eastern Caribbean.

Those small quibbles aside, *The Boat Galley Cookbook* is an outstanding resource for any boat cook, a comprehensive guide I know I'll be consulting frequently. In fact, right now I'm off to make no-bake, no-refrigerator granola bars for my upcoming passage — YUM!

The Boat Galley Cookbook *is available in print form and the electronic versions for Kindle, Nook, etc. will be available shortly. The Book Depository (www.bookdepository.com) provides free shipping to 90 countries worldwide.*

Heather B. Hamilton spent 15 years in Washington, DC trying to save the world before packing it in, buying a sailboat and setting out to see the world in November 2010. She and her husband, Pip, are currently cruising the Caribbean on Picaroon, *their 40-foot Hardin Sea Wolf ketch. Heather is the author of numerous articles and book chapters, including articles in* Cruising World *and* Blue Water Sailing. *You can follow their adventures at www.picaroonblog.com.*

SERVING AT SEA BY SHIRLEY HALL

Magnificent Mandarin Oranges

A juicy, sweet orange tastes good any time of the day. This fruit makes a good breakfast, an energizing lunch and its juice makes a thirst-quenching drink or a tasty addition to a cocktail. Mandarin oranges are especially sought after because they are so sweet and the peel separates from the flesh when fully ripe.

Mandarins are often smaller and flatter than oranges. This fruit has a loose orange skin and inner segments are easily separated, giving off a unique aroma of spice that says "holidays!" to those who remember finding this fruit in the toe of their Christmas stockings.

"Mandarin" refers to the color of this citrus fruit's skin when allowed to fully ripen: bright orange, as were the robes worn by ancient Chinese officials. Mandarin oranges grow wild in China and have been cultivated in Asia for three millenniums. They did not reach Europe and North America until the mid-1800s. The first mandarin oranges commercially exported were shipped from the city of Tangier in Morocco, becoming "tangerines". It seems another variety must have been shipped from Portugal, thus our name in Trinidad for a variety of this fruit. It can be confusing: a tangerine or Portugal is a mandarin orange, but not all mandarin oranges are tangerines or Portugals!

Many people in northern climates only know mandarin oranges as a canned fruit. Most of the fresh mandarins and tangerines found in US and Canadian markets have a wax coating that extends their shelf life to 14 days. Some are packaged with a decay-retarding fungicide. Luckily we Caribbean islanders get ours fresh. Good-quality mandarins should be firm to slightly soft, and feel heavy for their size and smooth-skinned, deep orange to almost red. In the fridge, they keep up to a week, but eat them as soon as possible in order to enjoy their rich flavor and to get the full benefits of their nutrients.

These fruits are very rich sources of water-soluble vitamin C, one of the powerful natural anti-oxidants which help with wound healing, boost anti-viral and anti-cancer activity, and help prevent arthritis and colds. Vitamin C also helps absorb iron in your food. One mandarin provides a third of the recommended daily amount of vitamin C.

Mandarin orange skin can be candied. The small segments are great for salads. Try adding them to vegetable side and main dishes. When substituting canned mandarins for fresh, drain and gently rinse away the syrup. However when substituting fresh mandarins for canned in some recipes, you may need to add water or simple syrup. Most canned mandarins come in 11-ounce tins. One can equals 1 1/4 Cups fresh mandarin orange segments.

Ponzu Sauce
1/4 Cup fresh mandarin orange juice
1/2 Cup soy sauce
(low-sodium preferred)
2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 Tablespoon water
1 Tablespoon sweet rice wine (optional)
a pinch of hot pepper

Combine all ingredients. Use as a marinade or add after cooking. This sauce is great on fish, chicken or pork dishes whether baked, fried, or grilled.

Mandarin and Cucumber Salad
4 mandarin oranges
1 cucumber
1 small onion (white preferred)
2 teaspoons brown sugar
1/3 Cup white vinegar
1 teaspoon chopped fresh basil
or tarragon (optional)

Peel mandarins, separate into segments, remove seeds and any bits of pith, and chop slightly with a sharp knife. Peel cucumber and slice into very thin rounds (should yield about 2 Cups). Peel onion and slice as thinly as possible. In a suitable serving bowl, combine mandarin oranges, cucumbers, and onion. In a small bowl, stir together the sugar and vinegar until the sugar dissolves. Pour the vinegar and sugar mixture over the salad. Add herbs if desired. Toss well and chill before serving.

Mandarin Cake
1/2 Cup sugar
1 Cup baker's flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 egg, beaten
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
(prefer canola)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 Cups seeded and finely chopped
mandarin orange segments
FOR TOPPING:
2 Tablespoons firmly packed brown
sugar, two teaspoons milk

Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine sugar, flour, baking soda and salt. Add egg, oil, vanilla and mandarin pieces, mashing the orange, and pour into a 9-inch square greased pan. Bake at 350°F for 30 to 35 minutes.

To make topping, combine sugar and milk in a saucepan, constantly stirring, and remove from heat when it begins to boil. Drizzle over hot cake.

Mandarin Rice Pudding
1 Cup evaporated milk
(not sweetened condensed)
1/2 Cup orange juice
1/2 Cup light brown sugar, packed
3 Tablespoons melted butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 eggs, beaten
3 Cups cooked white or brown rice
1/2 Cup raisins (golden preferred)
2 Cups mandarin orange sections,
seeded and chopped

In a large bowl, combine evaporated milk, orange juice, brown sugar, butter, vanilla, and eggs. Stir in rice and raisins. Pour into greased 12-inch glass baking dish. Cover with foil and bake at 350°F for an hour. Carefully remove foil and stir in the mandarin orange pieces and bake uncovered for another 20 minutes. Let cool for half an hour before serving.

Mandarin Orange No-Bake Frozen Dessert
5 to 6 mandarin oranges
60 buttery biscuits/crackers
(Ritz preferred)
1/4 Cup light brown sugar
1/2 Cup butter, melted
1/2 Cup unsweetened frozen
orange juice concentrate, thawed
1 can sweetened condensed milk
(not evaporated)
1 Cup whipped topping,
1/4 Cup chopped nuts such as
pecans or almonds (optional)

Peel, segment, seed and chop mandarins. Crush biscuits/crackers.

In a suitable bowl combine crushed biscuits/crackers and sugar. Add melted butter. Set aside a quarter Cup of this mixture to use as topping. Press remainder evenly into the bottom of a 12-inch glass pie dish. Whip or whisk the juice concentrate with the sweetened condensed milk until smooth. Fold in whipped topping and mandarin oranges. Pour into prepared crust. Sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture and chopped nuts. Freeze at least 2 hours before serving.





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The Sky in December 2012

by Scott Welty

The Planets in December 2012

MERCURY - Rising at 0345 hours on December 1st, and then ever later.

VENUS - Rising at 0315 hours on December 1st, moving to about 0400 by month's end.

EARTH - Sleeping in.

MARS - Look west for Mars in the evening twilight, setting around 1830 hours all month.

JUPITER - Up all night, rising in the afternoon and setting in the wee hours. See it just below the Pleiades and just to the left of the bright star Aldebaran.

SATURN - A "morning star", rising after midnight. See it below Spica, the brightest star in Virgo.

Sky Events This Month

The month begins with Mercury, Venus and Saturn up in the eastern sky in the morning. As the month wears on, Venus and Mercury will dip eastward toward the Sun, leaving Saturn high in the eastern sky.

4th - Mercury at maximum elongation (biggest angle from the sun) and joined by Venus and Saturn. Get up!

10th - Pretty morning sky with Mercury, Venus, Saturn and the crescent moon (see Figure 1).

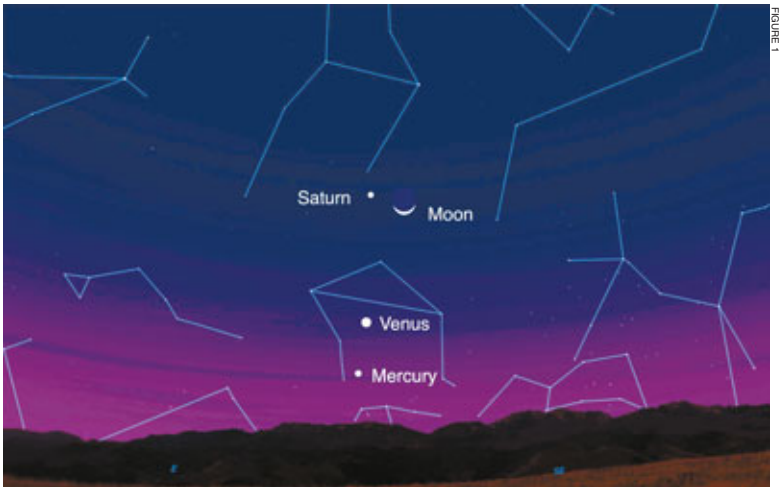


FIGURE 1

13th - New Moon

21st - Winter Solstice (see below)

25th - Newton's Birthday and Jupiter rides the moon through the sky! (See Figure 2.)

28th - Full Moon

Winter Solstice

Yes, happy winter solstice to one and all. The word solstice comes from the Latin, *sol sistere* or sun stop. Indeed it is at this time that the Sun halts its apparent trek to the south and begins to climb once again in the sky. So, it is on the 21st that we have the "shortest day" or the day with the least daylight and the most nighttime. It is perhaps not surprising that nearly all cultures and religions have some sort of celebration on or near this date to celebrate the return of the Sun. It is also not

FIGURE 2

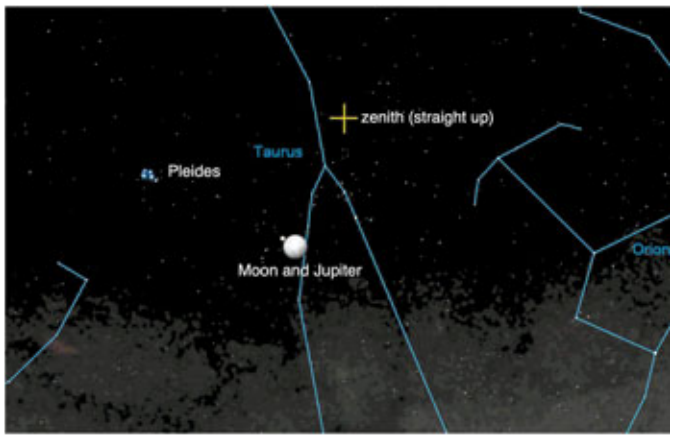


Figure 1: Looking east at 0445 hours on December 10th

Figure 2: Jupiter riding on the moon! December 25th, 2100 hours

surprising that many of those celebrations come from places with higher latitudes than those found in the Caribbean. For example the swing in sunrise/sunset for Grenada between June and December goes like this:

June - sunrise 0540 hours, sunset 1830 hours.

December - sunrise 0620 hours, sunset 1740 hours.

Compare this with similar numbers from Anchorage, Alaska:

June - sunrise 0300 hours, sunset 2240 hours.

December - sunrise 1015 hours, sunset 1540 hours.

In the Caribbean we may hardly notice that our days are "long" or "short" but you'd certainly notice up north — and you'd have to pay close attention so as to not plant crops too early or too late. That big swing in amount of daylight is what causes a big swing in the weather and something called "snow"!

So, no matter your culture, religion, or history have a happy or merry…

Deiwe, Brumalia, Chawmos, Christmas, Deygan, Dongzhi, Goru, Hanukkah, Hogmanay, Inti Raymi, Junkanoo, Karachun, Koleda, La an Dreoilin (Wren day), Lenaea, Lohri, Saint Lucy's Day (Santa Lucia), Makara Sankranti, Maruaroa o Takurua, Mean Geimhridh, Midwinter, Modraniht, Mummer's Dauy, Rzhanitsa Feast, Shab-e Chelleh, Sanghamitta Day, Saturnalia Chronia, Sewy Yelda, Sol Invictus Festival, Soyal, We Tripantu, Yule, Zagmuk Sacaea, Ziemassvetki

…one and all!

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

During 2012 we detected more than 100 additional planets orbiting other stars, bringing the entire list to over 800 extra-solar planets. Will 2013 be the year that we find an Earth-like one… and will it have cable?

Happy New Year!

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





PONDERING PIRACY PREVENTION

Dear *Compass*,

I read with interest Frank Virgintino's article "Cruising Without Fear" in the September 2012 issue of *Compass*, a superb picture of piracy in Venezuela (as he must have intended). I have been sailing full time, single handedly for 12 years and had my share of unwelcome attention at sea.

Prevention is indeed better than cure, not least because it is a delicate piece of surgery to detach yourself from unwanted guests. In my experience pirates can be discouraged but one normally has almost no time to plan, or to make them change their plans. Once contact between hulls is made it is the end for the victims.

I will not recount my own experiences but while reading the article I inevitably took in the photograph (taken in the Red Sea) of a small boat with a boarding ladder as if I had the problem. The vessel's fuel tank is, it appears, in a wooden cuddy. A full-bore rifle will overcome this and cause the fuel tank to burst into flames if struck. The vulnerable parts of the engine are: fuel system, electrical system, and cylinder head valve gear. I could not possibly "do a Nelson" and hit the waterline to sink the vessel, but bullets exiting the hull will make a very large hole sinking it in minutes.

It is now legal for a British yacht like mine to carry a rifle and I know, as an expert in small arms, which one to carry. But where to buy what I believe is now a necessary deterrent?

Sign Me,
No Names Please

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,

A letter in the November 2012 issue from "DNA" told how he was treated by Dominica (not Dominican Republic) authorities. Following his letter was a reply from Hubert Winston of the Dominica Marine Association. Mr. Winston said that, "common sense would have prevented the entire situation, i.e. common sense displayed by the Dominica authorities. DNA, the owner of the boat, could not have displayed common sense, as his error was one of ignorance of the law.

I believe that the authorities acted properly by taking the boat into custody, as the skipper of the boat had illegally discharged passengers onto the territory of Dominica. That is an offense in every country of the world, as Mr. Winston points out. However, what Mr. Winston fails to discuss is the question of intent. A crime is committed when there is intent to commit it; otherwise it is an error, grievous as it may be.

DNA's boat was boarded by armed Coast Guard personnel and taken into custody. When they reached the wharf the authorities did not let the skipper dock but rather docked the skipper's boat, causing damage to it. Then the owner reports "they inspected the yacht in every corner and left everything in a mess. They shoved us in a car and drove us to their main office. They treated us like real criminals: we were watched all the time by armed officers, and locked into a room and interrogated for hours, photographed, spoken badly to, fingerprinted and so on. After hours in their custody, we still didn't know what was going on...."

There is no doubt that DNA, as the skipper refers to himself, committed an offense. The question is, what should be his punishment and how should he and his mate be treated? After arrest they should have been taken, charged and allowed to understand their charges and consult an attorney. Instead, they "were shoved in a car." Then they were "interrogated for hours." And finally they were "spoken to badly." That they were arrested and taken into custody and fingerprinted is proper. Being shoved around, interrogated for hours without the benefit of counsel and spoken to badly are the actions of a roughhouse group who seem to believe that they are judge, jury and executioner.

Certainly the authorities of a country like Dominica have a variety of issues that they deal with daily. Are they not trained in how to comport themselves? Do they not know that one is innocent until proven guilty? Is there no training at all that allows them to distinguish between real criminals and those that have made a mistake? Mr. Winston says that, "it was unfortunate the skipper got a rude awakening... but that he has to understand that he does not have to touch land to be in violation of the laws pertaining to disembarkation of guests or crew." He should have said that it was unfortunate that Dominica stained its reputation by being rude to a tourist who made a mistake. Mr. Winston also said "The skipper, if he is a skipper, should know the marine laws of every island in the Caribbean...." What does he mean, "if he is a skipper"? How many pleasure yacht captains, even commercial captains, know every marine law in every land in the Caribbean?

If the authorities arrested the skipper and his mate and treated them with respect, as would have been appropriate, and had they come to the conclusion that an error was committed with no intent, then the skipper should have received a warning and let go. Instead he was fined US$4,000.

DNA says that he will "delete this island from his nautical charts." I will think twice before I will call there as well. The cruising community needs to look beyond the error that was committed by this "skipper" and look to the treatment that one must face if one commits any error in this country. When a guest commits an error in one's home, good manners always dictate that it should be handed as gently as possible.

For the offense that the authorities of the island nation of Dominica have committed against a cruising boat by their rough handling and arbitrary and costly fine imposed without merit against this skipper; his boat and crew, on behalf of the cruising community the sentence that I suggest we impose is for our...

—Continued on next page



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The Food Fair

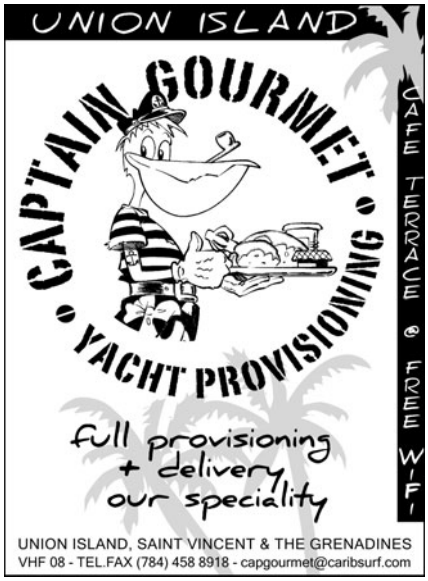
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—*Continued from previous page*

…community of cruising boats to bypass Dominica for the balance of the 2012-2013 cruising season. In this way, perhaps, the authorities will come to realize that "off with his head" tactics are not appropriate.

Regardless of their justification for their actions, and they will try to justify their actions, if we do not bypass Dominica by a show of strength, you may be the next boat and crew that they will mistreat if you make a mistake, any mistake!

Frank Virgintino, Author
www.freecruisingguide.com

HOW TO TREAT YACHTS

Dear *Compass*,

I read with great interest DNA's letter, the comment from *Compass* and the input of Mr. Winston. It doesn't matter if DNA was wrong or right: everybody deserves to be treated fairly and with respect. Therefore, I find the happening quite embarrassing.

I am a French citizen (Guadeloupe), have sailed in the Caribbean the last seven years and have heard a lot of stories. Sorry to say that the heavy-handedness of Dominica's authorities isn't news. It's not news that sailors, going south or north, seek to sail in international waters when passing Dominica.

Besides, when Mr. Winston mentions "the exact same law" that is totally wrong. I am an EU citizen and there is no way you can equate Dominica's existing laws with ours. We EU citizens freely travel between our nations, including Martinique, St. Martin and Guadeloupe. Our passports do not even get stamped. We can embark and disembark as we like. The only moment we need clearance paper is when we want to approach lands like Dominica and it's only because Dominica requires Customs paperwork.

Secondly, Mr. Winston says that Dominica is plagued with human trafficking. I've been in Dominica many times and that comment surprises me. Who is trying to get illegally into Dominica? What can Dominica offer to immigrants? Nothing! Please, tell things as they really are: people are actually trying to escape from Dominica and not the other way around; many people are trying to get asylum in Guadeloupe. You can even get the figures online.

Right now, I'm writing from St. Lucia and, since it's the closest island to Dominica in the Commonwealth, I will invite you to clear Customs here to experience the difference and learn how to treat incoming yachts.

My point of argument: Yes, use of common sense from the Dominica's authorities would have prevented DNA's situation and many other situations. Unfortunately, your country is killing a business that is (already) a disaster. Giving fines, instead of guidelines and directions, is — for Dominica — a real income source. Seems like Dominica's policy is to get money that way. I definitively think it's a very boring development.

I sympathize with DNA when he says, "Dominica never again".

Mark Lilholdt
Anaconda III

DON'T BADMOUTH DOMINICA

Dear *Compass*,

I am outraged after reading the November "Dominica Do's and Don'ts" letter. Signed "DNA", this person — who didn't even identify his name or citizenship, only "we're headquartered out of Martinique" — badmouthed Dominica unjustly. He took a victim stance: "Woe is me! I don't know the laws, but I don't *think* I broke any." I would like to know the name of this charter company. If they are so lame as to operate commercially without even knowing basic Immigration and Customs rules, everyone should get to know their name so as to avoid them.

Dominica has enough socio-economic challenges without being badmouthed by ill-informed skippers like DNA. Here's to visiting Dominica, one of our favorite places for the beauty of the land and its people!

Ellen Birrell
S/V Boldly Go

FIRST IMPRESSIONS IN CARRIACOU

Dear *Compass*,

Having been coming to Carriacou for many years, I feel it is time to ask about first impressions. The first impression a person coming to Carriacou by yacht will receive is at Immigration, where we arrive excited and ready to enjoy time in this lovely island. Most if not all sailors arrive with all relevant paperwork; a few, being holiday-makers for the first time, may be a little "at sea", but most are certainly ready to tackle this with a smile and good humour.

You knock on the door of Immigration in Hillsborough, walk in, and that's when it all goes most depressingly wrong. If I were to write a list regarding my and others' experiences in Immigration at Hillsborough I would take up half a page or more. In fact, I hope maybe others will respond to this letter and tell me differently!

The work of an Immigration officer I fully understand, as I have taken the time to find out, but they are the "front door" into Carriacou and the visitors they meet every day are asking to be guests in this island. Visitors come to use shops, restaurants, taxis, hotels and so much more, and to be treated inconsiderately at the first step is really just asking them to leave and not bother to come back.

The whole community of Carriacou benefits daily from incoming guests, so please, would it not be possible to have a welcome from the first people they meet? Visitors should leave Immigration with smiles on their faces, happy and ready to explore this friendly island, as opposed to walking out feeling like a criminal, and looking up-island and thinking, "Hey, there's Union Island — shall we go there instead?"

The work of an Immigration officer can be varied and the specific duties of each day depend on the particular passengers travelling through the ports of entry. Generally duties include:

- Examining passports and recognising forged documentation (this requires excellent observational skills and an understanding of forgery techniques);
- Conducting personal interviews with travellers — working through interpreters where necessary, and objectively evaluating the information presented;
- Keeping up to date with changes in legislation and current affairs;
- Applying Immigration legislation, rules and policy;
- Communicating with various agencies, including intelligence units, the police, benefits agencies, helping to organize surveillance;
- Carrying out intelligence-based activities and using knowledge of national and international intelligence;
- Undertaking, with police assistance, Immigration visits to identify people with no authority to remain in Grenada;
- Deciding on the entry rights of individuals and, where applicable, refusing entry;
- Making arrangements for the removal of those who have entered or attempted to enter the Grenada in breach of Immigration law;
- Writing and presenting case study reports and statistics.

And I would add one more:

- Being a good ambassador, a friendly face welcoming people to Carriacou

Please sign me,
Just Passing Through Carriacou

TRINIDAD IS SMILEY COUNTRY

Dear *Compass*,

We are currently completing our third stay in Chaguaramas since our Atlantic crossing in 2010, when we left from the Cabo Verde islands and made landfall at Tobago.

Ever since that first arrival in Tobago we felt heartily welcome in T&T. In May 2010 when we left Grenada for Chaguaramas, an overnight crossing, we were advised by Prickly Bay's Immigration officers to inform the Coast Guards of Grenada and Trinidad prior to leaving, which we did. Miles north of Trinidad, the Trinidadian Coast Guard called us via VHF and did so hourly till we got into Chaguaramas Bay. Immigration and Customs clearance went smooth and smiling. We put our boat, *Wind Song*, on the hard for the hurricane season while we returned home to Belgium. Our return to Trinidad that October went smiling and smooth again and we found our boat well taken care of.

Our 2010-11 season went in the same way, leaving our boat again in Chaguaramas for the hurricane season.

At the end of May 2012, *Wind Song* returned to Trinidad for the third time. Unfortunately, while underway from Tobago's Charlotteville to Chaguaramas, shortly after midnight we sailed into a huge fishing net. Luckily we could continue sailing but the propeller was inoperable. By daybreak, we called the Trinidadian Coast Guard via VHF and explained the situation. From that moment, they gave us a call each hour to ask about our progress and the situation on board. Once we got north of the Boca de Monos, the Coast Guard boat came and threw us a line and towed us to their premises. There, two divers jumped into the water and had an almost hour-long job to free our propeller. We left with a big smile, surrounded by big smiles.

October 2012: we just returned from Belgium, happy to be back in Chaguaramas and to find our boat in the best circumstances. Someone is dealing with our cutlass bearing that was damaged by the fishing net experience, others are scraping our vessel's hull, our sails and bimini are having a yearly check-up and repairs, while we hunt for parts — an endless list, as you all know what it takes to prepare for another sailing season in paradise. Meanwhile, we enjoy local food at so many locations and listen to cooking advice from the street vendors — feeling warmly welcome in "smiley country".

Walter and Marylou
S/V Wind Song

MAYREAU'S MULTIPYING MOORINGS

Dear *Compass*,

We sailed into Salt Whistle Bay in Mayreau in October and were horrified to find the entire bay covered with 50 moorings. When we asked the guy in a pirogue (who approached us to offer us ice or garbage removal) who had put down all the new moorings, he said that an Englishman had put them there and two ladies from up the hill were looking after them!

—*Continued on next page*

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We were disgusted to see that yet another bay had been pockmarked with buoys, and we are still wondering by whose authority yet another favorite bay has been spoiled by someone trying to make a quick buck by collecting money from yachting people.

Not more than a few months back the *Compass* ran a story of an unsuspecting yachtie, who tied up to a mooring in the same Salt Whistle Bay, only to find his boat on the rocks there (complete with the mooring still attached to his bow).

How can one find out if a mooring is "government authorized" or if one must use it? Personally I prefer to use my own anchor and equipment in which I have confidence, but it is becoming more difficult to pick a spot between the mooring fields because of the close proximity of the floats.

Mike Hatch
S/V Cynara

Editor's note: See related story on page 26.

THANKS FROM JOHN TRUELOVE

Hi *Compass* Readers,

I'm Geoff Truelove, John's brother. As you may know, John is in San Fernando Hospital in Trinidad. He asked me to send his thanks to all the people who generously donated blood for his upcoming hip replacement, which should put him back on his feet after almost a year of hospitals. I occasionally update the Facebook page "in support of john truelove (jt)"

He's in good spirits and wishes only to thank everyone who has helped in any way. There are too many to mention here, but he insisted on my mentioning Jesse James the taxi driver!

Thanks for everything,
Geoff Truelove

Editor's Note: John's fellow cruiser, Angelika Gruener, gives us some background:

John Truelove from the yacht Stillaware, *better known as JT, has been in several hospitals since September 2011. While in Carriacou last year, John became unconscious because of dehydration, and fell off the toilet in his boat. Melody Pompa of the Caribbean Safety and Security Net organized via radio to get him off the boat and into the hospital in Carriacou. He got an infection and was brought into hospital in Grenada. Next he was transported to Trinidad.*

Now he is in Trinidad in the General Hospital in San Fernando. Because this is far away from Chaguaramas, nobody visits him. He misses the contact with other cruisers a lot. We collected nearly all issues of Compass *from this year and brought them down on one visit, except the April and May issues. If anyone in Trinidad has them I would ask you to bring them down to him. He really will appreciate them.*

Angelika
S/Y Angelos

INDEPENDENT SAILORS FOR HAITI

Dear *Compass*,

I am looking for boats that will go to Haiti from Martinique to take clothes, food and medical supplies.

Since the earthquake in Haiti in January 2012, I have been finding boats going up there to help bring these supplies. I do this as an individual; I do not create an association nor am I part of an existing one — too many financial and administrative constraints. The sailors who go to Haiti all have a little something extra and many do not want to be part of a "machine" with laws and obligations; they do it with the heart. I'm getting a lot of people who donate, so we need more boats!

Most cruisers stop at Ile-à-Vache where there is an orphanage run by a Sister who tries to support 75 kids. There are, of course, other ports in Haiti itself where people are in need, and I have no preference where the supplies are taken, just as long as we give things that are not available there. Everything must be given.

If you want to participate or give donations, please contact me. I'll send you an e-mail quickly indeed. And I would very much like to hear from people who can have a lasting relationship — a *lyannaj* as we say in Creole.

Thank you very much to anyone who can help.

Armelle du Chemin
armelleduchemin@hotmail.com
Martinique

A SONG FOR YOU

Dear *Compass* Readers,

I wrote the words to this song for my husband but thought you might all enjoy it too.

You know the tune — just put on your "Sound of Music" sound track.

My Favorite Things

Blue skies and sunsets and white sandy beaches
Turtles and dolphins and sleek flying fishes
Potlucks and dominoes and meeting new friends
These are a few of my favorite things

When the squall hits
When the gen breaks
When the beer gets warm
I simply remember my favorite things
And then I don't feel so bad.

Snorkeling and reading and back deck seating
Potlucks and dominoes and new people meeting
Morning nets, fishing nets and calm, following seas
These are a few of my favorite things

Cool picture taking and a calm ocean passage
Liming with locals and sun shining on noses
Palm trees and banyans and fresh ocean air
These are a few of my favorite things

When the boat rocks
When the boat rolls
And the project list grows
I simply remember my favorite things
And then I don't feel so bad.

Joan Palango
M/V Panchita

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Letter of the Month

Dear *Compass*,

At the end of October my husband, Jim, and I set sail from St. Thomas to the Spanish Virgin Islands on our yacht and home, the Beneteau 423 *Jamann*. We wanted to have some new adventures prior to beginning our second busy season of term charters starting in November.

We had visited Culebra previously with charter guests and were looking forward to returning on our own. And of course this must be our first stop into the Spanish Virgin Islands to clear through Customs. After a great sail in beautiful weather from St. Thomas we spent two nights in Ensenada Honda, meeting new cruisers at the Dinghy Dock and catching up with another couple we had met in St. Thomas during Carnival. Another day we did a dive off Tamarindo Point and visited many turtles at the wildlife refuge of Cayo Luis Peña.

We then set sail for Vieques and new adventures. Our sail from Culebra was interesting as we sailed between multiple sets of rain clouds: outer bands of Tropical Storm Sandy 600 miles to the west. Our first two nights were spent in the harbor off Isabel Segunda with a day spent in this city visiting the highlights: El Faro Punta Mulas, the town square and bust of Simon Bolivar, the fort/museum el Fuerte Conde de Mirasol, Black Beard's dive shop, and a stroll through the town admiring architecture and churches. The visit was completed with a stop for happy hour refreshments at Al's Azul Bar, and then obtaining take-home dinner of excellent local cuisine from El Yate restaurant. We felt safe and welcome at each stop along our way. In fact the museum was not open to the public but the manager, Roberto Siegal, welcomed us in to join a group of school students. It was a wonderful day.

We continued sailing on to the east end of Vieques to spend a night in Bahia de Icacos. We were the only vessel there to enjoy the beautiful beach, the sound of the surf on the shallow reef and the mostly clear night sky complete with multiple meteors.

Our next stop — the small town of Esperanza on the southwest side of Vieques. As we sailed along the south coast we got a preview of several bays that we were interested in visiting later in the week: Ensenada Honda, Puerto Mosquito and Puerto Ferro.

Upon arriving in Puerto Real outside the town of Esperanza we were immediately greeted by a local cruiser, Glen, who in his dinghy led us to the perfect anchoring spot. Shortly after, another local, Chase, passed by in his dinghy, waving greetings.

After cleaning up the deck and taking a break, Jim and I decided to head in to shore to check out the main street of shops and restaurants and find a happy hour spot. At 5:30PM we were in the dinghy, also known as "the station wagon", heading for the dinghy dock where we tied up and locked our dinghy using a steel cable and lock. A quick stroll down the main street and we saw that the locals seemed to be at Lazy Jacks. We joined them for a short happy hour and headed back to the dinghy dock by 7:00PM. "Oh, no — our dinghy is gone! What do we do now? How will we get home to *Jamann*?"

We headed back to the main street and were almost immediately passed by two police cruisers, which we quickly stopped to report our dilemma. The police said they had already received a call about a dinghy being stolen and they were here to look for it. Must be our dinghy!

The officers were quick in taking our report and anxious to continue looking for our dinghy. But we were now stuck in town with no way to get home. The officers suggested we stop by restaurants, looking for a local to assist us as they headed out to continue searching. There was no one at Banana's to help us but we were directed to talk to a local out on the street. Jorge couldn't help us right then as he had a tour to lead, but said if we were still there in 90 minutes he could lend us a kayak to use. We were grateful. We returned to Lazy Jacks looking for help. We told the manager about our stolen dinghy and asked for assistance in finding someone to take us out to our boat. He was quick to get on the phone and find us transportation — to be supplied by our neighbor in the harbor, Chase.

We waited less than ten minutes for Chase to arrive and take us home. Chase informed us that there had been another dinghy theft in the past two weeks and he was being proactive by using three locks on his dinghy. He also offered to go out with his spotlight and check several hot spots where the dinghy could have been taken. The cruising community had come to our rescue. As he dropped us off at *Jamann* we got his cell phone number to contact him if we needed any help or transportation the next day.

We had a long and sleepless night of mixed emotions — anger, frustration, worry and being just plain upset. But first thing in the morning we were contacted via cell phone by the local police crime investigation unit. Officer Ramos was calling us to get more detailed info. He would like us to come ashore, but we had no means of immediate transportation so all info was communicated via the phone. He assured us that they were still actively searching for the dinghy.

While waiting for more info, our neighbor Glen came to visit in his dinghy. Chase had informed him and other local cruisers of our situation and they were all willing to help us. They were also all taking more precautions with their own dinghies.

Within two hours we received another call, saying that our dinghy had been found, but the motor was gone. (Our dinghy motor was a 9.8 Tohatsu. We can only guess that it is the motors the thieves want, as our ten-foot AB dinghy was valued at more than the motor.) This time we had to come ashore to meet Officer Ramos. We contacted Glen for a ride to shore. On shore we were met by neighbors Chase and Sebastian who, unbeknownst to us, had also been out searching for our dinghy.

We were met by Officer Ramos, several other officers and a pickup truck containing our sad-looking dinghy. The dinghy had been sunk with multiple long slashes on both sides. The officers had to use the pickup truck to pull the sunken dinghy, filled with sand and seaweed, out of the water.

—Continued on next page



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Yes, we could identify this as our dinghy via the hull serial number. We accompanied the officers to the police station to fill out and sign official paperwork. We were able to take photos of the damaged dinghy for insurance purposes and said goodbye to it, as it would be disposed of. We verified all the info and serial numbers in the police report. The officers will continue to search for the stolen motor and will contact us if it is found.

We have had a terrible experience in Vieques with the theft of our dinghy. We were warned in Culebra that we should be aware of safety and security issues in Vieques. We thought we took proper action by always locking up our boat and dinghy. We were not prepared for the banditos. What more could we have done?

As I write this, Jim and I are making plans to head back to our homeport of Red Hook, St. Thomas. We will not visit restaurants in Esperanza. We will not visit the gift shops and the grocery store. We will not sign up for the BioBay tour. We will go directly home, not leaving any monies in Esperanza, Vieques. Will we go back to visit? Maybe. If we hear of some enterprising Vieques citizen who is offering dinghy dock security at a reasonable hourly rate, we would gladly return.

'The local cruisers were all willing to help us. They were also all taking more precautions with their own dinghies'

But there is a bright side to this event. We are very appreciative of the kindness and assistance offered to us by the local cruisers in Esperanza. They were willing to assist us in any way, at any time. We also offer praise to the Vieques Police Department, in particular Officer Ramos, for their prompt action taken in performing their duties. But more so we appreciate their sincere kindness and concern extended in assisting us.

We can only hope that we will have the opportunity as cruisers to pay it forward and assist other cruisers.

Kathy M. Jackson
Jamann

Epilogue: Both our slashed dinghy and stolen motor were only ten months old. Fortunately both have been replaced with the same make and model from Budget Marine, Nanny Cay, Tortola — who gave us a little discount for being a good customer and buying a second dinghy in the same year. Life is an adventure!

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An ideal crew would have their own sailboat or other living quarters in the area and meet Serenity at various ports, living on their own while Serenity is occupied. The crew would be welcome to use Serenity as their own while we are not on board, with the understanding that much of the off-time be used to keep Serenity in Bristol condition.

The crew would manage the maintenance and dry dock of vessel during the hurricane season and prepare her for the sailing season. Non-smokers and moderate alcohol users only. Further details to be discussed.

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WHAT'S ON MY MIND...

Christmas in the Caribbean

by Hugo du Plessis

Christmas among cruising yachtspeople in the Caribbean is always a great occasion that makes up for the distance from family ties.

It might start with a round of nearby yachts in a dinghy. For some reason, I used to find myself in the role of Father Christmas. One year at Hog Island in Grenada I had a rival, dressed uncomfortably for a tropical island in 'full fig' and cotton-wool whiskers. These did not apparently stop him accepting the traditional hospitality because it was not long before he fell in. Weighed down by his heavy red robe and boots, and suffocated by his waterlogged false whiskers, he nearly drowned.

My rig of the day was more comfortable: just red shorts, red T-shirt (sometimes) and straw hat with the obligatory red cap glued on top. I did not bother with cotton-wool whiskers. Having my own genuine whiskers made it easier to eat the offered mince pies.

'It's a bit warm out here for a sledge, and anyway there's no snow. The only ice is in drinks'

The main Christmas event was a barbecue on the beach under the romantic palm trees. (Beware of falling coconuts the size of cannon balls and, being green, almost as heavy!) There were about two dozen yachts in the harbour, with more crews arriving by dinghy from nearby anchorages. No overcrowded, slum-like marina here. In fact there was not much of anything — no houses, just a wild sheltered tropical harbour with scattered cruising yachts at anchor. (I hear this delightful spot now has a marina and a hotel complex — you have to sail farther and farther now to escape the plague of tourism.)

In due course Santa arrived bearing gifts. It's a bit warm out here for a sledge, and anyway there's no snow. The only ice is in drinks. So I sailed over in my dinghy, which was suitably disguised by two plastic reindeer on the bows, borrowed from another boat.

Everybody in the anchorage had contributed one or more gifts, wrapped and labelled "Mum", "Dad", "Boy" or "Girl". These were sorted into four big sacks, which the rest of the year were sail bags, and labelled accordingly. I sat down on a driftwood tree trunk, carefully making sure it was not poisonous manchineel or covered with too many ants, and proceeded to distribute presents.

All went well until it was Patsy's turn. She was a nice kid, aged I suppose about eight or nine, from a liveaboard family and, like me, from Ireland. Having shared the same harbour for some months I had got to know the family quite well. I fished out a parcel from the "Girl" bag.

A few minutes later she brought it back, almost in tears, saying that perhaps Santa had made a mistake. I found I had given her a set of very frilly, sexy, black underwear. Most embarrassing. My face must have gone as red as my Santa shirt.

"Oh... Er... Yes, my dear... yes... Um... Perhaps Santa did... Well now... Let's see what else we can find... What about some chocolates?"

I fished in the "Girl" bag to find the largest and most unmistakable box of chocolates.

But what to do about the wrongly labelled present? I cursed middle-aged mothers who still referred to themselves as "girls". I did not dare to rewrap it in full view of everyone. What would people think? I looked around for somewhere it could be discreetly hidden.

I needn't have bothered. It had gone. Three Mums were fighting over it.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year!

Hugo du Plessis is the author of Fibreglass Boats, *now in its fifth edition.*



CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2012

1 – 2 Mango Bowl Regatta, St. Lucia. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), tel (758) 452-8350, secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, http://stluciayachtclub.com/mango-bowl
1 - 2 Pete Sheals Memorial Match Race (invitational), BVI. Royal BVI Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, sailing@royalbviyc.org, www.royalbviyc.org
1 – 2 Velauno Paddle Royal SUP Race, Puerto Rico. velauno.com
1 - 3 Gustav Wilmerding Memorial Challenge races, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), (284) 495-4559
2 - 8 Antigua Charter Yacht Show. www.antiguayachtshow.com
5 – 9 Carlos Aguilar Match Race, St. Thomas USVI. www.carlosmatchrace.com
8 Club Náutico de San Juan Christmas Boat Parade, Puerto Rico. www.nauticodesanjuan.com
8 St. Croix Christmas Boat Parade. www.christmasparadestcroix.com
8 – 9 Jolly Harbour Yacht Club Annual Regatta, Antigua. Jolly Harbour Yacht Club, Antigua (JHYC), tel (268) 770-6172, regattas@jhycantigua.com, www.jhycantigua.com
8 - 16 Hanukkah
9 Gouyave Sailing School Regatta, Grenada
9 St. Maarten Yacht Club Christmas Boat Parade. info@smyc.com
12 - 20 Havana International Jazz Festival, Cuba. www.apassion4jazz.net/havana.html
13 Public holiday in St. Lucia (National Day)
13 Fête Kweyol, Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia. www.igy-rodneybay.com
14 St. Thomas Lighted Boat Parade, USVI. www.facebook.com/events/114968368657481
15 O'Neal & Mundy Commodore's Cup, Tortola, BVI. RBVIYC, www.rbviyc.org
16 - 24 Nine Mornings Festival, St. Vincent. http://discoversvg.com
19 Public holiday in Anguilla (National Heroes Day)
21 Winter Solstice
21 St. Lucia Yacht Club Christmas Party (SLYC)
21 - 23 Carriacou Parang Festival. www.carriacouparangfestival.com
22, 26 and 29 Hightide Race Series, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
25 Public holiday in many places (Christmas Day)
26 Public holiday in many places (Boxing Day)
26 St. Kitts & Nevis National Carnival J'ouvert. www.stkittsneviscarnival.com
28 FULL MOON
31 Nelson's Pursuit Race, Antigua. AYC, www.antiguayachtclub.com
31 New Year's Eve, Old Year's Night. Fireworks in many places, including Trellis Bay, Tortola; Admiralty Bay, Bequia; and Fort-de-France, Martinique. St. Lucia Yacht Club Beach Party. Public holiday in Montserrat; half-day holiday in Curaçao

JANUARY 2013

1 Public holiday or "recovery day" in many places (New Year's Day)
1 – 6 Crucian Christmas Festival, St. Croix. www.stxfestival.com
2 Public holiday in Cuba (Victory of Armed Forces Day), Haiti (Founding Fathers' Day), and St. Lucia (Second New Year's Day)
2 Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Grand Parade of Carnival Troupes, St. Kitts). www.stkittsneviscarnival.com
3 Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Carnival Last Lap). www.stkittsneviscarnival.com
4 – 27 St. Bart's Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org
6 Public holiday in many places (Three Kings Day)
9 Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Eugenio María de Hostos Day)
21 Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Martin Luther King Day), in Barbados (Errol Barrow Day) and in the Dominican Republic (Our Lady of Altagracia)
21 Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race. www.mountgayrumroundbarbadosrace.com
23 – Feb 6 Mustique Blues Fest, Mustique. tel: (784) 488-8407
24 – 27 Bequia Mount Gay Music Fest, Bequia. ***See ad on page 13***
25 – 27 The Superyacht Challenge, Antigua. http://thesuperyachtchallenge.com
25 Public holiday in Aruba (GF Croes Day)
26 Public holiday in the Dominican Republic (Duarte's Day celebrated)
27 FULL MOON
28 Public holiday in the Cayman Islands (National Heroes' Day celebrated)
31 – Feb 5 Grenada Sailing Week Camper & Nicholsons Race Series, Grenada. *www.grenadasailingweek.com*

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

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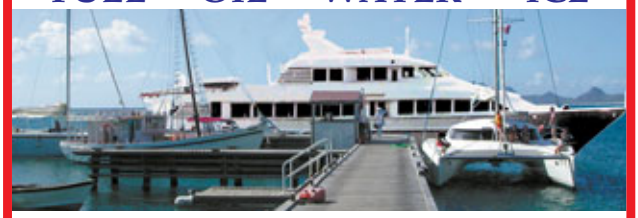
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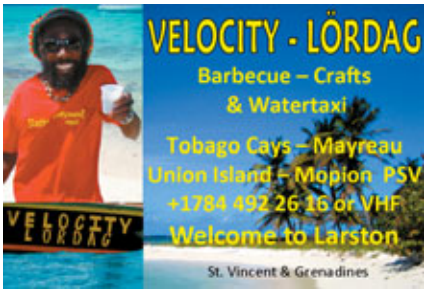
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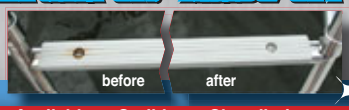
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