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COMPASS
DECEMBER 2019 NO. 291
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



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DECEMBER 2019 • NUMBER 291



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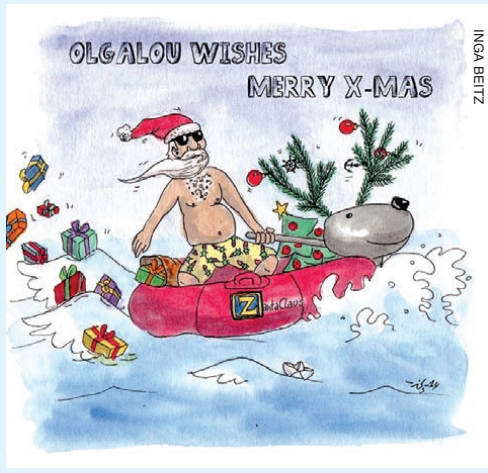


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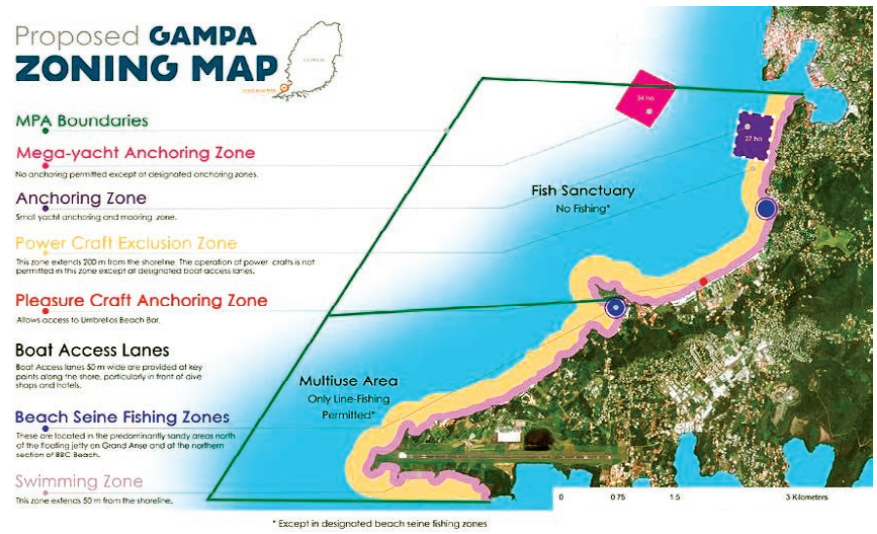
On the cover: If you haven't rung in a New Year in the Caribbean yet, you're in for a treat. There are festive parties across the Caribbean on New Year's Eve, better known as Old Year's Night. Fireworks in Bequia photo by Wilfred Dederer.



Info & Updates

Buoys Mark Grenada No Fishing Zone

Cruisers in Grenada report that in mid-October several white spar buoys with red stripes around the tops were laid around the Pandy Beach area, just south of St.



George's. These buoys delineate the new Grand Anse Marine Protected Area's (GAMPA) "fish sanctuary" zone, meant to protect fish stocks and enhance snorkeling and diving.

The yacht anchorage limits remain the same. The northern anchorage limit is the line defined by the range lights/boards on Pandy Mountain (132°T). The limit in the south is a line straight west from Falledge Point. The Port Authority is reportedly considering putting some buoys out to show these limits.

The entire Marine Protected Area stretches from the entrance of Port Louis Marina in the north to the southernmost point of Point Salines, and includes the island's most iconic and populated beach at Grand Anse. It includes zones for recreation and diving, such as the famous *Bianca C* shipwreck, as well as designated zones for yacht anchorage and priority fishing areas. Grand Anse was identified as a critical site for protection due to the large amount of recreational and economic activities in the area, the possibility for conflicts between resource users, and the impacts such uses can have on the environment.

Resource for Missing-Boat Searches

Glenn Tuttle reports: Boatwatch.org, formerly known as International Boat Watch Network, was established in 2001 as a public service to the maritime community. It now has new ownership and managers. My wife Eddie and I accepted the responsibility in July and have been busy with a new and updated website (http://boatwatch.org) as well as an accompanying Facebook group called Boat Watch. We will continue the operation and management of the organization, serving as a conduit between the family and friends of overdue and missing cruisers and the many governmental agencies responsible for search-and-rescue operations throughout the world.

The new website makes it easy for you, your family members or friends to file a report to Boat Watch regarding a missing, overdue or stolen boat, or other urgent message. We will then make contact and try to help you, your family or friends. Many times it is cruisers rescuing others, assisting authorities or relaying the lookouts that lead to a good result. Of course, notifying your local rescue authorities is the first course of action. The website's resources page contains links to rescue centers worldwide, float plans, safety courses and radio nets.

Boatwatch.org is supported by the Seven Seas Cruising Organization's HF Radio Service KPK, which broadcasts daily on SSB radio frequency 8.104 at 0715 hours EST or 0815 EDT (1215 hours UTC). Boatwatch.org is a partner of the Caribbean Safety and Security Net, helping keep cruisers advised of crimes against yachts throughout the Caribbean.

Radio Station KPK effectively covers the area from Nova Scotia to South America, and out to Europe and is available daily to assist any cruiser with our land-based resources, such as radio checks, phone patches to medical or mechanical professionals, or whatever we can do to assist vessels in remote locations.

Check Boatwatch.org for current watches, unresolved cases, resolved cases, resources, float plans, and interesting stories of actual rescues, as well as what you can do to be a well-prepared and educated cruiser.

If you have a rescue story or news regarding safety at sea, we would be glad to post it on our website. We also have an easy-to-use form for filing a report of a missing or overdue vessel.

See related article on page 7.

Eight Bells

PAT LINDSAY 1936 - 2019

Nicola Down reports: World business traveller, alternative lifestyle cruiser, and charter yacht chef Pat Lindsay passed away recently in Northampton, England, after suffering a major brain haemorrhage a year ago.

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Pat and her husband, Michael, crossed "the pond" in 1983 in their 26-foot Illingworth and Primrose JOG sloop, *Chablis*. Dismasted some 300 miles east of Barbados, they limped into Prickly Bay, Grenada, just as the US forces were leaving after the intervention.

A chance encounter with "a man with a green beer bottle in his hand" resulted in Don Street advising and helping in the repair of the mast, turning *Chablis* into a cutter rig. Trial sails to and back from Venezuela proved the rig's strength.



Moving north to St. Vincent, a year was spent happily running the bar and restaurant at the Wallilabou Bay Batik enterprise, with steel bands twice a week and lots of great times.

On to St. Lucia, working with Ted Bull and Narendra Sethia at Tradewinds Charters, then located at the bottom of the lagoon in Rodney Bay, crewing on their bigger charter yachts to and from Martinique or beyond.

Wanderlust then took *Chablis* far north up to the Carolinas; she was sold in Charleston. Pat and Mike found a new project when they acquired *Hedoness*, a 50-foot Young Sun cutter. They returned to St. Lucia, and again with Tradewinds embarked on term charters.

Within a couple of years, *Hedoness* was invited to join the Antigua-based Nicholson Yacht Charter fleet. Then followed some 12 years of Windward Island chartering, based in St. Lucia, St. Vincent and, latterly, Bequia until 2004.

Pat leaves many friends in many countries and islands, having sailed extensively over 27 years in the Med, North and South Americas and the Caribbean Basin.

RIP, Pat Lindsay.

Don Street Wins Spirit of Classic Dragon Class Trophy

At the 90th Anniversary Regatta for Dragon class sailboats held recently in Italy, Caribbean cruising guide author and chartmaker Don Street won the Spirit of Classic Dragons trophy. It is awarded by a vote of all the skippers of Classic Dragons to the skipper they feel best exemplifies seamanship, sportsmanship and the spirit of the Classic Dragons that raced in the regatta.

At age 89, Don was the oldest skipper in the event, and his Dragon, *Gypsy*, at age 86, is the oldest Dragon in the world that regularly races, One of Gypsy's regular



crew, age 16, was the youngest sailor in the regatta. Don says, "From the time I purchased *Gypsy* 34 years ago, she has always raced with junior crews."

At the prizegiving, Don received the trophy given in the 75th Dragon Anniversary Regatta, in St Tropez.

Don tells *Compass*, "I intend to sail *Gypsy* in the 100th Dragon Anniversary Regatta. At my age you must have a goal to keep going!"

Frigate Rock Assailants Convicted

Shock waves reverberated through the Caribbean yachting community several years ago when cruisers Christina Curtin and Mark Beiser were attacked by a machete-wielding assailant aboard their yacht, *Rainbow*, anchored off Frigate Rock, Union Island, on October 3rd, 2013.

—*Continued on next page*



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Six years later, on October 25th, 2019, a nine-member jury at the High Court of St. Vincent & the Grenadines found both Enard Douglas and Jeromie Jordan of Union Island guilty of aggravated burglary, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm. The long delay in the case coming to trial was not unusual in SVG; a backlog results from the facts that SVG has only one High Court judge and the Criminal Assizes are not held year-round.

Although evidence presented in court indicated that Douglas was directly responsible for wounding the American couple, he and Jordan were tried jointly. The two young men, who were 15 and 16 years old respectively at the time of the assault, are due to be sentenced as this issue of *Compass* goes to press.

We'll have a report in next month's *Compass*.

Ring in 2020, Caribbean Style!

If you haven't rung in a New Year in the Caribbean yet, you're in for a treat. There are festive parties across the Caribbean on New Year's Eve, better known as Old Year's Night.

Restaurants and bars across the spectrum — from ritzy resorts to ramshackle rum shops — hold Old Year's celebrations. Get a bite to eat, do bit of barhopping, and then join a party to enjoy the fireworks and dance the night away in the open air.

The Barbados Cruising Club at Carlisle Bay throws an Old Year's Night party each year, and Foxy's annual party on December 31st on Jost Van Dyke in the BVI is legendary. Bequia is popular with sailors for an Old Year's pub-crawl along the waterfront, followed by first-rate fireworks launched off a barge in the harbor. You can even get in some yacht racing with the Nelson's Pursuit Race in Antigua, held every December 31st, with plenty of partying after. December 31st is a public "Year End Celebration" holiday in Cuba, too.

Virtually every major town has fireworks. Notable shows regularly occur in Trellis Bay, Tortola; Admiralty Bay, Bequia; Clifton, Union Island and Kralendijk, Bonaire. Note that Fort-de-France, Martinique, customarily holds their fireworks on December 30th, not the 31st, so you can catch the show there and then boogie to another island for Round Two the next night.

After a night of partying, many folks head to a beach to watch the sunrise.

New Year's Day is commonly called Recovery Day, a popular day for a beach "lime" (hang-out) or a lazy picnic brunch. If you're still in the mood to celebrate, there are Junkanoo parades in the Bahamas, the annual Festival Parade in Montserrat, and "Sugar Mas" carnival in St. Kitts.

Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction

Suzanne Gabriel reports: 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 2020 auction will be held at The Fig Tree restaurant on the waterfront, at the end of the walkway in Belmont, on Sunday, February 9th.

Viewing starts at 12:00 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, jewellery and other new or gently used items. Donations can be dropped off at the school during regular school hours or at Dockside Marine, next to the Porthole Restaurant in Port Elizabeth. If you are unable to donate, attend the auction itself and bid for that rare gem that you just can't resist!

For more information visit www.bequiasunshineschool.org or call Suzanne at (784) 528-7444.

Broadway to Bequia Theater Festival

John Burstein reports: If you love theater, sail in to Bequia right after New Year's to see three great shows performed by a troupe of highly skilled, top-quality actors from New York, Boston and London. The Broadway to Bequia Theater Festival takes place January 8th through 14th, 2020. All shows are at 6:45PM.

"Love Letters" by AJ Gurney — a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for drama — will be performed on January 8th and 9th. "A rare work whose emotional richness offers a full-bodied theatrical experience." — *Hollywood*



See "The Big Bang" by Jed Feuer and Boyd Graham on January 10th and 11th. It's the entire history of civilization in 90 minutes. "The zaniest, most wacky and nonstop hilarious play I've seen in years — no decades." — *CT Theater Review*

The festival finale is "Bakersfield Mist" by Stephen Sachs on January 13th and 14th. A Critic's Choice in the *Los Angeles Times*, it has been called "deeply moving" by the *Chicago Tribune* and "stunning" by *Broadway World*.

For more information visit BroadwaytoBequia.com or call (784) 458-3210.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome new advertiser Helix Anchors hurricane mooring installations of the USA, on page 31. Good to have you with us!



YACHTS' SSB RADIO STATION, CRUISERS' CRIME DATABASE AND OVERDUE VESSEL NETWORK JOIN FORCES

The Seven Seas Cruising Association's high-frequency radio service, KPK, has teamed with the Caribbean Safety & Security Net and Boatwatch.org to benefit all cruisers.

When Glenn Tuttle was asked to join the Board of Directors of the Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) in 2015, he thought, "How could I combine my passions — cruising and radio communications — and serve SSCA?" He realized that he could make useful contributions to the organization and the cruising community by promoting the use of radio communications among cruisers.

A full-time liveaboard for over 30 years, who has cruised ten years in remote areas of the southern and southwestern Caribbean, spending months at a time at anchor without cellular or internet access, Glenn realized the importance of the HF/SSB radio aboard cruising vessels. Although a satellite phone is a great resource, and he and his wife, Eddie, used an Iridium phone during their cruising in the Caribbean, it is not a replacement for an HF/SSB radio.

Glenn suggested to the SSCA Board that they establish an SSCA Voice Service (not a formal net) on the HF radio band to assist cruisers in remote locations who were without cellular and internet access, in order to relay priority and emergency information and to provide assistance with additional resources. The assistance could include radio checks, float plans, telephone contact with family or friends, boat-to-boat relays, access to medical or mechanical professionals, internet searches, or other help that he might be able to provide. All vessels would be welcome to participate in this service provided by the SSCA.

However, to reach the far corners of the Caribbean, a land-based radio and antenna system was needed. Such a station, operating on the marine bands from a land station in the US, requires a Private Coast License from the Federal Communication Commission. The SSCA, with help from then president Scott Berg, obtained such a license, and is now authorized to operate under the call sign "KPK" from Glenn's residence in Florida. Glenn has erected a 70-foot tower with a rotatable directional beam antenna tuned for the 8 and 12 MHz marine bands, which effectively reaches the entire Caribbean and beyond.

Through a partnership with the Caribbean Safety & Security Net (CSSN), any report of a yacht-related safety or security nature occurring in the Caribbean made to the SSCA HF Radio Net will be provided to the CSSN. Likewise, any recent incident posted on the CSSN website will be announced during the daily morning radio broadcast.

The CSSN primary mission is the collection and dissemination of accurate information relating to crimes against yachts in the Caribbean, enabling cruisers to make intelligent decisions about how and where they cruise.

For decades bluewater cruisers have relied on HF radio, both on the amateur and marine bands, for sea-safety services. One of these services has been the International Boat Watch Network (IBWN), which was founded by amateur radio operator Michael Pilgrim (K5MP) in 2001 as a public service and tool for the maritime community to share information regarding overdue and missing vessels throughout the world.

In 2007, Shipcom LLC, owned by Rene Steigler (K4EDX) took over management of the network. Steigler managed the IBWN until his death in 2018. Steigler was a member of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary and net manager of the Maritime Mobile Service Network, which continues to operate on the ham frequency of 14.300 MHz.

Upon Stiegler's passing, ham operator Bobby Graves (KB5HAV), net manager of the Hurricane Watch Net, recognizing the value of the IBWN, took over its ownership and management. Graves has been managing the organization very effectively but has found his primary interest in the Hurricane Watch Net has been taking a large portion of his volunteer time, and there are only so many hours in the day.

Therefore, Graves contacted Glenn and Eddie Tuttle, to see if they were interested in assuming the IBWN's ownership and management. The answer was an enthusiastic "yes" inasmuch as KPK also focuses on overdue and missing boats, primarily in the Caribbean.

Since July 2019, the Tuttles have owned and managed the IBWN, serving as a conduit between the family and friends of overdue and missing cruisers and the many governmental agencies responsible for Search and Rescue Operations throughout the world. They work directly with family members and friends of missing cruisers to assist in their interaction with government officials if needed. Recently launched are a new website, www.Boatwatch.org, as well as a new Facebook Group called Boat Watch.

The SSCA HF Radio Net operates daily at 1215 hours UTC (0815 Eastern Standard Time and 0715 hours Eastern Daylight-Saving Time) on Single Sideband frequency 8.104. The purpose of this service is to pass emergency and priority traffic, as well as traffic related to safety and security.

The net also provides current news updates of interest to cruisers from such sources as the CSSN, Noonsite, the Salty Southeast Cruisers Net, *Caribbean Compass* magazine, Bahamas Chatter and others. It is also always ready to provide any vessels needing assistance with land-based resources.

During periods of transatlantic migration, KPK also operates the SSCA Trans-Atlantic Cruisers Net. This net serves to keep transatlantic cruisers connected and take position reports for vessels that have filed float plans with KPK. The net operates in conjunction with Dick Giddings' (KNC) Doo Dah Net, which is on the air daily at 2100 hours UTC (1700 Eastern Time) on frequency 8.152. After about 15 minutes it switches up to frequency 12.350 to reach vessels in Europe, depending on HF propagation. All vessels are welcome to join this net. However, for the net operators to take position reports and track your progress as you make the passage, they require a float plan be submitted, and that you have both SSB and satellite communications capabilities aboard. Float plans may be submitted to KPK@ssca.org.

In summary, the SSCA HF Radio Service, the CSSN, and Boatwatch.org work in harmony to provide a valuable service to the cruising community. It's all about cruisers helping cruisers.

How you can help the cruising community (without spending a penny or getting out of your chair):

Help Boatwatch.org get recognized by internet search engines by going to Boatwatch.org and spending about five minutes navigating around the website. That action on your part will help Boatwatch.org become a recognized entity on the internet when someone searches for help finding a stolen, missing or overdue boat.



BUSINESS BRIEFS

Budget Marine Provides Hands-on Training

On October 15th and 16th, Budget Marine hosted the students of the Kidz at Sea Foundation's Zero to Hero Program. They participated in courses on boat maintenance to better understand the specifics of key products used in the industry. Through the existing partnership between Budget Marine and the Kidz at Sea Foundation, these students followed four different training sessions: Epoxy and



Polyester Resin, given by Jeff Hargrove and Linda Munson from Clear Cote; Topcoats, taught by David Fix from Interlux/AWLGrip; and Basic Electronics, given by Menno Ligterink and Rob Bessette, representing the brands Ancor, Marinco, and Mastervolt. In September, a workshop on varnish was provided by Alexander Zonjee, representing Epifanes.

The brand representatives were happy with the level of interest and participation from the students. According to Shaëeza Ramjiawan, who joined the Zero to Hero Program as a student in September, the training sessions proved extremely useful: "After following these workshops, I realized how many factors play a vital role in the construction and maintenance of a marine vessel. Painting and varnishing are not simple tasks and they require constant diligence and accuracy. The sessions were not only an eye-opener, but they offered great insight and references for future purposes." Upon completing the program, Shaëeza hopes to obtain her local captain's license to join the marine industry on St. Maarten.

The Kidz at Sea Foundation is appreciative of this hands-on training initiative offered by Budget Marine to enhance the Zero to Hero Program. This program was developed to help unemployed youth with little to no experience in the marine industry find a career path in vibrant St. Maarten. It was created in the aftermath of the 2017 hurricane season, when youth unemployment skyrocketed. It is financed by various local and international sponsors, including the Nationaal Rampenfonds and with the support of local companies such as Budget Marine.

Visit www.facebook.com/pages/category/Education/Kidz-At-Sea for more *information on Kidz at Sea.*

See ad on page 2 for more information on Budget Marine.

Sea Hawk Parent Acquires Flexdel and Aquagard Paints

New Nautical Coatings, Inc., parent company of Sea Hawk Paints, Blue Water Marine Paints, and Hawk Epoxy, announced the acquisition of the Flexdel and Aquagard brands of antifouling paints and primers from Flexabar Corporation. This establishes them as America's preeminent marine antifouling coatings company. Flexdel and Aquagard products provide hull coatings for the pleasure craft and commercial marine markets.

"The acquisition of the Flexdel and Aquagard brands as well-known, easy-to-apply antifouling paints will complement our existing Sea Hawk Paints premium position and Blue Water Marine Paints value-based position in the marine coatings market and provide New Nautical Coatings with an additional growth platform, while diversifying our offering to professional applicators and DIYers," said Erik Norrie, New Nautical Coatings' CEO.

The Flexdel product line includes Armor, BottomGard, and UltraGard antifouling paints. The Aquagard product line includes Aquagard water-based bottom paint, Alumi-Kote brushable and spray paint, Inflatable bottom coating, and transducer antifouling spray. The products are sold through marine distributors and resellers as well as to leading private-label partners in the marine service industry.

A trendsetter of marine bottom paints, New Nautical Coatings, Inc. was established in 1978 and is dedicated to bringing only the highest quality products and customer satisfaction to today's mariner. The business is family owned and operated with a commitment to excellence. It provides a wide array of application-specific marine coating products that include the Sea Hawk, Blue Water Marine, and Hawk Epoxy antifouling systems, primers, solvents, and resins.

For more information on Sea Hawk Paints see ad on page 7.

Check Out Curaçao Marine Now!

Curaçao Marine, covering 25,000-square-metres of mud-free terrain, is your one-stop technical marina and boatyard in the Lesser Antilles. In 2017, Curaçao Marine changed owners and the new management has been implementing improvements to benefit the yachting community. Marina expansion in 2020 will include new utility pedestals.



Unchanged benefits include the island's hurricane-safe location, making it a popular option for long and short-term storage; the yard's "entrepot" status, meaning an uninhabited boat can stay for an indefinite amount of time; and the island's "180-day-maximum-stay, with possibility to extend."

The main services offered are hauling and launching. The company boasts 20 years of experience with slipway towing of monohull and multihull yachts with a maximum beam of 31 feet, a LOA of 110 feet, and a weight of up to 60,000 kilos. And soon more! Curaçao Marine also offers short-term and long-term yacht storage: 260 yachts can be stored on hard compound grounds with tripod boat stands. Hurricane straps for extra support are available. The wet berths hold 40 yachts.

Spray painting is also offered in a fully equipped, enclosed, shaded, and air-conditioned spray-painting cabin that can fit objects up to 65 feet. It can be rented or operated by our specialized staff.

Other services include high-pressure washing, steaming, bottom sanding, painting, antifouling, osmosis treatment, fiberglass repairs, gel coating and polishing. Curaçao Marine also provides yacht agency and project management services.

Services by trusted and experienced subcontractors include engine repair and maintenance service, stainless steel and aluminum welding, woodshop and teak specialists, sail repairs, yacht rigging, safety and fire equipment installation.

Facilities for sailors include 24-hour security with 31 surveillance cameras; laundry service with pick up and drop off at reception; a new shuttle service to Immigration and Customs for a small fee; free daily shuttle bus service to a supermarket; onsite car rental; free WiFi at the docks and in the social entertainment area; freshwater connection and 110V, 220V, and 380V electricity connections.

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Curaçao Marine is centrally located, making it ideal for provisioning and exploring the island.

Due to a high number of returning customers and early bookings, it is recommended that you make your reservations as soon as possible, to save a spot during hurricane season.

See ad on page 30 for more information on Curaçao Marine.

New Business at Grenada Marine

12N Caribbean Yacht Specialists is the newest company to join the expanding list of service and amenity providers located at Grenada Marine. 12N is the premier marine refit repair and maintenance company on the island of Grenada, employing ABYC-certified technicians and utilizing these standards from the top of the mast to the bottom of the keel. The team makes every effort to enhance your understanding of your boat and the service options available.



In addition to having a proficient, technically skilled team, 12N believes that good communication and accountability are the keys to efficient operations and trusting relationships. Customers are invited to anchor or berth their vessels at the service docks in the tranquil harbor of St. David's, with a controlling depth of 17 feet. Have a chat with a project manager and relax at Laura's Bar and Restaurant with high-speed WiFi at Grenada Marine.

12N offers a full range of quality technical services that include bottom painting with your choice of paint, including Coppercoat; rigging services, full sails/canvas; mechanical service, repair, refit, repower and engine rebuilds; shaft, strut, and rudder replacement; electrical and refrigeration repair and installation; systems upgrades and installs; marine woodwork and custom carpentry; internal boat cleaning, boat checks and battery checks; hull and deck polishing and brightwork; resurfacing and painting; welding, fabrication, and machine shops; Hotvac system for hull curing and osmosis treatments; and a comprehensive composite and exotic materials fiberglass department with powder coating and electro-plating capabilities.

12N is also authorized agent for international brands such as: Raymarine, Volvo Penta, Flexofold Propellers, Yanmar, Northern Lights, Mastervolt, Dessalator, GMPCS, Dometic, Maspower, Cristec, Balmar. Sea Hawk, Perkins, ZF Transmissions, Navionics, and many more.

While the base of 12N's operations is Grenada Marine and they are officially contracted by Grenada Marine to provide all repair, refit, and maintenance work to boats requiring services in the boatyard, the company also services boats at other marinas and boatyards around the island. They are well equipped with a full-service mobile workshop and experienced technicians ready to deliver expert service and excellent customer care.

See ad on page 24 for more information on Grenada Marine.

Tri-Island Chocolate Opens First Chocolate Factory Café

Tri-Island Chocolate, Grenada's youngest chocolate company, opened the first-ever chocolate factory and café on bustling Lower Lucas Street in St. Georges on October 26th. Tri-Island Chocolate merges their chocolate factory operation with a "make your own chocolate bar" or "cocoa tea spice blend" experience and café. Visitors can enjoy a cold or warm beverage while making their very own chocolate bars or cocoa tea from a selection of ingredients.

The factory at the junction of Lower Lucas Street and HA Blaze Street offers three main components: a factory, a café, and chocolate/cocoa tea making experiences. The factory is the new home for Tri-Island Chocolate to produce their single-origin, dark milk and dark chocolate bars, along with new seasonal flavors. The experiences offered will teach visitors about Grenadian cocoa and the island's chocolate industry before proceeding into the factory, where they will make their own chocolate bar flavors. The café offers traditional coffee, tea, and cold beverages, along with a range of locally made pastries and cakes.

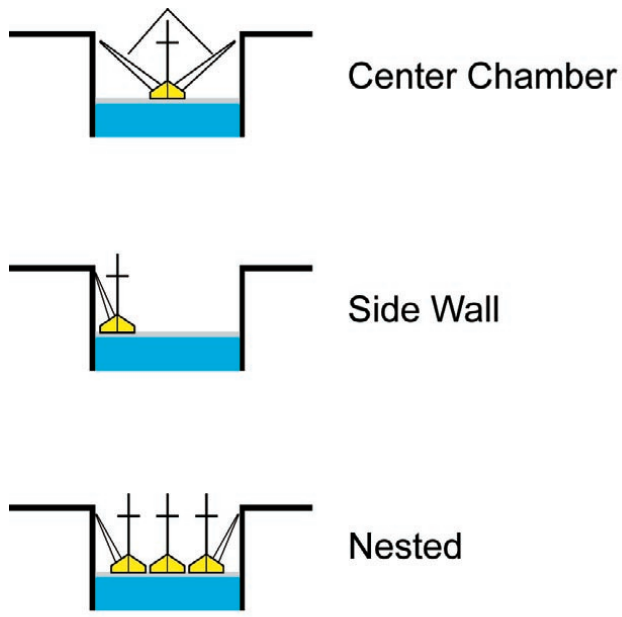
Tri-Island Chocolate has already been acknowledged on the international market after receiving a commendation in 2018 by the Academy of Chocolate for their 75-percent dark chocolate with bee pollen inclusion, made with beans from Crochu in St. Andrews.

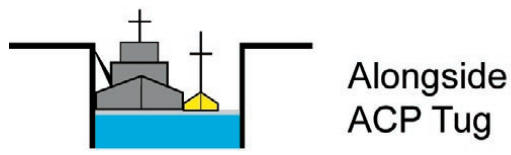
Aaron Sylvester and his brother inherited a small plot of land in Felix Park, Crochu, St. Andrew, from their grandparents Veronica and Fitzy Sylvester. Over a four-year period, Aaron has rehabilitated the farm, now offering a popular "Roots to Bar" experience, providing an authentic farm visit that includes insight into Rastafarian culture, beekeeping, and the importance of Ital food. In 2018, he launched three chocolate bars onto the Grenadian market. They are available at IGA Real Value and Maurice Bishop International Airport, among other outlets. Working in partnership with local farmers and families in his community, he has reached this stage through collaboration and consistent local support.

Visit www.triisland.com for more information.

Choose Your Canal Spot with Centenario

Erick Galvez reports: December's Christmas season rush is here, and everyone is looking for the best deals. Yacht sailors are on the move, beginning the new season with anticipation. And Centenario & Co. SA is here to give all sailors the best discounts on our service fee.





Remember, we are the experts on getting you through the Panama Canal as soon as possible and are the agency most sought-after by sailors. Check out our website's yacht section and contact us to find out about our promotion and what sailors are saying about us. Find us in Jimmy and Ivan Cornell's *World Voyage Planner*, too.

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See ad on page 35 for more information on Centenario.



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The Nature Conservancy

DEFEND Paradise

Caribbean ECO-News

Cuba's Shift to Climate Leader

As reported by Matt Reeder at www.dal.ca/news, Cuba has shifted away from the intensive, industrial-scale agricultural practices of the past towards a more sustainable approach to economic development. The island is currently one of only ten countries in the world with a constitution that mentions climate change. It is leading the way in sustainable fisheries management, and five of the world's 50 most climate-resilient coral reefs are located partially in its waters, a resource that will help future repopulation of coral damaged by climate change.

International experts on Cuba's climate and sustainability policies detailed these and other aspects of Cuba's sustainability shift during a panel at the Dalhousie University-hosted "Cuban Revolution at 60" conference last month. The symposium included a series of talks and panel sessions with Cuba scholars, policy makers and policy analysts.

"The whole of the Caribbean, including Cuba, is in a climate-change hot spot," said Julia Sagebien, an associate professor in Dalhousie's Faculty of Management and chair of the Climate Change, Envisioning the Future panel. Dr. Sagebien has worked with other academics, NGOs and experts in recent years to explore some of these issues as part of the Research Initiative for the Sustainable Development of Cuba. Forged a few years ago at a time of dialogue around low-carbon economies after the Paris Climate Accord, the initiative's mandate was to explore sustainable investment approaches and opportunities in the country. "It meant that Cuba didn't have to develop along 19th century models. It could leapfrog, the way people talk about technology and telephones. But it wasn't a consumption-level leapfrog, it was a production leapfrog — how things get grown, how buildings get built," said Dr. Sagebien.



WIKIPEDIA

The parrotfish eats algae and dead coral, keeping reefs clean and healthy.

Valerie Miller, senior manager of the Cuba Oceans team for the US-based non-profit Environmental Defense Fund, spoke about her organization's work with Cuba on building a network for a sustainable ocean through strong marine conservation collaboration. "[Cuba is] the most important island in the entire western hemisphere in terms of biological diversity," she said, noting the country's vast marine ecosystems — mangroves, seagrass beds and some of the best-preserved coral reefs in the Caribbean — and the hundreds of animal species and thousands of plant species found only in Cuba.

With strong environment policies, including an extensive network of protected areas that connect land and sea around the country, nearly 25 percent of coastal waters in Cuba are now under a certain level of protection.

Read the full story at www.dal.ca/news/2019/11/07/cuba-s-shift-from-sustainability-laggard-to-climate-leader.html

Parrotfish Hunting Banned in St. Vincent & the Grenadines

As of December 1st, a total ban will be placed on parrotfish harvesting in St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

The parrotfish eats algae and dead coral and spends up to 90 percent of its day nibbling, keeping reefs clean and healthy. When the fish eat the algae that compete with the coral polyps, the coral is able to grow and is more resilient in the face of local stressors such as pollution and warming. In many parts of the Caribbean, the overfishing of parrotfish and other grazers has resulted in reefs being smothered by algae and corals dying.

The excretion of a single parrot fish can produce up to 700 pounds of sand each year.

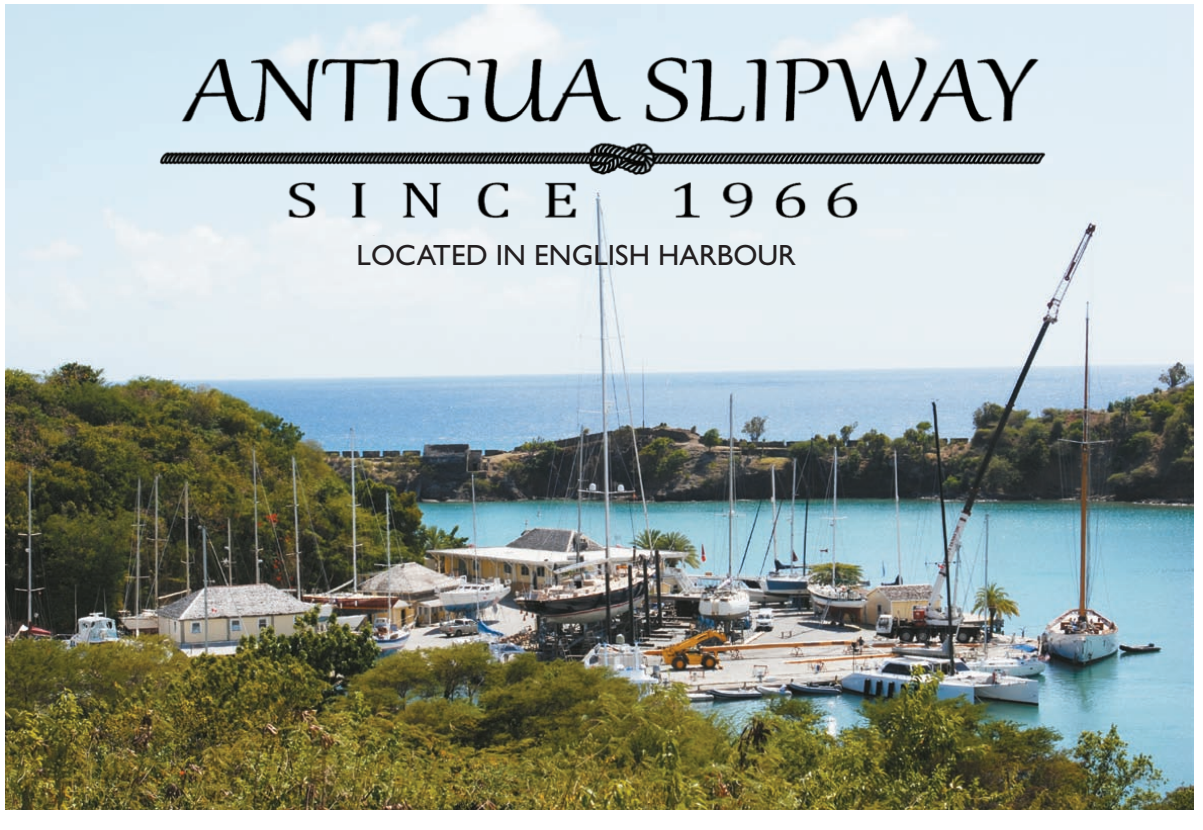
Hon. Saboto Caesar, SVG's Minister of Fisheries, commended stakeholders for their support and encouragement in protecting the parrotfish. SVG has also placed bans on the hunting of sea turtles and the practice of shark-fin fishing.

Bonaire Gives Hope for Coral Resilience

Recent research co-authored by the Environmental Defense Fund, the University of Maine and University of California Santa Barbara gives hope for coral reef ecosystems. The research shows how coral reef systems have been made more resilient in the Caribbean, and indicates that fisheries management has a strong role to play in fostering this resilience.

This research focused on Bonaire, which is lauded as having one of the healthiest coral reef systems in the Caribbean. Reef species here have proliferated even after significant environmental disturbances such as warming waters and coral disease. The research shows that smart fishing regulations and environmental protections contributed to Bonaire's reefs' almost unparalleled ability to recover from these disturbances. Several years ago, coral cover in Bonaire dropped by nearly 25 percent following damage from a hurricane and a coral bleaching event. However, after less than a decade, corals had recovered to pre-bleaching levels — something unique compared to other places in the Caribbean.

According to the report, one of the biggest factors for Bonaire's ecosystem resilience is the abundance of herbivorous fish, including parrotfish. In Bonaire, fishing regulations and protections have ensured an abundance of parrotfish. Often when a reef experiences a disturbance, harmful algae displaces and outcompetes coral. Coral recovery in Bonaire occurred following hurricanes and bleaching events in part because herbivorous fish including parrotfish kept harmful algae in check.



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REGATTA NEWS

Sunfish World Championships Held in Bonaire

Bonaire, famous for its strong and consistent tradewinds, left racers short during the Sunfish World Championships held from September 14th through 25th. Although officials had to amend the rules to meet the upwind/downwind requirements of the course, all races were completed.





David Misael Hernandez from Guatemala took the overall trophy, winning a tie-breaker to beat the Peruvian Renzo Sanguinti, who placed second. Alonso Collantes, a two-time Sunfish World Champion from Peru, ended up in third place. Chinese sailor Nancy Huang Yineng received the Marco Polo Prize for having traveled farthest to participate.

In the week following the Open Championships, the Youth and Masters events took place. In the Masters, Alex Zimmermann from Peru took first place, with Sipke Stappert of Bonaire in second, followed by Jason Pigot from the USA in third. Others on the Bonaire team had notable finishes as well. Ton Nuijten, one of the main organizers, won the Grand Masters category and Ezra Buys topped the Apprentice Masters.

In the Youth competition, 18-year-old Simon Gomez Ortiz from Colombia finished first. Fernanda San Roman from Peru took second place and Diego Castro from Guatemala secured third. Fernanda Higueras, 15 years old and also from Peru, was the youngest competitor in the Worlds Open competition. At 14, Jeaneau Thode from Bonaire was the youngest participant at the regatta.

Laser Performance and regatta sponsor Maclaren brought 72 brand-new boats to Bonaire to make the event fair for all. Smart Design Bonaire provided sail graphics and shirts sponsored by Budget Marine and Marlow Ropes. The boats proudly displayed the Blue Destination logo, to remind sailors and their supporters of the importance of the environment. Stream to Sea sunscreens and lotions were supplied to all sailors by Oduber Agencies. These products do not contain oxybenzone, which is harmful to coral.

Visit sunfishworlds.org for full results.

CSA Conference Ends with Closer Collaboration

Alison Sly-Adams, President of the Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA), sums up the annual CSA Conference, which ended on October 20th at the Antigua Yacht Club in Falmouth Harbour: "The conference enabled all the island regatta organizers who came here to represent their events, to examine, learn, and agree on issues to support collaboration of the 16 key regattas that make up the Caribbean calendar. We are cooperating on marketing, we explored more options in terms of race management, and we examined the importance of sailing development."

The CSA Conference was one of several elements of Caribbean Sailing Week, a new-format event that also included a three-day race management clinic and the Caribbean Dinghy Championships.

The representatives agreed that fundamental to the forward momentum of regattas is grassroots participation, particularly of the next generation of local sailors, and that a greater gender balance in sailing needs to be encouraged. Antigua Sailing Week's initiative to put young sailors aged 13 to 24 onto competing boats, and the availability of coaching programs for clubs, firmly place young participation on the agenda.

The marketing program was designed to attract entries from overseas and the regatta management session focused on ensuring that the CSA is ready for the future. "We are successful at sharing as an island region and we can boast the success of our yacht rating system. We need to focus on supporting the smaller territories to develop their involvement and capabilities," Vice President Robbie Ferron said.

"Our regattas happen in the winter/spring, allowing us to 'own' that period on the international calendar. The work of the CSA in coordinating our calendar and promoting the region is key," past president Peter Holmberg stated. Sasha van der Wouden presented the newest regatta on the circuit, the Caribbean Foiling Championships in St. Maarten.

Eight measurers convened during the week. Bastien Pouthier led the team, which has worked hard to reach the milestone of presenting the 2020 Rule.

Paige Myatt looked at sustainability and the role the regatta community must play in supporting long-term ecological balance. Steps already taken include well-signed recycling bins, the banning of plastic straws and styrofoam, and making biodegradable products like coffee cups and garbage bags available to competitors.

Presentations about the achievements of Antigua's Sailing Academy in bringing children into sailing free of charge, and the Sailability scheme and facilities for "differently abled" sailors, were also well received.

Alison concluded, "For our sport to survive and thrive, we have to hand it on to the next generation. This means involving them in the development process now, teaching them in a relevant way, encouraging participation, debate, and input. We have to be adaptable and restructure to ensure sustainability of our clubs, organizations, and regattas."

Visit www.caribbean-sailing.com for more information.

Caribbean Dinghy Championships 2019

The Caribbean Dinghy Championships (CDC) were held from October 17th through 20th in Falmouth Harbour, Antigua. With 15 races finished in a variety of conditions, competitors completed three sunny days of racing, proving that October is a great month for dinghy racing.

Four classes were represented: Optimist (for youths under 16), Laser Standard, Laser Radial, and RS Feva. The organizing Antigua Yacht Club welcomed crews from St. Maarten, Trinidad, Barbados, and St. Kitts & Nevis.

"It feels good to win this," sums up Jules Mitchell, who took first place in the Laser Standard class. Jules took ten wins out of the 15 races.

Mauriceson Valentine and his crew Nahio James, both Antigua sailors, not only won the RS Feva class, but also took the title of Caribbean Regional RS Feva Champions. "The light winds were a challenge in the beginning, but on the final day it was windier and that's better for us. Boat handling is our strong point as we both keep pretty fit," said Mauriceson.

—*Continued on next page*



Jules Mitchell, winner of the Laser Standard class



—Continued from previous page

"We've been learning as we go along. We only started sailing together four weeks ago and it was the first time we sailed in an RS Feva," Nahio added.

Hard training helped Daniel Smit to his win in the Laser Radial class. "I sail the boat four times a week here in Antigua, so I was well prepared," he said. Ten wins secured his triumph over runner-up Amy Cox from Barbados. Daniel has been to the Laser Radial Worlds in Poland and Texas and is heading next to the World Cup Series. "Ultimately, I would like to qualify for the Olympics," said the 17-year-old.

Perhaps the greatest victory of the series belonged to Ozani Lafond. Age 15 and also from Antigua, Ozani took first in all but four of the 15 races in the Optimist fleet. Patrick Greensmith, 11, from Antigua, and Kayman Floyd, 10, from St. Kitts & Nevis, put in strong performances, but were unable to catch Ozani.

Short, snappy windward-leeward courses were the regatta format in the sheltered setting of Falmouth Harbour. Race committee chair Clare Cupples and her team, along with Antigua Yacht Club's Steve Spanis, were on the water setting courses in sometimes tricky conditions, while racing manager Karl James helped put the event together.

The Caribbean Dinghy Championships will be back the same time next year. *Visit www.caribbean-sailing.com for more information.*

October Racing in the British Virgin Islands

The 29th Willy T Race and Virgin's Cup took place on October 19th in the BVI with 14 boats racing from Nanny Cay to the *Willy T* via the Hog Valley Green marker buoy off Road Town, Tortola, across the Sir Frances Drake Channel, between Norman and Peter Island, down to Pelican and the Indians, and onwards to the Bight. Four dinghies took a more direct route.



Twelve-year-old Victoria Rowlette drove a Corsair 27 to the overall win in Multihull class.

There were two dinghy classes, the Laser 4.7 and RS Feva. Samuel Allen and Max Reshetiloff duked it out in the Laser 4.7, with Allen taking a commanding lead to the Indians. Reshetiloff made a comeback in the final leg, but not enough to take the win from Allen.

In the RSFeva class, nine-year-old Darcy Lilleyman and her dad, Tom, showed off the skills she learned in the RBVIYC after-school program to finish first. Up against them were Julia Campbell and Dave Allen, who were forced to retire after taking on water.

There were five entries in the cruising class, all but one with lady helms. Sharon Barber steered *Wicked Winch*, a Hunter 30.2, to the overall victory. In second place was *Odyssey*, a Beneteau 44.7 helmed by Lisa Sutherland-Pilch. Barbara Bailey, on her Hughes 38, *Second Nature*, claimed third.

Three boats in the racing division had a close battle, but the IC24 *ElAmanda*, helmed by Amanda Plaxton and Leslie Cramer, clinched the win. In second place was Dee Bowden with *Firewater*, a Melges 24. Sam Brown at the helm of *The Black Pig*, a Tartan 10, arrived in third.

In the multihull division, the Corsair 750 *Lucky 7*, with Linda Phillips at the helm, got off to a flying start, but rudder failure halfway around the course forced her to retire. This left Victoria Rowlette, driving the Corsair 27 *Whoop Whoop*, with a clean shot. A fantastic performance from 12-year-old Rowlette saw her take the overall win in the multihull class.

At a colorful prizegiving, hosted by *Willy T's* Ewan Anderson, thanks were given to the Race Committee and local supporters who donated prizes: *Willy T*, Captain Mulligan's, Village Cay Marina, and Nanny Cay Beach Bar. Special awards went to the oldest and youngest skippers, Barbara Bailey (91) and Darcy Lilleyman (9).

ON THE HORIZON

Silversands to Sponsor a GSW 2020 Race Day

Grenada Sailing Week has announced that the new Silversands Resort on Grand Anse Beach will be the Tuesday Race Day Sponsor for the eighth edition of this week-long event, starting on January 26th.

For the first three race days, Silversands guests will have a great view of the races as they take place off Grand Anse Beach with tactical racing in the windward-leeward courses.

If you have not yet signed up to race, there is still time to register online for Grenada Sailing Week 2020 at https://yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=9522. With fabulous racing conditions and incredible hospitality, Grenada is waiting to welcome you.

For more information on Grenada Sailing Week see ad on page 12.

Caribbean Multihull Challenge Specials in St. Maarten

The organizers of the second Annual Caribbean Multihull Challenge (CMC) have announced that the Yacht Club Port De Plaisance (YCPDP) has renewed its Level 1



Gold sponsorship of the CMC and will play a major role in the 2020 Challenge, which begins February 14th.

YCPDP offers CMC participants free dockage in the south basin of the marina for the three racing days. The Sint Maarten Yacht Club office will assign these free spaces to the first 20 fully paid entries. Later entries and dockage on other days will be charged at a reduced rate. For CMC-registered yachts wishing to stay at the marina for an extended period of time, a special contract rate is available. (Reduced rate dockage is on a space-available basis, so competitors wishing to take advantage of this offer are urged to act quickly.) In addition, free use of the on-premises Country Club & Spa will be included for all CMC multihulls while they are on the marina dock.

On the Friday evening, there will be a 6:30PM prizegiving and after-race party on the south basin terrace, co-hosted by repeating Gold Sponsor Mount Gay Rum. All competitors, friends, and family are invited.

—Continued on next page

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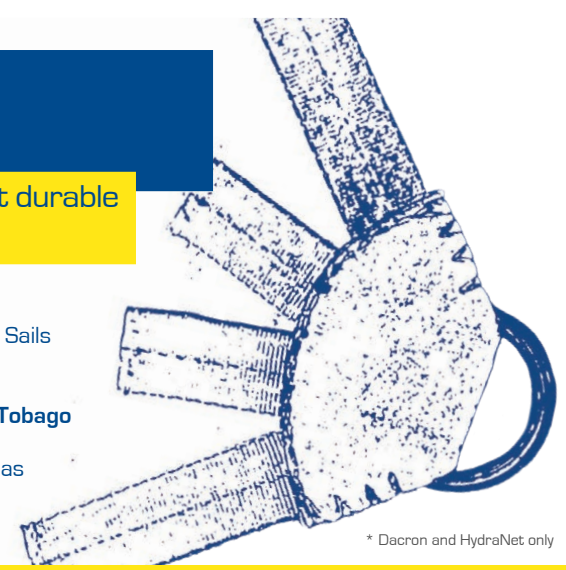
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The Sint Maarten Yacht Club will host the Caribbean Multihull Challenge from February 14th through 16th, 2020. The event is open to all multihull sailors on racing catamarans and trimarans, as well as chartered cats and cruising multis.

For more information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 44 and 45.

Antigua Classic in Early April

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta is the premier classic sailing event of the Caribbean, attracting a large number of classics every year from all around the world. In its 33rd edition in 2020, the event enjoys a wonderful variety of competitors including traditional craft from the islands; vintage, classic and historic ketches, sloops, schooners and yawls; Tall Ships and more newly-built Spirit of Tradition yachts; and the Dragon class.

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta 2020 will run from April 1st through 7th. All the races will start in Rendezvous Bay, directed from a committee boat.



TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

The 137-foot Herreshoff gaff schooner Elena of London *will again be joining the Antigua Classics.*

Registration and the welcome party will be held on April 1st. The 2nd will see the Concours d'Elégance and the Single-Handed Race, as well as the general skippers' briefing. Four race days follow, with the prizegiving on April 6th. The 7th is a wind-down with the Gig Racing and Cream Tea Party.

An updated schedule of events will be available at the AYCR registration desk.

For more information see ad on this page.

53rd Edition of Antigua Sailing Week in 2020

Antigua Sailing Week 2020 will start on April 26th and end on May 1st. The Peters & May Round Antigua Race on April 25th is the warm-up event.

The previous edition of ASW boasted entries from over 20 countries and Caribbean islands. More than 100 yachts in 12 classes gathered for a week of competitive racing and shoreside events in and around the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Nelson's Dockyard National Park.



PAUL WYETH / PWPICTURES.COM

The Ker 46 Lady Mariposa *was last year's CSA Class 2 winner.*

ASW attracts a wide variety of boats, including performance racing and cruising boats, multihulls, bareboats, race charter boats, small cruisers, and sport boats — there is competitive racing no matter what you ride.

—Continued on next page

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DEAN BARNES

One of the hottest classes in STIR 2020 will be the IC24s.

—Continued from previous page

Newly appointed Race Manager Jaime Torres says: "Fifty years of experience of hosting the world's premier racing yachts has cemented Antigua Sailing Week as a must-do event on the Caribbean sailing calendar.

This year, we are as inclusive as possible. Our refined Club class is specially designed to bring the podium experience to the cruising sailor who never expected to participate in such a high-level event. Club class is about who has the coldest beer, not the coolest gear!"

He went on to say, "So many in our racing fleet have black or dark grey sails. For 2020, we will be implementing a mandatory proof of sail number legibility, so boat managers, get on the ball with this."

With entry fees increasing at the end of the year, organizers suggest participants go for the savings and enter early.

Visit www.sailingweek.com for more information.

Act Now: St. Thomas International Regatta 2020

Carol Bareuther reports: Register now for the St. Thomas International Regatta (STIR), set for March 27th through 29th. It's the place to be to trade tacks and tactics with America's Cup, Volvo Ocean, and Olympic crews. Enter the Round the Rocks Race, a circumnavigation of the neighboring island of St. John, on March 26th for an extra day of competition.

STIR 2020 invites CSA racing, cruising, and bareboat classes, IRC, ORC, Multihull, Beach Cats, and One-Design classes with a minimum length of 20 feet. One of the hottest classes will be the One-Design. Over 20 IC24s are anticipated to be at the start line. The fleet of Hobie Waves is growing, too.

Bring your own boat or charter. Over half a dozen outfits are offering vessels to charter, either by the boat or as crew.

Register before January 31st at yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm and pay only US$150, or 50 percent off the regular entry fee.

Visit www.stthomasinternationalregatta.com for more information.

YOUTH SAILING NEWS

Antiguans Top Two SOL Regatta Fleets

The Sint Maarten Yacht Club hosted its 14th annual Sol St. Maarten Optimist Championship on November 9th and 10th. A total of 11 races were run in top sailing conditions of 15 knots plus.

The 31 participants included young sailors from St. Maarten/St. Martin, Antigua & Barbuda, St Kitts & Nevis, Curaçao, and St. Barth.

Ten Optimist sailors from the Antigua Yacht Club Junior Sailing Program led by Coach Karl James travelled to St. Maarten to test their skills. Antiguan sailors swept the top spots of both the Championship (Blue) fleet, and the Intermediate (Orange) fleet.

Ozani Lafond (age 14) claimed first place overall in the Championship fleet, dominating the field with 14 points overall and seven first place finishes, a third and a fourth. His teammates Shanoy Malone and Daniel Anglin took second and third respectively, with Alistair Knoblauch in seventh, Patrick Greensmith in eighth and Diego Ewinger in ninth.

Carrack Jones also had an outstanding regatta, taking first overall in the Intermediate fleet on the strength of eight firsts and a third, for a total of 11 points overall. His brother Tyden Jones placed second and Henry Greensmith took third. Emily Gaillard, the only girl on the Antigua team, claimed fourth, only one point behind third place.

This regatta is an AHO qualifier for the Optimist World Championships.

Visit yachtscoring.com for full results.

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THE ARC FLEETS ARRIVE THIS MONTH

Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, better known as the ARC, has been bringing a fleet of sailboats of all descriptions across the Atlantic from Las Palmas in the Canary Islands to the Eastern Caribbean every year since 1986. Crossing the Atlantic Ocean under sail is on a surprising number of people's "bucket lists," making the ARC the world's most popular yacht rally. The fact that the event has annually attracted over 200 boats and 1,200 people from all over the world since day one shows that the demand for "sailing in company" is ongoing.

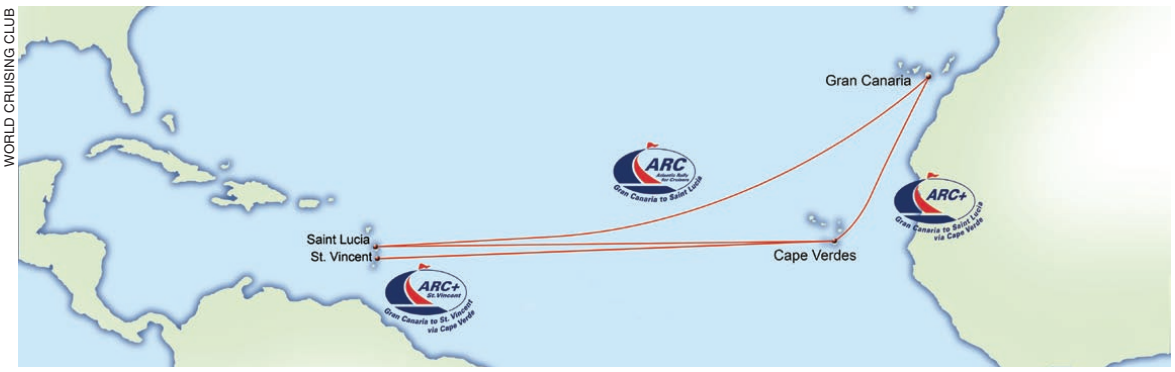
The first edition of the rally, which attracted 204 yachts from 24 nations, ended in Carlisle Bay, Barbados. The landfall was then moved to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia to utilize the marina services there. The St. Lucia Tourist Board and Tourism Authority have been strong supporters of the ARC ever since. Rodney Bay Marina houses a Customs and Immigration office, a bank, an Island Water World chandlery, a grocery store, restaurants, shops, and repair facilities. The fully stocked Johnson's Hardware, two shopping malls, numerous other restaurants, and beautiful Reduit Beach are within walking or dinghy distance.

JAMES MITCHELL



Above: ARC boats lined up in Las Palmas in 2018. This year's fleet is just as diverse.

WORLD CRUISING CLUB



Left: Three route options spread out pressure on the marinas at the start and finish, and offer participants more variety.

Owing to the increasing popularity of the event, over the years two alternatives have been added to the direct Las Palmas to Rodney Bay route (a distance of some 2,700 miles) to provide shorter legs, spread out the pressure on the marinas at the start and finish, and offer participants more variety. An itinerary offering a stop in the Cape Verde Islands before continuing on to St. Lucia was added in 2013, and the entry list for last year's new final destination of Blue Lagoon in St. Vincent also was quickly filled.

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As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, this year's total ARC entry list comprises 280 boats: 195 on the original direct route, 73 stopping the Cape Verdes en route to St. Lucia, and 22 finishing in St. Vincent after a Cape Verdes stop.

The ARC fleet is always diverse. Boats are sailing under the flags of 36 nations, with United Kingdom representing 30 percent of the entries, USA ten percent and Germany nine percent.



WORLD CRUISING CLUB / CLARE PENGELLY (2)

Above: Fourteen ARC+ boats will be sailing with children on board. They had opportunities like this beach party in Las Palmas to get to know each other before the start.

Right: Prior to the Atlantic crossing, ARC participants have a full program of workshops and seminars that includes practicing getting into a liferaft.

The smallest boat this year is the German-flagged Amel Fango *Falema* at 33 feet (ten metres), sailing with three crew on board. She is a pocket cruiser with saltwater in her veins and proof that you can cruise on a small, 30-year-old boat. *Falema* is one of 22 boats under 40 feet (12.2 metres) overall sailing the ARC direct route. Twelve percent of the boats in the ARC fleet are less than 40 feet long and half are between 40 and 50 feet (15.3 metres).

The largest ARC 2019 boat is *Ulisse*, a 105-foot (32-metre) luxury superyacht owned by sailing enthusiast and Prada CEO Patrizio Bartelli. She is entered in the Racing Division and crewed by a host of ex-America's Cup sailors. Twenty-three percent of the fleet is 50 to 60 feet (18.3m) and 15 percent is larger. The trend towards cruising with multihulls continues in this year's rally, with multis making up just under 20 percent of the fleet, similar to last year.

Nearly 70 different boat brands/builders are represented in the fleet this year, with the top five (in order) being Beneteau, Lagoon, Bavaria, Oyster and Jeanneau. A testament of their enduring cruising pedigree, the oldest boats in the fleet are both Swans, built in 1973: the Swan 48 *Montana*, and the Swan 65 *Vahine*. Twenty-two boats in the fleet were produced this year. Interestingly, multihulls make up nearly half of the new boats (those less than 18 months old).

Meanwhile, tried and true cruising designs are represented by *Neverland*, an Allied Princess long-keeled 36-foot ketch from 1976; *Escapade of Plymouth*, a 1977 Hallberg Rassy 41; and *Songster*, an Oyster 39 from 1979.

Before the start in Las Palmas, a full program of workshops and seminars offers practical and informative advice for the Atlantic crossing. Included are safety seminars, tips on weather routing and provisioning, and much more.

The 95-strong ARC+ fleet departed from Las Palmas on November 10th. Following a three- to five-day stopover in Mindelo, Cape Verde, 73 of the boats will sail to St.



Lucia, and 22 to St. Vincent. The ARC+ routes, with their shorter legs (850 and 2,150 nautical miles respectively), have proven especially popular with families. Fourteen ARC+ boats will be sailing with children on board, a total of 33 kids. The youngest participant will be Oisin Bee-Fenix, who will be just 19 months old at the start of the rally. He's one of seven children under the age of six taking part.

The direct Canaries to St. Lucia fleet will depart on November 24th, as this issue of *Compass* goes to press.

IGY Rodney Bay Marina in St. Lucia and Blue Lagoon Marina in St. Vincent are rolling out the welcome mats for the ARC and ARC+ 2019 arrivals. The finish line is ready and the ice for the welcome rum punch is in the freezer — now it's up to the boats to get here!

We'll have a full report in next month's Compass.

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Port Antonio, Jamaica

by Paul Sutcliffe

I was very excited to be headed back to Port Antonio, one of my favorite places in Jamaica. I'd sailed there the first time from Aruba in 2013, aboard my Elizabethan 31 sloop, *Sonic Boom*, and discovered that it was a beautiful laid-back coastal town with the spectacular Blue Mountains in the background.







WIKIPEDIA

DESTINATIONS

The town has a slightly run-down, "back in time" feel. It was once a British colonial naval base, and then in the late 19th century it was a banana exporting port. Now it is under special government protection from over-development. People didn't want Port Antonio to change, and it seems like it hasn't much.

While I had spent the previous month sailing east along Jamaica's north coast, hopping from bay to bay aboard, I'd been reading the wonderful novel *The Pirate's Daughter* by Margaret Cezair-Thompson, which captures Errol Flynn's life in Jamaica through the eyes of a local girl in a nation struggling with its own independence. I was now headed to Errol Flynn Marina, from where I would leave Jamaica to go to Haiti.

In 1946 Flynn was washed ashore in his luxury yacht *Zaca* by a storm near Port Antonio. A rich, handsome, womanizing movie star, he fell in love with the place and bought Navy Island, the small island in Port Antonio's harbor, although according to Flynn he won it in a rum-fuelled game of poker.

For Flynn, Jamaica was an escape from the pressures of Hollywood, where he was now a big star, and from the fallout from various incidents and scandals involving drink and women. He moved to Port Antonio in 1950, where he lived on *Zaca*, a classic 118-foot schooner built in 1930, moored off Navy Island.

Port Antonio is actually two harbors, East Harbor and West Harbor. The entrance is via East Harbor and then you pass Navy Island on the starboard side, following the markers into West Harbor. As I passed Navy Island and went through the channel to enter the quiet and calm harbor, I saw a huge classic yacht on the dock. It looked very similar to Flynn's yacht *Zaca*. In fact it was *S/V Germania*, a replica of a 1908 classic. Still, it added to the magic feeling of going back in time to the 1930s and Errol Flynn's glamorous life.

At the marina, there is a café next to a pool overlooking the harbor, a great place for lunch. A path leads from there to a beach. The marina is very "pirate" — there are old cannons and huge old anchors dotted around the grounds. It felt like being in a scene from one of Errol Flynn's films set in the age of galleons and pirates, films like *Captain Blood* and *In the Wake of the Bounty*. Although he always played the good guy in the movies, I think Flynn saw himself as a pirate. He claimed that his mother was descended from a mutineer on the *Bounty*, and that his ancestors were sailors.

Top left: We trekked through some rainforest and arrived at a large calm pool.

Above left: Germania *was in the harbor, just off Navy Island to the right. At 180 feet (60 feet longer than* Zaca*), she was for sale for US$8 million.*

Above right: Errol Flynn moved to Port Antonio in 1950, where he lived on Zaca*, a classic 118-foot schooner built in 1930.*

Right: A view of Port Antonio harbor from Errol Flynn Marina's restaurant.

Below: I think Flynn saw himself as a pirate.



In town, a few minutes walk from the marina, there's an excellent fruit and veg market, shops selling tasty Jamaican patties, and along the waterfront a terrific ice cream parlor. At night bars pump out reggae and rock steady. The local captain of a powerboat in the marina whom I'd made friends with took me to a nightclub where local DJs played mashed-up dance hall.

There are lots of interesting day trips from Port Antonio. You can go to coffee plantations high in the Blue Mountains, or travel just a few miles along the coast to Blue Lagoon. I went with a guide I'd met at the marina to Reich Waterfalls. A taxi took us through the countryside and up into the mountains. We trekked through some rainforest and arrived at a large calm pool. We jumped in and cooled off. There was a waterfall leading into another deep pool below us. We jumped into that pool, and swam to the edge where there was another waterfall, leading into another slightly smaller pool below. We did this five times, swimming through pools and jumping down waterfalls working our way back down the mountain where we met the taxi again and went back to Port Antonio.



Later I stocked up on supplies at the markets and did laundry back at the marina. The next day I cleared out with Customs and Immigration, who came to the marina. Eventually I headed out of Errol Flynn Marina and Port Antonio, and with a fair wind made for Haiti. I was sad to be leaving Jamaica.

My advice to cruisers is not to feel that Port Antonio is just a convenient port of entry, and be quickly on your way. It may well turn out to be one of your favorite places, too.

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PUERTO RICO TO ST. BARTH, ONE YEAR AFTER 'IRMARIA'

by Angelika Gruener

Angelos, our Colin Archer steel double-ender, was stationed in Curaçao for the summer season of 2018. I was very satisfied with the yard. Our family had already cruised the Windward Islands extensively, and since Curaçao is pretty much in the middle of the Caribbean I had the idea to sail to the north this time, and from there to the east to finally explore the Virgin Islands.

First stop was Bonaire. And after just three days the weather forecast announced a slightly southerly wind, so my son and I sailed off, first along the leeward side of Bonaire, which is quite pleasant. But that could change when reaching Bonaire's northern end if the wind began to blow on the nose. To where should we sail? Where the wind will blow us!

After four days we reached Ponce, on the south coast of Puerto Rico. From Bonaire to Puerto Rico we had a constant, mainly easterly wind of around 15 knots. In the middle of the passage the wind turned more from the south, and as we sailed farther north the wind shifted more from the southeast — it was no problem to reach Ponce. Basically it was an easy sail.

Puerto Rico

We are German, but thanks to our US visas there were no problems with clearing in, even if the procedure took a little longer — it took a whole day.

We soon discovered that hardly anyone spoke English; Puerto Rico's language is Spanish. And so is the culture. We enjoyed the Latin music, which reminded me of our stays in Venezuela. I would describe Puerto Rico as having typical Latin American casualness with a slight influence of US mainland. The streets of Ponce are clean, there is hardly any litter, the garbage bins are emptied daily early in the morning, the supermarkets are full, and the food prices are absolutely okay.

We had never been to this area of the Caribbean; it was a new territory to discover.



We rented a car for a week to explore the island. The damage from Hurricane Maria in the previous year was still significant. Wind turbines were completely disassembled. People told us "the hurricane took forever"; it seemed they were still traumatized. The island has beautiful sandy beaches that are not yet besieged by tourists. There were not many other sailors there in December 2018 — we were the eighth yacht to clear for the 2018-19 season. Most of the bays and anchorages were all ours, except for Salinas, which seems to be a good hurricane shelter. But even there, there had not been enough protection from Hurricane Maria.

On leaving Ponce on our eastward passage, fishing with the trolling line was outstanding. Luckily the annoying sargasso weed had not yet spread there.

We particularly liked the island of Vieques, which seems rarely visited by yachts. We enjoyed the lovely bays with long isolated beaches. North of Vieques is Culebra. This island has more tourists, but is still very quiet. With the public bus we went to the famous Flamenco Beach, and for a small entry fee we spent a whole day there.

From the island of Culebra, it is not far to the Virgin Islands, which are divided into two parts. The two western islands of St. Thomas and St. John belong to the USA, and the numerous further eastern ones are the British Virgin Islands.

The US Virgin Islands

The first shock we experienced was in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas — the anchorage was full of yachts! Most of their owners were there to work; many were engaged in the charter business. Charlotte Amalie is overloaded with cruise ships; jewelry and souvenir shops crowd the streets side by side. The difference with Puerto Rico felt huge to us: the town was dirty and dusty, and the dense traffic noise was annoying. The prices were also a shock. To moor in a marina cost the same as a good hotel room, but without breakfast. We found everything in the supermarket to be almost three times as expensive as in Puerto Rico, although both island groups belong to the USA. In addition, fishing for all foreigners over 18 years old is prohibited. Very funny: if you have children, then get them to fish!



Left: We enjoyed Puerto Rico's Latin American casualness.

Our lovely anchorage at Vieques.

St. John is almost completely a nature reserve, so it was a lot cleaner and quieter, but anchoring or taking a mooring buoy cost US$35 per night. When clearing out, we encountered a US Customs official who was unparalleled in our experience. We were treated as though we were invisible; she spoke only with her back turned to us.

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The British Virgins

We sailed the eight nautical miles to Jost van Dyke to check into the BVI. We were surprised to find the anchorage at this tiny island overcrowded. In retrospect, we know why so many yachts and charterboats were anchored there: one of the very few bars since the passage of the back-to-back Hurricanes Irma and Maria — collectively known as "Irmaria"* — had reopened there. The music was booming every day and cold beer was available, as well as internet and WhatsApp.

We visited several other islands, and tried to escape the bareboat fleet, partially succeeding. There are mooring buoys everywhere that can be picked up for an overnight stay fee of US$36. Fishing is generally prohibited to visitors, even children, in the BVI.



The Baths at Virgin Gorda, an attraction no hurricane could spoil.

Right: Jost van Dyke: music, cold beer and internet.

Another surprise — the largest number of yachts, including charterboats, we encountered in the BVI was in "remote" Anegada. In this allegedly difficult-to-access anchorage were at least a hundred yachts. At first I thought that a marina had opened here! The three functioning pubs attracted visitors because there was lobster on offer: a casual barefoot lobster dinner on the beach for US$55 per person! And to keep the charter passengers entertained there were scooters for rent at $35 for half a day. (Later in St. Martin we ate luxuriously for less than $10 at a small restaurant, and paid the same price as for a scooter for a car, for 24 hours.) But yes, the beaches are beautiful.

At our last stop in the BVI, the famous Gorda Sound, we were almost alone; the hurricanes had closed the party restaurants and bars. The buildings on the island in the middle of the Sound, formerly the meeting point of all charterers for the high life, were totally disassembled, but massive construction work was already in progress. Spanish Town on Virgin Gorda seemed completely out of breath. The only real highlight for us on Virgin Gorda was The Baths, which no hurricane could spoil.

So far everyone had always told us how great it is in the Virgins, so I always thought I had missed out on something. The world's largest charter fleets were stationed before the hurricanes; there must have been something. And of course if it were your first tropical sailing experience, it would be fantastic. But we couldn't find a special affection for this entire archipelago: the islands lie in east-west direction, which for us meant constantly motoring against the wind. On the other hand, the distances between anchorages are short and there is hardly any swell. We sailed for two months from Puerto Rico to the easternmost island of the Virgins without ever bringing the dinghy on board or taking the sun awning off the cockpit.

When we checked into the British Virgins we got a cruising permit for 30 days, and extension was only possible in Road Town on the island of Tortola for US$10 per passport. It was not difficult for us to leave after 20 days, especially since the weather was suitable. We had a fabulous sail from Virgin Gorda in 12 knots of easterly wind towards our next destination, Anguilla.

Anguilla

Here came the next surprise. Although clearing in is free, visiting bays other than the port of entry requires a cruising permit, which is issued per day but each day ends at midnight. So if you want to overnight in such a bay you have to have a permit for two days! For *Angelos*, this permit would have cost $55 per day, making $110 to overnight — on our own anchor. The beaches are nice, but we have visited many beautiful beaches.

St. Martin and St. Barth

It was an absolute blessing to reach the French side of St. Martin/St. Maarten. Here, clearing costs nothing, and you can visit all the bays without extra charge. Mooring buoys are also free of charge; even fishing is allowed. Here we felt free again. And since Hurricane Irma, the French had energetically begun to rebuild, so that not much could be seen of the damage. But some sunken yachts were still lying around in the lagoon.

Farther down the island chain we stopped in St. Barth, where hurricane damage was no longer present and the gardens abounded with flowers and colorful shrubs. The houses — villas, really — were feasts for the eyes, with much exquisite hardwood in evidence. Even the garden fences were made of high-quality woods. The buildings' facades were freshly painted, and all windows had specially fitted shutters to fully protect them in the event of a hurricane.

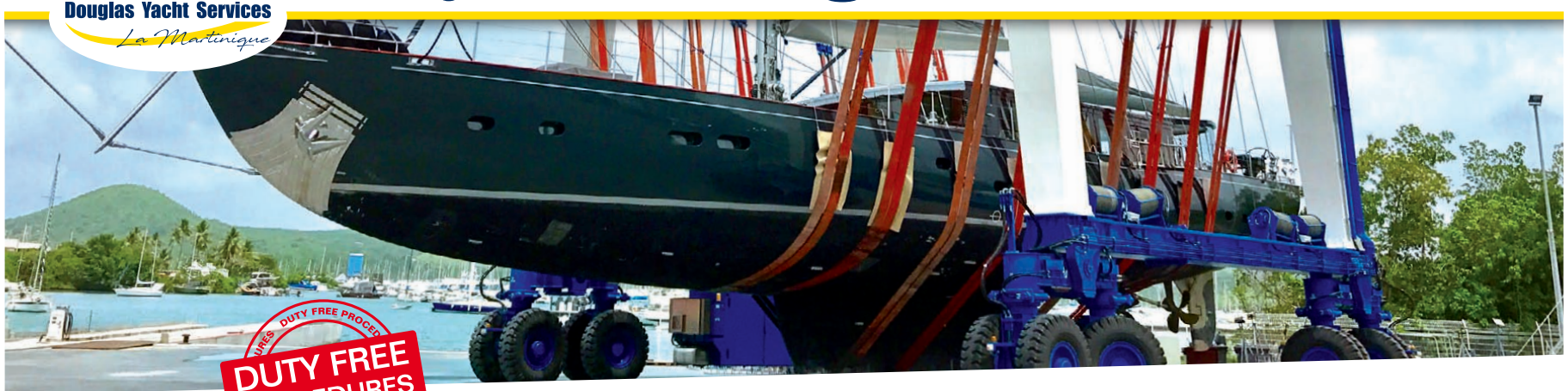


One year ago, we found the Virgin Islands still struggling with the aftermath of the 2017 "Irmaria" hurricanes. In contrast, there was lots of progress in St. Martin/St. Maarten, and everything was already back to normal in St. Barth.

For the summer of 2019, *Angelos* was stored in Trinidad, and as I write this we prepare for another season of Caribbean cruising. Where will the wind blow us, and what we will find on our island adventures this year?

** Hurricane Irma struck the British Virgin Islands as a Category 5 hurricane on September 6th, 2017. The eye traveled over Virgin Gorda, Tortola and Jost Van Dyke. Hurricane Maria was also a Category 5 hurricane. It struck Dominica, the US Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico on September 20th, 2017.*

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St. Maarten/ St. Martin is Back in Business

by Chris Morvan

When Hurricane Irma struck St. Maarten/St. Martin in September 2017 it devastated the island. And that, for some people, is that: the image persists of destruction and chaos. But in fact, the island rebounded very quickly.

Work began immediately to clear debris and rebuild. National initiatives were launched, with slogans such as SXM Strong and Building Back Better.

The insurance companies were swamped with claims and worked their way through them, with the result that, in some cases, deficiencies that had been there for years were addressed and standards were raised.

The immediate necessities — water, electricity, the phone systems and internet, were soon up and running and the island lost its air of shock and returned to something like normal.

In an odd way, the hurricane led to a boom in the local economy. Once the initial problem of a lack of vehicle parts and building materials had been overcome, the island's tradesmen had more work than they could ever have dreamed of.

Gradually the embattled motorist with his delicate, vulnerable car had a proper back window instead of a sheet of plastic, and vehicles started to look unexceptional again. Damage to cars, after all, looks a certain way: collisions are horizontal, and dents caused from above look puzzling if you don't know there was debris flying around due to the wicked velocity of a ferocious tropical storm.

Buildings were restored to normality, too, complete with roofs and windows. The popular choice for roofing — sheets of corrugated zinc — is notoriously susceptible to wind, prone to being peeled off like the aluminium foil protecting your barbecued chicken legs on a breezy beach.

It would be wrong to say everything here has been fixed. While you can walk around Simpson Bay and Philipsburg and notice nothing really amiss, the French side has been slower to rebuild and there are still areas, even in the heart of Marigot, where flattened reminders lurk.



The scene is serene at Phillipsburg.

Then there is the issue of security, which made some (deserved) headlines in the immediate aftermath of the storm. The local version of English uses "tiefin'" (thieving) rather than "stealing", and an opportunistic underclass emerged after Irma that justified its actions by proclaiming "lootin' ain't tiefin'". Damaged stores were emptied by these people, with the public powerless to stop them.

The local police were stretched to the limit, and the government of the Netherlands sent reinforcements to restore law and order.

Today the island is as safe as it was before Irma, which is to say you still have to be careful where you go, particularly after dark, but sadly that is true of many countries around the world. You don't go wandering down dark alleys in Philipsburg any more than you would in, say, parts of New York or London.

The good news for visitors is that there is less crime during the high season, perhaps because there is more work available to keep people occupied and solvent.

For the cruising community, the answer to the fundamental question of being able to moor safely in sheltered water is yes, you can. To sit at the Sint Maarten Yacht Club, next to the little Simpson Bay bridge, enjoying a coffee or a meal, is to watch the maritime world go by as people have done for years. The road traffic grinds to an impatient halt as the bridge is raised to allow everything from small craft to superyachts to enter or leave the lagoon. And the big boys are back, with their helicopter decks and gleaming hulls.

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The same cannot be said currently of the French bridge, which is out of action as long-overdue maintenance is carried out on the raising mechanism. The word is that it is expected to be functioning again by the end of the year.



Tranquil Porto Cupecoy.

In the meantime, of course, you can enter or leave the lagoon through the Dutch side.

And yes, there are still wrecks here and there, but most of them are clearly marked, so if you keep your wits about you, there shouldn't be any nasty surprises.

The area where Irma's legacy is most pronounced is around the causeway bridge and along by Princess Juliana airport, where sad hulks and smaller victims still languish, some awaiting repair by cash-strapped owners, and others simply abandoned.

As regards boat repairs and chandlery, by all accounts it is business as usual, with Bobby Velasquez of Bobby's Marina in Philipsburg and Mark Pendleton of MCJ Fabrications at Sandy Ground on the French side both reporting that all services are available, including the laundries. The big chandleries, Budget Marine and Island Water World, are well stocked. Have a look, too, at Boat Paint & Stuff in the Time Out Boat Yard.

As far as that all-important element, the restaurants and nightlife, it is fair to say that there is still plenty of choice, from the affordable to the prestigious. In Simpson Bay alone you can find everything from beachside bar/restaurants with their burgers and wraps to established favorites like Pineapple Pete's and on to high quality Thai food, a little Italian gem called Sal y Pepe, and the long-standing, understated but exceptional Vesna Taverna.

The popular Lagoonies Bar & Café in Lagoon Marina at Cole Bay is still there, while a couple of new places have opened in Philipsburg, although as the capital is a cruise-ship passenger's delight, it is generally pretty quiet in the evening when the floating behemoths have gone.

The French side of the island is changing, with rapid development at Hope Estate, out by the airport, leaving Marigot somewhat struggling. With a top class wine merchant to rival the smaller, cosier one in Marigot, Hope Estate even boasts a new Super U, the quality supermarket chain, which is bigger and brighter than the one of the outskirts of the French side's capital.

Foodies who have yet to visit Sol e Luna, at the top of the island (don't take the Orient Bay exit at the roundabout, but the next exit) should really give it a whirl, while down in Orient Bay itself that little "town square" lined with restaurants is thriving, with popular places such as Le Piment having quickly arisen after the tropical trauma.



Above: The party's over for this good-time girl.

Below: A hurricane casualty abandoned near the airport.



Speaking of which, the gastronomic village that is Grand Case took a hell of a battering from Irma but remains a unique area with some great restaurants — they just might be different from the ones that were there before.

All in all, St. Maarten/St. Martin is very much open for business. If you liked it before, you're going to like it again.



Cruiser Christmas in Martinique — Why it's the Best!

by David Carey

When we were living on land, before our young family moved onto a boat in the Caribbean, I wondered what a cruiser Christmas would be like. Back home in Australia, this holiday usually involved a fair bit of anxiety and stress. Figuring out whose turn it was to host the day, how the Secret Santa was going to work, who was bringing the prawns, the pavlova, and the lamingtons, were all important details that had to be sorted. Trying to hold a conversation with relatives you hadn't seen since the year before, while they told you it was too dangerous to live on a boat with young kids, was not my idea of a merry Christmas. I was actually looking forward to a change of scenery last year.



We tagged along on the Caribbean Sailing Santa's visit to an orphanage.

As we ventured up the island chain from Grenada to Martinique over the summer months, we had met many other "kid boats" and made some really good friends. There is definitely a strong bond between people who have gone against the norm, purchased a boat and uprooted their lives to live on the water. We were all out there working through the same challenges with boat repairs, home schooling, relationship stress, injuries and mishaps. We had made it through a tumultuous season of sailing and were ready to enjoy the festive season.



The plan for Christmas Day was simple: a pot luck on the beach.

Our three young boys had taken to boat life well, but my wife and I were acutely aware of the relationship between kid-on-kid interaction and morale aboard. We felt a little guilty that we had taken them away from their cousins and grandparents, flown them halfway around the world, and were not able to provide the usual traditions that made the holiday season so special. Thankfully, on Christmas Day 2018 there would be more kids around than there were at home, with some 20-odd children from various boats agreeing to meet up at Ste. Anne in Martinique. Also, there were new-to-us traditions to be experienced, such as helping others less fortunate.

I'm a little ashamed to say that my family and I have never done any sort of charity work at Christmas time. However, last year we were lucky enough to meet Mark and Tracey Duckett, who run the Caribbean Sailing Santa charity (www.sailingsanta.com).

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Since Hurricane Irma and Maria devastated Dominica in 2017, they have been raising money and purchasing presents for a local orphanage there. Our family organized to tag along and help Mark and Tracey out where we could as they visited the orphanage to hand out gifts. It may sound clichéd, but volunteering some of our time to those less fortunate during the holidays really made the lead-up to Christmas feel special, and it will definitely become part of our new traditions.

Ask almost any cruiser with kids, and they will tell you the best Caribbean island to celebrate Christmas is Martinique. Ste. Anne in particular is a gorgeous anchorage — just far enough away from the hustle and bustle of the main marina in Le Marin and near enough to white sand beaches with shade trees and barbecue areas. The Leader Price supermarket in Le Marin is near enough to dinghy to and has an incredible selection of cheeses, salami, baguettes, chocolate and hams, not to mention the cheapest French wine you are going to find this side of Europe. With enough food packed into our dinghy to sink the *Titanic*, we knew we would not go hungry this Christmas!

Martinique also has a Decathlon, a super sports and outdoor store with many toys to choose from to suit kids with an active lifestyle, something most other Caribbean islands lack. Fishing and spearfishing gear, fins and masks, surfboards, balls, scooters, clothes, kayaks and archery gear can all be found here. With cheap hire cars available in Ste. Anne, Christmas shopping was a completely different experience. There was no mad rushing around, fighting traffic and crowded shopping malls, just an easy-going drive around the island; the French roads are impeccable.

At home, the kids always got excited when the Christmas lights came out and we decorated the tree with Mariah Carey playing in the background. Last year was no different. With the inside of our boat resembling Clark W. Griswold's house and our portable speaker set to full volume, we each took turns seeing who could get the closest to Mariah's high E in "O Holy Night."

Christmas morning was so much fun. My wife and I were glad to see our boys were as happy on the boat as they were back home. They couldn't believe Santa had managed to get all those presents onto the boat without waking them up. They said it must have been tough for him, and I had to agree! The carrots on the deck had been nibbled at, and the bucket of fresh water in the cockpit was empty — the reindeer must have been happy, too.

I knew we were in for a great day when from out on the water I heard a familiar American voice cry out "Merry Christmas, *ROAM*!". It was my friend Barry and his young family in their dinghy, up early spreading Christmas cheer, singing carols from boat to boat. These moments never ceased to amaze me. We had only known this family for a short while, and they had taken the time to perform this lovely gesture; it warmed our hearts.

The plan for Christmas Day was simple: there would be a potluck on the beach with a fire and a grill to cook on, everyone would bring a dish to share, and we would all come and go as we pleased. How's that for no stress? Our three young boys were free to roam among the trees with their boat friends, sharpening sticks with their new Swiss army knives, flying along the sand on their skim boards, shooting nerf guns and drinking Leader Price cola. Santa may have gotten a bit carried away last year!

With an abundance of good food, conversation, archery contests on the beach, bonfires, music, ball games and swimming, the only thing left to do at the end of the day was fall into bed and realize that we just had the best Christmas in a long time.

There's no arguing that family life afloat has its ups and downs, but I think you would be hard pressed to find a cruiser kid in the Caribbean who didn't have an amazing Christmas.



Santa Claus is everywhere — Jack, Christian and Hamish met him in Martinique.





How Not to Leave a Mooring

by David Carey

As a family new to sailing, we learned so much in our first year living aboard our 1984 Moody 47, *ROAM*, in the Eastern Caribbean.

With three young boys aged under ten, and with very little boating experience, my wife, Erin, and I sold all our possessions in Australia, saved like mad, and bought a boat, sight unseen, on the other side of the world. We flew to Grenada, lived on the hard for six weeks as I performed the necessary repairs, and then triumphantly splashed her. Not wanting to let something as petty as fear get in the way of a great adventure, we dove in headfirst, learning how to motor, sail, anchor, upgrade and repair our yacht. With any new venture there will always be mistakes, and we made plenty of them. From dragging anchors to overheated engines, scrapes in gelcoat to flat batteries, the school of hard knocks was in session.

One of our more noteworthy learning experiences happened in Clifton Harbour at Union Island in the Grenadines. We had made the short trip from neighboring Carriacou safely. *ROAM* had performed perfectly. As we motored into the anchorage we were enthusiastically waved in and led to a mooring buoy by one of the guys who help you pick up a mooring for a small fee. It is possible to anchor here; however, there was not a lot of room among all the other boats and we were happy to take a ball.



CHRIS DOYLE

Not knowing the anchorage, we were a little surprised to be surrounded on three sides by shallow reefs; the boat boy had put us on the outermost mooring ball. The location was amazing, though. Union Island is a kite surfing mecca; with beautiful clear flat blue water behind the reef, many boarders come here to learn the sport or show off their incredible acrobatic skills. We enjoyed watching the kite surfers do their thing, and my kids even scored a ride on the back of one of these local thrill seekers as they skimmed effortlessly across the water.

When our time came to leave the island, Erin and I readied the boat as we normally do. Perhaps we were overconfident or unaware, or maybe we just didn't take our situation into consideration. The wind had piped up to about 20 knots. Usually, I work the front of the boat, anchoring, snubbing or tying off/releasing mooring lines, while Erin helms. As I released the mooring lines, our inexperience showed. The wind caught the wrong side of the bow and was now blowing the nose of the boat in the opposite direction from where we wanted to go.



Above: 'You can't let a bruised ego get in the way of a good time.'

Left: Protected by reefs, Clifton Harbour in the Grenadines offers calm water and no lack of breeze.

This shouldn't have been too much of a problem; we would just have to reverse out of our position. As I yelled to Erin to put the engine in reverse, we started moving backwards a few metres under power. I was hopeful we could perform a three-point turn and head to safety — until the engine died.

For a second I froze.

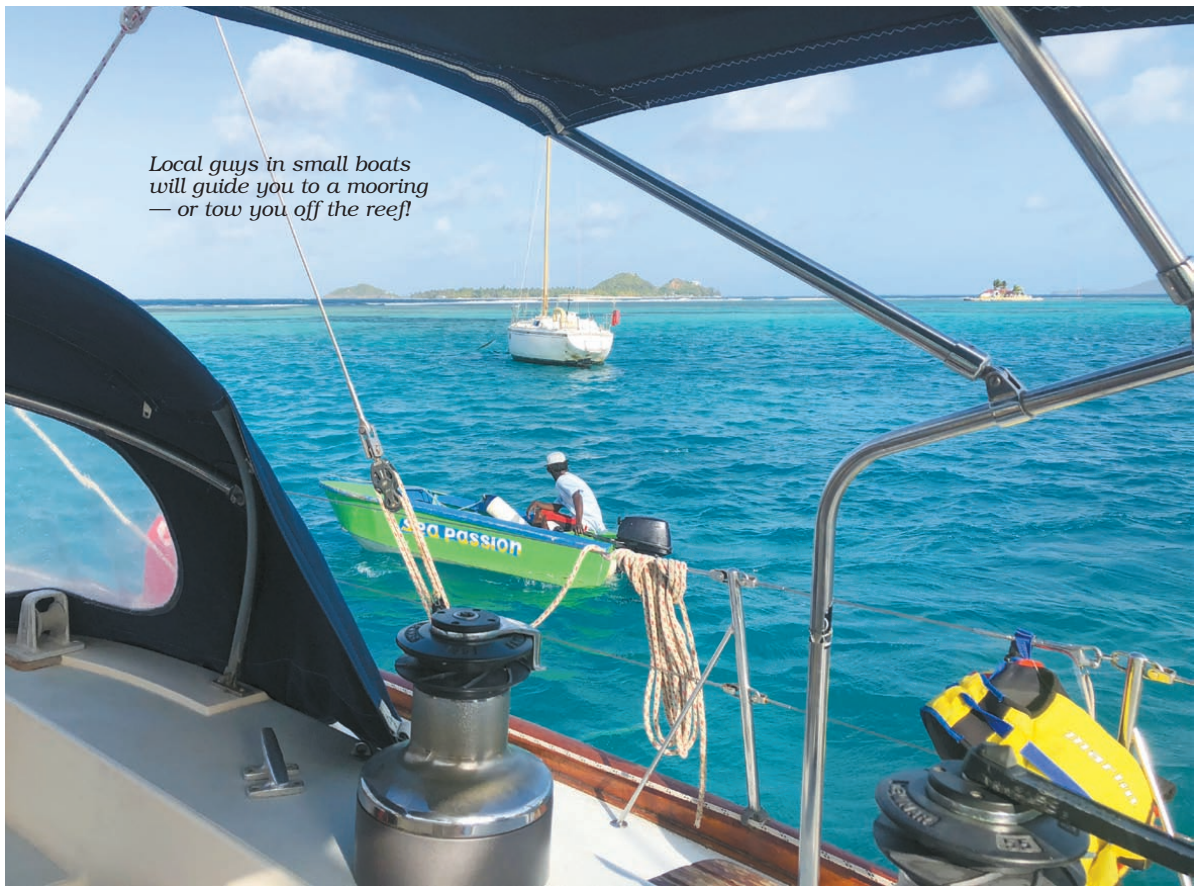
The brisk wind quickly blew our boat into the shallow water not far behind us. By the time we figured out what had happened, turned the windlass circuit breaker on and started to deploy the anchor, the boat drifted onto the reef and we were aground.

—Continued on next page



—*Continued from previous page*

It's a horrible feeling, being grounded, especially when you are the one who spent six weeks on the hard, painstakingly sanding and anti-fouling your new boat's bottom, rebuilding your rudder and repairing your keel.



Local guys in small boats will guide you to a mooring — or tow you off the reef!

Thankfully, due to the location of the anchorage, we were protected from the swell: with reef in front, behind and to the left, there were no waves crashing over us, and the boat wasn't bouncing around or pounding on the reef. But the keel was on the bottom, and our beautiful yacht looked rather out of place.

I frantically donned my snorkeling gear to dive in and inspect the damage as Erin put out a VHF radio call, explaining that we were grounded and asking if anyone could help pull us off. As soon as I dived under the water, I could see why the engine stopped. In all the excitement I hadn't noticed the nylon rope that was now pulled tight from the deck, over the side and under the boat. I hadn't secured it properly before we left the mooring, and it had fallen overboard and been caught in the prop while we were reversing out.

Luckily, a local guy came to the rescue with a small boat that had a 75-horsepower outboard. He proceeded to drag *ROAM* off the reef with a towline and we made it back onto the mooring ball we had just left.

Securely tied to the ball, we breathed a sigh of relief and let the jelly legs and heart rates recover. Fortunately, damaged egos are cheaper to fix than damaged yachts, and we had put only a few scrapes on the keel's anti-foul. Inspecting the bilge, we found no sign of water ingress. We thanked our rescuer and agreed on a price for his efforts — he had, after all, saved the day.

It seemed the school of hard knocks was still in session. We had paid a small price due to our inexperience, and we had learned a valuable lesson of what not to do coming off a mooring ball in a tight spot. We also learned to make sure your yacht never has a rope or line unaccounted for.

After this experience, we were wondering what our next lesson would be! Although I felt embarrassed after the incident, no one was hurt and the boat was fine. One thing I've noticed about cruising is that these types of mishaps seem pretty common, and you can't let a bruised ego get in the way of a good time. If you are able to laugh at your mistakes, while learning from them, cruising on a yacht can be a life-changing experience, and in the end, everybody loves a good story.

TOP TIPS FOR LEAVING A MOORING BALL IN STRONG WIND

- Prior to leaving the mooring ball, take a few minutes to discuss worst-case scenarios. What is the exit strategy? What is the backup plan?
- Ensure every line on deck is securely stowed.
- Keep a strong, long rope on board in case you need a tow if the worst happens.
- If other boats are very close to you, put out fenders and, if possible, have someone on board holding a large roving fender that can be used if it looks like your boat might touch another.
- Make sure your windlass is powered up in case you need to use it. Seconds count.
- Before letting go of the mooring lines, ensure your bow will fall off in the direction you want to go.
- If you don't feel confident leaving a tight spot, ask a fellow cruiser for some assistance; they may be able to use their dinghy to push the bow of the boat in the direction you want it to go, much like a bow thruster.

Kite surfers gave the kids piggyback rides, and they had a blast.





LOST AT SEA

by Jim Hutchinson

Jan and I do this to each other every so often, accept an invitation that we normally wouldn't — but then feel obligated to honor. The gathering at hand is her fault. We give each other slack though. It's part of what keeps us happy. But avoiding this sort of thing is part of it too.

Still, I'm the one who really screwed up. I'm responsible for roping us into a rendezvous with the yacht *Distant Horizons*. And in the US Virgins no less! We are in the Grenadines now, well south of the Moral Curtain. Lying Bequia, in fact.

Jan and I became fast friends with Sal and Paula many years ago in the Bahamas when they were aboard their little starter boat, which was shallow enough to have fun in the Bahamas — and we did! Then they graduated to an ocean-crossing boat and decided to see the world. They are now beginning their second circumnavigation. Their first Western Hemisphere stop will be the USVI to rendezvous with non-passported family before they're off for the Panama Canal. We haven't seen them for more than a decade and might not be here the next time they go around.

Anyway, this isn't the kind of rendezvous that we do, not lately. Jan and I agreed that our last visit to St. Thomas would be our last visit to St. Thomas — and that was long ago. Still, this adventure somehow struck us as cosmic… at the time. More cosmic to me than to Jan — I was the devil's advocate.

And we're leaving tomorrow. So that kind of adds weight to Jan's sin, the gathering we are attending now.

"We'll be leaving early," we announce first thing upon our fashionably late arrival. "Early departure." And it will be. The boat is inspected, provisioned, stripped of her harbor amenities and we're cleared out. Once the dinghy's on deck we're ready to go at first light.

"We're all departing tomorrow too," our host announces. "Four boats. We're buddy-boating up the islands. You can join up with us."

"We're a lot slower than you guys," I automatically answer.

"No problem. We aren't in a hurry. We're doing a shopping stop at St. Lucia. You'll be able to catch up."

"We're not very good at schedules," Jan says. "Too many variables."

"You don't have to worry with us. We're pretty loose. We gather on VHF every morning and wing it from there. Oh, here's Vance, our commodore."

—Continued on next page

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

DECEMBER 2019 - JANUARY 2020

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 2019					
DATE	TIME	21	0839	10	0000 FULL MOON
1	1613	22	0931	11	0020
2	1701	23	1025	12	0120
3	1746	24	1120	13	0218
4	1829	25	1216	14	0313
5	1910	26	1311	15	0406
6	1951	27	1403	16	0457
7	2035	28	1453	17	0507
8	2116	29	1539	18	0637
9	2250	30	1623	19	0727
10	2342	31	1705	20	0819
11	0000 FULL MOON	**January 2020**		21	0913
12	0037	1	1705	22	1007
13	0135	2	1746	23	1101
14	0233	3	1827	24	1154
15	0330	4	1909	25	1245
16	0426	5	1952	26	1333
17	0519	6	2039	27	1418
18	0610	7	2129	28	1508
19	0659	8	2223	29	1542
20	0749	9	2321	30	1622
				31	1703

—*Continued from previous page*

Vance is a short, burly man with a confident smile. “Vance Lance, net control.” he introduces himself. “I’ll be keeping an eye on things — rather,” he chuckles, “an ear.”

We are speechless.

Vance Lance is more than just the commodore of this fleet in which the other men are captains and the women are referred to as admirals. Apparently Vance has been around forever. And by “net control,” he means SSB, ocean work, serious stuff. He’s been there, done that. He can handle emergencies with a radio. He gets people rescued. He’s the real thing. We are in good hands with Vance.

Vance is remarkably modest about it, allowing most of this acclaim to come from the officers of his fleet.

That was pretty much the conversation until it turned to insurance rates. Their annual premiums approach what Jan and I paid for our little yacht. When asked how much insurance cost us I mumble, “About five hundred US a year.” That’s an exaggeration — I want us to look good. “What kind of coverage does *that* buy?” one of them gasps. “A new anchor and rode,” I confess. That answers — they take it as a joke.

These people are the antithesis of Jan and me. Most of yachting is somewhere in between… I suppose.

Then we make our excuses and row home, even though they offer to tow us — so that we won’t have to row! It’s Jan’s turn to row. It helps keep her looking how I like her to look. And I like looking at her from the stern sheets.

“See you on VHF in the morning,” Vance calls after us, “Oh six thirty sharp.”

I lean forward towards Jan. “First light?” I ask.

“What about the morning net?” she jokes.

“We want to be out of range by then. Besides, I think the VHF has a blown fuse or something.”

That means up at four, which we usually do anyway, but kind of sticking with the pace this time. It’s such a nice time of day to hang out that our usual first light departures don’t happen until around seven.

Jan manages to get online in the morning, before the surfers and streamers clog the WiFi, long enough to download an email from Sal and Paula. *Distant Horizons* has a big problem. They are hauling out in Portugal. Cancel.

For a long moment, all we can do is grin at each other.

“Let’s get out of here anyway. We’re checked out and provisioned for nearly a month.”

“Let’s start by doing Bequia Head then down the outer Grenadines. Off the beaten path.”

“Then maybe the east coast of Grenada? We haven’t been to Grenville for years,”

“We’d be the only yacht there.”

Up anchor, up sail and away.

“They’re already gone,” Vance had reported on VHF at 0630. “Northbound, I saw them pass the point. They must have wanted a head start.”

That was three days ago. The buddy-boaters are now clustered in St. Lucia shopping and waiting and beginning to worry.

“They should have been here by now.”

“They might have had a problem and had to stop at St. Vincent.”

“I hope they didn’t have a problem in the channels,” Vance says. “That could be bad. I’ll make some inquires.”

“Nothing,” Vance reports. “I’ve talked with a dozen yachts along the way and nobody’s seen them. I’ve issued an alert to watch for their boat. They are confirmed checked out of St. Vincent and haven’t checked in here. It’s time for action.” Vance begins the groundwork for an SAR (search and rescue). Some of the agencies seem hesitant but Vance Lance has dealt with that before.

Jan and I did a night of rolling and bucking under Savan Island, which reminded us why we haven’t done that for a while. Eddying wind and crossing current in fairly close quarters.

Then we spent two days isolated in seldom-visited and uncomfortable Maho Bay, which contains a small promontory with amazing geology that was surely holy ground to indigenous peoples. The anchorage is utterly untenable for modern yachts — lots of rock and roll and no WiFi. We use a second anchor to hold us into the swell that wraps the point. There are reasons why one can count on being alone in such places.

Then we do a close reach over Canouan to give Sail Rock a fly-by. It’s something we like to do now and then just because it is so remote — miles above even World’s End Reef.

Now we’re headed for Les Tantes. We’ve sailed through them a couple of times and thought we saw a good patch of clear sand but never anchored.

“I don’t think we can get any closer to nowhere than that,” I comment.

“The snorkeling will be great.” Jan answers. “But what about the fact that we’re cleared out?”

“I knew a guy, sailed these islands all the time without clearing in or out. Any time he had to, he said that he’d just arrived from the USVI, which doesn’t issue departure papers to US vessels. And the US Virgins is where we were cleared for anyway.”

“I’m glad we’re stocked with herb. How ‘bout we linger longer in the Grenadines?”

I nod agreement. “At Les Tantes, we won’t even see passing boats.”

But at Les Tantes we find no place to anchor without endangering the bottom. So we sail on towards the southeast coast of Grenada, which has several remote nooks and crannies we’ve long intended to check out.

“These people are unbelievable,” Vance declares in disgust. “But I’m getting the yachties together and the authorities will see that they’ll have to get serious on this one. We’ll find them, by God! We’re arranging an air/sea search and we’ll shame every coast guard vessel in these islands into participating. It’ll be expensive. But you can’t put a price on a human life. And we don’t abandon our own.”

THE END



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Carriacou Christmas

Island Poets

I jus' wakin' up, an' I hearin' screech,
"Oh Lord, what is dem t'ings down there on the beach?
"It lookin' like goat, wit' some real funny horn."
"Oh Michael," I say, "this is Christmas Day morn!
Keep calm an' jus' simmer you'self down my dear,
You doesn't know Santa Claus stops here each year
To visit this beach in our sweet Carriacou
An' cool off wit' a sea bath? This is nothing new.
An' Mike, that is not goat you seen' down there,
It is Santa's own world famous flyin' reindeer.
There's Rudolph, an' Blitzen an' Donner an' Cupid,
Takin' a swim, so, Man, don't get on stupid,
An' Santa has changed from that hot old red suit,
He's wearin' his swimmers – Oh, gosh! He's so cute!
Hey! Get him a drink of your sweet Ponche Crème.
An' a piece of black cake to revive him, and then
Get dressed, tune the cuatro, call folks, and soon after,
We'll celebrate Christmas with carols and laughter,
With Santa an' reindeer and our good friends, too,
Oh, there's nothing like Christmas in sweet Carriacou!

— *Nan Hatch*



CHRISTMAS WINDS

(To the tune 'Mercedes Benz' sung by Janis Joplin)

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a big jug of rum?
The weather's been crazy, it's time for some fun!
The winds of Saint Nicholas quite early have come.
I've got the juice, Lord — hurry up with that rum!

Oh Lord, can you help us with these great big seas?
Doyle says "an easy reach," but it ain't been for me!
The windward side's crazy, but so is the lee —
Oh Lord, can you flatten these awful rough seas?

Oh Lord, can you give us a little less wind?
Some friends, they have cats now; I've forgiven the sin.
Our rail's in the water, it's gone for a swim.
Head up or fall off, the sails need a trim.

Oh Lord, how I need you, please get it in gear!
Off to the Virgins I'm trying to steer.
The big party season is really too near —
Along with that rum, Lord, could you also bring beer?

— *Janice Nagle*



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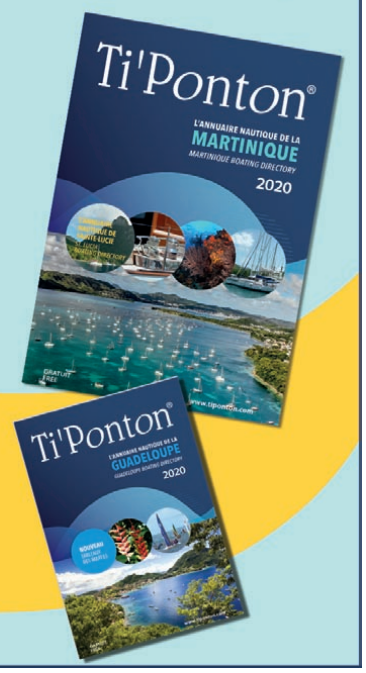


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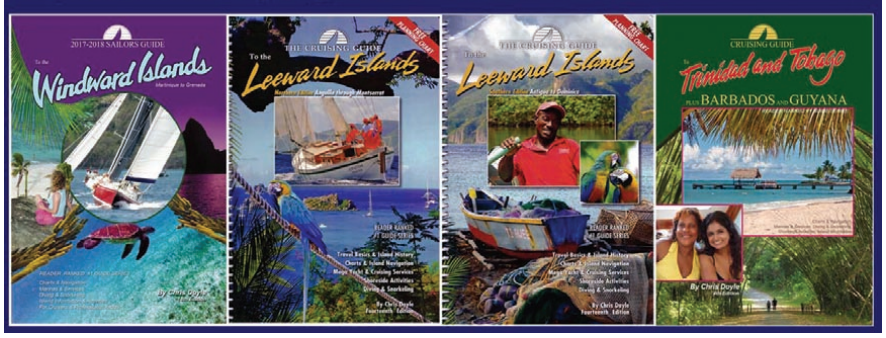
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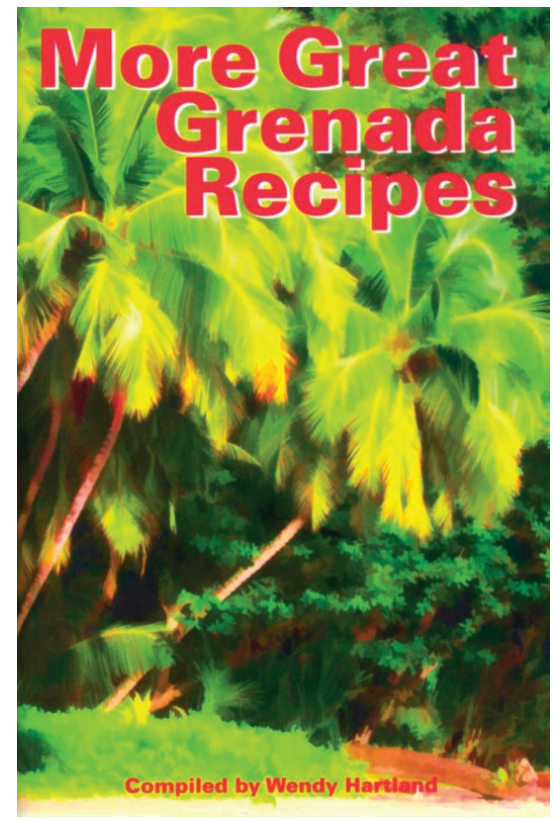
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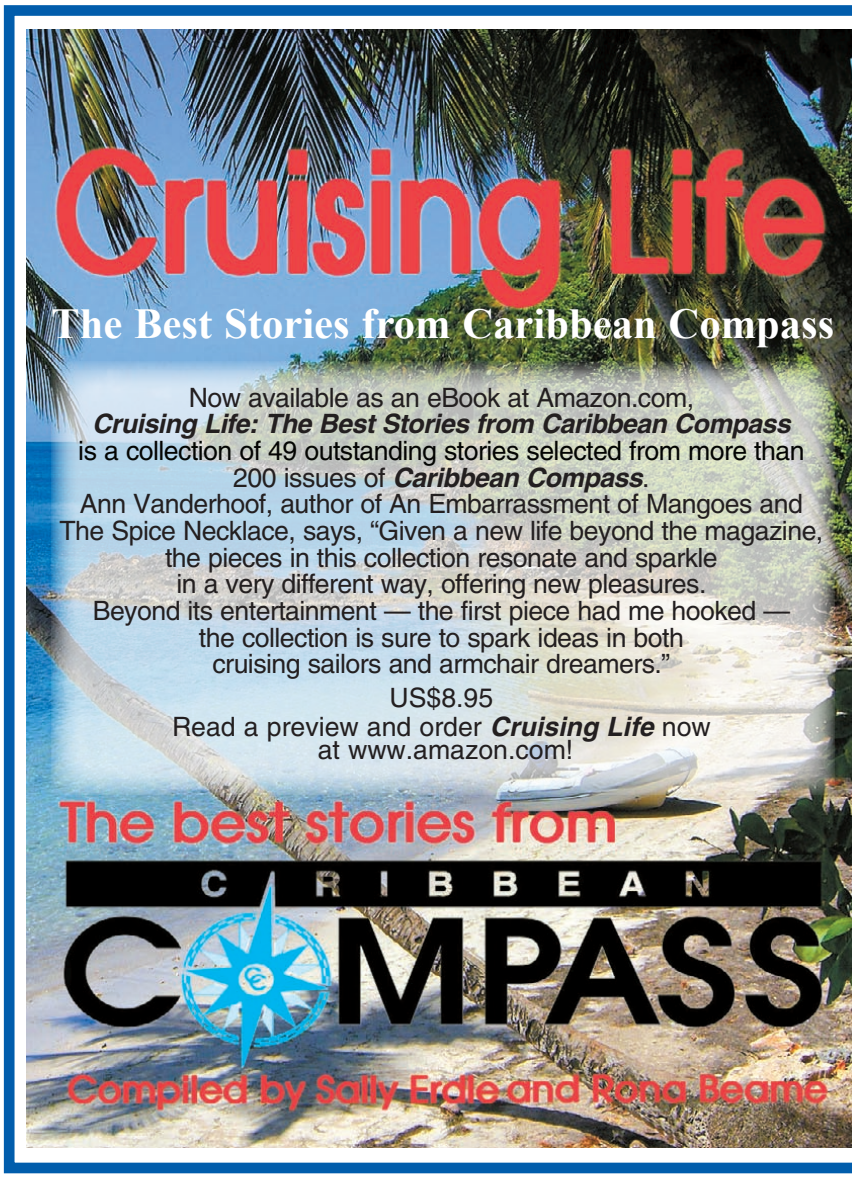
No need to fret about "hard to find" ingredients when you've familiarized yourself with Caribbean seafood, fruits and vegetables, and can refer to some tried-and-true local recipes.

The recipes in this sequel to *Great Grenada Recipes* have been contributed by chefs, restaurateurs, visiting yachties and home cooks in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique who shared their own — and sometimes their mothers' and their grandmothers' — favorites. Some are traditional, featuring the island's homegrown spices, while many of the newer recipes highlight the growth of the island's new agro-industries such as goat cheese, chocolate, honey and rum.

A portion of the proceeds of sale of this book go to the Father Hilarion Home for the Aged in Sauteurs.

Available at bookstores and gift shops in Grenada, or from Island Recipes Unlimited, framesartgda@gmail.com





THE HOUR WHEN THE SHIP COMES IN

BOOK REVIEW BY BOB BERLINGHOF

***Me, the Boat, and a Guy Named Bob**, by CE Bowman, ©2019, Tradewind Publishing, www.tradewindpublishing.com, nonfiction, 439 pages. ISBN 978-192-5 171-50-1*

CHRIS BOWMAN



There are some books that you just don't want to end. Despite its awkward title, Chris Bowman's autobiography falls into that category, and not just because his story is well-written, featuring a California kid's wanderings and most unusual life in the 1970s and '80s. The ending packs a punch that I knew was coming because I was living in Bequia at the time, but when it came it felt worse than I expected.

The boat referred to in the title was the last schooner to be built on Bequia, a 67-foot beauty, *Water Pearl*, launched in 1980, and the guy named Bob was her half-owner, Nobel Prize winner/enigmatic rock star Bob Dylan. How the author hooked up with Dylan and then became his partner is a story of cosmic coincidence of mind-blowing proportions.

Although I was a friend of Chris's in those early days, his childhood was not as I imagined. His eccentric, mercurial father was constantly moving his family to keep ahead of bill collectors. Ray Bowman was an inventor, and when times were good they lived lavishly, but it seems they were shunted from motel to motel more often than not. Chris and his younger brother, Rick, were unscarred by the experience, but his younger sister Jean's rebellion led to a life of drugs and four kids by multiple men who were not part of their lives. It was not your average middle-class upbringing, to say the least, but Chris surfed, played football and basketball, and was able to adapt to new schools far better than his sad sister.

The book's first 80 pages were a revelation to me. They feature Chris' Rabelaisian ramblings across Planet Earth, meeting all sorts of strange and wonderful people. He recounts his almost unbelievable sailing experiences across the Indian Ocean, up the Red Sea to Israel, throughout Greece, up the Med, and finally, across the Atlantic to the Caribbean. The last leg was the riskiest by far. With the recklessness and arrogance of youth he crewed aboard a 24-foot sloop owned by a broke Zen Mexican named Francisco who was trying to return to his homeland. 'Cisco refused to talk other than about the business of sailing, and their awkward silence was broken along with their rudder 900 miles from Barbados. Chris went over the side trying to jury rig a replacement, but eventually they used a very long oar that had been stowed on deck to make their landfall in Barbados after 36 days. After repairs were made 'Cisco unceremoniously dumped Chris off his boat in Kingstown, St. Vincent, but the author found the classic schooner *Shearwater* at Young Island Cut and got a temporary berth aboard, ending for me the only part of Chris's story with which I was totally unfamiliar.

Bowman's story of how he ended up in Bequia is unique. He tried to fix a small wrecked sloop on the beach in Prickly Bay, Grenada, and prematurely sailed off with his buddy Nolen with an unrepaired garboard leak. Nolen ended up bailing with a bucket until his hands bled, but they pulled the boat up the beach in Port Elizabeth before she sank. One of the reasons for their risky early departure was Chris' futile attempt to chase a woman he had no hope of catching.

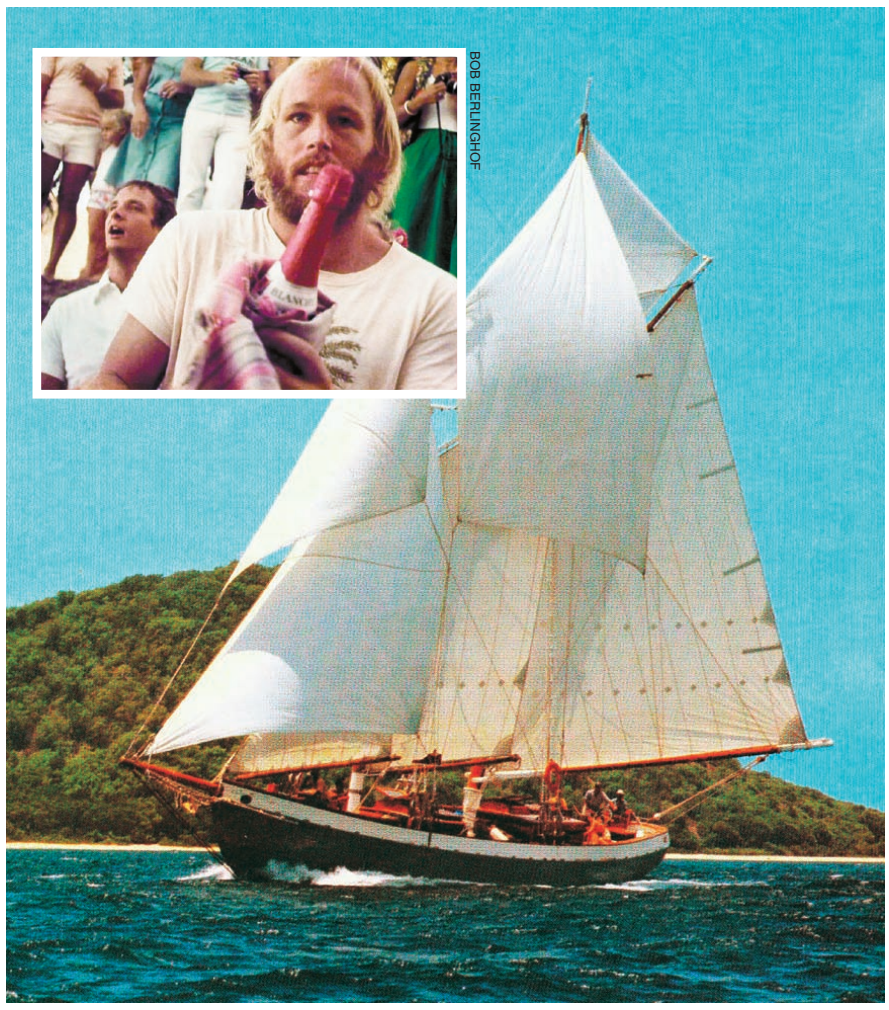
The author became enchanted by boatbuilding in Bequia and borrowed money from his father to build *Just Now*, a 40-foot island sloop, there in 1975-6. In late 1977, through a friend's employer, he and Bequian partner Nolly Simmons were commissioned to build a schooner, later named *Water Pearl*, for Dylan and an executive in Los Angeles who made the unreasonable demand, in contract, that she be finished in just 12 months. When time dragged on and this executive got testy and was considering legal action, Chris offered to swap his boat *Just Now* for a 50-percent partnership with Dylan in *Water Pearl*. This deal favored the author at the expense of his relationship with his other partner in Bequia, and the two never reconciled.

Nevertheless, *Water Pearl* was built on the beach where Dive Bequia now has its shack, and she was launched in December 1980. I was there and took the photo of Chris readying the champagne bottle, with his buddy Nolen's mouth wide open in wonder.

After the launch, *Water Pearl* chartered for several years out of St. Martin with Bequian crew Kingsley "Prop" Quashie and Cyril "Bamu" Stowe. Dylan would visit when not on tour, and as his friendship with the author blossomed, he invited Chris to accompany him on tour. Bequian mariner Mackie Simmons filled in as *Water Pearl's* captain and continued to work the boat.

The last third of the book chronicles Chris' wanderings on tour with Dylan and Tom Petty, sometimes with his Australian-born wife, Vanessa, and their young daughter, Clara. It was a traveling circus with Machiavellian undertones, as those trying to get closer to the rock star would gladly trample others in their quest. Dylan himself remained an enigma throughout. I found the building of *Water Pearl*, described by Chris in loving detail at the heart of the book, far more interesting. He was aided by many "old heads" who have now passed away, including Lincoln "Bluesy" Simmons, Athneal Ollivierre, and Loren Dewar among others, and he makes these chapters sing.

BOB BERLINGHOF



VANESSA BOWMAN



Top: The schooner Water Pearl *was launched in Bequia 39 years ago this month.*

Above: The last schooner built on Bequia — a 68-foot beauty, Water Pearl.

Inset: Chris readying the champagne at Water Pearl's *launching.*

Left: The author, Bamu and Bob aboard Water Pearl, *leaving Portsmouth, Dominica.*

The grounding and loss of *Water Pearl* in Panama, en route to the Pacific, is now part of Bequia lore, and the author takes full responsibility for not standing off until dawn and for using 23-year-old charts to navigate the Canal Zone at night. It has been oft-repeated on Bequia that had the author hired his local crew for that passage, *Water Pearl* would not have met her sad fate on a reef three miles from the Canal Zone's entrance. The author states he could not afford it and chose crew willing to pay their own way. His new crew quickly deserted him in Panama and sealed *Water Pearl's* fate.

Chris returned to Bequia for a visit after 20 years, having spent his life making wooden boats in Australia with Vanessa and their three children, but the sadness lingers over Bequia's last schooner. Nevertheless, this book is an excellent read. The author's life has been blessed (and cursed) by fate, and he weaves a fascinating tale of a life fully lived.

Available at http://tradewindpublishing.com/me-the-boat-and-a-guy-named-bob.html and as an e-book at most online bookstores.

The Sky from Mid-December to Mid-January

by Jim Ulik

"Why is there no Flat Mars Society?"
— Elon Musk

There will be a few internet headlines reporting a solar eclipse taking place on December 26th. Unfortunately, this event will not be visible in the Caribbean because the Earth is a sphere. This particular eclipse occurs on the opposite side of the globe. It will only be visible for those in Eastern Europe, much of Asia, Northwest Australia, Eastern Africa, the Pacific and Indian Ocean.

Next are the headlines mentioning the upcoming penumbral lunar eclipse on January 10th. The eclipse will take place below the eastern horizon. It will only be visible in locations including Africa, Oceania, Asia, Europe and Northern America.

I only mention these two events so you are aware they will *not* be visible in the Caribbean.

Two comets are passing near Earth this period. The first comet, 289P/Blanpain, was discovered in 1819 has made numerous close approaches to both Jupiter and Earth over the last 200 years. It will make a close approach to Earth on January 11th. The second comet is an interstellar visitor designated 2I/Borisov (Second Interstellar/Borisov). It will pass through our solar system in December. The next known comet that will make a close approach to Earth won't happen until November 4th, 2029.

Monday, December 16th

Mars is in the balance this morning. The red planet will be transiting the constellation Libra over the next few days. Mars can be found low in the east-southeastern sky for about two hours before sunrise. Maybe you can catch a glimpse of Mercury just above the horizon for a few minutes as dawn breaks.

Shining brightly as the Sun sets in the west-southwestern sky is the goddess of beauty and love, and Venus is her name. "You got it. Yeah, baby you got it." (Oh well, I guess you have to be over 60 years old.) As the skies continue to darken you may catch a glimpse of Saturn located just below and to the right of Venus.

The Comae Berenicid meteor shower peaks overnight and is active from December 12th to December 23rd. The best hours to view any shooting stars tonight are after midnight. Better viewing opportunities occur over the next few nights as the Moon approaches its new phase.

Tuesday, December 17th

The Moon begins its two-day passage through Leo. By the time the Moon rises after 2300 hours it will be positioned near the brightest star in Leo, known as Regulus or the "Heart of the Lion". Regulus also means the "little king" or "prince" in Latin.

Thursday, December 19th

The Moon reaches third quarter today. After passing through Leo, the Moon now enters Virgo on its way towards the Sun. Moonrise occurs just after midnight, finally setting a few minutes before 1300 hours.

Friday, December 20th

Between December 5th and February 4th there will be a chance of seeing meteors from the December Leonis Minorids shower. The radiant of this shower rises in the east about an hour before midnight. For reference, the meteors originate out of an area north of Regulus.

Saturday, December 21st

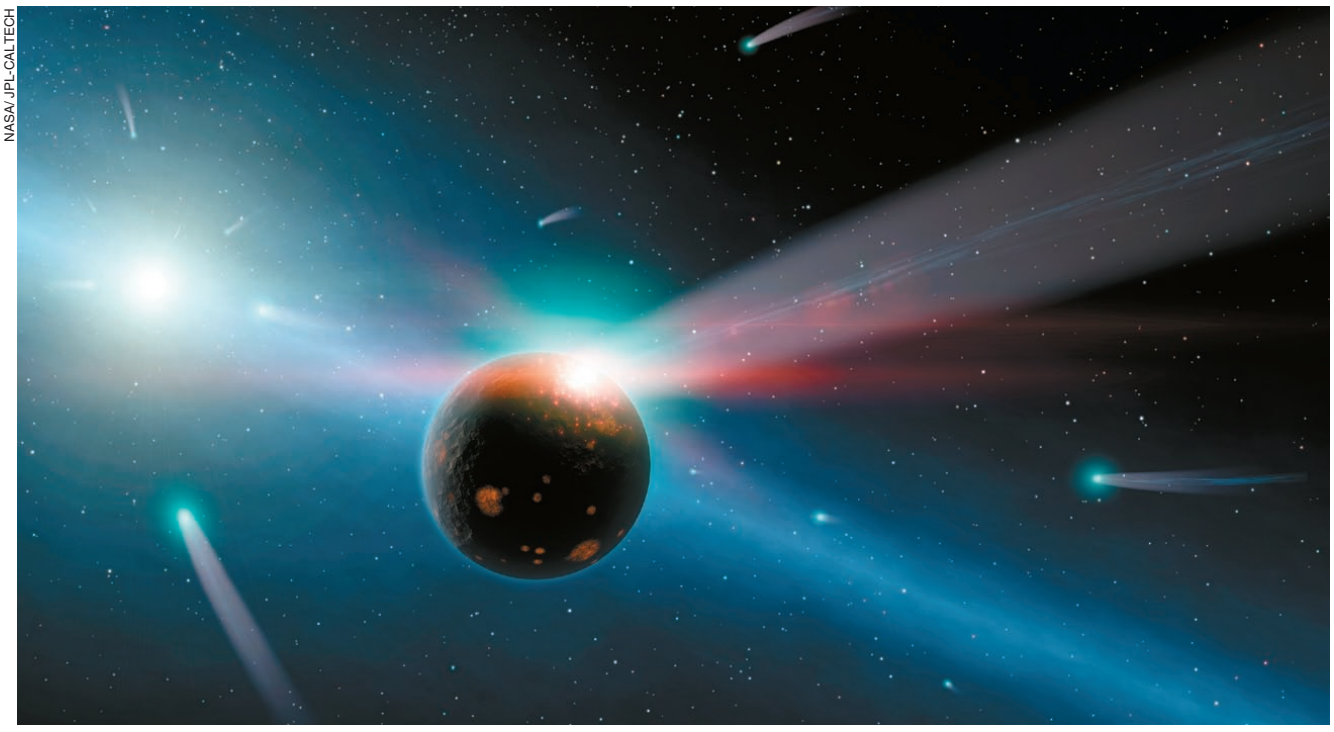
There is a close approach between the Moon and Spica this morning. The Moon is about halfway between third quarter and the New Moon phase so it appears 25-percent illuminated. The dark feature you see on the Moon this morning is an ancient lava flow named Oceanus Procellarum or Ocean of Storms.

Sunday, December 22nd

Welcome to the shortest day of the year. The Sun is directly overhead of the Tropic of Capricorn (23 degrees 26 minutes south). In terms of daylight, the Winter Solstice is about one hour and 25 minutes shorter than the June Solstice. For reference the Sun will rise at 114 degrees and set at 246 degrees. The line of celestial bodies transiting the daytime sky from east to west is Venus, Saturn, Jupiter, the Sun, Mercury and Mars.

—Continued on next page

NASA/JPL-CALTECH



Interstellar comets heading towards our solar system.

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—Continued from previous page

Monday, December 23rd

Look out for meteors streaking out of the north-northeastern sky after midnight. These meteors enter the atmosphere at a "medium" velocity of 138,400 km/h (86,000 mph). At that speed the shooting stars will appear either red or orange in color. The shower peaking overnight is known as the Ursids. The shooting stars will radiate out of Ursa Minor or Little Bear. This constellation includes Polaris, or the North Star, and is also known as the Little Dipper. This shower producing from ten to 50 meteors per hour is active from December 17th to 26th.

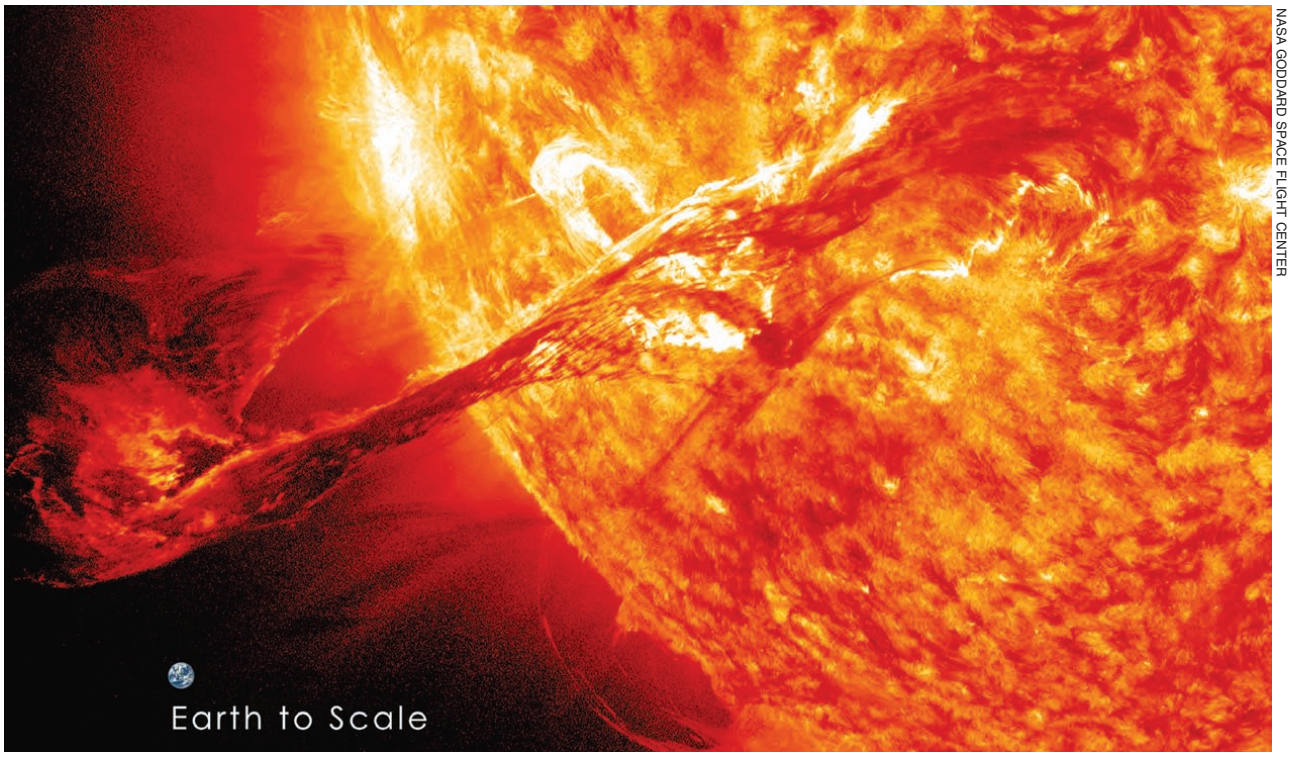
If you are still up before the Sun rises you will see a conjunction between the crescent Moon and Mars. Look for the pair to rise in the eastern sky before 0400 hours.

Thursday, December 26th

The Parker Solar Probe is performing its second flyby of Venus today. This gravity assist will help the spacecraft adjust its orbit, bringing it closer to the Sun. The purpose of this mission is to unlock the mysteries of the corona, but also to protect a society that is increasingly dependent on technology from the threats of space weather.

Three major geomagnetic storms demonstrated the vulnerability from these events. The Carrington Event of 1859 was the most severe space weather event recorded in history. A coronal mass ejection (CME) struck Earth, shorting electrical systems of the era causing numerous fires. Aurora, normally visible only in Polar regions, were seen as far south as Cuba and Hawaii. The economic costs associated with a catastrophic event similar to that of the Carrington Event could measure in the range of several trillion US dollars (according to the US House Homeland Security Committee, 2009).

The second event was the Quebec Power Outage of 1989. A geomagnetic storm affected Canadian and US power systems, resulting in a major power outage for the majority of the Quebec region and for parts of the northeastern United States. It took nine hours to restore 83 percent of the population to full power; one million other customers were left longer without electrical power.



NASA GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

Coronal Mass Ejection (CME) will reach Earth as a geomagnetic storm negatively affecting power and communications.

Another is the "Halloween" event in 2003. The power system infrastructure, the aviation industry, satellite communications and GPS navigation systems were affected in Europe and North America.

Saturday, December 28th

Today is Saturn's Day (Saturday) and this ringed planet is keeping a low profile. The planet remains hidden during the daylight hours. As the dusk sky fades, Saturn becomes visible for a few minutes low in the sky over the southwest horizon.

There is also a conjunction between the crescent Moon and Venus this evening. As the pair travels towards the horizon they will gradually move in closer together.

Saturday, January 4th

The first meteor shower peak of 2020 occurs between 0100 hours and sunrise. The Earth's rotation turns the Windward and Leeward Islands to face the direction of the incoming meteors. This orientation will maximize the number of visible meteors. More meteors will rain vertically downwards, producing short trails. There may be a few fireballs that enter the atmosphere at an oblique angle, producing long-lived meteors that may traverse a wide area of the sky before completely burning up. The Quadrantids shower is expected to reach peak activity at around 0500 hours producing 60 to 200 meteors per hour. This shower radiates out of the northeastern sky and is active December 12th to January 12th.

Sunday, January 5th

Earth has reached perihelion, or its closest proximity to the Sun. Don't look at the Sun or you will burn holes in your retina. The Sun is three percent larger at perihelion.

Tuesday, January 7th

Yesterday the Moon slipped on by the Seven Sisters. This evening it will make a close approach to Aldebaran. Tomorrow is the peak of the RGE Geminids meteor shower. While this shower is active December 28 to January 28, the Moon is now entering the area the meteors originate from. The best dates to spot any meteors will be before January 7th or after January 15th.

All times are given as Atlantic Standard Time (AST) unless otherwise noted. The times are based on a viewing position in Grenada and may vary by only a few minutes in different Caribbean locations.

Jim Ulik cruises aboard S/V Merengue.



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The Green Heron — A Solitary Fisherman

I remember the first time I noticed a Green Heron, *Butorides virescens*. It stood in misty solitude on the sculptured boulders of a shaded mountain stream in Grenada's rainforest, its deep chestnut plumage shining red in the filtered sunlight. Almost immediately, it took to the wing and a loud indignant *squawk* rang above the loud flowing creek.

On my second sighting, at La Sagesse's salt pond, I caught a glimpse of a solitary hunched figure amidst the riot of leaves and dark roots of the mangrove trees.



Their common name comes from the grey-blue-greenish hued mantle draped over their backs, and their dark blue-green caps.

I strained with anticipation to capture it within my camera lens, but once again it lifted on slow-beating, ghostly wings, leaving behind an echo, a passing note, a fleeting shadow.

My first experiences of the Green Heron had confirmed what I'd read so far — that they can be shy, elusive birds. Yet, they are known to visit ornamental ponds and ditches and to thrive in human environments. Indeed, during a trip to the northern town of Victoria, in Grenada, I came across two individuals fishing on the river boulders within close proximity to human activity. I watched the two herons for a couple of hours, following them as they moved slowly and stealthy upriver, marveling at their tolerance towards me and my happily clicking camera shutter. Interestingly, upon close inspection I realized that one of the herons had only one leg, yet it did not appear hindered by it — when its conspecific neighbor ventured too close, the one-legged bird flew towards it aggressively and chased it back over some invisible line. Then, obviously satisfied, it returned to its fishing spot, landing with surprising grace, where it stood motionless, perfectly balanced in an attentive semi-crouch, neck retracted, watching and waiting, its coiled neck and large dagger-like bill ready to lunge and snap at a passing fish. Green Herons can extend their necks a surprisingly long way and the movement is lightning fast and fluid, much like a lunging snake.

This sit-and-wait behaviour makes the Green Heron an accomplished fisherman with extraordinary skills of stillness and concentration. Many birds excel at fishing, yet only a few use tools to catch their prey. Some Green Herons are known to use fishing lures such as insects, bread crusts, earthworms, twigs, feathers and other items, placing them on the water's surface in order to entice the fish. It's astonishing to watch their dedication as they patiently reposition the lure and are rewarded with large fish, which they quickly snatch, flip and swallow head first.

Scientists are still trying to understand how these impressive individuals learnt to use lures. Although attempts to teach them to use bait failed, in *Gone Fishing. Who is a Clever Birdie?!!!* author David Hogg tells of Green Herons at a hotel pond in Grenada. The birds observed the crowd of fish that resulted when hotel guests threw bread into the pond, and soon begun snatching the bread crusts to use them as bait. The Green Herons were never seen eating the bread and when given bread away from the pond, they quickly flew back to the pond to use it as a lure.

Some scientists believe that only the most highly intelligent herons can make the link between dropping bread in the water and the resulting fish frenzy, thus explaining why not all Green Herons practice fish-baiting. However, others believe that the reason for the unpredictability of this behaviour is due to most herons not having the opportunity to observe the results of bait falling into the water. But perhaps bait-using individuals are indeed the Einsteins of the Green Herons, coming up independently with new, complex ideas on how to acquire their food.

Green Herons are partially migratory as populations from the cooler latitudes move south in the winter to Central America, the West Indies and northern South America. Northern birds tend to be highly dispersal and have been seen as far as Greenland, United Kingdom and France. However, tropical populations are sedentary. Green Herons favor freshwater and brackish habitats, such as lakes, ponds, swamps and rivers lined with secluded shrubs, mangroves or tree islands for feeding, roosting and building their platform nests. Nests are placed over water, up to two metres from the ground.

In the West Indies, nesting season is dependent on mangrove flooding and the increase in temperatures brought on by the rainy season around June and July. At this time, breeding birds acquire glossy black bills, blue-black lores and bright, orange-red legs. Couples are seasonally monogamous and breed mostly in isolation or sometimes in mixed species colonies, somewhat separate and well outnumbered by the other species.

Courtship involves intense aerial displays accompanied by "*skow*" calls, as well as ground displays, such as "the stretch," where the male points the bill skyward, stretches and bends neck backwards until head almost touches its back, with back plumes erect and fanned; he then sways his head and neck from side to side, eyes bulging as the irises change from yellow to deep orange, while calling out "*aarooo-aarooo*". Next, the female performs a less intense version of "the stretch" and finally is allowed to step onto the half-built nest platform for the first time. Both birds will continue to repeat this display throughout nest building and incubation, particularly during nest relief ceremonies.

The young are born semi-altricial (incapable of much movement) and are cared for by both parents. Chicks grow up fast and may reach independence at 30 to 35 days, although they remain under adult guidance for another month while learning to forage for fish.

In the West Indies predation on eggs and chicks is high, particularly by tree boas, manicou (common opossum), mongoose and Broad-winged Hawks. Green Herons instinctively recognise dangerous animals. In a study entitled "Avoidance of Venomous Sea Snakes by Naïve Herons and Egrets" carried out by the department of zoology of the University of California and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, six inexperienced, hand-reared birds from Panama who were presented with a dead sea snake backed away in panic, crests raised, flying around the aviary, scratching at the gates with feet and bills trying to flee. The birds had never tried to escape the aviary before.

Green Herons are charismatic, colorful birds — but they aren't truly green; their common name comes from the grey-blue-greenish hued mantle draped over their backs and the dark blue-green cap that explodes into a shaggy crest when the bird is disturbed. They have red-chestnut neck and chest with broad white stripes on upper chest and neck, bright yellow legs and lores (the soft skin around the eyes). These reclusive individuals have a curious habit of leaving a wake of white defecation while fleeing from human disturbance and as a result have earned the species some very amusing colloquial names such as "poke," "fly-up-the-creek," "chalk-line" and "shite-polk".

The species belongs to the genus *Butorides* (meaning "resembling a bittern"), which is comprised of three nearly identical species: the Green Heron, based in the New World tropics, the Striated Heron from the Old World tropics, and the grey-green Lava Heron from the Galapagos. When grouped together these three species form a compound called the Green-Backed Heron.

So while visiting the tropical wetlands of the Caribbean islands, consider the elusive Green Herons peering from behind the swampy thickets. Be unobtrusive and look for these compact, solitary fishermen; they may be seen out in the open, standing by the water's edge, wading in the shallows, or perhaps suspended upside down from an overhanging branch while baiting the silvery fish below. Otherwise, when the water is deep, you may see them diving for prey — Green Herons have webbing between their middle and outer toes which helps them swim with ease, elegantly and upright like charming little swans.



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THE FEISTY LITTLE DAMSELFISHES

by Darelle Snyman

The feistiest fish you are likely to meet on a Caribbean reef is the tiny damselfish. Those of you who have encountered them will know that their attacks are lightning fast and usually catch you completely by surprise.

These little missiles are definitely not damsels in distress; they are notorious for being fiercely territorial and aggressive. They will nip at anything that comes between them and their food source or threatens their eggs. Damselfishes, with their close relatives the anemonefish, belong to one of the largest families of reef fishes, the Pomacentridae. Damselfishes constitute the vast majority of this family. They are divided into various genera that include recognizable species such as *Chromis*, *Dascyllus* and *Sergeants*.

These lively little fish display a wide range of colors, and the vividly colored juveniles differ greatly in appearance from the adults, who tend to be somewhat drab in comparison. Damsels are characterized by a single nostril on each side of the head and two anal spines. Their tails are usually forked, and they rarely exceed 15 centimetres (six inches) in length.

The Sergeant Major (*Abudefduf saxatilis*) is probably the most familiar and commonly encountered damselfish species on the Caribbean reefs. The name comes from the five distinctive black bars on each side of its body that resemble the insignia of the military rank. These bars become narrower towards the belly. Its upper body is usually yellow. During the day you are likely to encounter schools of these vibrant fish opportunistically feeding on algae and small invertebrates. Juveniles tend to stick to specific habitats, often schooling close to caves, pilings and other protective objects. I have often encountered schools of juvenile Sergeant Majors hovering around marker buoys.

A close relative of the Sergeant Major, the Night Sergeant (*Abudefduf taurus*) bears the same bold bars but it is more solitary in nature and can be distinguished by its dark, brownish-green hue and larger size.

During the breeding season, male Caribbean Sergeant Majors take on a darker bluish coloration as they prepare nests on a variety of substrates such as rocks, reef outcrops, shipwrecks and pilings. They engage in courting rituals to attract females and several thousand salmon colored eggs are laid during a single spawning. The egg masses adhere to the substrate and the male remains to guard the eggs and aerate them until they hatch; this usually occurs four to five days after fertilization.

The most aggressive damselfish species I have yet encountered is the Three-Spot Damselfish (*Stegastes planifrons*), a small brownish-grey fish with a yellow tinge and a distinctive dark spot at the base of the tail and pectoral fin. If in doubt about its identification, also look out for the yellow-gold crescent above its eyes. I first encountered this little egomaniac while exploring a wreck off Point du Bout at Anse Mitan, Martinique. It surprised me with a nip on my forearm while I was busy trying to take a photo of a beautiful French Angelfish juvenile, I did not even see it coming. It then proceeded to relentlessly dive bomb my camera. I had to concede and leave — I was worried that it was going to give itself a concussion!

This strategy is also very successful against its much larger algae-eating competitors, the parrotfish and surgeonfish.



From the top: As the name indicates, the Bicolor Damselfish has a body divided into a distinct darker front part and a lighter back part.



The most aggressive damselfish species I have yet encountered is the Three-Spot Damselfish.



Dusky Damselfish tend to inhabit reef areas exposed to wave action.



Sergeant Majors are a familiar sight on Caribbean reefs.



The more reserved member of this pugnacious family is the attractive Yellowtail Damselfish.

Three-Spot Damselfish, like many of their kin, are herbivores that cultivate gardens of their preferred algae. They encourage the growth of their favorite algae by carefully removing unwanted algae and pesky invertebrates. Males that maintain the highest-quality algae gardens have a greater chance of successfully courting a female. Once the female has selected her favorite farmer, she deposits her eggs by sticking them to the algal fronds growing in his garden. The male immediately fertilizes the eggs and aggressively stands guard over the eggs until they hatch. Their weapons of choice to deter intruders are to either to nip and chase them, or to produce acoustic signals. The males make a popping sound during hostile encounters. Research has shown that both sexes produce the popping sounds during aggressive interactions, but only the males use it during courtship.

The two Caribbean damselfish species that are probably the trickiest to distinguish from one another are the Dusky Damselfish (*Stegastes adustus*) and the Longfin Damselfish (*Stegastes diencaeus*). The juveniles of these two species are easily distinguishable from one another but the adults are similarly dark in color. They don't make it any easier to identify them as they are constantly on the move, darting about their small home territories. The Longfin Damsel's name already gives you a clue to one of its distinguishing features: its dorsal and anal fins extend beyond the base of its tail. Its anal fin has a bright blue edge, a feature that Dusky Damselfish lack. In contrast, the dark-edged dorsal and anal fins of the Dusky Damsel tend to be rounded and rarely extend beyond the base of the tail. Dusky Damselfish tend to inhabit reef areas exposed to wave action while Longfin Damsels prefer more sheltered inshore habitats.

The more reserved member of this pugnacious family is the attractive Yellowtail Damselfish (*Microspathodon chrysurus*). It is also known as the jewelfish because the juveniles are a beautiful dark blue, adorned with visually striking, iridescent blue spots. The shy juvenile is very difficult to photograph as it darts around in a blur of blue. Their beautiful spots fade as they mature and only remnants remain on the dorsal area of the brownish adults with their distinctive yellow caudal fin. They are found singly or in pairs and you will often encounter them among fire coral. Adults are typically algae eaters while the juveniles are carnivorous.

Another feisty damsel to look out for is the Bicolor Damselfish (*Stegastes partitus*). As the name indicates, it has a body divided into a distinct darker front part and a lighter back part. They are mostly plankton feeding and tend to stake out a territory over a rocky reef with plenty of crevices for them to hide in. I have only encountered them singly, but apparently they will at times form groups of up to 20 individuals led by a dominant male.

Male Bicolor Damselfish also maintain a territorial nesting ground. Behavioral studies have shown that the male entices females with a mating dance that involves a sequence of sudden multidirectional movements, accompanied with grunting sounds produced at the peak of the dance. Once selected, the male leads the accepting female to his carefully prepared spawning ground where she lays a single layer of eggs, which he immediately fertilizes.

The above-mentioned damsels are only a few of the damselfish species that inhabit the reefs of the Caribbean, so next time you are diving or snorkeling, slow down and keep a lookout for these tiny reef inhabitants — that is, if they don't surprise you first.

LOOK OUT FOR...

Frankly Scarlet, I Don't...

by Lynn Kaak

Cordia sebestena has been described as the most beautiful tree in the Tropics. While it is fair to say that it does have a great deal of competition — plumeria and the flamboyants certainly spring to mind as stiff competition for the Most Beautiful title — it is certainly striking.

Known by a variety of names including Scarlet Cordia, Geiger Tree, and the misnomer of Geranium Tree, it is a native of the Caribbean neighbourhood, hailing from Central America.

This tree is widely planted for its decorative value, as well as its effectiveness as a shade tree if given some guidance early in its life. This slow-growing evergreen can grow to about ten metres (35 feet) in height, and its crown can grow to an equal width. While the wood is fairly light, the tree seems to be able to hold its own in the tradewinds without a great deal of breakage. However, it does shed leaves, flowers and fruit in season.

Its leaves are about 20 centimetres (7.5 inches) long, with wavy edges. They are on the hairy side and feel rather like a cat's tongue — rough and sandpapery. In most of the growing area of the Scarlet Cordia, the trees tend to keep their leaves all through the year. Typical of most lowland tropical trees, they can handle a bit of a dry period, and are fine with wet, as long as there is sufficient drainage for them — they don't like having wet feet.

The stunning part of the tree, which makes it so eye catching, is, no surprise, its flowers. They are about five centimetres (two inches) wide and clustered in bright orange clumps at the ends of the branches. The flowers tend to be most prolific in the early rainy season, creating a beacon of orange that can be seen from a distance.

After the flowers have finished showing off, the tree bears small, pale fruit. While it has a lovely scent, its taste is unremarkable. It won't hurt you, as it isn't poisonous, but it won't excite your taste buds like, say, a nice mango.

Look for these trees in inhabited areas. As Cordia are so decorative, they are frequently found in gardens and parks and by roadsides. The trees can take some salt spray, and don't mind sand around their roots, so they are popular for the more developed and decorative beachfronts, such as around resorts and seaside homes.

The leaves are used in some areas to make tea as a remedy for stomach troubles and for fevers, but it isn't one of the most commonly used trees for medicinal purposes.

Keep an eye out for this eye catcher, and you decide if the claim of others that this is the most beautiful tree in the Tropics has any basis. For once, I'll keep my opinion to myself.



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In the Caribbean, Black Cake and Sorrel Means Christmas!

by Lynn Kaak

Christmas is coming! Christmas is coming! If the posts on the cruisers' social media groups asking where to spend Christmas haven't made this apparent to you yet, then maybe the Christmas music playing since the end of September might have tipped you off to the impending holiday.

While cruisers sometimes create new traditions as many spend the holiday away from the traditions they knew, the people who live here have traditions that we might not always know about or understand.

By this time, you have heard the Christmas music. While hearing "White Christmas" or "Walking in a Winter Wonderland" in the tropics might be bewildering, hearing "Santa's Lookin' for a Wife" or "Holding the Cork in She Hand" might be even less recognizable. The latter tunes are examples of *parang*. This is the Latino-influenced holiday music that might discuss Christmas-y things in a more realistic manner for a tropical mindset. One singer belts out "it was *COLD!*" and then says that he won't spend another Christmas in New York because he thought the weather was going to kill him; he will henceforth celebrate at home in Grenada. This is more realistic for the Caribbean. Oh, and Santa is lookin' for an island gal to be his wife.

So, after almost three and a half months of Christmas music, and decorations festooning the stores since October, what else is part of the Eastern Caribbean Christmas? Black cake springs to mind. This incredible gift to baked goods and



alcohol consumption is the local equivalent to fruitcake, sort of. Dried fruits are soaked for weeks or months in various forms of alcohol, sometimes started even before the Christmas music starts playing. Fortified wine, brandy, rum — whatever the cook has at hand or can afford. They sit and soak up the spirits. These eventually get baked into a dense, moist cake. It is very dark, hence the name. The flavour is unlike that of fruitcake; these don't get regifted!

Typically more rum is poured on from time to time to keep a black cake fresh, and it can keep for months if liberally doused with rum once in a while. Depending on where you are in the Caribbean, it may be served to you "as is" or it may be doused with yet MORE alcohol, set on fire, then served with a hard sauce. Hard sauce is made with, you guessed it, more booze. Jello shots have met their match.

It is possible to order a cake without alcohol in it, but it just won't be the same. Look for black cake in the shops, or see if you can find a local source for this Yuletide staple.

The baking of black cake does create the unofficial holiday tradition of trying to procure eggs and butter. During the month of December, these are hot commodities and can be difficult to find. People have been known to travel from store to store, or even set up call lists to get eggs. If you find them, buy them, as they won't be there for long. Just the merest rumour of eggs being available can draw the desperate in. The quest for eggs at holiday time is practically Arthurian.

Was alcohol mentioned? It might as well be the next thing discussed. Going to visit others is a very big component of the Caribbean holiday season. Whether it is a casual drop-by, a slightly more formal open house, or a full on fête with dancing and music, the drinks flow freely. Large Christmas Day lunches that include friends as well as family are not uncommon, but just liming with the neighbours is also a possibility. This is a time to share food and drink. If a salted ham has been prepared, then a slice or two of that might be enjoyed. Salted ham still figures prominently as a Christmas-time staple. Despite the (sometimes recent) introduction of refrigeration, it has to be the salted ham in the English islands, while the French do cured ham. Beach lime or house party, it's always a good lime at Christmas time.

A non-alcoholic drink tradition is the making of sorrel. This is not the herb, but a member of the hibiscus family. The calyx (base) of the flower is steeped in boiling water and spices with sugar added to make a very refreshing and colourful drink. Freezing the flowers has made this more readily available throughout the rest of the year, but it is mandatory during the festive season. So is ginger beer. Yes, rum may be added if you wish.

With many in the Caribbean being Christian, church services are a very large part of the Christmas celebrations. Depending on the denomination, it may be a relatively short 90 minutes or an hours-long celebration of the Saviour's birth. The French islands often have re-creations of the nativity, with crèche and grotto or stable. This is usually accompanied by Bible readings and carols.

Some of these traditions are slowly dying out, with the steady diet of Santa Claus and the consumerism that is taking over. However, in some of the more rural areas, and with the influence of the Aunties and the older generations, they haven't died out yet. It is pretty much a given that the black cake, ham and sorrel will continue!

Christmas Black Cake
Recipe from More Great Grenada Recipes *(see page 32).*

1 pound (450 grams) (2 cups) prunes, stones removed
1 pound (450 grams) (2 cups) raisins
1 pound (450 grams) (2 cups) currants
1 pound (450 grams) (2 cups) glacé cherries
one 26 fluid ounce bottle Grenadian white rum
one 26 fluid ounce bottle Carriacou black wine (or red wine)
1 pound (450 grams) (2 cups) sugar
1 pound (450 grams) (2 cups) butter
12 eggs, lightly beaten
1 pound (450 grams) (2 cups) flour
1/2 pound (225 grams) (1 cup) mixed peel
1 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground clove
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
Almond essence
Vanilla essence
Dark food coloring
Black or red wine

Put the fruit to soak in a sealed container with the white rum and black wine. Keep the container in a cool place and allow the fruit to soak for several weeks or months, as desired.

When ready to make the cakes, preheat the oven to Mark 2, 300°F or 150°C. Cream the sugar and butter until light, add eggs and mix thoroughly. Add the mixed peel, spices and essences (to taste). Fold in the flour and mix well. Add dark food coloring to make the cake as "black" as desired.

Pour the mixture into three well-greased 8-inch round baking tins lined with greaseproof paper. Do not fill the tins to the top.

Bake for approximately one hour. When cooked allow to cool for a while and then soak with black or red wine.

Cakes can be frozen and reheated. Pour wine on top to moisten.

— Recipe by Leslie Ollivierre, Madame Pierre, Petite Martinique

Devi Sharp's Sorrel Drink
4 quarts of water
2 pounds sorrel (washed and deseeded)
2 cinnamon sticks
3 whole allspice
5 whole cloves
1 one-inch piece of ginger, peeled and cut into four pieces
2 pieces of orange peel about 1 inch each
1 Cup sugar

Rinse the sorrel and remove the calyx. You can cut around the seed with a small knife, or just pull the sepals off the seedpod. This is a bit of a chore and will make you consider paying the bit extra to purchase your sorrel deseeded.

Add cinnamon, allspice, cloves, ginger and orange peel to the water and bring to a boil. Add sorrel and sugar to boiling water and boil for a minute. Cover the pot and let steep overnight. Strain the leaves and spices from the liquid and discard (or save to make jam). Refrigerate the liquid sorrel concentrate.

When ready to use, add water or club soda to dilute the concentrate. You can then also add rum for a refreshing cocktail. You may need to add more sugar, but start on the light side with the sugar and you can always sweeten it as you use it.

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Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

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WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Dear *Compass*,

I read with interest Jim Hutchinson's article in the October issue of the *Compass* [*see page 34 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/october19compass_online.pdf*]. The question "What Would You Do?" produced an interesting debate aboard *Galene*. I feel for the writer's predicament; we all know our boats and the best way to prepare them for weather. To be forced to change one's plans because of another is extremely annoying. However, I believe Hutch took the seaman-like approach when faced with the prospect of a situation that potentially could have caused damage to his boat.

The mate on *Galene* saw things differently. "She should ditch that fellow immediately," was the initial response. "What sort of a man leaves a woman and a baby on their own on a yacht with a broken engine at the height of hurricane season?"

What sort of man indeed? To leave your nearest and dearest, not to mention your pride and joy, to the vagaries of the hurricane season demonstrates a cavalier rather than a seaman-like attitude.

Richard Mayhew
S/V Galene

Dear *Compass*,

I have learned through the years that anything Jim Hutchinson writes is well worth reading, and 90 percent of the time, I agree with what he has to say.

In the October issue of *Compass*, I read Jim's article "What Would You Do?". He has made two mistakes. A man leaving his wife and baby on a big yacht with no crew and a non-working engine is in my mind not only inexcusable; it verges on criminal behavior.

Jim's article should have named the yacht and the man who abandoned his wife on the boat during hurricane season!

Don Street
Formerly of yacht *Iolaire*

Hi Don,

Don't blame Hutch for these omissions. If we were going to publish the guy's name, to be fair we would have had to contact him to get his side of the story, and if we were going to publish the name of the yacht we'd have had to contact the woman as well, as it all might have been embarrassing to her. But we had no means of tracking them down before press time.

Now you can go back to agreeing with 100 percent of what Hutch writes!

CC

NOT THE PRETTIEST SOLUTION

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,

Bill and JoAnne Harris's article in the October issue of *Compass* about their passage from Panama to Grand Cayman was something else! It was the first time I'd heard of razor wire being used on the lifelines to deter boarders. [*See "Razor Wire and Wild Weather" on page 16 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/october19compass_online.pdf*]

But then I ran across this on the internet (*https://robbreport.com/motors/marine/protect-your-supery-acht-against-pirates-2870052*):

"One super-yacht captain regarding an Indian Ocean crossing: 'We also deployed barbed wire on our swim platform. While it may not be the prettiest solution, barbed wire is an effective one: it is rolled out across the beach-club deck and kept there the entire time the yacht remains in dangerous waters. Ideally, no guests are on board during such risky crossings, so no one is swimming.'"

One question: does barbed wire rust?

Bill Smith
S/V Abracadabra

WELCOME TO THE WINDIES

Dear *Compass*,

About the article "Top Tips for New Caribbean Cruisers" in the October issue, can you elaborate on the comment about knowing the wind? We check the forecast for the Caribbean often and it usually says 15 gusting 20, or 18 gusting 25, on our apps. Is that correct? How often do you experience squalls and how strong are they?

We come from the Med, where it's either blowing five to ten knots or 35 to 60 knots.

Also, is it really getting as busy as the Med? We're trying to escape from the crowded anchorages.

Elena Manighetti

Hi Elena,

I think the Caribbean is generally less crowded than the Med, especially if you get off the beaten track and/or cruise out of high season.

Winds of 15 knots gusting to 20, or 18 gusting to 25, sounds about right. If you look at the pilot charts for the different months, you'll get a good idea of wind speeds and directions at different times of year.

Chris Doyle adds, "Out of hurricane season we get winds from five to 25 knots with stronger squalls. We get far fewer calm and really light wind days than the Med; we also have no sustained gales or storms (more than Force 7) except in the hurricane season."

Come on over and enjoy!

CC

FAN MAIL

Hi *Compass*,

I just read your November issue over breakfast in foggy, fall Germany and dreamt myself away to the beauty of the islands.

I especially enjoyed the article on *Ceiba* and the tips for first-time Caribbean sailors!

You really do a great job with the magazine.

All the best from Bavaria,
Michaela Urban
Michaela Urban Travel & Fine Arts Photography

Dear Sally and the Caribbean Compass team,

I would like to extend my gratitude to you and your entire team for choosing to have our project as your November issue's cover story. This is an honour and I would like to acknowledge it properly. As someone who has lived and worked around the Caribbean for years,



I know how familiar and recognizable your paper is. I can recount many weekends relaxing at a marina or beach bar somewhere flipping through the pages and enjoying the stories; I always found them well written, and Chelsea Pyne's engaging style is no exception.

Our project seems to have taken wings in the past months, with the form of *Ceiba* revealing herself to the world. We started this massive undertaking with next to nothing and our success today is in a large part thanks to publications such as yours stepping forward and telling our story. Indeed, this is not the first time you've shared our progress!

I look forward to continuing to keep up with *Caribbean Compass* and recommending it to friends. On behalf of our entire shipyard crew, thank you again.

Danielle Doggett
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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

***Dear* Compass *Readers*,**

We want to hear from YOU!

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

We do not publish individual consumer complaints or individual regatta results complaints. (Kudos are okay!) We do not publish anonymous letters; however, your name may be withheld from print at your request. Please keep letters shorter than 600 words. Letters may be edited for length, clarity and fair play.

Send your letters to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

MY BLUE ECONOMY BUGBEAR

by S. Brian Samuel

"Blue economy" is a term in economics relating to the exploitation and preservation of the marine environment. My blue economy bugbear these days is cruise ships. I believe they destroy our Caribbean Sea and they contribute minimally to the host economies. My top ten beefs with the cruise ships are:

1) Passenger spends are minimal — and overstated.

The bi-annual economic impact report put out by the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) is a highly unscientific, based on a visitor expenditure survey filled in by less than three percent of passengers, with questions skewed to produce inflated results. Few passengers will take the 20 minutes needed to fill out a survey that reveals who they are, where they live, and how much income they make, just to admit that they only bought one T-shirt.

2) The industry is highly united, and the Caribbean is not.

The FCCA is the umbrella organization for the industry and they do an excellent job of promoting the interests of their members. On the other hand, there is no organization of Caribbean governments to speak with a unified voice to the industry, neither CARICOM nor the OECS. Result: we get played off one country against the other, like crabs in a barrel.

3) The ship is the destination.

Cruise ships are very good at keeping their passengers on board, where they spend the money (or more) they would have spent ashore. In Grenada, an estimated 25 percent of passengers stay on board, according to port data.

'I experienced first-hand how difficult it is to make money from cruise ships.'

"Activities such as dining and entertainment are all done on the cruise ship, leaving little to be spent in the local economies." — Caribbean Development Bank

4) They squeeze local small businesses.

In my short career as a small boat operator in Grenada, I experienced first-hand how difficult it is to make money from cruise ships. They added 100 percent commission on the prices charged by local vendors, and they insisted that operators carry expensive third party liability insurance for their passengers. During the dead summer season, small operators "suck wind." The hotel and yachting sectors decline in the summer, whereas cruise ships almost completely disappear.

5) Host countries are in a race to the bottom.

In 1999, when Grenada imposed a US$1.50 per head Environmental Levy on cruise ship passengers to help meet the rising cost of solid waste disposal (a large part of which came from the cruise ships themselves), Carnival Cruise Lines, the largest in the world and supplier of 50 percent of passengers to Grenada, boycotted the island for five years. Neighboring islands were only too happy to take up the slack.

6) Infrastructure consumption by cruise ship passengers is not priced.

A large cruise ship can produce 95,000 liters of sewage, 500,000 liters of wastewater, seven tons of garbage, 56 liters of toxic chemicals and 26,000 liters of oily bilge water per day. Where does this end up? When you add road usage and congestion in urban areas into the equation, it is evident that cruise ships are huge consumers of infrastructure services onshore — but do they pay their fair share?

7) Never the twain shall meet.

There are two distinct types of tourist: stayovers and cruise ship passengers, and cruise ship passengers rarely come back for an extended stay. I have seen no data to suggest that those "conversion drives" that give out expensive brochures actually work.

8) They turn away real tourists.

On cruise ship days, Grand Anse Beach in Grenada becomes overcrowded with noisy rambunctious daytrippers. This is diametrically opposed to what most stayover tourists and yacht visitors come to Grenada for: tranquility, natural beauty, peace and quiet. The Tobago Cays, the Eastern Caribbean's sailing gem, becomes overcrowded with cruise ship excursions during the winter season, often resembling Coney Island on the Fourth of July. Average spend per stayover tourist in Grenada is US$950, versus a paltry US$40 per cruise ship passenger, and yet we are sacrificing the former for the latter: this makes zero economic sense.

9) Head taxes are minimal and inadequate.

The average head tax in the Caribbean is US$8.92 per passenger, a derisory amount when compared to the real cost of cruise ships to the host countries.

Last but by no means least:

10) They pollute OUR Caribbean.

In May 2019, Carnival Cruise Lines was fined US$20 million for dumping plastic waste into the sea and falsifying waste disposal records. Carnival has a long history of dumping at sea and it is obvious that the occasions when they have been found out are only a small percentage of their illegal dumping.

According to Friends of the Earth, the worldwide cruise ship industry dumps around one billion gallons of sewage into the oceans every year. Given that the Caribbean accounts for one third of the global cruise ship industry, then we can assume that one third of that sewage is dumped into OUR precious, fragile Caribbean Sea.



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DECEMBER 2019

1	Open Sail & Surf, Curaçao. cursailing@gmail.com
1	Antigua National Sailing Academy Open Day. info@nationalsailingacademy.com
4 - 10	Antigua Charter Yacht Show. www.antiguayachtshow.com
12	FULL MOON
13	Public holiday in St. Lucia (National Day)
14	O'Neal & Mundy Commodore's Race, BVI. RBVIYC, admin@royalbviyc.org
14	Diamond Dash Race, St. Lucia. SLYC, www.stluciayachtclub.com
14	Woburn Wind Warriors youth sailing fun day, Grenada. (473) 410-4211
15	Yay Ray Laser Fleet Races, Grenada. PCYC, www.pcycgrenada.com
16 - 24	Nine Mornings Festival, St. Vincent. http://discoversvg.com
21 – 22	Winter Challenge, Puerto Rico. CNSJ, www.nauticodesanjuan.com
22	Winter Solstice
24 – 26	Dominica Christmas Regatta. info@dominicamarinecenter.com
25	Public holiday in many places (Christmas Day)
26	Public holiday in many places (Boxing Day)
27	Positive Vibes Festival, Bequia. facebook.com/thehubcollective
29	Year-End Race, Curaçao. palapivo@icloud.com_
30	Fireworks in Fort-de-France, Martinique, www.tourismefdf.com
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; Britannia Bay, Mustique; Clifton, Union Island; and Kralendijk, Bonaire. Public holiday in Cuba (Year End Celebration).

JANUARY 2020

1	Public holiday or 'recovery day' in many places (New Year's Day); Junkanoo parades in the Bahamas, Annual Festival Parade in Montserrat. www.facebook.com/MontserratAnnualFestival
1	Seven Seas Cruising Assn Gam in Trinidad. jessejamesmembersonly@yahoo.com
1 – 2	St. Kitts 'Sugar Mas'. www.facebook.com/SKNCarnival
4 – 5	St. Croix 'Crucian Carnival'. www.stcroixtourism.com/christmas_festival.htm
6	Public holiday in some places (Three Kings Day/Epiphany)
10	FULL MOON
10	Public holiday in the Bahamas (Majority Rule Day)
11 - 19	St. Barts Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org/festival.html
14 - 19	Barbados Independent Film Festival. barbadosfilmfest.org
16 – 24	Barbados Sailing Week. www.barbadossailingweek.com. **See ad on page 15.**
18	National Parade and Official Opening of Dominica Carnival. www.dominicafestivals.com
21	Public holiday in Puerto Rico & USVI (Martin Luther King Day), in Barbados (Errol Barrow Day), & in the Dominican Republic (Our Lady of Altagracia)
22 – 5 Feb	Mustique Blues Festival. https://basilsbar.com. **See ad on this page.**
25	Public holiday in Aruba (GF Croes Day)
25 – 1 Feb	Martinique Cata Raid, Ligue De Voile De La Martinique
26	Public holiday in Dominican Republic (Duarte Day)
26 – 31	Grenada Sailing Week. www.grenadasailingweek.com. **See ad on page 12.**
27	Public holiday in Cayman Islands (National Heroes' Day)
28	Public holiday in Cuba (Birthday of José Martí)
29 – 2 Feb	Bequia Music Fest. www.bequiamusicfestival.com. **See ad on page 14.**
TBA	World ARC 2020-21 departs Rodney Bay, St. Lucia. WCC, www.worldcruising.com
TBA	World ARC 2020-21 departs Santa Marta, Colombia. WCC, www.worldcruising.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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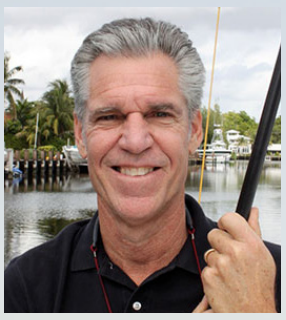
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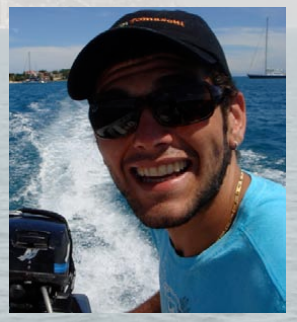
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2015 Royal Cape 530
$652,000



2015 FP Sanya 57
$999,000



2015 ALIBI 54
$899,000



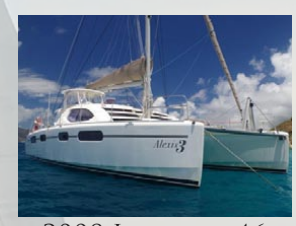
2015 Lagoon 560 S2
$1,250,000



2008 Catana 50
$620,000



2011 Lagoon 450
$479,000



2008 Leopard 46
$420,000



2007 Catana 50
$659,000



2015 Bali 4.3
$499,000



2007 Lagoon 440
$410,000



2003 Privilege 465
$395,000

Some Recently Sold Boats



2016 FP Helia 44



2015 Catana 47



2009 Catana 50



2014 FP Helia 44



2011 Privilege 615



2014 LAGOON 450



2010 Outremer 49



2006 Sunreef 62

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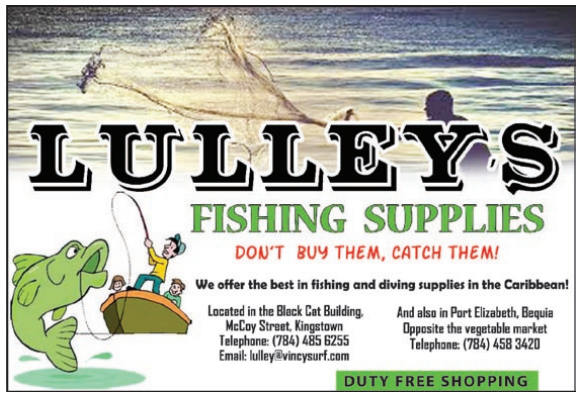
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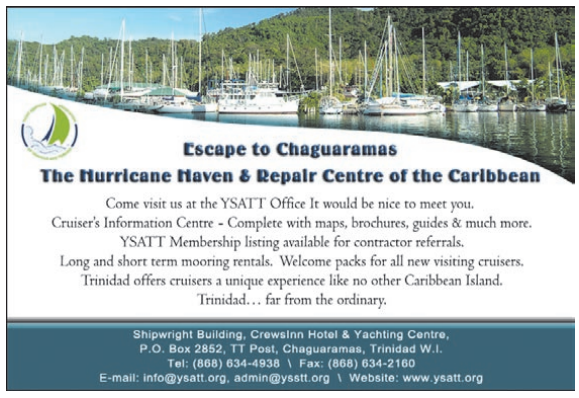


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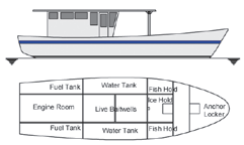
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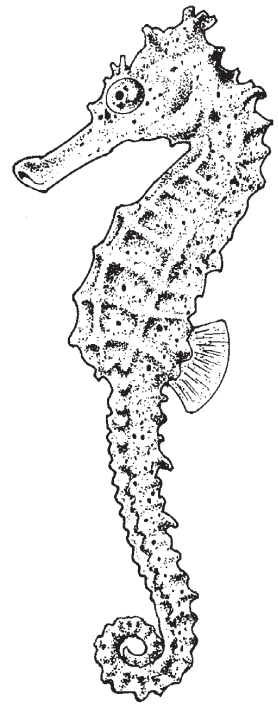


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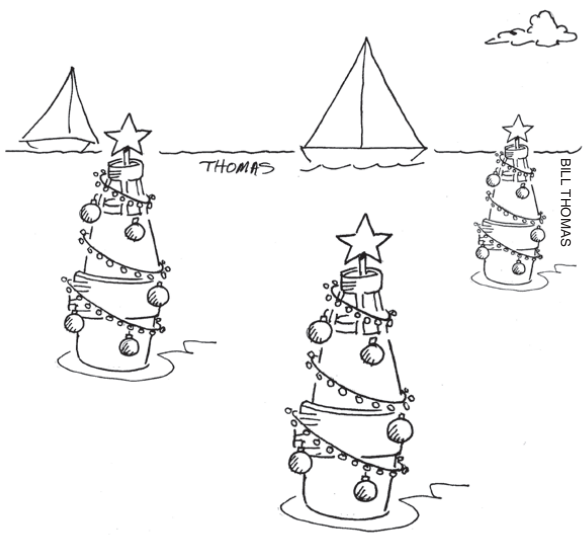
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