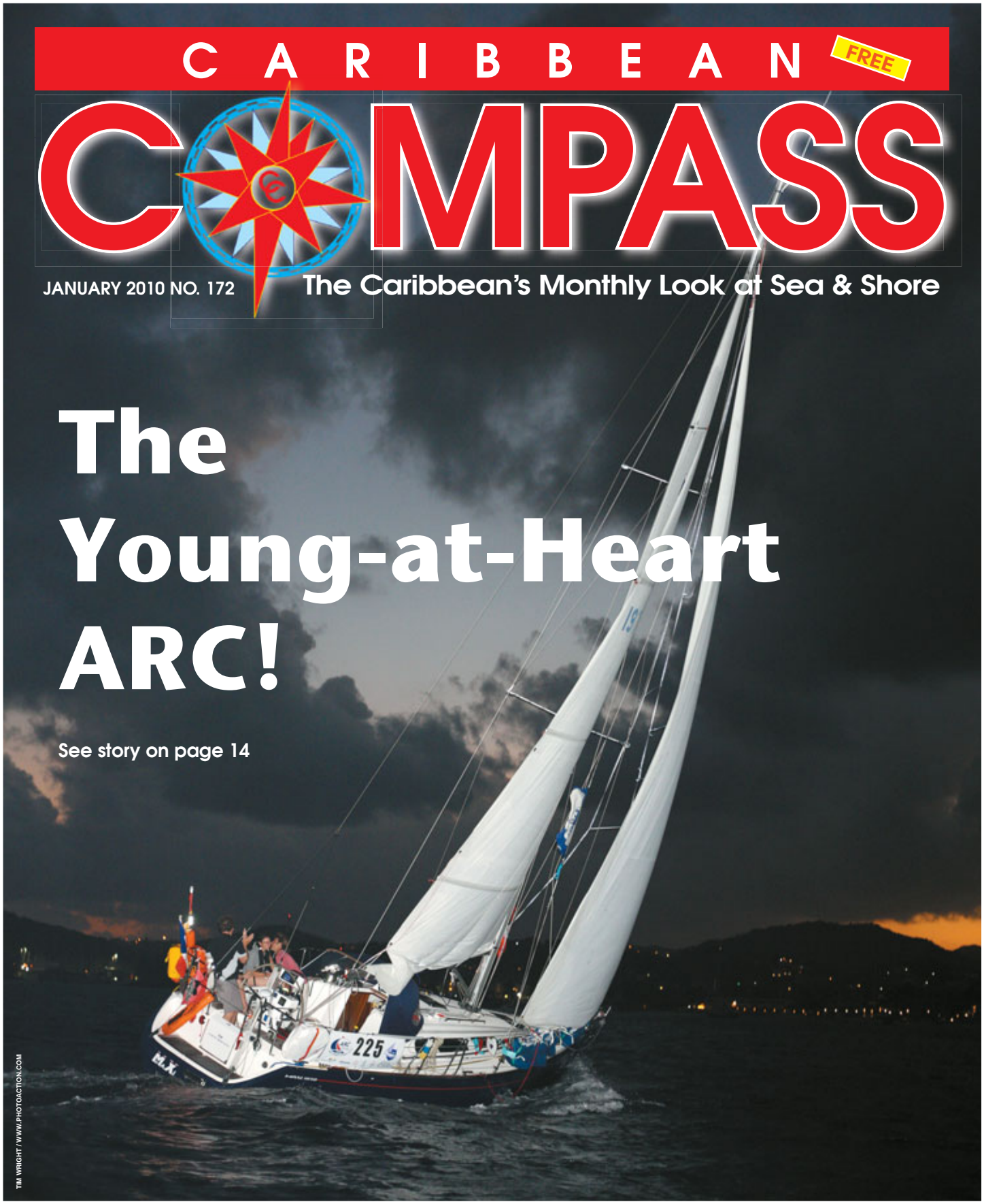
CARIBBEAN FREE
COMPASS
JANUARY 2010 NO. 172
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

The Young-at-Heart ARC!

See story on page 14



TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

INNOVATIONS

2010



JABSCO

LITE FLUSH ELECTRIC TOILET

JAB/58500-1012



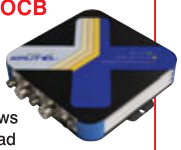
A new electric toilet designed to instantly retro-fit your existing manual toilet or to give your bathroom a modern stylish look.

The innovative design offers both low power and water consumption with an integral rinse and waste pump system.

easy SPLIT

EASYSPLIT OCB

WDK/A027



The easySPLIT OCB active VHF splitter allows a single masthead VHF antenna to be shared automatically between a Class B AIS transponder and a 25 watt VHF radio transceiver.

As an added bonus it also provides an output to feed an FM stereo radio.

Connections:
VHF Radio and VHF Antenna: SO-239
AIS Transponder: BNC female
FM Radio: Motorola car radio connector

ROCNA ANCHORS

ROCNA ANCHOR

ANR/ROC020



Budget Marine introduces the very latest in modern anchor design Rocna developed "new generation" marine anchor.
Its features include instant setting and superior holding power on most seabeds, addressing the issues which plague more traditional types.

Rocna is an excellent choice for any vessel from a small runabout to a small ship.

AB

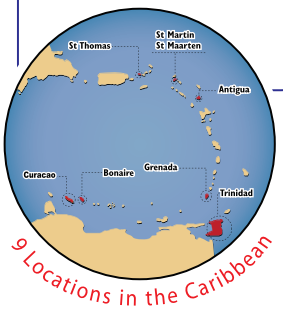
AB LAMMINA 9 UL

AB/32000050000



AB´s commitment to innovation remains on the forefront in the development and design of Light Aluminum Hull RIBs.

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Bequia
Withfield Sails and Model Boats
Port Elizabeth

Curacao
Kapiteinsweg #4
Netherland Antilles

Dominica
Dominica Marine Center
Roseau

Grenada
Turbulence Ltd.
Spice Island Boatyard

Panama
Regency Marine
Pedro Miguel Boat Club

Puerto Rico
Atlantic Sails and Canvas
Fajardo

St. Croix, USVI
Wilsons' Cruzan Canvas
Christiansted

St. Lucia
The Sail Loft, St. Lucia
Rodney Bay

St. Vincent
Barefoot Yacht Charters
Blue Lagoon

Trinidad & Tobago
Soca Sails, Ltd.
Chaguaramas

Antigua Barbados Bequia British Virgin Islands Curacao Dominica Grenada Panama Puerto Rico St. Croix St. Lucia St. Martin St. Vincent

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

www.caribbeancompass.com

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CMPA caribbean marine publishers association

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Cover photo: Mini Maxi, *winner of ARC 2009 Best Family Performance* *Photo: Tim Wright/www.photoaction.com*



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

"The *Caribbean Compass* magazine is to the sailing community in the region as the wind is to sailing: without it there, we would all be 'in irons'!

The *Compass's* extensive coverage of all that goes on in the islands — such as culture, Immigration and Customs rules, conditions and events — make it a must-read for casual and professional sailors alike."

— Niki Borde, Manager
Regatta Promoters Ltd.
Tobago Carnival Regatta

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

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Info & Updates

St. Croix Warning and Update

Marilyn Cook reports: There has been a major problem with yachts entering Christiansted Harbor, St. Croix. On average, one cruising yacht a month has been driving up onto Round Reef. Several have been lost, and all suffered damage. Just since Thanksgiving 2009, two sailboats have gone hard aground. Please study the chart before entering the harbor! (*Editor's note: Nancy and Simon Scott's* Cruising Guide to the Virgin Islands 2009-2011 *has a large aerial photo on page 262 that clearly shows the location of Round Reef. Space does not permit its reproduction here.*)

Round Reef is situated right in the middle of what one would think is the channel. To be on the safe side, I recommend entering the harbor on the left, following the green buoys along the peninsula straight in. There is a red-over-green buoy that marks the northeast corner of Round Reef. It is a dual channel marker. Apparently, some sailors assume you can go either side of it. DON'T! It is marking the straight-in channel (left channel) and also the WAPA channel that actually is a 90-degree right turn down along the reef going west. I have been using the channel for many years and I still get the willies coming in. It can be very confusing, as there are buoys everywhere.

Also, St. Croix's Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) has installed 20 moorings in Gallows Bay for transient yachts. They cost US$2.00 per foot per month and are well made. You can call DPNR at (340) 244-9066.

Security Patrols in Prince Rupert Bay, Dominica

Helen Clarke reports: Portsmouth Association of Yacht Services and Security (PAYS) would like to remind all yachts visiting Dominica to moor or anchor in the north end of Prince Rupert Bay (between Blue Bay Restaurant and the Purple Turtle) where security patrols are conducted nightly. Although we recognize that some visitors prefer the seclusion of the south end, current economic conditions do not permit our group to patrol the whole bay and although Dominica is one of the safest countries in the Caribbean, we cannot recommend that you anchor outside the patrolled area.

Please note that we tried to patrol the south end on a regular basis but we could not afford the additional fuel given the current revenue stream. We will monitor the situation through the season but PAYS President, Jeff Frank, is actively visiting all boats at the end of the day and asking them to move north.

PAYS is a registered non-profit association, established in 2007, and includes 17 members from the yacht tourism sector in Portsmouth, including tour guides, yacht service companies, restaurants and dive centres in the community. Funding for the night security is provided by membership fees, donations, fees from yacht moorings in Prince Rupert Bay, fund-raising beach barbecues and other fun activities. All services are provided by members on a voluntary basis and all proceeds are dedicated to ensuring your security and to helping develop the yachting sector in Dominica. Please help support our program by using PAYS members for your yacht services when coming to Dominica and joining in our fun events.



The PAYS patrol boat, a boost to yacht security in Portsmouth, Dominica

For more information contact Jeff Frank at (767) 245-0125 or Helen Clarke at (767) 275-3020.

St. Maarten Bridge Openings

As is customary every "high" season, the bridge into Simpson Bay Lagoon, St. Maarten, opens six times during the day in order to handle the vessels that make use of several marinas in the lagoon. The daily seasonal openings are: 9:00AM outbound, 9:30AM inbound, 11:00AM outbound, 11:30AM inbound, 4:30PM outbound and 5:30PM inbound. This schedule will run until May 2010.

Users of small craft are requested not to transit the bridge channel during bridge opening hours. Boats docking at the BBW dock should not be maneuvering in the channel during the bridge operational hours. Small sea craft must make use of the port channel when passing under the bridge.

—Continued on next page



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Jet ski owners and rentals are requested to inform users that they must put their waterspouts off when passing under the bridge. This prevents corrosion of the iron structure of the bridge.

Captains and owners of vessels, after docking their vessels in the lagoon, should immediately come to the window of the Simpson Bay Lagoon Authority & Immigration to clear in their vessel, crew and passengers and pay the necessary bridge and harbor fees and dues. (*See related story on page 9.*)

6th Edition of Sailor's Guide to Martinique Now Available

Ti'Ponton is bilingual, French and English, and offers the most extensive directory for sailors' needs in Martinique. It includes the names, addresses and telephone numbers of more than 600 nautical services, suppliers, provisioning companies, doctors, local restaurants, sightseeing spots and much more. *Ti'Ponton* also provides tidal information for major coastal cities in Martinique.



Ti'Ponton is a FREE publication and can be picked up all around the island all year round. For the latest marine news log on to www.tiponton.com

For more information contact Carola Pajari at cptiponton@wanadoo.fr

OCC Officer Appointed for Port Antonio, Jamaica

Errol Flynn Marina's General Manager, Dale B. Westin, has been appointed Honorary Port Officer by the Ocean Cruising Club. The international cruising organization, based in England, designates the port officers at key marinas worldwide in an effort to ensure that OCC members are afforded first-class assistance wherever they may cruise. To qualify for membership in the OCC, a prospective applicant must document they have made an ocean passage of at least 1,000 miles point-to-point.

For more info on the OCC visit www.oceancruisingclub.org

LIAT Flies to the Grenadines

Canouan Island, home of the Grenadines base of The Moorings yacht charter company, is now more accessible than ever. On November 20, regional airline LIAT started operating two non-stop flights per week from San Juan, Puerto Rico. LIAT flight 383 leaves San Juan on Fridays and Saturdays at 4:00PM and arrives on Canouan at 6:20PM. LIAT flight 384 departs Canouan on Saturdays and Sundays at 10:50AM and arrives San Juan at 1:10PM. In March 2009, LIAT began service from Barbados to Canouan operating four flights per week.

New Underwater Sculptures in Mexico

The first phase of a new underwater project in Cancun, Mexico is now complete. The first three sculptures were submerged in November, entitled The Archive of Lost Dreams, Man on Fire and The Gardener of Hope. Construction of the monumental second phase is also underway. This includes more than 400 life-size figurative works, which when complete will form part of the world's largest underwater art museum.



Underwater sculptures provide new attractions for snorkelers and divers. As marine growth colonizes the artworks, they evolve

Works by the same artist, Jason de Caires Taylor, form Grenada's popular underwater sculpture park at Moliniere Bay.

—Continued on next page



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EC Funds Shipping Study

Norman Faria reports: Can we in the islands ever get a viable Eastern Caribbean sea transport system carrying both freight and passengers?

That question could well be answered on the completion of a 200,000-Euro Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) study funded by the European Union. According to a release from the EU's Bridgetown, Barbados office, two main outcomes of the study would be to get a good estimate of passenger demand and to determine whether the shipping aspect would be sustainable over a long period.

Said the release in part: "If it (the service) materializes, it would enhance the export capabilities of the islands' agricultural output and provide alternative passenger routes which satisfy demand between OECS member countries, as well as explore possible pricing structures that can satisfy adequate return to operators." It added, against the backdrop of rising concerns about regional food security, "Whereas certain islands may have a surplus of agricultural products, lack of shipping freight lines does not facilitate the movement of produce."

The study is expected to take three months.

New Dinghy Dock at Cumberland Bay, St. Vincent

One of the things cruisers say they want is more and better dinghy docks, and the development of tourism and recreational facilities at Cumberland Bay on the west coast of St. Vincent was enhanced in November with the construction of a sturdy new one. This will allow yachting visitors in the bay easier access to the shore, where before dinghies had to be hauled up onto the beach. It will also facilitate visits by sailors to the newly developed Cumberland Beach Recreational Park which, when fully operational, will include a restaurant, laundry, showers and small shops.



It's easier now to step ashore at scenic Cumberland Bay. The new dinghy dock and Recreational Park are at lower left in the inset photo

The community-based project is part of a Tourism Development Project funded by the European Union. Consultations with area residents had determined that improved yacht services would be an asset to their livelihoods. The dock and park buildings were built by a local construction team, and the facility will be run by the Cumberland Valley Eco-Tourism Organization with the assistance of the National Parks Authority.

For more information contact Ernst De Freitas at (784) 495-0791.

Bequia Sunshine School's Good Fun for a Good Cause

Lisa Hunnicutt reports: The Bequia Sunshine School is a non-profit organization for children with special needs. The school operates solely on funds donated and those raised by various annual charity events, including one of Bequia's most fun and interactive fundraisers: The Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction. The event will be held this year at The Salty Dog, Port Elizabeth on Sunday February 14th. Not only do we solicit donations of gently used items, gift certificates and items of interest before the event, but we also encourage participation on the day of the event, bidding on unique, funky and functional items. These items and others are sorted throughout the year for use in the book sales, the auction and a jumble sale, while some remaining clothes and shoes are further donated to charity organizations in St. Vincent.

Look for the following events in 2010: "Walking on Sunshine" fun walk, January 3rd; Book Sales under the Almond Tree (two or three per year); Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction, February 14th; Jumble Sale (including school crafts, book sale and bake sale), March 20th.

Please support these events, donate items and volunteer your time. Monetary donations can be sent to The Sunshine School, Box 90BQ, Bequia, VC0400, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, or, as with material items, can be dropped off at the school during regular school hours. Look for our Sunshine School cans at various local businesses to drop your spare change, too!

For more information contact Camille Jacobs at (784) 457-3794 or visit www.bequiasunshineschool.org

Contributions Welcomed for Carriacou Education Fund

Melodye Pompa reports: As cruising boats are starting to move north from their summer hideaways, please remember that the Carriacou Children's Education Fund will gratefully accept any and all contributions: clean, used clothing for adults and children; household goods; treasures of the bilge; handmade craft items; and, of course, CASH. These items will be auctioned at our annual fundraising in July, directly preceding Carriacou Regatta Festival. Proceeds go to provide local needy children with school uniforms, textbooks, lunches, and scholarships to TA Marryshow Community College. Contributions can be left at the Carriacou Yacht Club in Tyrrel Bay.

For more information contact boatmillie@aol.com

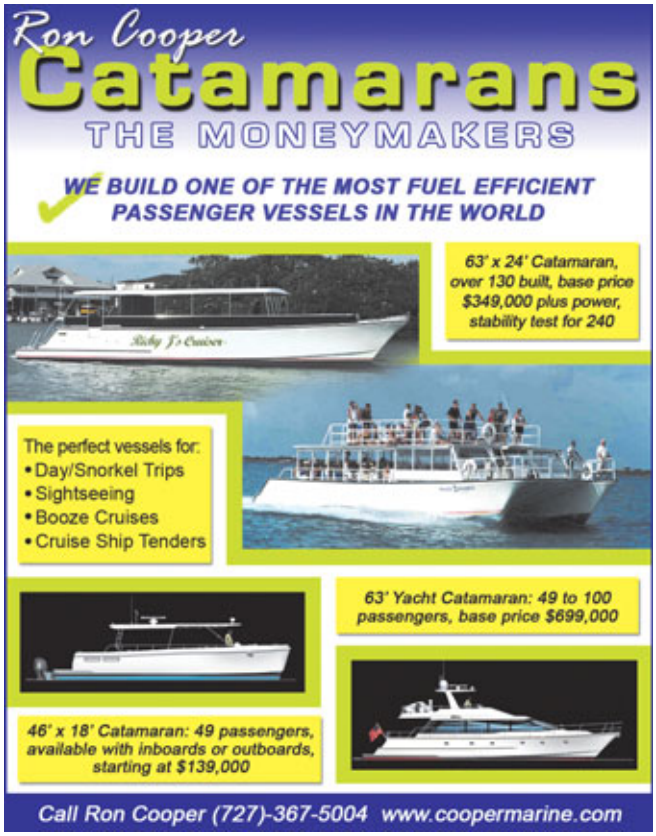
Errata

In last month's issue we referred readers to an ad for Grenada's Bluewater Sailing School, but the ad did not appear in that issue. Apparently the principals in the business were busy welcoming a new baby — congratulations!

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers *Beyond the Islands* of Bequia, page 43; Jolly Harbour Marina of Antigua, Market Place section; Marigot Beach Club of St. Lucia, page 24; Ocean Experts of St. Maarten, page 16; and Woodstock Boatbuilders of Antigua, page 9. Good to have you with us!







BUSINESS BRIEFS

New Gourmet Food Outlet in Bequia

Gourmet Food Ltd SVG has opened a new location in Bequia, conveniently located right next to the GYE chandlery and near the dinghy docks in the northeast corner of Admiralty Bay. This is their third outlet, following the opening of a supermarket deli café at Kingstown, St. Vincent's cruise ship berth last April. The flagship store is in Calliaqua, St. Vincent.

The Bequia wholesale food outlet is also a supermarket, offering high quality frozen vegetables, meat, fish and shrimp as well as canned food. And as a café, it also offers a nice place to drink a glass of wine, beer, fruit juice, tea or coffee and choose from a light café menu including shrimp/vegetable spring rolls, Gourmet Burgers, french fries, potato croquettes, calamari/onion rings, fresh-baked baguettes, garlic baguettes, sandwiches, Danish pastries, croissants and more.

Gourmet Food Ltd SVG also sees the outlet as an enhanced source of communication for their wholesale business, giving Bequia's hotel/restaurant/bar owners and visiting yacht chefs greater access to professional sales representatives "face to face". Fredrik Svanberg, owner of the Gourmet food group, was at the opening and commented, "We are very happy to expand our business in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It compliments our Swedish operation because we sell the same products in Stockholm. Bequia will now benefit from a wide choice of high quality, chef-ready food products."

For more information see ad on page 44.

Early-Bird Discounts at Dockwise Yacht Transport

Catalina Bujor reports: Dockwise Yacht Transport, the only float-on/float-off yacht transport service, is featuring a very special voyage from St. Thomas, USVI to Newport, Rhode Island and crossing the pond to Southampton, UK; Toulon, France; and Marmaris, Turkey aboard motor vessel *Super Servant 4*, which sails from the end of May through June, 2010. They are offering attractive prices and special discounts to those that book early.



For more information contact Nadine Massaly in Martinique at +596 596 741 507 or Nadine@dockwise-yt.com, or see ad on page 21.

Now: Cyber Help-Desk at Sea Services, Martinique

Ciarla Decker reports: Sea Services Shipchandler at Fort de France in Martinique now has an e-mail address dedicated to receiving your nautical questions.

Contact us at seaservices972@orange.fr and we will be glad to help!

For more information see ad on page 17.

Underwater Engineering, Corrosion Protection Services

Reds Caribbean Limited was incorporated in 2006 in the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago to provide underwater engineering services, which include commercial diving and underwater inspections and repair; surveys and positioning; in-water marine surveys and inspections; remote-operated vehicles; corrosion prevention; and rope access services to the local and Caribbean-based oil, gas, petrochemicals and marine engineering companies.

Since 2007, Reds Caribbean Limited has been certified as an In-Water Survey Company by the USA-based American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), and holds General Membership with the Association of Diving Contractors International Inc of Houston, Texas.

In the field of corrosion protection services, in 2008 Reds Caribbean Limited became the authorized agents and distributor for ZINGA UK, a division of MG Duff International Ltd. MG Duff is the manufacturer and supplier of the ZINGA range of anti-corrosive products within the territorial areas of Trinidad & Tobago.

For more information see ad on page 10.

Cabrits Café & Dive Re-Opens in Dominica

Helen Clarke reports: We have re-opened Cabrits Café & Dive in Lagoon, Portsmouth, Dominica as of November 14th, 2009. Situated in the north end of Prince Rupert Bay right next to Big Papa's, Cabrits Café & Dive offers dive and snorkel reservations, snorkel equipment sales and rentals, and a European coffee shop



right at the water's edge. Even if you are not water babies, you are still more than welcome to come visit and enjoy the fabulous views of Prince Rupert Bay. And this year we are building a jetty especially for our yachting friends!

For more information contact cabritsdive@yahoo.com

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St. Maarten Charter Yacht Show Faces Changes

Outgoing St. Maarten Marine Trades Association (SMMTA) President Jeff Boyd has announced that as of this year, the Mediterranean Yacht Brokers Association (MYBA) will no longer own the St. Maarten Charter Yacht Show. Ownership of the show now comes back to St. Maarten. The MYBA was involved in the show for three years.

Boyd said he hoped there would be a show in 2010, but it would be up to the SMMTA board of directors, and to some degree the membership, to decide the value of the show to them and to the island. Discussion of a possible new format for the show will reportedly begin next month. According to reports in the island's *Daily Herald* newspaper, Boyd said, "I think what we might see is a full-blown show rather than just a charter show… It may be more of a trade show, which we feel would be better for our members because it brings trades and more activity to St. Maarten." He added that he would also like to see the date changed for the St. Maarten show; in recent years the dates have conflicted with the Antigua Charter Yacht Show (see story on Antigua show page 10).

For more information on the SMMTA visit www.smmta.com

Dockside Management 'Preferred' by IGY Marinas in St. Maarten

Dockside Management, one of the leading ships` agents in the Caribbean, has signed an agreement with Island Global Yachting (IGY) to be a "preferred provider" at IGY's marinas in St. Maarten: The Yacht Club at Isle de Sol and Simpson Bay Marina. Based on St. Maarten, Dockside Management provides vessels with services including banking, clearance, visa assistance, courier/freight, provisioning, parts and repair and VIP services.

For more information contact office@docksidemanagement.net

Simpson Bay Under New Authority, Fees to Drop

As reported in the St. Maarten *Daily Herald* on December 1st, the Simpson Bay Lagoon Authority Corporation (SLAC) is now officially part of St. Maarten Harbour Group of Companies. As a result, control of the water rights along the shore and in the lagoon has been combined under one authority, which paves the way for uniform fees.

The island's marine industry and megayacht owners have been at loggerheads with SLAC for more than a year now over various issues, especially the bridge fees that went into effect on January 1st, 2008 without consultation with industry stakeholders. Industry insiders, including the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association, had warned that the fees and the way they were being applied were causing the island to lose yachting business to other islands. There also was a notable shift of yachts from the Dutch to the French side of St. Maarten, endangering investments made on the Dutch side over the years.

It was announced in December that the controversial mandatory one-week "double" fee for vessels entering and departing Simpson Bay Lagoon would be dropped effective this month.

News from Antigua's Woodstock Boatbuilders

Andrew Robinson reports: Woodstock Boatbuilders were part of a group of Antiguan businesses that participated in the Monaco Boat Show last September. The show was a great success with a good attendance and very positive feedback. The Antigua & Barbuda stand also received a large number of visitors. Woodstock would like to thank the Ministry of Tourism, National Parks Authority, Charter Yacht Meeting and those businesses that supported the stand.

Marine Engineering is our newest department, but one that is growing rapidly. Recently we have become agents for Fischer Panda and Westerbeke, suppliers of world-class marine generators and engines. Woodstock's head engineer recently completed a Fischer Panda training program.

We also completely refreshed our website last year. You'll now find it easier to navigate, jam-packed with information and with links to other useful sites. Have a look at woodstockboats.com and let us know what you think!

For more information see ad on this page.

New Marina: Christophe Harbour, St. Kitts

St. Kitts will soon be home to Christophe Harbour, a new marina and luxury residential community on the island's southeastern peninsula. Christophe Harbour's debut residential property offering, Sandy Bank Bay, is set along a horseshoe bay with two reefs and a natural sand bank. Existing as a marine sanctuary, the bay will remain free of boat moorings so that sealife can flourish and panoramic views of the Atlantic are protected.

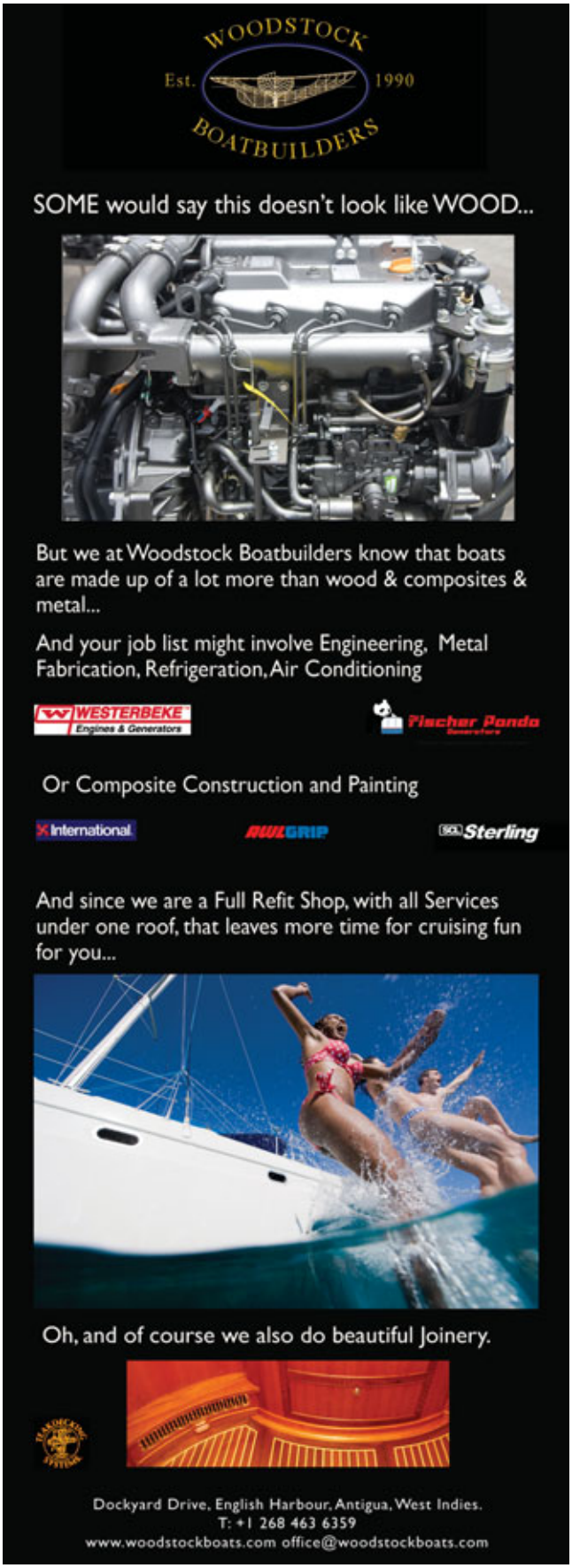


The Marina at Christophe Harbour will be located in what is presently the Great Salt Pond, a 300-acre parcel that serves as the centerpiece of the 2,500-acre Christophe Harbour resort. Whitehouse Bay, located just outside the Great Salt Pond, is a well-protected yacht anchorage.

"St. Kitts is on the yachting 'flight path' geographically, so once the marina is up and running, there will be no need to divert to Antigua on the way down from St. Maarten to Barbados," believes Kate Spencer, who has resided in St. Kitts since 1978. Her husband, Philip, is a classic-yacht designer. Some sample cruising distances from other popular destinations are: Antigua, 55 miles; St. Maarten, 65 miles; St. Barths, 55 miles; St. Thomas, 175 miles.

The Marina at Christophe Harbour is located at 17° 14′ N and 62° 39′ W. Upon its completion, the marina will provide spacious berthing capacity and advantages including a protected entrance and safe inner harbour; 300 slips (with 50 to 60 slips accommodating vessels 85 feet to 400 feet); and a designated port-of-entry offering streamlined Customs and Immigration services.

For more information visit www.christopheharbour.com



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Antigua's Charter Yacht Show the Best Yet

by Lucy Tulloch

"Where are all the boats?" was the question on everyone's lips in early December. Large numbers of yachts were registered in the 48th Antigua Charter Yacht Show but the docks seemed eerily empty...

Until, as happens every year, a steady stream of magnificent yachts appeared at the entrance of Falmouth and English Harbours and made their graceful procession up the channel.

It is the oldest boat show in the Caribbean, and you could feel it in the international buzz in the bars and cafés as industry insiders caught up on news and networked over cappuccinos and smoothies. Two-hundred-and-fifty professional charter brokers, 93 exceptional yachts and numerous sponsors and exhibitors came from



all over the world. The most exciting thing this year was the number of new launches, and not small yachts either — 55 were between 90 and 200 feet and eight over 250 feet long. Banners and bunting flew in the Christmas tradewinds from the likes of Camper and Nicholsons, Edmiston, Fraser Yachts, Burgess, Nicholson's Yacht Charters and International Yacht Collection.

Following a sumptuous opening on December 7th at the Antigua Yacht Club Evening Affair there were daily informative morning seminars with fresh breakfast in the historic Copper & Limber Store in Nelson's Dockyard. There was also a glamorous Welcome Dinner Party, there were wine tastings and brunches, there was an evening yacht viewing, there was the more-popular-than-ever Chef's Competition held by the pool at the luxurious boutique hotel The Inn at English Harbour. There were crew parties, bands, door prizes and finally the 25th Anniversary Fincham's Follies Variety Show for some light evening entertainment.

Some large yachts not in the show, anchored off in Falmouth Harbour as berth space was limited this week, led to one of the funniest sights of the week: the enormous *Mirabella V* (the largest sloop in the world, with a 292-foot mast) at anchor, making the dwarfed J-boat Ranger (LOA 136 feet) putting up her main nearby look quite like a little Dragon!

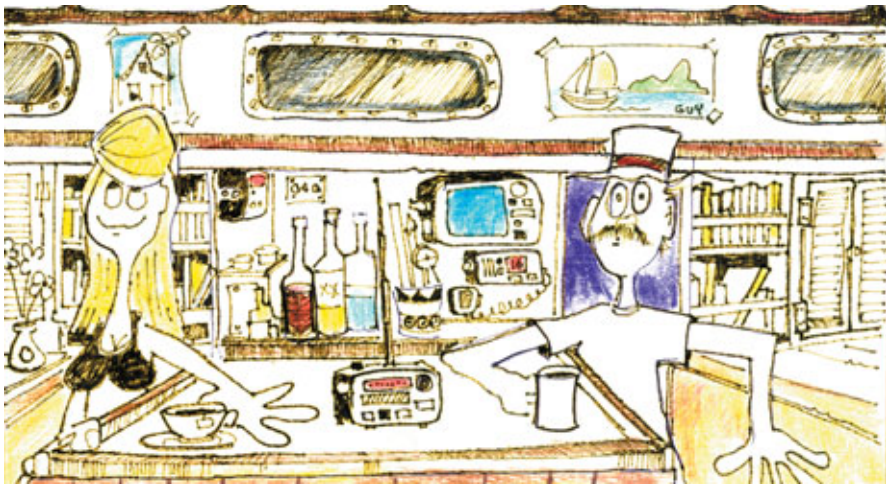
The Boat Show is run by the Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting, chaired by Paul Deeth and co-board members Anne Marie Martin and Janetta Miller, along with the incredibly dedicated management team of Sarah Sebastian and Afsaneh Franklin. Congratulations to you all. What a good start to the season!

WEATHER ON THE WEB

Cruisers have their favorite websites for researching a number of factors that affect their lives, not least of which is the inescapable weather. Steve Siguaw of *S/V Aspen* sent this useful list of Selected Caribbean Weather Forecasts for the Eastern Caribbean – Internet:

- Caribbean Offshore Waters Forecast – Wind and Waves for the Eastern Caribbean
  www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIAOFFNT3.shtml
- Atlantic Tropical Weather Discussion – Tropical Waves and ITCZ
  www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIATWDAT.shtml
- Atlantic Graphic Tropical Weather Outlook
  www.nhc.noaa.gov/gtwo_atl.shtml
- Sailing Weather Forecasts for the Caribbean
  www.passageweather.com
- NOAA Buoy for the Eastern Caribbean
  www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_page.php?station=41040
- Wind and Wave Forecasts throughout the Caribbean
  www.windguru.cz/
- Volcanic Ash Advisory – Montserrat Activity
  www.ssd.noaa.gov/VAAC/messages.html
- Wind Forecasts from QuikScat for the Caribbean
  http://manati.orbit.nesdis.noaa.gov/quikscat/
  http://manati.orbit.nesdis.noaa.gov/dataimages21/cur/zooms/WMBas20.png
- Radar Image of the Eastern Caribbean
  www.meteo.fr/temps/domtom/antilles/pack-public/animation/animMOSAIC2.html

Another radar weather site the Compass Crew likes is http://hadar.cira.colostate.edu/ramsdis/online/RMTC_BAR_1km_vis.html


GUY DEAN

SELECTED CARIBBEAN SHORTWAVE WEATHER REPORTS

UTC	AST	STATION & REPORT DESCRIPTION	FREQ	TYPE	MODE
0600	0200	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
0930	0530	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
1030	0630	Trinidad Emergency Net 9Z4CP (Eric)	3855	Voice	LSB/ham
1030	0630	Carib. Emergency & Weather Net	3815	Voice	LSB/ham
1100	0700	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	8137	Voice	USB (Note 2)
1100	0700	Caribbean Maritime Mobile Net	7250	Voice	LSB/ham (Note 3)
1100	0700	Bahamas Weather Net	4003	Voice	LSB/ham
1110	0710	Puerto Rico/VI Weather Net	3930	Voice	LSB/ham
1120	0720	C6AGG Carolyn Wardle Weather Net	3696	Voice	LSB/ham
1130	0730	KP2G Caribbean Weather Net (George)	7086	Voice	LSB/ham (Note 1)
1200	0800	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
1200	0800	Coconut Telegraph	4060	Voice	USB
1230	0830	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	8104	Voice	USB (Note 2)
1300	0900	Caribbean Sea (WLO)	C	Voice	USB
1330	0930	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	12350	Voice	USB (Note 2)
1530	1130	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
1800	1400	Caribbean Sea (WLO)	C	Voice	USB
1800	1400	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
2000	1600	Southbound II (Herb)	12359	Voice	USB
2030	1630	Carib. Cocktail & Weather Net (George)	7086	Voice	LSB/ham
2130	1730	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
2235	1835	Caribbean Emergency & Weather Net	3815	Voice	LSB/ham
0000	2000	Caribbean Sea (WLO)	C	Voice	USB
0000	2000	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
0330	2330	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB

** Since November 3, 2008 several radiofax charts produced by the National Hurricane Center which are broadcast from New Orleans are based on information from different model run times. A 36-hour wind/wave chart has been added to the New Orleans broadcast. For full details visit www.nhc.noaa.gov/radiofax_transmission_changes.shtml*

Frequencies (in kHz):

A) NMN, Chesapeake, 4426, 6501, 8764, 13089, 17314.
Caribbean Sea approximately 25 minutes later.
NMG, New Orleans, 4316, 8502,12788.
Caribbean Sea approximately 25 minutes later.

B) 4316, 8502, 12788, 17144.5

C) 4369, 8788, 13110, 17362, 22804. Gulf of Mexico, Southwest North Atlantic, then Caribbean Sea

Note 1: An in-depth voice report followed by faxes and SSTV, except Sundays.

Note 2: Unless severe weather threatens, this net is not conducted on Sundays. When there are active Tropical systems in the Atlantic, Caribbean Weather (Chris) runs a Net at 2300 UTC / 1900 AST, on 8137, Voice, USB. For complete schedule and changes visit www.caribwx.com/ssb.html

Note 3: George comes on approximately 0710 with a weather synopsis, then moves to 7086 and at 0730 gives the complete Caribbean forecast including rebroadcasting WEFX.

- WWV has World Marine Storm Warnings (Voice) at 8 minutes after each hour, and Solar Flux information at 18 minutes after each hour on 2500, 5000, 10000, 15000, and 20000 AM.
- During hurricane activity, information can be found continuously on the Hurricane Watch Net on 14325 USB/ham.
- Anyone, licensed or not, may legally operate on HAM frequencies in the event of a life-threatening emergency.

SELECTED CRUISERS' VHF NETS

St. Martin/Maarten	0730	VHF 14	Monday-Saturday
English Harbour	0900	VHF 68/06	Daily
Grenada	0730	VHF 68	Monday-Saturday
Chaguaramas	0800	VHF 68	Monday-Sunday
Porlamar	0800	VHF 72	Monday-Saturday
Puerto La Cruz	0745	VHF 72	Monday-Saturday

Thanks to William Mills of Toucan I, *Teri Rothbauer of* FREE, *Dave Richardson of* Overstreet, *Bill Campbell of* Alcheringa II, *the Pompas of* Second Millennium, *Steve Siguaw of* Aspen *and Nick Wardle of The Bahamas for information, which was correct to the best of our knowledge as this issue of Compass went to press.*



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THE CURRENT YACHT SECURITY SITUATION

by Melodye Pompa

Because I have served as Net Controller of the Caribbean Safety and Security Net for more than 12 years, the editor of the *Caribbean Compass* asked me to address the current situation regarding crimes against yachts in the Eastern Caribbean. As we enter another sailing season, the purpose is to give the new Class of 2010 some tips and to remind the old timers of any significant changes of which we all should be aware.

These comments are based on the reports that have come in to the Caribbean Safety and Security Net (all are posted on www.safetyandsecuritynet.com), various e-mails from many individuals, and my personal observations. In no way should anyone take this to be a scientific study: the only way we can derive useful statistics from this data is to have what I call yacht-days (how many yachts each day per island). At this time, there is no other database of incident reports, despite the promises of the OECS Secretariat three years ago to create such a thing. What the data does tell us though, like the canary in the mine, is that *serious* crime against yachts is on the increase, as a percentage of total crime reported.

First the numbers:

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009 ytd*
total reports	121	119	77	91	65
thefts & burglaries	105	99	56	60	43
assaults & robberies	16	20	21	31	20
% of total – serious crime	13.2%	16.8%	27.3%	34.1%	31.7%

** year to date through December 14*

While the total number of reports has decreased almost annually in the past five years, along with the so-called petty crimes, the violent crimes, involving weapons and physical assault, have increased dramatically as a percentage of the total reports. I attribute the decrease in total reports to a number of factors:

• Yachtspeople in the Eastern Caribbean are, for the most part, more attuned to the potential of crime. Cruisers are taking measures to insure their own safety: locking the yacht and locking the dinghy, using bars in hatches and companionways in potentially dangerous anchorages, curtailing their night-time activities away from the yacht.

• Because of considerable print publicity over the past three years (e.g. in *Soundings*, *Cruising World*, *Yachting World*, *Yachting Monthly*, the *Los Angeles Times* and all those newspapers who picked up that story, and the Compass), more people are now aware of the issues, especially charter guests, who previously were, at best, naïve. Some of that publicity has exaggerated and sensationalized the number of incidents, but intelligent sailors take that as part of the decision of where to sail. Most reports to the Security Net come by e-mail from a wide variety of yachtsmen: Americans, Canadians, British, Dutch, German, French, Swiss, Italian, Venezuelan, Austrian, and local folks here in the islands.

• Based on observations throughout the Eastern Caribbean, yachting tourism was down by some 30 to 40 percent in the 2008-9 season over the previous season.

• More and more cruisers are just not reporting what they think of as petty crimes (e.g. thefts of dinghies and outboards); they believe it's not worth the effort and there is little chance of their property being recovered, and they don't want to damage the reputation of their favorite anchorage.

The obvious point here is that we must take steps to protect ourselves because the law enforcement authorities are hard-pressed to contain the increase in crime against their own citizens, and they are stretched too thin to put much effort into solving crimes against yachts. Unfortunately, the attitude of many police officers is that their efforts are wasted because the yacht victims leave the island and are not available for any trials, if the perpetrators are arrested. While this may be true if the victims are charter guests, it is not true for cruisers, who may be very willing to rearrange their plans to attend such trials to give testimony.

The other two responses heard all too often are that the yachting victim brings it on himself because of his dealings with and use of drugs, and that most reports of crimes against yachts are attempts to defraud their insurance companies. The drug scenario is more apt to be on the perpetrator's side: the attempt to get easy cash to support his drug habit. The spin doctors in Antigua were quick to point the finger at drug practices among the megayachts to explain the death of an Australian megayacht captain last year, when, in fact, he was shot while chasing a purse snatcher during a walk back to his villa following dinner. The victim could just as easily have been a Swiss banker or a British construction worker — the incident had little to do with yachting. The insurance fraud response, on the other hand, is just too bizarre for comment!

On the positive side, police in Dominica, Carriacou and Grenada did arrest perpetrators in several crimes on those islands, and the defendants are serving time in jail. The flip side is that the St. Vincent authorities have still not convicted anyone responsible for the string of assaults and robberies taking place in Chateaubelair over the past four years, and the yachting community is unaware of even any arrests having been made in connection with those crimes. In most cases, police and coast guard officials are prompt and courteous in taking reports but that is as far as it goes. Four incidents closed of 63 reported is a closure rate of only six percent — not very good.

The various marine trades associations, while talking about security issues on their websites and in their brochures, seem concerned with yachting security only as a function of their revenue stream, not for altruistic motives having to do with the yachts themselves. MIASL in St. Lucia was instrumental several years ago in obtaining and staffing a patrol boat for the Rodney Bay area; that boat is no longer in service.

—Continued on next page



—*Continued from previous page*

Their HELP billboard provides a phone number and a VHF channel for yachts to call for help: the phone number does not work from a Digicel cell phone (we tried it ourselves when we needed help) and no law enforcement agency responds to the VHF call.

Dominica, via PAYS (Portsmouth Area Yacht Security), provides a patrol boat for the north end of Prince Rupert Bay, if you don't mind the loud music two nights a week and can find room to anchor among all the moorings (which are in the good anchoring spots, rather than in grass or rock). Unfortunately, this patrol boat, as well as the late St. Lucia boat and any others which are implemented, is easy to avoid: the bad guys just hide in the shadows until the patrol passes and then go on with their nefarious business. Only if the patrol boat is equipped with communications gear and can respond quickly to calls for help can those potential incidents be short-circuited.



An invaluable itinerary-planning resource for sailors in the Caribbean is the Security Net's regularly updated website, www.safetyandsecuritynet.com

The Dominica Marine Association, as all the others, is interested in preserving the reputation of Dominica, and asked me last spring to delete all the old crime reports from the Security Net website because "they are giving Dominica a bad name". This past summer, following the two boarding/assaults in Prince Rupert Bay, I was asked to change the descriptions to minimize the injuries to one person and downplay the use of the gun; concurrently, their press release describing the trial of two of the perpetrators exaggerated the sentences given.

YSATT, in response to an alleged list of six incidents within a year on the rhumb line between Trinidad and the Hibiscus gas drilling platform, rather than pointing out that four of the six were NOT on the rhumb line and one of the six was earlier than the year in question, called a meeting with the Trinidad & Tobago Coast Guard and other individuals, asking for protection from the rash of incidents listed.

Marinas and boatyards are not exempt from incidents of theft and burglary, despite the promises of the management of these facilities. There are several reports every year from so-called secure facilities, so lock the boat when you walk away, even to the showers. In fact, there have been reports of outboards locked to the stern rail taken by thieves, as well as break-ins to locked boats in slips, so locking up is no guarantee. It is fairly easy for a sneaky quiet thief to approach a marina slip from the water.

Neither the marine trades associations nor the law enforcement agencies have been able to curtail the watercraft speeding through various anchorages, such watercraft including jet skis, party boats, local fishing and speed boats, water taxis, and resort launches. The Security Net is receiving an increasing number of reports each year having to do with damage to yachts and dinghies, as well as severe injuries to people and even several deaths. Yachtsmen should be very aware of conditions where they anchor and not take unnecessary risks, which include standing up in the dinghy, no matter how cool it looks, swimming too far from the yacht, and kayaking and snorkeling except very close to shore out of the traffic lanes.

Lastly, prior to visiting an anchorage, yachts should check the Security Net website www.safetyandsecuritynet.com for the latest information. In many anchorages, the crimes are consistently of a type: for example, in Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou, it is nearly always theft of an outboard, with the dinghy left to drift away, tucked away on a remote beach, or deflated and sunk. Anyone who does not lock their dinghy to the yacht, a dock or a tree on shore while in Tyrrel Bay is setting themselves up to be a target, and that includes the fishermen and the water taxis. These outboards are said to be headed to the St. Vincent Grenadines, where the change in police jurisdiction prevents follow-up. On the other hand, those few incidents in Dominica are boardings to steal articles that can easily be sold: cameras, computers, watches, cell phones, but never outboards.

Be wary of believing every blog you read on the Internet. The downside of having such an extensive information tool is that everyone and his brother can post, claiming to have the final word on the facts. Without specific information, various press media have published wild speculations about the dangers of cruising, including in their dire warnings incidents that occurred ten or 20 years ago. There are now MORE rumors among the cruising community about crime than prior to the birth of the Security Net — change is not always progress!

The websitewww.safetyandsecuritynet.com includes a long list of safety tips accumulated throughout the nearly 14 years of the Net's existence. It is not difficult to take the necessary steps to avoid becoming the victim of a crime against yachts. There are, of course, no guarantees, but there are no guarantees in the life we choose to lead. There are, however, smart practices which can prevent petty to serious problems. Like brushing your teeth in the morning becomes a habit, so too should LOCK IT OR LOSE IT!

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IT'S (STILL) A FAMILY AFFAIR!

by Sally Erdle



ALL PHOTOS: SALLY ERDLE

Main photo: Like each new ARC arrival, within moments of completing their transatlantic passage, the Bjonness family from Norway on the X-452 Odin *is welcomed by St. Lucia Tourist Board and World Cruising staff*
Inset: Rodney Bay Marina rolled out the red carpet on its new docks for the crews from 32 nations who sailed in ARC2009

"When we said we were joining the ARC, people asked the strangest questions about what we were going to do with the kids — as if maybe we would leave them in the backyard with a big bowl of food!" The Dutch yacht *Elena* is stern to the dock at Rodney Bay Marina and Adam Kok laughs as his sons Mees, age three, and Pieter, one-and-a-half, clamber around the cockpit. The aluminum-hulled Veliger 477, with a crew also including the boys' mother, Leonie, and adult crewmembers Rosa and Martin, had arrived in St. Lucia a few hours before, as part of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers 2009. "It's special being with the children for such a long time in a small space," says Leonie. Adam adds, "We never considered not taking them."

Every year as the cruising season in Europe ends, hundreds of yachts voyage to the Caribbean. The ARC began 24 years ago as an Atlantic crossing-in-company for liveaboard cruisers, with enjoyment and safety — rather than speed — as its main considerations. Speed soon entered the picture, with IRC Racing Divisions racing under the auspices of the Royal Ocean Racing Club, but the ARC's original amateur spirit of friendly fun remains strong.

ARC2009 departed Las Palmas in the Canary Islands on November 22nd, 2009, and the bulk of the 212-boat fleet arrived at Rodney Bay, St. Lucia during the week of December 7th.

Originated by cruising yachtsman Jimmy Cornell, the ARC is now organized by World Cruising Club. ARC2009 was sponsored by the Tourist Board of Gran Canaria, the Port Authority of Las Palmas, the St. Lucia Tourist Board and Rolnautic, and is run in association with *Yachting World* magazine.

The Open and Racing Divisions' competitions are, of course, exciting. In this edition of the ARC, after a course distance of 2,700 nautical miles and almost 12 days at sea, only 16 minutes and five seconds separated the first two yachts to cross the finish line: the Volvo 60 *Big One* and the Wally 80 *Bagheera*.

But while the racing divisions are popular and attention grabbing, the ARC is still emphatically the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers. And while cruising boats themselves continue to evolve into something more akin to their racing counterparts, one undeniable trait that declares "cruiser!" is the presence of small children in the crew. As is typical for the ARC, and unlike most ocean races, about ten percent of 2009's fleet were "family" boats. They carried a total of 34 children.

The ARC organizers have made a consistent effort for the event to be family friendly. After arrival in Rodney Bay, the St. Lucia Yacht Club hosts an annual Kids' Day where the ARC youngsters and the SLYC junior members enjoy fun and games together on the beach and in the water. In the marina at Las Palmas before the start, there was a dedicated family pontoon ("The kids went feral," one parent noted) and there was a children's club each morning, supervised by ARC staff.

For young Australian sailor Jesse Dransfield of the Bavaria 46 *Nika*, a highlight was celebrating his ninth birthday in Las Palmas three days before the ARC start; all the other ARC kids came and sang the equivalent of "Happy Birthday" in their own languages. Jesse then crossed the Atlantic with his parents, Helen and John, his grandfather Peter, his Uncle Dean, and his siblings Zoë, age 6, and Tyler, 4.

Helen remarks, "It happened suddenly — thanks to various circumstances we had the opportunity for a year off. John and I grew up sailing dinghies. We had chartered in Croatia, and recently Peter chartered this exact boat and found out it was for sale.

—*Continued on next page*



After a couple of weeks at sea, Zoë, Jesse and Tyler from the Australian yacht Nika *were thrilled to meet Rodney Bay's famous Fruit Man*



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—*Continued from previous page*

"I was encouraged when I started reading blogs of boats with children aboard. The stars aligned: we bought the boat, packed up the house, took the kids out of school… and here we are!" The family will sail *Nika* back home to Australia.

The previously mentioned Kok family is on a planned three-year circumnavigation. The toddlers already had sailing experience back home and when the adults are busy working ship, "they are different boys," Adam says; they seem to instinctively know to stay out of the way. A day and a half into the Atlantic crossing, they got over being seasick. Leonie says, "They had no problem sleeping, and it was amazing how they developed their sea legs." Adam says, "Pieter could walk around onboard when the boat was heeled at 30 degrees, but after we arrived he had to relearn how to walk on the dock."

One of *Elena's* cabins is a playroom, and there are a beanbag and an inflatable wading pool for the cockpit, to which the children are restricted when not below-decks. Underway, Rosa organized activities with them such as baking. Adam says, "They basically do the same things as at home: play, fight, enjoy life. The scariest moments have been on land, never on the boat. Rules on the boat are really strict."

Leonie stowed lots of goodies provided by the boys' grandparents, and doled them out every couple of days to keep the fun factor high. They also enjoyed fishing and saw two whales. On December 5th, the family celebrated the Dutch tradition of Sinterklaas; the kids set out their shoes in the evening, hoping that in the morning they would contain gifts. To their delight, Sinterklaas (Martin in costume) actually appeared in the companionway. Sinterklaas is believed to visit Holland by steamboat, from Spain, and five minutes after he "came aboard" the boys spotted their first freighter — which Mees promptly identified as Sinterklaas's boat!

Elena's ARC crewmembers Rosa and Martin departed the boat in St. Lucia and the Koks will continue westward. Leonie says that other families wondering about bluewater sailing with kids "should do it. The time together as a family is so important; the children have their parents around all the time. And for us an important part of the ARC was to meet other boats with kids."

Another notable family participating in ARC2009 was aboard the Beneteau 57 *Les Papillons* — the crew consisted of males from three generations of an English family. Steve Bennett, 42, was skipper, cook and navigator, and his crew comprised his father, Arthur; his father-in-law, Keith; his sister's husband, Shane; and his sons Matt, 17, and Jack, 8. Jack was a pier-head jumper. When his mother brought him to Las Palmas to say good-bye, he asked if he could go along, "to take time off school and prove to myself that I could do without TV. Now it seems strange how I lived." Jack says he wants to continue sailing.

Although sailing in Cruising Division, *Les Papillons'* crew was competitive. To stay in the best winds they sailed 3,352 miles – 500 miles more than a similar boat that came in behind them — and went for boat speed, sailing more than 1,000 miles total under spinnaker. "The boat really looked after us," Steve said. Why this boat? "The value for money was fantastic. I looked at five or six other boats over 50 feet. The little things that go wrong you can live with, but it behaves like an adult." Most problems were the result of chafe: the main halyard snapped and "lots" of sheets broke. Steve says, "The key was it's all family, although very few of us had sailed together before. It was fun; it was very relaxed…"

Jack interjects, "Except for… what do you call them? Squalls."

Matt grins at his bother and says, "Sailing across the Atlantic is a big achievement. It's definitely life changing. You see that real things matter." Arthur agrees: "Sailing moves young folks away from bad things in life and toward natural, good things."

"In busy lives back in the UK we don't have enough time," Steve observes. "We've all just had two solid weeks together. If you can do the ARC, do it. But not just the ARC, any sailing adventure. There are highs and lows in crossing an ocean, but you'll never meet anybody who regrets it."

Keith adds, "The ARC provides real companionship, a real brotherhood, almost like a family. There are so many nationalities, people with so many different levels of experience, but you find at the end of the day we're all the same."



Above: Boat buddies. The Dutch Kok family — Leonie, Pieter, Adam and Mees — are visited aboard Elena *by Sepke, Ward and Flor Stellamans of* A Small Nest *from Belgium*

Below: Keith, Jack, Matt, Steve and Arthur on Les Papillons, *celebrating a happy crossing: 'the key was it's all family'*



As Keith noted, not all of the fellow feeling saturating the ARC has to do with children.

Jan Sigtsema, crew on the Jongert 2700M *Ithaka*, grew up in Curaçao from age two to 16, "so coming to the Caribbean is like coming home." After returning to Europe for the holidays, he'll rejoin the boat to do the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta.

Anders Lagerberg, who has owned boats since 1959 and sees the ARC as "a little bit organized and a lot of fun!" says one of the main reasons he joined was the opportunity to meet fellow sailors. Anders, sailing *Victory II*, a Swedish-built Farr 56, intends to spend the season cruising the islands with various friends aboard, haul out in Grenada for the summer, then transit the Panama Canal the following January. A decade ago, Anders helped a friend deliver a boat from Trinidad to Guadeloupe; since then he has chartered with The Moorings and Sunsail out of Grenada and St. Maarten: "This is a bit of paradise." Anders says he asked his wife, Annette, to circumnavigate 30 years ago, and when the dream began to come true it was her idea to join the ARC. "Don't hesitate! A big part is the people you meet."

Of the ARC2009's camaraderie, World Cruising's Andrew Bishop says, "It was a good bunch of participants this year in the sense that they gelled very well. There was a very good atmosphere in the two-week build-up to the start. And then there were steady winds for the majority of the crossing, and breakages were generally small and the sort of thing you'd expect on a long passage, like chafing, so most people were happy." The warm welcome in St. Lucia — with rum punch and fresh fruit presented to each arriving boat, accompanied by a steel-pan serenade — followed by yet more parties, added to the good vibes. Everybody likes a fast passage, and for ARC2009 on December 9th, there were 130 boats in for the "early arrivals" Welcome Party, compared to last year's 29.

"We're looking forward to the 25th edition next year, which will be our 21st in St Lucia," says Andrew. "For the last ten years, we've had more than 200 boats per year — quite a remarkable achievement. Because it's an international event, it continues to grow internationally. Although there has been a drop in entries from the UK, others have filled the fleet. There is a continued trend in growth from entries from former Eastern Bloc countries such as Croatia, Russia and Poland."

At the gala Awards Ceremony on December 19th, Overall Winner of the Cruising Division, the crew of *Amoress 2* from Sweden was presented with the Jimmy Cornell Trophy, as well as the Gran Canaria Trophy for winning Class E. *Nightlife*, the Sigma 41 skippered by Tom Sperry, won the RORC Racing Division. The Arch Marez Trophy for the crew that had best embraced the shoreside activities of ARC2009 went to the all-female Girls for Sail crew on *Diamonds are Forever*.

The younger ARC crews were recognized, too. Best Family Performance on corrected time went to the Chapdelaine family from France on *MiniMaxi*. Lani Waldbrenner aboard *Linocat*, from Germany, was next on stage as the youngest participant — at just 18 months. Many of the ARC boats submitted blogs to the ARC website during the crossing, and a prize was awarded to the Stellamans family of Belgium on the Beneteau Oceanis 46 *A Small Nest* for a hilarious log submitted as through the eyes of Ed the Iguana; for the past ten years Ed the plastic toy iguana has sailed the ARC aboard a boat with children in the crew. Underscoring the tradition of the importance of the family boats in the ARC, every child in ARC2009 was invited on stage to receive a prize.

For full results visit www.worldcruising.com/arc/results.aspx

WorldARC, a circumnavigation in company, departs St. Lucia on January 6th. Crossing the Atlantic from west to east at the end of the Caribbean season, ARC Europe starts from both Tortola (BVI) and from Florida, calling at Bermuda and then cruising the Azores, before finishing in Portugal and northern Europe. The start date is May 6th. The transatlantic ARC2010 will depart on November 21st.

Thanks to the St. Lucia Tourist Board, Palm Haven Hotel, IGY Rodney Bay Marina and the World Cruising Club staff in St. Lucia for making Compass's *research trip to St. Lucia so enjoyable. And special thanks to all the interviewed ARC crews for their warm hospitality.*



REGATTA NEWS

Bojangles IV Takes Top Honors in 20th Caribbean 1500

A week of strong northeast winds in early November 2009 propelled the 54 sailboats in the 20th Anniversary Caribbean 1500 fleet from Hampton, Virginia to Tortola, BVI. The boats hugged the rhumb line and sailed on a single port tack for the entire passage.



Bojangles: 'He could jump so high, jump so high, and then he'd lightly touch down...'

Bojangles IV, a Gulfstar 50 ketch owned by the Kilgour family from Toronto, Canada, took Overall Handicap Honors. First to finish was *Crazy Horse*, a Sundeer 60 owned by Bill and Rosemary Thomas of Middletown, Maryland, who completed the passage in six days, nine hours and 15 minutes.

The Caribbean 1500 Rally, managed by the Cruising Rally Association, left Hampton on November 2nd after a week of preparatory briefings, safety inspections, and gala social events, and arrived at the Nanny Cay Resort & Marina six to ten days later with many veteran skippers recording "personal best" passage times.

Colin and Kathleen Kilgour on *Bojangles IV* with Mitchell (age 11) and twins Gillian and Clare (age 9) were one of eight boats with children that participated in this year's rally.

The 2009 Caribbean 1500 fleet included participants from 23 US states, three Canadian provinces, Germany, the UK, and New Zealand. More than 40 percent of the boats were owned by veteran Ralliers. The boats averaged 47.5 feet in length. Four multihulls and a schooner joined the fleet of monohull sloops and ketches in this year's fleet.

The fleet sailed in two divisions: the Cruising Class, a way to enjoy a cruise in company, or the Rally Class to participate in the fun race. All received the same safety, weather and communication benefits. All Cruising Class boats were presented awards in Tortola that recognized their achievement of safely completing an open ocean passage of 1,500 miles.

The Rally Fleet was divided into four handicap classes. In the Rally Class I, *Clover III*, a Swan 56, skippered by David Fraizer, led the pack. In Rally Class II, *Special Delivery*, a Taswell 58 owned by veterans Bill and Diana Quinlan, placed first. Charlie and Jenny McNamara, on their Catalina 470, *Lady*, topped Rally Class III. Overall Handicap Winner *Bojangles IV* led Rally Class IV, followed by *Amarone*, a Stevens 50 owned by Lenny Statile, and Brian and Kim Duff's *One World*, the sole schooner in the fleet.

Stolen Hour received the event's Tempest Award, emblematic of the "Spirit of the Caribbean 1500." Skipper Peter VanAlstine sailed in the 1990 Caribbean 1500 with his father, Peter Sr., as skipper. This year, the two VanAlstines sailed with roles reversed. Peter and his wife, Christine, will cruise the Caribbean this winter with their children Hannah and Hayden. The award for Best Performance by a Double-Handed Crew went to Christoph and Dagmar Hartung from Weinheim, Germany on *Flomaida II*. The Brouse family (Kirk and Elizabeth, with 11-year-old twins Wesley and Clare) on *Discovery*, a Bowman 57, earned the event's Fishing Trophy, using hand-made lures loaned to them by kids who participated in the Caribbean 1500 in 1999.

More than 15,000 website visitors from 59 countries monitored the progress of the boats in the rally. With wireless transponders on each yacht, positions were broadcast via satellite six times each day. All Ralliers received cold champagne and a warm welcome at Nanny Cay Resort and Marina in Tortola, where the BVI Tourist Board and Road Town Wholesale hosted nightly parties.

The Cruising Rally Association, founded by veteran solo sailor and sailing event organizer Steve Black, is widely supported by a number of leading companies, including Davenport & Company, Nanny Cay Resort and Marina, LLC, West Marine, *Blue Water Sailing Magazine*, Switlik, OCENS, ICOM, and World Cruising Club.

For more information visit www.carib1500.com

Trinis Dominate St. Lucia's BMW J/24 Championship

Michael Green reports: St. Lucia Yacht Club hosted the third BMW J/24 Invitational Championship from November 6th through 8th, 2009 in Rodney Bay. With teams from Barbados, Grenada, Trinidad and St. Lucia, six teams sailed 18 races over the weekend.



Regional J/24 teams raced off The Landings in St. Lucia

Hosted in the The Landings' private marina with teams staying in luxury apartments and two beautiful BMWs on show, this regatta was a five-star event. Friday night's briefing and cocktail party was held at The Landings marina with the six Js tied alongside.

Racing started Saturday morning just offshore — great viewing for those on the beach or aboard Endless Summer's large cat. Courses were 20-minute windward-leewards. After lunch the sailors sailed six more races, with clear skies and ten knots of breeze. Results were close among the top five, with only three points separating Stephen Bushe's Trinidad & Tobago team, Barbados, the two St. Lucian teams and Grenada.

Sunday dawned with more perfect sailing breezes. Team Trinidad & Tobago sailed clear of the field to clinch victories in five of the six races; adding a second place saw T&T finish with 21 points overall. Robbie Yearwood's Grenada team fought off the St. Lucia teams, finishing second with 35 points, and Nick Fosberg's St. Lucia team was three points back in third place overall.

Trinidad & Tobago teams have now won the last two clashes in the J/24 class, achieving first and third places in the Barbados Nationals and now a first overall in St. Lucia, showing great promise for the upcoming 2010 CAC Games in Puerto Rico.

Thanks go to the main sponsor, BMW Prestige Motors, along with The Landings, St. Lucia Distillers and Peter & Company for prizes, and to the committee boat, *Il Restless*. All money raised by this event goes to the St. Lucia Yacht Club's youth sailing program.

Thanks also to the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association for information in this report. For more information visit http://stluciayachtclub.com

Bobby Velasquez Overall Winner in 5th Golden Rock Regatta

The Fifth Annual Golden Rock Regatta, held November 11th through 17th, included races from St. Maarten to Anguilla, Anguilla to St. Martin, St. Martin to Statia, and Statia to St. Maarten. In his first appearance in the event, Sir Robert "Bobby" Velasquez, representing the St. Maarten Yacht Club and racing his Beneteau 45 F5, *L'esperance*, was awarded the Governor's Trophy by Statia Governor Hyden Gittens.

Compass correspondent Stéphane Legendre was there, and we'll have a full report in next month's issue!

Team Tulloch Thrills at US Women's Match Championship

Carol Bareuther reports: The US Sailing Women's Match Racing Championship (USWMRC) was held in St. Thomas, USVI this year, hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club and sailed November 12th through 15th in Cowpet Bay. It is the first time the national event was held outside the 50 states.

Light winds worked to the benefit of US Sailing Team AlphaGraphics (USSTAG) member Genny Tulloch (of San Francisco, California) on the final day. Tulloch was joined by crew Chafee Emory (of Newport, Rhode Island), Elizabeth Hall (Chevy Chase, Maryland) and Elizabeth Kratzig (Miami Beach, Florida).

Tulloch upset fellow USSTAG teammate, Anna Tunnicliffe (Plantation, Florida), and her crew of Molly O'Bryan Vandemoer (Redwood City, California), Liz Bower (Rochester, New York), and Alice Manard (Charleston, South Carolina) in the finals. Manard and Vandemoer are both members of USSTAG. Team Tunnicliffe had dominated the first three days of the championship, losing just one match.

Shifty conditions and a breeze barely reaching six knots set the scene for the final two matches of the semifinals and for the four match finals. In the semifinals, Tunnicliffe defeated Annie Gardner-Nelson (San Diego, California) in three matches. Tulloch bested USSTAG member, Katie Pilley-Lovell (New Orleans, Louisinana), in three matches to force a Tunnicliffe-Tulloch face off in the finals. Team Tunnicliffe had gone 3-0 against Team Tulloch in their first three round robin matches.

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In the finals, Tulloch won the first and third match. Tunnicliffe won the second match, leaving her no choice but to win the fourth match in order to stay in the game. They were only three boat lengths from the finish and both teams were on a beam reach for the finish. The two teams both jibed, and Tulloch came out of the gybe with better boat speed and held it straight to the finish line. "We had a good time and a lot of fun," says Tulloch. "We're about 30 pounds lighter than Anna's team and I think that helped us in the light winds today."

The win for Tulloch is especially sweet after losing to Tunnicliffe in the finals of last year's USWMRC. "It feels great to win this championship," Tulloch says. "We enjoy racing in St. Thomas. The conditions are great."

"This is the first time the USWMRC has been sailed outside of the US," says regatta director, Ruth Miller, "and we're excited to have hosted this event and this level of sailors."

The 4th annual St. Thomas Radiology Women's Regatta and Tennis Tournament was held concurrently with the USWMRC. St. Thomas' Nikki Barnes and St. John's Agustina Barbuto won the regatta portion of the event with a flawless string of first place finishes over eight races. "After every race we went over what we did wrong, figured out how to do it right and put this into practice for the next race," says Barnes, a 10th grade student at Antilles School. "Even though we won each race, we were always on the move and forming new strategies to account for the ever changing conditions."

St. Croix's Sydney Jones and Krista Slino finished in second place, while fellow Crucian sailors, Challis Diaz and Genevieve "Genna" Keller finished third. Twenty-eight sailors competed in the regatta.

The 2009 US Women's Match Racing Championship is sponsored locally by St. Thomas Radiology Associates, which also sponsored the 4th Annual St. Thomas Radiology Women's Regatta & Tennis Tournament, and by Rolex Watch USA, Dry Creek Vineyard, Predict Wind and Sail Proud.



DEAN BARNES

Run concurrently with the US Women's Match Championships in St. Thomas was the Radiology Women's Regatta, in which young local sailors Agustina Barbuto and Nikki Barnes, above, trounced the competition

At Last: Triple Jack Wins Round Tortola Race

After copping numerous line honours in the Round Tortola Race since her arrival in the BVI in 1997, *Triple Jack* finally claimed overall victory on the 40th anniversary of the Peg Legs' Round Tortola Race held November 21st, 2009.

In conditions seemingly made for this trimaran, she circumnavigated Tortola in three hours, 33 minutes and 27 seconds, beating closest rival *Jurakan*, a Melges 32, by 42 minutes across the line. With the wind blowing from the south-southeast (unheard of in the event's 40-year history, according to race veteran Peter Haycraft) the fleet was predominantly able to sail directly to Beef Island and, once on the north side, reach directly to Soper's Hole. Once there, however, fickle winds played havoc with some competitors' finish times but not *Triple Jack's* — she "rattled through" in three painless tacks.

Because of the light winds and wind direction, the Nanny Cay-sponsored *Triple Jack*, a Kelsal 47, was able to carry full main, spinnaker and half-furled genoa almost the entire length of her northern run along Tortola, allowing her to put time between her and the rest of the fleet.

Peter Haycraft's *Pipe Dream* was second in Racing Class, 14 minutes behind *Triple Jack* on corrected time. Last year's winner, Dave West's *Jurakan,* missed second place by one second. Guy Eldridge's *Luxury Girl* lost a whopping 22 minutes after missing her recall for being over early; it's never a good sign when you have to use a spinnaker to get back to the line to restart.

Tom Mullen on *Shamrock V* won Cruising Class, with Adrian Sinton's *Rascal* second and Robin Tattersall's *Diva* third. A raucous prizegiving was held at Peg Legs' Restaurant with Dick Schoonover as MC. Peg Legs' Restaurant and Nanny Cay Marina sponsored the event.

TTSA's Budget Marine Dinghy Ranking Race

Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association in Chaguaramas, Trinidad saw exciting dinghy racing on November 21st at the Budget Marine Dinghy Ranking Race. The Optimist Dinghy Class competed in four afternoon races in good winds and choppy seas. Abigail Affoo showed good speed downwind to take the first race with this term's ranking leader, Myles Kaufmann, coming a close second. Three competitors succumbed to the conditions and did not finish the race. Race Two saw some close battles as the sailors became accustomed to the chop; Derek Poon Tip took the honours with Myles Kaufmann again in second place. In Race Three, Kaufmann took first with Kellyann Arrindell second. The fourth and final race proved an exciting contest between Helena Coombs and Derek Poon Tip. Coombs led the race up until the final mark, but Poon Tip managed to catch up and take the honours over the finish line.



A new National Sailing Scheme supports training for the T&T sailors of tomorrow

A gutsy performance in the Optimist Beginner Class by Geovannie Peters, of the sailing programme in the town of Vessigny, saw him win all four races. Vessigny's Caribbean Champions in the 420 Class, Daniel Briggs and Dekife Charles, won all four races without contest. Wesley Scott took the honours from Mark Peters in the Laser Radial class and Andrew Affoo came home uncontested in the Laser Standard class.

On the following day, the first safety-boat operator course in a series started, under the new National Sailing Scheme training programme. Twelve potential dinghy instructors (eight from Chaguaramas and four from Vessigny) learned rescue techniques for sailing dinghies, using the sailing school safety boat fleet. Steve Jackson and Sebastian Godsmark, experienced sailing instructors from the UK, will be assisting with training and coaching local students for two months.

The TTSA Sailing School Administrator thanked the Sport Company of Trinidad & Tobago (SPORTT) for help with funding and continuing support of efforts to gain international success through the new National Sailing Scheme.

For more information contact Hedge Shuter at (868) 634-1216 or youthsailingschool@yahoo.com

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48 Turn Out for ARC Flotilla 2009

Danielle DeRouck reports: The fourth annual ARC Flotilla sailed off from Castries Harbour, St. Lucia on November 22nd, bound for Rodney Bay Marina. The Brig *Unicorn* joined the fleet and fired the cannons to start the event.



Say 'ARC!' Key players from St. Lucia's public and private sectors showed their ARC spirit aboard the flotilla's mother ship, Grey Ghost

The Flotilla is held on the day the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) starts in the Canary Islands, bound for St. Lucia, and is designed to raise the event's profile locally. A total of 46 power- and sailboats registered in advance and two more boats joined the event on the day.

Aboard many of the yachts were representatives of the Flotilla's sponsors. The Flotilla's mother yacht, Bernard Johnson's Bertram 54, *Grey Ghost*, hosted St. Lucia's Minister of Tourism, Honorable Allen Chastanet; Director of Tourism Lewis Louis; St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC) Commodore Stephen King; Rodney Bay Marina General Manager Adam Foster and his fiancée Alex Prowse; and Bob Hathaway representing the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia (MIASL).

After arrival in the Rodney Bay Marina, all participants proceeded to H2O Restaurant to enjoy complimentary drinks from the Saint Lucia Tourist Board and Heineken, snacks sponsored by H2O, and music by the Digicel Steel Pan Band. Certificates of participation were presented.

The Flotilla is organized by SLYC and MIASL, with assistance from the St. Lucia Tourist Board and Rodney Bay Marina. Special thanks go to this year's sponsors — Digicel, Heineken, Columbian Emeralds, Travel Concept and Blue Waters — as well as to *KIKA* (press boat), *Merlin Too* (photo boat) and to all the participants for making this year's Flotilla a success.

For more information visit http://stluciayachtclub.com

The Superyacht Cup Antigua is This Month

The Superyacht Cup in Antigua has new dates at the end of January.

"More than 15 yachts have said they plan to participate and we are confident that there will be a really strong fleet and excellent racing," says Patrick Whetter, Event Organizer. The event will be held over four days with registration on January 27th and racing on the 28th, 29th and 30th. The "Bucket Rating" system will be used, with two races planned for the 29th.

Perini Navi will be returning to sponsor the Superyacht Cup Antigua and are planning to have at least two of their fleet taking part. The Briand-designed 38-metre sloop *P2*, built by Perini, has confirmed participation. Leading yacht insurance broker Pantaenius, a long-term support of The Superyacht Cup, will also continue their sponsorship of the Antigua event. Wayfarer Marine from Maine USA is taking up silver sponsorship of The Superyacht Cup Antigua.

For more information visit www.thesuperyachtcup.com

New Trophy for Female Sailors at Grenada Sailing Festival - and more!

Budget Marine Grenada, a long-standing sponsor of the Grenada Sailing Festival, will present a new Perpetual Trophy at the 2010 Grenada Sailing Festival, which runs from January 29th to February 2nd.

The Budget Marine Trophy will be awarded to the most outstanding female sailor participating in the event's Port Louis Racing Series, four days of international yacht racing. Nicholas George, Manager of Budget Marine Grenada, explained, "The company has long been a great supporter of the promotion and recognition of talented female sailors, and we are very pleased to bring this to the Grenada Sailing Festival. The aim of the Budget Marine Perpetual Trophy is to acknowledge and encourage sailing talent, spirit and ambition in our many female sailors, and will not necessarily go to the one who is over the finish line first."

The Trophy is a beautifully crafted wall-mounted chronometer, which will be permanently displayed in the Budget Marine Grenada Store in True Blue, and each year the winner's name will be added to an engraved plaque under the chronometer, and a picture of the presentation featured in a Grenada Sailing Festival Photo Gallery also in the store.

The 2010 Grenada Sailing Festival will offer not one, but two weekends of great sailing action. By staging the sailing over two weekends, the Festival will provide more interesting and challenging racing for all participating sailors.

For the second year running, yachts taking part in the Port Louis Racing Series will be able to dock at a "home port", Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, which has some 160 slips available for yachts of all sizes. Camper & Nicholsons Marinas is offering a discount on docking to all participants in the 2010 Port Louis Racing Series. Overall, prices have been reduced by 20 percent on previous rates, and then the marina is offering all yachts taking part in the Festival a further 30 percent discount on dock space.

Racing will start and finish from this base, with new, longer courses, including an extended South Coast Ocean Triangle. There will also be four days of parties Grenadian style. The new look Victory Bar at Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina will be "the place to be" for Finish Line Limes, happy hours, and a new selection of after-race parties, including the Mount Gay Red Cap Party and Festival Farewell Prize Presentation Gala Dinner. True Blue Bay Resort's Dodgy Dock is still on the calendar too: the popular Festival venue hosts the Monday night's party.

Sailing action continues on February 6th and 7th, when the crowd-pulling Grenada Sailing Festival Digicel Work Boat Regatta comes to Grand Anse Beach. There will be competition on the water between the sailing communities of Carriacou, Gouyave, Grand Mal, Petite Martinique, Sauteurs and Woburn, plus live entertainment, games and activities for the children, arts and crafts on sale, and food stalls with traditional dishes on offer. New plans pair this spectacular weekend of racing with the island's Independence Celebrations.

There is more good news for owners or skippers planning to have a pre-Festival clean or maintenance check: Spice Island Marine Services is offering a ten-percent discount on haul/launch, chocking and lay-days (after the company's standard five free days) for yachts participating in the Festival. The offer is good for the month of January and is non-transferable. Contact Justin Evans at Spice Island Marine at justin@spiceisland marine.com

The Grenada Sailing Festival Port Louis Racing Series is part of the Southern Caribbean Regatta Circuit — come south and sail with us! For more details check websites www.grenadasailingfestival.com, www.sailweek.com and www.sailingcarriacou.com

For more information on the Grenada Sailing Festival see ad on page 5.

Competition and Compassion in St. Croix Event

Ellen Sanpere reports: The St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta is set to start off on February 19th with an Opti Clinic for the youngsters and a fabulous rum party for the adults, followed by lots of great racing, February 20th and 21st.

"'Inspired by Competition ~ Enhanced with Compassion' is the regatta's motto," says Julie San Martin, regatta director. "In addition to being a great warm-up for boats and their crews (competition), we are sailing for a worthwhile cause, supporting hospice services for all who need it on St. Croix (compassion)."

The winning CSA Spinnaker-1 skipper will get his/her weight in Cruzan Rum and an invitation to the Hospice Regattas National Championship to be held in Rochester, New York next June. The competition will include up to 30 other Hospice Regatta winners from the US and Canada.

In St. Croix, racing is for the entire family. As many as 30 eight- to 15-year-olds will compete in four Optimist divisions after attending the Opti Clinic, back by popular demand, to improve their skills. The kids also get


ROB JONES

Last year's CSA Spinnaker 2 start in St. Croix. From left: Atlantic Raider, Rushin' Rowlette, Glory Daze, J-Walker, Cayennita *and* Magnificent 7

breakfast and lunches, included in the entry fee, and the overall winner gets his or her weight in sports drink.

In addition to Opti and CSA racers, the regatta invites all local and visiting liveaboards, cruising boats and multihulls to race in the Buck Island Channel, and promises at least one day of point-to-point racing, including the challenging Christiansted town race. One-design IC-24s and Rhodes 19s are invited to race in the protected waters of Teague Bay, with lunch ashore at the yacht club.

The St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta is an all-volunteer effort to raise funds and awareness for hospice care on St. Croix. Over one-third of the St. Croix population is under-insured or has no health insurance coverage at all. One hundred percent of the funds raised will go to support the end-of-life medical needs of St. Croix residents, ensuring a dignified closure to their lives regardless of their ability to pay.

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As of November 2009, Hospice Regattas netted more than US$1million for hospice care in their communities. Fiscal non-profit sponsorship, provided by the St. Croix Foundation, offers donors 501(c) (3) tax-deductible sponsorship options at several levels.

Acknowledging the challenges of US entry requirements, Customs and Border Patrol officers will be at the yacht club on Friday to welcome visitors arriving by boat. There is plenty of anchoring room in Teague Bay, making for a one-stop registration, clearance and party experience.

Some might say, the most compassionate part of the regatta is the "enter now, pay later" provision! Food and entertainment will be available all weekend, and to better plan a memorable party and regatta, San Martin asks skippers to pick a class and to register online. "Please enter early," she says, "No payment is due until February 19th, and there are no penalties if you are unable to show up for any reason." That said, St. Croix offers great sailing in February, competing for a worthy cause, and its famous Crucian hospitality: racers are encouraged to make their plans now!

For more information see ad on page 15.

South Grenada Regatta 2010 Launched

The thriving yachting industry brings revenue to Grenada. Wanting to celebrate the yachting community and also attract more yachts from other islands to Grenada, Le Phare Bleu Marina & Boutique Hotel held the first South Grenada Regatta in February 2009. It was a huge success.



Grenada's Tourism Board Chairman, Richard Strachan, is encouraged by strong sponsorship for the second South Grenada Regatta, coming next month

A special reception was held on November 27th, 2009, to announce the dates of the second edition: February 26th through 28th. At the launch, Richard Strachan, Chairman of the Grenada Board of Tourism, said he is encouraged by so many sponsors from the last Regatta who are still on board; some new and significant sponsors have also been secured.

Damon Du Bois, Marketing & Sales Manager for Westerhall Estate Ltd, is pleased Westerhall will be supporting the event for a second year, using the opportunity to promote Westerhall Plantation Rum. The SGR Committee would like to thank all their sponsors and supporters, especially Westerhall Estate Limited, Netherlands Insurance, Real Value Supermarket and Le Phare Bleu Marina & Boutique Hotel.

Jana Caniga, owner of Le Phare Bleu Marina and co-founder of the SGR, explained that the Regatta Committee discussed how to enhance the experience for participants and spectators, and decided to shorten some courses and add a third race. The Junior Dinghy Sailing will be held on the Saturday, and Sunday will be for prize giving, relaxation, family and fun. The main attraction for families is the fun Pirates' Trail, which takes place on the Saturday and Sunday. One significant change is the registration fee — only US$50 per vessel.

If you missed the South Grenada Sailing Regatta last year, take the opportunity to find out what all the buzz is about!

For more information see ad on page 20.

USVI's Peil and Barnes Selected for Singapore

The Virgin Islands Olympic Committee (VIOC) selected William "Will" Peil, a triathlete and 11th grader at Country Day School on St. Croix, and Nikole "Nikki" Barnes, a sailor and 10th grader at Antilles School on St. Thomas, to attend the first Singapore 2010 Friendship Camp.



Accomplished dinghy sailor Nikki Barnes of St. Thomas was chosen by the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee to attend a special event of the Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games

The Camp took place from December 8th to 12, 2009 and was organized by Singapore's Ministry of Education in partnership with the Singapore Sports School and the Singapore Youth Olympic Games Organizing Committee. It is a special event of the Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games. The 15- to 17-year-old athletes from around the world who participated in the Camp had the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of cultural and educational activities in anticipation of the inaugural Youth Olympic Games (YOG). The YOG will be held in Singapore from August 14th to 26th.

Peil embarked on his sports career as a swimmer with the St. Croix Dolphins Swim Team at age eight. He became a triathlete in 2007, competing in his first triathlon, the Try-A-Tri on St. Croix and finishing first in his age division. Most recently, Peil placed first out of a pack of 73 international triathletes in the 2009 St. Croix Sprint Triathlon.

Barnes began sailing at age seven at the St. Thomas Yacht Club. She competed in the Optimist dinghy until age 15, where her accomplishments included second-best Girl at the 2006 US Optimist National Championships in Florida, Top North American Girl at the 2007 Optimist North American Championships in Mexico, and a placing of 35th out of 255 competitors at the 2008 Optimist World Championships in Turkey. Barnes is currently skippering the two-man International 420 dinghy with crew Agustina Barbuto from St. John.

The VIOC, founded in 1966, has sent a team to every Central American and Caribbean Pan American and Olympic competition since 1966, with the exception of the boycotted 1980 Olympics in Moscow, winning its first Olympic medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. The VIOC represents 22 sports federations.

For more information visit www.virginislandsolympics.com

Third Annual Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta

Fred Thomas reports: The 2010 Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta dates have been moved forward to tie in with plans for a Virgin Islands to Grenada Challenge Race for yachts coming to Grenada to race. The main event will start on March 4th with the skippers' briefing, yacht registration and cocktail party held at Bel Air Plantation, St. David's Harbour, followed by three days of racing.

All courses will be off Grenada's southeastern coast; the first race will start and finish from St David's Harbour. On the Saturday the race will start off St. David's Harbour and end at Le Phare Bleu Marina & Resort, where boats can dock for the night. The final race will be to True Blue Bay Resort, where boats can also dock. Water taxis will be available for those at anchor.

After each day's racing, there will be time to enjoy the famous Grenadian hospitality, with great parties, food and drink, along with local and international bands performing each night. The awards dinner and party will be at True Blue Bay Resort.

Register early and get a break on fees.

For more information visit www.grenadaclassicregatta.gd

Challenge the Grenada Round-The-Island Record!

Roger Spronk reports: At the 2009 Grenada Round-the-Island Race (GRIR), the trimaran *Horizon Region Guadeloupe* shattered the course record by more than an hour, crossing the finish line with an elapsed time of three hours, 54 minutes and two seconds. This record poses an exciting challenge and the Grenada South Coast Yacht Club has responded by creating a prestigious prize for any vessel that breaks it, upping the stakes for the 2010 GRIR!

Chartered by John Burnie for Claude Thelier, *Horizon Region Guadeloupe* will be back in 2010 to defend her title and attempt to improve their 2009 time. At present, the yacht holds several other records, including fastest times around St. Martin, St. Bart's, Guadeloupe and Martinique.

In addition to top-quality sailing competition, the 2010 GRIR weekend from March 12th through 14th will bring a wide range of entertainment to Grenada's Grand Anse Beach. High points of the weekend will include A Taste of Grenada food festival, the youth sailing exhibition, and the ever-popular Crazy Craft Bathtub Derby.

—Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

The Grenada South Coast Yacht Club and 2010 Race Committee are working to continue the GRIR's tradition of promoting sailing excellence while also providing events that celebrate Grenadian culture.

With bragging rights on the table, the GRIR promises to be one of the most exciting sailing events of 2010!

For more information see ad on page 6.

Get Around Guadeloupe

The multi-legged 2010 Round Guadeloupe Race starts at the town of Gosier and includes legs to Saint-Louis in Marie Galante, St. François or Port Louis, Deshaies and Les Saintes before returning to Gosier. The Round Guadeloupe race offers nightly parties at each port, with Zouk music and *ti punch* — a great way to discover the Guadeloupe archipelago and its people and culture.

This year's edition will be held from the 1st to the 5th of April. The new "high season" dates are expected to attract more boats than the former May dates did. Forty yachts raced around the island last year, and organizers foresee an increase in 2010.

For more information see ad on page 7.

Bequia Regatta 2010: Big J/24 Class News

Russell Corrie reports: The Bequia Easter Regatta, April 1st through 5th, promises to be another record-breaking event and the J/24 Class hopes to contribute in significant measure. Last year's turnout of 13 J/24s might be exceeded by a potential 20 teams vying for the honor of being crowned the first-ever "Southern



Caribbean J/24 Champion" in addition to being Bequia's overall J/24 winner. Kudos to the Bequia Sailing Club's Regatta Organizing Committee for running a well-organized event, so competitive and so much fun, that it took the Southern Caribbean J/24 Council just one meeting to decide that it wanted this regatta to be the home of its Big Event every year.

Since Bequia first offered the J/24s their own class at the event in 2005, the St. Lucians have been the dominant force at this regatta, winning in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. But Barbados boat *Esperanza* upset the apple cart in 2009, and 2010 will see a line-up of eager contenders for this newly minted Southern Caribbean Championship crown.

The Trinidadians, who in 2009 won the Barbados Open, the St. Lucia Open and Grenada Sailing Festival, will have their eyes on this prestigious accolade. The Bajans too — as defending Bequia champions, with the largest fleet in the region and a recent taste of the highest level of competition from the 2009 World Championships — have every intention of taking home the goodies. Grenadian boat *Die Hard*, which took honors at the South Grenada Regatta and third overall spot in Bequia in 2009, will be looking for their first big overseas victory, while the Lucians, who virtually owned this class for so long, and who, it is rumored, expect legendary Mike Green to return to Bequia in 2010, will be out for revenge. Last but not least, dark horses St. Vincent and Dominica, who have just started their own fleets, will be crewed by some experienced sailors as well.

With the J/24s joining four other highly competitive classes in Bequia, this is one regatta that is definitely not to be missed.

For more information visit www.begos.com/easterregatta

Too Much Fun!

Sailboat racing in the Caribbean is booming and we've got more Regatta News than we can publish this month! See next month's *Compass* for lots more regatta results and details of upcoming events.

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Portsmouth, a Caribbean Jewel

by Ella Rychlewski

Most people will tell you that Portsmouth's claim to fame is being the island of Dominica's second largest city. So start most of the travel descriptions... only to end a few lines later. However, this is to do this social melting pot and natural jewel an injustice.

Portsmouth was briefly the capital of Dominica before the capital was relocated to Roseau. The topography of the area, marshes and volcanic elevations, did not allow for expansion. Now the bustling center of the Northern District, Portsmouth town is located on the shore of a natural harbor, Prince Rupert Bay, which was a port of call for Columbus in 1504 and today attracts yachts, ferries and cruise ships.

Most tourists and some cruisers head straight for Roseau and overlook the north — rich in history, culture, food and natural beauty. Portsmouth is an ideal base to discover a different part of Dominica.

Planned on a grid system, the town of Portsmouth is centered on Bay Street and Burrough Square. Its charm lies in the fact that it is not touristy; it is a working town where Dominicans from the area come to do to business and shop. The area's only hospital and fire station are also in Portsmouth. Locals come to town to run their errands and walk down the street hailing each other, exchanging greetings. Exuberant laughing, expansive gestures, animated arguments — the people make this place come alive.

In town, you can find most necessities in Joe's and Best Buy supermarkets as well as in a few smaller food shops. On market days (Fridays and Saturdays), the market provides a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as meat and fish. Along the main street you will also find a few clothing stores, a couple of internet cafés and most of the snackettes. These are small shacks where you can purchase snack food throughout the day: fried chicken, bakes and sandwiches, as well as Creole plates at lunchtime. The Creole plate is the staple diet of Dominica and includes meat or fish, vegetables, beans and at least two types of carbs (e.g. rice, spaghetti, "fig" pie, macaroni-and-cheese or potato salad). These are ideal places to rest, have lunch and to watch and listen to Dominicans, many of whom will stop in for lunch. Don't forget your local juice; there is nothing better, after all, than fresh juice (orange, grapefruit, tamarind, guava and the list goes on) made with fruit picked from a tree that same morning.

Portsmouth has the advantage of offering a wide variety of activities within close range. To the north, the beautiful Purple Turtle Beach is just outside Portsmouth, as are several other beaches. Most yachts anchor off this beach or pick up a mooring there. The cruise ship berth is located in nearby Cabrits National Park, which has many short trails to explore as well as Fort Shirley, an 18th century British garrison that is being reconstructed. Further up that side of the island, still heading north, are Toucarie Bay, which has little-known reefs for diving, and Capuchin, another historical site and the start of the picturesque Capuchin- Penville hiking trail. The road back to Portsmouth from Penville, an agricultural Caribbean village with sweeping views towards Marie-Galante, takes you through an active volcano crater with bubbling sulphur springs. The French islands are never far from view in this part of the island.

Portsmouth's southern border is the Indian River. Locals offer boat rides up the beautiful mangrove-framed river to the jungle bar at the end serving Kubuli, the local beer, and its version of rum punch. A little further south is Picard, home to Ross University medical school. For those hankering after some Western fare, you can find everything from bagels and smoothies to pizza, several fast-food chains, as well as a wider selection of food in the several supermarkets. The area's hotels are also mostly located in this area, along the beach.

If, after those several packed days, you get bored, you can always rent a car and venture farther afield. To the south is the Syndicate Trail where you can see the Syndicate waterfall and hope to catch a glimpse of the indigenous and rare Sisserrou (*Amazona imperalis*) and Jacquot (*Amazona arausiaca*) parrots. Heading east you can cross the Kalinago territory, owned by the "Carib Indians", the Kalinago people. They have a model village showcasing their history and lifestyle.

Portsmouth, often unjustly overlooked, offers a mix of an authentic Caribbean experience along with all the pleasure and comforts one wants to find on vacation. There are several clubs offering nightlife mid-week and on weekends as well as some authentic dining experiences. And did I mention the best "cookies and cream" ice cream I've ever had, to be found at Burrough Square?

Dominica is probably easier to access by boat than by air and Portsmouth offers a perfect place to drop anchor, refuel, restock and enjoy the best of what the Caribbean has to offer. Add to that the uniqueness of Dominica's natural wonders and culture and you have an unmissable stop on your Caribbean excursion.





Top left: Purple Turtle Beach

Above: The Cabrits, seen from Michael Douglas Boulevard

Right: The mouth of the Indian River at Portsmouth's southern edge



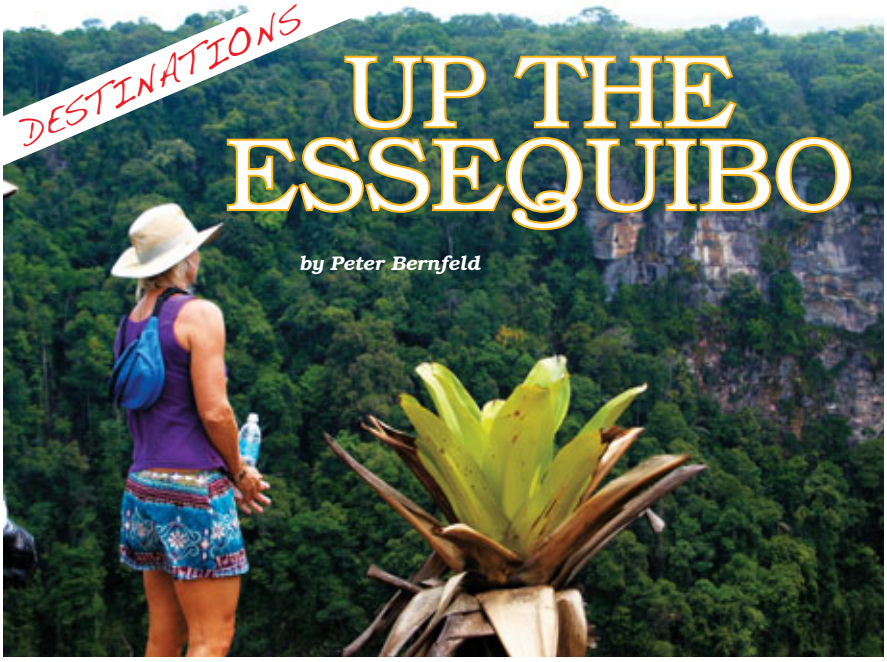
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DESTINATIONS

UP THE ESSEQUIBO

by Peter Bernfeld

I became aware of a voice shouting, "Troutbridge! Hello, Troutbridge!"

I became more awake and thought that it must be the Guyanese Coastguard hailing. We were anchored off Roeden Rust, flying the yellow flag, having arrived from Charlotteville, Tobago, the previous afternoon, October 2nd, 2009. Venturing on deck, I found the cheerful face of Kit Nascimento grinning up from his speedboat. "We're on our way up to our place at Hurakabra. Give me a call when you are 15 minutes out of Bartica and I'll arrange for Customs and Immigration to come out to you."

The planning for this trip had started during the winter of 2008, before I retired and left the English Channel island of Guernsey in *Troutbridge*, my Broadblue 385 retirement home. I'd purchased Chris Doyle's *Cruising Guide to Trinidad and Tobago, plus Barbados and Guyana* and started wondering if there was an alternative to four and a half months in Trinidad. It appeared that there might be. So, here I was with an Australian couple aboard, Pam and Jim, whose boat was on the hard in Trinidad, not to mention crewmate Cadey, and another boat, *Moonshiner*, waiting for the tide to continue up the Essequibo River to the town of Bartica where Customs and Immigration awaited us. It was Doyle's guide that had first introduced me to Kit.

Despite a slightly negative write-up in Doyle's about the trip from Trinidad down to Guyana, the two boats had spent a pleasant time getting there from Chaguaramas, stopping off in Scotland Bay, La Vache Bay and Grande Riviere before crossing to Charlotteville, Tobago. A week disappeared in swimming, walks and making a few repairs, and then we set off for Guyana, completing the passage to Roeden Rust in three days and six hours. We were able to sail during the hours of darkness and motorsail during daylight; it seemed as though the wind veered as the sun came up and backed as it set. The sea was slight all the way down with only the occasional "bounce" to disturb things. The much talked-about northwesterly current put in an occasional appearance, but never seemed to be more than a knot or so against us. All in all it was quite a pleasant trip. Maybe we were just lucky.

For those who just love the mad social whirl of Chaguaramas, you'll hate Guyana. I mean, I think mine was only the fourth boat this year to go up the Essequibo River. The anchorages were uncrowded, if not actually deserted, and there wasn't a potluck, jump-up or dominoes afternoon to be seen!

The waypoints shown in Doyle's guide are more than adequate to enter the Essequibo and continue up to the town of Bartica, however on my electronic chart system (Navionics) and on *Moonshiner's* system the boats were sometimes shown as being onshore and the tracks between some waypoints were shown as crossing the land. Working on the principle that it would be sensible to "stick to the wet stuff", a certain amount of interpretation was required, but anybody with an ounce of common sense should be able to stay out of trouble.

Troutbridge has a saltwater draught of about 1.2 metres and had no trouble; *Moonshiner* with a saltwater draught of 2.3 metres touched the bottom a couple of times taking the flood up to Bartica, but no harm was done.

—Continued on next page



Cadey (above) and Pam and Jim (right) on a side trip to Kaieteur Falls

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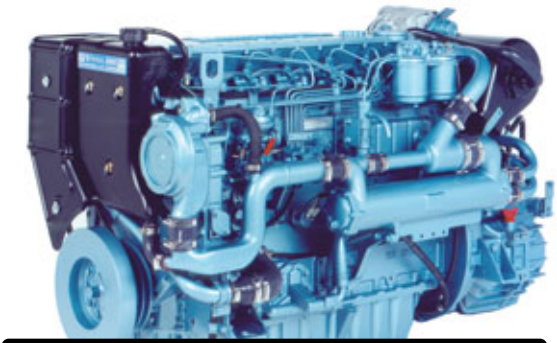
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—*Continued from previous page*

It's worth noting that there are virtually no buoys in the Essequibo river, a local source of information telling us that there was no money in the kitty to maintain them and there weren't many visiting ships or boats to warrant making any provision to maintain those that were still in place.

Approaching Bartica, I called Kit (592 455-3200) and he was as good as his word, sending Dominic (Dom), the manager of his resort, to meet us in Bartica. Dom waited until we were safely anchored and then ferried the officials out to us. They were both very pleasant and the fee was US$12.50. Everybody on the yachts was given one month in country, but I suspected that we could have had longer if we'd asked for it. This took place on a Saturday afternoon, at about 1700 hours, and there was no extra charge for working those hours or for coming out to the boat. The Immigration department is located in the police station at Bartica and the Immigration officer will walk you round to Customs. The fee for checking out is also US$12.50 and I'm pretty certain this is the only place I've visited so far where the officers shook hands and hoped that you've had a pleasant stay!

On the Sunday, we visited Hurakabra resort for lunch and a chat with Kit. The standard charge at resorts on the river seems to be US$15 per head for either lunch or dinner and there was a reasonable charge for Dom to pick us up and take us back to Bartica in a speedboat. In any case, Kit had been very helpful in his e-mails and had made no charge for sending Dom to assist with officialdom, so we felt the least we could do was to patronize his resort. Other boats might have to pay for this service, or Kit may continue to send Dom to help with clearing in; either way, he and Gem (his charming wife) are running a business.

While at anchor off Bartica (incidentally, I suggest you anchor a little further off the town than shown in Doyle's, to remain clear of the barge traffic), we were visited by the irrepressible Joyce Davis, the lady who owns the yacht *Mood Indigo*. She and her late husband, David, had been famous among cruisers as musicians in Trinidad. They built a house on the Essequibo a few years ago and Joyce seems to be happy for boats to anchor near *Mood Indigo*, but please remember that hers is a private home, not a resort. She invited us to come to her place and drop anchor, which we did, and we invited her out to the boats for sundowners. The following evening she reciprocated, showing us around the grounds of her home. While there, we encountered the third yacht in the river, *Erasmus*, a New Zealand boat, and the following day came across another boat, *Orchid*.

Gem will undertake organizing tours for visiting cruisers and, with hindsight, it might have been better to have used her services. There appear to be no advertising regulations in Guyana and tour companies seem to be in the habit of offering tours at attractive rates — then, when you book, these rates are not available. Fairly typical (actual) rates seem to be around US$250 for a return flight and guided tour at the Kaieteur Falls and around US$600 for a five-day/four night overland trip into the interior. Again, a word of caution: the people are very friendly and willing to please but don't expect the level of equipment or comfort that you would expect "back home". As a retired airline pilot I was content with the local airline we used to fly to the Falls; others who went on the overland tour were not so lucky and had a road accident. The driver had no first-aid training and there was no first-aid kit in the four-wheel drive vehicle and medical help was a few hours' drive away. So, if taking a land tour, have a look over the vehicle first and consider taking your own first-aid kit. That said, apparently the trip was very worthwhile. I would regard any river or road trip as an expedition rather than a tour and equip accordingly.



Left: A riverside scene at Bartica

Right: We had a visitor, en route to Trinidad



River transport is well organized on the Essequibo. A one-way trip from Bartica to Parika (the nearest port on the Essequibo to Georgetown, the capital) costs approximately US$10 per person. Although the boats appear fairly crude, they are subject to regular government inspection and all passengers are required to wear flotation vests (supplied). The ride takes just over an hour and can be great fun, if a little wet at times.

The river itself is a chocolate brown colour and when swimming, visibility is close to zero. The current can run at up to three knots, so a safety line off the back of the boat is highly recommended. There appear to be no "nasties" in the river, although in some places piranhas are present (but the locals claim are never a problem), as is the occasional anaconda. The latter seem to stay in swamp areas and have never been known to be a problem to swimmers.

The locals all drink bottled water, but my watermaker just loved the fresh water and delivered at least twice its rated flow. Nobody had any problems drinking the watermaker product during the 19 days we were there.

We anchored off Baganara Resort for a couple of days. They were very welcoming, although virtually closed during the week.

Navigating up and down the river requires some care and judicious use of the ebb and flood, but most of the rocks seem to be accurately charted. Those with shallow-draught boats could have a lot of fun gunk-holing.

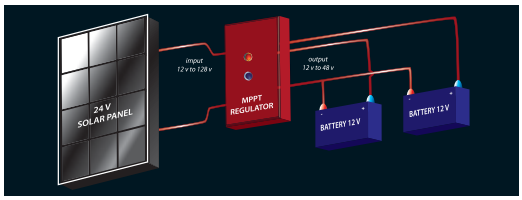
To summarize, the trip down was easier than we were led to believe, and the trip back to Trinidad was an off-wind pleasure with at least one knot of favourable current most of the time. It's worth noting that the current closer to the coast is much stronger than further off shore. The difference in tracks down and up was about ten nautical miles, but there was a marked difference in the strength of the current. The return trip took two and a half days.

The Guyanese are a friendly people and although there is some crime on the river, we never felt threatened. Bartica has a frontier town feel to it, but again feels safe, certainly in the early evening. Maybe staggering around at 3:00AM wouldn't be a great idea, but that's true of a lot of places. We were warned that Georgetown wasn't safe at night; indeed a group walking back from a restaurant to their hotel was told by a local lady that it would be better to hail a taxi, but nobody had a bad experience.

Organized tours are not particularly cheap and the local produce, while of reasonable quality, is not cheap either. Petrol (gas, for the Cousins) is around US$1 per litre. Diesel prices I'm not sure of, but it is available for visiting yachts. There are local mechanics willing to work on boats. They are able to improvise, but if spare parts are not available "in country" it may take up to ten days to import them. Kit was willing to help with this process and may or may not charge for this.

Guyana is a beautiful, fascinating country, well worth making the effort to visit. Anybody used to one-day inter-island passages followed by tying up in a marina may feel a little daunted by the prospect of the trip, but the reality (at least on this trip) was that with a little care, planning and provisioning the trip can be uneventful. I would definitely recommend going across to Tobago from Trinidad and spending some time there before heading south.

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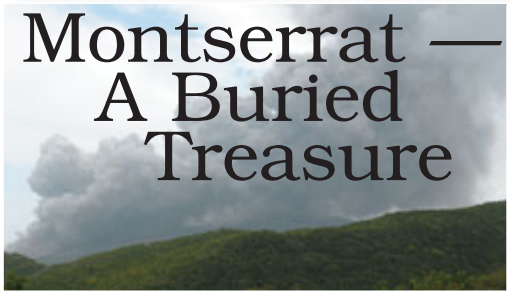
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ALL ASHORE...

Montserrat — A Buried Treasure



by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

Montserrat was once a bustling island and its capital city, Plymouth, was the commercial centre of the Eastern Caribbean. To those who last visited prior to 1995, Montserrat is now totally different. Volcanic eruptions in that year covered Plymouth with pyroclastic flows and ash. A large part of the population left the island.

With approximately two-thirds of the island declared unsafe and placed in an exclusion zone, the 4,000 remaining inhabitants have basically had to start over. But this should not be seen as a drawback but rather the opportunity to experience a re-emerging island culture. Currently, the settlement of Brades serves as the main town and houses the government offices while construction of the new capital city at Little Bay in the north of the island proceeds. When I visited Montserrat recently the new cultural centre and public market were already completed.

This island is commonly called the "Emerald Isle of the Caribbean". This name not only refers to the lush green vegetation present on the island, even in some of the areas that experienced volcanic activity, but also refers to its strong Irish heritage. Originally inhabited by the Amerindians, in 1632 English and Irish Catholic settlers were brought from St. Kitts, as they were not welcome in the other British colonies because of their religion. The first evidence of Irish influence that greets visitors is the shamrock stamp in their passport. The national flag also has the legendary Irish figure of Erin with a harp alongside the Union Jack (as Montserrat is still a British colony). It is also the only place in the world outside of Ireland where St. Patrick's Day is a public holiday.

My research on the spider biodiversity in the Eastern Caribbean has taken me to many wonderful and diverse islands. These included the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean, which was my home for two weeks as I conducted my research. I was assisted by one of my friends who had visited the island before. What struck us as a great thing about Montserrat is that it is small enough to do practically everything listed in the tourist guide, and we thought that we would try. So we got the guide and a map of the island, and headed off exploring.

Our first stop was at Jack Boy Hill on the northeast side of the island. It has well-maintained gardens, a picnic area and a viewing platform from which you can see the destroyed W.H. Bramble Airport and some of the surrounding villages. There is a telescope, which offers a better view of the area and the Soufriere Hills volcano. On a clear day you can make out the outline of the spiky plugs that cap the opening to the volcano.

But you can get an even better view of the volcano from the Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO). The sole purpose of this facility is to monitor the volcano and warn inhabitants of potential danger. This facility is open to the public Monday to Thursday. Here for a fee of EC$10 (US$3.75) you can view a documentary on life before the eruption and the stages of the volcano's evolution. It is shown at quarter past every hour from 10:15AM to 3:15PM. There are also many informative posters illustrating volcanic activity. In the recent past, visitors were allowed to talk to the scientists and go in their work area and see the seismic recording equipment. However, this started to interfere with the operations of the MVO and was discontinued.

Here we learned that Montserrat is no stranger to natural disasters — 95 percent of the island was damaged by Hurricane Hugo in 1989. In 1992 a series of earthquakes continuing until July 1995 was the first sign that the volcano, which had been dormant for recorded history, was active again. Magma first appeared in November 1995. In August 1997, pyroclastic flows destroyed central Plymouth and extended out to sea from the Tar River Valley. The heavy rains that followed washed down the ash to form a thick mud that buried the capital city even deeper. (For more information on the history of the volcanic eruptions visit www.montserratvolcanoobservatory.info)

Many people may have the idea that after the eruption Montserrat became a wasteland. But the truth is that the lush, undeveloped northern part of the island was untouched by the volcano. This island has a lot to offer the nature lover, including a network of trails. The trails are of varying degrees of difficulty but all allow you to see the wide range of flora and fauna on the island. If you are a novice, try the Oriole Trail. More experienced hikers would want to try more challenging trails like those up Jack Boy Hill leading to Baker's Hill and then on to Katy Hill.

If you want to passively support the biodiversity of the island, visit the National Trust in Salem where you can purchase books, T-shirts and other nature-inspired items. They also have a beautiful garden with a collection of ornamental, fruiting and medicinal plants. Plans are in the works to turn this garden into a national botanical garden. The same building that houses the National Trust also houses the National Philatelic Bureau, which has something for both the nature and stamp lover, since many stamps feature pictures of the local and endemic wildlife such as the Montserrat Oriole and the Rock Iguana.

There are many nightspots and restaurants. My favourite was Bingo Night (Thursdays from 8:00PM for about an hour) at The Lime Sports Bar in Brades. Cards can be purchased for EC$5 each and reused for the duration of the night. Sometimes Bingo Night has a theme; for instance, the first time we went it was "Hurricane Hugo Night" and the first person to get the numbers in the shape of each of the letters of "Hurricane Hugo" won a game. For example, for the first game the winner was the first to spell "H". At the end of this you return the plastic bingo cards and can participate in the jackpot game played on paper tickets for about EC$10 each. If there is no winner the jackpot rolls over.

After the first week we decided that we had seen almost everything on land so we looked into taking a boat tour around the island. We turned to the services of Troy and Melody who operate The Green Monkey Dive Shop at Little Bay. The tour took approximately two-and-a-half hours. Along the way we saw how the wave action eroded the sides of the island to form sheer cliffs.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

We passed Foxes Bay, which is the bay before you reach Plymouth as you head south and is off limits to the public. Approaching Plymouth we saw many large homes and condominiums occupying the hillsides between Foxes Bay and Plymouth, all of which now stand abandoned. The landscape reminded me of present-day Chaguaramas in Trinidad.

Then we came to Plymouth, or "Modern Day Pompeii" as it is commonly referred to. There was not much to see, as heavy rains washed ash downhill after the eruptions, and when it hardened it became as hard as cement. We saw buildings, but kept in mind that what we were seeing was just the top floors of any buildings more than two storeys tall — everything below this level is buried in rock-hard ash. It is an eerie sight: the entire city looks frozen in time, standing in silent testimony to the bustling commercial hub it once was. And although from a distance it looks pristine and untouched, it is slowly deteriorating.

The large petroleum tanks near the coast enter the water as they come loose from the mud. This poses a hazard for boat propellers, so that the area has to be navigated with caution.

We were lucky that day as it was quite clear so we had a great view of the volcano just below the plug. Troy said it was the clearest they had seen in months. But you cannot stay in the area too long because of the constant presence of sulphuric gas, so we turned back and headed to Rendezvous Bay. This relatively small, isolated bay is just past Little Bay as you head north. Its calm waters make it great for snorkelling, which is what we did. The bay is accessible by land but it is a long hike that becomes steep in some parts. We returned to Rendezvous Bay later in the week to try our hand at kayaking. Again we enlisted the services of The Green Monkey to rent kayaking equipment.





Top: Much of Montserrat's former capital, Plymouth, has been buried in volcanic debris
Above: Out of the ashes: the island's new cultural centre at Brades

If you are new to snorkelling as I was and you want to go to a more populated beach, Woodlands beach is a good place to start. The crowd really gathers at around 3:00PM, but during the day it is quiet and it's great for an early morning swim. It is one of the beaches where leatherback turtles nest. The island is also quite safe, so you could camp on the beach and wait for the turtles to visit.

Some more adventurous persons might want to walk around in the old capital and passes can be obtained from the local police — only when they deem it safe to enter the area. This is for your safety since heavy rains, especially during the wet season, can bring down mudslides.

If you want to get a safer "up close and personal" view of the destruction caused by the eruption of the Soufriere Hills volcano, visit Belham Valley on the safe side of the border of the exclusion zone. This was one of the small valleys where the pyroclastic flows came through, claiming 19 lives. Evidence that it was once a thriving community is seen by the abandoned homes and businesses including a hotel, hair salon and nightclub. Some electricity poles still stick up through the mud as silent indicators of the location of streets and the buildings that once lined them. We went into one of the abandoned condominiums during one of our explorations of the area.

During our visit we were fortunate to meet some interesting residents of the island who decided to stay after the eruptions, including Shirley and Lou Spycalla. Along with all the physical destruction, some of the country's rich folklore was also destroyed. Shirley told us of the legend of the mermaid of the pool at Chance's Peak. If you were able to take her golden comb, she would grant your wishes. This pond is now buried under many feet of rock-hard ash.

Another colourful resident we had the great fortune to meet was Kevin West. He is an avid photographer and the owner of Paradise Photo and Art Studio. He took many of the photos of the eruption that are now featured on postcards from the island. He told us how he set up his camera for hours, shooting rolls of film late into the night. He also told us of a time he had to take his equipment and literally run out of the path of the volcanic flow after he had waited until the very last minute to get the perfect shot.

We were also lucky to meet one of Montserrat's famous citizens, Alphonsus Cassell, better known as the calypsonian "Arrow", at his store, Arrow's Manshop. His song "Hot Hot Hot" is known worldwide.

Before we left we took a drink of the pure spring water from Runaway Ghaut (pronounced gut). Contrary to its name, it is said that if you drink from this you will visit Montserrat again. So, see you again, Emerald Isle!

Right now the best way to reach the island is either by yacht (yachts can currently anchor only at Little Bay), or by flying from Antigua on WinAir (www.fly-winair.com) or Fly Montserrat (www.flymontserrrat.com). The ferry service between Antigua and Montserrat is undergoing changes; for updates visit www.visitmontserrat.com

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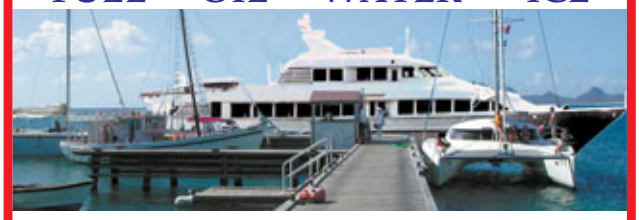


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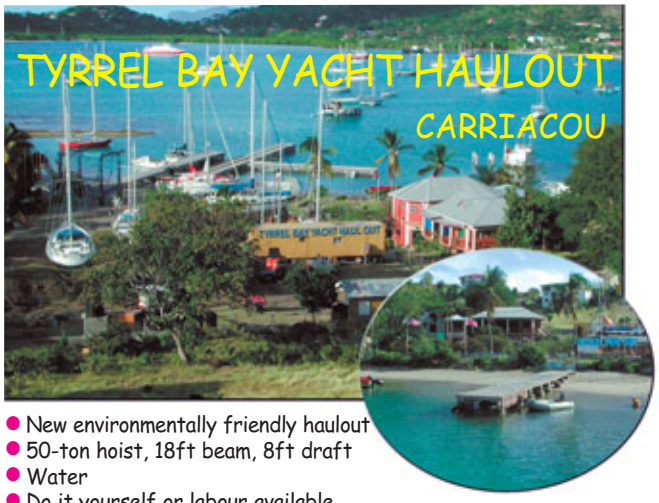
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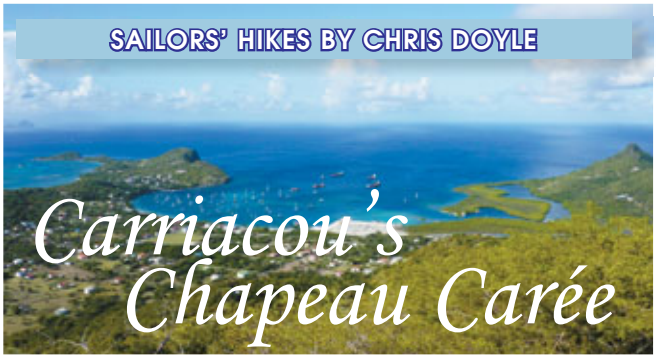
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A rewarding view of Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou, from the peak of Chapeau Carée

If you look around while anchored in Tyrrel Bay you will see the very pretty hill line to the north above the mangroves, now broken by a big new Italian house perched on top. Look to the east and you will see Chapeau Carée, the tallest hill visible from Tyrrel Bay. Standing 290 metres above sea level, it is the second highest hill on Carriacou. The highest hill (High North) is only a metre taller, so if you really want to feel you have been as high as you can get on Carriacou, carry a small stepladder with you on this hike.

Hiking to Chapeau Carée is lovely, but it can be hot, so early morning is best both for comfort and for good light for the view over Tyrrel Bay (don't forget your camera). The hike takes about two to three hours round trip from the Tyrrel Bay dock. There is an unmarked path of sorts, which is steep towards the top. It can be slippery — on mud when wet and on fallen leaves when dry.

From the main dock, turn left in the direction of L'Esterre. Turn right on the first side road, which is good and straight, with several houses on either side. Then take the first left-hand turn. This road bends around and climbs slowly into the hills. It starts off paved and turns to dirt. For the most part you have a view on your left and a hill on your right. The road follows upwards around this hill.

Continue till you come to a small junction straight ahead where the dirt road divides in two. If you stand at this junction and look at the left hand road, you will see a gap in the hedge into a field almost opposite where you are standing. (Long version: turn left at the junction, walk a couple of feet and turn right through the gap in the hedge.) Enter into the field.

Now the adventure begins. Walk up through the field, making friends with any cows in the path, until you get to the field's top left-hand corner, where a path goes into a dense thicket with a small pond. This is a good resting spot; there are often wading birds, grackles, pigeons and other birds that use this as the local watering hole. Plus, in the shade it is cool.



Above: Watering holes like this are essential for livestock and wildlife on dry islands
Right: Trail map

You can continue walking on either side of the pond. If you take the right-hand side you will come into a small field that goes up to a ridge and you can see your destination way above. Go to the top left of the field and get through one of the small openings that lead into the next field.

If you go to the left of the pond you will already be here. Follow this field upwards. It will bring you to an open ridge. The open part is quickly over and you need to find the path that leads up along the ridge through the trees. Follow this path all the way to the top. If you find yourself on either side of the ridge, you are straying from the straight and narrow. There is no trail-maintenance crew; you may have to scramble or find your way around fallen trees.

The path is mainly in the woods, which give shade, except for one clearing where you begin to get a good view. You emerge out of the trees at the very top of the hill. The view of Tyrrel Bay is outstanding: the whole bay is laid out before you in miniature like a brightly colored children's book illustration. You also get great views of Sandy Island, Union Island, the town of Hillsborough, the islands to the south between Carriacou and Grenada, and to the east.

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January - March 2010

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Part One:

Tobago to Dominica

As I've often mentioned, articles and letters in yachting magazines frequently complain that the harbors in the Eastern Caribbean are so full of mooring balls and other yachts that there is no room to anchor. But I'd like to let newly arrived sailors know that if you are willing to get off the beaten track and forgo bars and restaurants, there are probably a hundred anchorages where you and a buddy boat or two can enjoy anchoring in solitude.

All the anchorages mentioned are well described in various guides, so I won't give sailing directions. Admittedly, many require eyeball navigation with someone standing *on top* of the bow pulpit. A few will require someone on the lower spreaders. (On the modern yacht with internal halyards, climbing aloft is much more difficult than in the old days when halyards were external. Fixing steps on the mast to enable a crewmember to easily reach the lower spreaders is a worthwhile alteration.)

Let's start from the south.

Tobago has a dozen uncrowded anchorages. Those on the north coast should not be used in the winter due to the prevalence of the northwest groundswell, but come summer they are fine. (If a hurricane approaches, head south to Trinidad or west to Golfo de Cariaco.)

Grenada has an abundance of under-used anchorages. On the southwest coast, boats that draw six feet or less can work their way well into Morne Rouge Bay. Deeper draft boats can drop their anchors on the edge of the shelf and back off.

Grenada's south coast has numerous anchorages; one can almost always find an uncrowded one. If heading north up the east coast, see sailing directions on the back of Imray Iolaire chart B32; Lascar Cove, Requin and Le Petit Trou offer good anchorages where you will find no habitation and no other boats.

Grenville's anchorage is not that hard to enter, sheltered from the sea but not the wind, and a wonderful base from which to do shoreside explorations of the northeast corner of Grenada. When leaving, mind your p's and q's. It's possible to sail out but advisable to motor-sail.

Frigate Island is a seldom-used anchorage that's one of my favorites

Uninhabited Sandy Island, on the northeast corner of Grenada, is another nice anchorage seldom visited by yachts.

Enroute to Carriacou, in summer months when it is not blowing hard, a daytime anchorage might be found in the lee of Les Tantes, where fishermen sometimes camp. Corn Store Bay on the northwest corner of Isle de Ronde is a good anchorage as long as the groundswell is not running.

Instead of crowded Tyrrel Bay, head for the southeast corner of Carriacou. In the summer when it is not blowing too hard try the anchorage behind One Tree Rock. There is room for one boat only and good diving on the reef to windward. To the east of One Tree Rock, anchorage can be found west of Sandy Island and northwest of Saline Island.

A short beat brings you to Kendeance Point, the entrance to Grand Bay where you find five miles of sheltered water and good anchorage tight behind the reef. Continue north past St. Hilaire Point. Boats drawing seven feet or more should proceed dead slow or send the dinghy ahead to check depth. Anchor off the boatbuilders' village of Windward or tight up behind Carib Island.

Sail on north and west to anchor behind Frigate Island, a seldom-used anchorage that's one of my favorites. (Frigate Island is attached to Union Island by a causeway constructed for a failed marina project.) Then, if the wind is south of east, Bloody Bay on Union Island is wonderful, but if the wind is east or north of east forget it.

On to the windward side of Mayreau: just like the outer anchorage in the Tobago Cays, but no other boats. The windward side of Canouan is also an excellent anchorage and big enough that you will never be crowded. If it is not blowing too hard, and if you are a good eyeball navigator and can put a crewmember ON THE SPREADERS, you will find another anchorage where you will be alone and have good diving within easy swimming distance of the boat.

Out to windward is Baliceaux, an uninhabited island visited by fishermen and the occasional yacht. Another easily reached, quiet anchorage is Anse Chemin on Bequia, which is great as long as the wind is east or south of east. From Anse Chemin or Baliceaux heading north, forget about sailing up the west lee side of St Vincent. Check the "meridian passage of the moon" table on the back of the Imray Iolaire chart or in *Compass*. Head across Bequia Channel with the first of the weather-going tide, go to windward of St. Vincent and stand north to Vieux Fort, St. Lucia. It should be a close reach, a fetch during the winter, or come spring, when the wind tends to be south of east, a good fast reach.

Once checked in at Vieux Fort, sail around the corner and anchor in Anse de Sable. Tuck up really tight behind Maria Island, as in the main bay it tends to be rolly as the swell hooks around both sides of Maria Island.

Heading west, try Laborie. Unfortunately there are moorings, but I am told that there is still space to anchor and the boat boys are not too pushy.

In Martinique, check in at Le Marin, then leave the crowded harbor and anchor off Ste. Anne in clear water and plenty of room. It is a good jumping-off spot for the east coast of Martinique, a wonderful cruising ground where you will see few if any other cruising yachts. In this area my guide is adequate, but if you really want to gunk hole, especially if you have a shoal-draft boat, purchase the guide by Philipe Lacheneze Huede and Jerome Nouel. Philip is descended from Martinique's first white settlers and has sailed the east coast all his life, while Jerome arrived in Martinique 30 years ago, has cruised into every gunk hole in Martinique and has produced superb sketch charts.

There are so many anchorages on the east coast of Martinique that I will not try to list them. Since the harbors lay on an east-west axis it means you cannot leave till the sun is high and you should be anchoring by 1500 at the latest. At the head of some of these harbors the rise and fall of tide at springs can reach three feet, so check depth and state of tide before anchoring.

In Dominica there are few anchorages; none are off the beaten track.

Next month: The Saints and northward.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2010

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

Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide runs eastward; and from just after its nadir to soon after its rising, the tide runs westward. Times given are local.

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

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

January

DATE	TIME
1	0016
2	0118
3	0216
4	0310
5	0400
6	0449
7	0537
8	0626
9	0715
10	0806
11	0858
12	0950
13	1042
14	1131
15	1219 (new)
16	1303
17	1346
18	1427
19	1507
20	1547
21	1629
22	1713
23	1800
24	1852
25	1949
26	2050
27	2153
28	2256
29	2356
30	2454 (full)
31	0054

February

DATE	TIME
1	0148
2	0239
3	0329
4	0419
5	0510
6	0607
7	0654
8	0746
9	0838
10	0928
11	1016
12	1101
13	1145
14	1226 (new)
15	1307
16	1347
17	1428
18	1511
19	1557
20	1646
21	1739
22	1836
23	1936
24	2036
25	2136
26	2234
27	2330
28	0000 (full)

CRUISER PROFILES BY JOHN ROWLAND



Stan and Cora on *Ambler*

S/V Ambler has been home to Stan and Cora since they left Germany in 1981. The boat was built in 1927 as an RNLI motor-sailer lifeboat and remained in service in the often-hostile waters off the coast of the UK until 1949. Purchased in Guernsey in 1977, it took Stan and Cora until 1981 to refit her sufficiently to begin their cruising life. The work of refitting *Ambler* continued as they traveled until *Ambler* was brought to her current configuration in 1991. Even though she has a taller mast installed and a foresail added to make her a cutter and her wheelhouse has been cut down to a coach roof and countless other changes have been made, her stout, 40-foot, 16-ton hull still provides a truly seaworthy boat. *Ambler* has proven herself to be a reliable vessel throughout Stan and Cora's extensive travels.

They started their cruising adventure in the Mediterranean. From there they went to the Canary Islands, then across the Atlantic to Brazil, south to Argentina and around the Cape and up to Chile, then Easter Island, across the Pacific to Polynesia, Australia and New Zealand. Then it was 3,000 miles across to Madagascar, around South Africa and across the Atlantic, back to Brazil, some 25 years later. The adventures and misadventures of *Ambler*'s voyages during those years would fill a book. From Brazil, Stan and Cora worked their way up the South American coast and into the Caribbean two years ago.

Stan is the cook and the engineer. Much of the refit of the boat has been done in out-of-the-way places, requiring Stan to create needed parts and items from materials available. He is carpenter, welder, mechanic and rigger. Cora said, "It wasn't until we got to the Caribbean that I realized you could walk into a chandlery and buy something you need rather than having to make it yourself." Cora does the painting, varnishing, bottom scraping, epoxy and canvas work, and generally keeps the boat shipshape. Underway, the crew roles on *Ambler* are quite blurred. Whoever is on watch is the captain. Navigation has become second nature to both of them, as have most of the tasks involved in handling the boat. Whatever needs to be done, together they can handle it.

In their travels across the planet, Stan and Cora have shared their talent and passion for music. Wherever they are, you will probably find them playing their favorite jazz or blues pieces in some local club, often joined by local musicians. Stan does keyboard and vocal while Cora plays the sax. Stan has played since childhood. Cora, on the other hand, has acquired her musical skills during their travels. Their upbeat outlook and passion for living clearly come through in their music.

When asked what their favorite places have been, they agree their all-time favorite is Tonga. They spent five years in Tonga's Vava'u island group, making many friends, including the Crown Prince, a fellow musician. Other favorites are Madagascar and Mozambique. But they add, "Everywhere we have been, we've found the people to be friendly to us."

When I asked what they like best about this cruising life, Cora spoke up. "We go everywhere but I always have my own bed, my books, my home, wherever we are."

For the future, as far as they can see it, Stan and Cora will go where the wind carries them, making friends and making music along the way.

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SAILING A LEGEND

by Patrick DiLalla

When I bought my boat in Maine six years ago, people told me she was built in the Caribbean and was famous. They told me that she *always* comes back home, and that she knew the way to Bermuda on her own. But in the drive to get the boat and myself ready for a solo passage to Bermuda, I never allowed myself to think of my vessel in such a romantic way. I preferred to call her "tried and true" if anything, and focused on all of her possible weaknesses.

But later, as I guided my beloved little boat back to her birthplace after a 28th transatlantic passage, a little puff of wind sweetened by the trees of Bequia swept across *Plumbelly*'s sails and she knew where we were. I smiled and let myself believe in the magic carpet that carried me so many miles and reveled in her amazing history.

Plumbelly came to life on the beach in Admiralty Bay under the shade of the palm trees, near the place where the Porthole Restaurant is now. An eccentric German architect and ship's captain named Klaus Alverman wanted a small yacht to cruise the islands in, and he set out to build it with the help of, among others, Bequian shipwright Lauren Dewar, better known as Lauren Joe. They built the 25-foot boat in the local tradition, hewing carefully selected timber from around the island into the shape of a modified two-bow fishing boat. Her full body inspired the name as a passerby commented, "Look like she got a big plum in de belly!"

She was launched in 1965, and a few years later set out to cross the Pacific Ocean. Klaus' motivation for leaving on such an ambitious passage is unknown to me. *Plumbelly* had no engine, no electricity and no self-steering device. After four weeks of sailing sheet-to-tiller with the bow down, *Plumbelly* arrived in the Pacific islands sporting a beard of algae on her bowsprit!

While Klaus was resting in Tahiti, a big red double-ender came gliding into the harbor with a wild-eyed Frenchman at the helm. The man had just sailed two times around the world, non-stop. It was the messiah of French yachting, Bernard Moitessier. The two men became friends and Klaus obtained a design for a simple wind vane from him. He built the wind vane in New Zealand and it is working its magic as I write this.

Plumbelly and Klaus returned to Bequia to a hero's welcome — the first Bequia boat to be sailed around the world. For those in Bequia that know the story of *Plumbelly*, there is a gleam of pride in their eyes when they speak about it. This is my second time "back home" with the old girl and I've yet to meet someone over 30 who doesn't know the name. Many remember Klaus and called him a friend. Bequians will be pleased to know that the boat's fame extends far beyond Bequia, the Windward Islands and even the Caribbean. In places as far afield as Senegal I've had people ask me: "That's not THE *Plumbelly*, is it?" "Bet your boots it is, the one and only!" People just smile and shake their heads.

When Klaus finally stopped after 20-odd years of sailing, *Plumbelly* ended up in the hands of an American science professor in Massachusetts. She was used for day sailing and coastal cruising until an adventurous young man from Maine bought her and once again pointed her bow in the direction of faraway lands. Now I am the third in a line of owners from Maine (actually I'm from Ohio but I bought the boat while living in Maine) whom *Plumbelly* has carried safely across oceans.

One previous owner and friend of mine told me before I left for the first time, "*Plumbelly* is the princess of every harbor she visits; she always gets the best spot!" And I'll be darned if it hasn't been true — from the grimiest fishing harbor in Morocco to the most chi-chi spots in the Caribbean, she always gets the royal treatment. She's so small, but so proud. She just charms the socks off of everybody! I think it's the spirit of adventure and tradition she embodies that makes peoples' eyes twinkle when they take a moment to admire her.

I read once that art is an expression of humans' love of labor, and people have described Klaus' relationship with *Plumbelly* as "a grand love affair". In the case of the Bequian shipwrights it was a love born out of necessity, for nothing less than a sort of love can create a vessel seaworthy enough for whaling. In *Plumbelly*, Klaus created a working monument to this fading tradition, a swan song that fused his love of construction and love of the sea. She is a vessel that has turned into a legend in the waters that she plies, always popping up to the delight of everyone who ever dreamed of just getting a boat and going.



Small but mighty, Plumbelly of Bequia *crosses oceans, turns heads, and keeps tradition and dreams alive*

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Falling in Love with Grenada

by Richard Rolland

Hello to you all. Before telling our story, let me give you a bit of our background.

My name is Richard and my wife is Lucie; we are both from Montréal, Canada, retired and in our mid-fifties. Our new home is called *Marie Galante II*.

It all started in 2006 at the end of a two-week charter on a 40-foot catamaran, from Martinique to Guadeloupe and back. We had been sailing for the past ten years and loved to travel and to be on the water. My wife was entitled to her retirement the coming year and I wasn't really sure of my future with the takeover of the company that I was working for. Just before leaving Martinique I asked her if she could imagine cruising the Caribbean full time. I already had a good idea of her answer — it was a resounding "YES!"

Upon our return I started right away to see how we could manage to make this project come alive. After studying a few scenarios, we came to one solution that was the best for us: sell everything that we owned (the house, motorboat, car, furniture, you name it), find the boat and go!

So, after a year and a half, we left Montréal on a 1992 Jenneau Sun Odyssey 44. We had previously taken basic navigation and coastal navigation courses. Before we left, we also took specialized courses in subjects such as shortwave radio, diesel mechanics, meteorology and first aid, and got some additional sailing qualifications.

After sailing for two months on Lake Champlain, south of Montréal, getting familiar with our boat and the new equipment we put on board, we officially started this new lifestyle and adventure on September 6th, 2007. No more schedules, no more clock-watching, just living one day at a time and with no idea for how long — WOW.

Our first leg was through the Champlain Canal and down the Hudson River to New York, Cape May, the Delaware River, Chesapeake Bay, Norfolk, and the Intracoastal down to Florida.

—Continued on next page



Picturesque St. George's, the capital of our favorite island so far

Inset: Richard and Lucie

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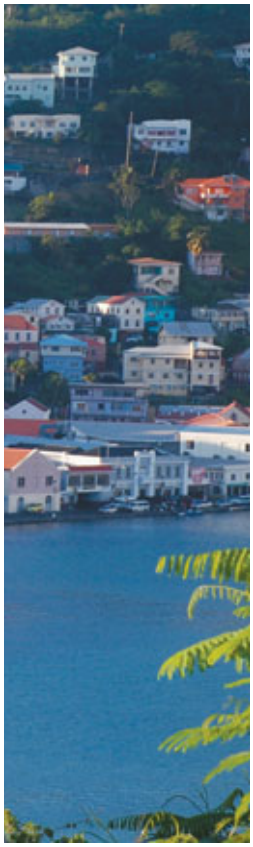
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...continued from previous page

We arrived in Florida in mid-December. Now that we have all the time in the world, we only sail in good conditions, we take time to visit everything that may be of interest, and we are meeting new sailors living the same dream. What more can you ask for?

From Fort Lauderdale we sailed to West End in the Bahamas and the Abacos, Nassau, and all of the following islands. The fun part so far was that we were always going south and it was always summer. No more spring, fall or especially winter. Discovering so many wonderful people and spectacular places would take wa-a-a-y too long to describe here. After waiting for a good weather window we sailed from the Turks & Caicos to the Dominican Republic at Luperon.

Six months had gone by so fast and we were only beginning. We flew back home for two weeks, seeing family and friends, all wondering how we were managing. It is funny to see how people perceive, and can't really relate to, our new style of life. I'm sure that all of you boaters understand what I mean.

Let's move on — Puerto Rico, Vieques, Culebra, St. Thomas, and the BVI, where we stayed for three months. Then St. Martin to Guadeloupe, stopping at most of the islands in between. Mind you, we don't have to stop at every island right now because we will pass back eventually.

Lucie has family in Guadeloupe and hurricane season had started. Luckily for us her cousin was going back to Canada for seven weeks and wanted us to take care of her house in the meantime. Hard to refuse, wouldn't you say? We left the boat at Marina Bas-du-Fort and enjoyed the earthling life again: pool, car, big washroom and no restrictions on water or showers. We took this opportunity to visit, in depth, all of Guadeloupe. It was also time to take care of *Marie Galante* because she needed a good clean-up, antifouling, waxing, etcetera — you know the drill.

We had a charter booked on our boat that was scheduled for January, so we sailed back up to the BVI. We stopped at Antigua, which we had not visited in the past, and celebrated Christmas in St. Martin where my daughter was. By the end of February, it was time to head south again.

This time we stopped at Saba, which we recommend that everybody should visit. And of course we stopped at Marie Galante; we could not pass the island for which our boat is named. Dominica was next and then Martinique, where we stayed for three weeks at Grande Anse D'Arlet. We rented a car for three days to go around the island. We slept one night at the foot of Mt. Pelée in a small bed-and-breakfast — a real treat.

From then on, every island south of Martinique would be new to us, with the goal being Grenada. I will spare you all the names of the islands from Martinique to Grenada. By the end of June, we were at St. George's Lagoon.

Okay, back to the title of this story: falling in love with Grenada.

The first things that we noticed were the beautiful view of the city and the Carenage from the lagoon, the warm welcome and help from the dock master of Port Louis Marina, and the reunion with cruising friends who were anchored close by.

We were still not sure if we would remain here for hurricane season because we had friends from two other boats going to Venezuela and they wanted us to go with them. We still had three weeks before their arrival and decided to stay at the marina for that time. There you are close to everything, whether by foot or dinghy, and the buses are right here. Talking about the buses, well, you don't wait for them — they are looking for you. We have traveled a lot and find Grenada's bus system is unique and cheap — EC$2.50 (about one US dollar) will take you most places you want to go.

Already we felt something different about this place but were not sure what it was. On an island tour with friends we discovered the spice factories, plantations and, naturally, the rum distillery. I believe that was the beginning of our love story. Raymond (Maboat), our driver and guide, came to be a very good personal friend. The thing about Grenadians is that they are so welcoming: without prejudice, simple, honest and helpful. Even the street vendors do not harass you; if you say "no, thanks", they smile and wish you a good day. Now that is special, after living with other situations elsewhere!

Every day I took a walk around the marina to see the ongoing expansion and renovation. It's quite interesting if you like to see how things are built. At the beginning, the workers thought I was an inspector but soon found out that I was more curious than anything else and we became friendly.

By the time our friends arrived to continue to Venezuela, Lucie and I had decided to stay here for hurricane season and to learn more about Grenada, especially since Carnival was around the corner and it would be our first one. Talk about having fun — dancing, singing and drinking — yes! We and some fellow cruisers joined hundreds and hundreds of local people, and they made us feel so much at ease and they were so happy that we celebrated Spice Mas with them. It was like being a part of the family, and that's what you see and feel every day, everywhere on this island.

I had to go back home for two weeks, and upon my return everyone whom I had met since our arrival greeted me with so much warmness, saying, "welcome back!" — and I felt that it came from the heart. It felt like we belong here. I could go on and on relating all sorts of daily situations, but to put it simply, Grenadians are just loving and warm people. It has been over five months now that we are here, and the feeling is still the same, so much so that we are in the process of exploring how to prolong our stay.

To the people of Grenada who read this, please, please, please, don't change; keep that mentality that makes you so fine and unique. We love you.

For those cruisers who have not had the chance to come here yet, don't wait — put up the sail and come. You won't regret it.

To all the friends we made since the beginning of this adventure, we salute you wherever you are. We will be stationed at Port Louis Marina and hope to see you here. Safe and happy sailing!






PATRICK HOLIAN

KEVIN FAVREAU

TURTLES IN PARADISE

by Patrick Holian

Main photo: A hawksbill turtle. The nutrient-laden sea grass of Lac Bay serves these turtles well
Inset: STCB's Funchi Egbreghts with Red Berger. Red is among the cruiser volunteers who help with sea turtle conservation projects in Bonaire: 'It opens up a whole new world'

Along the 'Wild Side', Bonaire's rocky east coast, is a magnificent lagoon known as Lac Bay. A mile-long reef runs along most of its entrance, blocking a turbulent sea fueled by constant Caribbean tradewinds. Within the bay, however, the water changes from a rich, indigo blue to an iridescent, dreamsicle green. Violent, churning waves give way to flat water. Depths run shallow with much of the bay only three to six feet deep.

These conditions make Lac a perfect place for windsurfing, and tourists flock here by the thousands to take on the wind in smooth seas. In fact, this is home to the annual Dutch Antilles Windsurfing Challenge, an international event attended by Olympic-class windsurfers from around the globe and homegrown competitors like Patun Saragoza and Taty Frans. But Lac Bay is also known for something less thrilling than high-performance windsurfing. Less thrilling, that is, unless you are a turtle. The bay holds a bounty of nutritious sea grass.

"Green turtles are mostly herbivores. Their bread and butter are sea grass and algae. They maintain grazing fields here. They like the sea grass when it's young and tender and just eat that and move on." So says Dr. Robert Van Dam, a marine biologist who, for the past 20 years, has conducted research on turtles throughout the Caribbean.

"Lac Bay is a special place. There's a real pumping action of water going on. The wind-driven water gets pushed in and flows out a deeper channel. This high degree of circulation is unlike other mangrove-fringed bays in the Caribbean. Nutrients are brought in and out frequently so the bay is very suitable for sea life. Because of this, three hundred to five hundred turtles use Lac on a daily basis."

Many of those turtles hail from other islands in the Caribbean, but come to Lac Bay specifically to eat. Between trips back to their origins to breed, many spend time at Lac's sea grass smorgasbord dining on *Thalassia testudinum*, turtle grass, and *Syringodium filiforme*, manatee grass.

"You can see that," claims Van Dam. "If you go snorkeling right outside of Lac, you'll see all these turtles hanging out. This is their resting and digesting habitat. They've been so successful in feeding in an hour or two inside the bay that they just swim out and bunch up together. They're all fat and happy. They are even socializing outside the reef. The opportunity for feeding is so great at Lac. It's just a magnet for green turtles."

I took Van Dam's advice and snorkeled just beyond the bay's reef on a day when the winds were low and the waves tempered. Visibility in these waters can easily reach 100 feet. The bottom was dotted with a forest of purple and green sea fans approaching ten feet in height. They moved to the undulating rhythm of incoming swells making for a dreamlike, aquatic dance below. And then there were the turtles — layers of them. I spotted more than 50 during my hour-long snorkel. There were brawny, green turtles weighing well over 100 pounds. Hawksbills were also present with their distinctive beaks and dark-colored shells. The nutrient-laden sea grass of Lac Bay had served these turtles well.

—Continued on next page



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"They came for the buffet," says Van Dam smiling, "and the eating's really good. It's a nursery ground here for Caribbean green turtles."

But there is trouble in paradise. The constant use of Lac Bay by windsurfers, waders, and other recreationists has begun to impact the sea grass beds, which can be easily destroyed if frequently trodden upon. Once eliminated, shore erosion can increase significantly, upsetting the local habitat.

"The importance of sea grass goes beyond turtles," explains Mabel Nava, manager for the not-for-profit organization, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB). "These beds are important because they retain substrate sediment. They clean the water. They also serve as a buffer to the constant wave action. The sea grass protects the beaches that we all enjoy at Lac."

To that end, STCB spearheaded an effort with Bonaire's national park organization, STINAPA, the not-for-profit Progressive Environmental Solutions and local Lac Bay beach businesses to protect the grass. They installed "no-go zones" with floating buoys and ropes that encircle sea grass beds in waters used frequently by swimmers, kayakers and windsurfers. The boundaries serve as a reminder not to step inside these vulnerable areas.

"Those beds are too shallow and too busy for sea turtles to visit," adds Robert Van Dam. "But it is a great beginning to let people know that these are special places. Sea grass is a nursery for a whole bunch of organisms important to Lac."

"In the near future, we're placing 'turn around' buoys to protect other sea grass beds where turtles do feed," continues Nava. "Currently, windsurfers often turn around in this area as they cruise Lac and step on the grasses in the process. The buoys will warn the windsurfers before they reach this area."

STCB is also involved in data collection of sea turtles. Twice a year the group captures turtles in Lac Bay. Before releasing them, the turtles are measured, weighed, photographed, given ID tags and inspected for general health. All this information goes into a database and individual turtles can be tracked over time. Van Dam, who works as a scientific advisor for STCB, has been impressed by some of the results. "The big 'wow' factor is the growth rates of these animals. During our data collection we've discovered that they're growing six to eight centimeters (four to five inches) per year. That's the highest growth rate for juvenile green turtles in the world."

Volunteers are vital for a grass-roots organization such as STCB. In addition to the activities at Lac Bay, helpers work on beach cleanups, water surveys, sea turtle satellite tracking, and nest monitoring.

"We have only two paid staff, field specialist Funchi Egbreghts and myself as manager," explains Nava, "so volunteers are essential for us. But I especially like working with the visiting sailors and cruisers who volunteer. They are people who are familiar with the sea. They're usually good swimmers or drive boats or do things that are really helpful for us. And they love turtles because they love the sea."



PATRICK HOLIAN

Local boys inspect a green turtle during data collection

I found this to be true when I met "Red" Berger who is in Year Five of a Caribbean cruise with her husband Tom. They own a steel-hulled Endurance 44 ketch, *Katana*, which they call home.

"They are majestic when you swim with them," declares Berger. "I would never been able been able to pick out a sea turtle so easily before. Now when I swim from our mooring, I can easily spot a turtle. I know what to look for, so that's pretty cool. It opens up a whole new world."

Red usually accompanies STCB's Funchi Egbreghts to survey the nesting turtles three times per week. They search the beaches of Bonaire's west coast and those of offshore island, Klein Bonaire, for signs of nesting activity. It takes about 60 days for sea turtle eggs to hatch. When they do, STCB tries to be there in order to get an accurate count of the hatchlings. These numbers are added to the database, but the team, at times, helps hatchlings reach the sea to what is the start of a perilous beginning.

"If conditions aren't perfect, we give the hatchlings a little help by moving obstructions, etcetera," says Egbreghts. "They face a lot of predators in the beginning of their lives including shore birds, fish and crabs."

"It's like being part of The Discovery Channel," adds Berger. "For me, working with the turtles is really cool, but there are other benefits. You sail to a place and the volunteering lets you meet the local people. Otherwise I wouldn't know Funchi and have gone out to his farm and hung out with his father. It's just the right thing to do. You've given back a little of what they've given you. If you're a cruiser and you're not taking advantage of this, you don't know what you're missing."

"One year we did the netting-data collection in Lac entirely with visiting sailors as volunteers," adds manager Nava. "Normally the cruisers are here two to three months, so it's perfect. We even have cruisers who return to volunteer again and again. January through April is a good time to contact us since we are busy doing in-water surveys around Bonaire. After that, we start with the nesting season. These are perfect times for sailors to plan their visit here if they would like to volunteer."

Back at Lac Bay, I walk the sandy shore with Robert Van Dam who is talking numbers. "Today, we only have about 100,000 adult sea turtles in the entire Caribbean Sea, whereas there were probably at least 10 million before Columbus arrived. Can you imagine what places like Lac must have been like? These waters were just teeming with turtles. I expect there could have been 3,000 to 5,000 turtles in the bay here back then."

As I look out over the vast lagoon, I try to imagine that time long ago. The water is sparkling gold in the afternoon sun. Suddenly, I spot the silhouetted head of a sea turtle breaking the surface for a quick breath of air. That timely glimpse gives me hope that the turtles will always return to feast at Lac Bay as long as it is well preserved. I know I will always return, simply to see them.

For more information on Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire visit www.bonairenature.com/turtles

When not writing for Caribbean Travel & Life, Sailing *Magazine or* Earth Island Journal, *Patrick Holian is often at the helm of his 14-foot catboat,* Kontentu, *sailing the leeward coast of Bonaire.*



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♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
While boat-business sails are backed, feel free to indulge in romance, which will prove a blissful distraction as the New Year gets underway.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
It's love AND lust on the breeze this month, sailor, so enjoy it! Treat yourself well and splurge a bit as a reward for all your recent hard work in the boatyard.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
As 2010 is launched, adverse currents in your love life will slow forward motion on your creative cruising ambitions. Don't fret — the tide will turn in your favor during the third week.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Personal relationships and onboard creativity will be in irons this month, and you'll feel a general lack of drive. Not a problem — lounging around on deck with a cold beer may be just the ticket.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
Other than a lack of energy and a lackadaisical attitude, this will be a dead calm month! Find a good "beach book" and enjoy it.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
The Horse Latitude conditions in your life will extend till the end of this month. You might do well to join Cancer on deck with a coldie.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Business and finances are slogging to windward with a dirty bottom, and there could be some squalls in your love life. But stay on course and you'll reach a safe haven.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
Prepare to reef! Romance, which has been smooth sailing of late, may meet some rough weather in the third week. You didn't whistle for wind, did you?

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
Get to work, sailor; the holidays are over. Any new boat projects you are working on had best be concluded before the end of the month.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
After all the holiday excitement, arguments and misunderstandings could make your love life squally. Raise the storm sails of humor and you'll sail right on through.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Sails will be slack and seas glassy until the last week. It's the perfect time to touch up the varnish to make your floating love nest ready for romance to sail in during the last week.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
Happy New Year! Enjoy a month of ease. Lie on the hook in a favorite anchorage and just enjoy life.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS
1) PERIGO
3) PAST
7) FOLLOWING
11) IN
12) APPROVE
14) CAM
15) SLOWS
17) AFTWARD
20) IT
21) ATE
23) SINO
25) AFTERMOST
26) GO
27) HALF
29) WITCH
30) GONERIL
33) SAILS
35) YARD
36) SEWS
37) END
39) TILLER
41) AFTER
42) ATOLL
44) SIT
46) SEEPS
47) FACES

DOWN
1) PELAGIC
2) OF
3) PLACED
4) AO
5) SWIMS
6) TIN
8) OVER ATE
9) GLOWING
10) LOST
13) PEAK
16) STOOL
18) WATCH
19) RERIG
22) NOON
23) STORMY
24) YAWL
25) AFTCASTLE
28) LI
31) ORDERS
32) LARDERS
33) SW
34) SALES
36) SEAM
38) DATA
40) ILE
43) OS
45) IF

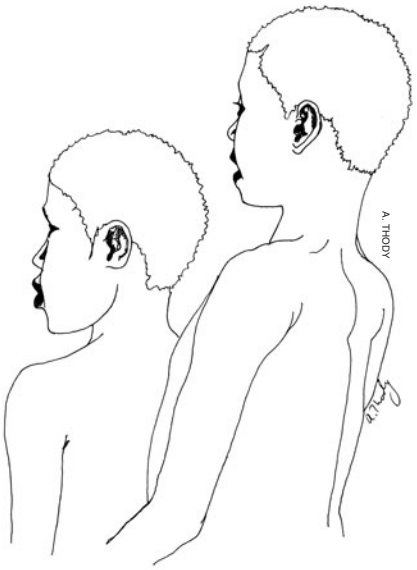
Island Poets

WHY?

For what am I searching?
Why do I walk these dusty lanes?
Why do I sail this azure sea?

Long ago,
Before classes and degrees;
Before funerals of parents and loved ones;
Before jobs and mortgages and taxes;
Before all life's absurdities;
There was a boy...

Skin brown from the August sun;
Eyes sparkling like the summer sky;
There were butterflies dancing
In the lush green hills.
There were brown trout swimming
In the bubbling stream.
There were wildflowers swaying
In the soft, warm breeze.
There was a rainbow arching
After a gentle rain.



As I walk these dusty lanes
I sometimes hear his spirit
Woven into the laughter,
The carefree laughter of the islands.

As I sail from one island to the next,
Sometimes, I see his eyes
As the sun's rays sparkle
Off the rippling sea.

Before I cross the line,
Before I join the echoes,
Before I become a memory,
I'd like to find that boy.

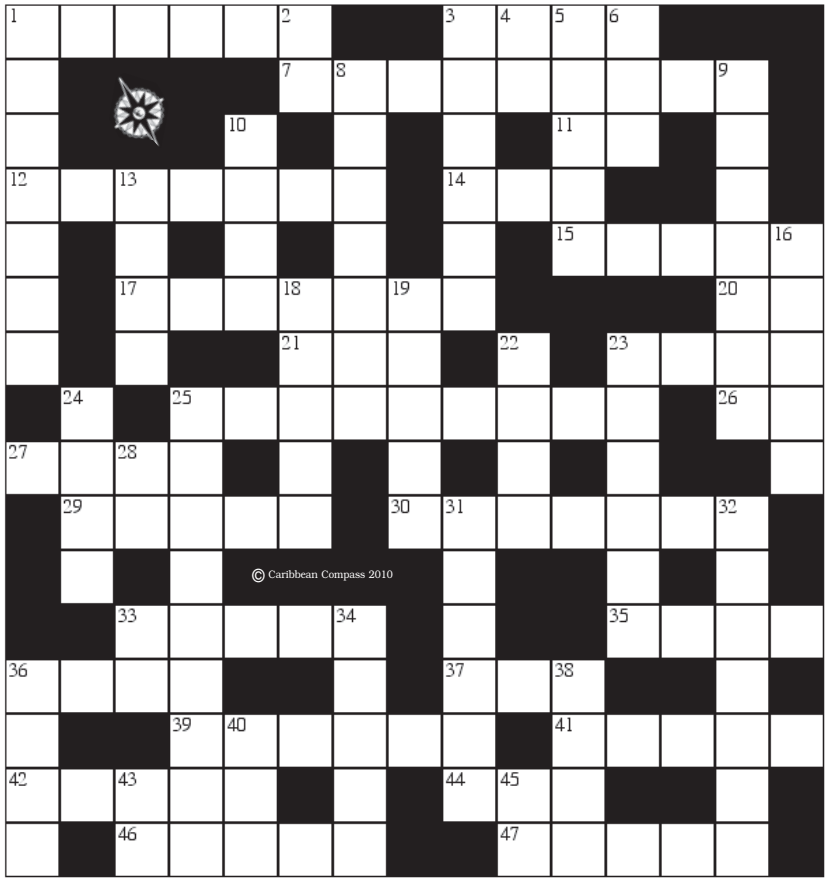
Yesterday,
For a moment,
I thought I saw him.
Blue eyes sparkling,
Face brown from the sun.
I blinked and he was gone,
Leaving only me in the mirror.

— John Rowland

bela-toon



Compass Cruising Crossword



'AFTER'

ACROSS

1) Mediterranean lateen-rigged vessel
3) What comes 41 Across present
7) Seas coming from aft are said to be this
11) Not out
12) Confirm or give sanction to
14) Lobe on an engine shaft
15) A dirty bottom ____ the boat
17) Towards the stern
20) That thing
21) Consumed
23) Prefix pertaining to China
25) Farthest astern
26) __ to sea: get underway
27) ____ deck: the 41 Across part of a navel vessel's gun deck
29) Sea ____ ketch, an Angelman design
30) King Lear's eldest daughter
33) Jib, main, mizzen, spanker, etcetera
35) A spar crossing the mast horizontally
36) A sailmaker ___ 33 Across
37) The transom is at the 41 Across ___ of the boat
39) Dinghy steering device
41) Subject of this puzzle
42) Circular coral island
44) Do this on a chair
46) Slow leaks
47) Compasses' cards are their _____

DOWN

1) Wandering offshore
2) Cat __ nine tails
3) Came in, as in a regatta
4) __tearoa: Maori name for New Zealand
5) A bird flies; a fish ____
6) Substance now banned from antifouling paint
8) Consumed too much (two words)
9) In phosphorescent seas, the water is _____
10) ____ at sea: missing underway
13) The end of a gaff
16) Channel to which backstay can be set up
18) Set a night one on deck in a strange harbor
19) Do this after dismasting
22) Time to take a sextant sight
23) _____ Weather: famous yacht or song
24) Boat with mizzenmast set aft of the sternpost
25) An elevation at the stern in square-riggers
28) Symbol for lithium
31) Edicts from the captain
32) Melville and others wrote of the contents of ships' _____
33) A compass point (abbrev.)
34) The budget-minded cruiser looks for these
36) Where two deck planks meet
38) Organized information
40) ___-à-Vache is a small island in 33 Down Haiti
43) Operating system (abbrev.)
45) "__ pigs had wings..."

Crossword Solution on page 38

Make a New Year's resolution to be more green in 2010. Start by doing this special puzzle, and when you're done reading this issue of Compass, pass it on or recycle it!

Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski

RESOLVE TO BE GREEN - WORD SEARCH

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

ACT
CARBON
CLEAN
CONSERVE
CORAL
DISPOSE

EARTH
ECOLOGY
ENVIRONMENT
EXTINCT

FISH
FUEL
GREEN

HEAD
HOLDING
HOPE
ICE
LEAD
NEW YEAR
OCEAN
PROTECT

RECYCLE
REDUCE
RESOLUTION
RESOLVE
REUSE
RIVER

SAIL
SAVE
SEA
SHARE
SOLAR POWER
SPECIES
SUSTAINABLE

TANK
TRASH
TRY

WALK
WATER MAKER
WATERSHED
WIND POWER

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 49

Where Have All the Dragons Gone?

Part One

by Lee Kessell

"Dragons, *doux-doux*? I don't think they've really gone anywhere," answered Silla's grandmother. Silla was only six years old and the questions she asked her grandmother were hard for the old lady to answer. Granny had been brought up in the country on a Caribbean island of mountains and rivers where, as a child, she had never heard of dragons or seen a TV. All that the children feared back then were the local spirits, such as the Soucouyant and the Mage Noir, and even now, Granny kept little bags of garlic by the doors and windows to keep out night-prowling spirits. Granny's own kind of spooks she could handle, but not the bloodthirsty vampires and dragons that featured so dramatically on TV these days. Oh, she understood why children loved them, because as children, she and her friends loved to be scared by stories of evil forest creatures just waiting to carry them off. But dragons? She would just have to make up a story to satisfy Silla or the child would never stop pestering her.

"But if dragons have never really gone, where are they?" persisted Silla.

"Well, I didn't want to tell you this, but all the dragons are up there in Morne Diablo."

"You mean this very Morne Diablo in this very island?" Silla shivered as she sat on her grandmother's wide and comfy lap.

"That's what I've heard, child. And what's more, they come down from their mountain caves and gobble up stray animals like cats and dogs and anything they can get their claws on. The smaller animals they eat where they find them, the larger ones they carry off to their evil-smelling dens!"

"Do they carry off children as well?" asked Silla, her eyes wide with pleasurable fright.

"You never can tell, but I haven't heard of any children who have gone missing lately…"

That night Silla dreamed about dragons in the mountain that loomed over the island, and in the morning, as it was Saturday and no school, she determined to walk as far as she could to Morne Diablo and see for herself.

Silla didn't get very far as the mountain was a long way off and her legs were very small, but she looked about the worn path for any signs of dragons having stopped for a meal.

Just as she was about to go home as her tummy was rumbling with hunger she heard a little mewing bleat from behind a boulder. Silla trembled with fear and would have run down the hill as fast as she could, but her legs wouldn't obey her and she stood as if a dragon had breathed cold fire over her.

The small bleat came again, and then a little head peeped around the rock. It was the strangest creature that Silla had ever seen. It had a face like a lamb, but rising from its head and running down the length of its squat little body were claw-like spikes that rose and fell as it bleated. It had tiny wings pressed against its sides and a tail with an arrow's head at the end. Every part of the little creature, including its short legs and clawed feet, glowed on and off in all the colours of the rainbow. It had to be a baby dragon!

And who could resist such a cute creature? Not Silla, so she had her arms wrapped about it in an instant. She picked it up and staggered off with it, intending to take it home and care for it. But Silla didn't get very far as the baby dragon was too heavy. So she hid it behind a bush, told it to wait there for her, and ran home.

"Granny, Granny, I've found a baby dragon!" Silla gasped as she burst into the old lady's kitchen. Granny was just putting out some bakes and little fried fish for lunch but she stopped and spun around to face her granddaughter. "What?" she demanded, forgetting all about her story of dragons the day before. "There are no such things as dragons!"

"But there are, there are, you said so — and I've found a baby dragon lost and hungry on the path up the mountain and I have to get some milk to take back and feed it!"

"Now just you sit down and get hold of yourself, young lady. For a start, what were you doing taking that path to Morne Diablo when you've been told not to?"

"But Granny, you told me that dragons lived in the mountain so I went to see for myself, but it was too far." Silla began to sob.

The old lady's heart softened at once and she took Silla in her arms and told her it was all right, and after they had eaten the bakes and fish she and Silla would take a bottle of milk and go and feed the baby dragon. Of course, Granny believed she would find a deformed lamb, abandoned by its mother on the path, so she would bring it home and care for it.

Silla gobbled down her lunch and fidgeted until her grandmother had eaten. Then, taking some milk, a cup and a clean piece of cloth to let the lamb suck from it, as Granny didn't have a baby's bottle with a teat, they left the little cottage and made their way slowly up the mountain path. It was a long, hot walk but at last Silla recognized the bush where she had hidden the baby dragon. She raced ahead, calling out, "I'm back, little dragon, and I've brought you some milk." A little mewing sound reached Granny's ears and then a little head pushed its way out from under the leafy bush…

Did Granny find a dragon or a lamb? Read the end of this exciting story in next month's issue of Caribbean Compass!

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

Last month, we looked at how the carbon atoms in the world are recycled. Now let's look at how the ocean plays a part in the carbon cycle.

Global warming and the greenhouse effect are caused by excess greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide (CO_2) in the atmosphere. The gases trap heat close to the Earth's surface. Global warming would be much worse if the ocean didn't absorb a great deal of the carbon dioxide. In fact, scientists believe that it probably absorbs around 50 percent of the carbon dioxide produced when fossil fuels such as coal and oil are burned.

What happens to the carbon dioxide that is absorbed?

Carbon dioxide is more soluble in cold water than it is in warm water so it dissolves in northern seas, sinks down and is carried on the 'conveyor belt' of ocean currents to warmer water further south in the tropics. There it comes to the surface and escapes to the atmosphere. This process may take many years.

The ocean also contains large amounts of microscopic plant plankton (**phytoplankton**), which use up carbon dioxide in photosynthesis. When the phytoplankton die, they sink to the ocean floor. Some get buried in the mud of the ocean floor. Some decay and release carbon dioxide back into the water and, eventually, back into the air.

So, if carbon dioxide is being continually recycled between the atmosphere and the sea, why are scientists worried?

Too much carbon dioxide in the water makes larger amounts of carbonic acid there. Carbonic acid dissolves calcium carbonate, which is the chief building material of coral reefs and of the shells of many marine animals. Scientists have studied the thickness of the shells of tiny animals called foraminifera (forams). Forams also sink to the ocean floor when they die so it is possible to compare the thickness of the shells of new forams with the thickness of the shells of the dead ones found on the sea bottom. The newer shells were thinner by about one-third, almost certainly caused by a more acidic ocean.

The survival of these tiny animals is vital to the survival of all animals further up the food chain. And no one knows how the loss of coral reefs and other marine creatures whose shells and skeletons are destroyed by carbonic acid would affect the future working of the carbon cycle.

Experiment to demonstrate what happens when acid meets calcium carbonate.

Calcium carbonate comes in many forms, like coral, chalk, marble, and eggshell. To demonstrate what happens when calcium carbonate comes into contact with acid, leave a piece of chalk or (dead) coral or eggshell in a cup of soda water. You should see bubbles of carbon dioxide gas rising up and, eventually, your calcium carbonate sample will waste away. If you'd like to see it happen more quickly, use lime juice or vinegar instead of soda water.

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2008 ©

THE SKY IN JANUARY

by Scott Welty

The Planets in January

MERCURY - You have a shot at seeing Mercury this month. It rises the earliest (so, farthest from the rising sun) on the 22nd at around 5:00AM. Look east-south-east to the left of the hook in Scorpio.

VENUS - Nope. Venus will swing around the far side of the Sun (superior conjunction) on the 11th, meaning it is too darn close to the sun for the month.

EARTH - Would not return my calls.

MARS - Rising around 9:00PM at the beginning of the month and then earlier and earlier as it moves through Cancer.

JUPITER - An "evening star" all month setting in the west around 7:00 to 8:00PM.

SATURN - Rising between 11:00PM and midnight all month and sitting in Virgo.

Sky Events This Month

1st to 5th - Quadrantids meteor shower. Look for increase in meteor activity in the east in the early morning hours. Meteors look to be coming from Bootes, which rises around 2:00AM.

3rd - Earth at perihelion. What? Yes, at midnight the Earth is its closest to the Sun. Yep, that happens in the winter. See below.

15th - New Moon

15th - Annular eclipse of the sun; nicely visible off the coast of Somalia but if you're sailing there you have other things to watch out for!

17th - Look for Jupiter and the pretty crescent moon setting in the west around 7:00PM.

29th - Mars in opposition AND closest to the Earth. This means Mars is fully illuminated by the sun like a full moon, except it's "full Mars".

30th - Full Moon

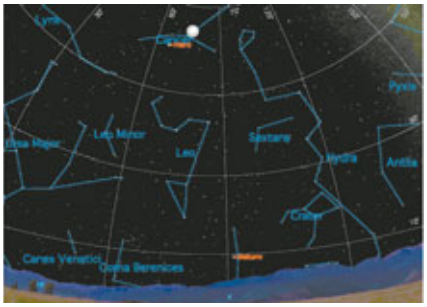


Figure One: Mars on the 29th at 10:30PM. In theory at its brightest, but the nearness of the nearly full moon makes a day or two later or earlier better viewing

Elliptical Orbits

Sometimes we learn stuff in school "too much". Somewhere along your journey through junior high or high school you probably learned that the orbits of the planets around the sun are elliptical in shape. Johannes Kepler figured this out and Isaac Newton then showed that it had to be so, given what he worked out about gravity. This is all fine but then you see diagrams like Figure Two.

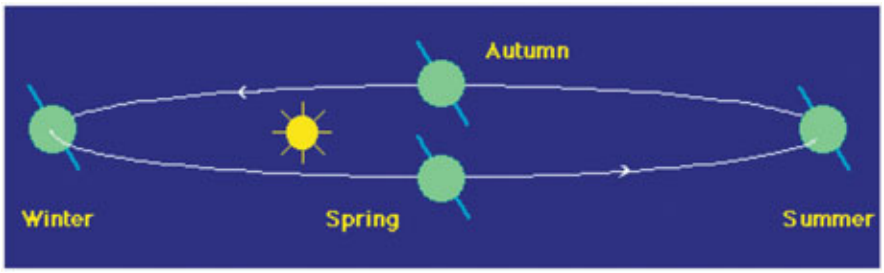
The spirit of these diagrams is fine. It shows the "ellipticalness" of the orbit with the sun at the focus of the ellipse. But, like a lot of astronomy things, the scale is all out of whack. Never mind that if you draw the ellipse on a standard sized piece of paper the size of the Earth is less than the width of the line drawn to represent the ellipse. It's the ellipse itself I want to talk about.

Figure Three is the Earth's orbit drawn to scale. Well, I *tried* anyway. At this scale the long axis of the ellipse is 6 inches and the shorter axis is 5.999 inches! Neither the sun nor the Earth shows up on this scale the Earth being about 3/10,000 of an inch in diameter and the sun being 3/1000 of an inch. We're down to individual pixels being bigger than what we want to draw!

It's easy to see then that our nearness to the sun has little to do with our seasons while our tilt to the sun has everything to do with it.

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

The SETI project is still out there. For years now they have been searching the sky for radio signals from intelligent life elsewhere in the universe. For the last ten years they've done a clever computer thing. They take in about a kabillion bushels of data every second as they scan the sky. There is no computer big enough to process all that data. But, what if you gave a kabillion home computers one bushel of data?



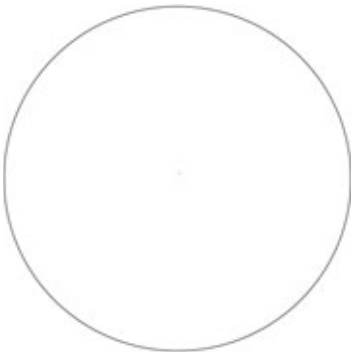


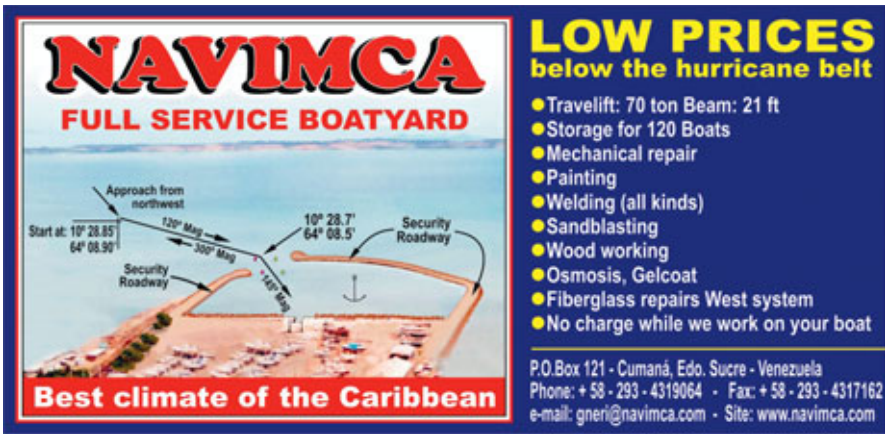
Figure Two, above: Typical graphic showing the elliptical earth orbit. Notice relative sizes of the orbit, the sun and the Earth. (Graphic courtesy of University of Tennessee - Physics Dept.)
Figure Three, at left: The Earth's orbit to scale: 6" the long way and 5.999" the short way. Can you see which is which?

That's what they've done. Basically they have wired millions of home computers together via the internet to make a giant parallel processing computer. (You can learn more and sign up here: http://setiathome.berkeley.edu/)

So, what do we do when and if a signal does come in? What if we can tell that it's from 100 light years away? What if they just say, "Stop that"? How will we react as a people if we could really, really know that someone else was out there... And they have radio but no DJs? More wine?

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





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BOOK REVIEWS BY CHERIAN GORDON

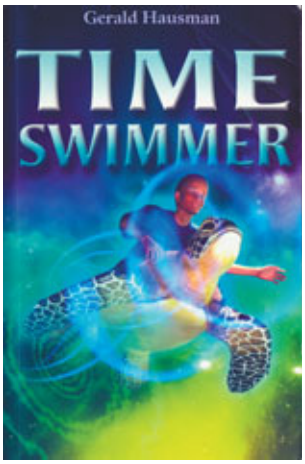
Caribbean Books for Teens: MACMILLAN'S ISLAND FICTION

For 40 years, Macmillan has been one of the leading publishers of school textbooks for the Caribbean. During that time they created the Macmillan Caribbean imprint and have published books for and about the Caribbean in all subjects and at all levels. In 2006 they began activating plans to launch a brand-new fiction series aimed at boys and girls aged 12 to 15, with novellas based around fantasy/science-fiction themes and the legends and folklore of the Caribbean. The six books in the series are all paperback, and about 200 pages. These should be of interest not only to Caribbean-born teens, but to teen-aged expatriate residents and visitors as well.

Three of the books in the series are reviewed here. The others are Legend of the Swan Children, *by Maureen Marks-Mendonca;* Escape from Silk Cotton Forest, *by Frances C. Escayg; and* Delroy in the Marog Kingdom, *by Helen Williams. The latter two were reviewed in the August 2009 issue of* Caribbean Compass.

***Time Swimmer*, by Gerald Hausman**

Time Swimmer is the story of a young Jamaican, Luke, who befriends an ancient storytelling sea turtle called Odysseus. Together they travel through Caribbean time, righting wrongs and saving lives — the pirate, Henry Morgan, for one; and Cyparis, the only survivor of the Mount Pelée volcano that killed 28,000 people in Martinique in 1902, to name another. The novel is full of spiders that are men and lizards that are gods, all mixed together in a pepperpot stew of fantastic spice that blends fiery history with delectable fantasy.



To me, the greatest thing about this book was its emphasis on Caribbean history long forgotten or, more accurate to say, not known by many of today's youths. Although it is history, it isn't boring. By using visual and sound imagery, the writer gives a colourful edge to these various historical events. Furthermore, the writer also tries to have the reader gain a sense of the courage, intelligence and strength of the characters, by describing the conflict in the plot between Luke and Odysseus and the various gods. The gods in the novelette typically represent obstacles and signs in a character's life, or a helping hand achieving set goals. There isn't much this book lacks for it is funny, imaginative and rather innovative.

***The Chalice Project*, by Lisa Allen-Agostini**

Twins, Ada and Evan Brijlal, eat junk food, fight at school and are normal Trinidadian children in every way — or so it seems. Their father Steven, a genius scientist, desperately wants to protect his children from his reckless past. Now the future has caught up with them and Time as we know it may never be the same. A sneaky search for the mother they long to know leads them to a Jamaican laboratory and mind-blowing revelations. A secret potion and the mysterious Chalice Project are the children's only clues to uncovering their true identities.

At the beginning, the plot was centered on genetics. Its later plot was centered on time travelling, telepathy and various mysterious events from the time of the children's conception leading up to the realization that they had super-human abilities.

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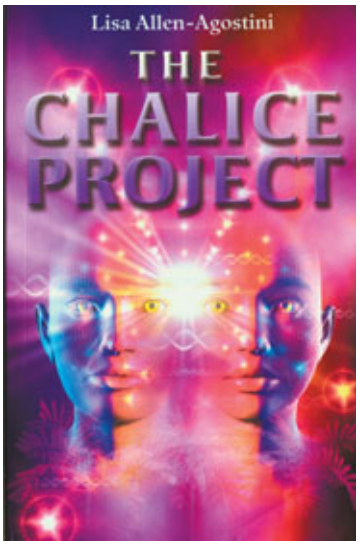
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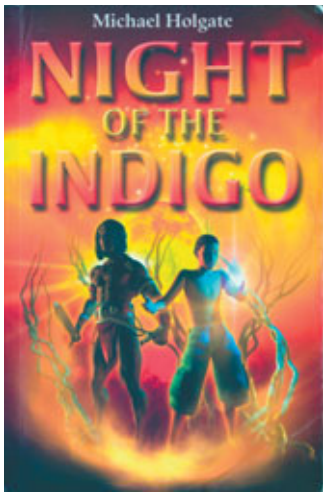
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I expected The *Chalice Project*, as a part of the Island Fiction series, to follow the Caribbean folklore theme of the other books in the series, but it doesn't. Actually the only common aspect this book has with the others was that its scenes were set on a Caribbean island; other than that, it was merely science fiction. Don't get me wrong though, it was still a pretty good read — great for passing the time.



***Night of the Indigo*, by Michael Holgate**

Marassa, a 15-year-old Jamaican boy, is catapulted into a wondrous world of Natural Mysticism. His twin brother Wico is dying and no doctor on earth can save him. Guided by Kundo, the mystic warrior, Marassa transcends time and matter into an unknown dimension, a planet called Orunda. If he accepts his responsibility as a Marshal or Warrior of Light he can rescue his brother from the clutches of death. But first he must make a spine-tingling journey, confront the challenges of mind and spirit and meet the beautiful and exotic princess Ayoka. As his mystic gifts awaken, Marassa must learn to master the very power that threatens, before the Night of the Indigo Moon. If he doesn't, then the power surging within will destroy him and all he holds dear. Can he overcome all obstacles and prove that he is worthy of the name Marshal?

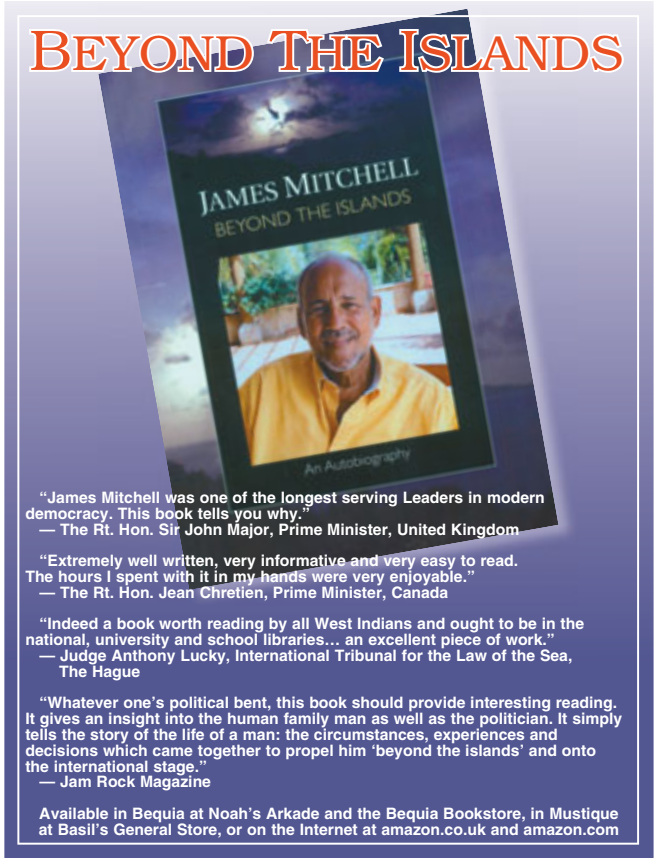


I am going to be a little biased here and say that I think this is the best book of the series. The book is dramatic, funny, mysterious, imaginative, and every other adjective known to man that could describe a well-written novelette. A tale of unknowing faith, different worlds, deep understanding, pain and triumph is the root of this story that culminates in everlasting happiness and redemption. In gathering a personal understanding of this novelette, one could say it's figurative, and if read between the lines its true story unfolds: the story of life.

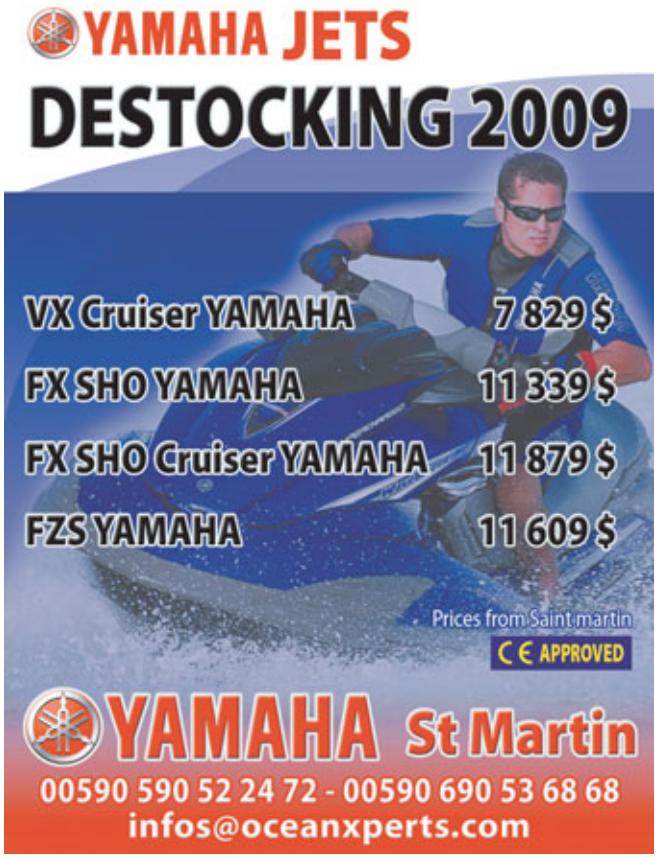
It's about growing up, the choices that we are faced with, right and wrong, trials and temptations. One could say that becoming the Marshal is Marassa's life's purpose and, in reality, everyone has to plot his or her own course to becoming a Marshal *per se*. The story also contains near-death drama and the emotions that go along with it. Marassa uses those feelings to excel, and so it should be done, for sorrow carries no way forward. It's the basics of everyday life in a compellingly beautiful story.

These books are available at bookstores or from www.Macmillan-caribbean.com

Cherian Gordon, a recent graduate of Bequia Community High School, is currently residing in England.







Tide's Table

by Ross Mavis

Just Five Ingredients

I have a new invention. It is engineered from a great deal of research and personal experience. Every person over 50 will want one. The production materials are kind to the environment. The cost is affordable.

It is a small rubber or plastic suction cup with a length of brightly coloured organic woollen yarn attached to it. I can market various models starting at 50 feet and running up to 200 feet in length. The suction cup is firmly attached to any cordless phone on board and the yarn is left to trail behind, allowing you instantly to find where you last left it. I'll make millions.

Cooking can often be an experience similar to trying to find the cordless phone when you need it. Our materialistic society encourages the acquisition of more ingredients, equipment, tools and gadgets than we could ever possibly use in one month, let alone one day or for any single meal. Try this enlightening experiment sometime. Count your collection of pots, frying pans, baking dishes, casseroles, Dutch ovens and any other container that you can cook in. Add to this number all the equipment, tools and gadgets, both useful and whimsical, you have in your galley. Even without considering all your stored ingredients, the number will astound you.

There always is that favorite tool or utensil that you never can find when it's needed. I have a favorite stir-



stick carved from lignum vitae hardwood. I almost hyperventilate if I can't lay my hands on it when food needs stirring. The other day I was unable to locate a red-handled potato peeler, the only device I use for peeling fruit and vegetables. It is fantastic. But, for the life of me, I couldn't find it. To add embarrassment to frustration, my wife, Willa, pulled open the drawer I had just closed after rummaging around in search of the peeler, and there it was. Right out in the open. How could I have missed it? I shook my head in disbelief and shuffled off, mumbling under my breath about the Zen of soy products or something equally as blasphemous. Our lives are filled with too much stuff. One truism is that we never own stuff; stuff owns us.

You can imagine my delight when I opened a gift that Willa gave me recently. It was a food calendar from England with a recipe for each month of the coming year. And each recipe contains only five ingredients. What a refreshing thought; only five ingredients to track down in the galley! Too often we complicate our lives by trying to make them more complex than necessary. Granted, some dishes may involve several stages of preparation and cooking and are more involved than a simple egg, boiled in water and served on toast. However, Willa and I have always tried to provide recipes in our cookbooks that are not complicated. Availability of ingredients and items commonly found in today's kitchen or galley is also a priority. Good food can be made with five ingredients. Here is a sample of one such recipe.

Chops and Mushrooms in Sherry and Cream
2 large pork chops
2 Cups (500 ml) small, whole mushrooms
2 Tablespoons (30 ml) sherry
1 Tablespoon (15 ml) grainy Dijon mustard
3/4 Cup (150 ml) whipping cream

sLine a broiler pan with aluminum foil. Spray lightly with canola oil. Lightly spray mushrooms with the oil. Season mushrooms and chops with salt and pepper. Place the chops in the broiler pan and grill for about 8 to 10 minutes until nicely browned. Turn chops and add mushrooms to pan. Return to broiler and cook another 7 to 8 minutes until mushrooms are browned and chops are cooked through. Sprinkle with sherry and stir mustard and cream into pan juices. Season with salt and pepper to taste and return pan under grill. Watch closely and serve when sauce is bubbling nicely. Spoon sauce over chops and mushrooms, serving with potatoes or rice and a green vegetable of your choice.

This dish can also be prepared in a skillet on top of the stove. Use medium-high heat when cooking the chops and mushrooms. Reduce the heat slightly when incorporating the cream. Enjoy.

If you have any cooking questions, don't hesitate to seek advice from Ross@Innonthecove.com

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CRUISING WITH CABBAGE

by Angelika Gruener

I am from Germany, and the North Americans gave us the nickname "Krauts". I know why, and I am not angry about that. We really do eat a lot of cabbage, not to mention our famous sauerkraut. In Germany, in autumn we buy cabbage in ten-kilo bags. The first ten kilos are gone within two weeks, then we buy the next ten kilos, which last a bit longer.

If cabbage is available for a good price, we make sauerkraut aboard *Angelos*. It needs to ferment for at least six weeks. We have done this in Venezuela and in the Pacific. If anyone is interested I can give the recipe, which is as easy as the salad recipe given below. Contact me at syangelos@web.de

The following recipes are easy to make onboard, and they really taste nice. You should try them.

Bavarian Cabbage

1 small white cabbage (or half of a large one)
5 Tablespoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon sugar
1 onion
1 heaped teaspoon caraway seeds
1 teaspoon salt
1 to 2 Cups water
2 Tablespoons vinegar
2 teaspoons flour (approximately)
1/2 Cup of water

Quarter the cabbage, cut out the core, take off the dirty leaves from the outside, leave the quartered head together, and cut the cabbage in small strips, about 3 mm thick.

Cut the onions into pieces.

Put the oil in a large pot with the sugar and heat it, stirring until the sugar melts and starts to get LIGHT brown. Now reduce the heat and DO NOT STOP stirring.

Add the onions and caraway seeds, and stir quickly. The onions will get brown. (If they get black, the fire was too hot — throw everything away and start again!)

Add the cabbage, and stir till everything is mixed up nicely, about 2 minutes.

Add salt and water, stir, put a lid on, reduce the heat as low as possible, and let simmer for about 20 to 30 minutes.

When the cabbage is tender, add the vinegar.

In a cup, mix the flour with the water till all the lumps are gone. Then add it to the cabbage, stirring to thicken the mixture. The quantity of flour depends on how much liquid you have with the cabbage.

We enjoy this Bavarian Cabbage with mashed potatoes and two fried eggs per serving. This also tastes very nice with some bacon.

Red Cabbage

1 small red cabbage
1 onion
1 apple
5 Tablespoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon sugar
3 Tablespoons vinegar
1 to 2 Cups water
1 teaspoon salt
7 whole cloves
1 piece of cinnamon
2 pieces of star anise
2 teaspoons flour
1/2 cup of water
5 Tablespoons goose fat (if available)

Quarter the cabbage, cut out the core, take off the dirty leaves from the outside, leave the quartered head together, and cut the cabbage in small strips, about 2 to 3 mm thick.

Cut the onions into pieces.

Peel the apple, quarter it, and take out the core. Then cut the apple into thin pieces.

Put the oil in a large pot with the sugar and heat it, stirring until the sugar melts and starts to get LIGHT brown. Now reduce the heat and DO NOT STOP stirring.

Add the onions and pieces of apples, and stir quickly for a short time.

Next add the red cabbage, and immediately add the vinegar to give the cabbage its nice colour.

Add the water, salt, cloves, cinnamon and star anise. Stir, cover the pot, reduce the heat as low as possible, and let simmer for about 20 to 30 minutes, until tender.

In a cup, mix the flour with the water till all the lumps are gone. Then add it to the cabbage, and stir to thicken the mixture.



MARGO EGGINTON

Both of the recipes above will taste much better if they are prepared in the morning or a day before, and just heated up again for dinner. But if you prepare the cabbage a day before consuming, then keep it in the fridge.

And what about a salad from white cabbage? Here comes the recipe:

Krautsalat

1/2 large white cabbage
1 teaspoon salt
Juice of one lemon or lime, or 2 Tablespoons vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 onion cut into small pieces
2 tablespoons of butter melted till hot, OR 5 strips streaky bacon cut into small pieces and heated up in a frying pan till crispy and the grease swims in the pan, OR 1 Tablespoon good mayonnaise

Quarter the cabbage, cut out the core, take off the dirty leaves from the outside, leave the quarter head together, and cut the cabbage in very thin strips, about 1 to 2 mm thick.

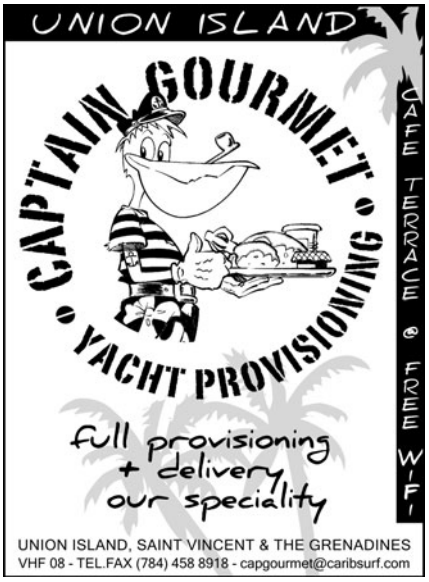
Put the shredded cabbage with the salt in a bowl and knead it with your fist and knuckles energetically for about 3 to 5 minutes. If the cabbage is fresh, then its juice will appear. Very good! Here you can exercise boxing; it means knead hard! The better you knead, the softer the cabbage will become.

Add the vinegar or lemon juice, sugar, and the onion. Stir all up, and leave it for half an hour, maybe in the fridge.

Melt the butter till it starts foaming, or fry the streaky bacon. Pour it (the bacon pieces with all the fat) over the salad, and stir all nicely.

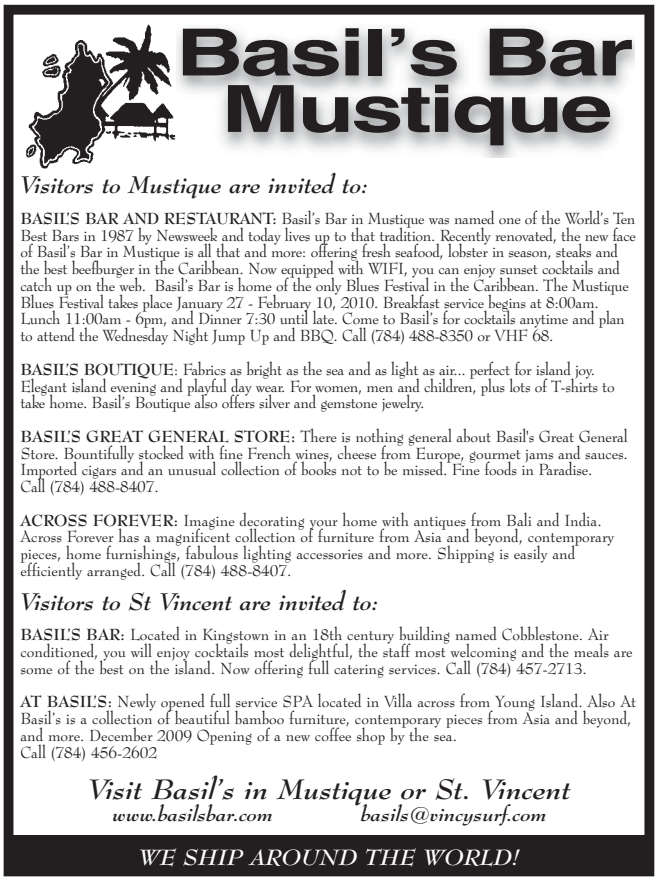
Tell me how you like it!











Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

So Much, So Little: San Blas

A Grenadines Diving Diary

Panama Canal Without Panic

... and much more!

THE SPICE LOCKER BY SHIRLEY HALL

Fennel is an herb that isn't used much in the Caribbean because of its limited availability, but it is worth seeking it out at specialty shops. I found mine growing at a nursery in Aranguez, Trinidad.

Fennel is an attractive addition to my herb garden and spice shelf. It has a thick, perennial rootstock and can grow to five feet tall (not exactly suitable for growing aboard!), with an erect cylinder of bright green, smooth leaves. Every part of fennel is edible and it is considered both herb and spice. The swollen leaf base, or bulb, is eaten, and the seeds are used for flavoring. The leaves can be used as a garnish. Fennel has a delicate aniseed flavor and is often used to season fish and broths. Fennel leaves are used by French and Italian cooks in fish sauces and in mayonnaise. Fennel is an ingredient of Chinese Five Spices and of some curry powders.

Fennel contains manganese, calcium, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, and vitamin C.

IT'S WORTH FINDING FENNEL

Fennel originated around the Mediterranean, and is now grown worldwide where climate permits. Fennel prefers hot dry, sunny conditions, yet can adapt. It was well known to the ancient Greeks who used it as a digestive remedy; it will reduce gas and stomach cramps. Ancients believed fennel seed helpful in eyesight, particularly curing nearsightedness. Fennel was once used to increase breast milk. In mediaeval times this herb was hung above doors to ward off evil spirits. Early New England Puritans chewed the seeds during town or church meetings, and fennel seeds are still used in India as an after-dinner breath freshener. Fennel is also thought to curb hunger — great for dieters. It is even reputed to stimulate strength and courage, and increase the eater's life span.



Roasted Garlic and Fennel
3 heads garlic, peeled
2 fennel bulbs, sliced
1 bunch chives, chopped
1/2 hot pepper, seeded and minced (optional)
pinch of salt
1 Tablespoon oil (canola preferred)
Place peeled garlic bulbs and sliced fennel on a piece of foil and add chives, pepper, salt, and oil. Wrap tightly and put in an ovenproof dish. Bake at 350°F for half an hour. Seve as a spread for roti or bread.

Roasted Fennel
2 fennel bulbs, sliced
1 to 2 Tablespoons oil (canola preferred)
1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar
In a bowl, stir fennel slices with oil and vinegar until they are coated. Transfer to an ovenproof dish and bake uncovered for 15 minutes at 400°. Serve warm with roasted meats or fowl, or toss with steamed vegetables such as green beans or broccoli.

Potato and Fennel Casserole
4 Tablespoons butter
2 pounds Irish potatoes, washed clean
1 fennel bulb
pinch grated fresh nutmeg
salt to taste
1/2 hot pepper, seeded and minced (optional)
1 Cup milk
1/2 Cup grated cheddar cheese
Slice fennel bulb and potatoes very thinly. Place half of the slices in a greased ovenproof dish and give them a dash of nutmeg and salt, and hot pepper if you choose. Cover with milk. Place more slices on top and cover with grated cheese. Cover dish with foil and bake at 350°F for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 minutes longer to let cheese turn golden brown.

Rice and Fennel Cake
2 Cups milk
1 Cup cooked rice
2 fennel bulbs, peeled and chopped small
1/2 Cup brown sugar
4 eggs
1 Tablespoon butter
2 to 3 Tablespoons baker's flour
In a suitable pot, scald the milk and stir in the rice and fennel pieces. Simmer for half an hour before stirring in the sugar. Remove from heat. Mix in one egg at a time. Slowly stir in the flour. Spoon mixture into a greased cake pan and bake covered at 350°F for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 more minutes. Cool before serving.



For the Gardener
Since fennel grows so tall and can survive for years, place it where it will not shade or interfere with your other plants. A few plants about 20 inches apart are all that's necessary for the average household. Plant seeds an inch and a half deep in well-worked soil. Fennel doesn't require much attention or water. A warning: fennel will cross-pollinate with dill weed, so do not plant these two herbs close together as their flavors will be dulled. After about four months collect the flowers before the seeds ripen. When dry, shake the seeds on to a white cloth. Pick fresh leaves and harvest the bulbs as needed.

Backstage at Larston's Lobsters

by Karen Kleppa

I close my eyes and melt with the taste of barbecued lobster. It seems to just dissolve in my mouth. I'm on the beach in the Tobago Cays. There's a mound of lobster in front of my friends and me. The garlic potatoes are heavenly. For someone that doesn't usually like cooked vegetables, I can't seem to get enough of them. Around me the palm trees whisper against the sky and the waves softly lick the shore. An iguana runs through the bushes a few yards from the picnic tables. As the light fades, the candles on the tables are lit. Can one have it any better than this? Carolyn on *Windborne III* was right. When I told her where and what I was having for dinner she said, "You lucky person; Larston's lobsters are to die for!" She was right. And I ask Larston what his special ingredient is and he smiles....

Larston and his boat *Velocity II Lørdag* are a familiar sight to many around the Tobago Cays and Union Island. Having crewed a couple times across the Atlantic on both Swedish and Belgian boats, Larston was one of the first to start doing barbecues in the Cays some ten years ago. What started as helping charter skippers create something special for their guests has caught on.

In Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet* I've read that "work is love made visible". Both Larston and all the others who run the barbecues in the Cays have given pleasure to many through the years with their activities on the beach. Last season I got to go "backstage" for a few weeks and see what all goes into creating these special meals.

The days start EARLY. Larston and his nephew Glenroy are down at the harbor in Union just after the sun comes up, cleaning their boat and getting it ready. By 8:30 or 9:00AM Vee (and for a while I) has made the rounds of the grocery stores and fresh produce booths to get all the vegetables, fruits, garlic, spices and everything else we will need for the day and to make all the dinners. Sometimes they know ahead of time "approximately" how many dinners there will be if people have ordered in advance. But most often they just have to guess at it — and it's a long way to the closest grocery store once we have gotten to the Cays.

Then it's off to Petite Martinique to pick up the fresh lobsters from the fishermen Larston has fishing for him there, then it's over to Mayreau to pick up a huge sack of charcoal.

When we get to the Cays we raft up with the others who also offer barbecues but got there earlier than us, and we wait our turn to approach the newly arriving yachts. Especially since the Cays became a marine park, all the people offering different services to the visitors have devised a system of who gets to approach whom and when.

Lunchtime. We make it right there on the water, rafted up. Food gets passed around to the others rafted up. This really is a day on the water (no biminis here).

By late afternoon we have visited three boats and have orders for eight dinners. Sometimes people want to have the meals delivered to their boat. But today everyone wants to eat on shore. It's time to head for the beach and start preparing the food. The potatoes get boiled first (over a fire), then cut and grilled. Glenroy starts cleaning the lobsters. Vee, Larston and I start cutting up all the vegetables. Garlic butter is one of the main ingredients, and it takes a quite a while to grate by hand all we will need.

There's a special atmosphere. This evening there are four others also preparing food and sharing the two grills. If one person doesn't have enough fruit, they borrow from someone who does. Everyone is in a good mood. It's a happy, lively bunch making dinners for more than 20 people. Everyone runs their own "business" but they are all working together. Nice!

Just before sunset most of the guests have arrived and found places at the picnic tables. It's always a pleasure to present the huge platters of lobsters and hear all the *oohs* and *aahhs*. The food looks scrumptious and smells even better. It's heartwarming to make things people like and appreciate. There is a festive atmosphere on the beach. No one goes away hungry, that's for sure.



Glenroy, Vee, Karen and Larston adding the special ingredient

By the time all the guests have eaten and left, all the dishes done, the garbage collected, the boats loaded up with equipment, utensils, pots and pans, it's late and dark dark dark. The boat ride back to Union goes under starry skies.

I've learned what Larston's "special ingredient" is that makes his food so good. It's just like *The Prophet* said: work is LOVE made visible. Enjoy!



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Dear *Compass*,
MAYAG would like to thank the crew on *S/V Cheetah II* for their kind words in the November issue of *Compass* about the Royal Grenada Police Force and in particular Detective Garcia and his team. So often only the negative items are shared. Mindful of this, the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG) sought to draw the published letter to the attention of the relevant authorities.

MAYAG wishes to publicly thank Detective Garcia and team for the efforts taken to follow up with communication and information as he clearly managed to turn a negative incident into a positive one. Grenada and MAYAG know that safety and security are a prime factor when those on yachts decide where to go, and to have such a glowing testimony to Grenada's law enforcement officers is a great benefit for our industry. All our marketing and promotional efforts are worthless if our clients do not feel they can remain safely in Grenada.
Laura Fletcher, MAYAG
Grenada

Dear *Compass*,
Thanks again for publishing my letter about trying to import our dog Darwin into Antigua in your November issue. In Grenada I got quite a few positive reactions from other dog owners. We also appreciate the reaction from John J. Duffy, President of the Antigua & Barbuda Marine Association. His comments didn't really clarify anything, but he invited yachtspeople who experienced problems to contact him at info@abma.ag. Having written and sent a huge letter about our Jolly Harbour experience to the chief of the Antiguan agriculture department without hearing anything back, we tried our luck with Mr. Duffy. We sent a copy of the long, explanatory e-mail of our experiences to him a few weeks ago.

At the moment, we are in St. Lucia, where we had another unsatisfactory experience checking Darwin in. Dogs are now allowed to be (temporarily?) imported into St. Lucia and we did so successfully four months ago. At that time, in Rodney Bay, a government vet came to our boat, *Irie*, to inspect Darwin, scan his microchip, check his paperwork and issue a permit, all for the price of EC$45. All was done in a professional manner and we didn't regret going through all the hassle and time to check our dog in. Plus, we now had a good experience in St. Lucia and we would come back.

A week ago, we hoped to go through the same process with our dog, but in Soufriere this time, arriving to St. Lucia from the south. We had e-mailed the government vet in charge, Dr. King, weeks before arriving to see whether all formalities could be done in Soufriere and to confirm the cost. We never heard back from her.

An hour after finishing our own formalities, Mark went to shore again and picked up an agricultural guy from Vieux Fort, ordered by the Customs official, and brought him to *Irie* to "see" our dog. This person looked at Darwin, glanced through his paperwork and wrote something like "veterinary inspected and approved" plus the date on one of the sheets and that was it. No scanning of the microchip, no touching the dog, no official permit. We had to pay him EC$95 — twice as much as the amount four months ago and without a receipt. That amount had been negotiated down from the EC$150 he initially wanted to charge. Since when are government fees negotiable? And how did this amount rise so steeply in a few months? Questions we asked in an e-mail to Dr. King, who hasn't yet gotten back to us.

So, we feel it is impossible to do this dog check-in procedure "right", no matter how hard you try. It would be a challenge to write an article about dog import regulations and fees in the Caribbean with all the contradicting information you find online and given the mixed and non-conforming experiences we have had. That's probably why it never has been done or why the little information you find is outdated and incorrect.

I just wanted to share this information and hope you understand our ongoing frustrations about legally taking our dog to the Caribbean islands. It becomes clearer to us every time why so few other cruisers bother.

Keep up the good work at *Caribbean Compass*!
Liesbet Collaert
Irie

Hi there, *Compass* Readers,
Just to let you know that Martinique is experiencing the same crime problem as many of the other islands. Please be more careful.

We were in the marina at Le Marin, Martinique, having some last minor repairs done to our yacht under the Lagoon warranty. One night, 27th November, at round 2:30AM, Joe said he felt the boat move. A little later, he heard a soft cough. Someone had boarded our boat! This is very easy if the boat is tied on a pontoon at a marina.

Joe got up and saw a man sitting on the inside step to our "patio". He called to me to get the camera, as there was someone on the boat. When he opened the door to confront the man, the noise of the lock alerted the guy, and he got up and jumped off the boat, and just walked away (such a cheek!). When he looked back and saw the camera (which he probably thought was a firearm), he began to run. We could not get a picture of him, but did report this to the marina staff, and they in turn reported it to the police. We did give them a fairly good description of the guy. Apparently this was not the first time this had happened, and they were getting closer to finding the offender.

We checked to see if anything was taken, and fortunately the only thing that was actually taken and eaten — we found the peels — were all the bananas! A large plastic box containing our shoes is normally kept at the entrance to the yacht, below the steps. This was open, and the boarder had neatly lined up all Joe's shoes in pairs, perhaps to see which ones he wanted. Luckily he was disturbed before he made up his mind. This box of shoes happens to be the only thing left out at night when we lock up. Now we bring that in too!

Two nights later, 29th November 2009, we were anchored out in Le Marin bay, and almost the same thing happened. Joe woke up to disturb a guy who had swum out to us, and was trying to steal our dinghy. He got a fright, left his wet shirt in the dinghy, and swam away. Try as we might, we could not see him in the dark — he must have been able to hold his breath for an awful long time! He was not able to take the dinghy because we had it locked to the yacht with quite a heavy chain. We are very vigilant about keeping things secure because there are numerous stories of this kind of thing happening. It just sucks to have it happen to us as well!
Joe and Mercia
Yacht Free to Be

Dear *Compass* Readers,
Imray is in the process of re-drawing the following charts:

A 231, 232 US and British Virgin Islands
B 26 Barbuda
E 5 Bermuda
A 234 St. Croix

Please check your charts and send any corrections and/or suggestions on improving them to me at streetiolaire@hotmail.com.

We are particularly interested in seeing corrections to the St. George's, Bermuda blow-up, as we have heard a megayacht berth has been established.
Many thanks,
Don Street
Iolaire

Dear *Compass*,
Thanks very much for letting us see *Caribbean Compass* magazine on-line. I have been able to pass the link to other people who otherwise wouldn't see the magazine.
Anne Dunlop
Freya of Clyde

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NIGHT PASSAGES

by Ann Westergard

A yacht named *Kersti*, a monohull much like ours, was holed and sank the other night while on a passage from the San Blas islands to Cartagena, Colombia. The crew in their liferaft was safely picked up by another yacht, *Jupiter's Smile*, which was sailing on a similar course. But *Kersti* is gone, and with it, I'm sure, the confidence and serenity of the crew, as well as all their personal stuff.

Then, a day later, on the Northwest Caribbean Net came the report from another vessel that had in view a "large white ship's mooring" measuring about 15 by 20 feet, drifting around on the rhumb line from San Blas to Cartagena. The report was radioed in and apparently will reach a US Coast Guard vessel in the area, which will deal with the obstacle.

I remember one of the most frightening nights of my life — years ago, in our former boat, *Arion*, somewhere in mid-Atlantic. We were rollicking along, headlong into one of the darkest (but starriest) nights imaginable. All I could think of was a report I'd heard about a number of refrigerated containers that had supposedly been swept off the deck of a cargo ship in a storm. I was certain that the sharp corner of one was hovering about two feet below the surface and we would be upon it at any moment. I was miserable until sunrise, and then, although the containers may still have been there, I regained my balance.

I've buried those particular containers under a pile of other things I might worry about. The other night we were moving along the coast of mainland Honduras on a mainly clear but moonless night. There was a rock and a reefy area to avoid, and an isolated rain squall whose boundaries I checked on radar. As it passed, a persistent little blip remained just behind us, and as I looked for it, a light went on. Apparently we had nearly run over an unlit fishing boat, provoking him into showing a light. A few minutes later another light suddenly appeared maybe a quarter mile off.

Other items for the worry list include logs washed down rivers, and whales (although if I hit a whale I'd consider that it had the right-of-way and I had just drawn the wrong card).

Of course we stand watches all night, along the coast and offshore. But it's impossible to see everything. We place a lot of faith in the odds that whatever danger lurks ahead is not directly ahead on the little line we draw across the ocean. For the men in the unlit *lancha* it worked out, for *Kersti*, it didn't. For us… well, it remains to be seen. I'm expecting the best.

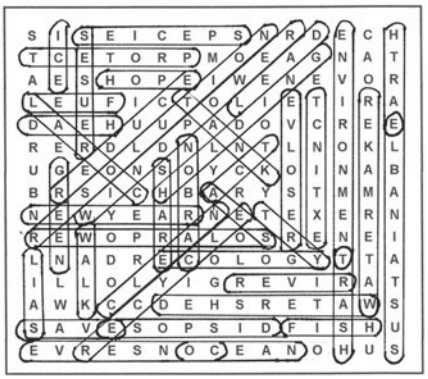
'Of course we stand watches all night… But it's impossible to see everything'

There is an Arab proverb to the effect that you don't truly own anything that you can lose at sea.

Ann Westergard and Doug Brown are cruising the Caribbean aboard the Valiant 40 Galivant.

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CALENDAR

JANUARY 2010

1 New Year's Day. Public holiday or "recovery day" in many places. Junkanoo parade in Abaco, Bahamas
1 – 3 St. Croix Christmas Festival Parades. www.stxfestival.com
2 Public holiday in Cuba (Victory of Armed Forces Day), Haiti (Founding Fathers Day), St Kitts & Nevis (Carnival Day), St. Lucia and Grenada (Second New Year's Day)
6 Three Kings Day. Public holiday in many places
6 World ARC 2010/11 starts in St. Lucia. www.worldcruising.com/worldarc2010
8 – 10 French Regional Marine Mammal Stranding Workshop, Guadeloupe. evastropic@wanadoo.fr
11 – 17 17th Annual Barbados Jazz Festival. www.barbadosjazzfestival.com
11 – 20 St. Barts Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org
13 – 16 Carriacou Sailing Series. www.sailingcarriacou.com
17 Women's Cup Regatta, Martinique. Yacht Club de la Martinique (YCM), tel (596) 63 26 76, fax (596) 63 94 48, ycmq@wanadoo.fr
18 Martin Luther King Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
21 Errol Barrow Day; public holiday in Barbados. Our Lady of Altagracia; public holiday in Dominican Republic
21 – 24 St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta. www.ClassicRegatta.com
22 St. Thomas USVI Blues Festival. http://stevesimonpresents.com
23 – 24 Around Antigua Race. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
24 – 28 41st Spice Island Billfish Tournament, Grenada. www.sibtgrenada.com
24 – 30 Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival, Montego Bay. www.airjamaicajazzandblues.com
25 Duarte's day. Public holiday in Dominican Republic
27 – 30 Antigua Superyacht Cup. AYC
27 – 10 Feb 15th Annual Mustique Blues Festival. www.basilsbar.com
28 – 31 Bequia Music Fest. *See ad on page 13*
29 – 2 Feb Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival. *See ad on page 5*
29 – 6 Feb 16th Guadeloupe International Film Festival. www.fest21.com/en/festival/femi_international_cinema_festival_of_guadeloupe
30 FULL MOON
30 – 31 Budget Marine Women's Caribbean Championships, St. Maarten. St. Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC), tel (599) 544-2075, fax (599) 544-2091, info@smyc.com, www.smyc.com

FEBRUARY

2 World Wetlands Day
4 - 7 Club Náutico de San Juan International Regatta, Puerto Rico. www.nauticodesanjuan.com /sailingprogram/regatta_int.htm
5 Pineapple Cup Montego Bay Race, Jamaica. www.montegobayrace.com
6 – 7 Digicel Workboat Regatta, Grenada. See ad on page 5
6 – 7 Gill St Maarten Keelboat Championships, SMYC
6 - 16 5th La Route du Carnival rally, Martinique to Trinidad. www.transcaraibes.com
7 Independence Day. Public holiday in Grenada
12 - 15 32nd Annual Sweethearts of the Caribbean and 28th Annual Classic Yacht Regatta, Tortola. tel (284) 495-4559.
12 - 16 20th Semaine Nautique Schoelcher, Martinique. www.clubnautiquedumarin.com
13 –14 Budget Marine Valentines Regatta, Antigua. Jolly Harbour Yacht Club (JHYC), Antigua. tel (268) 770-6172, miramarsailing@hotmail.com, www.jhycantigua.com
13 – 15 Carnival Regatta, Martinique. Club Nautique Le Neptune (CNN), Martinique, tel (596) 51 73 24, fax (596) 51 73 70, info@clubnautiqueleneptune.com
14 Sunshine School Fundraising Auction, Bequia. www.bequiasunshineschool.org
15 - 16 Carnival Monday and Tuesday in most Dutch and French islands, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Dominica, Carriacou, Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela, and other places
15 Presidents' Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
17 Ash Wednesday. Public holiday in Cayman Islands and Jamaica
19 – 21 St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta. *See ad on page 15*
19 – 21 Tobago Carnival Regatta. www.sailweek.com
22 Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Lucia
22 – 26 RORC Caribbean 600 Offshore Race, Antigua. caribbean600.rorc.org
26 – 28 South Grenada Regatta. *See ad on page 20*
27 Around St. Maarten-St. Martin Multihull Regatta. www.MultiHullRegatta.com
27 Independence Day. Public holiday in the Dominican Republic
27 – 28 Around Martinique Race (2 legs). CNN
28 FULL MOON

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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